



Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 1987

NUMBER 1

Studies In Romans 14

(No. 8)

The final trio of valiant verses of this tremendously important chapter reads:

It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:21-23).

Another major abuse of Romans 14 is based upon an extremely faulty exegesis of verse 21. Proponents of the acceptability of so-called "social" drinking, or "moderate" imbibing of alcoholic beverages (in reality nothing is more UNSOCIAL than drinking which makes its practitioners wholly anti-social; and MODERATION may ONLY be used in that which is right in and of itself: but drinking, TO ANY DEGREE, is wrong, or sinful, per se) like to park at this verse. They claim that "social" drinking is simply an indifferent matter, and is neither right nor wrong as long as other people are not harmed by their practices. But alcoholic beverages do not fit matters of indifference. They are wrong per se. Passages such as Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-34; and Habakkuk 2:15 set forth the grievous wrong in alcoholic intake of any and all amounts. These crystal-clear passages of strict warning read:

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. . . Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?

who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. 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 . . . Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also; that thou mayest look on their nakedness.

In no sense of the term was Paul giving commendation to something that has been inherently wrong since its first mention in Genesis 9 with drunken Noah, and its second appearance within Holy Writ with a twice-drunken Lot and the sons he begat with his two daughters in Genesis 19.

I maintain that Paul uses "meats" and "wine" here in the same category: "meats" are indifferent; the "wine" is indifferent. The "wine" could NOT be a matter of indifference if ALCOHOLIC in content. Therefore, it must be "wine" that is unfermented. That superb scholar of the Bible in general and Romans in particular, Roy C. Deaver, has well written:

I do not accept the view that the word "wine" in this passage refers to intoxicants, and that Paul therefore classifies the drinking of intoxicants within the realm of indifference. The word "wine" here is used with the word "meat" (flesh), and must refer to something which stands before God as "meat" stands. I cannot accept the notion that inspiration would categorize intoxicants with meats. Further, the word "wine" (Greek: OINOS) does not necessarily mean an intoxicant. It may refer to the juice freshly squeezed from the grapes. It may refer to the juice of

the grape while it is still in the grape. This is the word used in John 2, and I do not believe for a moment that the Lord made something intoxicating. Even if it could be proved that in Paul's day and in that culture that the drinking of INTOXICATING "wine" was a matter of "indifference," it would not follow that such would be the case in our day. Millions of broken homes, destitute children, murders on the highways, cases of loss of influence for good, and countless other tragedies, all declare that the drinking of intoxicants is not a matter of indifference. A CHRISTIAN will have nothing to do with drinking intoxicants (Roy C. Deaver: THE CHURCH AND FELLOWSHIP: FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES: 1974, William Woodson, Editor p. 311).

To this superbly stated and scholarly statement I say, Amen! Amen!! Amen!!!

The "strong" brother should willingly forego all these -- meat-eating, wine-drinking, or anything else -- if, by so doing, he causes a "weak" brother to stumble, to become offended, or to be made weaker. A stumbling-block placed in a "weak" brother's way is, as defined by Thayer and quoted by Whiteside, "an obstacle in the way, which, if one strikes his foot against he necessarily stumbles or falls; trop., that over which the soul stumbles, i.e., by which he is impelled to sin" (Ibid., p. 275).

Verse 22 is addressed to the "strong" brother. Does he have faith? This is NOT faith in Christ, or faith in the gospel; for both strong and weak have that. It is "faith" in the rightness of his eating meats. Then have it to thyself before God. Whiteside, on this verse, quotes Bloomfield, and states, "'Keep this persuasion to yourself, and your God; use it when you have no other witness'" (Ibid., p. 276). The Pauline idea, or, more accurately stated, the Holy Spirit's message, is that the "strong" person should use this right in such fashion that he does not wound or damage

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Words Of Truth

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Acts 26:25

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"Commitment"

INTRODUCTION

Under the Mosaic economy, God expected Israel to be a committed people (Psalms 37:5; Proverbs 16:3). He expects/ demands nothing shy of the same from Christians today (I Corinthians 16:15, 16).

"Commitment" is a very disturbing subject. It dares to challenge one's "get-by-with" religion. It forces one to change his life. It places demands on one's time, possessions, and interests. Yea, it damns the neglect of one's indifference. Yet, the Bible says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind" (Luke 10:27); in other words, "Be committed!"

To develop a deeper understanding of, and a greater desire for, commitment, consider two questions relative to the same as answered by Jesus in Luke 14:26-33.

I. "WHAT IS COMMITMENT?"

Jesus answers this question with two declarative statements.

(1) Commitment is an attitude of putting Jesus first (Luke 14:26). With this passage Jesus did not teach his disciples to literally "hate" [detest] their parents (Cf. Matthew 15:4), their spouses (Cf. Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4), their children (Cf. Ephesians 6:4; Titus 2:4), or their own lives (Cf. Matthew 22:39; Ephesians 5:28). Rather, he used emphatic terminology to emphasize the fact that Christ must come first (Matthew 10:37).

God has always expected first place (Exodus 20:1-6; 23:19; I Kings 17:8-16; Malachi 1:6-8, 10, 12-14). Today, the charge is clear: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteous-



Dan Winkler

Cylla is a great rock near the Italian coast. Opposite it, off the Sicillian coast, is a great whirlpool called Charybdis. The ancients thought of them as two great monsters. To avoid either of them put one in danger of being destroyed by the other. It was difficult to pass between them safely.

That which is styled "modernism" in religion is materialistic and to a large degree approaches atheism. Since there is nothing in it to satisfy the hunger of the human soul, many have swung to another extreme which has been called "Neo-orthodoxy." This philosophy claims to believe in God and his word, and at the same time claims exemption from obeying the word of God. Beginning about 1955 another philosophy called "Neo-Pentecostalism" was urged upon the religious world, and has infiltrated to some degree both Catholic and Protestant denominations. Neo-Pentecostalism is not at all concerned with doctrine; but theirs is an experiential religion. They are not concerned about what the Bible teaches with respect to obedience, but they want an experience of feeling, produced by a baptism (?) of the Holy Spirit which is evidenced by speaking in tongues. The Bible does not allow for either Spirit baptism or miraculous tongues this side of the first century.

The Lord's church has not escaped entirely either of these "monsters." Several, we might say many, preachers and churches have been destroyed by modernism. While they may not classify themselves as "neo-orthodox," yet there a number of preachers occupying pulpits and several teachers in Christian colleges who run with the crowd. A number of young preachers, as well as other students, are being indoctrinated and are going forth to teach others in the Lord's church, and in the school classrooms as well. In view of these problems, we need be reminded that God is a God of law and order, and that his law cannot be set aside with impunity.

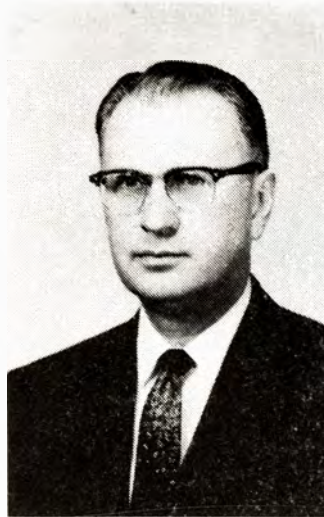
All Things Are Under Law

Law has been defined as a rule of action given by the superior to be obeyed by the inferior. There are two types of law: **Impressed Law**, which God has bound upon all nature. For example, corn seed produces corn, cotton seed brings forth cotton, and so it is with every kind and species in nature. There are no exceptions. There is also "expressed Law, or the law of God spoken and written to mankind. God is the superior Being, and man the inferior; hence man must obey the superior. No responsible person is exempt. God has delegated all authority to Christ (Matthew 28:18); and all those who neglect or wilfully disobey God will be destroyed (Acts 3:22-23).

In spite of plain Bible teaching, some are affirming that salvation is by "grace only," or by "faith only," apart from any law. If one insists that saint and sinner are bound by any law, he is dubbed a "legalist."

Grace Appropriated Through Law

(No. 1)



Roy J. Hearn

But that the Christian is under law to God is very clear. The New Testament is called "the law of faith" (Romans 3:27). "A great company of priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Hence, "the faith" is the law of God, and Christ is the giver of salvation to those who obey it (Hebrews 5:9).

The Gospel Is a Legal System

"Legal" is defined: "Of, or pertaining to law, based upon, governed by law." Law is further defined: "A rule of conduct or action prescribed by the supreme governing authority, etc., with obligation of obedience by those governed" (Webster).

The New Testament is yet the will of Christ, bound and made operative by his death upon the cross (Hebrews 9:16-17). There are certain elements to be found in connection with a legal will, namely, a testator (will maker), gifts, conditions, death of the testator, probation of the will, executor(s), and heirs. Relative to salvation, Christ is the will-maker. The gifts are remission of sins past and eternal life in heaven for the faithful (I John 2:25; Revelation 22:14). Conditions of forgiveness from past sins are given in the Great Commission as recorded in Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44. These involve being taught the word of God, believing in God and Christ, repenting of sins, and being baptized for (in order to) remission of sins. Read Acts 2:22-41 and see this in effect. Peter preached. Believers were told to repent and be baptized in order to be saved. Then, there are specific conditions bound upon Christians for their eternal salvation (Matthew 7:21-27). The will of Christ was sealed by his death, probated in the court of heaven, executed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles (II Corinthians 5:18-20), and the heirs are they who submit to the terms.

While the gospel is a legal system, this does not eliminate or destroy "grace." Neither do conditions minimize nor reflect upon grace. A human will is a legal document. If someone were to select you as beneficiary, that is grace. If he adds conditions to get the inheritance, that is still grace, for he does not have to include you in his will -- either with or without conditions. So, God was under no obligation to save man; but by grace he provided a way; and his grace is incorporated in the conditions he imposed. (To be continued).

—4035 Barron Ave., Memphis, TN 38111.

Ivey Named Executive Vice Chairman Of Faulkner University Board

A board member since 1974, Marlin Ivey was recently named Executive Vice Chairman of the Faulkner University Board of Trustees.

Ivey, of Kosiusko, Mississippi, is Chairman of the Board for Ivey, Inc., a national contracting firm. He also serves on the Board of International Bible College, and of Magnolia Bible College.

Recognized throughout the South as an outstanding Christian businessman, Ivey has been and will continue to be a great asset to Faulkner University.

Holy Spirit Baptism And Gift

This lesson seeks to answer questions concerning the work of the Holy Spirit as a divine person. The Holy Spirit knows things (I Corinthians 2:11), was a Comforter to the apostles (John 14:16-17, 26), and was the guiding and directing influence in the revelation of the word (I Peter 1:9-11; II Peter 1:16-19).



W. Edwin Kearley

WHAT ABOUT THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT? John the Baptist contrasted his baptism with the baptism Jesus would administer: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matthew 3:11). Baptism of the SPIRIT was a promise, not a command. Some would be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and the disobedient would be baptized with eternal fire. The gospel of Christ

did not make the baptism of the Spirit a command to be obeyed.

The promise by John of Holy Spirit baptism was fulfilled at the time of our Lord's choosing. The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred twice. After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his apostles for forty days. "And being assembled together with them, [he] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:1-5).

The twelve apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus. It was the apostles, and not the one hundred twenty, who were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The pronouns of Acts 2:1-4 refer to the antecedent found in Acts 1:26. The antecedent is the "apostles."

There is no doubt this event was the "baptism" of the spirit. Peter remembers the Lord's promise at the house of Cornelius. He said, "And as I began to speak, THE HOLY GHOST FELL ON THEM, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, Jesus Indeed

baptized with water; but YE SHALL BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY GHOST. Forasmuch then as God gave them THE LIKE GIFT as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:15-17).

The second occasion of the Holy Spirit is the one which we have already mentioned, the house of Cornelius. While Peter was speaking to the Gentiles, "The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

"As on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15) refers to Pentecost. The "like gift" (verse 17) refers to these two occasions. These two events were the fulfilling of God's prophecy through Joel: "... I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. ..." (Joel 2:28). In Peter's sermon on Pentecost, he said concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. ..." (Acts 2:16-17).

The apostles were Jews; the house of Cornelius were Gentiles. If one is not a Jew, he is a Gentile. Therefore, the baptism of the Holy Spirit prophecy was fulfilled on these

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"Commitment"

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ness" (Matthew 6:33); yea, "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are upon the earth" (Colossians 3:1,2).

How important is the question, "Is Jesus first in my time management?" Which is more readily taken in: a Sunday afternoon football game on television, or worship at the local old-folks home? Which is enjoyed more: a golf tournament, or worship services? Which is the object of more diligent study: a daily newspaper/a favorite magazine, or the word of God? Which is more important: saving money, or saving a soul?

Equally important is the question, "Is Jesus first in the management of my funds?" What item is listed first on the family budget? Is the church contribution more -- a larger amount -- than our mortgage? car payment? or savings account for vacations? Remember, commitment is an attitude of putting Jesus first!

(2) Commitment is an attitude of putting self last (Luke 14:27). In this verse Jesus called for his followers to take up their cross. Now, a cross is something to die on; it is not an ornament to display, nor an object to admire. Remember the words of Jesus: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24)? These words are found in the context wherein Jesus first speaks of his own crucifixion, and, secondly, demanded a spiritual crucifixion -- death to self -- of those who follow him.

The context currently under study immediately follows a parable in which various ones used excuses for not attending a great feast (Luke 14:15-24). Some used the excuse of possessions; another used the excuse of relationships. With this parable in mind, Jesus focused on commitment, only

to say he must come first and self [be it one's desires relative to possessions or relationships] must come last.

It is sometimes suggested, "What this church needs is a few funerals," in reference to certain cantankerous souls which impede the progress of the Lord's body. In reality, what every congregation of the Lord's church needs is the spiritual "funeral" of all her members; that is, each member dying to himself/herself.

II. "WHAT WILL HELP ONE BE MORE COMMITTED?"

Jesus answers this question with two illustrations: (1) To develop commitment, one must "count the cost" (Luke 14:26). Buildings left unfinished stand not only as shelter for rodents; they stand as a memorial of neglect and improper judgment. How important it is to "count the cost" before a construction project is undertaken. Even more so, one should "count the cost" of becoming a disciple of Jesus.

Jesus instructed his apostles to make disciples by baptizing the taught (Matthew 28:19, 20 ASV). In Greek, the two modal participles "baptizing" and "teaching" project the means by which disciples are made. Note, men are to be taught the commands of Jesus. This implies the need of one's "counting the cost" in becoming a disciple of Jesus.

(2) To develop commitment one must "pay the price" (Luke 14:31, 32). In his illustration of the king with 10,000 sending ambassage to the king with 20,000 before he went to war, Jesus made reference to the fact that the king "took counsel." Such is found in the middle voice of the Greek language, indicating self-deliberation on the part of the king. Yes, the king studied the situation within himself and acted accordingly; he "counted the cost" and "paid the price!"

It should be remembered that "a religion

which does nothing, gives nothing, costs nothing, suffers nothing, IS WORTH NOTHING!" Paul wrote, "Try your own-selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Corinthians 13:5). Men need to put themselves to the test, scrutinize the genuineness of their spirituality, and determine whether they are "in the faith." In other words, each should ask: "Have I paid the price?"

CONCLUSION

Jesus closed his words on commitment with a note of clarity: "So therefore whosoever there be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33). That is the "bottom line" when it comes to the subject of commitment. When one counts the costs, and is willing to pay the price of putting Jesus first and self last, such an one will bid farewell to all possessions and ties in this life, considering all that he has and all that he is as belonging to Jesus! The Christian who is not willing to pay such a price is worthless, like salt that has lost its savor, to Jesus.

(a) Commitment is not a half-hearted way of life. Most of the problems that come from living the Christian life come from living it halfway! (b) Commitment is not engulfed by a fire-escape religion. A religion in which one does as little as possible so as to escape the fires of hell by the skin of his teeth and slide into heaven by the "strained" grace of God(?) is not the religion of New Testament Christianity (Cf. Matthew 22:37). (c) COMMITMENT IS AN ATTITUDE IN WHICH JESUS IS PLACED FIRST AND SELF IS PLACED LAST! How stirring and disturbing is the question, "Are you committed to Jesus?"

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The apostle Paul stated in Romans 2:4: "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." One motivating factor behind obedience is God's goodness. This is why John said, "We love him, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). In this article I want you to think carefully about the goodness of God.

1. The goodness of God is shown by the gift of his Son for mankind. Yes, John 3:16 says, "For God so



Ronnie A. Missildine

The Goodness Of God

loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" Paul in speaking of this gift said, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Corinthians 9:15). Paul said that God's gift of his Son for our sins is so wonderful and meaningful that it cannot be adequately described with words. It is an " . . . unspeakable gift." God's goodness is supremely seen by the gift of his Son for our sins. Hebrews 2:9 tells us that Jesus by the grace of God tasted death for every man. How thankful we should be!

2. The goodness of God is seen by the fact that he is no respecter of persons. All men are equal in God's sight. It doesn't matter whether we are rich or poor, black or white, or whatever. God loves all men and wants all of them to be saved (I Timothy 2:4). Peter said at the house of the gentile Cornelius,

" . . . Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35). Yes, God is impartial. This is a wonderful quality that manifests his goodness.

3. The goodness of God is seen by his mercy and care for us. In II Corinthians 1:3, God is described as "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." These are marvellous statements that show God's goodness. Peter wrote, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7). Where would we be without God's mercy, concern and kindness? We are told in Hebrews 13:5, " . . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What a wonderful promise!

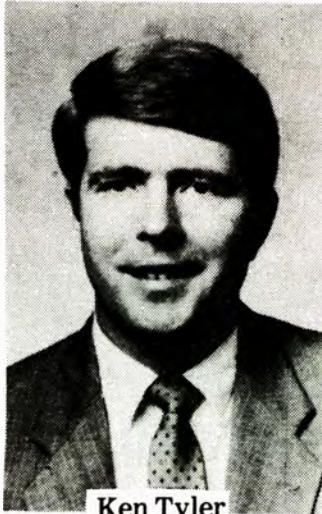
I want to ask you: has the goodness of God led you to repentance? There is no question about God's goodness. Do you love him because he first loved you? John said, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. . ." (I John 5:3).

Friends, the God of heaven is good. May we all gladly serve him!

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A Prostitute In Faith's Hall Of Fame?

In Hebrews 11:31 Rahab the harlot is listed among those who possessed great faith in God, and is commended for that faith. She hid the spies sent into Jericho by Joshua before Israel attacked the city. The Hebrew writer, along with the account in Joshua 2, both describe her as a harlot. Some, who can't accept that God would use a person of such character, try to say that the Hebrew word for "harlot" can also mean "a female innkeeper" or "hostess." But the Hebrew writer leaves no doubt. The Greek word is "porna" which means "a woman who sells her body for sexual purposes" (Thayer). Is the Hebrews account inspired? Of course! Then she was a harlot; a prostitute.



Ken Tyler

But God's spies did not go into Rahab's house for evil purposes; they went for good. Just as Jesus did not go into the house of Zacchæus the publican for evil purposes, but for good. As a result, Rahab became a believer, and obviously changed her way of life and served God. The Hebrews account proves it.

Why is it so difficult to think that God could see into the heart of a sinner (even a prostitute), and know that if she were presented with opportunity to repent, she would? Peter says that "God . . . is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

There is a lesson here for us! Sometimes we pick and choose those people whom WE think the gospel will touch; and we shun those whom we think will not respond. But, God and his way changed the prostitute, Rahab. Who are we to think that the gospel is not powerful today? Do we not believe Romans 1:16? Or, do we shun those whom we believe are "below our dignity?" God forbid! The lessons Jesus taught in the parable of the marriage feast (Luke 14) shows that Jesus will accept ye even solicit, anyone who will repent and do his

will.

Rahab, a harlot? Sure; why not? -- She didn't stay one, though!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.

Holy Spirit Baptism And Gift

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two occasions: it had come upon "all flesh."

Holy Spirit baptism was never a command. Baptism of the Holy Spirit was never a condition of salvation.

The baptism commanded in the gospel of Christ is water baptism. After the house of Cornelius received the Holy Spirit baptism, and at the conclusion of Peter's speech, Peter asked, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized . . ." (Acts 10:47). At the baptism of the Ethiopian nobleman we read concerning his baptism, "And when they were come up out of the water" (Acts 8:39). The Lord's great commission says: "He that

believeth and is baptized shall be saved. . ." (Mark 16:16; compare Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:5).

When we obey the Lord's command today, we are the sons of God. Through faith, we are baptized into Christ, and put on Christ (Galatians 3:26-27). In Christ, we are new creatures (II Corinthians 5:17). Upon believing and being baptized, we are saved (Mark 16:16), and The Lord adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47).

We are not commanded to receive Holy Spirit baptism for salvation, nor after we are saved either.

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Studies In Romans 14

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his "weak" brother. Happy is the man who does a thing that is right, and who believes in its rightness at the time of his doing it. In such he does not do violence to his conscience.

But the "weak" brother who goes ahead and eats of meats, doubtful that he is doing the right thing, is "damned if he eats." He violates his conscience in so doing. Believing a thing to be right does not, in and of itself, make it right; but it does show sincerity of purpose when one persists in doing what he deems to be right -- much like Saul of Tarsus when he persecuted Christians in Acts 7, 8, and 9. But one is not to engage in that which he really and truly believes to be wrong. He must believe in the rightness of what he is doing. The "weak" brother, by eating such meats as he believes to be unclean, violates his conscience. By doing so he, according to brother Guy N. Woods:

" . . . establishes a dangerous precedent. A weak brother does something he thinks is wrong, though it is not; he has, in so

doing, violated his conscience; he may then proceed to the doing of things that are actually wrong, on the ground that there is no difference (Woods, op. cit., p. 54).

Liberty is not an absolute. (1) Not all things edify, Paul avows in I Corinthians 10:23. (2) Not all things are expedient (I Corinthians 10:23). (3) We should not be brought under the slavish power of any food, pleasure, and the like that would interfere with the supremacy of our allegiance to God the Father and his only begotten Son -- our Saviour (Cf. I Corinthians 6:12ff).

Let us consider others. Let us consider their conscience. Let us consider with care that what we do will edify -- not destroy -- others. Let us make sure that what we do is right and expedient -- not wrong and injurious in its workings. As pioneer preachers and present proclaimers have often said and written: "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; and, in all things, charity."

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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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Studies In Romans 14

(No. 9)

POINTS TO PONDER FROM ROMANS 14

1. This chapter majors in depicting matters of opinion or indifference.

2. There is absolutely no justifiable exegesis of this chapter which makes it a proving ground for the authorization of mechanical music in Christian worship.

3. It is a terribly deceitful handling of this chapter to equate the "strong" brother with the Independent Christian Church preacher, an adamant devotee of mechanical machinery in Christian worship, who, in a so-called summit (or, new unity) meeting, will temporarily forego the usage of his pet idol for the sake of non-instrumental worshipers, but gives no ground at all in his contention that the mechanical instrument is justified.

4. It is equally a deceitful handling of this chapter to equate the "weak" brother with the non-user of mechanical machinery in Christian worship -- the one who adamantly opposes its usage.

5. Romans 14 is NOT a doctrinal discourse in what should be in Christian worship, nor what should not be in Christian worship.

6. Matters of INDIFFERENCE such as are discussed in Romans 14 cannot ever be equated with ESSENTIALS, such as what constitutes true and acceptable worship.

7. It is a terribly deceitful handling of this chapter to make it a proving ground for making so-called "social" (or "moderate") drinking of alcoholic beverages perfectly acceptable (?) before God and righteous men.

8. "Meats" and "wine" occupy the same



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

position in Romans 14:21. If the "meats" are indifferent and innocent in and of themselves -- AND THEY MOST ASSUREDLY ARE -- then the "wine" MUST BE of the very same order -- AND IT MOST ASSUREDLY IS!! But for the "wine" to be of an indifferent or innocent order, it would have to be unfermented -- for "wine" which makes men drunk has NEVER been indifferent or innocent in its noxious influence for exceedingly far-reaching evil.

9. Strength and weakness in this chapter are associated with personal feelings toward INDIFFERENT matters, and not with the degree of strength or weakness of one's faith in God, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in the Bible, in the gospel, in the Lord's church, etc.

10. God has received the "weak" brother. This should be a sufficient ground for the "strong" brother's receiving him likewise.

11. God has also received the "strong" brother. This should be a sufficient ground for the "weak" brother's reception of him also.

12. Jesus Christ is Lord of both the "strong" brother and also of the "weak" brother. This towering truth should have done much to dissolve differences between the two groups.

13. What Jesus did at Calvary and by the marvelous means of his triumphant resurrection should be a majestic motivation for a "strong" brother and a "weak" brother to dissolve troublesome and perplexing problems about matters of opinion, items of indifference.

14. That both the "strong" and the "weak" will appear at the same time before the judgment bar of God's Son makes mighty inconsequential these separating differences relative to indifferent matters.

15. We are here to help our brethren in Christ -- never to hinder, never to hurt, never to injure, never to destroy them spiritually.

16. Practice of the Golden Rule will work wonders when a "strong" brother and a "weak" brother have similar problems today about INDIFFERENT matters as the

"strong" and "weak" were experiencing in Romans 14.

17. Christian charity works wonders in the interpersonal relationships among brethren.

18. Christian selflessness will keep us from doing anything that will destroy a brother for whom Christ died.

19. True workers for peace are at a desperate minimum in the Lord's church today.

20. Edification is a true mission of major proportions for the Lord's church.

21. Conscience is a sensitive entity that cannot be violated without suffering the most grievous of far-reaching consequences.

22. A good, sensitive, pure, and tender conscience is of the greatest price to a Christian.

23. We must believe in the rightness of what we do, or else we greatly injure our own precious personality make-up.

24. A good conscience is an imperative for happy, joyful, vibrant, and fruitful living.

25. Romans 14 should never be used to condone any error or falsehood; for it upholds only truth, and condones neither error nor falsehood.

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

The Lost Letter

Gynnath Ford

I knew that the letter should have come this morning. I went to the mail box several times, but it was not there. I ran my hand back to the far extremities, but it was not there. What could have happened?

Then my hand moved to the side of the box near the front, and there, in an upright position was the letter I was expecting. But letters are supposed to be in a horizontal position stacked atop one another in a rural

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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The Lost Letter

Continued from page 1

mail box! But there it was. I had overlooked it, because it was not in the position to which I was accustomed.

Is it possible that I sometimes overlook scriptures, because I am only looking in the way I have been taught or trained to look for answers? Is it possible that I have missed the blessings of God, because I looked only in the same path to which I was accustomed? It is not easy to get off the beaten path. But the good Samaritan did (Luke 10). And he blessed another -- and he was blessed also. How good we must have felt! All because he looked a little more closely and carefully into the life of a fellow human being.

The people in Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica, because they searched the scriptures daily to see if the things Paul told them were so (Acts 17). Are you just a seeker? or are you a real searcher?

The letter might have something valuable in it. I am going to look more carefully from now on, because I want to receive the blessing. How about you?

—Box 652, Dickson, TN 37055.

FHC Lectureship Feb. 2-6, 1987

"Grace Abounding" is the theme of the 51st Annual Bible Lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College February 2-6, 1987.

Daily speakers will include such outstanding scholars as William Woodson ("Grace, Faith, Works, and Obedience"), Hugo McCord ("God's Grace Manifested Through Christ"), Ian Highers ("Questions and Answers"), Franklin Camp ("The Book of Romans"), Winford Claiborne ("If I Could Lecture at a . . ."), and Ralph Gilmore ("Theistic Revolution"). Mignon Doran will discuss "The gracious Women" daily in a ladies class.

Evening speakers will be Mack Lyon ("Sin and Grace"), Monday; Juan Monroy ("The Grace of Preaching"), Tuesday; Guy Woods ("Grace and Law"), Wednesday;

What are the "gifts of the Spirit?" They are listed in I Corinthians 12:8-11: "For to one is given by the Spirit the WORD OF WISDOM; to another the WORD OF KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit; to another FAITH by the same Spirit; to another the GIFTS OF HEALING by the same Spirit; to another the WORKING OF MIRACLES; to another PROPHECY; to another DISCERNING OF SPIRITS; to another DIVERS KINDS OF TONGUES, to another the INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."



W. Edwin Kearley

All the above are miraculous manifestations in the beginning of the church. One purpose was to confirm or bear witness to what was spoken through the inspired men. The Hebrew writer wrote that the great salvation was first spoken by Christ and "was CONFIRMED UNTO US by them that heard Him, God also BEARING THEM WITNESS, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will" (Hebrews 2:3-4; compare Mark 16:20).

John concludes concerning the inspired revelation: "And many other SIGNS truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but THESE ARE WRITTEN, THAT YE MIGHT BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). But the nine gifts of the Spirit enabled them to know God's will before the written New Testament was given.

These gifts of the Spirit were imparted by the apostles to those on whom they laid their hands (Acts 8:17). In this way, others besides the apostles were enabled to receive extraordinary wisdom, knowledge, and faith; they could perform miracles, heal the sick, prophesy, discern spirits, speak

and Jimmy Mankin ("Young People Growing in Grace"), Thursday. Thursday night will be youth and parents night. Ladies day will be Friday with a guest luncheon scheduled.

The daily Mission Forum will be at 2:30 p.m. with Norman Hogan directing. There will be special classes from 8:30 a.m. throughout the day. Alan Highers will be conducting "Questions and Answers" each day at 3:30 p.m.

You are invited to this spiritual feast. Winford Claiborne will be honored at a banquet Monday evening during the lectureship.

The Holy Spirit Baptism And Gifts

(No. 3)

to themselves (unknown) tongues, and interpret tongues.

Philip had performed miracles at Samaria (Acts 8:6-7, 13). However, it was necessary for the apostles, Peter and John, to come from Jerusalem to Samaria to impart the spiritual gifts (Acts 8:14-18). It follows therefore, that when the apostles died, the power to impart spiritual gifts died with them. By this time, the two purposes of the miraculous had been served: the inspired message of the entire New Testament had been revealed, and had been confirmed by the miracles.

The apostles had miraculous powers. They were promised these by Jesus (Mark 16:17-18); and they used these powers. They were given a great commission to "... preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15-16).

Men today cannot perform such miracles with the power of God. They cannot cast out devils, and they cannot speak in new languages miraculously. They cannot drink deadly poison without harm, and they cannot take up poisonous serpents and be bitten without hurt.

From newspaper accounts, Lloyd Hill of Fort Payne, Alabama, tried it -- and the snake did harm him: he died! The legislature of Alabama passed a law prohibiting such practices. Their rebuttal is "lack of faith." Lloyd Hill evidently had enough faith: he took up the deadly serpent!

The apostle Paul had that power. On the island of Melita, when Paul gathered a bundle of sticks, a viper fastened on his hand. He shook it off without harm. When his hand did not swell, they said, "He is a god" (Acts 28:1-7). Of course, their conclusion was wrong; but Paul felt "no harm" from that deadly serpent!

Miraculous power was possessed by the apostles. Such powers were for a limited period of time. Paul refers back to the gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 12 and said they would "fail," "cease," and "vanish away" (I Corinthians 13:8). While the apostles were inspired, they knew "in part" and "prophesied in part." "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Corinthians 13:9-10).

The Interlinear Greek-English by Alfred Marshall, D. Litt., translates: "when but comes the perfect thing, the thing in part will be abolished."

Paul is speaking about inspiration. The "perfect" inspiration is the Bible. James uses a mirror or "glass" also to illustrate. He refers to the word of God as "THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY" (James 1:25).

Paul said, "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).

Peter could say, "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and goodness. . ." (II Peter 1:3).

"That which is perfect" has come! The word has been confirmed by miracles. The miraculous has ceased.

—103 Elena Court Bay St. Louis, Miss. 39500.

BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH WITH YOU ON SUNDAYS!

Grace Appropriated Through Law

(No. 2)

Nothing is more clearly taught in the Bible than individual responsibility in service to God, unless it be that when God speaks man must obey in order to receive any blessing God promises. God by his grace has provided for mankind to have food and clothing and other needs of life; but he requires man to exercise himself to gain these blessings.



Roy J. Hearn

There is no such thing in the Bible as salvation without effort on the part of any human. Therefore, there is no hint of such a thing as salvation by grace only -- nor by faith only. Therefore, note:

1. The law of the Spirit

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). The "law of the Spirit" is that which God, by Christ, through the Holy Spirit revealed through the apostles (John 16:13-15). They were chosen as Christ's ambassadors through whom his will would be revealed, that is, the word of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-20). By the "law" of the gospel made known through the apostles sins would be bound or loosed (John 20:21-23). It was shown last week that "law" is a rule of conduct that is to be obeyed to receive God's blessing. The "law of sin and death" Paul mentioned is the rule of sin in one's life (Romans 7:22), from which one may be delivered by serving with the "mind" or spirit "the law of God" (Romans 7:25).

Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). What is truth? "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is truth" (Psalms 119:142). "Thou art near, O Lord, and all thy commandments are truth" (Psalms 119:151). This shows that God's "truth" is equal to God's "law;" therefore, one is made free by obeying the "law" of God. First Peter 1:22 says that one's soul is purified in obeying the truth. Since "truth" is equal to "law," they are one and the same; and since one is made free, or is purified by, "truth," he is saved by "law." Wherein does this allow anyone to set aside God's law, and expect to be saved by faith alone?

But some claim that the Christian is not under law. Nothing is farther from the truth. Besides Romans 8:2, read First Corinthians 9:21, where Paul says, "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ." Philippians 3:16 says, "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things." Galatians 6:2 enjoins: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." James 1:25 refers to the word of God as the "perfect law of liberty;" and James 2:12 states, "They shall be judged by the law of liberty." Jesus said that the words he has spoken will be the standard of judgment (John 12:48-50). For one to really know God and to love God he must keep God's commands (I John 2:3-5; 5:3; John 14:15-23).

2. Grace and gospel

Without doubt one is saved by GRACE

(Ephesians 2:8-9). However, the grace of God is appropriated to one's self through faith expressed in overt acts of obedience. In Hebrews 11:4, note that God testified of Abel's faith -- not directly of his abstract "faith," but his faith manifested through his gifts, his sacrifices, his obedience; and only through such obedience did God testify of his "faith." In other words, Abel was pleasing to God only by active faith. James 2:17-18 plainly states that faith is made valid by works: "Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself . . . I by my works will show thee my faith." Abraham, a child of God, and Rahab, an alien, were both justified "by works" (James 2:23-25). Therefore, the grace of God is made available through faith that is active -- that is, obedient faith.

The gospel is God's power to save, and therein -- in the gospel-- is the righteousness of God revealed (Romans 1:16-17). This does not refer to God himself, for the Jews knew he was righteous; but the text means the gospel is the means through which God makes men righteous, or to be in a condition acceptable to God. Read Romans 10:1-3, and note the Jews were lost because they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of

God, but followed their own. The "commands" of God are "righteousness" (Psalm 119:172), therefore, plainly, they did not submit to the law of God, the gospel, thus they were not saved.

It has been shown that one is justified by "grace" and by "law;" therefore, the grace of God is incorporated in law, or conditions of salvation. One is benefited "by grace" when he complies with the conditions God sets forth in the terms of the gospel, just as in the case of a human will.

Be not deceived into thinking, as many are teaching, that one can have a spiritual birth apart from obedience to overt acts of obedience. No man can be relieved of submitting to God's "law." One can no more be born spiritually than he can be born physically without submitting to the law of God in either case. The Corinthians were saved by the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-4), but it was by their obeying the "form of doctrine" (Romans 6:17-18). The burial and resurrection of Christ for our sins is part of this saving gospel, and that action is pictured in baptism, according to the law of faith (Romans 6:3,4,17, 3:27).

—4035 Barron Ave., Memphis, TN 38111.

The Great Compromise

Trevor J. Major

While with my mother and another woman recording headstones at an old cemetery, the surroundings turned our conversation to life and death, life after death, and then to God. The woman said she believed in God; but obviously not everything in the Bible could be taken literally. "Take the Creation, for instance," she said; "doesn't everyone know that God meant each 'day' was a million years?"

That was a shock! It had never occurred to me that one could mix the long ages of evolution with Genesis. Weren't they immiscible, like oil and water? She wasn't a Christian, so my conclusion was that such opinions must come from the teachings of denominations who had long since abandoned the fundamental principles of Truth. Perhaps even some Christians, in the immature stage of their faith, may attempt to reconcile evolution with the Bible, but would surely change when presented with evidence to the contrary. I prayed that this compromise would never become a willful, practiced doctrine on the part of those who profess New Testament Christianity. What naive on my part! How sad that such error is being taught by some of our brethren.

Some suppose, whether or not they accept the literal view of Genesis 1-2, that the Creation and the Creation/evolution controversy are merely peripheral matters. We should, they tell us, restrict ourselves to preaching love, faith, hope, and the grace of God -- stop trying to contend against those who hold different views to our own, be tolerant and always positive, and not take dogmatic stances on minor issues like the Creation account. The question which has to be asked is: Where do such views originate? Certainly they did not come from the New Testament. Paul, especially, devoted a good portion of his epistles to correcting error; and if he had to name the false doctrine and name the practitioners of it, then he did so.

Science can be used against the fallacy of compromising God's word with Evolution. There are many scientific evidences which condemn Evolution and an old age for the earth. There are many evidences which support a recent fiat creation *ex nihilo* (that is, that God spoke the universe into existence out of nothing thousands, rather than billions, of years ago). Thus, the Christian has no need of fear toward science. It is not a case of "science versus the Bible," for God created the laws of science by which the universe operates. His creative act was supernatural and hence above or outside those laws. Evolution, while confining itself to the natural, contradicts the laws of science. Perhaps when Christians have a problem with science it is because they confuse what SCIENTISTS say with what SCIENCE (i.e., knowledge) says. Such confusion may, in turn, make them feel the need for compromise.

To compensate for a lack of knowledge which so often prevents our successfully battling atheism, Christians should take the time to learn the evidences for our faith. Such a study will, beside providing knowledge to be used in the battle, strengthen our own belief. However, what must be established amongst those who already believe, is: What constitutes true doctrine. Which is correct: Theistic Creation (the literal view of Genesis 1-2)? or, Theistic Evolution (the non-literal view of Genesis 1-2)?

It seems that God knew people would deny his word. He therefore had Moses to write those chapters of the Bible in such a way that they were sealed against the meddling of man. To imagine that Genesis 1 and 2 can suggest long time periods, either by inserting time between verses, or by making the days longer than literal 24-hour days, is to fly in the face of all the elementary rules of biblical interpretation. The context, style, Hebrew

Continued on page 4

"Oil Is Oil, Fire Is Fire, And Music Is Music"

Johnny Hester

I'm not sure whether it is a sign of my age or the quality of '80s T.V. fare, but of late some of the commercials hold greater interest for me than do most prime time offerings. My favorite involves Earl who drives along in a parade, oblivious to the fact that those following are dropping like flies as they choke on the black smoke belching from the tailpipe of his automobile. A concerned passenger inquires, "Earl, what kind of motor oil do you use?" Earl blandly replies, "Motor oil is motor oil." Obviously, Earl has been misinformed.

Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10), newly appointed priests, exemplify what a fearful thing it is to disobey God by ignoring what he has specifically commanded. The priests, in their ceremonial duties, were to use sacred fire from the altar which had been kindled with fire from heaven. By using common fire they profaned God's sacred altar. Because of their disobedience, Aaron's two sons were struck dead: "So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Leviticus 10:2). Why were they killed? Because they disobeyed God! How? They "offered strange fire before the Lord, WHICH HE COMMANDED THEM NOT" (Leviticus 10:1 emphasis mine. JPH). They might have reasoned, "God never specifically forbade the use of another kind of fire. After all, FIRE IS FIRE!" But they sinned by failing to respect God's silence! God had required that a certain fire be used, and it was not necessary for him to list every other type and categorically state: "Use it not!" Even Aaron recognized that his sons had disobeyed God, for he "held his peace" (Leviticus 10:3).

As the priests' lifeless bodies were carried out of the camp, looked upon no doubt, with wonder by an affrighted people, the argument that "Fire is fire" would have had an empty ring indeed.

Today some among us reason: "God never specifically condemned the use of pianos,

organs, etc., in the worship of the New Testament church. And, after all, MUSIC IS MUSIC!" The point being missed is that God has required a specific kind of music in our worship. He instructs us to "sing" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). It was not necessary for God to categorize every unauthorized type of music and add, "Use it not!" God authorized his people to "sing." Additions and substitutions are, then, unauthorized (Deuteronomy 4:2; Galatians 1:8-9; Colossians 3:17; Romans 14:23; 10:9-17).

In a recent conversation with a preaching

brother I was told, "The slogan: 'Let us be silent where the Bible is silent,' originated with man, not God." To this I responded, "But the principle which demands respect for God's silence, upon which this slogan is based, is clearly taught throughout holy writ. We dare not legislate for God."

Jesus stated in John 16:13 that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into "all truth." With reference to music in the worship of the New Testament church, he guided them to require "singing." Shall we reply, "Music is music"?

—P.O. Box 725, Kennett, MO 63857.

The Great Compromise

Continued from page 3

language, and references elsewhere in the Bible ("the Bible is its own best interpreter"), all support the Creation week as a period of seven literal 24-hour days. Put another way, if God had in any way wanted to suggest long time periods, he certainly could have; but did not.

Theistic Evolution is simply not supported by scripture. For instance, (1) the Jewish week of six working days and a sabbath day is based on the fact that "in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth" (Exodus 20:11). (2) Christ, in Matthew 19:4, affirmed to the Pharisees that which they were expected to know-- that in the beginning God made man and woman. Why is Jesus using the creation and the subsequent marriage of the first man and woman as a basis for teaching, if they were only mythical characters? (3) The third chapter of Genesis records the sin of Adam and Eve. Paul says in I Corinthians 15:21-22 that because man (Adam) brought sin and death into the world, we have need of Christ to cleanse sin and defeat death. Hence, what was the need for Christ's painful, humiliating

death on the cross if Adam were an imaginary, mythical person who committed an allegorical sin? That need is removed with Theistic Evolution. After all, the whole idea of the Garden of Eden was to show the special relationship which man once shared with God. Following the fall of man (Genesis 3), the plan of redemption was set in motion to restore that relationship, and was finally achieved by the resurrection of Christ. Where is the purpose of God's plan if the Garden, the Fall, and the characters are only part of a "poem"?

Finally, in the first chapter of Romans Paul establishes the necessity of the gospel (in the immediate context) to the Gentiles. He then argues (verse 20) that the Gentiles are without excuse in their unbelief, for the creation as expressed in the world around them declares the omnipotence and divinity of God. In addition, this evidence has been, and is, capable of perception by rational human beings. Where is Paul's argument, then, if God did not have the power to create the universe as he said he did -- and if the creation were not a product of design, but of blind, random processes operating over eons of time?

Paul goes on to say (verse 21) that the heathen "did not honor God," and "became futile in their speculations." This would be particularly relevant to the Gentile Christians of Rome; for their ideas on the origin of life would probably have been based on the Greek philosophers who, in general, held a naturalistic, mechanistic view of the development of life. Verse 21 would be equally relevant today with those in the church who allow themselves to be influenced by the atheistic philosophy of Neo-Darwinism. Even if such brethren struggle in their belief of the Genesis account of the Creation, the Great Flood (Genesis 7-8), and the Great Dispersion (Genesis 11), why can't they give God's word precedence over man's?

It is evident from the preceding scriptures that Theistic Evolution is not consistent with the doctrine of Christ and the inspired apostles. Theistic Evolution denies the power and purpose of God to do what the Bible says he did. Sad though it is, Theistic Evolution must be an issue of fellowship; and those who teach it must be treated as erring brethren (Romans 16:17; II Thessalonians 3:14).

—Apologetics Press, Inc., 230 Landmark Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117.

King Of My Life?!

Ronnie A. Missildine

There is an interesting incident near the end of the life of Jesus here on earth. He was on his way into the city of Jerusalem for the Passover. He had been in Bethany with his friends Martha and Mary, where he had raised Lazarus from the dead. The chief priests and Pharisees were plotting his murder; but the common people loved him. They cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh . . ." (John 12:13). On this occasion they proclaimed him as their king. But what had happened to their commitment when they cried a few days later "Crucify him!"?

Man's loyalty is so fickle! There was a day when YOU may have made Jesus the King of your life. You were penitent when you confessed Christ and were baptized. You felt as though you'd never renege on your commitment.

But things happened. Maybe Jesus has been dethroned in your life. You can correct it. You can enthrone him once again. You can again be penitent, and ask for forgiveness (Acts

8:22-24).

Peter averred in his great Pentecost sermon that Jesus has been made "both Lord and Christ" by God (Acts 2:36). That means that whether he is king in your heart NOW or not, that he has been proclaimed such. And in the day of Judgment "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess . . ." (Philippians 2:10). Hadn't you rather enthrone (or rethron) him as king NOW, so that in judgment he will own you? Don't be fickle as were the Jews.

King of my life I crown thee now,
Thine shall the glory be.
Lest I forget thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary.

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.



(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 24

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1987

NUMBER 3

The Holy Spirit's Part In Conversion

The Holy Spirit clearly has a part in man's conversion. The following four points must be observed. (1) The Holy Spirit revealed the gospel of Christ through the apostles and other writers of the New Testament. (2) The Holy Spirit used the word in the conversion of sinners. (3) All are converted with or by the revealed truth. (4) The Holy spirit does not operate separate



W. Edwin Kearley

from the word in conversion. Not a single case is recorded, after the gospel was given on Pentecost in Acts 2, when any one was saved directly, independently, or instantaneously by the Holy Spirit, apart from the gospel of Christ.

The Holy Spirit revealed the gospel. Jesus made some statements concerning the revelation: "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). "He shall testify of me" (John 15:26-27). "He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8-11, A.S.V.).

On Pentecost the apostles spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance . . ." (Acts 2:4). Paul speaks of how the Spirit inspired him: "We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (I Corinthians 2:12-13, New International Version).

The inspiration was not thought inspiration, but plenary inspiration. "Plenary" means

complete. In Genesis 12:2, the Lord made promises to Abraham. The greatest promise was that through his seed all nations would be blessed. Paul spoke of this promise to the Galatians: "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). Inspiration was so exact that trust can be put in the singular and plural of inspired words. Remember: translators were not inspired.

All scripture was given by inspiration: "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). Jude wrote of the faith, ". . . which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

The Holy Spirit uses the word of God in conversion. The "conversion" of which we speak, is turning from evil to God. Jesus said one is drawn to the Son by the Father. But how does the Father draw the sinner to the Son? Jesus stated, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45). How does God teach? Paul informs us, "For I am not ashamed of the GOSPEL OF CHRIST: for IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION to every one that believeth. . . ." (Romans 1:16). To the Corinthians Paul stated: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet ye have not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have BEGOTTEN YOU THROUGH THE GOSPEL" (I Corinthians 4:15). James wrote: "Of his own will BEGAT he us WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). Peter reminded those to whom he wrote, "Seeing ye have PURIFIED your souls IN OBEYING THE TRUTH through the Spirit . . . BEING BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1:22-23). The word is the agency of the Spirit in converting the soul to God.

In the New Testament, the same instrumentality of revealed truth was used for all. There are no recorded exceptions, nor inferences of exceptions. New Testament examples of conversion are found in Acts 2; 8:5-12, 35-38; 9; 10; and 22. The word of truth revealed through the agency of man, by the Holy Spirit, was (and is) used to convert men to the Lord in obedience. The six steps are: (1) The word of the gospel was preached in every instance of conversion. (2) All of them heard the word. (3) All who would be saved, believed the word. (4) All who wanted salvation repented of their sins. (5) All confessed their faith in Christ. (Romans 10:9-10). (6) All were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:1-4; Matthew 28:19).

Those who were thus converted, were further taught after their conversion (Matthew 28:20; Romans 13:14; Revelation 2:10).

No separate operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary in conversion. The word of the Lord is sufficient. Errors of men conflict with the Bible. The New Testament must be our only rule of faith and practice.

—103 E. Lena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

E.T.S.O.P.M. Lectureship Set

Rod Rutherford

The East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions in Knoxville, Tennessee, will host its thirteenth annual lectureship, March 1-4, 1987. The theme will be "Things Pertaining to Life and Godliness." It will be an in-depth study of the Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude. Among the speakers will be Curtis Cates, George DeHoff, Tom Holland, Howard Horton, Wayne Jackson, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Wendell Winkler, and Gary Workman. Lois McCord will teach a daily class for the ladies. As in the past, the lectures will be available on cassette tape and in book form.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931.



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 Land Of The Living

Ancil Jenkins

Where do you live? One often hears the expression, "He has left the land of the living . . ." Yet in a sense this is incorrect. We do not live in the "land of the living" Psalm 27:13; we also live in the land of the dying.

As you turn off the light each night, you can count you have one less day to live. Eternity is nearer each minute. We cannot stay here. We will leave this world at a time and manner unknown to us.

Let us remember there is a land beyond this. It is the heavenly home prepared for us (John 14:1-2). It is not in this world; it truly is the land of the living.

In which land is your heart? Although David Livingstone died in Africa, his heart was brought to England to be buried. His heart was brought home! The Scriptures teach that where our treasures, aims, and affections are, there is our heart (Matthew 6:19-20). We must live in the land of the dying, with our heart in the land of the living.

"I have heard of a land
on a faraway strand.
'Tis the beautiful home of the soul.
Built by Jesus on high
Where we never shall die
'Tis the land where we'll never grow old.
Never grow old, never grow old.
'Tis a land where we'll never grow old."

—8445 SW 72nd Street, Miami, Florida 33143.

**BRING A FRIEND
TO CHURCH
WITH YOU
ON SUNDAY!**

"And I, If I Be Lifted Up"

Jesus spoke of his death in John 3:14 when he said, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up . . ." This, of course, was a direct reference to Numbers 21:9 where it is said: "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Our Lord knew that the Jews would lift him up on a cross and kill him. John 8:28 reads: "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

Why was it necessary that Christ be lifted up and crucified upon a cross? Jesus stated why in John 12:32 when he said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Christ was lifted up so he could draw all men unto himself. The very next verse explains what Jesus meant about being "lifted up." "This he said, signifying



Demar Elam

what death he should die" (verse 33). The cross was an instrument of death

Christ's drawing power depended upon his being lifted up. He said, ". . . if I be lifted up . . ." If Jesus had never been lifted up, the redemptive plan of God would have been thwarted, and we would die in our sins.

However, Satan, the prince of the world had been drawing people unto himself; but Christ, in offering himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, counteracted the work of the evil one. This, therefore, explains Paul's strong feelings expressed in Galatians 6:14 when he said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Zechariah (chapters 12 and 13) spoke of him who would be pierced, and of a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. What a marvelous, wonderful, and faith-building prophecy! It predicts the "Fountain, filled with blood, drawn from Emanuel's veins." This fountain of blood flowed from the body of God's Son, making it possible for man to escape the end result of sin -- eternal damnation!

Why was Christ lifted up? That you might be saved!

—Forest Park Church, P.O. Box 623, Forest Park, GA 30051.

Ed Jones Joins ETSOPM Faculty

The elders of the Karns Church of Christ are pleased to announce the addition of Edwin E. Jones to the faculty of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions.

Brother Jones began preaching in 1968. He received his undergraduate education at Alabama Christian College. He then studied under Dr. Rex Turner, Sr., at Alabama Christian School of Religion, receiving the B.S., M.S., and M.R.E. Additional graduate work was done at Auburn University.

As a preacher, he has served congregations in Ashland and near Jasper, Alabama; Kinston, North Carolina; and Marietta, Ohio. For the last three years he served as a missionary in New Plymouth, New Zealand, where he distinguished himself as a teacher, writer, and church builder.

His combination of a thorough educational background with his evangelistic experience makes Brother Jones a rich addition to our staff of teachers. He brings special classroom skills in Old Testament Studies, Christian Education, and World Evangelism.

East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions has completed sixteen years of service to the brotherhood, having trained and sent forth 120 gospel preachers for the Lord. Enrollment is about 30 for the fall quarter is expected to be 30 full-time students. With a faculty of 6 full-time teachers, the



John Waddey

school offers a quality ministerial education to qualified brethren without charge. In two years, a student will pursue 48 separate courses of study, spending 2400 hours in the classroom -- the equivalent of four years of regular college work.

East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931.

The New Birth

Ronnie A. Missildine

There are many matters of doctrinal importance in the account of Jesus' study-session with Nicodemus, as recorded in John 3. But lest we forget, there are some strong spiritual lessons there too. For instance, think of the implications of the New Birth which Jesus commanded. That new birth **MUST** take place! It is a new beginning for a person, just as though he was being born for the first time -- but this time it is spiritual.

It is into a new world, just as a newborn baby comes into a new world. It is vastly different from the previous one, with new interests, new perspectives, new commitments, new relationships, etc., etc. But many try to make it like the old life: same friends, same old actions of life, same priorities, etc. **It won't work!** Until we fully decide to truly change, and begin a new life in Christ, the new birth has not really

Continued on page 3

The Inspiration Of The Bible

No 1

This article begins a series of **The Inspiration of the Bible**, with the hope that faith in the word of God will be increased on the part of all who read them. For a basic passage please read from the American Standard Version I Corinthians 2:1-14.



ROY J. HEARN

“And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. We speak wisdom, however among them that are fullgrown: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nought: but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: but as it is written, Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, And which entered not into the heart of man, Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him. But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.” In order to help understand what follows, it is in order to give some

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

1. **INSPIRATION.** This English word comes from two Latin words, in plus spirare, meaning “to breath into.” The Greek word is **theopneustos**, a combination of **theos** (God) and **pneo** (to breathe); hence, God-breathed, filled with the breath of God, divinely inspired. The word involves an influence from without man, producing results which are beyond natural powers. Therefore it denotes the influence of God and Christ exercised by the Holy Spirit over the minds of Biblical writers. Inspiration is not human in character. Divine inspiration is supernatural throughout. No writings of human origin ever were introduced by “God spake,” or “Thus saith the Lord.” Often the writers of the Bible are referred to as inspired men. It may be more proper to refer to the writings as being inspired rather than the men, as Paul said,

“All scripture is inspired of God. . .” (II Timothy 3:16).

Every line of the Bible record is inspired of God in detail and substance, as well as in thought. However, keep in mind that not everything in the Bible is true, (e.g., the devil’s lie in Genesis 3:1-5); but the historical account is inspired, accurately given. **REVELATION DIFFERS FROM INSPIRATION** in that it means “the disclosure to others of what was before unknown to them.” **INSPIRATION** also involves divine guidance in writing what was already known.

2. **PLENARY INSPIRATION.** “Plenary” means full and complete; therefore, when the last line of the Bible was written, such constituted God’s final and complete revelation to man. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into “all truth” (John 16:13). The apostle Paul said to the Ephesian elders that he had declared the “whole counsel of God,” he had held back nothing profitable (Acts 20:20, 27). Jude wrote “contend earnestly for the faith which once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3, A.S.V.).

3. **VERBAL INSPIRATION.** Some argue that God simply gave Bible writers the idea, or thought, and let them write of their own volition. This would have allowed for much human error; hence, it is not true. Verbal means that God did not only inspire the thoughts, but also the words. Matthew 10:19 records the Lord as saying to the apostles, “Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.” Mark 10:19 gives it this way:

“Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate.” Hear the apostles Paul regarding revelation and inspiration as he wrote in I Corinthians 2:13: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth.” Keep in mind that Verbal inspiration does not mean that the writers were manipulated like a rubber stamp, mechanically; but the Holy Spirit was able to inject the individual’s personality into his writing, as well as to cause him to use his own vocabulary. (For example, Luke, being a physician, used medical terms). It is to limit the all-powerful God to say he could not do so. So, inspiration did not in any wise prevent the exercise of human faculties, directed by the Spirit.

Do we have an inspired Bible Today? Some say no, and insist that only the original writings were inspired, and that one must know Hebrew and Greek in order to understand them. Read Acts 2:8-11 and note how many nations were present on Pentecost. They heard in their own language. Were they all Hebrew and Greek? No! Therefore, when the original languages are faithfully and accurately translated into any other language, that Bible is inspired of God. Doubtless many so-called “translations” do contain false doctrines, because some men put them there by design; but they are not faithful renditions of the originals. Is the Bible myth? fable? or truth?

Articles to follow will show the Bible to be the truth of God’s word, and refute the ideas that it is full of myth and fable].

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

Waddey To Edit Christian Bible Teacher

Rod Rutherford

John Waddey, Director of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, well-known gospel preacher and writer, has been named editor of **The Christian Bible Teacher** by Quality Publications. He assumed editorial responsibility January 1, 1987. Brother Johnny Ramsey has edited the Abilene, Texas, based monthly for the past several years.

Waddey will bring to the editorial chair a wide background of teaching, preaching, and writing experience. He has preached for the past 30 years, 17 of which were with the Karns Church of Christ in Knoxville, which conducts the East Tennessee School of Preaching and

Missions. Waddey travels widely in the brotherhood speaking on lectureships and in gospel meetings. He has served as editor of **Star** magazine, writes regularly for leading gospel papers, and is the author of twenty-five books. He will continue to serve as director of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions while editing **The Christian Bible Teacher**.

Correspondence to the new editor may be directed to him at 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931.

—6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931.

The New Birth

Continued from page 2

taken place (cf. II Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20).

The New Birth is to begin a new life. It is no longer a life in the sinful world, nor for worldly pleasures, but now totally dedicated to God, his way, and his will for you. But have we truly considered the import of this? What changes have we made from the life we lived before being born again?

Some in the religious world misuse the term “born again” to refer to spiritual revival. They talk about “born-again Christians” as

compared to “just plain” Christians. But the re-birth that Jesus teaches must happen when one becomes a Christian! The process is one and the same. So it is redundant to refer to “born-again Christians.” It’s like calling a lady a “female woman.” Because a true Christian IS born again, there is no way around it. Let us consider our new birth and live up to its standards.

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.

Miracles And Divine Providence

W. Gaddys Roy

We are living in an era in which many think a "miracle" is involved in every case in which there is any divine intervention. In a recent article in a brotherhood paper, a brother said, "I can just hear some skeptic now, 'But the days of miracles are over.'" I am one of those "skeptics" he is talking about. The Bible teaches that miracles ceased when the New Testament was completed (I Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:8-14).

I heard two different brethren speak; one was on a lectureship, and the other in a gospel meeting. Both said, "Some brethren say that the days of miracles are over." (Pointing to the baptistery): "Every time one is baptized into Christ he is born again, and that is a miracle." It is obvious to me that these brethren either do not understand how the Lord works today, or else they do not know what a "miracle" is.

God works today through his law. Elihu said, "The Spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life" (Job 33:4). How did the Spirit of God "make" Elihu? He "made" him by the law of procreation, just like he made the rest of us! David said, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit; they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth" (Psalms 104:30). God does not perform a miracle in "renewing" the face of the earth. He "renews" the face of the earth through the law of nature. Any time God works through his laws, divine providence might or might not be involved; but one thing is sure: no miracle has occurred.

In the new birth one is born of God (I John 5:1). One is born again when he is led by the Spirit to be baptized into Christ (Romans 8:14; Galatians 3:26-27). Therefore, he is "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5). The new birth is according to God's spiritual law, which is the word of God (I Peter 1:23). The new birth is no more a "miracle" than the fleshly birth.

A "miracle" is an act in which God works aside from his natural laws. Webster defines a MIRACLE: "An event or effect in the physical world deviating from the known laws of nature, or transcending our knowledge of these laws." A "miracle" is an extraordinary divine performance, and not an ordinary occurrence which we acknowledge everywhere and in everything. A "miracle" is the result of those powers of God other than those which either have always been working, or never have worked before. A "miracle" is the irresistible activity of God which at other times hides and conceals itself behind the veil of what we term "natural laws;" but in the miracle, unveils itself. It steps out from concealment, and the hand which works is laid bare.

When a "miracle" was performed, the law of nature was set aside, or else some law of God is used to counteract the law of nature. This is not unreasonable. The law of gravity is not set aside when a magnet collects iron filings. It is only that the superior force of magnetism has overcome gravitation.

The supreme lawgiver of the universe may suspend his own laws if he chooses. He performs only a single work when he neutralizes his laws of nature by introducing laws which are more powerful than his laws of nature, and performs a "miracle."

There are instances in the Bible where there were divine interventions upon the law of nature; the laws of nature were

either overcome or set aside. One instance of divine intervention upon the law of nature is to be found in the case of the axe-head which floated (II Kings 6:1-7). Another instance of divine intervention upon the law of nature is the case of Jesus' walking upon water (Matthew 14:22-23; Mark 6:48-51).

In short, when God intervened by setting aside, or by neutralizing, the laws of nature, a "miracle" was performed. When God worked with or through his laws, no "miracle" had been performed. The divine intervention could be divine providence, but no "miracle." I will give two Bible illustrations. One case is when Elijah prayed for rain (I Kings 18:41-46). There was no "miracle;" it rained out of a cloud -- just as it rains today. Another case is when God used Joseph to preserve life (Genesis 50:15-21). In both cases there was divine providence, but no "miracle."

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." How will the things of which Jesus is speaking be added? It will not be through miraculous power, for miracles have ceased (I Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:8-14). God will THROUGH his

natural laws fulfill the promise of Jesus (Matthew 6:33).

I believe in praying for the sick, and I believe people sometimes recover in answer to the prayers of the faithful. How does God answer such prayers? When God heals people today, it is through his natural laws. God healed King Hezekiah in answer to his prayer (II Kings 20:1-11). The healing of Hezekiah was DIVINE healing, but it seems that God worked THROUGH the laws of nature, and not miraculously. God healed Naaman (II Kings 5:1-14). The healing of Naaman was unquestionably a miracle. He was healed instantaneously, and his healing was contrary to the laws of nature. We can say that all MIRACULOUS healing is DIVINE healing; but not all DIVINE healing is MIRACULOUS. Likewise, all "miracles" include divine PROVIDENCE; but not all divine PROVIDENCE is MIRACULOUS. Therefore, let us not confuse all divine providence with the miraculous, and conclude that God cannot work through his natural laws without performing a "miracle." God is sitting at the steering wheel of nature; but he respects his own laws today, just as he expects us to respect them.

—3248 White Road, Dora, AL 35062.

The Old Colossus

Wheeler Pounds

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless, tempest tossed, to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

On November 2, 1883, Emma Lazarus penned a poem entitled *The New Colossus* which ended with the above words. It was written about the Statue of Liberty and the Country of America. We heard this poem many times during the recent ceremonies marking the statue's centennial celebration.

Although she would not be guilty of plagiarism, the beautiful thoughts behind the words Emma Lazarus penned that day were by no means unique to her. The Statue of Liberty may have emerged as a "New Colossus" but there was an "Old Colossus" whose monument stands taller and brighter than any other. This is Jesus Christ.

More than eighteen hundred years before the above words flowed from the pen of Emma Lazarus, these words were spoken by Christ, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). John penned these words of Christ in Revelation 22:14: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Verse 17 continues, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This is more than a welcome into a great country! It is an invitation to enjoy eternal life in heaven. Nothing on this earth can even begin to compare with it.

Christ was dedicated to liberty for "where

the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Corinthians 3:17). He gave us the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25) that all men may be free (John 8:32). The freedom which he offers is an inner freedom which knows no boundary. It cannot be suppressed by bars, or locks, or handcuffs, or handicaps, or sickness, or nationalities, or political leaders. It dwells within the person no matter the circumstances.

Paul (Philemon 1:1) identified himself as a "prisoner" of Jesus Christ; but it was for another that he sought freedom. Onesimus, a bondservant of Philemon who had left for bodily freedom, was returned by Paul to secure the inner freedom enjoyed by Paul. This inner freedom can only be achieved when one frees himself, through Jesus Christ, of sin (Romans 6:16-18).

Christ had compassion for the tired, the poor, the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. He, therefore, lifts his lamp beside the golden door. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). James writes of this (James 2:1-13), and it will be beneficial to all to ponder this passage as it teaches of great compassion.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). 'I lift my lamp,' says he, for "I am the light of the world" (John 8:20). "The entrance of thy word giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple" (Psalms 119:130). As Christians, we, too, must 'lift our lamps beside the golden door' and light the way to heaven (Matthew 5:14-16). We must lead the way through those gates of pearl into a city of pure gold (Revelation 21:18). As pilgrims in this land, we must seek the strait gate and narrow way that leads to life . . . and a few will find it (Matthew 7:13-14 and Luke 13:24). This is the true paradise.

—Route 1, Box 176B, Oakman, AL 35579.



(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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"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

A Look Backward, And Forward

1986 is gone! Within the pages of this issue of Words Of Truth is the INDEX FOR 1986. This will serve as a ready reference to all the articles printed during the last calendar year. It also will enable one to readily locate any given article.

As we look ahead into 1987, we expect to publish articles which touch our very lives. How to become a Christian, how to live the Christian life, how to worship God acceptably, and what one should believe and teach, are vital themes. Each Christian should sincerely yearn to know what the Bible teaches on any and every subject. Our goal is to always "speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). We make no effort to be sensational, but strive to avoid extremes on any issue.



Flavil H. Nichols

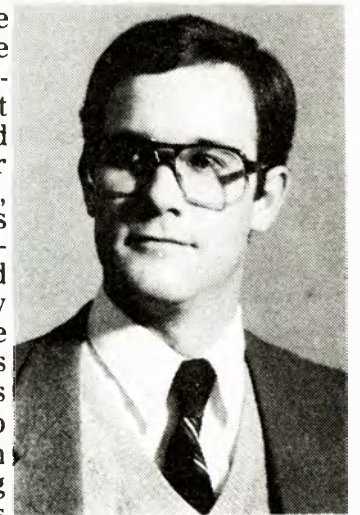
out in full the names of Bible books. We do not abbreviate even Deuteronomy, or any other long name -- much less the shorter ones. If you quote from any translation other than the King James or the American Standard (of 1901), please specify the version used. Otherwise it is difficult to verify the quotation. The cooperation of each writer is solicited, and appreciated.

Increase Our Circulation

We can accomplish more for our Master by increasing the number of readers. Ask the elders where you worship to send this journal to every family in your congregation. Also add the names of interested friends who may be converted by reading this paper. It costs less than a postage stamp each week to send this 4-page weekly paper to a relative or friend. If it contributes to his soul's salvation, it will be worth more than all the world (Matthew 16:26)!

Privacy In God's House

"Testifying" is a common practice among many of the various denominations. The idea that members should publicly divulge their private problems, sins, and temptations is frequently expressed among them; and time is regularly given for this purpose in assemblies. Others teach that members are obligated to do the same thing in private. "Sharing with one another" is sometimes demanded



Tim Nichols

as an essential activity for "really consecrated" Christians. An added feature, in some circles, is the requirement of revealing (testifying) "what the Lord has done for me today" (a thing often more man-centered than God-glorifying). The social pressure to engage in these activities can become so great that some have felt compelled to manufacture spiritual valleys and summits for these times. Often those who are the most "open" are seen as being more "spiritual."

When an individual from this background is converted to the Lord and added to his church there can sometimes be a feeling that something is lacking in his or her relationship with brothers and sisters in Christ. The absence of these activities seems to cause some to opine that we are less "caring" than the denominations. Some would have these activities added to those of Christ's church, thinking that the church of our Lord is

Continued on page 4

Announcements

Heretofore we have run large display announcements of several lectureships. All this has been done free of charge ("gratis") --for we carry NO paid advertising. Since our paper is only four (4) pages, and space for teaching articles is always at a premium, we will NOT in the future carry such displays. Verbose announcements even in story or article form will be reduced to fit the available space. An exception will be made for the Gus Nichols -- Words Of Truth Lectureship here at Sixth Avenue, under the oversight of whose eldership this paper is published.

G. N. — W.O.T. Lectureships Sept. 27-Oct. 1

Annually the Gus Nichols -- Words Of Truth Lectureship begins the last Sunday night in September, and continues through Thursday night. Make your plans to attend September 27-October 1, 1987, when the theme will be "God's Plan For His Church At Work."

A Request Of Writers

This Editor's task can be made much easier by those who write for Words Of Truth. Please submit only original (typed --not photocopied) manuscripts. The author's name should be under the title of the article, and his address at the close of the article. Only double-spaced manuscripts can be used. Please tell our readers what the Bible says. Before you write ABOUT the text, quote it. Please do not merely cite a string of references. We want to be true to our name, "Words Of Truth," --not just "References To truth! In most instances, the stress should be put upon WHAT the Bible says, rather than WHERE the text is located; therefore I prefer that the references (in parentheses) follow, rather than precede, the quotation. A little observation will show that our policy is to spell

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Faith In Whom?

Ronnie A. Missildine

he scriptures are replete with passages which urge us to put our faith and trust in God. And well should our faith be in him. But in dealing with and serving on the same earth with human beings, we'd better be careful about how deeply we put our faith and trust in our fellowman. There would be those who, after having been hurt by their

fellowman, would tell us not to trust ANYONE. And, in the ultimate and unrestricted sense, that is true. For, every person on the face of the earth is a human being (not so profound a thought, right?). But in all of us being so, that means that as humans we are fallible; we make mistakes; we

have errors in judgment; in fact, WE ALL SIN (Romans 3:23). Of course to distrust EVERYONE all the time is miserable too.

The problem arises when we have put all our faith in PEOPLE and not as strongly as we should in God, our bubble will be burst. Preachers, elders, Christian college presidents, etc., will sin. We hear of it.

How do we handle it when it becomes public that a "prominent" brother or sister has sinned? Some reactions are all right; others are not. Shock, dismay, even disappointment are natural. But if we should let our FAITH be shaken because of sins of a fallible human being, then maybe we'd better question the object(s) of our faith. I heard an older and very wise fellow-preacher say: "If every person goes bad and sins, I STILL have the responsibility to do right!" How true!

So, if some "prominent" brother or some Christian in whom you had much faith, falls, and sins, don't let it destroy YOUR faith. David said, ". . . In God have I put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." — Psalms 56:4

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.

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Privacy In God's House

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deficient in this area.

The scriptures teach that we must confess our sins to God. Private sin (that is known only by God) does not need to be broadcast to others. It must be repented of and acknowledged before God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

If a child of God sins publicly, and desires to be restored to a right relationship with God and man, he must repent and acknowledge his sin before those aware of it. When one does this he is to be forgiven and prayed for by his brethren. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:16). It is actually wrong to pray that God will forgive a brother of a sin for which he will not repent (Luke 13:3). Obviously such is the "sin unto death" of which John wrote:

If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin unto death" (1 John 5:16, 17).

Brethren, through the years, have been correct in teaching that the confession should be as public as the sin -- but not more so.

He who truly repents will be desirous for all who knew of his lapse into sin to be informed of his penitence, but he will shrink from any effort to publicize weaknesses which would not otherwise be known and whose circulation would only reflect further upon the cause of Christ" (QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, Guy N. Woods).

Our love for brethren will cause us to tenderly leave their private sins out of our own view unless, for some reason, one would wish to seek our advice, etc. We will not launch investigations or seek to learn --the uninvited--the private thoughts and struggles of those we love. Their daily recognition of God's goodness is not something we would demand any brother or sister to verbalize for us.

Respect for privacy is a part of cultivating a close and trusting relationship with others. "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Proverbs 20:19).

—Route 1, Box 211, Burlington, WV 26726.

The Perfect Pattern Is God's Word

Eva Nell Brown Naramore

There is a pattern so designed,
To fit the heart, the soul, the mind,
So perfectly with love entwined,
It changes not with changing time.
This pattern will forever be,
The true blueprint for you, and me;
No substitute will God permit,
(A substitute is counterfeit!)
We take not from, nor add thereto;
No other way will ever do.
Instructions are for us to read,
God's word is all we'll ever need.
This pattern always will be right,
God's children clothed, as with pure white.
Original in every way,
It teaches us to kneel and pray;
Complete details for family life,
To give more joy, less pain and strife,
For training children there's a guide,
To teach them while they're by your side.
Our Father loves, and will forgive,
When by his pattern, here we live,
No part of this can we take out.
With faith that works there is no doubt.
There're some things God will not allow,
But if we study we learn how
To use the pattern God designed:
His precious word, the Book Divine
Rt. 2 Box 95-A, Oakman, AL 35579



(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 24

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1987

NUMBER 5

God's Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace
John Newton

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

It has been erroneously assumed that grace is exclusively a New Testament subject. Nothing could be further from the truth. Did not even the first human beings receive "grace" when God covered their nakedness? did not grace postpone their violent physical death by the substitutionary sacrifice of an innocent animal? (Genesis 3:21). Righteous



R. W. Gray

Noah found "grace" in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8). The sons of Korah exclaimed, "... the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalms 84:11). The Lord proclaimed to Israel's law giver: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,

longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . ." (Exodus 34:6). God promised to hear the cry of the poor for covering, exclaiming, "for I am gracious!" (Exodus 22:27). "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly" (Proverbs 3:34). "And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, . . . that he may have mercy upon you . . ." (Isaiah 30:18). "Hate the evil, and love the good, . . . it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (Amos 5:15). "... For I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and great of kindness. . ." (Jonah 4:2). "And now, I pray you, beseech God that he may be gracious unto us" (Malachi 1:9).

From Genesis through Malachi, God's mercy and grace are highlighted. God's amazing grace has ever been such that he has promised, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

God's grace does not cover the wicked in his wickedness, nor the ignorant in his ignorance. Grace teaches that we live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world (Titus 2:8-9). "And the time of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

God's amazing grace provides constant cleansing from sin through the blood of Jesus for those who "walk in the light." He forgives his people who "confess their sins" (I John 1:7, 9). Christ has been made the propitiation for our sins through grace. "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (I John 2:2-3). While we walk in darkness, refusing his commandments, we have no promise of grace (I John 1:6; 2:4).

If saving grace is extended to the heathen in his ignorance, we do him an injustice to tell him of Jesus and his love. For if he "believes not" he will be damned (Romans

10:13-16; Mark 16:15, 16).

If brethren are "forgiven through grace" in their "ignorance of sin and error in their lives," we do them a grave injustice in correcting their error. James would have been in error to say, "we save a soul from death, and cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:20). Better it would be to allow him to go on in his error covered by grace than to enlighten him that "sin is sin," and thus expose him to the need for obedience (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Paul warned the Galatians that the "works of the flesh" would cause them to be lost. He nowhere hints that grace covers "such sins" when we commit them "in ignorance" (Galatians 5:19-20). It remains true that "those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

The new "grace-negates-law," and "grace-covers-our-ignorance" doctrine is a 'first cousin' to the license to sin advocated by the Gnostics and their forerunners. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, . . . ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, . . ." (Jude 4). His admonition is still timely: "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

As sweet as is the sound of God's amazing grace that has brought us safe thus far, that relieved our fears, and that will lead the faithful home, it is trampled under foot, and counted an unholy thing by those who turn from the word of his grace that has the power to save and sustain (Hebrews 10:24-32; Acts 20:32). "Do not err, my beloved brethren" (James 1:16). "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). We are "under grace," but not "under license to sin" -- whether deliberately or ignorantly.

Think on these things. And may the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with [us] all" (II Corinthians 13:14).

— Rt. 3, Box 306, Bremer, GA 30110.



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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Building Up, Not Breaking Down

There are some in the world who are demolition experts. They know just exactly what to do to bring down a huge building or a mountain of rock. They have been trained and are very proficient in placing explosive charges in just the right places to be most effective. Then, with the flip of a switch or the push of a plunger, things which may have taken years to build come tumbling down in seconds.



Ronnie A. Missildine

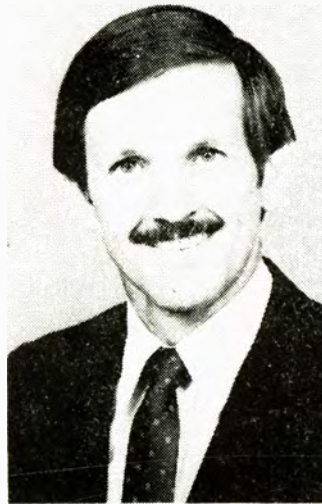
There are demolition experts in the church. You say, "Oh, no!" But there are. They are trained, either through years of self-teaching, or after being taught by some negative individual who is also a "demolition engineer." They don't tear down buildings and bridges, but they are terribly destructive none the less. They know just the times and places to place a discouraging comment, a sarcastic dig, or an unwanted, unneeded, and unsolicited criticism. And, in seconds, the work of many in the heart of an individual (or even in a congregation) comes tumbling down! The demolition expert then proudly walks away with chin up and chest stuck out saying, "I guess I told them!" The damage will probably never be repaired. The heart, the soul, the work, and the stamina are scarred for life. But God teaches us to build up, not tear down; to edify, not to destroy. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify

Continued on page 3

God Called Him A Fool

We are living in the age of the passive. Ours is a time when little concern, if any, is shown for anyone but self. In Luke 12:16-20 Jesus tells of a man with such a selfish attitude. I think his life is typical of the lives of many living today. He had great riches bestowed on him from above. And yet, his chief concern in life was to establish a life of ease and prosperity all for himself. He did not consider how he could use his riches to help care for a poor orphan child. He did not consider how a portion of his goods could make life more bearable for a person stricken with a dreaded disease. He cared nothing for the plight of the poor widows around him. He cared only for himself. He was selfish! He was living under a "take it easy" policy. This "take it easy" policy is running rampant in our society today. This rich man thought he had a lease on life (Luke 12:19), but quickly learned that he had made a GRAVE mistake.

Many people, like the rich man, have simply left God out of their thinking. America, as a whole, seems to worship the God of



Demar Elam

MATERIALISM. We want "things!" We want them all for ourselves!

This foolish man who left God and his fellowman out of his plans talked about "my fruits," "my barns," and "my goods." Read Deuteronomy 8:18. God had given this man everything he needed to become a success, and he was not willing to give God anything in return.

Man often forgets God in the day of prosperity. It should seem that the opposite would be true -- that man would realize where his blessings come from (James 1:17), and would praise and serve God all the more! However, the sad reality is that the richer a man becomes, the more difficult it is for him to go to heaven (Matthew 19:23-24).

The human soul can not be satisfied with material things. Money cannot bring complete happiness and fulfill all our desires. The wise writer of Ecclesiastes wrote: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver: nor he that loveth abundance with increase: This also is vanity" (Ecclesiastes 3:10).

God called this man a fool! Here was a man who had entirely missed the real meaning of life. We have been placed on the earth for a reason. I urge you, my friend, to stop and evaluate your own life. Have you left God out of your life? Is it possible that, due to your present lifestyle, God might soon say of you, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (Luke 12:20)?

—Forest Park Church, P.O. Box 623, Forest Park, GA 30051.

Worst Enemy? or Best Friend?

I'm your worst enemy. You will not be able to say at the judgment that you have never heard the gospel. Now that you have heard, you have responsibility. Like the rain that brings forth both beautiful vegetables and ugly weeds, the gospel causes some to be condemned while it causes others to be saved.

These words were spoken the other day on a local religious radio program by a denominational speaker. He was simply articulating the conclusion that all would correctly reach if a single assumption were to be accepted as truth. If accountable adults who have not yet heard the gospel are in a safe condition, then the preacher of the gospel is the world's worst enemy. Following are a number of Bible reasons for not accepting this oft-repeated assumption as true.

It is man's sin that separates him from God -- not the gospel. "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness" (Isaiah 59:2-3). Because God is just, he will punish those



Tim Nichols

eternally who are found guilty of sin (John 5:28-29; Matthew 25:46; II Thessalonians 1:5-10). Because all responsible men and women become guilty of sin, all are under this condemnation (Romans 3:23).

Because God is merciful, he provides a means by which sinful man can escape from his lost condition. Jesus gave his life upon the cross in order to suffer the punishment due sinners. Those who obey the gospel of Christ and continue to walk according to the will of Christ as expressed in the New Testament will be saved. Those who do not obey the gospel will be lost. God has offered no other means for redeeming sinful man (Romans 1:16; II Thessalonians 1:8-9; John 3:16).

When one affirms that sincerity is all that is necessary for salvation, he contradicts and goes beyond the revealed word of God (II John 9). He makes the gospel preacher a bringer of condemnation. He makes the death of Christ an unnecessary event and God a tyrant for bringing it about. He takes away all purpose to preaching the gospel. But we must preach the gospel to men and women. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:15).

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

The "Gift Of The Holy Spirit"

(No V)

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him" (Acts 2:38-39 A.S.V.).



W. Edwin Kearley

In the first century church there were different measures of the Holy Spirit. Jesus received the Holy Spirit "without measure" (John 3:34).

In this series of articles, we have seen the only two recorded instances of Holy Spirit BAPTISM. Peter said this was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16). Joel said "all flesh" would be baptized of the Holy Spirit. Those on Pentecost were Jews; and the household of Cornelius were Gentiles. In the New Testament Jew and Gentile covers all mankind, or "all flesh."

There were two recorded instances of the imparting of miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Peter and John imparted the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans, and Paul to the Ephesians (Acts 8:17; 19:1-7). Philip, who performed miracles, could not impart the gifts.

The "gift" of Acts 2:38 was promised to those who responded to the preaching of the gospel on the day of Pentecost. It was promised to those "who are afar off." Paul used this expression to refer to the Gentiles (Ephesians 2:13).

"Even as many as the Lord shall call" are all who obey the gospel of Christ from that day forward.

The question is then asked, "What does this gift of the Holy Spirit do for the Christian? The late brother Gus Nichols wrote, "I see no reason for disturbance among us over this question so long as all believe and teach that the Holy Spirit DOES dwell in faithful and obedient children of God in some way. The

Building Up Not Breaking Down

(Continued From Page 2)

another" (Romans 14:19). Paul told the young preacher Timothy that we ought to spend time and effort on things which bring "... godly edifying which is in the faith" (I Timothy 1:4).

My father and mother taught me (and their parents taught them before), "If you can't say something good, don't say anything." Were they saying, "If you can't build up, certainly don't tear down"? Yes!

Jesus said, "... for it must needs be that offences come. But woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" (Matthew 18:7). Don't be a demolition expert; be an edifier!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.

honest but misguided interpretations which may be made in trying to show how the Holy Spirit dwells in us should not, by those on either side, disrupt brotherly love and unity, and ravage our brotherhood. There are many reasons why one's position as to how the Holy Spirit dwells in us should never be made a test of fellowship. The only reason which needs to be stated now is, that to all who obey the gospel from the heart, the promise will be fulfilled as God planned it, whether or not we understand "how" the Holy Spirit dwells in us" (Lectures on the Holy Spirit, pp. 155-156).

Other passages teach the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian. "And we are witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). The apostle John wrote: "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (I John 3:24).

Some deny that the Holy Spirit dwells personally in the Christian because he cannot be seen. Such denial would also deny the existence of God. The apostle John concluded,

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (I John 4:12-13). Paul declared, "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Romans 8:9).

The Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian's body. Paul stated: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16). That is plain language. Again he said: "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

I have as much inability to explain how my eternal soul dwells in my body as I do in explaining how the Holy Spirit dwells in my body. Inspired men said it does. That is enough for me.

—103 E. Lena Court, Bay Saint Louis, MS 39520.

The Simple Gospel

Kenneth L. Randolph

Curtis Cates, Sr., who has preached in Montgomery for many years, told of hearing Charlie A. Wheeler (who baptized Gus Nichols) preach, when brother Cates was but a boy. He said that brother Wheeler's sermon was so simple that, though but a lad, he thought to himself: "I believe I could preach like that, it is so simple!" Brother Wheeler's simplicity in preaching stirred the idea of preaching in a young man's heart. And that simple style characterized brother Cates' preaching also. True gospel preaching is simple because the gospel is simple.

To say that the gospel is "simple" does not mean that it is not rich and deep. It means the gospel is free from complexity, and is not complicated. It is not hard to understand; it is unaffected, natural, and plain.

The gospel comes to the point. It declares plainly that man is a sinner who cannot save himself. It speaks in clear and tragic tones of the consequences of a life of sin. The gospel makes no attempt to classify sinners into categories, such as rich and poor, black and white, young and old. It starkly declares: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

The gospel does not complicate the means by which the sinner is saved. It states plainly that there is but one way, through Christ (John 14:6). In coming to God, the sinner has simple facts to believe -- the death of Jesus Christ "for our sins," his burial, and the resurrection of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4). He has simple commands to obey -- believe, repent, confess, and be baptized (Mark 16:16; Romans 10:10; Acts 2:38). Belief of those facts and obedience to those commands secures simple, but sublime, promises -- forgiveness of sins, all spiritual blessings, and hope of life eternal! The gospel teaches that the way of life is plain and narrow, but is lighted by the lamp of eternal day and supported by help and hope along the way.

The gospel is declared to be "the power of

God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). It draws its power from a rugged and blood-stained cross. The cross at its core gives the gospel the simple, rational, appeal to reach the intellect; it paints the story of divine love in vivid colors to move the emotions; it storms the ramparts of the stubborn soul to change the will.

The gospel story tells of the Son of God as a man moving among the common people, who heard him gladly. It speaks of condescending love. It pictures Christ concerned about the simple (yet real) problems of life: the plight of the poor; the fever of Peter's mother-in-law; the fear of the disciples; and the tears and sorrow of Mary and Martha. It shows him moved with compassion for the ignorant, the straying and the lost.

The gospel is so simple it is embarrassing to some who have been educated beyond the bounds of their intelligence. It has always been counted "foolish" by the wisdom of the world. But the gospel is not easily scorned. It begs not for explanation, but for proclamation. We don't need to confound the gospel; we need to expound it.

Senator Sam Ervin, Jr., tells of an old farmer who went to see a lawyer about getting a divorce from his wife. The lawyer wanted to know why he wanted the divorce, and the farmer said, "Because she talks too much." "What does she talk about?" asked the lawyer. The old gentleman said, "She don't say." There is much that goes under the guise of "preaching" today that "don't say" what the Lord's gospel says. In an attempt to revive a dead spirituality, some have turned to psychology, sociology, entertainment and emotionality; but these are not GOSPEL proclamation. Preachers need to cull from their sermons appeals to human wisdom and earthly applause. It still pleases God to save man "by the foolishness of preaching" the simple gospel (I Corinthians 1:21).

—Faulkner University, School of Biblical Studies, Montgomery, AL 36193-4601.

The Perfect Gift

By now, all the presents have been opened and all the surprises have been revealed. I hope you got what you desired for Christmas, and that you gave the gifts that others desired from you. Have you ever stopped to think just how much time is often spent in choosing that special gift for that Special "Someone?" Countless hours, no doubt. In fact, commercialism has gotten to the point that they will "help" us in the selection of that perfect gift for someone. Some stores in malls have computers set up to give you gift ideas for that special "someone", based on information you feed into the computer. Other stores just invite you to come in, give them the pertinent information about someone, and they will select the gift for you. Sounds too modern, doesn't it?



DON WILLIAMS

But during all this time of buying and selecting gifts for all the ones on your list, what have you decided to give to God? I mean, what can God expect from you in the life you hope to live in the coming year? We know that he has given us the greatest of gifts, when long ago he gave HIS PERFECT SON upon the cross (John 3:16). What shall I give him in return? Some might suggest that a portion of the money that they make each week is enough. Others might say that a few hours of the week in worship would suffice. Yet, neither money nor a small amount of time will do justice for

that which God has freely given us.

What will you give unto God? Micah, an Old Testament prophet, dealt with this issue. In Chapter 6, he talked about the various sacrifices that man might present to God. He concluded that God will not be pleased with countless sacrifices of any type, even if one were to give his firstborn child for the transgression of the sins in his life. In verse eight he concludes by saying, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?" In a nutshell, Micah says that we must give our ALL to God the Father because he has given HIS ALL to us.

We then must willingly obey all the laws that he has set down for us to follow. Because of

our love for him, we will extend love, mercy, and compassion to those around us (family, spouse, children, friends, enemies, those in need, etc.). And finally, we will walk humbly WITH God. That word "WITH" is most important, for the other deeds cannot be accomplished unless there is that daily communion with God and his will for our life.

As you then approach the New Year, ask yourself the question, "What will I give to God?" Will I give him the left-overs of my money, time, and abilities? or, will he occupy the center and foremost place in my life? Will you be WITH God in 1987? More importantly, will God be WITH you? Giving of self to God (II Corinthians 8:5)—Now there's the PERFECT GIFT!

—934 Florence Street, Lewisburg, TN 37091.

The Living Christ

GARVIN M. TOMS

With his resurrection from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ now lives again. To his disciples he said: "But you will see me because I am alive, and you also will live (because I live)" (John 14:19, 20). "The life that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Romans 6:10). The world needs a living Savior. Jesus lives in God the Father, while we live in them in a three-fold unity. The continual exercise of Divine power raises obedient believers up to live the new life in communion with Christ.

Jesus affirmed: "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). Our greatest hope lies in the truth that Jesus is no longer dead, but ever lives to intercede for us. The angels asked: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

HE is not here, but is risen" (See Luke 24:5-6). Appearing to his disciples alive—after his suffering—for about forty days, he ate and talked with them as he had done before, by which they became witnesses to his living again. To John in the Revelation (1:17-18) he said: "I am the first and the last, and the Living one, and I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." He has complete power over the domain of death. Thus, like Melchizedek, it is witnessed that he lives.

THE LORD'S LIVING SERVICE

The risen Christ performs a service for mankind, following the atonement through his blood, which only a LIVING Lord can do.

As we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, "much more shall we be saved by His life" (See Romans 5:10-11).

THE LIVING INTERCESSOR. The Savior's life qualifies him to be our Mediator (I Timothy 1:5) before the throne of God. "And what we say is yet more abundantly evident, if after the likeness of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who hath been made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:16). "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near to God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). He works all circumstances together for good for all who love Him. Note that he "is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:34).

THE KING'S LIFE. The living Messiah saves obedient believers by his resurrection and his life when they are immersed for salvation (See Romans 5:10-11; I Peter 3:21). We are saved by all the services that he performs. Only a living Redeemer and "Attorney" could serve at the Court of Heaven on our behalf.

THE GROUND OF ETERNAL LIFE

Christians live because they share the life of Jesus Christ. His resurrection is a constant guarantee that Christians will live in Christ and that they will live again in eternity. "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself..." (John 5:26). Jesus is the life because he has it inherently by Divine right, and he has the power to share it with you and me.

—915 Baltimore Avenue, Waycross, GA 31501.

You'd Better Be In The Right Lane

While visiting one of our members in the hospital in a large city a few days ago, I spied a sign at a service station advertising cheap gas. Thinking myself to be a smart economist, I decided to pull in and fill up my gas tank.



RON WILLIAMS

Unfortunately, my anticipation was to great and my observation skills too small. I pulled in and got out of the car, only to meet an attendant running toward me to clean my windows and check my oil (if I had been using my lead, I should have figured out that something was wrong.) Only after I had filled up my car with gas did I notice the price on the gas pump. \$1.28 per gallon! I yelled, "Hey, what's wrong here?" The attendant informed me that this was FULL SERVICE, that self-service was over yonder!

Admitting defeat, I told my car that it had better enjoy this expensive gift (self-service was 78¢ per gallon), and I reminded the attendant to check the air in my tires! After thinking about this for a while and even laughing, here are some important lessons in a spiritual

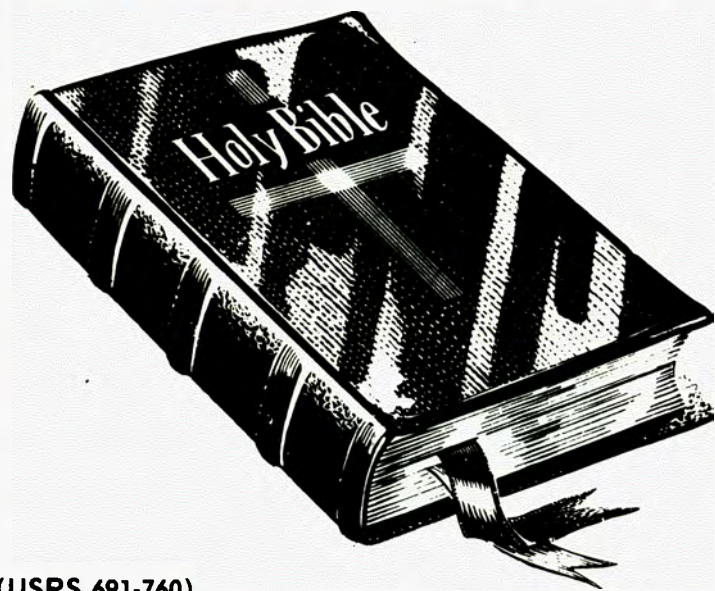
sense to be derived from all of this: (1) I was genuinely sincere in my intentions on this occasion, but I was wrong. Regardless of how sincere people might be in religion, failure to DO WHAT GOD SAYS will have tragic consequences for them in the end.

(2) As there were several different pumps to go to at that gas station, only ONE had the price that I really wanted but I failed to use it! We would do well to listen to Solomon as he wrote in Proverbs 14:12, "There is A WAY WHICH SEEMETH RIGHT UNTO A MAN BUT THE END THEREOF ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH." Contrasted to that idea of religion, Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

(3) Finally, the failure on my part to observe the right gas pump cost me only some money; — but the failure for people to do what God has commanded will cost them the most priceless of all possessions — their souls for eternity!

— P. O. Box 325, Evergreen, AL 35401.

**Bring A Friend To Church
With You On Sunday!**



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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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NUMBER 6

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(NO. I)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. This first installment will be followed by seven (7) others on a weekly basis].

*Baptism Of The Holy Spirit -- (No. 1)
Gus Nichols (1892-1975)

This evening we are to study "The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit." Of course, our general over-all theme for the week is, "The Holy Spirit and His Work." Certainly, we do not know too much about any vital Bible subject. If we knew all that God has revealed about any given subject, we would not know too much. We can learn more and more about God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit by a prayerful study of what he has revealed. One text we have used in the background study says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children" (Deuteronomy 29:29). We are interested in the things which are revealed, not in some speculative theories, nor in some imaginary system which someone has worked up and thought out for the rest of us.



Was A Promise

First of all, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a promise made unto the apostles of our Lord. John the Baptizer made the statement: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and

he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:11-12). Beside water baptism, two other baptisms are mentioned in this context. "I indeed baptize you with water" assuredly refers to water baptism, with which the people who heard John were familiar. It is stated in this same chapter that the people "were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matthew 3:5-6).

Baptism An Immersion

Baptism is an immersion. The English word BAPTISM is from the Greek BAPTIZO, which means to dip, immerse, overwhelm, submerge, and such like kindred ideas. It never meant to sprinkle or pour. It has reference to the burial, as mentioned in connection with baptism. The apostle Paul says, "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 6:4-5). Hence baptism is a burial. Paul also used the word "planted" here in describing the act. So, regardless of what the element might be in which one is baptized, the baptism itself is always an immersion, submersion, or overwhelming of some sort. Baptism never meant a sprinkling. It never meant just a bit of the element referred to. This is true of the baptism of the Holy Spirit the same as it is true of baptism in water.

Baptism Of Suffering

Jesus said, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Matthew 20:22). He was talking about his suffering. Who would be so blasphemous as to say that Jesus endured only a little "sprinkling" of suffering? — that when he called his a "baptism" of suffering, he meant that there was just a small bit of suffering connected with his death? No! The Bible

teaches us that he suffered terribly in death for us -- that he suffered indescribably for us that he might bring us unto God (I Peter 3:18). His suffering was beyond what any human tongue can describe. That suffering was a "baptism" of suffering! It was an overwhelming of suffering, and a submersion, as it were, in what is figuratively referred to as the "element" of suffering. Hence, the word "baptism" connected with anything, any element -- literally or figuratively -- describes an overwhelming. This word necessitates a large measure of the element, rather than just a small amount of it.

Greek Literature

In classical Greek literature we find the word "baptism" connected with such experiences, for instance, as a man being "drowned" with questions. He was said to be "baptized" with questions. That didn't mean only a few questions, but had reference to a great quantity of questions. If a man were overcome with debt — so deeply in debt that he could not pay — he was said to be "baptized" in debt. This is the use of the word "baptize" in the language of the people whom Jesus addressed in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit, through the apostles and other inspired writers of the New Testament, addressed the people in their own — the Greek — language. They understood that language, and received the word of the Lord in the new covenant in that language. To them the word BAPTIZO (baptize) meant to overwhelm, submerge, and the like. When water is the element, "baptize" has reference to a burial, and a resurrection (Romans 6:4-5). It refers to a "planting" in the likeness of his death -- thus a covering up — for when we plant our seeds we cover them up. Not only so, but Paul says

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Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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Famine In The Land

Millions of Ethiopians are starving. The rider on the black horse of famine stalks all of Northern Africa. Behind him follows Death upon his pale horse (compare Revelation 5:8). Vivid pictures of starving children move even an Ebenezer Scrooge to lend a helping hand. Something must be done!

Another kind of famine plagues

our land. Though plates are full and most people are overweight, this deadly famine is sapping the vital life out of millions of American people. Even members of Christ's church feel the biting pangs of this hunger. Should its lethal effects not be broken, a whole generation may perish in horrible anguish. Such a famine struck Israel in Amos' day.

"Behold . . . saith the Lord Jehovah, . . . I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah" (Amos 8:11).

One asks, how can this be true here in America, with Bibles in every home, churches in every community, preachers in every pulpit? The problem is: the "Bread" and "Water" of Life are not being served to those who come to eat! This sad situation has been evident in denominational churches for 50 or more years. The consequences have been appalling. Most distressing of all is the fact that it has now made its way into God's household, the church of Christ!

A large segment of our brethren are suffering

Continued on page 3



John Waddey

The Walnut Hill church had Gus Nichols come from Jasper, Alabama, to Dallas, Texas, to deliver a series of messages on "The Holy Spirit." He also answered questions each night on the theme discussed. The lessons were so timely they were published under the title of "Lectures On The Holy Spirit," by Gus Nichols. From the Introduction I quote:

Perhaps no man in our brotherhood today is better acquainted with the



Flavil H. Nichols

BOOK than Gus Nichols. Five hours of daily study for fifty years has developed a naturally-gifted mind far beyond normal accomplishments. Many of his one hundred public discussions have dealt with errors about the Holy Spirit. By preparation and experience he stands with few peers in the ability to discuss this theme.

--But that was in 1967, and the book long has been out of print. To make available to current students the benefit of his study of this subject, and with permission from the copyright owner, we reprint from this book his lecture on The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit (see page 1). Because of the importance of this subject, it will be given front page prominence. Because of its length, it will appear in serial form over the next eight weeks. Many will want to preserve these issues of Words Of Truth.

—The Editor.

Media Ethics And Modern Music

(NO. II)

Wayne Coats

The Rage of Rebellion (Concluded)

A very casual look at the lyrics of many contemporary songs will reveal an undue emphasis on sex, drugs, and rebellion. Country Song Round-Up recently stated, "Most of the media space devoted to Country stars seems to focus on drink, drugs, divorce, and debauchery." Perhaps this is true; but it certainly isn't any mark of intelligence, or real maturity, to be fed a steady diet, or to desire a diet, of that which is destroying millions of people mentally, physically, morally, and spiritually.

It is interesting that Paul Harvey has commented about the Country Music industry's condescending into the "pornography of the airwaves." When writers, composers, station operators, and performers borrow their brains from the brothels, they can feel happy that they will have a sufficient number of fans and supporters to keep the records spinning.

Occasionally we hear of someone who has the strength, stature, courage, and conviction to refuse to bow before the god of lust. Ron Thompson, who served as program director of the powerful 50,000 watt radio station in Wheeling, West Virginia, issued a program directive wherein he stated:

"Due to profanity and distasteful lyrics we have been receiving on records by name artists, WWVA has initiated the following policy. WWVA AM/FM will not

air suggestive or profane lyrics. We will delete questionable words and phrases before we play a record . . . it is not our policy to be moral cursaders but we will not jeopardize our standing in the community."

This is the kind of men and movements which needs our support in a very public manner.

If there seems to be the rage of rebellion among some of the Country artists, they would seem more like Puritans singing "Peace In The Valley" when compared to most of the rock groups. Some people prefer to call the efforts of the various rock groups "jungle music;" but personally I have too much respect for the apes of the jungle! --and I refuse to associate them with rock music!

That there is vociferous rebellion in the lyrics and utterances of many rock performers, we cannot deny. Alice Cooper has stated that rebellion was the basis of his group. In the song, "Benny And The Jets," Elton John prattles:

"We shall survive.

Let us take ourselves along

Where we fight our parents out in the streets
To find out who's right and who's wrong."

Too many youngsters are already tainted with rebellion; and they do not need encouragement in this matter.

The Jefferson Airplane/Starship group in the

Continued On Page 4

Oral Roberts Does It Again

Yes, Oral Roberts, like countless other denominational preachers, can come up with 'special revelations' any time he pleases! These preachers believe that God's revelation, as contained in the Bible, is incomplete. They contend that they receive continuous 'revelations' in addition to what is written upon the pages of Holy Writ!



W. A. Holley

Richard Roberts is quoted as saying that he supports his father (Oral Roberts) in asking "\$4.5 million before March." Well! As is the father, so is the son! (Cf. Ezekiel 16:44). Jimmy Swaggart (a well known T.V. fundraiser who raised more than \$60 million in contributions in 1984) says that he thinks God does speak directly to Oral; but he doubts that God told him to raise "4.5 million before March, or die."

Just listen to these statements: In 1981, Oral Roberts claimed to have seen a vision of a 900-foot Jesus towering over his 60-story hospital complex. In 1983, he claims to have had a seven-hour conversation with God who told him (Oral) that he would find a cure for cancer if everyone would send in \$240.00. Verily, Oral Roberts is a charlatan who makes noisy or showy 'pretenses to knowledge or ability' which he does not possess. He is a quack, a faker, a deceitful worker, who beguiles or hoodwinks his listeners of their money.

Oral Roberts robs the helpless and despairing, the old and dying, the desperate and hopeless of their last pennies. He has been known to send out letters to his supporters urging them to send him their money even if they had to go to the bank and borrow it. A sister who carries the mail often tells of countless letters containing money which she gathers up from dozens of the poorest kind of people, addressed to Oral Roberts.

How unlike Oral Roberts is, in contrast with those preachers whom Jesus Christ sent out during his personal ministry (Matthew 10:1-15). To them Jesus commanded: "As ye go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:7-8). These apostles had freely received, and they were to freely give. Their preaching was to be confirmed by miracles; but they were not to 'sell' miracles; neither were they to 'sell' the gospel; nor could they demand money for healing any one (Proverbs 23:23; Isaiah 55:1-5). The truth of God is priceless; there is not enough money in the whole world to buy the gospel of Christ!!

Oral Roberts' notion that God gives him continuous 'revelations' is ridiculous in the extreme!! The word of God is complete! It is a sin for one to add to, or to subtract from, or to substitute for its sacred truth (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:5-6; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18-19). Here is the reason all doctrines and commandments of men (whether oral or written) are sinful (Mark 7:6-13). The truth is: The

only way God today communicates his sacred will to man is through revealed truth as recorded in the Holy Bible (John 8:30-32; 20:30-31; II Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16). No dreams, no human experiences, no feelings, no imaginations, are involved.

Mr. Roberts threatens his followers by saying that if they do not contribute "\$4.5 million by March," he will die. In all sincerity, Oral Roberts will die, whether he receives \$4.5 million dollars or not! A standing appointment awaits us all: "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27; ASV; Genesis 3:19). Who can imagine any apostle threatening the people of their day with such grotesque and bizarre proposals as those set forth by Mr. Roberts??

Isn't it amazing? Oral Roberts is doing such a wonderful work performing(?) miracles! But he needs a hospital to care for those whom he cannot heal!! Talk about gall!! Here is a man filled with brazen boldness coupled with impudent assurance and insolence. If Mr. Roberts can perform miracles, why does he need hospitals and doctors? No apostle ever bilked sick people of money they could not afford to give away!

The age of miracles is past. The purpose of miracles was to reveal and confirm the truth of God. When all of God's word had been revealed, and confirmed, no further

revelation or confirmation is necessary; hence, no further miracles are needed -- Mr. Roberts to the contrary notwithstanding (Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:1-4). Paul teaches that miraculous gifts were to "cease," "vanish away," and "be done away" (I Corinthians 13:8-13). When the apostles died, and when all upon whom they had laid their hands died, miracles came to an end (Acts 8:14-24). Men can claim that they possess miraculous power, but they cannot demonstrate it.

Verily, DEMONSTRATION is the end of all argumentation. If so-called miracle-workers claim power to heal the sick, let them also raise the dead (Matthew 10:8). Jesus selected twelve men (the apostles), and "gave them power over unclean spirits . . . and they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark 6:7, 12-13). Let Mr. Roberts do likewise!!

Mr. Roberts is a master at making grandstand plays. His grandiose, theatrical, outlandish claims can never set aside the plain and simple teaching of the Holy Bible (Matthew 24:35).

Dear readers, do not be surprised when Oral comes up with other schemes to raise money, and thus fleece the people.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Famine In The Land

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from spiritual malnutrition. Even those who attend every class and every service are often affected. It is like the deadly kwashiorkor disease of some primitive people whose bellies are filled with worthless bulk while they die of protein starvation. So, many Christians are slowly dying.

What Is the Cause of This Awful Starvation?

1. It is caused by 'preachers' who stand in the pulpit and preach sermons(?) with little of the word of God in them. Lessons are filled with jokes, illustrations, and personal 'testimonies' --with only a sprinkling of Scripture to make them appear respectable!

2. It is caused by an endless flow of sermons on marriage, parenting, self-esteem, and worry -- with almost no teaching on the fundamental doctrines of the faith. All these practical, personal subjects are useful, and need attention; but they will not save a sinner, nor grow a congregation that is strong and sound in the faith of Jesus.

3. It is caused by preachers who have lost their faith in the power of the gospel and the preaching thereof. Not expecting sinners to respond to the gospel call, they no longer even set forth the plan of salvation in their sermons. Sermons close with a vague, generalized "call" to come to Jesus -- such as is heard in every Protestant pulpit in town. No wonder few respond publicly these days; they have no idea what is expected of them.

4. It is caused by elders who have lost faith in the power of gospel teaching, and who quit planning gospel meetings, and special teaching sessions. They lamely blame it on members who won't attend. Of course, with no gospel meeting, no one attends. At home, when children refuse to come to the table, parents get concerned. They call a doctor. They insist that they eat what is essential to

their health.

5. It is caused by congregational Bible schools using class literature prepared by denominational authors with limited Bible content. While it may have only minimal amounts of error, the greater danger is that it is generic in content. That is, the publisher ordered it written so it may be used by Methodists, Baptists, Churches of Christ, etc., with no offense to any. Thus, any distinctive doctrinal matters are routinely omitted. Our children feed on this chaff -- and die spiritually. Do you doubt the validity of this? Ask your literature supplier who writes his material. The greater part used by our people for the preschool through intermediate levels is prepared by such denominational publishers as Gospel Light of California (an interdenominational publisher) and Standard Publishing Company of Cincinnati (Christian Church). It is customized with "our" covers, given minimal editing, and sold to unsuspecting churches, who in turn feed it to hungry children. Only a small portion of our graded literature is written by our brethren. How sad!

What Can We Do?

The brotherhood has responded beautifully to the problems of hunger in Poland, Ghana, Southern Africa, Haiti, and Ethiopia. Surely we can solve this SPIRITUAL FAMINE before disaster overwhelms us.

1. Those who train our preachers need to overhaul their programs and restore a solid emphasis on Bible Knowledge and Bible preaching. Stress the need for sound teaching and thorough indoctrination in the faith. Teach students the distinctive features of the

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Media Ethics And Modern Music

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song, "Volunteers," urges the listeners to "Tear down the walls (expletive)."

As Paul Stanely of KISS addressed a crowd he shouted,

"Do you care what parents think about us? Do you care what those preachers think about us? We don't give a (expletive)."

The Sex Pistols blare forth with: "I am the anti-Christ. I want to be . . . anarchy."

If this isn't enough, Pink Floyd sings:

"We don't need no education
We don't need no thought control.
I ain't did nothing to you.
I ain't dumb, I ain't stupid
Hey, teacher, leave us kids alone."

Ask any teacher in Junior High School if the spirit of rebellion is prevalent among the students. For fourteen years this scribe dealt with this as a teacher and a counselor. The rebel spirit beggars description in the average Junior High School, while the youth are steadily consuming the lyrics of the various rock groups.

The utter lack of respect and decency is demonstrated by Ozzie Osbourne who urinated on the Alamo in San Antonio. The City Counsel banned his group from using the facilities in the city. A few years ago he would have been hanged by the neck for such an outrage.

This rebellious spirit is prattled by Prince who sings:

" . . . I wish we all were nude,
I wish there were no black and white,
I wish there were no rules."

When one thoroughly researches the antics of the punk rock bands, he frankly wonders if they have any rules except those which they make for themselves?

As Mick Jagger sang "Sympathy For The Devil," a man was killed just a short distance from the performer. Jagger said: "If Jesus had been there, he would have been crucified." Is this the kind of ethics that we really believe in? No wonder Newsweek called it "the music of rebellion . . . against parents against the establishment, against social restraints."³

In another article the same magazine said: ". . . it's the spirit of rebellion." The more pronounced the rebellion, of course the more publicity will be created. This could be one of the reasons the blessed Lord attacked so vehemently. In his book, "A Spaniard In The Works," John Lennon described Jesus as a garlic-eating, stinking little yellow, greasy fascist, bastard Catholic Spaniard. This kind of fermented ignorance gets attention and will please the masses who delight in such blasphemy. In their album, "Long John Silver," the Jefferson Airplane/Starship describes Jesus as a bastard and details how he (supposedly!) had an affair with Mary Magdalene. This is the way millions want to be entertained.

John Lennon declared:

"Christianity will go. It will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue about it. I'm right, right, and will be proved right. We are more popular than Jesus now. I don't know which will go first, rock 'n roll or Christianity."

Another has stated:

"I'd like to say that organized Christianity has done more harm than any other single force I can think of in the world."

This is some indictment -- coming from a rock performer! Has he taken an objective look at the evil fruits of rock music???

While on duty at an Ozzie Osbourne concert, an emergency medical technician saw enough to cause any intelligent person to be filled with chagrin. He said:

"I thought of the repeated deaths at this type concert. I thought of the hospitalization, of the OD's, the pregnancies, the illicit sex, the nudity, the outright punishment of human beings that I witnessed. Why is it that this has been going on for years and parents and churches are still

in the dark? Either Satan is pretty shrewd, or we are just plain dumb."

My personal observation of the matter is that both of his appraisals are true: Satan is indeed shrewd; and Americans are exceedingly 'dumb' to support such filth.

(To be continued).

[EDITOR'S NOTE: A tract by this title may be ordered from the author.]

—184 Hillview. Mt. Juliet, TN 37122.

2Country Song Round-Up July, 1986, Page 43.

3Newsweek, November 6, 1967, Page 101.

Famine In The Land

Continued from page 3

Lord's church, and the errors of denominationalism. Make them feel the responsibility to "preach the Word" -- in season, or out (II Timothy 4:2). Let the denominations have their pastors, but give us gospel preachers who know and will declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26).

2. Elders, feed the church of the Lord with that Living Bread from heaven (Acts 20:28). Insist that it be trumpeted from your pulpit, and taught in every classroom. Review your Bible school literature: and authorize only that which will help your young charges to "grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ." Remind teachers of your expectation and their duty to God to train these precious young souls in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

3. Brethren who sit at the feet of preachers and make possible their salaries by their contributions must make known their desire for strong biblical instruction. Let the elders and preacher know how much you appreciate hearing the meat of the word (Hebrews 5:12-14). Likewise, let them know when you go away hungry for God's truth. Do not let unsound teaching go unchallenged.

4. Preachers, "try your own selves, whether

ye are in the faith; prove your own selves . . ." (II Corinthians 13:5). Look squarely at your ministry in the mirror of God's word (James 1:23-25). What kind of sermons are you preaching? How much time are you spending in Bible study? Are you preaching "the whole counsel of God?" Are you "a good minister of Christ" who puts the brethren in mind of God's teachings (I Timothy 4:6)? Are you "rooting and grounding" your hearers so their faith will be strong and durable, making them "faithful unto death" (Revelation 2:10)? Are you "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" because you have "rightly handled" the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15)? Could a visitor from a local sectarian church see any substantive difference between YOUR lesson, and that of his PASTOR? If not, fall down on your knees and ask God to have mercy on you for neglecting your duty. With due penitence, make a strong resolution to be a FAITHFUL spokesman for Jehovah, or else resign your post and let a better man do what must be done.

This famine need not be. The solution is in our hands. Let us rise up and meet our challenge!
—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

* Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

we are "buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him" (Colossians 2:12).

So, baptism has reference to the act of submersion. It has reference to an act which differs from receiving just a bit of the element considered. Of John the immerser we read that the people "were baptized of him in Jordan" (Matthew 3:6). One man quibbled, "Well, it didn't say River Jordan." True, that text doesn't; but Mark 1:5 does: "They were baptized of him in the river of Jordan." Later we read, when the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized, that "both Philip and the eunuch" first "went down into the water" preparatory to the performance of the act of baptism (Acts 8:35-39). Then the Bible says, "And he baptized him." After the baptism we read: "They were come up out of the water . . ." —that is, they came back up on the land.

Now, the word "baptize" connected with the Holy Spirit carries with it the idea (although figuratively expressed) of the amount of the Holy Spirit given and received in the case. Our Lord's baptism of suffering implies the great amount of suffering he endured. The one baptized in debt was overwhelmed in the enormous amount of his debts. One baptized with questions was submerged or "drowned" in the multitude of inquiries. So likewise we refer to

a certain large, voluminous "measure" (we might say) of the Holy Spirit when we talk about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is no ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit under consideration.

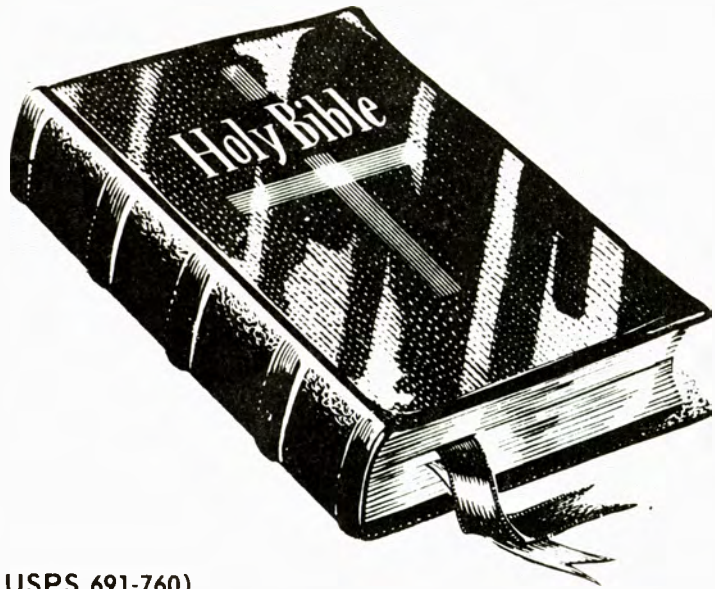
Christ To Administer Holy Spirit Baptism

John said Christ, whom he referred to as coming "after me," shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" or "Holy Spirit" (Matthew 3:11). Christ was to administer Holy Spirit baptism. When you find the Holy Spirit administered by some man, as by the laying on of some apostle's hands, such is not the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit — because only Christ was the administrator of that. The baptism of the Spirit was not given through the imposition of apostolic hands.

That measure in the Bible is never called the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit. It was bestowed by the laying on of the apostles' hands.

God had given John a sign that, when he baptized Jesus, he would see the Spirit descending in the form of a dove (John 1:33-34). He said, "This is he" — the Messiah, the Savior and hope of the world— ". . . the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." So, Jesus alone, is said to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

(Continued Next Week).



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1987

NUMBER 7

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(No. II)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirt" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. The first installment showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise (not a command), (2) that it was an immersion, or overwhelming, and (3) that only Christ could administer this baptism.]

Baptism Of The Great Commission Not Holy Spirit Baptism

We know by this that the baptism of the Great Commission is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to his disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Matthew 28:19). Who were to do the going? The disciples. Who were to do the teaching? The disciples. Who were to perform the baptizing? The disciples. Hear Jesus again: "Go ye" --you disciples -- . . . and teach all nations, baptizing them." That was WATER baptism; for only Jesus could administer SPIRIT baptism, as we have seen. Another reason for saying the baptism of the Great Commission is water baptism is that it is to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). Certainly, Holy Spirit baptism would not be "in the name of . . . the Holy Ghost" --by the authority of the Spirit himself. Great Commission baptism is in the



name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Therefore water baptism is the "baptism" of the Great Commission. Except the Society of Friends (Quakers), every religious body or denomination in my knowledge baptizes (?) some way or other, according to their ideas of baptism. And they never administer what they call "water baptism" without doing it in some "name."

Some of the Differences

Let us note some of the differences between water baptism and Holy Spirit baptism.

1. Water baptism is for "all nations," and is required of "every creature" who is a gospel subject (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16). Holy Spirit baptism was not for all men, for in speaking of "the Spirit of truth" Jesus said: "whom the world cannot receive" (John 14:17).

2. Water baptism is a command of God (Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:48; 2:38; 22:16). Holy Spirit baptism was a promise of God unto a very few (Acts 1:2-5).

3. Water baptism is an act of obedience, an act of man (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 10:48). Spirit baptism was an act of the Lord, not an act of man (Acts 1:5).

4. Water baptism is administered by men, by those doing the teaching (Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 1:14). Spirit baptism was administered by the Lord himself (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33).

5. Water baptism is a condition of salvation to a lost world (Mark 16:15-16; I Peter 3:20-21). Spirit baptism had to do with either REVEALING the gospel, or CONFIRMING it (John 16:13; Hebrews 2:4).

6. Water baptism is "in the name" (or by the authority) of Christ, and "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, ASV; Acts 2:38; 8:14-16; 22:16). Holy Spirit baptism was in no name at all -- was not performed by man (Matthew

3:11).

7. Water baptism is an act of faith (Galatians 3:26-27; Mark 16:15-16; Colossians 2:12). Spirit baptism was not an act of man, hence it could not have been an act of faith (Luke 24:48-49).

8. Water baptism has in the action both a burial, and a resurrection -- as Christ was buried and raised (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). Spirit baptism had no resurrection, and no visible burial (Acts 1:5; 2:4).

9. Water baptism is a baptism "of repentance" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 19:4; 2:38) -- that is, it belongs to, and grows out of, repentance. But Holy Spirit baptism came three-and-one-half years after the apostles repented and were baptized in water (Mark 1:4; Luke 7:29-30; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4).

10. Water baptism is a condition of cleansing one from the guilt of sin (Acts 22:16; Ephesians 5:25-26). Spirit baptism came long after the apostles were already "clean" (John 15:3) through the word.

11. Water baptism puts one "into Christ" (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27). Spirit baptism of the apostles came after they already were "in" Christ, and had been urged to "abide in" Christ (John 15:1-6; Acts 2:1-4).

12. Water baptism is in order to "receive" the ordinary "gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38; 5:32). Spirit baptism itself was a reception of the miraculous "gift of the Holy Spirit" administered by Christ (Acts 1:5; Matthew 3:11).

13. Water baptism is to continue in God's program "always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20). There is no promise of Holy Spirit baptism this side of A.D. 64, when Paul wrote Ephesians 4:5.

14. You can obey the Lord's command to be baptized in water (Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16).

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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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Surrogate Motherhood

Surrogate motherhood is a subject that is increasingly being brought to our attention today. Americans and those in other nations are faced with weighty, moral issues that will affect us, and generations yet unborn.

As we make decisions on moral issues, we would do well to remember the moral decline and decadence of ancient Rome. A strong and mighty empire was

brought to ruination because of the malignant spread of immorality. America seems to be traveling down a similar road. Many sins such as: child abuse, abortion, divorce, drunkenness, adultery, spouse abuse, homosexuality, and such like are prevalent in modern America. In fact, they are so prevalent that many are unable to blush at these sins whirling about us today. Jeremiah warned of what happens to those who cannot blush at sin by saying: "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; herefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 6:15).

It is almost inconceivable to right-thinking people that a mother could conceive a baby and for a certain amount of money sell that baby, her own flesh and blood. That is what is happening today.

A recent Time magazine article featured a story of a woman who had agreed to sell her baby for \$10,000. After handing over the baby,

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Demar Elam

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

But there is not now a thing you can scripturally do to obtain Spirit baptism — for there is only "one baptism" now (Ephesians 4:5).

It is just like old Satan to get people to refuse to obey God, and instead, spend their time trying to "get" something which God has not promised us today, and which is not for us at all.

Holy Spirit Baptism Promised

John promised that the disciples of Jesus would be baptized with the Holy Spirit: "I indeed baptize you with water . . . but . . . he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" or "Holy Spirit" (Matthew 3:11). Baptism in water — even in the case of the apostles — would not take the place of, be a substitute for, Holy Spirit baptism. Neither would Holy Spirit baptism alone be sufficient. As apostles, they first had to be baptized with water (Matthew 3:11; Luke 7:29-30). But cases are not always uniform: we find a vast difference between the baptism of the apostles in the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit baptism of the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 2 with Acts 10 & 11).

Promised To Apostles

We notice next that Jesus (in addition to John) promised to the apostles the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let us read from Acts the first chapter. I want you to get the noun and the pronouns that follow clearly in mind. (You may not have read it carefully!) Luke says, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles . . ." — there is our plural noun, apostles; now watch the pronouns which follow all the way down for the next twelve verses— ". . . he had given commandments unto the apostles whom . . ." —the very next word after 'apostles' is a plural pronoun, referring to the apostles— ". . . being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: and being assembled together with them" — the apostles — "commanded them" — that's the apostles again — "that they" — another pronoun referring to the apostles — "should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, Ye" — another plural pronoun referring back to the noun 'apostles' — "ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water;" — as we quoted from Matthew 3:11 — "but ye" — a plural pronoun again, meaning the 'apostles' — "shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:1-5). Pentecost follows in the next chapter, and it was "not many days hence" — usually considered to be about ten days after the ascension.

But let us read the sixth verse, going right on without skipping a verse: "When they" — the apostles — "therefore were come together, they" — the apostles — "asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them" — the apostles— "It is not for you" — the apostles— "to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye" — the apostles— "shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" — the apostles — "and ye" that, too, is the apostles— "shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the

earth."

At The Ascension

Luke continues: "And when he had spoken these things, while they" — the apostles — "beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their" — still talking about the apostles— "sight. And while they" — that's the apostles— "looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them" — by the apostles— "in white apparel; which also said, Ye" — apostles — "men of Galilee," — these apostles were men of Galilee, — "why stand ye" — you apostles— "gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you" — all these pronouns refer to the noun 'apostles' back in the second verse. But we continue in verse 11: "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye" — you apostles — "have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they" — the apostles — "unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." We have considered this meeting until it broke up. The apostles went out and saw the Lord ascend; now they have come back into the city for some things that occurred during the interval between the ascension and Pentecost, which is usually regarded as a ten-day period.

Apostles Needed Holy Spirit Baptism

Now, I wish to call attention to the fact that these apostles were just fallible men. They were not qualified as yet to go out and preach the gospel under the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). In a "former treatise" (Acts 1:1) by this same author, we have another record: "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. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise" — here's the promise about which we have been talking (Matthew 3:11); the baptism of the Holy Spirit was to take place later, on Pentecost day (Acts 2). "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you" — Jesus was talking to his apostles, and was here giving them the Great Commission — "but tarry ye" — that's the apostles — "in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49). So the promise is made unto the apostles; and the noun "apostles" (Acts 1:2) is the antecedent of the pronouns which we have followed all the way down until our Lord ascended to his throne in heaven. Those "apostles" turned back unto the city (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:12).

—Continued Next Week.

WORD of GOD

If ye love me keep my commandments.

John 14:15

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments:

1 John 5:3

Does The Believer Have Eternal Life Now?

Many preachers say that the believer possesses eternal life now; but Jesus teaches: "---in the world to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:30). Hence, eternal life is a wonderful "promise" (I John 2:25). Those who have heard, believed, and obeyed the gospel have been raised to "walk in newness of life" (John 6:44-45; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4).



W. A. HOLLEY

Writing to the Corinthian Christians, Paul says, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (I Corinthians 15:1-2; Cf. Acts 18:8). We respectfully ask: How could one "believe in vain," if he were in possession of eternal life then and there?? Again, we ask: If one receives eternal life the moment he believes, how could one "believe in vain."

Jesus taught his disciples: "Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Luke 18:29-30, Emphasis mine, WAH). There are some things one can have now; but "eternal (or everlasting) life" is in the world to come.

According to your Bible, it is possible for one to make "shipwreck" of one's faith (I Timothy 1:19-20). It is possible for one to believe for a while, "and in time of temptation fall away" (Luke 8:13). Moreover, one may "depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1-3; Cf. I John 4:1; I Thessalonians 5:21; Revelation 2:2). The Bible speaks of the "hope of eternal life" (Titus 1:2; 3:7). But one cannot "hope for" what he already possesses. Let us listen to Paul: "For we are saved by hope: but a hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:24-25). No one "hopes" for what he already possesses! "If our redemption was already complete, if there was nothing yet to be desired or expected, there would be no hope." (Commentary on Romans, R. L. Whiteside, Page 185).

Just as the end or result of living a sinful life is death, even so, the end or result of living a faithful Christian life is "everlasting life" (Romans 6:3-4, 21-23). "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life . . ." (I Timothy 6:12). But, everyone knows that victory comes after the battle -- not before the battle! A faithful child of God receives eternal life in the next world!!

Does the Bible teach that believers can be lost? Yes, if believers refuse to continue to be faithful to the Lord. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of

men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43). Who will argue that those mentioned in the verses just quoted will be saved -- even though they were "believers." Can those who are ashamed of Jesus be saved, even though they "believe," but lack the courage to confess him? (Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Matthew 10:32-33). Jesus taught that if you confess me, I will confess you; but, if you deny me, I will deny you!!

Will you listen to Jesus? "As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:30-32). Jesus' speech is continued. In verse 44, Jesus says, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do . . ." Is Jesus teaching that, no matter what a believer does, he will be saved, even if he serves Satan?? The believer who obtains eternal life is the believer who obeys the Lord. John 3:36 in the American Standard version reads: "He that BELIEVETH on the Son hath eternal life; but he that OBEYETH not the Son shall not see life . . ." Thus included in the word "believe" is obedience!

Our readers may inquire: Do you believe John 5:24 and John 10:27-28? My answer is "Yes! Wholeheartedly!" We shall quote John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life." What Jesus is saying, "If you hear -- and keep on hearing; if you believe -- and keep on believing, eternal

life, "in the world to come," is certain to be yours!" But, what would happen if one STOPS HEARING and STOPS BELIEVING?? I Chronicles 28:9 says: ". . . If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."

We now ask our treasured readers to turn to John 10:27-29, and read these words of our Lord with great care: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Does the afore-quoted passage teach the impossibility of apostasy? No, it does not! The Master teaches that those who HEAR his voice and FOLLOW him shall receive eternal life. Just suppose the sheep stop hearing and following the Master? Will such be saved in their disobedience? We will permit the Bible to supply the answer: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:12-13).

Yes, Jesus gives eternal life to those who hear and obey his commandments, and who remain faithful unto death (Revelation 2:10). The actual possession of eternal life is "in the world to come," not here (Titus 1:2; Mark 10:30; I John 2:25).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

"Thou Shalt Not Covet" (Romans 13:9)

The advertising in the print, radio, and television tends to feed the covetous mind. Many feel that luxuries of the day are a right by citizenship. Such realization is impossible because our blessings depend to a very large extent on our individual initiative and preparation. This comes through diligent learning and experience. Inheritance, and being at the right place at the right time, has some bearing on the extent of the temporal blessings we enjoy.

Looking realistically, how much can one enjoy at a time? Recently, the news media carried a story about the wife of the former Philippine president: She had left behind 3,000 pairs of shoes! It is evident she over-compensated for the poverty she had earlier experienced.

In the ten commandments God gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai, God said: "Thou shalt not covet



W. Edwin Kearley

thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's" (Exodus 20:17).

"The whole world has the same trouble. A story is told of Abraham Lincoln, the great president. A Springfield neighbor was drawn to his door one day by the crying of children. When he got there, he saw Lincoln passing by with his two sons crying lustily. 'What is the matter with the boys?' asked the man. 'Just what is the matter with the whole world!' answered Lincoln. 'I have three walnuts and each boy wants two.' Surely this spirit is abroad still today. We all need to learn more earnestly that covetousness and greed are sins that bring only trouble and pain" (Christian Herald, London).

Paul stated, "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). COVETOUSNESS is longing for something not one's own to the point it becomes an all-consuming desire. It becomes an idol. It pushes God off the throne so

Thanks, Noah!

Ronnie A. Missildine

The apostle Paul says in Romans 15:4, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning . . ." The biblical account of Noah and the flood certainly meets that criteria. Many lessons are available to us from it -- lessons on faith, trust in God, obedience, faith and works, etc., etc.

But two lessons that perhaps we have not examined so closely have to do with standing up for what is right. For instance:

We can thank Noah for proving that it is possible to live right in the midst of

great wickedness. We think things are bad now, and they are; but listen to what the scriptures say about Noah's day: "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). Keep in mind that there were probably several million people on the earth at that time. That's pretty bad! Noah and his family were the only righteous alive. But Noah proved that he could still live right and could train his family to do so too. **Thank you, Noah!**

We can thank Noah's sons and their wives too for proving that the younger generation can have enough moral strength not to go along with the crowd. They obviously did not subscribe to the philosophy that "everybody's doing it," so that makes it all right. They understood that this was a false and very dangerous standard of conduct. They remind us that before we go along with the crowd, we should determine where the crowd is going.

I know the whole Noah family was sad as the flood waters rose and destroyed all on the earth. But don't you know they were happy that they had done the will of God! Thanks, Noah, for the lessons! We will try to read and heed!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-4171.

Surrogate Motherhood

(Continued From Page 2)

he cried, "Oh, God, what have I done?" Presently a court battle rages between the seller and buyer, two women fighting for custody of the same baby.

America is entering a new market -- 'surrogate motherhood.' According to the time article (dated January 19, 1987), 'Modern contract surrogacy emerged around 1976.' An estimated "500 children have been born to surrogate parents since then, 65 of them last year." This article went on to reveal that "about a dozen centers are in operation around the country. The number is small but is likely to grow at a time when as many as 15 percent of married couples in the U.S. meet the medical definition of infertile."

Surrogate motherhood opens a broad spectrum of moral questions. This practice commercializes conception and birth. Is artificial insemination outside of marriage sanctioned by God? Is it morally and ethically right? What kind of problems will it present for all who are involved? -- and, especially, for the child?

Although artificial insemination is a modern technique, the idea of surrogate mothers is not new. Truly Solomon stated, ". . . There is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). The Bible reveals the sad story of a surrogate mother arrangement that failed miserably. Even casual Bible students remember the story in Genesis 16 of Sarai's later called Sarah's feeble attempt to make surrogate motherhood work. Because she did not believe that she herself could conceive, carry, and deliver the "promised child," she decided to help God out and employed the services of her handmaid, Hagar. We read about his ridiculous scheme in Genesis 16:2. Here was a case of 'surrogate motherhood.' Sarai attempted to obtain children by another woman. God never sanctioned this unholily arrangement. Read the entire story in Genesis 16. Needless to say, it didn't work! The son born was always referred to as the son of Hagar. He was never considered for even a moment to be the legitimate heir. He was not the "promised child." The promised heir was later conceived, carried and delivered by Sarai, Abraham's wife.

This child was Issac, the "promised child." The son of Hagar was Ishmael, and divine inspiration refers to him repeatedly as the "son of Hagar," the bondwoman. Jealousy, heartache, grief and hate followed in the wake of the whole, miserable 'surrogate mother' affair. No doubt Sarai was sorry for the rest of her life that she ever resorted to such an impossible scheme. All it brought was unhappiness and human suffering.

When Hagar conceived, she despised Sarai (Genesis 16:4), and "Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee" (Genesis 16:5). Please note the Bible says, ". . . So Sarai treated her harshly . . ." (NAS, Genesis 16:6). Hatred, bitterness and strife is the finished product of 'surrogate motherhood.'

It is against nature for a mother to conceive and bear a child and then give or sell it to another woman. God never designed mothers to be breeders!

Some obvious pitfalls of surrogate motherhood should be noted. Unlike adoptions where the birth mother has a specific time-frame to change her mind, contracts for surrogate mothers allow no chance for the birth mother to change her mind at all. She is merely a breeder. Her maternal instincts are not even considered. This is the frightening position she has placed herself in, bound by a legal contract.

She not only "rents out" her uterus for nine months but perhaps usually also donates her egg with its 23 chromosomes that are unique to her and her alone. She gives away, or sells, the very essence of her life.

Selling human beings was common during slavery. How far have we really come? Time magazine presented some thought-provoking prospects. Time stated, "While pregnancy can be as much an ordeal as a blessing, sanctioned compensation raises the prospects of some women, especially among the poor, turning to careers as professional breeders. Truly nightmarish prospects of a breeding market may be on the horizon . . ." In the "contract" the surrogate agrees that if amniocentesis reveals fetal abnormalities, abortion will be required. In other words, a "less than perfect" child will not be tolerated by the barren mother who is perhaps a little less than physically perfect herself. The birth mother agrees to have her own baby murdered by abortion if it is flawed. How ungodly is such an arrangement!

Again, Time stated, "Some fear that the poorest Americans or even Third World women would become human incubators for prosperous couples who prefer not to gestate their own offspring."

The abortion crisis has already vividly demonstrated what measures some women will take to maintain uninterrupted careers. If Christians do not rise up and speak out against such blatant abominations, who will? —185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

"Thou Shalt Not Covet"

Continued from page 3

far as the heart is concerned, COVETEOUSNESS is another act which will prevent one from enjoying the eternal joys of heaven (I Corinthians 6:9-10).

C. Leslie Miller wrote: "A famous millionaire died of cancer. For weeks he suffered intolerable agony. Although surrounded by every luxury and receiving every possible care, he died as wretchedly as a pauper. There was the usual publicity, flowers, telegrams, an expensive casket, and towering beautifully carved tombstone. After the funeral a relative turned to another and said, 'How much do you suppose Harry left.' Back came the reply, 'He left everything he had!' Yes, Harry could not take one thing with him. He worked harder than a slave. He grasped, saved, cheated, lied and where legally possible, he stole as he amassed his great fortune. He lived for self. He left all he had. He faced God without hope or plea. Harry was a poor fool. 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' (Matthew 16:26).

Covetousness is a prevalent sin. It seems to involve people who in most respects are highly moral. However, their desire to have more, bigger, and better, causes the interests of others to be trodden under foot.

May we do as our text says, ". . . thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self" (Romans 13:9).

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

WORD of GOD

New Testament

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matthew 24:27



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

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Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(No. 3)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1 & 2 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise (not a command), (2) that it was an immersion, (3) that only Christ could administer this baptism, (4) Great Commission baptism is not Holy Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences between the two, (5) Spirit baptism was promised to the Apostles, and (6) that the apostles NEEDED Spirit baptism].

Apostles Received Holy Spirit Baptism

There was no promise of the Holy Spirit to be poured out in a baptismal measure upon all mankind, nor on the multitude of people, nor on the "hundred and twenty." We have seen that this promise was to the apostles. Of them we read further in Acts 1. The last word in the closing verse of Acts 1 is the noun "apostles." Remember that God did not divide the Bible into chapters and verses. (This was done by men for convenience).

Let us read the last verse of Acts 1, with the first four verses following it, ignoring the division into chapters: "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." There is the noun 'apostles;' it is the last word in the first chapter. We read



right on: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they . . ." — 'they' who? The apostles! The pronoun 'they' refers back to the preceding noun 'apostles.' "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they" — the apostles — "were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they" — there's the same pronoun again, referring to the apostles — "were sitting." (Note that Luke does not say, 'where they were wallowing or rolling in the sawdust, or down in the dirt,' but they were 'sitting' — in an orderly fashion, I Corinthians 14:40, of course). "And there appeared unto them" — that again is the apostles — "cloven" — or forked — "tongues like as of fire . . ." (These "tongues" were "cloven" or forked, like flames of fire leaping up, forking out this way and that).

No Fire Baptism On Pentecost

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire . . ." There was no "fire" baptism on Pentecost. Good people were not promised "fire" baptism. Fire baptism is hell fire! We read that the wicked "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8). Hell is here spoken of as a "lake" of liquid brimstone (sulphur) on fire. Now, John said Jesus would baptize with two baptisms: (1) one would be the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and (2) the other would be the baptism of fire. In this context John mentions this "fire" on both sides of verse eleven (Matthew 3). He says, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit" — that is not good people — "is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (verse 10). Now, that fire is not something to be prayed for, and sought after; it's for the bad and fruitless trees. John also said Jesus "will gather his wheat" — those are the good people — "into the

garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (verse 12). Don't you see that is hell fire? "Unquenchable fire" is never said in the New Testament anywhere to be for the righteous, for good people; but it is for the wicked, and has reference to eternal punishment in torment. Later, when Jesus repeated this promise to his faithful apostles only, Jesus omitted any reference to the fire baptism (Acts 1:5). Hence, when John said Jesus would "baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11), we know the apostles were in one group, apart from those for whom fire baptism is intended — for they received the Spirit baptism, as we are tracing the account in Acts 1:26 to 2:4. In Acts 1:5 Jesus renewed the promise to the apostles that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit "not many days hence." And they did "soon" receive Him (Acts 2:1-4).

Both Visible And Audible

Thus we learn that the "fire" mentioned on Pentecost (Acts 2:3) was not real, literal, fire. Luke simply said the tongues were cloven or forked "like as of fire." He did not say they were actually tongues of fire. So down goes the theory that the apostles would be, and were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire on Pentecost! There isn't a word of truth in that idea; it is false doctrine! Your Bible says, "There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" — there on each of these apostles was a visible appearance. The multitude, when they assembled (verse 6) could all see that forked or cloven tongues sat upon the apostles. That was not something which depended upon the apostles' testimony. One apostle did not get up and claim, "I've got it!" and the another eventually arise, saying, "Well, I've got it, too! It's come upon me, too!" The audience that "came together" (verse 6) did not have just the apostles' word for their baptism in the

Continued on page 4



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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Christ As Prophet, Priest And King

Jesus Christ is spoken of in many ways throughout Holy Writ. He is called the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29); "the way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6); and Emmanuel, which being interpreted is "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). However, in Hebrews 1:1-3, the writer depicts the Savior of man as the holder of three offices: (1) PROPHET; (2) PRIEST; and (3) KING. Let us view these positions that the Master Teacher holds.

First, he describes the Son of God as Prophet (Hebrew 1:1-2). He contrasts the prophets who revealed the Old Covenant unto the fathers with "that prophet" (Acts 3:22-23), who has spoken unto us in these last days. The writer teaches that our authority comes not from prophets such as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, or Amos; but, from Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God (Matthew 28:18; Colossians 3:17; Matthew 17:5). Indeed Christ has spoken (Hebrews 1:2)! This word "spoken" (past tense) cries aloud against those who yearn to "tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21)! Those who thirst for the twisted and perverted teachings of men rather than the sound doctrine of Christ would do well to study such scriptures as Revelation 22:18-19 and Galatians 1:6-9!

Secondly, the writer of the Hebrew epistle pictures Christ as Priest. Christ "purged our sins" (Hebrews 1:3) when he shed his blood



Howell Bigham

D. S. Burnet, Architect Of Apostasy

David Staats Burnet was one of the most influential men of the second generation of Restoration leaders. He was born in Dayton, Ohio, July 6, 1808, of an aristocratic family. His parents planned for him a career in the field of law. Later he was offered a scholarship to West Point Military Academy, but declined for a life of preaching.



John Waddey

At age sixteen Burnet cast his lot with the Baptists, being convinced that immersion was the Biblical mode of baptism. It happened that Philip S. Fall was delivering a series of lessons for the Enon Baptist Church when young Burnet resolved to be baptized. It was through Fall that Burnet was introduced to the Restoration tenets preached by Alexander Campbell. Soon Burnet gained acclaim among the Baptists as the "Boy Preacher," delivering his lessons with great power and conviction.

In 1827, at age twenty, Burnet became pastor of a Baptist church in Dayton, Ohio. Under his leadership his congregation rejected all human creeds and then withdrew from the Miami Baptist Association. He later helped to organize the Eighth and Walnut Streets Church in Cincinnati. The congregation was composed of former Baptists who had followed Burnet's leadership back to the Bible.

D. S. Burnet was an energetic and industrious leader who brought forth a continual series of projects throughout his career. As an editor he published *The Evangelical Enquirer* (1830); *The Christian Preacher* (1834); and the *Christian Family Magazine* (1845). In 1837 he was appointed president of Bacon College, the first college within the young movement. He later founded Hygeia Female Atheneum in 1839.

Burnet: The Brotherhood Organizer

The year 1845 found Burnet deathly ill with a fever. As he lay recuperating he concluded, "It is our duty to organize Societies for the purpose of concentrating our means, and applying them to the conversion of the outcasts of Israel, and the sinners of the Gentiles. It is our duty to organize . . ." When recovered, he devoted the remainder of his days to bringing his resolution to reality.

His task was not an easy one. The earlier teaching of Alexander Campbell had specifically attacked Missionary, Bible, and Educational Societies, suggesting that to have and support such organizations would "rob the church of its glory, and exalt the inventions of men above the wisdom of God."² Campbell's views were modified over the years. In 1849 the great leader published a

series of five articles in the *Millennial Harbinger* entitled "Church Organization." In these he began to pave the way for major changes in brotherhood structure. Opposition from other brethren was a major obstacle.

The first organization was a trial balloon. The American Christian Bible Society was founded by D. S. Burnet in Cincinnati, January 27, 1845.³ His board elected him president. To his great disappointment, Campbell offered criticism rather than help and encouragement. It was not that Campbell opposed having such an organization; rather he feared it would drain away needed funds from his newly-founded Bethany College. Campbell also wanted to keep brotherhood publishing activities at Bethany, Virginia. The Bible Society died in 1852.

In 1846 Burnet succeeded in launching the American Christian Publication Society. He was the principal leader of this cooperative organization. Not only Alexander Campbell, but W. K. Pendleton (and others) made attacks against Burnet's projects. Their opposition was of a personal nature, for these men did not object to the organizational concept. It seems they felt that Burnet might grab leadership and power if unchallenged.

The most notable and destructive of Burnet's achievements was the creation of the American Christian Missionary Society, October 21-27, 1849. Building upon the foundation of his Bible Society, Burnet called together a general convention of representative brotherhood leaders in Cincinnati. With the skill of a seasoned political chairman he steered the meeting to adopt the following resolutions:

Resolved, That a missionary society, as a means to concentrate and dispense the wealth and benevolence of the brethren of this reformation, in an effort to convert the world, is both scriptural and expedient.⁵

The constitution drafted and adopted was essentially that of the Burnet's Bible Society. In a master stroke to neutralize Campbell's opposition Burnet saw that Campbell was elected in *abstentia* to the president's chair.⁶ How could Campbell oppose that of which he was president?

Burnet's biographer interprets his determination to accomplish his goal of organizing the church thusly:

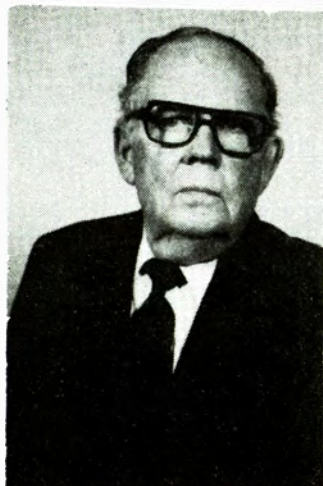
The struggle of aggressive action, even against some of his closest companions in the movement, if need be, would be necessary . . . It would be a normal, premeditated aggression, not pathological. . . he would plan how to escape the conditions which would be most disagreeable; he would disguise the significance of his ultimate aims by attacking the less obnoxious problems first. . ."

Continued on Page 3

GOSPEL BROADCAST
6TH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
8:00 A.M. DAILY
WKIJ (11:30 K.C.)

Why Preach Christ?

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8:5). What did Philip preach when he "preached Christ" to the citizens of Samaria? Well, verse 12 of this same chapter (Acts 8) supplies the information we need. In "preaching Christ," Philip taught them "the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ..."



W. A. Holley

What was the response to such preaching? "... they were baptized, both men and women." This same type of preaching led Simon (a sorcerer) to believe and to be baptized (verse 13). Thus, Simon heard and believed and obeyed the same gospel that the aforementioned Samaritans had heard and obeyed (See Acts 8:5, 12). Often those who believe the false doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace," assert that Simon did not obey the Lord; but, according to the reading

of the Scriptures, he certainly did! (Cf. Luke 8:13; Galatians 5:4; I Corinthians 9:27; II Peter 2:20-22).

It is clear that "preaching Christ" is not merely saying, "Jesus loves you!" or, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" or to spend much time talking about Christ. (Cf. Matthew 7:21-23; II Timothy 4:1-6). One can not "preach Christ" if one never preaches what Jesus said and what Jesus commanded (Cf. Mark 16:15-16; John 3:3, 5). One cannot preach Christ without preaching the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16-17). Urging people to "take Jesus as your personal Saviour" is not preaching Christ!! The apostolic teachers of the first century never taught such a doctrine. (Scripture, please!).

Why Preach Christ??

(1) Because Jesus is our Saviour. Before Jesus was born it was predicted that he would "save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21-23).

It was because of God's great love for sinful men that Jesus was sent into this world. "For God so loved the world that he gave his own begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). We suggest that John 3:36, A.S.V., be read and seriously considered.

Yes, Jesus tasted death for every man

(Hebrews 2:9). There was/is no limited atonement as taught by the Calvinist. Jesus "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; Cf. I John 4:14). Even though Jesus died for all, he offers salvation conditionally (Hebrews 5:8-9).

2. Jesus is the head of the church. Jesus is head of "HIS" church, not some other man's. According to the Bible, the Pope is not the head of the Lord's church. An unprejudiced reading of Ephesians 1:20-23 and Colossians 1:18, 23-24 will show that Jesus alone is head of his church.

The truth is: Jesus built but one church; it was purchased by his precious blood (Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 20:28). There is but one body which is the Lord's church (I Corinthians 12:13, 20, 27; Ephesians 4:4-6). The Lord adds the saved to his church (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47).

3. We must preach Christ because he is our great example. Humanity needs a perfect example and Jesus is that example. "... Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21). Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"

Continued on page 4

D. S. Burnet, Architect Of Apostasy

Continued from page 2

Other Activities

Probably more than any other man, Burnet fostered and promoted the idea that preachers should be "pastors" of churches even as in the denominational world.

His views on church membership and fellowship were among the most liberal of his day. While in Baltimore he led his church to practice "open membership" with all who name the name of Christ and walk with him,

without reservation.⁹

On July 8, 1867, while at the zenith of his power and influence, D. S. Burnet suddenly died. He did not live to see the bitter fruit of his philosophy when carried to its full end. By 1900 the brotherhood was broken. Two bodies of people claimed to be heirs of the Restoration: the one having bought the liberal approach of D. S. Burnet; the other, holding to the more conservative view of accepting

only that which is authorized by the Scripture.

Today the Disciples of Christ reflect the thinking expressed by D. S. Burnet. Their full-blown denominational structure owes its origin to the thought and work of Burnet. Their involvement in the World Council of Churches is the application of his views on fellowship. The elevation of their ministers to the office of "pastor" is the consequence of his thinking.

In this study we see the impact of thoughts and ideas on the church. We see the ability of one man to affect the church for good or evil. We see the grave danger that always follows when we abandon the principle that we can do only what the Lord authorizes in his Word.

The thinking of D. S. Burnet is yet to be found among us. If it is allowed to prevail, it will again wreck the church as it did a century ago.

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

ENDNOTES

¹ Noel L. Keith, *The Story of D. S. Burnet, Undeserved Obscurity*. (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1954), p. 70.

² Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptists*, 1 vol. ed. *The Christian Religion*, (Cincinnati: D. S. Burnet, 1835), pp. 6-7.

³ Earl West, *Search for the Ancient Order, Vol. 1*. (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Co., 1953), p. 164.

⁴ Noel L. Keith, *The Story of D. S. Burnet*, p. 120.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁶ Earl West, *Search for the Ancient Order*, p. 178.

⁷ Noel Keith, *The Story of D. S. Burnet*, p. 71.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

Christ As Prophet, Priest, And King

Continued from page 2

upon the cross for the sins of the world (Matthew 26:28; Revelation 1:5). The writer again illustrates the law of Christ to be superior to the law of Moses by saying "he had by himself purged our sins" (Hebrews 1:3). Under the Old Covenant, there were high priests of the Aaronic line who offered unblemished animal sacrifices for their sins first, and then for the sins of the people (Hebrews 7:27; 9:25; 10:1-4). However, these sacrifices could not take away the sins of man. The writer states: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). In contrast with the Old Covenant, one can easily see the superiority of the New Covenant in that the sacrifice was not that of bulls and of goats, but of Christ Jesus, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)! Furthermore, the High Priest of the New Covenant is not one of the sons of Aaron, but Jesus Christ, the "holy, harmless, undefiled" one (Hebrews 7:26). As our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-15), Christ carried his offering for our sins to the Holy of Holies in heaven (Hebrews 9:11-12). However, for one

to be cleansed from his sins, he must come into contact with the precious blood of Christ through obedience to the Gospel (I Peter 1:18-19; Romans 6:1-7)!

Finally, Jesus Christ also holds the office of King. Paul states that Jesus is "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Timothy 6:15). Christ, after purging our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3; 8:1). In this age, in which the thought of the day centers on the philosophy of "doing your own thing," man should realize that he is subject unto Christ (I Corinthians 15:24-28). One day each of us will answer to God for the way he has lived (John 12:48)! May we all dethrone sin (Romans 6:12), and enthrone Christ as the King of our life (Matthew 6:33)!

In summary, the writer of the Hebrew epistle presents Christ as: (1) the Prophet who has SPOKEN the word; (2) High Priest who has PURGED our sins; and (3) our King, who REIGNS on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

—1412 Parsons Avenue, Sheffield, AL 35660.

The Privilege Of Serving In Public Worship

As a gospel preacher have the privilege and responsibility of being before the congregation every Lord's day. But I work very hard never to take that time for granted, nor treat it lightly.



Ronnie A. Missildine

Neither should you, when you lead in any part of the worship. It is an awesome and sobering thought to think of leading the minds of God's people in worship to him. Those who participate in public prayers, serve at the Lord's table, lead

singing, etc., should regularly consider your opportunity, and prepare accordingly.

Don't take it for granted! When you are assigned to lead in these areas, do it to the best of your ability. Too often, the one in charge of seeing that this leadership is assigned, finds that those assigned have not even read their bulletin-- and are not prepared. What if I should stand one Sunday and say: "Well, I forgot to prepare a sermon for today." You say, "Oh, that's different; you're the preacher!" But my responsibility is no keener than yours!

If you have agreed to lead in worship, and have been asked to do so, don't neglect your responsibility. (1) Be on time. (2) Be prepared to do your job. (3) Be dressed properly for it. (4) Stand up reverently. (5) Put some thought into your prayer or officiating at the table. Say what needs to be said. (6) Speak

up loudly and distinctly. (7) Keep keen awareness of the needs of the people whose minds you are leading.

A fellow gospel preacher and good friend, brother Dabney Phillips who preaches at the Sansom Avenue congregation in Gadsden, Alabama, made an excellent point: "At a funeral, friends are asked to serve as pallbearers. The friends of Christ are to officiate . . ." in the worship. What an honor and privilege it is. Let us ever keep ourselves aware of the responsibilities connected with it. Let us regard it as a privilege.

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.

Bring A Friend To Church With You On Sunday!

Why Preach Christ?

Continued from page 3

Hebrews 4:15; I Peter 2:22-25).

Jesus obeyed the law of his Father. He was 'made under the law,' and kept it perfectly (Galatians 4:4; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 4:44-47). Jesus knew that when he had fulfilled the law of Moses, it would be "nailed to the cross" (Colossians 2:14-17). Jesus also was obedient to his earthly parents (Luke 1:52). In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed, saying, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42; Cf. Hebrews 5:7-9).

In his teaching and preaching, Jesus was straightforward, authoritative, uncompromising, persuasive, (although many segments of the Jewish population disputed him)

because he knew the real needs of men (Matthew 7:29; John 2:23-25; 7:45-53).

4. We should preach Christ because he is the Judge of the world. The standard of judgment which Jesus will use in his word (John 12:47-48). We shall be judged according to our works (II Corinthians 5:10-11). There will be a Great White Throne upon which Jesus Christ sits and judges the nations of the earth (Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 25:31-46). Matthew 25:46 contrasts "eternal punishment" with "eternal life," (A.S.V.). Thus, eternal life is not simply eternal existence -- for the wicked will exist eternally; rather, eternal life is eternal communion with God Almighty.

What can honest, sincere souls do to

escape the damnation of hell? In I Peter 4:17 there is a grave question: ". . . What shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" The answer to this question can be found in your Bible (II Thessalonians 1:7-9), which reads: ". . . The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

Alien sinners, erring brethren, you are not prepared to meet God Almighty! — P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

Holy Spirit. The multitude could see this demonstration of Holy Spirit baptism upon the apostles. That is why Peter says Christ "hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (verse 33). And the people could hear the apostles speaking in their language, which is mother mighty miracle connected with the baptism of the apostles in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

We read right on in Acts 2: "And they" — that is still talking about the apostles — "were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues" — That is other languages — "as the Spirit gave them" — the apostles — "utterance" (Acts 2:4). Now the apostles have been baptized with the Holy Spirit by the time we finish this verse.

Apostles Only On Pentecost

It was the apostles who received Spirit baptism on Pentecost, not the "hundred and twenty," not the multitude, nor everybody in the city round about. But let us read further: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this" — the Spirit's coming upon the apostles — "was noised abroad" — when people of the city heard that the apostles had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, or heard the 'sound . . . of a rushing mighty wind' — "the multitude came together" (verse 5-6). The multi-

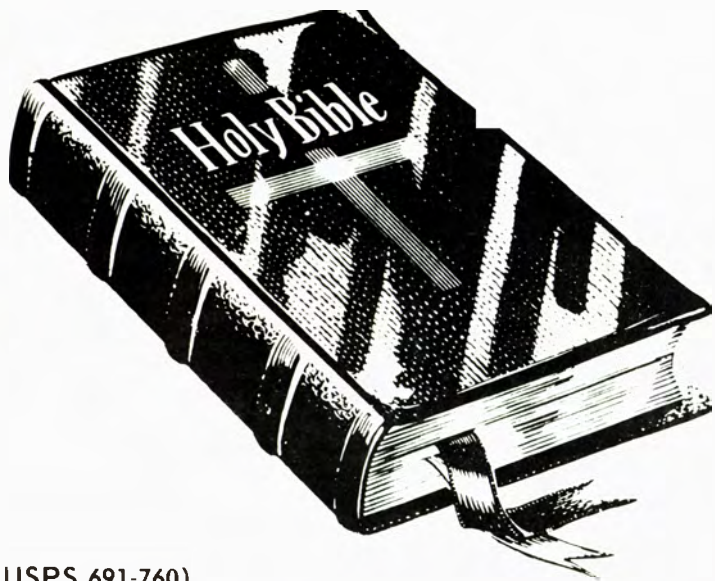
tude was not present when this great miracle occurred. "The multitude came together, and were confounded . . ." — the multitude, not the apostles, were confused — "because that every man" — every one of the multitude — "heard them" — the apostles — "speak in his own language." The apostles were enabled to speak in the languages of the people of the multitude, even though they had never studied those languages a day in their lives! "And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these" — these apostles — "which speak Galileans?" Remember, we read (Acts 1:9-11) where two men (angels) in bright apparel at the ascension called the apostles "men of Galilee." The apostles were "Galileans," whereas the multitude were from all over the civilized world. "And how hear we ever man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" They could hear the gospel as it was preached to them in their own language which they could understand. No miracle was performed on the multitude. It did not take a miracle for a man to hear the gospel preached in his own tongue when by the power of the Holy Ghost a man preached it in that tongue. This miracle was still upon the apostles, not upon those who heard.

The apostles were not 'jabbering' or 'mutter-

ing" something that nobody could understand! The multitude inquired, "How hear we every man in our own tongue" — or language — "wherein we were born?" The audience spoke different languages in the communities where they were reared; but the apostles were enabled, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to "speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (verse 4).

Then Luke lists fifteen countries from which the multitude had come. He says there were "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome," — then he explains that all of them worshiped according to the Old Testament, for they were all "Jews and proselytes," which are not places; — "Cretes and Arabians, we" — the multitude — "do hear them" — the apostles — "speak in our tongues . . ." (Now, were the apostles really 'speaking,' or were they just 'jabbering' something? Let's read that again.) "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." They knew what the apostles were talking about! They were telling about God's wonderful works in raising Jesus, and exalted him!

(Continued Next Week).



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad,
Words of Truth ar

—Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1987

NUMBER 9

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(No. 4)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1-3 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise (not a command), (2) that it was an immersion, (3) that only Christ could administer this baptism, (4) Great Commission baptism is not Holy Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences between the two, (5) Spirit baptism was promised to the Apostles, (6) that the apostles NEEDED Spirit baptism], (7) the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, (9) it was both visible and audible, and (10) that only the apostles were baptized in the Spirit in Acts 2.

How Audience Reacted

"And they" — the audience — "were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?" (There are many people who do not yet know the meaning of it!) "Others mocking said, These men" — there were no women in the group baptized by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost! The people were right there looking at the group that had been baptized by the Holy Spirit; they could see the "cloven tongues like as of fire" sitting upon them, and they could hear them in their own language as they told the multitude the "good news" (gospel) of the great works of God in raising Christ, and exalting him. They knew who received Holy



Spirit baptism that day! Some who stood by said mockingly, "These men are full of new wine." They did not say any ladies as well as men were filled with the Holy Spirit on this occasion.

Sometimes some fellow will say, "Well, God said, 'On my servants and on my handmaidens will I pour out in those days of my Spirit.'" (Joel 2:28-30). Thus there had to be some 'maidens' there — unless one of the apostles was a 'daughter' or a 'maiden.'" The truth of the matter is, Joel's prophecy only began to be fulfilled on Pentecost. Later, at the house of Cornelius, the Spirit was poured out upon the whole household, and it involved ladies as well as men. You remember that Cornelius had invited his friends and his kinsmen (Acts 10:26-27). Hence men and women, his friends in general, were present; and all of them were baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10 & 11). Then, and not before then, was Joel's prophecy completely fulfilled so as to include the pouring out of the Spirit on the handmaidens, as well as upon "all flesh" (Cf. Luke 3:6).

Returning to Acts 2, we continue our reading: "But Peter, standing up with the eleven" — Peter was not standing up with the hundred and twenty, nor standing up with the three thousand, nor standing up with a lot of men and women; but he was 'standing up with the eleven,' the other apostles! — "lifted up his voice and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words." Now the multitude must be converted by words that they must quietly hear, consider, and understand, believe, and obey, in order to be saved.

Apostles Not Drunk

"For these" — here is a plural pronoun again; 'these' who? Well, 'these men.' Some had said, "These men are full of new wine,"

and Peter said, "These" — meaning these men — "are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel . . ." Then follows Joel's prophecy, and Peter's sermon reaches this conclusion: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted," — that's Christ's exaltation — "and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost . . ." — this does not mean Christ received, after he got to heaven, the Holy Ghost which God had promised to give him. No; but he received from God the "promise of" (or made by) "the Holy Ghost" — the promise upon which Peter at that moment was commenting. What was that "promise?" That Jesus would be raised to sit upon David's throne. The Holy Spirit promised that to David (II Samuel 7:12-13). And now Christ has been raised, and has ascended into heaven, and has received David's throne, which was the thing promised by the Holy Ghost.

"And having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he" — Christ — "hath shed forth this" — the baptism of the apostles in the Holy Spirit — "which ye now see and hear." Peter did not say some apostle shed it forth by laying hands on somebody, but Christ has "shed forth this" — for only Jesus could administer Holy Spirit baptism (John 1:33; Matthew 3:11). Peter proceeded to preach further to them: "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly" — believe most confidently — "that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (verse 36).

What The Multitude Needed

Note the result of this sermon: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart" — the hearers were pricked in their heart by the gospel which they heard, which is 'sharper than any two-edged sword' (Hebrews 4:12) — "and said unto Peter and to the rest of

Continued on page 4



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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Why Study The Bible?

(1) The Bible should be read and studied because God has commanded men to peruse its sacred pages (II Timothy 2:15; I Peter 2:1-2; 3:18; Hebrews 5:11-14). The Bible is not the mere words of men; rather, it is indeed the word of God (II Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2:13).

(2) The Holy Bible contains power to save lost men and women. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16, ASV.). Thus, one is not saved by the Holy Ghost separate and apart from the word of God or the gospel of Christ. In all instances of conversion in the New Testament, the gospel was always preached by the preacher, and those who wanted to follow Christ were always baptized (Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27).

(3) The Holy Bible furnishes marvelous light to guide sinful men through a dark world of sin. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you," said Jesus to his disciples (John 15:3, A.S.V.). "It is God in Christ who cleanseth the soul, but this cleansing is affected through hearing, believing and obeying the word" (J. W. McGarvey; **The Fourfold Gospel**, p. 667). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). ". . . For thy word hath quickened me" (Psalms 119:50), not the direct



W. A. Holley

As Jesus concluded his great Sermon on the Mount, he laid a challenge at the feet of his hearers. In view of the coming judgment they must decide how they will respond to his words. Will they be as wise men? or, as fools? A wise man who builds a house will build upon a sure foundation of solid rock. A fool will build his house upon the sand (Matthew 7:21-27). So a wise man will obey Christ's words, while the fool will ignore them. It has been noted that few portions of Scripture have been more lavishly praised and few more widely disobeyed than Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

The Background

To appreciate and understand this message of Christ's, we need to know something of Palestinian geography and climate. It is a rugged land of mountains and valleys. There are distinct wet and dry seasons. The climate provides sudden and violent rain storms. A lovely valley or hollow may appear a perfect place for a house in the dry season. One would have level terrain and rich soil for a garden. The scene would be lovely and peaceful; the site easy to excavate for building. Yet in the rainy season this "Eden" could become the bed of a raging torrent. Many a fool would be tempted to build his house and lodge his family in such a beautiful -- but treacherous -- place.

Jesus' Auditors

The Lord divides all hearers into two classes. Each is building a house. Every soul is planning, preparing, laying foundations, and erecting walls. No one is allowed the privilege of being "just a spectator." Fortunately we are able to choose the foundation on which to build.

Among those who build on the sand, we see these responses:

- Those who neither call him Lord, nor obey his will.
- Those who call him Lord, but do not the things he says.
- Those who do not call him Lord, yet try to live by his standards.

The Foolish Builder

This man looked only at the surface things. He did not examine and test that on which he erected his house. Evidently he sought the easy way. He wished to avoid toil if at all possible. Sand is always much easier to work with than rock. This builder was short-sighted, not stopping to think what his choice of building sites might be like in six months. We assume that he built a nice house, but everything was just on the surface. There was nothing "out of sight," nothing to provide stability, nothing to resist the violent elements. The more grand the foolish man's house, the greater the disaster when it fell.

The Wise Builder

This man had a prudent regard for the future. He was not deceived by mere outward appearances. He expended the energy to dig deep in order to find a solid bed-rock for his foundation (Luke 6:47-48).

The Two Builders



John Waddey

The Storm

In time, a common storm came upon both houses. The sudden, violent storms of the Palestinian rainy season turned the dry beds and adjacent valleys into raging torrents. On the high ground, situated on its solid rock foundation, stood the wise man's house, safe and enduring. Where once stood the foolish man's mansion, not a trace was seen. In the valley below one saw the ruined wreckage, a monument to his folly. Usually when one loses his house to disaster, all his other possessions are lost with it. Sometimes he will even lose his family in the catastrophe.

The Application

Each accountable person is building a house. Each has a choice of foundations, only one of which will stand. The house Jesus speaks of is our house of faith, which is built for eternity. The only foundation that will stand the tests of time is faithful obedience to Christ's word (Galatians 5:6). Jesus saves those who obey him (Hebrews 5:9). Building on the rock foundation is placing Christ, his will, and his kingdom first in one's life (Matthew 6:33). One may "admire" Christ and his teaching, and yet never get around to OBEYING him. For some, devotion becomes a substitute for action. To have high feelings for Christ and yet do nothing about them, is simply to indulge ourselves. It is not enough to thrill at worship. We must be inspired enough to do something for God. And that "something" must be the right thing -- what the Father says to do (Matthew 7:21). Some folk give to Christ the same admiration they give to a beautiful sculpture, or painting, which never leaves the gallery to become a vital part of their lives. True religion must get beyond our appreciation for the esthetic, to one's sense of duty. There is but one way to prove the sincerity of our faith; that is, by our practice (John 14:15).

Luke says the wise man dug deep to secure his foundations. So we must dig through the human customs, traditions and teachings to the firm foundation of God's truth (Matthew 15:6-8). We must remove the rubble of family loyalties, personal prejudices, undivided preferences, and our own opinions. It is not enough to be religious, to be a teacher, or a great worker for Christ. We must do the Father's will (Matthew 7:21). It is not just moral evil, or heresy, that Christ condemns; rather, it is shallowness in faith and practice that he warns against.

A day of testing will come to every builder. Be assured that storms, (i.e., trials and tribulations) will come! While we cannot avoid the storms, we can be sure that our foundation is on solid rock. Houses might stand side by side for years. Both appear equally sound until the testing comes. Then the truth will be known. Without a good foundation, nothing else really matters. In addition to, and after, all the stress and shocks of this life, "we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God" (Romans 14:10).

Some Lessons To Remember

Paul reminds us to take heed how we build (I Corinthians 3:10). Religion is no place for shortcuts and substitutes. Avoid superficiality in your profession. Dig deep and build on the rock of Truth. Erect a spiritual house that even the most violent storms can not shake. Paul had such a foundation: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

“Natural” Religion

Surely you have noticed lately that many food companies are using labels containing phrases like “No Additives,” “No Preservatives,” or “All Natural.” Americans have come to appreciate the value of foods that are made without added chemicals. “Natural” foods have become top sellers at the local supermarket as advertisers emphasize the “No



Bryant Evans

Additives” label. There are lessons churches of Christ can learn from this style of advertising.

First, we should realize that people are beginning to grow wary of additives, not only in consumer items, but also in matters of faith and doctrine. Many are now unhappy with the religions of their ancestors. They find that the old doctrine of the Bible has been supplanted, changed, or has given way to new traditions and doctrines of men. These people, noble and morally good, are searching for truth. God has laid before us “an open door which no one can shut” (Revelation 3:8). Let us walk through it with a “natural” religion undefiled by “addi-

tives.”

Imagine for a moment a tiny mountain stream flowing softly from snow-capped peaks. As this small trickle of water moves toward the ocean, it passes into a large river. Soon the river passes beside a factory that spews polluted wastes into its pure waters. Now the water is dirty; it has been defiled and adulterated by man. It is no longer fit to drink, useful only to watch as it flows slowly toward the sea. James speaks of a “pure religion” (James 1:27), thus suggesting that an “impure” religion may also exist. Like our imaginary stream, what began almost two thousand years ago as the “pure” faith, has today become contaminated by men who seek to insert “additives” of their own choosing. Granted, the defilement has been gradual, but nonetheless deadly. Even a very limited look at many of today’s religious groups shows a doctrine as foreign to the pure gospel as rat poison is to apple pie.

Paul spoke harshly against those who troubled the Galatians with false teaching (Galatians 1:6-10). He also rebuked the Galatians themselves who had received the “foreign” teachings of men (Galatians 3:1). Jesus warned that “vain” worship consists of teaching doctrines that came from men (Matthew 15:9). In like manner, millions of people are today worshiping God vainly. These people are lost, and cannot be saved without true Bible teaching (Romans

10:13-17).

Exactly what is our responsibility to these people? how should we approach them? Allow me to make a few suggestions. First we must accept Jesus’ charge to his followers: “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19). Far from being a mere duty of the Christian, the performance of the Great Commission reflects our great love for our Savior and for our fellowman. Each day that passes sees more and more of these people deceived and poisoned by “polluted” gospels. We must not forget that these people can only be saved by the truth (II Corinthians 4:3; I Thessalonians 2:16).

Secondly, each should realize that the restoration call to “speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent” is still a legitimate challenge today. It is the doctrines of men that have changed, not the Bible. God’s word is the same today as it was when written. There is no more consistent, solid, or unchangeable rule of faith in existence.

Third, let us emphasize the purity of the gospel. Our faith has not been cluttered by the opinions of men and their corresponding commands. Within the church of my Lord, each individual is responsible for his own salvation (Romans 14:12). This responsibility is not, nor can it be, affected by the commands of a committee or convention. We are free from the domination of mortal man. This freedom is attractive to the masses, but only if they hear it. Paul said, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation” (II Corinthians 6:2).

And fourth, we all should pray to God that he will multiply our efforts to expand the kingdom. Jesus said that “whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13). God will guide us and aid us as we strive to spread the good news.

Our brotherhood must once again arise and proclaim the one true and pure gospel. Presently, people are responding to secular advertising that presses the “No Additives” theme. Doesn’t it make sense that the same theme can be used to spread the Gospel that is free from additives? With the help of God Almighty, His stream of truth can become a raging river of salvation. Pure, “natural” religion the way God means it to be.

—Student, Freed-Hardeman College: Box 57 F-HC, Henderson, TN 38340.

The Two Builders

Continued from page 2

shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” Nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35-38).

Remember that knowledge without obedience is valueless. You could pass an exam in Christian ethics and still not be a Christian! Don’t be like Cardinal Lorraine. A contemporary wrote that he was avaricious, malignant, cruel, and deceitful, but “full of religion.” We must get beyond the talking stage if we would please God! We must do

his will both in the first principles of salvation, and in Christian duty.

Build your house of faith in view of the great day of judgment. That is the ultimate test it must pass. Do not be deceived by the lavish praises of men; do not measure your faithfulness by other men. The words that Jesus spoke will judge us in the last day (John 12:48).

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

Why Study The Bible?

(Continued From Page 2)

operation of the Holy Spirit.

(4) The law of the Lord as contained in the Bible converts the soul (Psalms 19:7). “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.” “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness” (“overflowing of wickedness,” A.S.V.), “and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:18, 21).

(5) It sanctifies the heart and life of man. “Sanctify them through thy truth; they word is truth” (John 17:17). One’s heart is purified by faith (Acts 15:9) when one obeys the truth (I Peter 1:22-23).

(6) We should study the Bible because it cuts deeply into the hearts of men. “For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts

and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, A.S.V.). Thus, the word of God is not dead and powerless, as is asserted by those who think that the Spirit works separately and apart from the word of God, or the gospel of Christ. In fact, “the sword of the Spirit . . . is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).

(7) We should study God’s word because we do not have the right to follow the doctrines and commandments of men. Human commandments and doctrines may seem plausible, or believable, or credible to countless millions -- but those who follow them (however honest and sincere) are certain to be eternally lost (Galatians 1:7-10; Revelation 22:18-19; Mark 7:6-13; Matthew 7:21-27; Hebrews 2:3).

Dear Reader, open your Bible! Read it! Believe it! Obey it! And live its principles out in your life -- and heaven shall be your eternal home.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



The Preacher Jonah

Truly Jonah was one of the great preachers of the Old Testament. Christ compared Jonah to himself. But we have come to associate this great preacher with a fish, instead of considering him in the light of his work and character.

The ancient art in the Catacombs depicts the figure of Jonah more often than any other Bible character. In view of these attested facts, this writer desires to draw from Jonah's experiences some lessons for Christians today.



Dabney Phillips

The book of Jonah reveals the mercy and the power of God. It also teaches us that in life God gives us repeated opportunities for repentance (II Peter 3:9). No sincere student of the word of God can read this book without being impressed with the need of foreign missions. Yea, there are many Nineveh's only waiting to be told the gospel of love -- and acceptance would follow.

Jonah made the serious mistake of attempting to run away from God. God could see as well the route to Tarsish as he could see the city of Niveneh. A central thought of the Bible is the omnipresence of God (Psalms 139:7-10; Hebrews 4:13). It appears that Jonah did not like the idea of his becoming an unpopular preacher, therefore he attempted to escape his responsibility. He fails to measure up to the courage of Elijah at this point of the story. Yes, Jonah wanted to quit the battle before it had actually begun. He just did not like that "hard" place to work and preach. Possibly he reasoned that others were better men for the work; hence he sought to wash his hands of the matter. But as the story goes, God had different plans: and he was to use Jonah as the instrument for converting the wicked city of Niveneh.

The failure of this preacher to do his duty worked a hardship on the members of the boat crew on which Jonah was a passenger. The storm threatened to destroy the ship because of Jonah's presence. His disobedience also prevented the Ninevites from hearing God's word. And as long as Jonah was in the ship the storm continued! Even so, as long as sin remains in the church, the church cannot hope to prosper and to receive the blessings of Almighty God.

But Jonah realized that he was the source of trouble, and very unselfishly suggested that he be cast into the sea. We need to be big enough to say that we have sinned, when we are the "trouble spot." When the church is characterized by this type of spirit, it has the possibility of performing the work of the Master, which otherwise could not be accomplished.

One can not help but note the hand of God in this narrative. The coming of the storm, and the preparation of the big fish indicates that God's hand was in it all. God also has a hand in our lives. He has a work outlined for us that we all can do. If we will only give God a chance with our lives he will mold us into beautiful earthen vessels, vessels of service.

After Jonah was providentially saved, we see in him a different character -- a tower of

strength. He enters into wicked Nineveh with the word of God on his lips and in his heart. His subject was "Repentance -- or Destruction!" and the people of that city chose repentance. From the king down to the poorest citizen, confession of sin was made! This preacher was able to reach the masses and also royalty -- a feat seldom accomplished by a single preacher.

Just as the word in those days changed the lives of those who heard, it will surely perform that same mission today. May we have hearts that are receptive to the truth as were the Ninevites. May God give us more preachers like Jonah, and more audiences as interested in the messages as were the people of Nineveh.

—100 Carlton Place, Gadsden, AL 35901.

Forgiving Without Condoning

One of the firmest principles of God's forgiveness of our sins is the condition that we be willing to forgive others: "And forgive us our debts" (sins) "AS we forgive our debtors" (those who have sinned against us) . . . "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:12, 15,

Emphases and explanations are mine-RAM). And, even though we may have difficulty practicing that consistently, I think we all accept that intellectually.

But a problem arises when we imagine that in forgiving and accepting them back, we condone or count as insignificant what they have done? For instance, when a girl in the church commits fornication and becomes pregnant, the sin will soon become obvious. Thank God if she repents. We must forgive her and not hold any grudges whatsoever. She can and should be involved in the work of the church, etc.



Ronnie A. Missildine

But what do we say to our younger girls, whom we are trying so desperately to teach that sexual activity outside of marriage is wrong? They may be impressed with the idea that that sin is not so bad after all; that if you sin and pregnancy results, just go before the church and everything will be back to normal. Problem? I think so!

First, it is the parents' responsibility to teach their children that, although God forgives totally, and we must too, that what initially happened was wrong and sinful and that God is very unhappy with sin. They can be shown, without degrading the one who sinned, the consequences of the sin.

Second, often one who has experienced the consequences can (and will) help others to understand from a first-hand point of view that that sin is to be avoided.

Third, the church needs to continue to take public stands against such sins, while showing true forgiveness for the penitent sinner. A show of a willingness to forgive can be one of the greatest motivations for the repentance of others; but for God's people to continue to firmly stand for truth and righteousness also shows that the sin is in no way condoned.

We can abhor the sin, while forgiving and reinstating the penitent sinner. For, isn't this what we ask God to do for us?

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

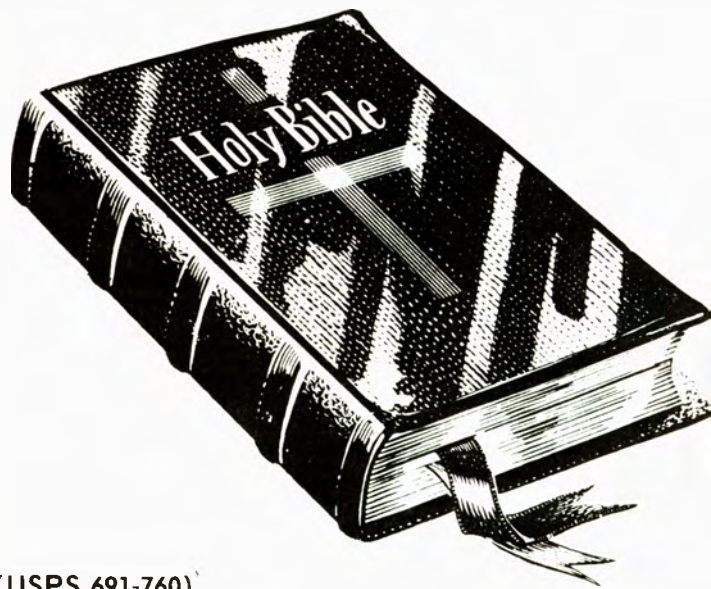
the apostles . . . " They didn't inquire of Peter and the "rest of the hundred and twenty." Neither did they ask Peter and the "rest of the multitude." But — "they said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren. . . " —and sisters? No! Just, 'Men and brethren.' "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" This question was propounded to nobody but the apostles; they were the only ones who were qualified to answer it. That the apostles were the proper ones to ask, was demonstrated in the presence of the multitude by the "cloven tongues like as of fire" sitting upon the apostles, and by the fact that the apostles miraculously preached the gospel in the languages of the people present (verse 37).

Remember that the Holy Spirit is speaking through the apostles, for "they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). The Spirit, speaking through the apostles, is now directing the multitude,

and telling them what to do to be saved: "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 2:38). "For the promise is unto you," —you Jews— "and to your children," —they will be Jews, too— "and to all that are afar off," —that is us, Gentiles— "even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (verses 39-40).

Notice that the multitude did not receive any direct revelation of the Spirit to them; but of the audience we read: "Then that that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

(Continued Next Week).



(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 10

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(No. 5)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1-4 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise; (2) it was an immersion; (3) only Christ could administer it; (4) Great Commission baptism is not Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences; (5) Spirit baptism was promised to the Apostles; (6) the apostles NEEDED Spirit baptism, (7) the apostles received Spirit baptism in Acts 2; (8) no fire baptism on Pentecost; (9) Spirit Baptism was both visible and audible; (10) only the apostles were baptized in the Spirit on Pentecost; (11) audience reaction; (12) Apostles not drunk; and (13) What the Multitude needed.

Why Were The Apostles Baptized With the Holy Spirit?

We have found that the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles (Acts 1:26-2:4), and it came upon them as sent by Jesus, and was thus administered by Christ — that Christ did baptize them in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33). Now, why were the apostles baptized with the Holy Spirit?

1. In the first place, these apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit in order that they might be enthroned. Jesus said they would "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:28-



30). They were enthroned, in power, and made to sit upon these twelve (figuratively called) "thrones" when they were thus given power. Jesus promised, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you . . ." (Acts 1:8).

2. That they might be empowered to function as apostles. We read: "Ye shall receive power, after that" (A.S.V. 'when') "the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . ." (Acts 1:8). Again: "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Holy Spirit baptism was to give them supernatural power, to reveal and confirm the gospel, the New Testament, for all time to come.

3. It was to make them able ministers of the New Testament. Paul wrote that Christ "hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Corinthians 3:6). Hence, this was to make them "able ministers" of the New Testament, by enabling them to reveal the gospel, and to confirm the New Testament, for all generations to come, so long as the world stands.

4. The baptism of the Spirit was to enable the apostles to fulfill this promise of Jesus: "Greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). After his ascension they would do greater works (not greater miracles). Holy Spirit baptism was to enable them to perform these greater works, which would involve bringing people into the kingdom of God. Remember that Christ ascended before the kingdom was established (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:4).

5. It was to confirm through the apostles the word or gospel, which "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and

wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will" (Hebrews 2:3-4).

6. The Spirit was to be their Comforter. While with them, Jesus comforted them: "Let not your heart be troubled . . ." (John 14:1). But now he says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter" (verse 16). Of course, the Holy Spirit now comforts by his promises, by teaching and encouraging us, through the apostles. They would, through the revelation of the Holy Spirit, be comforted. Hence we read of the "comfort of the Scriptures" (Romans 15:4). Paul said, "Comfort one another with these words" — words just revealed and written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (I Thessalonians 4:18). The Spirit used words; the words of inspired men are written by the Spirit for our comfort. Therefore, we do not have any direct comfort of the Spirit. Some erroneously imagine that we must have the Comforter come and do his work "in addition to, and independent of, the written word of God."

7. Jesus said the Spirit would teach the apostles all things. "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them," and "testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy prophets" (Nehemiah 9:20, 30). Jesus said, "He shall teach you" — the apostles — "all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). They could not remember everything Jesus had personally taught them; but the Holy Spirit would enable them to accurately recall what Jesus had taught, and bring it to the apostles' remembrance when needed. This prevented their leaving out something that ought to have been in the gospel, or in the new covenant.

8. Then, "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). They didn't have a line of the

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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—Acts 26:35

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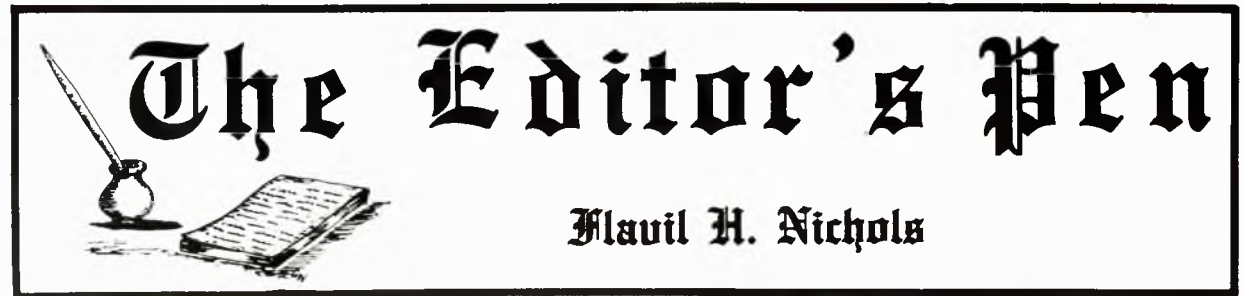
21st Annual Memphis School Of Preaching Lectureship Nears

Curtis A. Cates, Director
"Ancient Lessons in a Modern Setting -- The Book of Exodus" is the theme of the 1987 Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, March 29 - April 2. Thirty-Seven outstanding speakers will be delivering fifty-five lessons on Exodus.

Special features include: in-depth exegesis of Exodus, lessons for today's Christian, challenges to greater service, emphasis upon maintaining sound doctrine, training in teaching methods, twice as many ladies' classes, open forum, tremendous singing and fellowship, abortion and tobacco discussed by a Christian physician, practical instruction for preachers, et al. Speakers include such as Winfred Clark, Roy J. Hearn, Johnny Ramsey, Rex A. Turner, Sr., Charles L. Jarrett, M.D., Joe Gilmore, Roy Deaver, Garland Elkins, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., etc. From Walker County, Alabama, our speakers include Neil Myers, Bobby Liddell, Jerry Martin, and Ronnie Hayes. Women teachers are Irene Taylor, Lora Laycook, and Bronwen McClish Gibson.

Record-breaking crowds, over 700 in the evening, are expected at this year's lectures, as was true last year. The cloth-bound book of some 480 pages will be off the press by lectureship time and is available through the school, 4400 Knight Arnold, Memphis, TN 38118, for those unable to attend.

Please plan to attend the lectureship!
4400 Knight Arnold Rd., Memphis, TN 38118--9990.



The Mission Of The Church

(NO. 1)

[Some churches of Christ reportedly are involved in projects which are outside the realm or sphere of the work of the New Testament church. Some members --including some deacons, elders, and preachers! --apparently do not have a clear perception of what the word of God depicts as the function of Christ's church. Therefore this series of articles will set forth the work of the Lord's church.]



Flavil H. Nichols

INTRODUCTION

The dictionary defines "MISSION" as "a specific task with which a person or a group is charged." The "MISSION" of the church, therefore, is its WORK, what it is authorized to do.

The Holy Spirit guided Paul 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). Although addressed to an individual, surely all brethren will agree that this principle applies also to the church. The holy scriptures furnish not only the individual, but also the church, to every good work. Because this is true, John wrote: "Whosoever transgresseth" (A.S.V.: "goeth onward") "and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God" (II John 9). This is no less true of any CHURCH which goes beyond the doctrine of Christ.

Should Not Do What Is NOT ITS WORK

The Lord's church was never designed to function as a secular government, notwithstanding the claims of temporal powers for the Roman Catholic Church. The church which Christ built should never try to be a state.

Neither should the church seek to function as a HOME, as some radical brethren would attempt to make it. We must let the home function as a home should, and the church function as the Lord's church.

Should Be The CHURCH

Jesus promised, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). Evidently he did as he promised, for he added the saved "to the church" (Acts 2:47). Inasmuch as Christ built his church, and the New Testament lays out its functions, we should be perfectly happy for the church today to be that church and serve that "mission." In fact, no man on earth, and no angel from heaven (Galatians 1:6-9), has authority to make any change whatsoever in the church as it is

described in the New Testament in matters of "SPECIFIC AUTHORITY." This includes all matters of revelation, where God has spoken. We dare not "go beyond the word of the Lord [our] God, to do less or more" (Numbers 22:18). All specified matters which pertain to the faith, the organization, the worship, and the doctrine of the church are "settled forever . . . in heaven" (Psalms 89:37). Since "all things that pertain to life and godliness" are revealed (II Peter 1:3), not one single point of "SPECIFIC" authority may rightly be changed (II John 9-11).

Under "GENERIC" authority, expedient matters are left by inspiration to human judgment and opinion. If the method of travel were not "bound" on the apostles and others in the first century, it can't be "bound" on us. If they could use human judgment as to the place of assembly for worship, or as to which hour of the "first day of the week" they assembled, so may we use human judgment in such matters. It is just as sinful to "bind" where the word of God leaves matters "loosed," as it is to "loose" what God's word "bound." Likewise, since "TEACH" is generic, such things as Bible classes, the use of uninspired literature, and visual aids are optional. The use of either (1) only one communion container, or (2) individual containers, is optional. We may change matters which, under GENERIC authority, by inspiration are left to human opinion. It is just as sinful to make laws for God, as it is to break laws which God made.

ONE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IS TO EVANGELIZE THE WHOLE WORLD

To his apostles Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Matthew (28:19) says he told them to "go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." Admittedly it is scriptural and right for INDIVIDUALS to teach the gospel. Philip, his four daughters, and Agabus (Acts 21:7-10) are approved examples of this practice. Jesus sent out the twelve (Matthew 10:5-7), and later seventy other disciples (Luke 10:1). He then taught his disciples to pray for the Lord to send laborers into his harvest (verse 2). Today there is an alarming shortage of TRAINED PREACHERS, and other church LEADERS. Won't you pray for the Lord to send additional laborers? He asks, "Whom shall I send? who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8). Will YOU volunteer?

The Great Commission was carried out also by THE CHURCH at the beginning. Established in Acts 2, that church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine . . ." (verse 42). They sent Barnabas to Antioch (Acts 11:22) and later sent their own Judas Barsabas and Silas (Acts 15:22) with Paul to Antioch. Paul described the church as "the

Continued on page 3

Confusing The Issues

Doing what we know to be right and doing what we feel to be right are often not the same thing. This is especially true when relationships with people are involved. When we read I Corinthians 5, separated by the centuries and miles, we are amazed that the Corinthian congregation had tolerated such gross immorality in her midst. We judge only



Tim Nichols

upon the basis of the facts presented and we can see the obvious violation of God's expressed will. But those to whom the letter was addressed, those who knew the individual best, had overlooked his open incestuous relationship. The picture changes when we see him as a real person with a name, a face, a family, a personality and a history. He was someone's neighbor, someone's employee or employer, and maybe someone's best friend. Perhaps he was a "good old boy," and maybe he had a sense of humor. The members of the church in Corinth had been wrong in permitting these and/or other factors to cloud their sense of duty to deal with him and with his sin.

The history of man's obedience to God is a history of men and women who stifled their sentimental feelings while pressing on to do their duty. We all need to guard against giving in to the siren's call to ignore our obligations and to embrace those as faithful brethren who are not. To say that one teaches and/or practices error is not equal to saying that we dislike him or that we do not seek his best good. But recognizing it **does** give us obligation to attempt to "restore such a one" (Galatians 6:1) and finally to withdraw

from such a one who will not repent (Romans 16:17).

Israel struggled with the tension that can exist between what is **commanded** and what is felt.

And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land: ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you (Judges 2:1-3).

Their later experiences repeatedly showed that God's wisdom would have saved them from being influenced to do evil themselves.

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the land of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so (Judges 2:16-17).

Early leaders in the movement to restore New Testament Christianity sometimes hesitated to speak and act as decisively as they should have upon learning certain biblical truths. Their feelings sometimes tried to pull them in a direction that was contrary to the knowledge that they had attained. Robert Richardson tells us the state of Alexander Campbell's mind in 1825:

Remembering the earnestness and faith in which the church at Brush Run sought

to know and to do the will of God, while yet mistaken in regard to baptism, his feelings led him to wish to have communion with any similar churches, though they might be yet Paedo baptist. Nevertheless, he remained fully satisfied that the New Testament presented baptism as "indispensably preceding" social communion in religious acts. Thus he was placed in a strait between his conviction on the one hand that there were saints of God in all parties, and on the other that obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel was necessary to church membership. His feelings led him to recognize all as Christians who gave evidence of faith and piety, while his views of the Gospel restricted him to formal communion with those only who had publicly professed to put on Christ in baptism. In practice he was governed exclusively by his conscientious convictions, and was thus often obliged to do violence to his feelings; nor was it until after some years that a somewhat different view of the subject finally relieved him from the practical difficulties connected with this communion question (MEMOIRS OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, Vol. 2, p. 138).

We, like faithful Christians throughout history, must not permit ourselves to be socially induced to ignore the very real errors that need to be corrected in our friends. While we love them and care deeply about them, we must seek their salvation rather than court their favor. Those who compromise under the pressure of human sentiment will be applauded by human hands for having an irenic spirit. The hand that pats them on the back will be that of mortal man and not the hand of God.

—P.O. Box 512, Keyser, WV 26726.

The Mission Of The Church

(Continued From Page 2)

pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). He also said that "by" ("THROUGH," A.S.V.) the church, the manifold wisdom of God is to be made known (Ephesians 3:9-10).

Even in the Old Testament, God's word is said to be a "light" (Psalms 119:105, 130). In the New Testament, seven congregations of the Lord's church are called "candlesticks" (Revelation 1:20), whose function is to hold up "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ" (II Corinthians 4:4).

The Holy Spirit directed the church at Antioch to "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2). Upon the completion of that "First Missionary Journey," they returned to Antioch "from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them. . . ." (Acts 14:27-28). The church sent the missionaries, and they (upon returning) reported to the sending church.

Thessalonica was another church which "sounded out the word" (I Thessalonians 1:8-10). The church is Christ's bride

(Ephesians 5:23-25), and John wrote: "The [Holy] Spirit and the bride [the church] say, Come" (Revelation 22:17).

Just as Jerusalem and Antioch cooperated in evangelism (Acts 11:22; 15:22), so a plurality of churches supported the apostle Paul at one time. He says: "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service" (II Corinthians 11:8). It is possible that this support was all sent to one congregation (like Philippi, based on Philippians

4:15-17), for Paul; but it is possible also that it was sent directly to Paul. You see: if it had made any difference which plan was followed, the Holy Spirit would have told us how it was done!

It is clearly established that a plurality of church cooperated to evangelize the world. Such cannot be wrong today. Evangelism is one function of the church.

(Next: Edification of the saints).

Remember To Listen To

GOSPEL BROADCAST

6TH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

8:00 A.M. DAILY

WKIJ (11:30 K.C.)

"Brought To A Piece Of Bread"

The wise man of old has fully warned us of the devastating results of a whorish woman. The wise writer of Proverbs said, "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck" (Proverbs 6:20-21). Why should we keep the father's commandment? and forsake not the law of the mother? He says that they shall lead us, keep us, and talk with us. "The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman" (Proverbs 6:23-24).



Demar Elam

One of man's great failings today is a refusal to take instruction. Foolish is the man who will not listen to wise counsel. Ours is a time where individuals seem to scoff and laugh at

wise, prudent counsel. Ungodliness is the order of the day. It is in vogue! It just is not in fashion to seek after Godliness and holiness in daily living (Hebrews 12:14).

The liberated, free thinkers of our day will not listen to the voice of inspiration regarding sexual sins. People today believe they can ignore God's law regulating sexual conduct without punishment. They totally abandon the law of God -- only to reap the harvest of their own doing!

The wise one of Proverbs says, "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life" (Proverbs 6:25-26). Please note that God through divine inspiration states that a whorish woman will bring a man down to a piece of bread. However, the foolish man will not listen to instruction or warning. He supposes he can escape what others have not escaped.

Observation reveals that the warning of the Bible is not being heeded by a host of people in society today. Many men will disregard the warning, and lust after the beauty of a whorish woman. They allow her to take them with her eyelids; they commit adultery and are BROUGHT TO A PIECE OF BREAD. Is

not this exactly what happens in life? A whorish woman comes hunting the precious life; and a foolish, silly man commits adultery. He breaks the precious, sacred vows made to the bride of his youth -- and sins! He thinks within himself, saying at first: "I have gotten away with it" -- only to learn that his sin has come to light, and his wife is aware! "Oh well," he thinks, "it was worth it anyway," only to have a succession of events to rapidly follow. His wife divorces him due to his adultery; he loses his home and automobile in the process; his children tell him to his face that they despise him; he loses his job; he loses some close friends; he finds himself thinking about taking his own life -- and it is at that point that he realizes the truthfulness of Proverbs 6:27-29, 32:

Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. . . . But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

—Forest Park Church, P.O. Box 623,
Forest Park, GA 30051.

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued From Page 1

New Testament in writing. They had to give the world the New Testament, orally at first, then put it in writing. Without any guide, depending on fickle human judgment and memory in giving us a testament, they may have mixed and scrambled truth with error — like vegetable soup! But the Spirit guided them to give us a book of truth, without error.

9. The Holy Spirit was to show the apostles "things to come" (John 16:13). He foretold of the apostasy (II Thessalonians 2:4), and predicted that false teachers would come (Acts 20:29-30; I Timothy 4:1-3).

10. He was to enable these apostles to lay hands on others, to confer the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit on them. "Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given" (Acts 8:18).

11. By the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were enabled to make known the terms of the remission of sins. "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:23).

12. Spirit baptism gave the apostles the "keys of the kingdom" (Matthew 16:18). It enabled them to "bind on earth" what is bound in heaven, and "loose on earth" what is loosed in heaven.

13. By it the apostles were enabled to be "witnesses" (Luke 24:48). Jesus told them to tarry for this power as witnesses (verse 49). Then he said, "Ye also shall bear witness . . ." (John 15:27). Also with their own eyes they had seen certain things of which they could bear witness.

14. There was a language barrier in their way. In giving the apostles Great Commission, Jesus had said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). They could not do

creature in all the world could speak the same language. This humanly-impossible barrier was in the way, and they would be unable to carry out the Great Commission, unless the Lord gave them the power to preach in the various languages. Holy Spirit baptism enabled them to speak in languages they had never studied or learned, and thus get the gospel started among all tongues, by empowering them to preach in the various languages (Acts 2:1-14).

15. It was to establish a church. The Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:1-4); the kingdom came "with power" (Mark 9:1) — the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Peter said, "The Holy Ghost fell on . . . us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). But the Holy Spirit fell on them on "Pentecost" (Acts 2:1-4). Hence, Pentecost was the beginning — the beginning of the church or kingdom, which came with power (Mark 9:1).

16. The apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit to inspire them. They began to preach the gospel, or speak "as the Spirit gave them utterance" in other tongues (or languages). Peter said the gospel was preached "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (I Peter 1:12). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3:16).

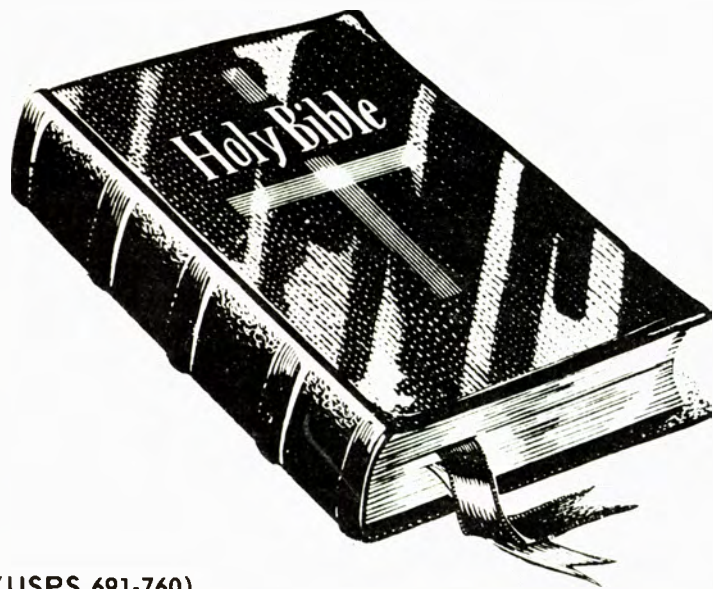
17. In the next place, Holy Spirit baptism was to aid the apostles to carry out the Great Commission. Whatever was required in the matter of revealing and confirming the great Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Spirit showed them — even things to come (John 16:13). He guided them into all the truth that the world will ever need (John 16:13). They were the "last" apostles, says Paul (I Corinthians 4:9; note marginal reading). The only current, living 'apostles' on earth are "false apostles" (II Corinthians

11:13-15). Jesus said the Ephesians had "tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Revelation 2:2). So they had lying "apostles" back then; and there are today lying "apostles" — "false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves" — as Mormon 'apostles' do — "into the apostles of Christ." They claim to be real 'apostles,' successors of the apostles of Christ; but the apostles of Christ had no successors! Paul said, "God hath set forth us the apostles last" (I Corinthians 4:9) — "L-A-S-T!"

No Successors

One function of an apostle was to be a witness; and a witness cannot have a successor. If a prominent and important witness in a legal case dies, we can't have some neighbor, or anyone else, come in and take his place, and testify in his stead. A witness can't have a successor! Since that is one of the prominent functions of an apostle — to be a witness — it follows therefore that we can have no other apostles. These New Testament apostles are our apostles tonight. They are on their thrones (Luke 22:30) tonight. They have ruled, and do now rule; they have made inspired decisions and they are on record. Every decision necessary, every truth ever to be revealed, has been revealed by them, and has been confirmed. This truth needs no new revelation; and it needs no new miraculous confirmation. Thus, my friends, when we follow the apostles' teaching in the New Testament, we are being governed and guided by the Holy Spirit through them. The New Testament apostles are our apostles — and we don't need any 'living apostles' tonight. This was one purpose of Holy Ghost baptism for the apostles (Acts 2:1-4).

(Continued Next Week)



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble rulers. I speak these words of truth and soberness."

he

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1987

NUMBER 11

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(NO. 6)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print) with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1-5 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise; (2) it was an immersion; (3) only Christ could administer it; (4) Great Commission baptism is not Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences; (5) Spirit baptism was promised to apostles; (6) the apostles NEEDED Spirit baptism, (7) the apostles received Spirit baptism in Acts 2; (8) no fire baptism on Pentecost; (9) Spirit baptism was both visible and audible; (10) only the apostles were baptized in the Spirit on Pentecost; (11) audience reaction; (12) apostles not drunk; (13) what the multitude needed; (14) seventeen reasons why the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit; and (15) the apostles had no successors].

The Case Of Cornelius

Now, let us briefly turn to the house of Cornelius: Cornelius and his household were also baptized with the Holy Spirit, but not for the purpose of revealing and confirming the New Testament, as were the apostles. The purpose of the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10 & 11) differed from the purpose of the Spirit baptism of the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter said that as he "began to speak" (Acts 11:15) at Cornelius' house, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 10:44). All who heard the word — kinsmen, near friends, all those gathered by Cornelius



(Acts 10:24) — all who heard the word. It didn't fall on just a few here, and a few there, who were 'seeking' it — nothing of that sort happened! It fell on everybody, seemingly unexpected. This was a great miracle! They could "speak with tongues" (v. 46); this was a miraculous outpouring. Perhaps it came with the noise of a cyclone or tornado, as it did on Pentecost when it was accompanied by the sound "as of a rushing mighty wind;" and "cloven tongues" (Acts 2:2-3) no doubt sat upon these also. There was some visible manifestation of it, so that Peter could say, "As I began to speak" He knew exactly when it happened! "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). He did not say that it fell on them as on us last week, last year, or during the 'big meeting' where I was recently preaching!

Only New Case

Several years elapsed between Pentecost and the house of Cornelius — about eight or ten years, according to Bible scholars' estimates. But Peter could not think of another case like the house of Cornelius between that time, and Pentecost! He had to go all the way back to Pentecost to think of another case like it. "The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). Well, the apostles received the "baptism" of the Spirit in the beginning — for Jesus said it would be that (Acts 1:5). And Cornelius also received the "baptism" of the Spirit — for Peter said, "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said" (in Acts 1:5) ". . . ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 11:16). (Peter left off — did not quote — the "not many days hence" part of Christ's promise, because the "not many days hence" part would fit only the apostles (Acts 1:5 with 2:1-4). So Peter remembered Christ's promise about the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit, and applied it to the household of Cornelius. Hence, he and his house received a "baptism" of the Spirit, like the

apostles did on Pentecost. Luke says that it "fell on all them which heard the word" — at his house (Acts 10:44).

Did Not Save

Spirit baptism to Cornelius' household was not to save them — nor did it fall on the apostles to save them. They had been out preaching under the limited commission (Matthew 10:5-7) for three-and-a-half years before Pentecost, before they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2).

It was not to give either Cornelius and his household or the apostles a "second blessing," in the sense of taking the "Adamic nature" out, and making it impossible for them to ever sin any more: because John (one of the apostles) says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

Man could note when the house of Cornelius received the baptism of the Spirit. It was a direct outpouring, like that on Pentecost, in a baptismal measure (John 1:33). Christ administered it. Nobody laid hands on Cornelius and his house as Peter started to speak, so that they received this! But it came directly from God. Christ was "baptizing" with the Holy Spirit, as had been promised (John 1:33; Matthew 3:11). Joel's promise (Joel 2:28) was now being fulfilled: God poured out his Spirit on "all flesh," which includes Gentile flesh. There are just two "fleshes" (if you please), Jew flesh, and Gentile flesh. Jew flesh had received this promise on Pentecost (Acts 2), and now Gentile flesh received it. There is no other "flesh" of man left.

Purpose Of It

Now, in view of that, we read that the purpose of it on this occasion was to bear witness of the fact that Gentiles can be saved if they obey the gospel — just like anybody else. For fifteen hundred years the Gentiles had been excluded from God's covenant grace and mercy, as revealed to the Jews (Exodus

Continued on page 4

The Godhead And The Absurdity Of The "Jesus Only" Doctrine



**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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New Commandment

After Judas had left the other apostles, and Jesus gathered with them for the Feast of the Passover, Jesus said to those who remained: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another also love one another" (John 13:34).

God used the word "love" the first time it was used in the Bible. He spoke with reference to Abraham's love for his son Isaac. He commanded: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis 22:2). Abraham had to make a choice of his two loves. God had promised to make of Abraham a great nation, and that all the families of the earth would be blessed through Isaac (Genesis 12:1-3). How could he have faith in, and love, such a God who now commanded him to slay the child of promise?

The writer of Hebrews tells us that Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead; and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death (Hebrews 11:19). To all intents and purposes, Abraham did kill Isaac; God stopped him before he did the actual deed. Then God said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything to him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." (Genesis 22:12).



W. Edwin Kearley

Continued on page 3

There is one divine nature or diety — the name of which is "God." Comprisement of this divine nature is the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. The plurality of the Godhead is seen from the Old Testament as well to the New Testament.

A FEW references to the plurality of the Godhead in the Old Testament are:

1. "And God said, let US (Emphasis mine, H.B.) make man, in OUR (Emphasis mine, H.B.) image, after OUR (Emphasis mine, H.B.) likeness . . ." (Genesis 1:26).
2. "The Lord God said, behold, the man is become as one of US (Emphasis mine, H.B.) . . ." (Genesis 3:22).
3. "The Lord said, . . . Let US (Emphasis mine, H.B.) go down and there confound their language" (Genesis 11:6-7).
4. "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying Whom shall I send, and who will go for US (Emphasis mine, H.B.)?" (Isaiah 6:8). The plural pronouns "us" and "our" in these passages reveal that there are PLURAL personages or personalities in the Godhead.

Notice a few passages in the New Testament which reveals the plurality of the Godhead:

1. In Matthew 3:16-17 at the baptism of Jesus, God the Father spoke to the Son who came up out of the water upon whom the Holy Spirit descended like a dove.
2. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus commanded his apostles to baptize in the name (authority) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." (John 14:26).
4. The apostle Peter said that God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost in Acts 10:38.
5. The apostle Paul recorded that "There is one Spirit;" "One Lord;" and "One God and Father of all" in Ephesians 4:4-6. All of these passages clearly set forth the factuality of three personalities in the Godhead.

Having set forth the factuality of the three personalities of the Godhead, let us notice the absurdity of the "Jesus Only" doctrine.

THE BASIC 'SUGARSTICKS' OF THE "JESUS ONLY" DOCTRINE

Let us examine with close scrutiny three of the basic 'sugarsticks' of the "Jesus Only" doctrine.

1. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (I John 5:7). The Oneness Pentecostals comprised mainly of the United Pentecostal Denomination would pervert this scripture and wrest it to their own destruction by adding the word "person." But the beloved John did not pen that God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were one person but he penned that they were one! In what manner are they one? They are one in purpose and unity. Permit the following "ones" in the Bible to be brought forth to help



Harold Bigham

us understand what John is saying:

A. Husband and wife are one (Ephesians 5:31) yet two people.

B. Christ prayed that all believers might be one (John 17:22) but not one person!

C. God said that the people building the tower of Babel were one (Genesis 11:6) but not one person because God said "Let us go down and confound THEIR (Emphasis mine, H.B.) language." If the husband and wife can be one and yet two persons; and if all of Christ's disciples can be one and yet be different persons; and if the people building the tower of Babel were one yet different persons; then God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can be one and yet be different persons!

2. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). They contend that this passage proves that Jesus said that he is the Father. But does it??? There is an abundance of difference in stating, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" and saying "I am the Father"! In my home on my mantel lies a picture of my Father. Suppose someone came in and looked at the picture and said, "I would like to have seen a picture of your grandfather." I would reply, "If you have seen my father, you have seen my grandfather." My father is the image of his father. Likewise, Christ is the express image of his Father (Hebrews 1:1-3). Paul stated, "In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Corinthians 4:4).

3. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and his name shall be called: Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). They contend that Isaiah said that Jesus is the Father and therefore there must be only one person in the Godhead! Lets examine what the Bible states! In II John 3, John tells us that Jesus is the Son of the Father. In II John 9, John teaches that we have both the Father and the Son. Is there a contradiction between two inspired writers of the Bible? Not at all! When Isaiah spoke of Jesus as being the "everlasting Father", Jesus is the Father in the sense that he has children (Hebrews 2:13). In Isaiah 9:6, notice the nouns, "Son," "God" and "Father." Jesus could not possibly have been the Father of himself and Isaiah speaks of him being the "Son"! Here again, their doctrine is refuted!

THE BIBLE REFUTES THEIR DOCTRINE
The United Pentecostal Denomination would declare from the housetops that there is only one person in the Godhead and that person is Jesus! Therefore, they plainly deny the three personalities of the Godhead. The Bible teaches "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-Christ, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (I John 2:22-23). John states that those who deny the Father are Godless and are Christless! John places a terrible blow to the United Pentecostal Denomination and their doctrine of "Jesus Only."

What are some basic words found in the Bible that would refute the "Jesus Only" doc-

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New Commandment

Continued from page 2

Later Moses called Israel together, and gave them the commandments of God. Among those laws was the command: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). Jesus quoted this passage in Matthew 22:37. He recognized the Father has always required his people to love each other.

Concerning love for each other, the law given through Moses stated: "... thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself..." (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus restated this command in his platform for Christianity (Matthew 19:19; 22:37; etc.). One must have the ability to love himself before he can love another. He who loves himself is one who is aware of his needs. In reality all of man's needs are spiritual. The author of the science of living is God. The textbook is the Bible. Proper love for

self requires one to know God's word to the best of his ability and apply it's teaching in all his living. Then he is able to manifest love to his neighbor "as he loves himself."

The NEW COMMANDMENT of Jesus involves the extent of his love for us. His command is, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:35).

The NEW COMMANDMENT of Jesus involves the extent of his love for us. His command is, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). How much did Jesus love us? He gave his life's blood on the cross for us (John 3:16). His death on the cross is our example (I Peter 2:21-24).

Jesus concluded, "By this (love) shall all

men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

In the early church was a man named Polycarp. He loved his Lord, the Lord's church, and his eternal soul. He lived in a time of extreme persecution. He was arrested by the heathen in power, and was called upon to renounce Christ. "But when the magistrate pressed him hard and said, 'Swear the oath and I will release thee'. 'Revile the Christ?' Polycarp said; 'Fourscore and six years have I been his servant, and he hath done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my king who saved me?'" (The Apostolic Fathers, The Letter of the Smyrnaens, Pg. 112, Translated and Edited by J. B. Lightfoot, Published by Baker Book House).

May we love as Jesus loved!

—103 E. Lena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

A "Pure Language"

Clifford Dixon

The prophet Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah. He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and the captivity of the wicked people of Judah, and he also gave a beautiful picture of the service of God in the Christian age. Through him God stated: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent" (Zephaniah 3:9). There are three things in this prophecy that should characterize the Christian age.

1. God will turn to his people a pure language. They had a "corrupt" language in their false religions and idolatry, and needed a "pure" language. When they returned from captivity in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah they had intermarried, and had a "mixed" language. These were told to put away their mixed marriages in order to get themselves sanctified to serve God with a "pure" language (Nehemiah 13:23-31). The "pure language" of the Christian age is the language of Jesus Christ. 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 truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

Peter was convinced that Christ has "the words of eternal life" (John 14:6). Jesus prayed that God would "sanctify them" (the apostles) "through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). John, in concluding his record of the gospel, stated: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). All these passages show us that the only "pure language" for us today is the word of truth found in the New Testament.

All the truth concerning Christ and our duty to him is to be followed. Feelings, visions, modern 'revelations', and all other human devices that man follows today, are but the "language of Ashdod" and "Ammon," rather than the "pure language" we are divinely obligated to follow. As Peter expressed it: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). Paul told Timothy: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is

according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (I Timothy 6:3-5).

Yet, how many are using unscriptural expressions! Do you realize that "my church," "your church," "joining the church," "getting saved," "mass," "baptized by sprinkling," "presiding elder," "Good Friday," and calling religious leaders "Reverend," "Father," and other titles of honor -- are all unscriptural phrases? They depict error, rather than truth. God wants us to call Bible things by Bible names, and do Bible things in Bible ways.

2. The second point of Zephaniah's prophecy (3:9) was that "they may all call upon the name of the Lord." "Calling on the name of the Lord" for deliverance and salvation is a prophecy found in Joel 2:28-32, and is quoted in Acts 2:21 and Romans 10:13 as being done in the Christian age. This "calling" is not done by prayer, because we must "do" the will of the Father to be accepted of him (Matthew 7:21-23). Peter told the Pentecostians to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remissions of sins" (Acts 2:38). This is how they "called on the name of the Lord" to be saved (verse 21); and so must we. Paul, who wrote Romans 10:13, had to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). He pointed out in Romans 10:13-15 that no man can call on the name of the Lord who has not first been preached to, having heard the word, he must also believe. Then in verse 16 of this same chapter he equated this "calling on the name of the Lord" with "obeying" the gospel. In II Thessalonians 1:7-9 he points out that those who "know not God, and obey not the gospel shall be punished with everlasting destruction." How important then that we correctly "call on the name of the Lord" by obeying the gospel!

3. The third point of Zephaniah's prophecy (3:9) was: "... to serve him with one consent." The Pulpit Commentary states that in the Septuagint version this phrase is rendered: "under one yoke," and literally means "with one shoulder." This refers to the unity with which Christians should serve God.

A. All believers should be united in fulfillment of the prayer of our Savior. He prayed: "That they may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us" (John 17:21). If unity is not possible, why did Jesus pray for it?

B. We should be united so that the world may believe (John 17:21). Divided 'Christendom' is a laughing-stock to the world.

C. We should be united because God is against divisions, and opposes the things which cause divisions. He hates the man who sows discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:19). He tells brethren to mark and avoid dividers (Romans 16:17-18).

D. We should be united because "God is not the author of confusion," but wants all things "to be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:33, 40).

E. We should be united because division is destructive. A house, or kingdom, divided against itself "cannot stand" (Matthew 12:25).

F. The plea of the word of God is that we "all speak the same things" and that "there be no divisions among" us (I Corinthians 1:10-13).

G. Christ died on the cross to make both Jew and Gentile "one" in ONE BODY (Ephesians 2:14-16). Jesus didn't die for divisions.

H. There is but one way, which is by Jesus Christ (John 14:1-6); and he calls it "the narrow" way (Matthew 7:14).

In order to have unity, we must love God above all else, and must seek to please him above all (Matthew 22:37-39).

We must love all the brotherhood (I Peter 2:17), sincerely want to be united, and earnestly strive for unity, as we also "speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). The "pure language" will lead to pure belief, which will mean that all have the "same mind" and the "same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10). God's platform for unity is the one body, one Spirit, one hope, one faith, one baptism, one Lord, and one God and Father of all (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Let us all adhere to the "pure language," "call on the name of the Lord," in his appointed way, and "serve him with one consent."

—P.O. Box 507, Jav, FL 32565.

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

31:17; Romans 3:1-2). Paul explains: "That at that time ye" —Gentiles— "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off" —the Gentiles had been far off — "are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:11-16). Here is a great mystery which Jesus solved. Even the apostles seemed not to understand the very words of the Holy Spirit. Their prejudice, established for fifteen hundred years, was so great that they couldn't think of any but Jews as being recipients of the blessings of the Great Commission (Mark 16:15). So, it took these miracles (Acts 10 & 11) to break down this great barrier, and to get the gospel started to the Gentile world. God planned it all, and executed his plan for us. The mystery was, "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Ephesians 3:6).

Before They Heard

But the Holy Spirit fell on these Gentiles before they heard the gospel! Peter says, "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them" (Acts 11:15). Thus it was before they heard the word. The Spirit did not, nor does he now, have to fall on people to get them to obey the gospel — that is, people who were already understood to be involved in gospel provisions and promises. But these Gentiles did not understand themselves to be acceptable; neither did the Jews think Gentiles were acceptable. It took a miracle, in the first place, to get the Gentiles to send for a Jew, a preacher like Peter. The angel said to him, "Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:13-14). Cornelius sent for the preacher; but it took a miracle — the housetop vision — to convince Peter to go over there! Finally, the Spirit said, "Go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them" (Acts 10:20). So it took a miracle to make the Gentiles send for a Jew; and a miraculous work was required on the preacher himself (a Jew) to get him ready to go to these Gentiles. But when he arrived he said, "God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). These two miracles were for the purpose of getting the preacher and the unsaved together.

So the preacher came. As he arose to speak, the Holy Spirit "fell on all them which heard the word" (Acts 11:15). This was God's way of bearing witness to the fact that the gospel is for all people, Gentiles, the same as Jews. Peter later said, "God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe" (Acts 15:7). Like all others, the Gentiles had to get their faith by hearing the gospel preached, and not by direct information or revelation from God. "And God, which knoweth the hearts" — not 'their' hearts, as you often hear Peter misquoted as saying, but — "the hearts" — God knew the prejudice in the minds of the

Jews, in their hearts; and he knew the doubts in the minds and hearts of the Gentiles. So, "God, which knoweth the hearts" — the prejudice and doubt from both sides, Jew and Gentile. "God, which knoweth the hearts, BARE THEM WITNESS. . ." (Acts 15:8). "Bare them witness" —How? and witness to what? To the fact that a Jew has no more chance of being saved by the gospel than a Gentile; that a Gentile can be saved through the gospel of Christ the same as a Jew. God "bare them witness" to this fact. How? Let Peter answer: "God . . . bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them." There is no difference in the conditions of pardon to the Jew and the Gentile! (Acts 10:34). It took several miracles to convince Peter the gospel is for those who, under the Old Testament, were "far off" (Ephesians 2:13). So Peter said the baptism of Cornelius and his household with the Holy Ghost was to bear them "witness." "God bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:7-9). That simply means that Gentiles can be saved by hearing the gospel, believing and obeying it, so as to be saved by obedient faith — just like Jews and everybody else on earth who will ever be saved in the gospel age.

Was To Confirm

Thus the purpose of Holy Spirit baptism at Cornelius' house was to reveal the fact the gospel is for all people; that God is no respecter of persons; that "in every nation"— Gentile as well as Jewish nation — "he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34, ASV). It was also to confirm this great truth. But when it was confirmed, it remains confirmed; it does not have to be proved over, and over, again and again,

every time somebody wants God's truth. The old truth is sufficient; there is no "new" truth; and there is no new confirmation of the truth. For instance: Christ was raised from the dead to prove, to declare, him to be the Son of God with power (Romans 1:4). Now, he does not have to be raised again and again in order to declare and to prove that fact, nor to keep it established. He was raised one time, nineteen hundred years ago. It proved that fact; and it stays proved! It stays established! It has never been in doubt to anyone who believes the gospel, from that day to this. So also this truth was confirmed in the gospel for all time to come.

The Report Confirmed Truth

When Peter went back to the church at Jerusalem, they took him to task about his preaching to the Gentiles: "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (Acts 11:3). Peter explained the whole thing "by order," somewhat like I've gone into detail with it here. Hearing about it — not seeing it transpire again the second time in their midst, not seeing it re-enacted, but just hearing about it — convinced the Jewish church, and all people who believe in Christ, that the Gentiles are acceptable. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18). What was the evidence of this fact? Well, the miracles connected here, abundantly confirmed it. If they proved to the Jewish nation that the gospel, as revealed and confirmed, includes Gentiles, then the hearing of it tonight ought to establish that fact in our minds without our wanting a new case of Holy Ghost baptism. Hence, there has not been a new case of it from Cornelius until tonight!

—Continued Next Week.

The Godhead And The Absurdity Of The "Jesus Only" Doctrine

Continued from page 2

trine?

1. The word "Both". "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both (Emphasis mine, H.B.) the Father and the Son" (II John 9). Both means two and John taught a plurality in the Godhead by using the word both! In Acts 8:38, Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water. Are Philip and the eunuch two people or just one person!?
2. The word "Another." "And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another (Emphasis mine, H.B.) Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." "Another" means "One more." "Another" cannot mean just one! Jesus said that the Father was another person (John 5:32, 37).
3. The two "wills." "For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will (Emphasis mine, H.B.) but the will (Emphasis mine, H.B.) of him that sent me" (John 6:38). In this passage two wills are clearly observed. One will is that which Jesus calls "mine own will" and the other will he calls "the will of

him that sent me." If there is only one person in the Godhead and Jesus is that person, then would he not have to do his own will? Yet, Jesus said he did not come down from heaven to do his own will! Jesus came to do the will of him that sent him. Again, the "Jesus Only" doctrine fails the acid test and is clearly refuted by the Bible.

CONCLUSION

"Let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4). The "Jesus Only" doctrine which is mainly propagated by the United Pentecostal Denomination is a man-made doctrine and comes not from the pages of Holy Writ! Jesus is not the only person in the Godhead. The Godhead is comprised of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. To teach otherwise is to teach a false doctrine and to be in rebellion against the Deity upon High.

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 23

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NUMBER 12

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(NO. 7)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1-6 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise; (2) it was an immersion; (3) only Christ could administer it; (4) Great Commission baptism is not Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences; (5) Spirit baptism was promised to the apostles; (6) the apostles NEEDED

baptism], (7) the apostles received Spirit baptism in Acts 2; (8) no fire baptism on Pentecost; (9) Spirit Baptism was both visible and audible; (10) only the apostles were baptized in the Spirit on Pentecost; (11) audience reaction; (12) apostles not drunk; (13) what the multitude needed; (14) seventeen reasons why the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit; (15) apostles had no successors; (16) the case of Cornelius; (17) only new Case; (18) did not save; (19) purpose of it; (20) before they heard; (21) was to confirm; and (22) the report of it confirmed truth).

One Baptism Now

Paul said, "There is . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). That was written in A.D. 64. Cornelius' case of Holy Spirit baptism was in A.D. 41. Pentecost was in A.D. 33. So, by the time Paul said (A.D. 64) there is "one baptism," the baptism of the Holy Spirit had served its purpose in (1) guiding and qualifying the apostles, preparing them for their life's work, and (2) in confirming the fact that the gospel is for Jew

and Gentile alike, thus getting the gospel going out to the Gentile world. This was established with proofs which, when anybody else ever hears the gospel message (including these "proofs" in preached form, as revealed), will satisfy all other people to the end of the world. These proofs never need to be repeated in a single case. Hence, there are only two recorded cases of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (I think Saul also was baptized in the Holy Spirit, but there is no record stating it, as in these two cases).

One Baptism Is What?

Now, in view of this, what is the "one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5) that is left? Well, it is whichever one was intended to last, and was for all people. Holy Spirit baptism was not for all. Jesus says, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive" (John 14:15-17). It is not for the world, not for everybody; it was intended for only a few, just a few necessary ones (Acts 2 & 10). But water baptism is for all people: Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:15-16). Peter, when speaking of water baptism, said, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3:21). Salvation is for the world; and so is the baptism (water baptism) upon which it is conditioned. But Holy Spirit baptism is not for the world. Hence the world is not to be "saved" through Holy Ghost baptism — and this was also true of the apostles, and the household of Cornelius.

Water Baptism

In Matthew's record Jesus says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Matthew 28:19). This baptism is for all men. It is not Holy Ghost baptism, but is water baptism instead. ". . . baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them" — after you baptize them — "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you" — with you, in what? In this work of

teaching all nations, baptizing people, and then teaching those taught and baptized. But, wait a minute, Lord: how long are you going to be with this work? "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20). This work of the Great Commission will last "unto the end of the world" or always! This baptism, which can be administered by the disciples, must be water baptism (Matthew 3:11). But this baptism — water baptism — will continue always, "even unto the end of the world." Holy Spirit baptism was no where promised to last unto the end of the world. Hence, water baptism is the baptism of the Great Commission; it is a condition of salvation, and is for all people of the earth who will accept the gospel and who want to be saved. Therefore, the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5 is water baptism.


Preach The Word

That's sufficient, I think. This explanation is as brief as I can make, yet be sufficiently clear in a time of controversy. Recently I received an eight-page document from a brother in California who has gone off into sectarianism, and now contends for Holy Ghost baptism — including 'speaking in tongues' (?) — for members of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ! Brethren, if we have any true regard, reverence, and respect for the word of God, we'd better get back to preaching the WORD! It seems strange to me that people can't see that it is easy to drift off into error.

The simple things which I have preached here tonight are nothing new in gospel preaching. The old pioneers preached them! And people back there understood and believed the truth about it. But we are producing a generation of preachers who talk about the word, and preach about the word — instead of telling people what the word says, and what the word teaches! They don't study God's word; they read after denominational preachers, and denominational commen-

Continued on page 4





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—Acts 26:35

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A Debate Concerning Peer Pressure

(NO. 1)

Alton Hayes

The Bible deals with a diversity of subjects. In the book of Proverbs there is a debate between a father and his son's "peers" on the subject of "peer pressure." Proverbs 1:10-19 covers this subject in three points: (1) the Father's Advice (verse 10); (2) The Peer's Pressure (verses 11-14); and (3) The Father's Rebuttal (verses 15-19). By examining this section of scriptures we can find many reasons why we should not yield to peer pressure.

Let us first understand what we are discussing under the terms "peer pressure." By "peer" pressure we speak of the influence that those have on our lives who are "equal; one of the same station" (*The Grosset Webster Dictionary*, page 430). The devil can paint a very glowing picture for us through the avenue of "peer" pressure. Be reminded that although this term often refers to teens, it is not only a young person's problem. The Bible plainly meets every situation that will face young, middle-aged, and old alike. There-

fore, by using the inspired word of God we of every age can face and overcome "peer" pressure.

The father's advice is, "Say 'No!' to sin" (verse 10). Solomon is speaking to one he simply terms, "My son" (note Proverbs 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1). As the wise man speaks by inspiration, he speaks also as a father to his son, and warns him of evil men and women: "To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things; who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths: to deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words; which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God" (Proverbs 2:12-17). In fatherly love, Solomon is saying, "My son, when others (your "peers") want you to do wrong say, 'No!' " There is a television commercial that warns of the dangers of drugs and concludes: "Just say, 'No!'" If we take the inspired advice of Solomon when evil people try to get us to do wrong, we will say an emphatic, "NO!"

The debate on "peer pressure" actually begins with the discussion by the peers (verses 11-14). In this section of Holy Writ this son's peers will give him reasons (?) why he should follow the peers and do wrong. The first argument is, "If you are like us you will be one of the gang." Verse 11 plainly points to the fact that they want an unholy alliance, "If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause." This gang spirit reminds one of the "vain men" that Jephthah had with him (Judges 11:3). It also sounds a great deal like Rehoboam as he followed the young men who lacked the proper experience to guide him (I Kings 12:6-14). To be certain the warning of I Corinthians 15:33 sounds with clarity: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."

The second argument by the "peers" is found in verse 12: "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit." The "peers" offered: "We will get rid of anything and anyone that stands in our way." "Grave" and "pit" are a Hebrew parallelism from the word "Sheol," (the place of departed spirits). This group of thugs was willing to get rid of anything or anybody to the point of bloodshed. Surely we can recognize that this stands in direct contrast with Jesus' teachings (note Matthew 7:12).

The "peers" state in verse 13: "We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil." The idea set forth here is of getting rich quick, at any cost. The "innocent" (verse 11) had worked to gain material goods, but these common criminals will take it and "fill our houses." In this section of debate, the "peers" offer contentment through material things. God's word emphasizes that true contentment comes from the spiritual, not the material (read I Timothy 6:5-12).

In their final argument to endeavor to win Solomon's son, the "peers" state: "Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse" (verse 14). We have here a spirit of "one for all and all for one." To this writer this

Three Views Of Woman

In modern society we see three conflicting attitudes toward the place and role of women. On the one hand we see that of the male chauvinist and, on the other, that of the feminist. God's view stands midway between these extremes.

The Chauvinist View

Seeking the meaning of this term, Webster cites us to one Nicolas Chauvin, a soldier of excessive patriotism and devotion to Napoleon; thus the example of blind patriotism. The feminists took Chauvin's example and added the words "male and "chauvinist pig" to describe any man who disagreed with their credo, or stood in the way of their goals.

In fairness we must admit that there are some of the male gender who reflect a blind and excessive superiority toward woman. They mistakenly assume that since man is physically stronger, he therefore is intellectually and spiritually stronger as well. This is reflected in some primitive tribes and social groups that reserve education for the males. In Africa, I saw churches where men did not care to bring their wives to learn and worship.

There are those who think that man's greater strength gives him the authority to use force and violence to impose his will upon women. Thus, wife-beating is still a common practice in much of the world, and not unknown in our own culture.

We see some males who imagine men should occupy a master-servant relation to women. This is pronounced in Africa, and the islands, and is still common in more subtle forms in America. In much of the third world, men



John Waddey

yet pay a dowry to the wife's parents for their daughter. This leads many of these men to view their wives as their property, to be used and worked as the men see fit.

In our society we still have men who declare that woman's place is exclusively in the home; that under no circumstances should she venture out into the work world. Some obviously feel that women do not have the inherent dignity or worth of a man, and hence do not deserve equal opportunity and equal recognition, nor equal respect and equal pay for equal work with men.

There are those who see woman as existing primarily for the sexual pleasure of men. They act as though a woman should have no sexual needs, nor expect pleasure in sexual relations. This is seen in those primitive cultures which practice genital mutilation, and in those yet holding to the puritanical views of sexuality.

The sources of chauvinism are evident. It flourishes in ignorance of God's will, and ignorance of the true facts of life. It flows out of a male-dominated culture and history. Little boys learn and imitate their father's chauvinistic attitudes toward women. It is rooted in sinful pride and arrogance in some men. Pagan religions promote the chauvinistic view, as does Hedonism (the Playboy philosophy). Even among Christians, we sometimes see this faulty notion when folks fail to distinguish between God's standards and our human culture.

The Feminist View

Feminists, being angry at the abuses of Chauvinism, are demanding total equality with males even in those areas where God has legislated differences. Observation tells us that the more radical feminists want female dominance, not just equality. As one considers the characteristics of the Betty Freidan and Gloria Steinham brand of feminism, he notes a renunciation of the Biblically-assigned role of women. Freidan writes, "The changes necessary to bring about

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Oh, Come On, Mr. Roberts!

According to the article, "Roberts Pleads for Life," in the Atlanta Constitution on January 7, 1987: "Oral Roberts needs about 4.5 million in 'quick money' from followers or God won't let him live past March." This type of "con" job, professedly in the name of God, sickens me and infuriates me to righteous indignation.



Demar Elam

This type of shenanigan turns people off regarding religion. As a gospel preacher, I'm offended at such actions by those wearing the name "preacher."

Roberts is quoted as saying, "I'm asking you to help me extend my life." The newspaper article stated that he told this to his television audience on Sunday. Roberts went on to say, "We're at the point where God could call Oral Roberts home." Doesn't this kind of thing just make you sick? Think of the number of elderly people who, wanting to do good, will give their life's savings in order to help "save his life."

Roberts was also quoted as saying, "God told him that raising the possibility of his death was necessary to get the attention of his followers." When we ask ourselves, "Is this a scheme Oral Roberts has devised to fill his coffers?" the answer rings back, "Yes, a thousand times, yes!" I pity the multitudes of people who are being "taken to the cleaners" by such tactics.

God's Word commands us, "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). God no longer speaks to man directly; rather he speaks to man through the written word. Peter wrote, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Peter 4:11). God has chosen to give man his written word to guide us in all things. God has given man "... all things that pertain unto life and godliness ..." (II Peter 1:3). The inspired word of God supplies man with all that he needs to make him complete. Paul wrote: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right-

eousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible claims that it is given by inspiration of God, and that through it, man is furnished unto all good works. It claims that it will make man perfect or complete. The written word is God's means of speaking to mankind today.

God has not spoken to Mr. Roberts, asking him to raise 4.5 million "quick money." The newspaper's article was titled, "Roberts Pleads for Life." It should have been titled, "Roberts Pleads for More Money."

People should wake up and take a good look

at what is happening. IF they would open their eyes, they would see that, almost without exception, the "big name" television preachers are preaching for their savings accounts. They are endeavoring to turn the church into a "savings institution," rather than a "saving institution."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if Oral Roberts and others like him would stop begging for money and start preaching the soul-saving gospel of Christ???

—Box 623, Forest Park, GA 30051-0623.

Facts Concerning The Bible Church

Here are some plain, concrete reasons why the Lord's church (as set forth in the Holy Bible) should make a vital difference in your religious life. You must be sure that you are a member of the right church; and the right church is the church you can read about in the Holy Bible (I Peter 4:11). In Jeremiah's day many false prophets had failed to "speak as the oracles of God," and thus contributed to the downfall of the Jewish state (Jeremiah 23:9-33).



W. A. Holley

In an effort to assist our readers to learn the truth regarding the Lord's church, we shall note ---

(1) The church was not a non-essential institution -- because "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:26-27).

(2) Jesus Christ built his own church; he did not leave the building of churches in the hands of men. "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18-19; Cf. Matthew 15:13-14). Those religious "plants" not planted by Jesus shall be rooted up.

(3) Jesus adds the saved to his church: "And the Lord added to the church daily such

as should be saved" (Acts 2:36-38, 41-42, 47). Hence, there was no "joining the church of one's choice." Do you think Jesus would add to a church not his own??

(4) Jesus purchased the church with his blood. "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). No church built by man is blood-bought; but Jesus' church is!

(5) Jesus taught that all religious plants not planted by him are to be rooted up (Matthew 15:13-14). Jesus was not speaking of tomato plants, or cabbage plants, or pepper plants, when he stated that certain "plants" are to be rooted up; but he was talking about religious "plants" or religious institutions which he did not authorize -- namely, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and others which fall into the same class.

(6) The birthday of the church Jesus established is the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection (Matthew 16:18-19; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 36-38, 41-42, 47; 11:15). The Lord's church did not begin in the days of Adam, or the days of Abraham, or the days of Moses, or even during the days of John the Baptist. John the Baptist was dead and buried before Jesus established his church or kingdom (Matthew 14:3-12; 16:18). Any church established at any time other than the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection is the wrong church.

(7) There is but one way for one to enter the Lord's church or kingdom. "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 3:3, 5). How is one "born of water and of the Spirit"? Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; and Romans 6:3-4 supply the answer. To be "born of water and of the Spirit" equals salvation, or remission of sins, or conversion. When an honest soul believes that Jesus is the Christ, repents of his sins, confesses the blessed name of Jesus before men, and is baptized "in name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," that one has been "born of water and of the Spirit."

In fact, the cases of conversion contained in the Book of Acts, are recorded to show honest souls how to be "born of water and of the Spirit." If this is not true, why did the Holy Spirit have these examples of salvation or conversion, recorded?? Who will answer??

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

**Help Us To Stop Absenteeism
See You In Sunday School!**

A Debate Concerning Peer Pressure

Continued from page 2

sounds a great deal like Robin Hood and his Merry Men. However, this perverted relationship is far from that fairy tale. To "cast in lot" the "peers" literally said, "cast in your inheritance." Doesn't this remind you of the Prodigal Son as he received his inheritance and wasted it with his so-called friends? The real crux of the matter is: How much confidence can be placed in one who will lie, cheat, and shed the blood of the innocent?

If he is willing to do this to others, will he not do this to the gang -- if the time and situation arises? One needs to be mindful of this when choosing friends!

(At this point the debate is half over. We will notice the father's rebuttal in the next installment).

(More to Come).

—P.O. Box 128, Munford, AL 36268.

Three Views Of Woman

Continued from page 2

equality were, and still are, very revolutionary indeed. They involve a sex-role revolution for men and women which will restructure all our institutions: child rearing, education, marriage, the family, medicine, work, politics, the economy, religion, psychological theory, human sexuality, morality, and the very evolution of the race." They repudiate the Biblical concept of marriage. Another feminist writes: "Marriage has existed for the benefit of men and has been a legally sanctioned method of control over women . . . The end of the institution of marriage is a necessary condition for the liberation of women. Therefore, it is important for us to encourage women to leave their husbands and not to live individually with men. . . Now we know it is the institution that has failed us, and we must work to destroy it. . . ." They reflect a deep-seated distrust of, and resentment toward, man. Lisa Hobbs says, ". . . women who hate and fear men, for what they hate is not so much man, but humanity in general. They loathe the nature of man and refuse to face the fact that it was God and not General Motors who created man and all his devices. They long for the world to be some other way, for man to be something other than what he is . . ."

The average feminist is often the product or victim of an unhappy home, in either childhood or marriage. Many of them are unhappy and resentful of their feminine gender and its natural limitations. This is typified in the large number of lesbians attracted to the feminist movement, and their close and sympathetic ties with the lesbian cult.

The leadership of the feminist movement subscribes to the philosophy of the Humanistic code. Betty Friedan, mother of the Woman's Liberation Movement, is a signer of the Humanist Manifesto II, which says, "We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural . . . As non-theists, we begin with humans, not God, nature not deity . . . But we can discover no divine purpose or providence for the human species. . . No deity will save us; we must save ourselves. Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful." Gloria Steinham was quoted in the Saturday Review of the News as saying, "By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God." They reject the idea of a supreme God to be accountable to, or a divine moral code to live by. For them, woman is her own god, accountable only to herself.

As we discuss the feminist's view, we gladly concede that not every professional woman is a feminist; nor is every feminist a committed Humanist. Not all feminists are lesbians, or approve of lesbianism, nor would every feminist subscribe to all the points above. However, these observations are fairly typical of the leadership people in their movement. It is a fact that many women have suffered abuse at the hands of men or were short-changed by a society that discriminated against women by imposing a double standard. Such experiences have pushed them towards the feminist movement.

The Christian Doctrine of Woman

Both men and women were equally created by God in his image (Genesis 1:27). Physically man is the stronger, and woman "the weaker vessel" (I Peter 3:7). Obviously, man holds no INTELLECTUAL, or SPIRITUAL superiority

over woman. I learned that in the fourth grade when our teacher seated us by our academic achievement: the girls dominated the first two rows! The number of female valedictorians and salutatorians is another indicator of female intelligence. A glance at any congregation of Christians will reveal a solid majority of strong women.

God wills that women marry, bear children, and rule the household (I Timothy 5:14). Older women are to train the younger ones "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 2:3-4).

Man has been designated the "head" of the family (Ephesians 5:23). This does not indicate that he is superior in quality or nature. Rather he has an assignment, a divine delegation of authority to do a job. Just as in the military, all men are of equal value, yet someone must lead the group; so also in the home.

Wives are to be in subjection to their own husbands (Colossians 3:18), and husbands must love their wives as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25). Christ was willing to die for his church. Happy is that woman whose husband so loves her. Husbands are to cherish their wives as their own bodies (Ephesians 5:28-29). Such would eliminate wife-beating, neglect, and abuse!

Child bearing is the obvious prerogative of women. The very term woman means literally "man with a womb."

Both men and women are one in Christ

(Galatians 3:28). There is a common salvation, adoption, and heavenly reward awaiting all.

In the church, men are designated for the leadership roles of elders and preachers. "If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. The bishop must be . . . the husband of one wife . . ." (I Timothy 3:1-2). We commit the gospel to "faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). Women are forbidden to teach or usurp authority over men (I Timothy 2:12). "Let the woman keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law" (I Corinthians 14:34). We hasten to add that a woman can do any job that needs to be done in Christ, so long as she does not do so over men. There have been hundreds of cases where godly women began a congregation without men to help, or conducted services in the absence of men. However, they gladly gave the leadership to men who later joined them. They did not violate the letter or spirit of Paul's prohibitions.

The great poem of Proverbs 31, praising the worthy woman, closes with these words:

"Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;

But a woman that feareth Jehovah,

she shall be praised.

Give her of the fruit of her hands;

and let her works praise her in the gates"

(31:30-31).

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

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued from page 1

tators; and they fill our hearts with chaff. They don't have the wheat to present!

I'd like to plead for a return to good, old-fashioned GOSPEL preaching! That is the only kind that will ever convert the world to Christ. Stop this idea of trying to get people to 'hit the sawdust trail' with a little fifteen or twenty minute psychological appeal to get them into (?) the church! Such "converts" will be ignorant of the gospel of Christ, and will be nothing but problems in our midst, to decoy, to lead astray, and to divide us up into little 'tenth-rate' sects and parties! The uninformed and untaught can be nothing but problems on our hands!

Teach the truth, preach the word of God.

Don't support a man with one copper cent who won't faithfully "preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2). Don't stand behind him! He is not a gospel preacher if he doesn't fully preach the "gospel of Christ." "Make full proof of thy ministry" is God's exhortation to gospel preachers (II Timothy 4:5). "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). "Make all men see" the truth (Ephesians 3:9). Now, we are not sent to make them believe it; but you are sent to make them see it.

But the time is up for this occasion. Let us sing.

Continued Next Week.

WORD of GOD

Parable of Jesus

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared

the tares also.

So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

But he said, Nay; lest

while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers.

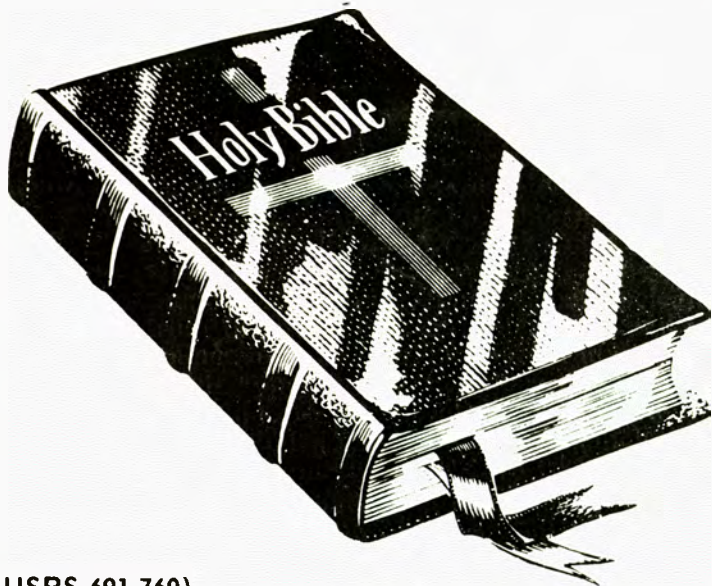
Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matthew 13:24-30

Seek the Lord!

Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.

Proverbs 28:5



(USPS 691-760)

Words of Truth

"I am not mad, mos
Words of Truth and s

ACTS 26:25

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1987

NUMBER 13

A Debate Concerning Peer Pressure

(NO. II)

Alton Hayes

Our last article noted the danger of "peer pressure" to all ages. We also noted that Proverbs 1:10-19 contains a discussion where a father and his son's "peers" engage in a debate on the topic of peer pressure. In noticing the "peer's" pressure (verses 11-14), four items were argued concerning the good they claimed would be received for following one's peers: (1) To do so would make one a part of the "gang" (verse 11); (2) To follow this attitude would enable one to get rid of anything or anybody that stood in his way; (3) The offer to get rich quick at any cost (verse 13); and (4) It will be "one for all and all for one" (verse 14). At this time we move to the father's rebuttal.

The father warns the son not to follow in the path of wickedness: "My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path" (verse 15). This is the same advice that was given by the father in verse 10. Also Solomon warns, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Proverbs 4:14). We are not to walk "in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalm 1:1). If we truly desire to do God's will our desire is to "walk in the light" (read I John 1:5-10).

In Proverbs 1:16 the father gives another reason why those "roughnecks" must not be followed: "For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood." The father warns that these peers are running to get into trouble. Have you ever considered how quickly one gets INTO trouble in comparison to the length of time that it takes to get OUT OF trouble? These trouble makers were running to their own ruin and the father admonishes his son not to follow them.

The father gives a third reason why the advice of the peers must be rejected: "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird" (verse 17). Those who set out to trap others are about to entrap themselves. Barnes Notes on this text states: "For in vain, to no purpose, is the net spread out openly. Clear

as the warning is, it is in vain. The birds still fly in. So the great net of God's judgments is spread out, open to the eyes of all, and yet the doers of evil, wilfully blind, still rush into it." The peers who thought they "had it made" are setting out to ensnare themselves.

The fourth argument offered is found in verse 18: "And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives." They crept up to the innocent -- only to find THEMSELVES being destroyed. Holy Writ warns about "the wages of sin" (Romans 6:23), and about reaping what one has sown (Galatians 6:7)! The FINAL payday for sin will be the judgment; but surely at times the consequences of a man's sin are reaped in this life. The person who decides to drink and drive, often finds this to be the case. The young person who wants only to "try" drugs, but becomes enslaved to them is another case in point. The man or woman who will "do as everyone (?) else" (peer pressure!) and have an extra-marital affair often reaps a destroyed marriage and ultimately a ruined life. Surely all these must answer in the judgment; but often some consequences of our sins are felt in this life.

Finally, the father states: "So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof" (verse 19). The father says simply, that these will end up losing -- instead of gaining, as they had desired. To those who lie, cheat, harm others and even kill, he warns that they will lose! Again hear Barnes notes: "Not robbery only, but all forms of covetousness are destructive of true life." This son's "peers" have thought that through a wicked and greedy spirit they would have great gain, only to find "they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:10). Let this be a warning to all who would seek greedy gain! This "debate" between a father and his son's

"peers" teaches great lessons on the topic of "peer pressure." If one will accept the warnings of the father, and reject the faulty reasoning (?) of the peers, he will find the truth: We must not follow the evil leadings of men. As the Psalmist wrote: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

—P.O. Box 128, Munford, AL 35268

Cleansing The Leper

Nothing terrorizes the human heart like the word leprosy! No other disease so distorts and disfigures the human body as does this dreaded disease. In its worst form, leprosy was the most loathsome condition a person could face. Under the Law of Moses lepers were ceremonially unclean and quarantined without the camp, separated from family, friends and God's house



John Waddey

Leprosy Is Typical Of Sin

To the ancient Hebrews leprosy was a living death. When Miriam was smitten with the disease Moses begged God "Let her not, I pray, be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed . . ." (Numbers 12:12). Lepers

Continued on page 4



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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Thou Art The Man

Trenton J. McCluskey

The power of being king collided with the temptations and desires of the flesh. The respect and honor that a devoted king should maintain before his subjects were chewed to shreds by his own lusts. The "deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13) brings forth more grief, all in the name of pleasure.

It is easy to look back, with the detailed view God has given us of this event. I, of course, refer to the events of II Samuel. King David undermines his servant Uriah, following his selfish desire. The grinding wheels of sin are set into motion. Powered by man's desire and greed, King David soon murdered his own servant Uriah. David, by the stroke of a pen, backed by the power of his being king, pours out the blood of his devoted soldier. David was in his palace, far away from the event; yet Nathan tells David he is the guilty one: "And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul" (II Samuel 12:7).

Imagine the powerful words which pierced the heart of the king. The king -- who could reach out and have what he might! The king -- who was caught up at this point in a turning and chewing series of events that he set into motion, and only he could have stopped. Thank God that this king was humble enough to pen Psalms 51:1-19!

Power, influence, and desire -- to some degree we all have these tools. God's plan is that our desires be to use the power of the gospel to influence the world. What is your desire?

A powerful king is stunned by four words: "Thou art the man." God gave us this story that we might learn from David's choices. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Let us combine and use power and influence with true desire for the lost to be saved.

—103 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214

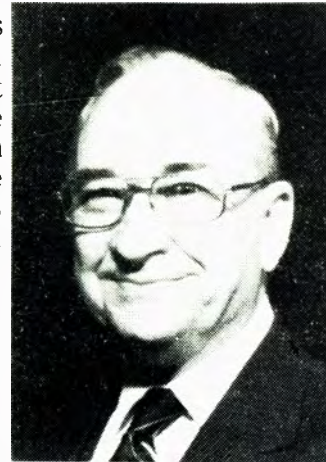


Flavil H. Nichols

The Mission Of The Church

(NO. II)

[Many seem not to have a proper concept of the Lord's church and its work. We saw in our first installment that one function of the church is to preach the gospel. Here is another biblical mission of the New Testament church].



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Church To Edify Itself

The church of Christ was in "the eternal purpose" of God (Ephesians 3:9-11).

Who can believe that God had no mission in mind for it to accomplish? no work for it to do? no goals for which it should strive? no regulations for it? We have seen that one part of its work is to evangelize the world. But another function of the church is to "edify" itself.

Christ set various laborers in the church "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:8-12). Of the church the Holy Spirit also stated clearly that the "whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (verse 16). In the same chapter the word "EDIFY" appears again: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (verse 29).

Definition of "Edify"

The word "edify" means "to build up; to instruct and improve, especially in moral and religious knowledge; to profit morally and spiritually." So by instruction the church is to build up itself in moral and religious knowledge for its own spiritual and moral profit.

Each follower of Christ should be "rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:7). Jude wrote: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith . . ." (Jude 20).

Some Things Do Not Build Up

Not all things "edify" the church. Paul wrote: "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not" (I Corinthians 10:23). The American Standard Version corrects the misplaced modifiers in this text: "All things are lawful; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful; but not all things edify."

Even in the miraculous age (the first century), "unknown tongues" --being "a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe

not" (I Corinthians 14:22) -- did not "edify" the church (I Corinthians 14:4). Being unknown to (most) listeners, the hearer "is not edified" (verse 17). "But he that prophesieth edifieth" [A.S.V.: "buildeth up"] "the church" (verse 4-5), because by his teaching the church receives spiritual nourishment, the word of God, by which we grow (I Peter 2:2).

"Charity" (or love) is one thing which is said to edify the church: "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth" (I Corinthians 8:1, A.S.V.). "Godly edifying which is in faith" (I Timothy 1:4) should be the intent of every gospel preacher like Timothy. Paul said, "We do all things for your . . . edifying" (II Corinthians 12:19). As Christians, "Let us therefore follow after the things . . . wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19).

Word of God Builds Up

To some 'Holy Ghost-made' elders, the apostle Paul said: "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build YOU" -- these scriptural elders! --"up" (Acts 20:32; cf. verse 28). So the word of God is designed to "build us up," or "edify" both the individual, and the church.

[If scriptural elders need the word of God, which members of the church do not need it???

The same apostle wrote to the Colossians that he rejoiced when he beheld the "steadfastness of [their] faith in Christ." He also admonished them: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so wak ye in him: rooted and BUILT UP in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:5-7). It was therefore by the word of God --by TEACHING: "as ye have been TAUGHT" -- that these brethren had been "built up" or "edified."

God Provided Edification For The Church

God did not leave the infant church without the divine means for its own growth or edification. We note that Christ "gave gifts unto men." But to what end? "For the EDIFYING of the body of Christ," "unto the EDIFYING of itself in love," and so that we "may GROW UP." Hear the inspired word: "He gave some [to be] apostles; and some, prophets, and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the PERFECTING of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the EDIFYING of the body of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may GROW UP into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual

Continued on page 3

The Mission Of The Church

Continued from page 2

working in the measure of every part, **MAKETH INCREASE** of the body unto the **EDIFYING** of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:8, 11-16).

"Apostles" For Edification Of The Church

From this text it is clear that the **APOSTLES** were to function for the "edifying" of the church.

In order to be an apostle one must have seen Jesus after he was raised from the dead. This enabled each apostle to "be a **WITNESS**. . . of his resurrection" (Acts 1:22). Jesus referred to his rising from the dead the third day, and stated clearly to the apostles: "Ye are **WITNESSES** of these things" (Luke 24:46-49). Again he said to them: "Ye shall be **WITNESSES** unto me . . ." (Acts 1:8). He told them that the Holy Spirit "shall testify of me: and ye also shall **BEAR WITNESS**, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:27).

That they did thus "testify" of him is clear from what Peter said on Pentecost: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we [apostles] all are **WITNESSES**" (Acts 2:32). The same apostle told Cornelius' household that "We are **WITNESSES** of all things which he did . . ." (Acts 10:39). He declared that God raised Jesus the third day and "showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto **WITNESSES** chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).

A "witness" cannot have a 'successor!' But an apostle was a **WITNESS!** It follows, therefore, that an apostle can not have a successor.

--Nor indeed are new apostles (**WITNESSES**) needed: for those New Testament apostles still function through their written word! Christians today, as in the first century, must continue steadfastly in "the **APOSTLES'** doctrine" (Acts 2:42).

Those apostles whom Jesus chose are **OUR** apostles today. Paul said they were "the **LAST** apostles" (I Corinthians 4:9, margin). Therefore all other (later) 'apostles' are "**FALSE APOSTLES**" (II Corinthians 11:12-15). Jesus complimented the church at Ephesus, saying: "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them **LIARS**" (Revelation 2:2). Those first century apostles were "able ministers of the new testament" (II Corinthians 3:6). The gospel was not only "revealed" through them, but they also "confirmed" it with miracles (Mark 16:20). "Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43). The gospel which they preached needs no new revelation. And it needs no new confirmation. Those first century apostles revealed and confirmed the gospel of Christ for all time to come. Honest men and women today believe because of the **WRITTEN** miracles of those original apostles (John 20:30-31). Thus those apostles "edified" the church then, and they are for its edification even in our day, and to the "end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20). The apostle John did **NOT** say, "He that knoweth God, heareth us **AND OUR 'SUCCESSORS'**"! But he wrote: "He that is of God, heareth **US**" [the apostles]; and he added: "He that is not of God heareth not **US**" (I John 4:6). Therefore the curse of heaven is pronounced (Galatians 1:5-10) against any man, or even an angel from heaven, who preaches any gospel different from the "**APOSTLES'**

doctrine" (Acts 2:42).

Early Church Had "Prophets" Also

Christ gave some to be apostles, "and some, **PROPHETS**, . . . for the perfecting of the saints, . . . for the edifying of the body of Christ," which is his church (Ephesians 4:8-16; 1:22-23). In the first century, Paul said the "mystery of Christ . . . is now revealed unto his holy apostles **AND PROPHETS** by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:4-5). I conclude therefore that the new testament "prophets" were inspired. "Prophets from Jerusalem" included one named Agabus (Acts 11:27-38); and two others were Judas Barsabas and Silas (Acts 15:32). Joel (2:28-30) had foretold that the Spirit would enable some "daughters" and some "handmaidens" to "**PROPHECY**." Accordingly, we read of Philip whose four daughters did "prophecy" (Acts 21:9). However this does not authorize or justify women 'preachers,' because the same Holy Spirit does not permit women to "teach, nor to usurp authority over the man" (I Timothy 2:12). It must be some other kind of 'spirit' that causes women to ignore or to violate the Holy Spirit's restrictions.

In the absence of the written word, inspired "Prophets" were given to the church in the first century for the "edifying," or building up, of the church. Their **TEACHING** was inspired -- although their **LIVING** was not. Like Balaam (Numbers 22:35), they had to teach the word which God gave them, for the Spirit "guided" them into the truth (compare John 16:13).

By the Spirit the apostle Paul foretold that "prophecies" and other miraculous gifts would "fail," "cease," "vanish away," and "be done away" when the complete will of God was revealed and confirmed in the written New Testament -- "when that which is perfect [complete] is come" (I Corinthians 13:8-13).

Some Edified Who Were Not Inspired

"Evangelists" were also given by our Lord to his church for its edification (Ephesians 4:11-16). "Evangelists" seem not to have been inspired, but learned from the apostles and other inspired teachers (Acts 2:42, 46). Timothy was directed to "give attendance to reading" (I Timothy 4:16), and to "do the work of an **EVANGELIST**" (II Timothy 4:5). That he was not inspired seems clear from the fact that he had "**LEARNED**" the gospel from Paul (II Timothy 2:2), just as he was to pass **THAT SAME MESSAGE** on to others -- who also would be uninspired. Such teachers then, and today, are "for the **EDIFYING**" of the church of Christ. Each person who has been taught shares a responsibility -- and privilege-- to teach others also (II Timothy 2:2).

"Pastors" To Edify

"Pastors" is another name for "Elders," or "Bishops" (Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-3). For one to be appointed to this office, it was not necessary for him to be inspired (I Timothy 3:1-7). The fact that they were capable of teaching error (Acts 20:29-31) shows that they were **NOT** inspired. Who supposes it was possible for one miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit to teach false doctrine?

"Teachers" Given To Edify The Body

Notice that Christ gave to edify (build up) the church (1) apostles, (2) prophets, (3) evangelists, (4) pastors, and (5) Teachers (Ephesians 4:11-16). Does not the very nature of their functions tell us something about

HOW, and **WITH WHAT**, the Lord's church can be 'built up,' or 'edified'?? This is to be accomplished by **TEACHERS** through their **TEACHING!** Only by continuing steadfastly in the "apostles' teaching" (Acts 2:42, A.S.V.) can we be edified or strengthened in the way of God. Swimming pools, ball teams, and spaghetti suppers do not in and of themselves 'build up' the church!!! It comes, therefore, as no surprise to hear the apostle Paul's admonition: "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (I Timothy 4:13, A.S.V.). That apostle wrote to a young uninspired preacher: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" [A.S.V.: "teaching"]; "continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:15-16). In the first century the Troas church could use a visiting teacher when Paul was in town (Acts 20:6-7). So today the church may use a teacher from another congregation. Philip taught at Samaria, and on the Gaza road below Jerusalem (Acts 8). Neither Barnabas nor Saul lived at Antioch, yet for a whole year they "taught much people" in that city (Acts 11:26).

Modern Methods But the Ancient Message

While being scrupulously honest with the brethren to teach only "the gospel of Christ" --without addition, subtraction, or crook! --we may freely utilize modern methods in such teaching. We may use the printed page, just as you now are reading this article in **Words Of Truth**. The gospel may be preached over radio, or on TV. Bible class workbooks may be helpful in class teaching situations, and personal house-to-house studies are fine to edify the church. We also build up each other by singing, for Paul said singing functions as mutual edification (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). We build each other up as we speak the word, as we read the Bible in the assembly, or as we make Bible talks to the congregation.

In most congregations there is great need for exhorters to "edify" the church. "Let us exhort one another daily," and "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works . . ." (Hebrews 3:13; 10:24-25). To "provoke" is to excite, stir up, or rouse the careless and indifferent. This will "edify" the individual; and it will also "build up" the congregation.

Let us re-dedicate ourselves to the task of strengthening or **EDIFYING** one another.

"The Unity Of The Spirit"

Plans are progressing well for the fifth annual **MISSOURI-KANSAS LECTURES**. The lectures will be held September 20-24. Interest from many areas is already high.

Below we have listed the names of those who are to participate in the lectures this year. We are sure you will be able to see that men of such ability as these will surely help in providing a truly edifying week of Bible study. Several of these men will also participate in a daily forum, Monday thru Thursday, in which they will address written questions submitted on the topic of unity.

Continued on page 4

Cleansing The Leper

Continued from page 1

were described as "walking tombs." Josephus writes that the law excluded lepers from civil life as being "in no wise different from the dead."

An added burden of the leper was the alienation it imposed, "All the days wherein the plague is in him he shall be unclean; . . . he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his dwelling be" (Leviticus 13:46). So sin affects us, alienating us from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Sin results in spiritual death.

Leprosy Begins With A Small Spot

"When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, or a scab, or a bright spot, and it become . . . the plague of leprosy . . ." he would be declared "unclean." While the disease began in this small unostensible way, if not arrested, the consequences were fatal. Sin begins its work in a similar fashion: One seldom becomes a "great" sinner all at once. Sin begins its growth in small and imperceptible ways: first the thought; then the desire; finally the sin. There would be no drunkards were it not for the first drink. There would be no gamblers if no one placed the first bet.

That "bright spot" of sin appears in every human life, and that right early. David wrote "The wicked are estranged from the womb: They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies" (Psalms 58:3). While we would not understand the hyperbole literally, observation tells us that youngsters soon are affected by sin around them. Paul tells us that all are "under sin." "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:9-10). Because of the widespread prevalence of sin, and because of its destructive power, we owe it to our children to teach them the dangers thereof (II Timothy 2:22). They must learn of the only cure -- which is the saving blood of Jesus (I John 1:7).

Lepers Were Cleansed Outside the Camp

"This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest; and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; . . . and, behold if the plague of leprosy be healed . . ." (Leviticus 14:2-3). Because of his uncleanness, the leper could not come into the Lord's assembly, therefore the Lord's representative went out to him. This vividly reminds us of the distance between God and unforgiven sinners: 'separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers, from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world' (Ephesians 2:11-12). Like the leper, a sinner cannot cleanse himself; another must do that. Rather than cleanse us, "all our righteousness are as a polluted garment" (Isaiah 64:6). Works of righteousness will not do the job (Titus 3:5). God sent his priest to the leper; and he sent his Son to save sinners. "Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:9-10). The Scriptures are not a story of mankind's search for God; rather, they tell of God's search for us!

The Ceremony Of Cleansing

"Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two living clean birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet and hyssop; and the priest shall command to kill

one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean and shall let the living bird into the open field" (Leviticus 14:4-7). Before he could be acceptable to God, the leper needed purification and atonement. God taught Israel: "For the life is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life" (Leviticus 17:11).

The living bird dipped in the shed blood and then freed, represents the taking away of our sins by our Savior. During his earthly ministry he was our sacrifice, whose blood was shed. In heaven where he now reigns, he is our high priest who offers the sacrifice on our behalf

(Hebrews 9:11-14).

The cleansing of the leper's flesh typifies the cleansing of our spirit by Christ. The leper was publicly unclean; now he must be publicly declared clean. Only through the shedding of innocent blood and the public ceremony of cleansing could he be made acceptable and allowed to enter God's assembly. So must we contact the cleansing, saving blood of Jesus by the ceremony of baptism into his death (Romans 6:3), in order to be saved, cleansed and allowed into God's presence (Hebrews 10:19-22).

Jesus loved "us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood . . . to him be the glory and dominion for ever" (Revelation 1:5-6). For two things we give our thanks to God: 1) That in our land in this age, leprosy is no threat to our health. 2) That even the leprosy of sin can be readily removed by the blood of our Lord Jesus.

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

"..The Lord's...Compassions Fail Not"

The Prophet Jeremiah wept bitterly for the sins of his people. The book of Lamentations records those deep sorrows. But even though it is a sorrowful book, Jeremiah does not lose perspective on life and God's continual care. In Lamentations 3:22-24, he says: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his



Ronnie A. Missildine

compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore I will hope in him."

In times of trial and trouble when it seems that life will overwhelm us, we must not lose hope in our God and his help and protection. The passage assures us that because

of God's favor and mercy toward us, we are not utterly consumed. The reason? Because his compassions, his love, care, and keeping, do not and will not fail us.

But note that they are not hard to see and comprehend; they do not go far away from us. Rather, ". . . they are new every morning!" WHAT A COMFORT! (Maybe that's why I like mornings so well)! Everything does seem fresh and new. Even my troubles and worries don't seem as keen in the morning. But I think more than MY feelings is his providential care for me. He renews his efforts every day.

His faithfulness (steadfastness towards me) is great, large, abundant! The Hebrew writer restates God's promise to Moses and applies it to the faithful Christian, ". . . 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.'" — Hebrews 13:5-6

Aren't you glad that the Lord's compassions fail not? We can depend on him as long as we are faithful! Therefore let us hope in him.

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.

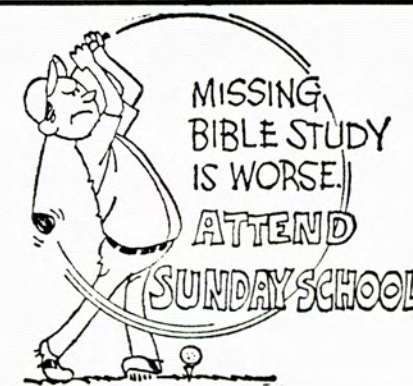
"The Unity Of The Spirit"

Continued from page 3

Speakers for the 1987 MISSOURI-KANSAS ECUMENICAL CONFERENCES are: Curtis Cates, Charles Coats, C. Davidson, Mac Deaver, Roy C. Deaver, David Deffenbaugh, Don Deffenbaugh, Glen Elliott, Dean Fugett, Bill Goring, Bill Graddy, Richard Massey, Dub McClish, Jim O'Connor, Oran Rhodes, Marvin Rickett, Toney Smith, Garry Stanton, Dick Sztanyo, Robert Taylor, Louie Ward, Randy Watson, Dan Winkler, Wendell Winkler, Michael Wyatt, and Jack H. Williams.

In addition to the above, we will also have a ladies class each weekday afternoon which will be taught by Judy O'Connor of Blue Springs, MO, Pat Surles of Arlington, Texas, Irene Taylor of Ripley, Tennessee and Susie Wyatt of Stephenville, Texas.

We encourage you to begin to make plans now that you will be able to attend this valuable series of studies.





Words Of Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

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VOLUME 23

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NUMBER 14

The Instrumental Music Question

(No. 1)

[This will be a three part series designed to look at some data to help sincere Bible students decide about the instrumental music question].

Without doubt, the question of the kind of music authorized by the New Testament for acceptable worship in the corporate church has been one of the most debated issues in the Restoration Movement. But the issue is not a nineteenth or twentieth century disagreement; it relates to New Testament authority. Anyone who believes this



Charles Cook

debate came out of the "Restoration Movement" only, and that questions about using instruments of music in worship had no part in earlier church history, is not very well informed on the matter.

There are many younger (present) generation members of the church who see the matter as a "position taken by old timers," and who believe that within another generation the church will (in good faith) incorporate the use of instrumental music into its worship. Even a casual observation of present trends in our brotherhood should convince us that attitudes toward the instrument in worship are changing. Youngsters being reared in the church are asking their parents about the question, and in many cases are not convinced by the answers given. New converts are all too often inadequately taught about why we do not use the instrument. Many quartets and singing groups have been organized (in some cases to entertain us and give us a sense of identity with the world), and many of these groups try hard to make their voices sound just

like mechanical instruments. Is this done to prove that acappella music, if rendered well, can sound as good as instrumental music? Or, are we subconsciously moving toward the use of the instrument?

Let me inject this: outside the worship, I am not opposed to, nor offended by, quartets and singing groups. I know of many with sincere motives who seek only to serve and edify the Lord's Cause.

The New Testament itself alludes to music of any kind in only a few places. In every place where worship is the context, it always specifies a cappella music. There are also a number of references to the subject of music in church history, a few of which are germane to this report. As early as A.D. 190 a Christian named Clement of Alexandria wrote, "We make use of only one organ or instrument, even the peaceful word, with which we honor God; no longer with the old psaltry, trumpet, drum or pipe."

Dr. Frederic Ritter, Director of the School of Music at Vassar College, relates: "We have no real knowledge of the exact character of the music which formed a part of the religious devotion of the first Christian congregation. It was, however, purely vocal. Instrumental music was excluded, at first, as having been used by the Romans at their depraved festivities; and everything reminding them of heathen worship could not be endured by the new religionists" (*History of Music From The Christian Era To The Present Time*, page 28). Additionally, we might observe that common sense dictates that they primarily excluded it because it was not apostolically authorized.

According to *The American Encyclopedia*, a Pope Vitalian introduced the instrument of music into the churches of Southern Europe in the latter part of the Seventh Century (Volume XII, page 688). The *McClintock and Strong Cyclopedia* agrees that the instrument was introduced into Christian worship in the late Seventh Century. Schaff-Herzog states,

"The absence of instrumental music from the church for centuries after the apostles and the sentiment regarding it which pervades the writings of the fathers are unaccountable, if in the apostolic church such music was used" (Volume III, page 1961).


Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, and other Reformation leaders, all spoke negatively about the use of instrumental music in worship. John Wesley, whose brother Charles wrote many of our fine hymns, stated: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels provided they are neither seen nor heard." John Calvin compared the use of the instrument in worship to "the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law." He further said that he much preferred "the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostles," namely, simple a cappella music.

The question of music was a part of Luther's revolt against the Catholic Church. A portion of his ninety-five objections which he nailed to the church door at Wittenburg, Germany, (1517) involved criticism of the music used in Catholic mass. However, the issue of music took a back-seat to so many other controversies of that period it was hardly ever discussed. When the various factions began to form into denominations (1517 to 1684), the use of instruments of music was automatically assumed, just as were many other unscriptural practices of Catholicism.

[In the next installment we will take a look at some of the debates that came out of the early Restoration Movement over using instruments of music in worship].

—Kona Church of Christ, P.O. Box 803, Kailua - Kona, Hawaii 96745.

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—Acts 26:35

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Dr. C.P. Roland Lecture Series April 23 At Freed Hardeman College

E. Claude Gardner, President

The department of history and political science at Freed-Hardeman College and the West Tennessee Historical Society will co-host the first Dr. C. P. Roland Lecture Series. The event is set for April 23 at 7 p.m. in Loyd Auditorium on campus. All students and community residents are invited to attend.

President E. Claude Gardner proposed the idea to have this one-day one-lecture series in honor of Dr. C. P. Roland. Dr. Roland "had not only broad religious knowledge and interests, but he also had a real interest in current events, history and happenings of the world," stated President Gardner. "The lecture series will be a way of helping the college community keep abreast with the current problems facing the world," continued Gardner.

Dr. C. P. Roland's son, Dr. Charles Roland, will address the subject "A Citizens Soldier Remembers World War II." Dr. Charles Roland attended Freed-Hardeman College, Vanderbilt University and Louisiana State University. He has taught at several universities across the nation. In 1988, another son, Hall C. Roland, will be speaking on the subject "Nuclear Power." He is a professor of Nuclear Engineering at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

C. P. Roland received a doctor of law degree from Freed-Hardeman College in 1980 because of his service to the college as dean, business manager, student recruiter, vice president, vice president emeritus and curator.

Dr. Charles Roland also will be the featured speaker at the F-HC Development council Dinner April 24 at 7 p.m.

—Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN 38340.

I Samuel 1:23-24



Ken Tyler

Listen carefully to these great words of Samuel,

"More-over as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you" (I Samuel 12:23-24).

Five important points are made by Samuel in this passage. Let us examine each one.

1. Samuel said that he would not cease to pray for them. What a beautiful thought! Samuel was busy PRAYING for Israel! He was deeply concerned because of their wickedness. Do we pray for our brethren? Hebrews 13:18 simply says, "Pray for us . . ." Brethren, let us pray for one another.
2. Samuel said, "I will teach you the good and the right way." One purpose of all our lives should be to teach others the good and right way. We must begin at home, and reach out to as many other people as we can. "The good and the right way" is the only way that leads to heaven. We must never forget this.
3. Samuel said, "Only fear the Lord."

Today, do you stand in awe of God? Do you reverence him? Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). May we all be wise by fearing God and not be as the fool who says in his heart, "There is no God" (Psalms 14:1).

4. Samuel said, "Serve him in truth with all your heart." In this statement we see the two essentials in pleasing God: truth, and heart. The "truth," of course, is God's word (John 17:17). With "all the heart" means that we are sincerely dedicated to his purpose. Joshua said, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth" (Joshua 24:14). Today, are you serving God in truth with all your heart?"

5. Samuel said, "For consider how great things he hath done for you." What a statement! Why should we serve him in truth with all the heart? The answer: Because of what he hath done for you! Samuel is saying: Just stand back and look what God has done for you! This is what we all need to do. John said, "We love him, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). If we will consider what he has done for us it will make a difference in our lives.

I think you will agree that I Samuel 12:23-24 is a tremendous passage of scripture. Samuel was a great man. May we listen to him, and follow his example as set out in this great text.

—P.O. Box 376, Arab, AL 35016.

Be On Time

David Courington

"Everyone is late sometime." This is true. Even the most punctual person has been detained by an accident of some sort, and consequently has been late. These are not the types of things that we wish to discuss. Often, tardiness is habit that has been developed. Some are habitually late most of the time. Perhaps we all know those who shock us by being on time occasionally. It would be impossible to count the number of times I have seen someone who is habitually late, come in 10 minutes late, stumble over several people sitting on the back row, even shake hands and talk to someone, and then finally take a seat. Not only is this true of worship services, but it is true in other places as well. Also, one is often kept waiting for various appointments by an individual (who according to all of the evidence) has lost his watch! (Some preachers are the worst offenders)! Stop to think about it; there are several Biblical principles that are violated by that one who is always late.

Hear the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul: "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40). Tardiness violates this. The scene pictured above of the habitual late-comer is surely not orderly. People whose minds are tuned to spiritual things are disturbed, and they are caused to think about other things. The person in the pew might even be pondering what he should do about the salvation of his soul. In any event, he is worshipping God in "spirit and truth" (John 4:24). This is difficult (to say the least) when people are continuing to

come in late.

In other areas of life the Golden Rule, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matthew 7:12, is violated by the person who is always late. One creature that this writer has never seen is an individual who enjoys waiting on someone else who is habitually late. This passage shows that we are to take into consideration the feelings of others. It is selfish to make people wait for you all of the time. In consideration for others, one should make every effort to be on time.

Furthermore, the matter of our veracity is involved here. Many think nothing of telling someone that they will meet at 9:00 — but not arrive until 9:30. Paul exhorts us to put "away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor" (Ephesians 4:25). One might say, "Why, no one would think that being 15 or 20 minutes late is LYING!" Admittedly, most people probably do not think of it that way; but when one does this continually, and does not try to change, he frankly is not being truthful. The preacher who does this can destroy some of his credibility. If one makes appointments but is not there at the appointed time, can he be trusted in any other areas?

Some consideration needs to be given to these matters. It is probably true that this type of person does not intend to disturb worship, offend others, nor to be less than completely honest; but that does not mean he does

Continued on page 3

The Cost Of Discipleship

When Jesus issued his call for disciples to follow him, it was made clear that the cost would be great (Mark 10:29-30). The church of our generation in the U.S.A. has known virtually no persecution. So great is our American affluence and the peace we have enjoyed, that many disciples cannot imagine their faith bringing hardships. Observation suggests



John Waddey

that large numbers would deny their commitment rather than endure hardships for the Master, as good soldiers should endure (II Timothy 2:3).

When we are tempted to complain about long sermons or the failure of the meeting-house air conditioner, we need to be reminded of the price others have paid for their faith.

On January 5, 1527, in Zurich, Switzerland, Felix Manz was tried and convicted for worshipping and serving God according to his New Testament. The sentence read: "... Manz shall be delivered to the executioner, who shall tie his hands, put him into a boat, then strip his bound hands down over his knees, place a stick between his knees and arms, and thus push him into the water and let him perish in the water." Drowning was often the penalty for those who renounced sprinkling for immersion in the reformation period.

That same day George Blaurock "was stripped to the waist and severely beaten." On September 6, 1529, he "was burned at the stake." His crime was preaching the gospel contrary to the established state church.

On May 20, 1527, the judge wrote "Michael Sattler shall be committed to the executioner. The latter shall take him to the square and there first cut out his tongue, and then forge him fast to a wagon and then with glowing

iron tongs twice tear pieces from his body, and then on the way to the site of execution five times more as above and then burn his body to powder as an arch-heretic." "After every attempt to secure a recantation from Sattler's faithful wife had failed, she was drowned eight days later." Sattler died with great courage, enduring every torment.

On March 10, 1528, Balthasar Hubmaier was executed. They rubbed sulphur and gunpowder into his beard and then burned him to death. His wife was drowned in the Danube three days later. (The above stories are recorded in *The Anabaptist Story*, by W. R. Estep, pp. 30-63).

These martyrs were called Anabaptists by their enemies. The term meant "re-baptizers." They rejected the 'infant baptism' of the Catholics and reformers. They spoke of restoring the original Christianity of the apostles. They were hated and persecuted by all. Preachers among them rarely survived more than 5 years before being killed.

Those of us who wear Christ's holy name today and who boast of being true Christians should examine ourselves in the light of scripture, and in admiration for these devout souls. The words of Jesus to Peter are surely applicable. "Lovest thou me?" (John 21:17).

It is relatively easy to be a disciple in our environment. But the time of testing may well come. Wherever the iron fist of Communism gains power, those who love Jesus suffer. We would be foolish to think such could never happen to us. The followers of Mohammed have never hesitated to use violence against followers of Christ. In our own land there are godless people subscribing to atheistic humanism, who voice their disdain for Christians and label them as enemies to society. History records the fact that powerful and entrenched churches such as the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican, have used their power to persecute those minority groups who dared to challenge their position.

We cannot wait until that evil day is upon us to think about it. Rather, now -- while we are safe -- we must inspect our house to see that all is in order (II Corinthians 13:5). Faith to endure the fire must be built upon the

solid foundation of Jesus the Messiah (I Corinthians 3:11). A weak foundation will not stand the storms of persecution. The house will fall (Matthew 7:26-27). We need to fill our hearts with divine truth that will fortify the soul as did Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11). We must train our hearts to be constant in prayer. Stephen was victorious in death through prayer (Acts 7:59-60). Countless martyrs, over the centuries, have died courageously, calling upon the name of the Lord.

A soul addicted to the material things of an affluent life will find it most difficult to suddenly be called upon to surrender it all for the name of Jesus. The cares of this world keep many a heart from bearing proper fruit for the Master (Matthew 13:22). Not only the evil things of this world, but the material world itself can become so important to a disciple that he finds it difficult to let go (I John 2:15-17; Philippians 1:22-23).

We should discuss with our families what should be our response if persecutions become our lot. To think ahead, to have thought out in one's mind the boundaries we must not transgress, is essential to proper conduct in the moment of truth.

May our God continue to smile upon us and grant us a quiet and peaceful life in which to live, serve, and rear our families. But should that awful day arrive, may we be like those faithful ones of old that the Hebrew writer describes:

They "were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trials of mockings and scourgings . . . bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn assunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword . . . being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy) . . ." (Hebrews 11:35-38).

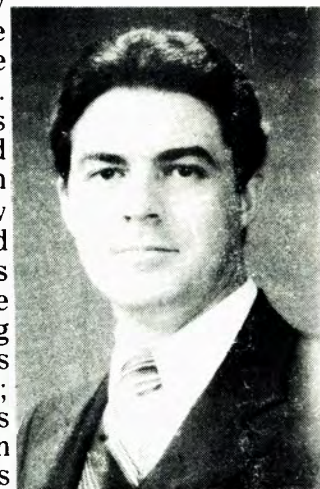
—6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Who Is Old Fashioned?

Years ago, I disposed of all my paisley ties because they were out of style and old fashioned.

Recently, paisley ties are back in style and selling for fifteen dollars and up. Few investments would pay as much as buying out-of-style ties then, and selling them now. Styles come and go; fashions change; fads are in and then soon out. Many things change; but, thankfully, some do not.

The world looks upon Christians as "old fashioned" and "out of style." Why? Because the world has moved on and left God's standard for living -- the Bible. The 'sixties



Bobby Liddell

Be On Time

Continued from page 2

not do so. Many people "intend" to be on time, but somehow just never seem to make it. Here are some suggestions which will help.

1. Make being on time a high priority. Do not take the attitude that a few minutes will not matter. A few inches do matter in measuring lumber. A few cents matter in counting money. A few drops matters in measuring medicine. And a few minutes matter in measuring time.

2. Plan to be where you are going a few minutes early. The person who plans to arrive at the church building 15 or 20 minutes before services is rarely late; but the one who plans to come in at the last minute is often late. In addition, one can benefit from the extra time spent in talking to and encouraging the brethren before services, and can be a real asset by greeting visitors.

3. Give some thought to how much time it will take to prepare. It does not take a genius to figure out how long it will take to dress,

drink coffee, and brush one's teeth. Add it up.

4. Plan for unexpected delays. Of course, not all of them can be planned for; but many CAN be anticipated. Parents with small children know to allow for the last-minute diaper change, or spill. All elders and preachers KNOW the phone will ring just as they reach the door. (Doesn't it always happen?)

5. Do not plan more things than you have time for. The old movie scene with the boy who has a date with two girls at the same time, and tries to make it to both of them, is all too real for some. At times it is difficult to say no to people when one already has plans; but it is better in the long run.

With life as busy as it is, being on time takes work. But it is worth it! "The early bird" still "gets the worm." With a little extra effort, you can be on time.

—P.O. Box 160, Mulga, AL 35118.

Continued on page 4

Wisdom

Trent McCluskey

Would you like to have something more valuable than rubies? The wise man in his writings says, "For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it" (Proverbs 8:11). Notice how he stresses that wisdom is not only "better" than rubies, but is better than "all things that may be desired." Solomon is placing a high price on wisdom! Why?

He goes on in that same chapter and states that wisdom declares "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way and the froward mouth, do I hate" (Proverbs 8:13). So, wisdom hates these sins that plague and condemn the souls of men.

Who needs counsel? Wisdom declares: "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength" (Proverbs 8:14). Wisdom offers much to the individual who will seek it, embrace it, and practice it!

Have you ever wondered how old wisdom is? God's word teaches us the age of wisdom when it says, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing 'ways before him" (Proverbs 8:22-30).

Wisdom declares, "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways" (Proverbs 8:32). Will you listen to wisdom and hearken unto her ways? We are living in a day and age where wisdom is sorely needed by those who are endeavoring to live for God. We need to exercise wisdom in our preaching, teaching, and daily Christian living. While some seek after rubies, and all the things that may be desired, we often miss the most need-

ed thing of all -- WISDOM.

James instructs us to ask God for wisdom, and we shall receive it (James 1:5). Wisdom is there for the asking! Therefore, let us ask for it, embrace it, and hearken unto her ways!

Socrates said, "That man is wisest who realizes that his wisdom is worthless." Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God . . ." (I Corinthians 3:19). Wisdom declares of itself, "For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord" (Proverbs 8:35). Wisdom also warns, "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Proverbs 8:36).

Wisdom is such a precious commodity! It should be sought after by every man. What is the beginning of wisdom? We are not left without an answer to this vital question. Proverbs 9:10 states that, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The proper reverence, respect, and awe of God are essential for the wisdom that cometh down from above. James tells us, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

"The fruit of wisdom is better than gold,

and its revenue than choice silver" (Proverbs 8:19). It takes wisdom to know what is right and wrong. Therefore we need to ask God to bless our lives by supplying us with this most precious blessing. We are told to ask God, in faith, for wisdom if we desire to possess it. James sheds light on our need to ask God for wisdom when he says: "If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and unbraided not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

Our troubled times call for wisdom; but many seem content with foolishness and folly. Wisdom cries out, urging us to, "Forsake the foolish and live; and go in the way of understanding" (Proverbs 9:6). Wisdom pleads, "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart" (Proverbs 8:5).

Is not wisdom something you would like to possess? Wisdom does not just automatically come into our lives with the passing of the years. Wisdom must be sought after, asked for, and exercised. Wisdom is not just a possession of the affluent of our world. An old Latin proverb says, "There is often wisdom under a shabby cloak!"

—Forest Park Church, P.O. Box 623, Forest Park, GA 30051.

New Development Director Appointed At Freed Hardeman College

David Short, who was reared near Jasper, Alabama, has been named director of development at Freed-Hardeman College, according to President E. Claude Gardner. He began February 2. Short comes to F-HC from International Bible College, Florence, Alabama, where he was director of public affairs.

Short earned a B.S. in secondary education from Florence State College and a



DAVID SHORT

B.A. in Bible from International Bible College. He attended the graduate school of the College of William and Mary, and is completing an M.B.A. program at the University of North Alabama.

After graduating from Florence State (now the University of North Alabama), Short spent 12 years in the U.S. Army as a pilot and officer. While in the Army, he was selected for the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, a master's level program. He graduated in the top 10 percent of his class. He served two tours in Vietnam, and was awarded two Bronze Stars, nine Combat Air Medals, four Army Commendation Medals and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He has been active in the U.S. Army Reserve for nine years, holding the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Short then returned to school to prepare to preach. He served as associate minister for the Huntsville Park Church of Christ in Huntsville, Alabama. He joined the staff of International Bible College in 1978 as coordinator of public affairs and admissions. He was promoted to director of public affairs in 1985.

Short brings to his job 20 years of experience in organizational and creative management. He is well-qualified to help the college in its institutional advancement.

Short and his wife, Polly, have two daughters, who are currently attending Mars Hill Bible School.

Who Is Old Fashioned?

Continued from page 3

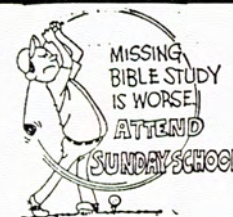
fashions became 'old,' and the old were once again 'new,' who was "old fashioned?"

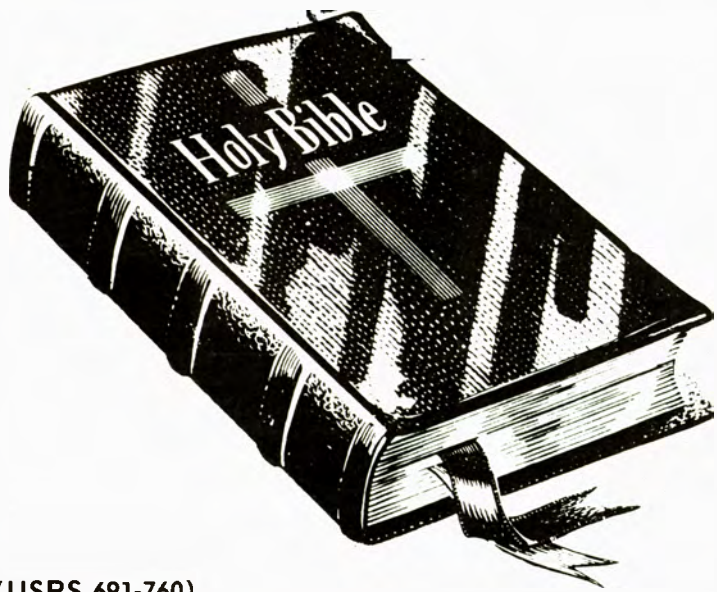
Christians, though in the world, are not to be worldly (I John 2:15-17; Colossians 3:1-2). Christians are not to worry about being old fashioned or not, nor about having the praise of men or not, but about being and 'seventies saw new "morals" and new "lifestyles," and those who refused to change were "conformists" --stagnant, backward, and unaware of their own ignorance. It was inevitable that the backlash of the 'eighties should come. There is evidenced a return to "conservative" thinking in politics, morals, families, and in physical (and spiritual)

creatures (II Corinthians 5:17). Satan would have us strive for the praise of men, look like the world, live like the world, love the world -- only to leave the world for a hopeless eternity.

God would have us put first things first in seeking his kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33), instead of seeking the world and worldliness. Remember, Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Alabama 35580.





Words Of Truth

"I am not mad,
Words of Truth a

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 1987

NUMBER 15

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

(NO. 8)

Gus Nichols [1892-1975]

[Editor's Note: My father's material on Holy Spirit Baptism is being reprinted from his book, "Lectures On The Holy Spirit" (which is out of print), with permission from Nichols Brothers Publishing Co. In Nos. 1-7 he showed that Spirit baptism (1) was a promise; (2) it was an immersion; (3) only Christ could administer it; (4) Great Commission baptism is not Spirit baptism, pointing out 14 differences; (5) Spirit baptism was promised to the Apostles; (6) the apostles NEEDED Spirit baptism; (7) the apostles received Spirit baptism in Acts 2; (8) no fire baptism on Pentecost; (9) Spirit Baptism was both visible and audible; (10) only the apostles were baptized in the Spirit on Pentecost; (11) audience reaction; (12) Apostles not drunk; (13) What the Multitude needed; (14) Seventeen reasons why the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit; (15) Apostles had no successors; (16) The Case of Cornelius; (17) only new Case; (18) did not save; (19) purpose of it; (20) before they heard; (21) was to confirm; (22) report of it did confirm truth; (23) one baptism now; (24) what the "one baptism" is; (25) water baptism; and (26) that we must preach the word. For this final installment I have selected some of the questions asked and answered that night].



Gus Nichols

as ye suppose, since it is but the third hour of the day!" (Acts 2)? Why did he not say, "We are not drunken as ye suppose . . . "?

Answer: I do not know just why that is true. I think about the only way that I could recommend that you could be sure to find out is to just be a Christian and live the Christian life and go to heaven. Then you can ask Peter, and he can tell you exactly why. But there is no argument in it against anything that the Bible says in the scriptures presented. It does not prove that Peter was not involved in the number. In fact, "These men are full of new wine," they said. Peter might have been included in that number. And then when he got up, naturally, it would be enough to say that "These are not drunken as ye suppose," and refer to the others. Naturally, if it fit them, it fit him, too.

Question: Why is it so important to affirm that the Holy Spirit, in Acts 1 and 2, descended upon the apostles only, and not on the 120?

Answer: Well, for the very reason that if the Holy Spirit came upon the 120, then the doctrine would be established that the baptism of the Holy Spirit on this occasion was for the disciples in general, and would thwart the very purpose of God in revealing it to be the other way — that it was for the apostles. Regardless of the reason for it, we do find, and have shown, that the Spirit fell upon the apostles; and not upon the multitude, that the multitude was not there. Miraculous powers were not to be received by the multitude, nor the one hundred twenty. They are just not in it as far as this miracle is concerned. It had to do with revealing the gospel, and was for the Lord's apostles to be the men through which that would be done.

Question: Last night you said, "If you sin against the Holy Spirit, you will never be forgiven." What do you mean by that?

Answer: I mean the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. "He that shall blaspheme against the

Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Those are the very words of the Bible (Mark 3:27-30).

Question: When you die, do you receive the Holy Ghost, and if you have sinned a lot, will your soul go to hell? If you have not sinned real bad, will your soul go to heaven, or what?

Answer: I think I will answer this because it might help some precious soul to obey the gospel and be saved while he can. First of all, we do not receive the Holy Ghost when we die; there is not any proof that you receive the Holy Ghost when you die. Acts 2:38 says: "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 5:32: ". . . so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." You had better not expect to receive something in death that God has not promised. As for the other, I have already answered.

Question: What is really the point in trying to show the pronouns in Acts 1 and 2 are exclusive, and then have to say that Cornelius and Paul also received the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: Because the Holy Spirit is given for one purpose on Pentecost, and that was to reveal through the apostles, and confirm through them, the gospel of Christ. It did not inspire Cornelius. He still had to be told what to do. It was to confirm what had been revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Peter in their preaching and teaching that God is no respecter of persons. That was the revealed truth, but it needed confirmation. And it would show, in the first place, and that is our purpose in it of course, that Cornelius and his household were not inspired like apostles, for they were not apostles and not in that class, and did not need what the apostles needed. The need on that occasion was con-

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Since Peter was baptized with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, as were the other apostles, then why did he exclude himself when he said, "THESE are not drunken

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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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Does God Threaten To Kill Men?

Perhaps most people now aware of Oral Roberts' declaration made on national media that God told him that he (God) would "call him home" (take his life) if he did not raise 4.5 million dollars by March of 1987.

We can KNOW that God did not speak directly to Oral Roberts and threaten to take his life: (1) because of the nature and attributes of God, and (2) because direct revelation from God to man has ceased.

God would not and could not threaten Oral Roberts' life because of God's self-existence and self-sufficiency. God is not dependent upon anything or anyone for his thoughts (Romans 11:33-34), his will (Romans 9:19), his power (Psalms 115:3), or his counsel (Psalms 33:10-11), his life, or anything else (John 5:26; Acts 17:25). God exists by the necessity of his own being and nature. Therefore, God is the eternal first cause, who himself is uncaused, and non-dependent. He never has had, nor will he ever have a single need. His divine nature has provided for himself. God does not need anything; and he certainly does not need anything from Oral Roberts, nor 4.5 million dollars from man. God is perfect in his goodness (Psalms 107:8; 52:1). Since God is perfect in his goodness, he cannot do any wrong or evil; and he certainly would not take Oral Roberts' life if he did not raise the 4.5 million dollars. The very nature and attributes of God make that impossible. The nature of God makes Oral Roberts' statement absurd.



Lawrence Williamson
from God to man has ceased.

Continued On Page 3

Billy Graham's Notion Of How Sinners Are Saved

"Dear Dr. Graham: I would like to learn about God, but I don't know where to turn. What church do you recommend I go to? I guess that is probably the best way to learn something about God, isn't it?"
—Mrs. M.T.C. (The Birmingham News, 1-12-87).

We shall discuss Dr. Graham's answer as set forth in his reply to the questions contained in the above quotation. We do not wish to be unfair in our remarks, but we will answer according to the Holy Bible. Dr. Graham misses the mark by a country mile in his efforts to instruct the inquirer. We know he could have done much better if he had cited scripture to answer her question.

(1) "What church do you recommend I go to?" The good doctor thinks that almost any church would be all right "where the Bible's message is preached and taught." But Dr. Graham is a member of the Baptist church, and the Bible teaches nothing concerning any kind of a Baptist church. If he knows where a Baptist church is mentioned in the Scriptures, let him cite the passage. Truly, Jesus built his church (Matthew 16:18-19), and adds the saved to it (Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47). In the New Testament one can read of the church of Christ (Romans 16:16). If Dr. Graham would preach and teach the full truth concerning the New Testament church, he would not be promoting the Baptist church.

(2) "But right now you can come to know in a personal way by giving your life by faith to Jesus Christ." What Dr. Graham is teaching is that one can be saved "by faith alone." But the good teacher should read James 2:14-26. Here James denies that one can be saved by "faith only." One is saved "by faith" when one's faith leads him to obey the commands of God (Acts 6:7; I Peter 1:20-25; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4). To know God in a "personal way," according to Mr. Graham, means mystical senses, or subjective experiences, not subject to Bible proof. One can know the truth of God and can know that one has obeyed it (Romans 8:14-16; I John 2:3-4). Feelings count for nothing!

(3) Then Mr. Graham tells the inquirer that God created her and that he loves her. It is true that God created both men and women (Genesis 1:27-28), and that he loves them (John 3:16); but men and women must reciprocate their love for him "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

(4) Mr. Graham reminds his inquirer that sin separates the sinner from God, and cites Isaiah 59:1-2. He is right about what sin does; but how does one obtain remission of sins? Sins are not forgiven through "a personal relationship with him." Here Dr. Graham returns to his notion that, somehow, there must be a mysterious "experience of grace"



W. A. Holley

The "miracle of the new birth" is not taught in the scriptures. John 3:3, 5, mentions the new birth. How did Jesus state it? "... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "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." Jesus is right about this requirement.

How does one go about being "born again?" Well, Acts 2:36-38 is a fine example. It shows how those on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection were "born again . . . born of water and of the Spirit." We quote Acts 2:36-38 that we may not be misunderstood: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Whatever one must do to be saved, or to obtain "remission of sins," is exactly what one must do to be "born again . . . born of water and of the Spirit."

(5) We quote again from the same article, "... All we have to do is to open our hearts to Christ and ask him to come into our lives as our Lord and Saviour." Question: **WHERE DOES THE BIBLE SAY ANY SUCH THING?** We can read where we must believe (Hebrews 11:6), repent of our sins (Luke 13:3, 5), confess Jesus' name before men (Matthew 10:32-33), and be baptized (Mark 16:16); but where does the Bible say, "All we have to do is to open our hearts to Christ and ask him to come into our lives as our Lord and Savior?"

Mr. Graham continues: "I invite you to receive Christ. You can do it by a simple prayer of faith, telling God you know you are a sinner, and you want Christ to forgive you so you can be his follower every day. When you do, God will come into your life and make you a part of his family." Billy Graham has misrepresented the teaching of God's word! Jesus does not promise to save sinners in answer to prayer (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; I Peter 3:21). God gives the believer the "right" or "power" to BECOME a child of God (John 1:11-12). The believer is not saved until he repents of his sins, confesses Jesus Christ (Acts 8:37), and is baptized into Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).

Billy Graham is a wonderful man in many ways; but he does not preach the truth of God. We ask his readers and our readers to turn to the Holy Bible for the final word (Acts 17:11; II Timothy 2:15). The Holy Scriptures cannot be wrong.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



Welcome Visitors!!

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

Continued From Page 1

firmation of the gospel of Christ, and it confirmed for the Gentile world rather than being for new revelation.

Question: Last night you said that we should get out of our minds the idea that the Holy Spirit is somehow associated with an angel. You did say that God had manifested himself as an angel. Why is the above idea wrong? What Scripture teaches you to say this?

Answer: What Scripture teaches you to say that the Holy Spirit is an angel? And that is the thing that I called for last night, and stated that it is not in the Bible. And I am sure that it is not there now, or you would have produced it. I stated that God is presented AS an angel, and I have proof (Jude 13). I gave Abraham and Lot as cases, where an angel appeared, and God talked to the people through this angel on the occasion (Genesis 18-19). And yet, he looked like a man, and Abraham did not know any better at first. And I quoted from Hebrews 13:1: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." "Unawares" means not knowing who they were at the time. And so I proved my point that God sometimes presented himself as though he were a man, but yet he was in the form of an angel, in the form of man, no doubt, because Hebrews 13:1 says the person was an angel. But you have not produced the verse, and you will not produce the verse, that says the Holy Spirit is an angel. Angels were created beings; the Holy Spirit is an "eternal" being, never was created (Hebrews 9:14). He who "through the ETERNAL SPIRIT offered himself to God." Hence, the Holy Spirit is eternal.

Question: I had heard the following argument put forth: On the day of Pentecost, there were more than 12 different dialects represented in the multitude; and if only the 12 apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit, then a miracle was worked upon the multitude so that all could HEAR in their own tongue. What is the truth in this matter?

Answer: The truth is that the multitude was not present at first. That is the first truth to remember. The multitude was not there when the Spirit came. "When this was noised abroad, the multitude came together" (Acts 2:1-7). They were not there when the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles. And in the second place, it has been understood by Bible scholars who have studied these different nationalities, the Parthians, the Medes, etc., that these people spoke less than a dozen languages. Now, the idea that each one of them had a language separate from all the others is not necessarily established at all. And the apostles simply spake in each language or tongue and all heard. The first night I referred to I Timothy 3:16: "Great is the mystery of godliness." We cannot understand all the mysteries connected with everything and explain all those things; but we are to stay with what is revealed. I want to emphasize that again tonight (Deuteronomy 29:29).

Question: How do you know that the apostles are on their thrones tonight? Is this their heavenly throne? If so, when were they resurrected?

Answer: Their tongues were thrones of power. I stated tonight that they were (figuratively speaking) upon thrones, that they were enthroned with power; and I quoted Acts 1:8: "And ye shall receive power, after that

the Holy Ghost is come upon you." I referred to Matthew 19:28. He said that, "ye that have followed me," — then there is a comma— "in the regeneration" — well, we are now in the regeneration. We know we are in it because Titus 3:5 says God saved us by "the washing of regeneration." They were in the regeneration nineteen hundred years ago under the apostles' preaching. "Ye that have followed me, in the regeneration, when the son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory" — you see, this was spoken during the personal ministry, in Matthew 19, while Christ was crucified in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters, raised from the dead in the twenty-eighth chapter. And then he was looking forward to Pentecost and the Christian age that would soon be established, and the giving of the Great Commission, and how it was going forth. And he said, "In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory; ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

He said that they would be on thrones "in the regeneration," and at the same time he was on his throne. In Zechariah 6:12-13 we read that he would sit and rule upon his throne; and Acts 2:29-36 says that he was raised to sit on the throne. So he got on his throne when he started reigning and ruling, was declared to be on his throne on Pentecost, raised to sit on his throne. And they were to be on their thrones at the same time he was to be on his! "When the son of man shall be seated on the throne, ye also shall be seated on twelve thrones." And so, we know by that the thrones of the apostles were for the time of their lives here on earth. And there they exercised the authority and power by functioning as apostles while they lived upon the earth, and there is no evidence that they will get on any apostolic throne hereafter. The apostles are still upon their thrones and judging. Their inspired teachings and decisions for people are now in the inspired New Testament (II Corinthians 3:6; John 16:13). The End.

Does God Threaten To Kill Men?

Continued From Page 2

foolish, impossible, and false. Oral Roberts' declaration rejects and repudiates the nature and attributes of God; and therefore, we can know that it is false.

God speaks to man today only through his word, the Bible. All of God's revelation to man has been confirmed by miracles (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). There is no revelation without confirmation. Therefore, if it can be proved that confirmation of revelation by miracles has ceased, then one can prove that revelation has ceased; and therefore, Oral Roberts did not and could not have received a message from God. Confirmation of revelation by miracles has ended because: (1) the means of confirmation (laying on of the apostles' hands, Acts 8:17-18; 19:6) has ceased -- because there are no living apostles today; (2) evidence of miracles has ceased (raising the dead, drinking deadly things,

etc., Matthew 10:8; Mark 16:18); and (3) the Bible teaches that miracles to confirm revelation have ceased (I Corinthians 13:8-10). When the "complete" revelation came (the Bible was completed), then the "part" (spiritual gifts - miracles) ended. The revelation is complete (Jude 3). Therefore, revelation and confirmation have ended. Thus we know Oral Roberts' declaration is false because it is opposed to God's nature and attributes, and because God's revelation to man has ceased.

Many people have been and are being led astray by people like Oral Roberts, who think that their own inclinations and ideas are the voice of God. God has spoken his final word through Christ, His final prophet (Hebrews 1:1-2). Therefore, take heed and beware of false prophets (I John 4:1; II Peter 2:1).

—800 S. Cummings Street, Fulton, MS 38842

Bob Carrell To Join ETSOPM Faculty

The elders of the Karns church are pleased to announce the addition of Robert Carrell to the faculty of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Brother Carrell has been preaching for 38 years. His education was received at Abilene Christian University, Anderson College, and Memphis State University. For 18 years he worked as a certified instructor for the Dale Carnegie Program. The following churches have been served by Bro. Carrell: Hillcrest in Anderson, Indiana; Clifton in Cincinnati, Ohio; Belmont in Dayton, Ohio;



Bob Carrell

Quince Road in Memphis, Tennessee; and Highland View in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He has had a successful career as a gospel preacher and is skilled in the teaching and application of human relations principles.

With his graduate degree in counseling, Bro. Carrell brings special skills to the school. He will serve as guidance counselor for the students and teach courses in ministerial counseling. In addition to these he will teach courses in Bible and related subjects.

The school has a current enrollment of 26 full-time students. Since its beginning in 1970, 127 students have been trained and sent forth.

Brother Carrell's new work will begin in May 1987. The faculty of the school will be strengthened and the students blessed to have a teacher of his experience and ability working with them.

—East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Gospel Preaching? Or Gospel "Pop"?

Recently I heard a man preach to a large Wednesday evening gathering. He was well educated, a gifted speaker with at least some 15 years experience in the pulpit and classroom. A large audience had assembled to hear a message from God.



John Waddey

The sermon was based on Acts 2, a glorious section of Scripture that contains a multitude of great lessons for both Christians and sinners. After a few jokes the preacher moved on to his message. I awaited anxiously to hear those familiar sacred truths applied. To my dismay, this man was able to speak 35 minutes without mention of (1) the church, (2) salvation, (3) repentance, (4) baptism, (5) the Holy Spirit, (6) Holy Spirit baptism, (7) miracles, (8) Old or New Covenants, (9) the gospel, (10) the Lord's death or resurrection, (11) worship, or any other lesson found in the context; and (12) no instruction for obeying the gospel was given as he closed. Instead he told funny stories and numerous personal experiences. He found a faint analogy to modern social, emotional stress, and decorated it with a few theatrical gestures. His sermon resembled the preaching of the Apostles about as much as

the modern gospel-pop music resembles the Psalms of David. In fact we should coin a new phrase to describe such entertainment -- "gospel-pop preaching!"

I sat with churning emotions: I was surely disappointed that the gospel was not preached, that the word was not handled aright. I was angry that sinners would walk away untaught -- and still lost. I was distressed that Christians who came for the grain of the gospel were receiving husks and cobs! I was tempted to walk out in protest of this charade in God's assembly.

If we produce a generation of this type of preachers (?), the Lord's cause will be in great danger. Churches will wither and die under such pseudo-preaching. Conversions will cease to occur. Denominational people will see no reason to leave their human organizations and come to a group with such sickly teaching. Our members will be doctrinally weak and unsure of their faith, and

many will be led into error because of their lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). This we cannot afford!

As I endured that ordeal I was reminded just how important it is to train faithful men to be great gospel preachers in the mold of the Lord and his apostles. The work in our School of Preaching took on greater significance (in my perception) at that moment. We must press on! We cannot afford to be discouraged. We must find more good prospects, and fill them full of Scripture and plant in their souls an unquenchable fire to preach the Word . . . both in season and out of season! The Lord's church needs men who will be "sober in all things, suffer hardship, (and) do the work of an evangelist . . ." (II Timothy 4:2-5).

—East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, 6608 Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, TN 37931.

CALEB

"Super Saturday" At Freed-Hardman College

Tracey Taylor

The Freed-Hardeman College Office of Admissions will host a "Super Saturday Weekend Workshop" for college-bound high school juniors and seniors on April 18 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. on the F-HC campus in Henderson, Tennessee.

The purpose of the "Super Saturday Workshop" is to orient high school students to college life. Activities have been planned for students AND their parents. Information will be available concerning scholarships and financial aid, as well as a step-by-step description of how to become a college student. To be eligible for the many academic, alumni, and departmental scholarships to be awarded, a student should send a copy of his high school transcript and ACT score, if available, to the Office of Admissions, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN 38340.

This free workshop includes lunch. Guests are invited also to spend Friday night on campus free of charge prior to "Super Saturday." For further information, contact Susan Edmonds at the Freed-Hardeman College Office of Admissions, (901) 989-6651. Tennessee residents may dial 1-800-FHC-LIVE.

—Director of Public Information, F.H.C., Henderson, TN 38340.

The account of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, is briefly told in the Bible. It is recorded in Numbers 13 and 14; Numbers 32:10-13; Deuteronomy 1:19-40; Joshua 14:6-14 and Joshua 15:13-14. Caleb was a godly man. He was one of the 12 spies sent out to spy out the land of Canaan. After 40 days the spies returned and gave their report of the land. Ten spies gave a report of doom and failure. In essence, they were saying that the people of God could not possess the land. They reported that the land eateth up the inhabitants and that there were giants in the land — the sons of Anak. The other two spies, Joshua and Caleb, gave a report of courage and stated that the Lord would bring them into the land to possess it — therefore have faith in the Lord, for the Lord was with them!

The people reacted violently to the good report issued by Caleb and Joshua and wanted to stone them (Numbers 14:10). God was displeased with the people and stated that they would not see the land of Canaan, but would wander in the wilderness forty years until each of them (save Caleb, Joshua and those under twenty years old) died (Numbers 14:29-33). Therefore, Caleb, Joshua and those under twenty years old were allowed to enter the land of Canaan, a land that flowed with milk and honey.

What are some lessons that we can gain from the life of Caleb?

I. He was a man of faith! He had seen the wonders in Egypt, the Red Sea, and Sinai. He knew first hand the mighty power of God and he knew that God had promised the land of Canaan and he was assured that God could keep his promise (Cf. II Peter 3:9).



Harold Bigham

Caleb would not limit God to human reasoning but he possessed the kind of faith Abraham had.

II. He was a man of foresight! He had made the same journey the other spies made. He had the exact assignment they had. He viewed the same walls, cities, and people they had seen. What was the difference? Caleb saw God! He looked over the giants and realized that God was on his side.

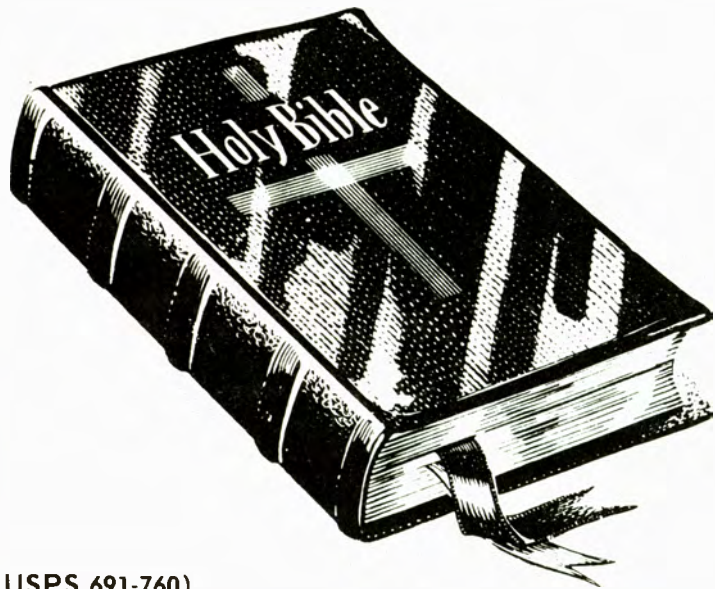
III. He was a man of fortitude! He had the plucks and courage to stand up for what he believed to be right. He went against the majority and would not surrender to their evil reports and threats of violence! He would not be deterred by thoughts of the walled cities, giants, or even a "land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof."

IV. He was a man of forbearance! After returning from spying out the land and giving his good report, the promise of his inheritance into the land was made. After the forty years of wandering in the wilderness and after seven years had passed after the crossing of the Jordan with Joshua, he still had not received his inheritance! It was on his eighty-fifth birthday that he came to Joshua to talk about his inheritance in the land of Canaan. His forbearance and patience is comparable to that of the father of the faithful, Abraham in waiting for the birth of Isaac.

May we all have the faith, foresight, fortitude and forbearance that Caleb possessed!

—Post Office Box 7233 Jackson, MS 39212.





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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 23

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1987

NUMBER 16

The Instrumental Music Question

(NO.2)

The "Restoration Movement" was born out of a "speak where the Bible speaks" premise. Therefore the use of mechanical instruments in worship strongly came into question. Any honest application of this principle prohibited the use of an instrument of music in worship. For a while there was general agreement that there is no justification for the instrument's use in



Charles Cook

worship. The New Testament simply does not refer to it, but by inference and example sanctions only vocal music. Alexander Campbell once said, "But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert." Just as the nineteenth century was ending, there arose tremendous strife among "Restoration" thinkers concerning the use of the instrument. The less conservative spokesmen contended that just because it was not upheld or mentioned in the New Testament is not enough to ban it. They argued that David used it in worship to God and that the change of covenants had nothing to do with the kind of music pleasing to God. R. L. Aldrich cited Paul's conclusion that "All Scripture" and not just the New Testament was given by God; and therefore, the Old Testament as well as the New is "profitable for doctrine" (II Timothy 3:16-17) (Anti-Musical Instrumentalism, page 3). The opposition said this is ludicrous, since we would not think of sanctioning multiple-wives simply because David was a polygamist. Nor, they said,

would we argue for any Old Testament practice today since the old law was taken away at the cross and a better one given (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:9). Paul warned that anyone looking to the old law for justification has "fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4).

J. W. McGarvey wrote, "... this practice is one of recent origin among Protestant churches, adopted by them from the human apostasy; ... it was one of the latest corruptions adopted by that corrupt body; ... a large part of the religious world has never accepted it; ... though employed in the Jewish ritual, it was deliberately laid aside by the inspired men who organized the church of Christ; and that several precepts of the New Testament implicitly condemn it" (What Shall We Do About The Organ?, pages 6-7). It is obvious that brother McGarvey never approved the instrument, but it is widely known that he refused to disfellowship those sincere brethren who did use it. However, most brethren who took as strong a stand as brother McGarvey took, thought it inconsistent to extend fellowship to those who used the instrument. The turn of the twentieth century was a very difficult era for the "Restoration Movement," and the church to this day suffers because of this rift over mechanical music.

The census in 1906 recognized the "Restoration Movement" had split, not altogether over the music issue, but that was primarily the reason. One side said that it is not scriptural to use the instrument in worship because there is no authority for anything but vocal music (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; I Corinthians 14:15). The other side argued that the plain testimony of God's word indicated that there is nothing wrong in praising God with an instrument of music as did David (Psalm 92:1-3). Out of these simple positions there later arose several very complicated

arguments in defense (?) of both camps.

The years following the great division in the "Restoration Movement" produced a number of outstanding debates over the issue. Two of the more outstanding ones were: **The Boswell - Hardeman Debate** (1923), and **The Wallace-Hunt Debate** (1951). The Boswell-Hardeman encounter centered around the meaning of the Greek word "PSALLO" as it is used in the New Testament. The Wallace-Hunt debate involved some of the more extreme positions. It is interesting to note that neither of the two pro-instrumental proponents relied on Old Testament support as their earlier colleagues did.

The **Boswell-Hardeman Debate** was conducted in the Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee, May 31 through June 5, 1923. The proposition was stated as follows: "Instrumental music in church worship is Scriptural." The affirmative position was taken by Ira M. Boswell. The negative position was defended by N. B. Hardeman. Supportive of Boswell was a group called The Commission on Unity supported by the First Christian Church. Hardeman was backed by the brotherhood of the churches of Christ. It must be remembered that in 1923 these two groups were more closely tied than they are today. It had been less than twenty years since the split produced these two factions. The closeness of the two groups is particularly noticeable in the fact that each debater referred to the other as "brother."

[In our final article of this series we will relate some details of the Boswell-Hardeman discussion as well as the Hunt-Wallace debate of 1951, and make our conclusions].

—Kona Church of Christ, P.O. Box 803, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 9673.

**Help Stop Absenteeism
See You In Sunday School!**



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 Hope Of Young People

Young people, your life belongs to you; what are you going to do with it?

Young people should not give themselves over to immoral acts, including the unwise use of drugs, tobacco, and alcoholic beverages. Do not allow illicit sex to inflame your passions, thus destroying all spiritual reason. Lawlessness in all its ugly forms is to be avoided.

"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:12-14).

The verses quoted show that young people can overcome the wiles of the Devil. Surely, there is more in life for young people than alcohol, drugs, and unlawful sex. Young people, there are far better ways to make your life full, complete, and meaningful than by permitting Satan to control your activities. We suggest the following for your consideration:

Read the Bible every day. By this your faith may increase, rather than decrease (Romans



W. A. Holley

When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry

Tom L. Bright

"Loyalty," in anybody's language, is a commendable trait. Webster defines "loyalty" as "the state or quality of being loyal." "Loyal" is defined as meaning "faithful to those persons, ideals, etc., that one stands under an obligation to defend or support." Included among the many synonyms listed by Roget's Thesaurus are such words as "constancy" and "devotement." Interestingly enough, the same authority lists as synonymous with "loyalty" a concept that bears heavily upon this article -- that concept being the idea of "to idolize" and "to worship."

It goes without saying that all admire "loyalty" evidenced in another's life, even though they might not agree with the object of one's loyalty. But when that loyalty becomes idolatry, when it becomes the "worship" of man (or things of man's origin) then our view of such attachment changes from admiration to disdain.

Blind loyalty to things of man is never a quality to be coveted. As we look through "tinted glasses," our vision becomes blurred and we can only see the object of our affection in the light of that which we want to see. We become blind to the truth, and will defend the object of our affection regardless of the consequences. Loyalty to anything which has had a direct impact upon our life, and in which we have been heavily involved is not uncommon. Likewise, neither is blindness to the truth, even to the extent of a "white-washing" and a cover-up.

This, in my view, has been evidenced in the recent furor raised by the charge that Theistic Evolution has been or is being taught in Abilene Christian University. I have long claimed that many people operate under the philosophy that "You can talk negatively about me, my wife, my children, my parents, the church, the elders, or the preacher -- but don't ever talk about my school."

We have read the "Abilene Christian University Institutional Statement," dated Feb. 17, 1986 which was an official response to the charges leveled at ACU by brother Bert Thompson in his book, *Is Genesis Myth?* However, we ask simply: Was anything really answered? Was anything settled? It seems to me that not all of the evidence available was considered, and that there are many inconsistencies relative to those specifically charged which were never harmonized.

Will ACU Respond?

We would welcome a response from ACU relative to the charges made by Kevin McLeod, M.D., a former student at ACU, now associated with the prestigious Scott and White Clinic in Temple, Texas, in a personal letter to ACU President William J. Teague (a copy of which I have before me), dated Feb. 18, 1986. In this letter, brother McLeod plainly stated "I was taught evolution in my classes at ACU without alternative. You have not been wrongly accused." On the next page, brother McLeod expresses his consternation relative to all of the literature attempting to clear the faculty of evolutionary teaching. He states that "No mention ever was made for creation science. I did not encounter this term until three years following ACU."

This brother further writes, "Letters I received in '80 inform me that then there was no coherent consensus of opinion among the science faculty about creation or the Genesis account. Creation material received no

emphasis to the students. Evolutionary views in some fashion (certainly theistic) were held by these writers." This is, without doubt, shockingly interesting.

Of further interest is a letter from J. S. "Jake" Macleod of San Angelo, Texas, to brother Bert Thompson, dated 2/26/86 in which he writes: "I suppose it was a result of sheer ignorance that I did not challenge the apparent lack of continuity between the proposed geologic progressions and the first chapters of Genesis, but I do remember it striking a strange chord. I simply never challenged Dr. Williams' authority. I assumed that Genesis and the geologic tables somehow dovetailed into a logical progression of events that did not violate the words of Genesis nor the 'facts' of evolution. Needless to say I never found an adequate explanation."

He adds that upon the reception of his Texas State Teaching Certificate, he began to teach Life/Earth Science in the 8th grade. He writes, "I taught a strange home brewed brand of theistic evolution simply because I knew nothing else until I attended one of your seminars in Austin. You presented the facts that I needed to resolve the conflict." Then with a lament that should touch the heart of every concerned Christian, he wrote, "Unfortunately I will never have an opportunity to re-teach the students, who, as a result of my ignorance, are misinformed regarding evolution and creation."

Why is it that a person can make such statements after having graduated from one of our prestigious colleges? Hear his explanation: "The bottom line is that I was not armed with any information from the ACC science department to support the Genesis account of Creation. Creation was never discussed nor was the topic ever remotely approached in any of the science classes that I attended while at ACC. Could it be that the professors are also unfamiliar with the logic and facts regarding the Creation?"

Face To Face Interviews

In the "Institutional Statement," readers are told that the Committee conducted face-to-face interviews with the two accused professors. We are told that "Both unquestionably repudiated the theory of organic evolution and the theory's particular reference to the evolutionary creation of man."

Yet, when we consider a document sent to brother Bert Thompson by the L. D. Swift family of Tuscola, Texas, we find an unresolved contradiction. Briefly stated, the Swifts tell of a regular meeting of a church visitation group which they attended in 1981, which was held in the home of brother Archie Manis, one of the accused professors. In a conversation that evening, they affirm that brother Manis clearly stated a view of the creation of which the Swifts stated, "This view is commonly known as 'theistic evolution.'" Because of this, they left the Baker Heights congregation in Abilene.

Upon hearing of the recent controversy, they decided to talk directly to brother Manis, and on October 28, 1985, the Swifts called him. Of the many things said in that conversation (approximately one and a half hours) which do not harmonize with the claims of the "Institutional Statement," one, in particular,

“A Formula For The Prevention Of Divorce”

Divorce is one of the greatest problems faced by the church and the nation today. Millions will be lost eternally and millions of innocents will also suffer because of it. There is no “magic” solution. No one has any new “revelation” about how to solve the problem. However, the following “formula” will work without fail if it is followed.



Douglas Sims

Most parents -- even in the Lord's church -- have failed to impress upon our children the evils of divorce and the truth of God regarding the subject. I submit the following list of ten things that will prevent broken marriages which are so prevalent even in the body of Christ. The first eight are of a “common sense” variety; but the last two will guarantee a marriage that will be dissolved only by death.

1. Wait Until You Grow Up To Get Married.

This means grow to physical, mental, and emotional maturity before you marry. Some people will never be “old” enough to marry. They are too selfish in their attitudes. Marriage is not for children, nor for “grown ups” who act like children! Many today have been married and divorced two or three times before the age of twenty-five. Some “grow up” too late to preserve a happy life.

2. Know Your Intended Marriage Partner.

Take the time to learn everything about him or her you can. Learn about his or her habits, ambitions, attitudes, beliefs, background, reputation, and character. If your marriage partner turns out to be like a stranger later, it will be your own fault. “Love at first sight” may be possible in some cases; but you had better get to know everything you can about your future spouse before the wedding bells ring! “Opposites” attract when dealing with magnets; but it does not apply in the marriage relationship. Being male and female will cause enough problems to be resolved, without other differences of ideas, and opinions, to cause conflicts between marriage partners.

3. Marry For One Reason Only.

Do not marry for money, for social position, nor any such reason. Do not marry “on the rebound” -- to spite someone who rejected you. Do not marry to get away from the authority of your parents. The only true reason for marriage is to form a permanent relationship with a person you prefer over everyone else in the world! Marriages that last were **PLANNED** to be that way. Many marriages that fail are the result of **PLANS** to dissolve the marriage if it doesn't “work out.” It usually does not take much to make such partners decide to call it quits.

4. Reject The World's View Of What Marriage Should Be.

The “Dallas” and “Dynasty” philosophy of marital behavior is from the devil himself! Young people are encouraged by today's society to believe it is natural for everyone to engage in pre-marital sex. They are told also that it is fashionable to cheat on your marriage partner. Why should we be surprised at what is going on in the minds of the youth of today? We must help them to see

marriage as a holy institution, ordained by God for a lifetime, if they are to have the proper respect for the vows they make.

5. Follow The Will Of God

From Genesis 2:23-24 it appears that Adam said a man should leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife as one flesh; but Jesus tells us (Matthew 19:4-5) that our Creator said this. Paul said the same thing to the Ephesian Christians many centuries later (Ephesians 5:31). Parents should mind their own business and let their married children mind theirs! Many a marriage is ruined because young people don't live their own lives. God knew what he was doing when he said to “leave” father and mother and establish a new family unit. Personally I have found never living in the same town with the parents of either spouse to be a real advantage in making marriage work as it should.

6. Don't Marry Anyone Who Needs To Be “Changed.”

A lesson in a young people's book by Wyatt Sawyer is entitled, “Aisle Altar Him.” You can see what is suggested! Many foolish young ladies have thought that the behavior of a proposed mate will be easily “altered” after the trip down the “aisle.” It rarely works out. If one will not change **before** the wedding, he very likely won't change later. (And this is equally true of the bride!) Paul spoke of the problem of being unequally yoked to unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14-18). Good and evil cannot live together peacefully. They are directly opposed to one another, and will result in “wars” both large and small. If he is a drinker, a liar, a gambler, or immoral, do not expect him to change easily, if at all.

7. Don't Even Think Of Marrying Out Of The Church!

How many sermons have you heard on this subject lately? Has it now become “old fashioned” to warn our young people? God has never approved of his people marrying the “heathen.” His teaching to the children of Israel is very plain (Deuteronomy 7:1-3). Paul's warning to the Corinthian Christians again rings loud and clear (II Corinthians 6:14-18). This applies to many areas of involvement, but no one can truthfully deny its application in the case of marriage to an unbeliever.

8. Realize Adjustments Must Be Made By Both Parties.

Selfishness can destroy any relationship. A happy marriage cannot exist in the face of selfishness. At least one party will be totally miserable. God gave his law to married people even in regard to the physical relationship (I Corinthians 7:1-5): Each partner is to fulfill the needs of the other. To refuse is to disobey God. Each must learn to consider the needs and characteristics of the other. They must

learn to agree on many things, including the making and spending of money.

Some people speak of the “ideal” marriage as being a “fifty-fifty” proposition. I have a better formula that I give to prospective marriage partners: Make it a sixty-forty proposition with **both** of them willing to meet the other **MORE** than “half-way.” This will be the beginning of a successful, and lasting, marriage.

9. Make Your Home Christian.

This is one of the guaranteed weapons against divorce that cannot fail. When a home is truly **CHRISTIAN**, no problem is too great to work out. When we ignore, or depart from, God's plan for the home, we must prepare to reap the consequences. His plan is the only one that will work. Ephesians 5:22 - through 6:4 gives God's plan. 1. The husband is the head of the wife, who is to be in subjection to her husband. There is no other way acceptable to God. 2. Men are told to love their wives as themselves. This will take away the slave/master relationship which some men, even in the Lord's church, want to call a marriage. 3. The children must be obedient to parents in order to be obedient to God. 4. Fathers must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to be pleasing to God.

In a real **CHRISTIAN** home, parents and children read together, pray together, work together, play together, and -- most of all -- worship together. The key is in one word . . . **TOGETHER**. In a Christian home, you never hear the church, the elders, the preacher, nor anyone else, being slandered.

10. Be Faithful Children Of God.

This is the guaranteed formula for success! It cannot fail. Faithful Christians live by the “golden rule” (Matthew 7:12). Faithful Christians seek the kingdom of God first (Matthew 6:33). Faithful Christians keep all the commandments of God, including those regarding the sanctity of marriage vows.

The institution of marriage is compared to the relationship of the church and Christ. If a Christian remains faithful to Christ, he will never be “divorced” from him. If a Christian husband and a Christian wife remain faithful to Christ, they will never be divorced from each other.

There **HAS NEVER BEEN** a divorce between two **FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS**.

There **WILL NEVER BE** a divorce between two **FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS**.

Such a thing is utterly impossible!

In I Peter 3:7 husbands and wives are spoken of as being “heirs together of the grace of life . . .”

It is imperative that we **LIVE** the right way before our children, and **TEACH** them God's laws of marriage if they are to stand in judgment acceptable.

—330 East Ave., Cedartown, GA 30125.

WORD of GOD

Parable of Jesus

Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are

choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

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 8:11-15

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

John 20:31

When Loyalty Becomes Idolatry

Continued from page 2

stands in bold contrast to the claims made therein. In response to a question asked by sister Swift relative to whether brother Manis ever refuted the teachings of evolution as it is presented in the books he used, it was reported that he replied, "No! I never do" (further statements of Manis in the same conversation would corroborate this).

Even more interesting is the fact that the Swifts gave brother Manis a copy of their conversation with him. On a blank provided, he signed his name verifying the fact that he had been given the opportunity to read the statements relative to his discussion with them, but left blank the options as to whether he did or did not consider them accurate as they were written.

But the "Institutional Statement" is as silent as the stars in reference to the claims made by the Swifts. Were they ever "interviewed" or even contacted? Maybe we should assume that they were incorrect in their claims? Possibly the ACU administration feels that all people will bow to their ipse dixit, and that he matter is closed, and that they have been exonerated of all charges.

But let us look further. John Propst, who was a member, as well as a deacon, of the Baker Heights congregation in Abilene where Archie Manis is an elder, gives a story that harmonizes with the Swift letter. Thus, we see another instance that places Manis and the ACU "Institutional Statement," and all associated with it, in a very precarious and untenable position.

Brother Propst states that on Wednesday, September 25, 1985, he met with brother Manis at the Baker Heights building. In response to the question "Do you believe that God created the heavens, earth, and everything in them in six literal days of approximately 24 hours each?" Brother Propst writes the following relative to brother Manis' answer: "Initially, Archie tried to avoid giving a direct answer, therefore, I continued to ask the same question until he gave the following answer: 'I think he could have, if he wanted to, but I don't think that's the way he did it.'"

A month later, on October 26, at the request of two other deacons of the congregation, John Propst went in on their meeting with Manis. At the start of the meeting, Manis verified that Propst had quoted him (Manis) correctly in saying that he (Manis) did not believe that God had created everything in six literal days. However, toward the end of the same meeting, Manis denied that this was his belief, stating that he did believe that God created everything in six literal days. When asked by Propst why he (Manis) had deliberately misled and deceived him in the first meeting, Manis' answer was "I'm sorry."

On November 20, 1985, brother Propst and another deacon, along with their wives, met with all of the Baker Heights elders (Manis included). To their surprise, the Baker Heights elders, to a man, stood with Manis! The other deacon, who had previously met with Manis on November 3, asked him why he had specifically told them that the days of creation were 24-hour periods. The response from Manis was that he had "become all things to all men."

Now we ask: Which Archie Manis are we believe: The one of September 25, October 26 (the first part of the meeting), October 26 (the latter part of the meeting), November 3, or the one in the "Institutional

Statement" of February 17, 1986?

Why is it that the "Institutional Statement" never mentions these meetings, nor those who were involved in them? Were John Propst, the other deacon, and their wives ever "interviewed" or contacted? If they were not, then we ask "Why?" In my judgment, the ignoring of such detrimental evidence by the Special Committee of the ACU Board of Trustees is worthy of being questioned. The dignity of the position of Board of Trustees is worthy of being questioned. The dignity of the position of Board of Trustees and the obligation which they have to both parents and students, whether past, present, or future, as well as to the brotherhood in general, calls

for an investigation which would remove any doubt. After all, is it not their claim that they are a "Christian College"?

Again, we affirm that loyalty is to be commended. But when this loyalty becomes blind, even to the point of being idolatry, then the results can be nothing less than disastrous.

Author's note: Photocopies of the letters from brethren McLeod and MacLeod quoted in this article are available from Apologetics Press, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117 (a contribution to help with postage would be appreciated).

(More To Follow)

—111 S. Curry, West Plains, MO 65775.

The Hope Of Young People

Continued From Page 2

10:17).

Attend all the services of the church you can. Put the Lord and his church first in your life. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Let the pursuit of the way of Christ be your main vocation in life (Ephesians 4:1-3). Learn to love Christ and his church more than your family. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worth of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37-38; Cf. Luke 14:26-33).

Be a real man or a real woman as you endeavor to make the very best of life. David, on his death-bed, gave the following advice to Solomon his son: "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man" (1 Kings 2:1-4). Do right, talk right, walk right and be a blessing to yourself and to your parents. Have the wonderful courage to stand for the right, regardless of the cost.

I know that it is difficult for young people to grow up into adults who can bless the world in the years ahead. Young people need all the help of a righteous sort they can obtain. Young people need no help in doing wrong.

To illustrate the problems of young people, we submit the following statistics:

1) Broken Homes: 3 in 5 born today will live with a single parent by age 18.

2) Child Care: 2 of 4 children (age 13 and under) live with parents both of whom are employed.

3) Drugs: 1 child in 6 has tried marijuana, and 1 in 3 has tried alcohol, before the 9th grade.

4) The proportion of girls under 15 who have had sex has tripled in 2 decades.

5) Suicides: The suicide rate for youths under 15 has tripled since 1960.

—U.S. News & World Report, Oct. 27, 1986.

A caricature of the 23rd Psalm illustrates well the point we are attempting to make: "These tragic words, part of a twisted rewording of the beloved 23rd Psalm, were discovered recently in Reidsville, N.C., in a closed car alongside a dead heroin addict. She was 23 years old.

"Her death was ruled a suicide. A hookup with the car's exhaust had sent carbon monoxide fumes from the running motor into the vehicle. Here's the complete

"Psalm."

"King heroin is my shepherd; I shall always want. He maketh me to lie down in the gutters.

"He leadeth me beside the troubled waters. He destroyeth my soul.

"He leadeth me into the paths of wickedness. Yea, I shall walk through the valley of poverty, and will fear no evil for thou, Heroin, art with me.

"Thy needle and capsule comfort me. Thou strippest the table of groceries in the presence of my family. Thou robbest my head of reason.

"My cup of sorrow runneth over. Surely, Heroin addiction shall stalk me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the House of the Damned forever."

Also found in the car with the dead woman was this written message:

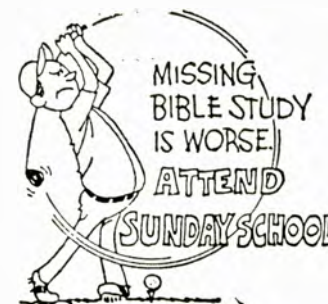
"Jail didn't cure me. Nor did hospitalization help me for long. The doctor told my family it would have been better, and indeed kinder, if the person who got me hooked on dope had taken a gun and blown my brains out. And I wish to God he had. My God, how I wish it."

—Ann Landers, Birmingham Post-Herald.

Young People! Don't you know that you reap as you sow? Those who sow to the wind must reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7). "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the 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).

"Be not wise in your own conceits" (Romans 12:16). The word "conceits" refers to an "excessive appreciation of one's own worth or virtue; individual opinion." Young people, allow God to order your lives. To do otherwise, is to utterly fail.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.





(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 24

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NUMBER 17

The Instrumental Music Question?

(NO. 3)

The basis of Boswell's position was that the New Testament usage of the Greek word "PSALLO" means to sing to the accompaniment of an instrument of music. He offered several lexicographers as authorities on the primary meaning of "PSALLO": Wright, Pickering, Dunbar, Hamilton, Greek-English Vocabulary, Oxford Press. They all related that the word had to do with "plucking or twanging a string as in the playing of a musical instrument."



Charles Cook

Boswell agreed that, with the lapse of time, words change meanings; but he contended that words never completely lose their basic or root meanings. He pointed out that he believed that these lexicographers upheld his position in that they generally agreed that to "PSALLO" means to sing while accompanied by an instrument. He argued that the significance of the word (as it appears in passages like Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16) is that it authorizes Christians to sing to God while being accompanied by an instrument. He further pointed out that these and other lexicographers have rendered the strictest meaning to the word, and in doing so confirm his contention. However, he also stated that to sing with or without an instrument was in his opinion acceptable New Testament worship.

In answer to Boswell's arguments about the meaning of "PSALLO," Hardeman stated that words have etymological, primary, original, and applied or contextual meanings. He said words have meanings according to the usage of the time in which they are

presented. He agreed that "PSALLO," etymologically and primarily, means to "pull, pluck, twang as on a bowstring or musical instrument." And that the word means "to sing to the accompaniment of an instrument."

Hardeman then asked, "What, under the New Testament, is the instrument that accompanies the singing? Ephesians 5:19 says we are to sing unto the Lord and 'psallo' with the heart . . . therefore, the heart is the instrument that accompanies the singing." (Boswell-Hardeman Discussion, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, Tenn., 1957)

Few of us today would be acquainted with the lexicons cited by Boswell, such as Wright, Pickering, and others. We generally quote Thayer, Vine, Robinson, or Arndt and Gingrich. Their consensus is that "psallo" in its root meaning is as Boswell's sources indicated: it means "to pluck, to twang, etc." But Thayer and the others strongly suggest that the contextual meaning of the word far outweighs its classical meaning, and therefore, in Ephesians 5:19 its usage has to do with singing with the human voice and has nothing to do with instrumental accompaniment, the accompaniment is the human heart. Thayer defines it thus: "In the N.T., to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song . . ." (page 675).

The Wallace-Hunt Debate was held in the auditorium of the School of Evangelism, Ottumwa, Iowa, during the month of April, 1951. The debaters were G. K. Wallace, Tampa, Florida, an evangelist and teacher of Bible at Florida Christian College, and Julian O. Hunt, Lexington, Kentucky, minister for the Martland Avenue Christian Church. The proposition was stated as follows: "Resolved, that according to the New Testament the infallibly safe side is for Christians to use mechanical instruments of music in connection with praises offered to God." Mr. Hunt took the affirmative position and Mr. Wallace the negative.

Mr. Hunt revealed that there are 44 passages in the New Testament that make mention of

instruments of music. He argued that not once does the New Testament condemn or even speak against them. He further maintained that there was ample opportunity for inspired writers to condemn them, and the fact that they failed to do so is tantamount to New Testament approval. He concluded this argument by stating: "Anything that is mentioned in the New Testament is mentioned for one of three purposes . . . either to uphold it, to condemn it, or the Scripture is neutral about it." As further proof he cited the fact that the New Testament upholds baptism, condemns sin and is neutral on the subject of circumcision. He concluded that circumcision or uncircumcision avails nothing (Galatians 5:6), and that this same principle applies to the use of instrumental music in the worship service.

Mr. Wallace's answer was first of all to partially argue with Mr. Hunt. He stated, "It (instrumental music) is mentioned 44 times, but not once in connection with the New Testament church . . . The Sabbath is mentioned 58 times, but that does not prove that we ought to observe the Sabbath day." And, on justifying instrumental music on a "neutral grounds argument," Wallace said: "There are some things that are morally right that are religiously wrong. It is morally right to use an instrument, but it is religiously wrong . . . He (Hunt) said that circumcision is just neutral. Turn with me to Galatians 5:3, 'If ye receive circumcision, ye are fallen from grace.' It is morally right, but religiously wrong. If you should use circumcision as a religious act, Christ would not have anything to do with you." (Wallace-Hunt Debate, Telegram Book Co., Longview, Wash., 1953).

Thus we have the essence of two debates on the subject of authorizing instrumental music in worship to God. There are many arguments in these debates not mentioned here. And, there have been many other debates on this

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Your Faith Greatly Determines Your Child's Faith

As the result of some research it has been determined that there is an overwhelming

relationship between the faithfulness of Christian parents and the faithfulness of their children. Here are the results of that research:

6 percent of the children remained faithful to Christ where the parents attended Bible study occasionally.

53 percent of the children remained faithful from homes where the parents were reasonably faithful, but inactive in the Lord's work.

74 percent of the children remained faithful where one parent was active and faithful.

93 percent of the children remained faithful to Christ from homes where both parents were active and faithful to the cause of Christ.

How great is the faith YOU have instilled in your children? Paul declares, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Your respect for, and

appreciation for, the word of God is the most influential factor in your child's attitude toward it.

Too often, one's confidence in the truth is so shallow that the wayside hearer is descriptive of him: "Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved" (Luke 8:12).

A small boy, new to Sunday School, was greatly pleased with his picture card with its text: "Have faith in God." On the way home the card slipped from his grasp and fluttered out the window of the bus. The little boy cried out, "Stop the bus! Please stop the bus! I've lost my 'faith in God'!"

The good-natured driver stopped the bus and the card was regained amidst the smiles of the other passengers. One older person remarked about the "blessed innocence of childhood." Another more thoughtful person said, "There would be many happier and truer lives today if only we older ones were wise enough to call a halt when we find ourselves rushing ahead on some road where we are in danger of losing our faith in God!"

One small child tried quoting the 23rd Psalm, but said:

"The Lord is my Shepherd,
And that's all I want!"

A greater sermon could not be preached!
—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.



Edsel Burleson

The Conversion Of The Ethiopian Eunuch

The book of Acts is sometimes called the "Book of Conversions" because it contains the accounts of those who "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine" delivered unto them (Romans 6:17), thus being "made free from sin" (verse 18; John 8:32). In this "Book of Conversions" we find a chapter dealing with the conversion of a eunuch of Ethiopia.

In examining Acts 8:26-40, we notice several good traits of this man which contributed to his conversion. Let us examine these traits and also his obedience to Christ and his rejoicing afterward.

HE WAS A MAN OF GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

The inspired record reads that this man was "an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure . . ." (Acts 8:27). These descriptions reveal the dependability, trustworthiness and honesty of the eunuch of Ethiopia. Unlike Jonah of old (Jonah 1:1-3), the Ethiopian eunuch was a man who assumed his responsibilities!

HE WAS RELIGIOUS

Not only was the Ethiopian eunuch a man of



Howell Bigham

great responsibility, the scriptures also teach that he was a religious man. The purpose for his having come to Jerusalem is given in the text -- "for to worship" (Acts 8:27). From this statement of inspiration, we learn that this individual: (1) had a concern for religious matters; and (2) that he believed in God. However, this statement brings forth another thought concerning this man. It teaches that a man can be religious, yet still be unsaved! The eunuch reminds one of Cornelius, a "devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway" (Acts 10:2). Notice however, that Cornelius was commanded to send for Peter "who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14). Therefore, we learn that it is not merely enough to be religious. A man must be religiously right in order to be saved at the judgment!

HE READ THE SCRIPTURES

This eunuch of great authority was sitting in his chariot and reading Isaiah, the prophet of old (verse 28). In studying these verses, one can know the "WHAT" of the eunuch's reading -- Isaiah 53:7-8. We discover, too, the "WHEN" of his reading -- that he "was returning" from worship. Therefore, we learn that the eunuch was reading the greatest book -- the Bible; that he was reading concerning the prophecy of Christ being "the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) and that he was studying the Bible away from home.

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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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Debates: Some Recommendations

John Waddey

The man who occupies the front line in the good fight of faith will likely find himself in a situation where he must publicly contend for the faith against error (Jude 3). Debating has played a significant role in the history of the America Restoration Movement. When truth is represented by a brother knowledgeable on the issue at hand and skilled in polemic methods, great good will result. On the other hand, the unskilled and unprepared contender will often be routed to the embarrassment of himself and the church.

The following suggestions may prove helpful to the man contemplating his first debate. Those who have debated should already have learned these lessons.

1. Never let an opponent rush you into a debate before you have time to adequately prepare (Proverbs 21:5). He may have been studying the issue for years. You could easily be overwhelmed, even though occupying the correct position.

2. Always insist on a fair, soundly worded proposition, which clearly sets forth the case in dispute. A proposition correctly worded and properly defined is essential to a successful debate.

3. Read and digest every line your opponent has written on the subject. Do not hesitate to ask him for copies of his materials for review. Try to find tape recordings of his lessons for your study. You must know exactly what he says, lest you aim at the wrong target. A false teacher can often escape the effects of your blows if he can point out a misrepresentation -- be it ever so small.

4. Spend as many hours per day as possible in your preparation, immersing yourself in your subject until your mind is totally permeated with it.

5. Put every argument of both sides in a properly indexed notebook, with tabs for easy handling. Place both his and your responses along with each argument.

6. Frame your arguments for the common man in the pew. Although the representative of truth has sound arguments, they may be set forth in such profound and technical

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"The Works Therein Shall Be Burned Up"

This phrase, found in II Peter 3:10, took on real meaning for me recently. In the context of this verse, Peter is talking about the certainty of the Lord's coming and the destruction of the entire world. However, an incident that happened the other day reminded me of this fact once again.

My brother, Ron, minister of the church in Evergreen, Alabama told me this story as it happened



Don Williams

to him recently. He had been out visiting, and was getting ready to leave. He turned the ignition key, expecting to hear the sound of the engine. What he heard was a popping sound, followed by the smell of smoke. Raising the hood, he saw that the engine was on fire. He ran to the front of the house and knocked, trying to get in to call the fire department. No one heard him, so he ran to the back of the house, got in, and called the fire department. The man of the house then ran outside, hooked up a hose, and began spraying down the burning engine. But he was too late! Parts of the engine had melted due to the intense heat -- it was a complete loss!

What is the point of the story, you say? Well, as I began to think about the events of this story, I thought about some similarities and dissimilarities between this and the judg-

ment day. First, all that was destroyed on this day was my brother's car, and it was an accident. On the judgment day, it will be no accident "when all the elements of the earth shall melt, and all the works of the earth shall be burned up." Secondly, my brother tried to get inside the house to call for help, but no one heard his call. On that great day, many will call and cry unto God and Christ for help and mercy, but to no avail (Matthew 7:21-23).

Another interesting thought in this story was that water was needed to put out the fire-- but the hose and faucet could not be found in time. Today as we live: water is used by God to show forth man's obedience unto Christ, by his being immersed into water for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 8:36; I Peter 3:20-21). In the aftermath of the judgment, many in the torments of hell will be much like the rich man in torments, desirous

for the smallest amount of water (Luke 16:24). But it will not come. Finally, and thankfully, all that was destroyed in this incident was my brother's older car (at least not his newer one). He himself escaped without any harm -- and this is most important. But on the judgment day, those who disobey God will not escape from his wrath. Matthew 25:46 says that the unrighteous shall go away into everlasting destruction. Mark 9:43 tells us that the fire in hell will never go out.

One final thought: My brother's car, a total loss, can be replaced -- because he had insurance that covered fire damage. What type of spiritual insurance do you have in your life so that you need not worry about the eternal fires of hell? "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (II Peter 1:10).

—934 Florence Street, Lewisburg, Tennessee 37091.

The Conversion Of The Ethiopian Eunuch

Continued From Page 2

While reading the scriptures, this eunuch "desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him" in his chariot to "guide" him in his study (Acts 8:31). Here we learn of the importance and need of preachers and teachers of God's word (Romans 10:13-15). Philip was indeed helping a man who was "hungering and thirsting after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6) to rightly divide the word (II Timothy 2:15). Truly, the eunuch from Ethiopia provides a sterling example for all to read the book of God (II Timothy 2:15; II Peter 3:18; Acts 17:11).

HE WAS RECEPTIVE TO GOD'S WORD

The scriptures state that the "eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" (Acts 8:34). Here was a man asking questions concerning the scriptures. The Bible teaches that a man must be receptive to God's word in order to be converted to Christ (Acts 2:41; 17:11).

As a result of his receptive attitude, Philip "preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35), beginning "at the same scripture" (Isaiah 53:7, 8). Like many others in the book of Acts, this man a "good ground" hearer (Luke 8:15).

HE RENDERED OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST

After the eunuch heard the word proclaimed, there were some things that he saw. He saw that he was lost in sin (Romans 3:23; Acts 2:37). He no doubt also saw the urgency of obeying the gospel, for he said "what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36; 16:33; II Corinthians 6:2). Therefore, in verses 37-39 of Acts 8, one reads of the plan of salvation that this man (and all who will be saved) obeyed. He (1) heard the gospel (v. 35; Romans 10:17); (2) believed that Christ is the Son of God (v. 37; Mark 16:16); (3) repented (turned from his sins and turned to God); (4) confessed Christ before man (v. 37; Romans 10:9-10); and (5) was baptized for the remission of his sins (v. 38; Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21).

HE REJOICED IN THE SALVATION OF HIS SOUL

Acts 8:39 states that the eunuch "went on his way rejoicing." Here was a man who was once lost, but now was saved. Indeed, how appropriate it is for one to rejoice in the salvation of his soul (Acts 16:34)! Habakkuk of long ago said: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation"

(Habakkuk 3:18).

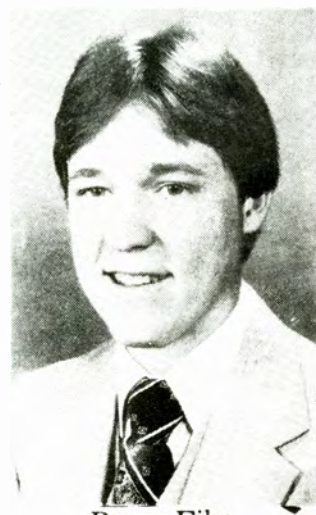
CONCLUSION

We have studied another account of conversion in the "Book of Conversions." The man from Ethiopia possessed some traits which contributed greatly to his conversion. However, it was not until he rendered obedience to the gospel that he could go on his way rejoicing!

—1412 Parsons Avenue, Sheffield, AL 35660.

Who Are The "Older Women?"

I ran across a bulletin which referred to the older women of Titus 2:3-5 as those older in faith. The impression given was that a 27-year-old mother of one, could fit the requirements of this passage; that such a younger woman could teach a 50-year-old, mother of 4 grown-up children, for the older one is not as old in her spiritual life as the younger mother.



Barry Fike

This can not be. Paul was talking to Titus about women who were older in physical age. Such a conclusion comes from the following observations.

1. This same Greek word (PRESBUTIS) here translated "old" or "aged" occurs also in Luke 1:18 and Philemon 9. It refers to physical age, not the spiritual age of the disciple. (This Greek word, presbutis, points this out clearly.)

2. They are to encourage the young women. How do they do this? By teaching them to love their husbands, love their children (showing that these "young" mothers were young enough in age to have children still with them), etc.

How could a young mother (in age) possibly

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Debates: Some Recommendations

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jargon that the folks who will hear and judge the merits of the presentations, may never understand what is spoken. In some such situations error actually gains the victory in the minds of the hearers, because the errorist used commonplace terminology, which -- though wrong -- was easily understood.

7. Do not allow your opponent to provoke you into manifesting an unchristian spirit (Romans 12:14, 18, 20-21). Some debaters have lost the support of the audience because of a caustic, hostile attitude toward an opponent. This is doubly tragic because the truth we represent thus suffers.

8. As the time draws near for the debate, make sure you get adequate rest. A tired mind is always slow and forgetful. Such problems a debater cannot afford to have.

9. Place your arguments on overlays and use an overhead projector. It takes more work to do this, but it really pays off when the audience can both SEE and HEAR the truth.

10. The beginning debater should read brother James D. Bales' little book, "Christian, Contend for Thy Cause" printed by Gospel Light Publishing Company. It is the best available handbook on debate procedure, methods, and style.

11. Above all, pray that God will give you wisdom for your task (James 1:5); that he will use you to set forth his TRUTH, to strengthen the brethren, to correct those in error and to silence false doctrine. With his divine help we can do all things (Philippians 4:13).

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

The Instrumental Music Question?

Continued From Page 1

subject pointing out different aspects and approaches to the problem. Men are to this very day still trying to resolve issues surrounding this subject.

Instead of growing closer, the opposing sides have over the years grown further and further apart. There have been so-called "unity meetings" for the purpose of setting up dialogue between the groups, and it is felt by some that progress has been made in some of the more recent gatherings. However, others criticize these meetings, saying they are no more than compromising attempts to set up fellowship between the two factions while each continues to hold to their present practice. This would constitute a "sell out" of the conservative position. The issue has to be settled on the basis that the New Testament either does, or does not authorize the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. There is no other way to settle the question!

Obviously, the lexicographers cannot settle this matter for us. In the various sources I have consulted, debaters on both sides of the question have referred to Thayer's Lexicon where he discusses the meaning of "PSALLO" as it appears in both Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. Both sides claim that he substantiates their position. That cannot be true. So, what is the answer to this puzzle? The issue cannot be settled on the basis of etymology, or a scholar's opinion. However, when we use all that scholarship can tell us about the possible uses and meanings of a Greek word, and couple that with proper hermeneutics which demand interpretation of all words and passages within their given context, then, and then only, are we ready to exegete what this word "PSALLO" means in these two passages.

Simplistically, some have concluded that the reason we have these two bodies (for all practical purposes totally out of fellowship with each other) is because of instrumental music. Actually, the instrument is more of a symptom than the issue. The issue is hermeneutical, a difference of attitude toward the scriptures. The "Restoration Movement" rallied around the principle that wherever God specifies a thing, that automatically eliminates everything else. When God specified unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine for the Lord's table, that automatically eliminated coke and pizza, and every other kind of food. The same rule that allows coke and pizza for the Lord's supper, allows instrumental music in praise during worship. Hence, God's silence about the use of instruments of music being used in New Testament worship is tantamount to prohibition. When God's servant wrote that we should "sing, making melody in our hearts," that rules out using instruments. This hermeneutical rule applies to more than music, or the Lord's Supper; it applies to every aspect of Christianity.

Seldom do the pro-instrument churches defend their position by appealing to proper hermeneutics; they more often use a "loop-hole" approach. They cite those lexicons that remotely suggest that "PSALLO" could also mean playing an instrument as well as singing. They disregard the fact that lexicographers say without dispute that it means to sing, and that it merely "could" include playing an instrument. They also desperately turn to the few translations that render Ephesians 5:19b, "Sing and make

music in your heart to the Lord," (i.e., NIV) as though rendering "PSALLO" here as "make music" supports their case. In what way does this support the use of instrumental music in worship? Still the music is made in the "heart." Besides, translators are not inspired; translations vary in quality depending on the scholarship behind them. Again, in its context "PSALLO" has to do with vocal

music, and any honest, sound exegetical treatment of Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 would never force authority for instrumental music in worship to God upon these passages.

May these three articles help to unify all those who love God's word and who want the concept of restoring New Testament Christianity to prosper in our time.

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Who Are The "Older Women?"

Continued From Page 3

have the talents (not to mention good old experience) to be able to handle such a high calling? Only an older woman who has gone through years of marriage, both to her husband and to Christ, can adequately and effectively train young women to love their husbands and children. She has this knowledge from the school of experience which is much more valuable than the school of good advice.

May I make a simple plea here? A little amount of study in this area will show forth the truth that Paul spoke of. Let us be sure that before we put our pens into action that we have done the right amount of open-minded study that we require of the denominational world so that the truth of God's word may spring forth.

Secondly, Older Women, where are you? I have heard so many of you say that the younger women have the zeal, interest and energy that you had when you were young. Thus, the logic goes: "The young ladies need to teach the children's classes, teach the Ladies' Bible class, and do what-

ever else is required of them." I think that it is wonderful that so many of our ladies of youthful age are willing to do so much. Surely such a spirit shows the Christ-like nature of so many. But Paul said they need guidance!! Only a little reflection upon the society that we live in, and the pressure that is put upon young women to work outside the home, and to become the head of the house, shows that this is desperately needed in the church today!

Sister, if the older women includes YOU, remember that God does not look lightly upon the one who has the talents, yet foolishly squanders them. You not only have the necessary time, but also the needed talents and abilities that the years have blessed you with. Countless future generations are calling upon you to guide the hearts of the youth so that their path may become clearer as they come closer to the light. Be the woman Paul calls for and encourage today's young women!

—7620 Elm Ave., Rockford, Ill. 61111.

Hunger And Thirst After Righteousness

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Many Bible passages exalt righteousness. Notice these from Proverbs: Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (14:34). "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right" (16:8). "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour" (21:21). "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death" (10:2).

What is "righteousness?" Webster says, "Freedom from guilt or blame." Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon defines "righteousness" as "integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness; correctness in thinking, feeling, acting."

In II Peter 2:5 Noah is called "a preacher of righteousness." We are told that "All scripture is profitable for instruc-



Ken Tyler

tion in righteousness." (II Timothy 3:16). David said that he had never seen the "righteous" forsaken. (Psalms 37:25). Luke 1:6 states that Zechariah and Elizabeth "were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Physically, the person who is genuinely hungry or thirsty can think of little else; he will do all humanly possible to supply the need. If we could get people to pursue righteousness the way they pursue eating and drinking, this would be a different world in which to live! Let me ask you, do you hunger and thirst after righteousness?

For the person who does hunger and thirst after righteousness, a "crown of righteousness" is laid up for him. The apostle Paul said shortly before his death, while in prison at Rome: "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to be only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:6-8).

It is my prayer that all of us will "hunger and thirst after righteousness" so we shall receive a crown of righteousness at the last day.

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(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

"I am no Words of

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26:25

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A Father's Influence!

FATHERS BEWARE! There are few words in the English vocabulary that carry with them the significance as that of "father"! A vast majority of young boys desire to be "just like my daddy" and many will grow into both physical and spiritual adulthood having accomplished just that objective; some to their benefit others to their detriment.



Dale Jenkins

When God chose the name he wished to be called by those he adopted, it was "Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:5-6). As I lay on my couch with my two-year old son and listened to his heartbeat (he was in a rare moment of stillness-those of you who have had two-year olds can understand that), I realized again, this heartbeat, this soul exists because of me. What an overwhelming responsibility. I have committed myself to being the best father I can be. And I believe in part one of the important things for me to do is look at the influence fathers in the Bible had on their children and learn from them.

Let us restudy two biblical fathers, often overlooked, and their influence on their children. It is likely neither of these men would have been mentioned had it not been for the places in which their children were. Very little is told us of either of these men, therefore much of what we observe will be through their sons. They are Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, the father of Saul, Israel's first physical king (I Samuel 9:1-2); and Jesse, also of the tribe of Benjamin, the father of David, Israel's second king (I Samuel 16:1, 11).

First let us observe Kish. The very first mention we have of Kish, after the typical Jewish method of giving his lineage, is that he was a "mighty man of power" (I Samuel

9:1). Now to you and me that sounds just fine, or at least it did until I noticed the footnote rendering of power: "wealth." I have nothing against rich friends who serve God mightily using their substance in a spiritual way. In fact, these good folk do much good for the Lord and his cause. But I do worry when I am introduced to a man and the first and only thing that can be said of him is that he is rich! Every mention of Kish specifically deals with his material assets. It should not take the serious Bible student long to see that what he took interest in rubbed off on his son. Most of us know that Saul reigned 40 years but how many know that it was only two years into his kingship that his power began to crumble (I Samuel 13:1, 11). More on that later. Notice a revealing event that transpired even before Saul was anointed king. Kish, playing his usual role, showing great interest in "things," sent his son Saul to look for his donkeys (I Samuel 9:3). After searching for what must have been several days, Saul is ready to give up the search when his servant suggests that they inquire of the man of God (vs. 4 & 6). Verse eighteen reveals a note of importance, standing face to face with Samuel, Israel's spiritual leader for many years (7:16), Saul does not know him. Now, with all the sacrifices required of the Israelites, is it not strange that Saul has never even met the one who is ordained to offer the sacrifices? The plot thickens when Saul is anointed king. It is interesting to notice three mistakes of Saul. Each deals with his incompetence when it comes to the matter of worship to God.

Saul's successes seem to crumble almost as quickly as they were built. Perhaps Saul's greatest error is in never realizing who gave him his victories. In I Samuel 13, early on in the king's reign, he chooses 3,000 men to fight against a garrison of the Philistines. Notice carefully Saul's seemingly self-seeking acts. First he gives himself 2,000 of the men while only giving his brave son 1,000 fighters. Verse three tells us that it was Jonathan who led the attack on the garrison, but by the time Saul finished blowing his

trumpet, the message received was that Saul was the attacker (vs. 4). Saul and the Israelites gather at Gilgal as instructed by Samuel (10:8). When the priest runs a little late Saul takes it upon himself to take the God-ordained role of priest and offers the burnt offering. Had Saul been taught properly he would have known this to have been wrong. Before the day is done, his army of 3,000 has dwindled to 600, and the kingdom has been taken from him (vs. 14-15). Saul's key concern is not sacrificing or penitence, it's his own skin! Notice his explanation to Samuel: "Because I saw that the people were scattered from ME . . . Therefore I said, The Philistines will come down now upon me . . . I forced myself" (vs 11-12). And finally notice the judgment placed on Saul only two years into his reign: "Thou hast done foolishly: Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart . . ." Remember the last part of that quote: it is significant when we view the heart of David.

We do not have to travel very far to find the key to Saul's downfall revealed even more graphically. In chapter 14:35, after Saul has led the people to sin by not allowing them to eat of the spoils of battle, he decides it is finally time to build an altar to God. Notice that this is Saul's first attempt ever to build an altar to God. Where are the altars in Saul's life before this time? Why is there no altar at the birth of his son Jonathan? why not one near the time he was anointed as God's appointed one? why not one in Michmash where he could have better spent time thanking God for the victory rather than blowing his trumpet? On these occasions you find others sacrificing, but this is Saul's first attempt to build an altar to God. I suggest to you that the reason Saul is such a failure at his worship attempts is because Israel's God is not "his" God. Is it likely that he had learned to worship the god of himself from his "mighty" father, who evidently

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Words Of Truth

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It is not the most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. —Acts 26:35

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Filters For The Ears

John L. Wheeler

We have filters for just about everything: our automobiles have oil filters, air filters and gasoline filters. If it were not for these, the engines would not function properly for very long. Our water is so bad that we must have filters to clean it up.

There are filters to get rid of unwanted noise and static from our radios and sound systems. There are filters that can select any given frequency for passage and refuse passage for any other. These we call tuners for radio and TV. Were it not for these, we could not tune the stations we want. There are audio filters that will allow us to shape the sound entirely different from that which is broadcast.

We should have filters in our ears to keep out things that we do not need to hear. We should use them for many TV programs and records. Much of what is said and what is sung is not fit for Christians to hear. We should be able to tune out gossip and slander. We should be able to tune out false doctrine and Satan's temptations of the flesh. At the same time we should be able to tune in God's will.

There were people in the time of Jesus who had filters in their ears. They could not hear the words of Jesus. He said, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not: and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand: and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed: lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. When any one heareth the word of the king-

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The Rich Young Ruler

One of the best-known and best-loved stories from the life of Christ is that of the rich young ruler, recorded in Matthew 19:16-23; Mark 10:17-31 and Luke 19:18-30.

Near the end of Jesus' public ministry, as he made his way toward Jerusalem, "there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17).



John Waddey

About The Man

A careful study gives the following profile of our subject. He was a "young man" (Matthew 19:22). He was very rich (Luke 18:23). He was a ruler, which is thought to mean a ruler of a synagogue (Luke 18:18). If this be correct, he would have been at least 30, very near the age of Jesus. In character he was upright -- he obeyed the law from his youth (Mark 10:20). His interest in eternal life indicates he was a religious man. His words and actions toward Christ showed the greatest reverence. He was an enthusiastic and earnest young man: he "ran" to Christ. He was discerning. While most of his peers rejected Jesus, he saw him a worthy teacher with answers for his questions. Courage was evident in his life, for he was willing to publicly acknowledge Jesus, even in the face of a hostile community. The Lord found him likeable: he loved him (Mark 10:21). With all of the above in his favor, he had an inner emptiness. He urgently desired a closer walk with God. He wanted eternal life.

The Cardinal Question

This young ruler came with life's most important question on his lips: "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:18). He had youth, wealth, and position. For the worldly-minded, these things constitute the ultimate degree of the 'good life.' But he correctly understood that the life and possessions of the here-and-now are part of the world that will pass away (I John 2:15-17). Like all discerning souls, "eternity was in his heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). With David, he longed to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalms 23:6).

In ancient times men wondered "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). Jesus had given the race a definitive answer. He declared, "My sheep hear my voice, . . . and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish" (John 10:27-28). He promised his disciples an abiding place in his Father's mansion (John 14:2). Since God is eternal, those who are privileged to live with him will share that never-ending existence (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Eternal Life

Eternal life is "with the Father" (I John 1:2). Faithful disciples will receive "in the world to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:30). We live "in hope of eternal life" which God has promised (Titus 1:2). At the same time, John assures us that we "may know that (we) have eternal life" if we believe on the Son of God (I John 5:13). This certainty is

based upon the immutability of our God, who cannot lie or break his promise (Hebrews 6:18). God will render eternal life "to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption . . ." (Romans 2:6-7). Jesus said that those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have eternal life. He then explained: "It is the spirit that giveth life: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6:54, 63). Thus by feeding upon his word we can have eternal life. Christ taught that "Whosoever believeth may (can) in him have eternal life" (John 3:15). "And this is life eternal that they should know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). This "knowing" God and Christ is more than mere awareness of: it is that intimate knowledge that comes when one has the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). Eternal life cannot be purchased or earned, it is "the free gift of God . . . in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Although it is a gift, we must "lay hold on the life eternal" (I Timothy 6:12). This means that God-given conditions must be met before we receive the free gift. Those who have eternal life "shall never perish" (John 10:28).

Why Callest Thou Me Good?

Jesus' first reply was not the answer the young ruler sought, but a rebuke for his complimentary words "Good Teacher." Luke helps us understand these mysterious words! "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest me good? None is good, save one, even God" (Luke 18:18). Jesus claimed to be divine, thus "making himself equal with God" (John 5:18). This the Jewish leadership rejected. Jesus' words meant, If I am good, than I am God. If I am not God, then I am not good! The following proposition captures the essence of his words.

God alone is good -- this the young man believed.

He called Jesus good.

Therefore he should go farther and recognize Jesus as God.

Jesus called himself the good shepherd (John 10:11) and rightly so because he existed on an equality with God (Philippians 2:5).

Keep The Commandments

To the young ruler's query, "What must I do?" Jesus said: "Keep the commandments." He meant the commandments of Moses, for he then cited those of the second table of the law.

It was entirely fitting that Jesus gave him this answer. As a Hebrew, living under God's covenant made at Sinai, he was obligated to obey Moses' law. Moses reminded his people that "Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, . . . And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment . . ." (Deuteronomy 6:24-25).

The answer fit the question, both as to time and covenant. Today, WE live under a different law, with different obligations. In his death Jesus took the old Law "out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14-16). The new covenant promised through Jeremiah has been given (Hebrews 8:8-9). Now Christ has "all authority in heaven and earth" (Matthew 28:18). His word will judge us in the last day (John 12:48). All that we do must be done "in the name of the

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Filters For The Ears

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dom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart" (Matthew 13:13-16, 19).

These people 'heard' Jesus; but the filters in their ears did not allow them to get the truth of the message. These filters were of their own making. They had chosen to tune out what they did not want to understand. At the same time, they had changed the frequency of the filters to 'hear' what Jesus did NOT say.

This happens today among many religious people. Much that is said by the Lord is not heard, nor understood by those reading or studying the Bible. Their filters either remove the message altogether, or change it entirely. This makes it possible to get (?) 'anything' from the Bible that one wants -- not that the Bible teaches such, but filters have been placed in their ears! According to Jesus, these cannot be "converted" so long as these filters are present.

Some appeal the Bible to prove (?) that they are saved by grace alone. The fact that the Bible has much to say about the necessity of man's obedience in order to be saved makes no impression on them. The reason: their ears filter out what the Bible has to say on the subject of obedience (Romans 6:17-18; Hebrews 5:8-9).

Others appeal to the Bible to prove (?) that they are saved by faith only. The Bible says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). This fact makes no impression on them, for they do not hear it. Once again the filters they have chosen keep out the truth, while allowing them to hear that we are saved "by faith." That message is changed by their filters from an obedient faith to "faith alone."

Many are not able to hear the Bible teaching that baptism is a condition of salvation. This is despite many plain passages (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21). Why are these people not able to hear? They have filters in their ears! As far as they are concerned, these passages do not exist.

Some appeal to the statement of Jesus, "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" (John 10:16). All they hear (?) from this passage is that there are many folds, churches! Jesus did not say that he had many churches. Rather, he is teaching that his people shall come from among the Gentiles, and both Jew and Gentile shall be united in one church in Christ. But the filters get in the way once again, and the truth is not allowed to get through.

In the same way some use the teaching of the Bible on the security of the faithful believer to prove (?) that the UNFAITHFUL cannot be lost. It matters not that such is different to the message of the Bible. The filters change the message so that they hear (?) what they have their filters tuned to hear!

Denominationalism could not exist without filters which block what is not wanted, and change what is wanted into the form pleasing to man. But members of the Lord's church also are guilty of using filters in their ears! Consider the person who does not want to assemble regularly with the saints. He cannot hear Hebrews 10:25. All he can hear is that he is to come when he wants to come. The person who does not want to give of his means as

he has been prospered is not able to hear the teaching of the Bible on giving. He hears only what he wants to hear. It matters not to him that it is different from what the Bible teaches. His filters are so tuned that what he does not want to hear is filtered out, and what he does want to hear is changed to suit himself.

Even some church members have convinced themselves that if they are present three times a week, that is all God requires. They can lie, cheat, and do anything they want to do during the week. They are hearing what they want to hear, whether God said it or not. Some members who attend every service need to respond to the invitation, confess their ungodliness, and pray to God for forgiveness. Why the pleas of the preacher seem to fall on deaf ears is explained in that they have filters

in their ears.

Paul describes those with ear filters: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

May God help us all to get rid of those filters which block or distort God's word. We must be open and honest with the Bible if we are to be saved and go to heaven. We cannot understand with these filters in our ears

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The Rich Young Ruler

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Lord Jesus . . ." (Colossians 3:17). Rather than keep Moses' precepts, those who today want eternal life must obey the gospel of Christ. "He is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9). The Lord declared the conditions upon which salvation in eternity will be given. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:15-16).

In practice we see this great truth demonstrated. Three times in the New Testament men asked what to do to be saved. The apostles taught them the gospel; they believed; they were baptized, and they were saved. (The Jews in Jerusalem, Acts 2:36-38; Saul of Tarsus, Acts 22:10-16; and the jailor of Philippi, Acts 16:30-33).

What Lack I Yet?

The young man had kept the commandments all of his life. Yet something was missing. "What lack I yet?" he cried. The answer was stunning: "If thou wouldst be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come follow me" (Matthew 19:21). Really there were two things commanded: go and divest yourself and come follow me as a disciple. While the demand seems shocking to us, it was no more than the Lord and his apostles had done. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me"

(Matthew 16:24). Jesus saw the one flaw that stood between this young soul and salvation. He loved his possessions inordinately. Such a serious problem demanded radical surgery. We should not conclude that God expects us to live in poverty in order to be Christians. We read of Christians who were "rich in this present world" (I Timothy 6:17). They were warned not to set their hopes on riches but on God — but they were not told to divest themselves. The case of the rich young ruler was unique, as was the divine prescription.

He Went Away Sorrowful

Sad that such a wonderful story has such an ending! He came to the right person, at the right time of life. He came (apparently) with the right attitude, and with the right question. He received the right answer. But his response was all wrong. His countenance fell; he became exceedingly sorrowful; he went away. -- To his credit, he was "sorrowful" rather than angry. We can wish that he lived to reconsider his decision. Surely this is one of the saddest stories in all the Bible! He loved things more than he loved God.

Let us learn from his mistake. May we gladly deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24).

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

Neither Cold Nor Hot

W. Edwin Kearley

To the church at Laodicea John was inspired to write: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see" (Revelation 3:15-18).

The church at Laodicea felt themselves a

"super-affluent" society. Their life was flowing along, encountering no obstacles. All of their wants were being filled. They were in a self-satisfied state. But they were blind to their real spiritual condition. Jesus sought to reveal to them their actual state.

Far too many in the Lord's church in the "good old U.S.A." today stand where the church at Laodicea stood. The only thing that matters to some is their own standard of economic living. Too many wake up after selfishness has destroyed their homes, and/or themselves. They may awake to their spiritual needs after their children have left home without spiritual training and conversion to Christ.

Jesus counseled the church at Laodicea to open their eyes to see that they were naked

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A Father's Influence!

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was more intent on building his holdings rather than in building strong relationships with God?

Saul's most famous fall is recorded in chapter 15. The last verse of chapter 14 is significant because it reveals that the prophesy of God was in fact coming to be (8:11-12). You are aware of the record of Saul's incomplete obedience to God by not utterly destroying the Amalekites. You know of his statement that he planned to sacrifice the spoils to God, even though it becomes obvious that his intent was a grandstand show of his own might (see vs. 17, 30). You know of his attempt to place the blame of his own faults on the people, verse 21. Often, though, what is perhaps the key to the downfall of Saul is overlooked. One can most vividly see the heart of Saul in his own words of attempted self-justification: in both verses 15 and 21 he describes the Lord as "thy God" or "your God" and not as "my God" or "our God."

The character of self-centeredness seen so clearly in the life of Saul seems totally absence in the life of the son of Jesse. When we come to this man Jesse, we are again given little but the life of a son to go on. As is the case with Kish, he is introduced to us and then leaves the scene. As was true in the record of Kish, from these simple few lines of introduction we can glean where the son learned his life-style. We are introduced to Kish by his lost donkeys, but God introduces us to Jesse. God knew that all the priest of God would have to do would be to call Jesse to sacrifice and he would arrive. So the first time we meet Jesse he is sacrificing (16:3). Now I suggest that we follow the same procedure, that we followed when examining Saul and look at a few of the events of and statements about David's life.

Reading the Psalms of David has prompted some to suggest that he is perhaps the greatest worshiper of all time. I would suggest to you that if worship has become meaningless to you that it would be worth your time and effort to spend a while viewing the respect, fear, love, and adoration David had for his God. As troubled Saul is in need of a comforter, a servant in the king's courts remembers one of the sons of Jesse. In I Samuel 16:18 his description of David the servant includes that "the Lord is with him." While Saul's important characteristics are being listed it is always included about his goodly looks and lofty physical height, but the thing that seems to single David out each time is his lofty spiritual superiority of the shepherd. On the very occasion when God removed Saul from kingship he promised to make "a man after his own heart" to be captain over his people. (I Samuel 13:14). At Saul's disaster against the Amalakites, God told Saul that he would give the kingdom to a neighbor of his, "that is better than thou." (I Samuel 15:28). We find David in moments of fear fleeing to the tabernacle (21:2; 22:9). We see David's desire is not even kin to that of his predecessor. While Saul continually seems to be trying to advance his own glory, David is constantly drawing his strength from the Lord. Listen to a few statements at the victory over Goliath, the giant Philistine, of Gath. To a group of "warriors" he said: "... who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God." (vs. 26). To supposedly self-sufficient Saul, who was cowardly avoiding his responsibility, he

spoke this: "Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (vs. 36-37). And to the over nine foot tall taunting terrorist he uttered: "... I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied" (vs. 45). It is interesting to me that the giant of Gath had previously addressed the Israelites as the servants of Saul. This would have likely been to Saul's liking, but David sets Goliath straight as he tells him that God is their leader! David doesn't stop here, he makes both his intention and his purpose clear: "This day will the Lord

deliver thee into mine hand . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands" (vs. 46-47). David was obviously in this war to bring back honor to HIS GOD! Jesse, you did fine! The world didn't judge you as rich or successful, so far as we know you are just a sheep herder, but remember, Jesse: It is not the world's commendation that matters!

Fathers, Beware: What are you teaching your children by your influence? By your worship fervor? By your giving? By your standards? By your life? FATHERS BEWARE!

—Route 1, Box 3 Eva, AL 35621.

Neither Cold Nor Hot

Continued from Page 3

spiritually. Today many who are doing well -prospering!- economically, are spiritually naked. They have very little knowledge of the word of God. Some are depending on the preacher to do their studying for them. Others are not concerned at all; while some are defiant of God and his word.

Neutrality is a position desired by many. But Jesus stated, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30). Jesus will not accept neutrality. We are either actively engaged in his kingdom, or we are registered by Christ as against his righteousness and kingdom (Matthew 6:33).

We ask the following questions: (1) Do you take the stance of neutrality concerning the deity of Christ? The Bible declares Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:20). Paul gives a list of eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus (I Corinthians 15:3-8). On the road to Demascus Paul was the last eye witness. On the day of Pentecost, no one challenged Peter's declaration: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24).

(2) Do you take a stand on the inspiration of the scriptures? Peter declared, "... but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21). Paul affirmed, "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, ASV). Therefore, we have Paul's testimony concerning the verbal inspiration of the scriptures.

(3) Are you a member of the church Jesus purchased with his blood? He promised to build his church (Matthew 16:18). He shed his blood to purchase it (Acts 20:28). The saved were added to it on Pentecost, the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection from the grave (Acts 2:41, 47). If you have done what they did, you are a member of Christ's church.

(4) Are you zealous for the cause of Christ? The apostles were zealous enough to give their lives for the cause of Christ. History tells us only John died a natural death.

However, even he also suffered much for his faith. How much does the Lord's cause mean to you? How active are you in his vineyard?

(5) Are you morally pure? Are you a stumbling block to others? or, are you an example of purity? (Matthew 5:13-16).

(6) How do you view your spiritual responsibility to your children? I have heard some say, "I will wait until he is grown, and let him decide." The truth of the matter is that he is making his decision every day. He is not living in a vacuum. His life is being molded by what he sees, hears, and learns each day. Two forces are vying for his allegiance: (1) The forces of evil influenced by the devil are on one side. (2) The forces of righteousness influenced by God are on the other side. Not all "religion" is good. The Bible, the word of God, is the standard of righteousness. You need to teach each child of yours, and allow him to be taught the word of God NOW, without addition or subtraction.

Are you dead spiritually? Or are you alive and on fire for the Lord? Or are you lukewarm? Only those on fire for righteousness are pleasing to God! The lukewarm make him sick at his stomach! (Revelation 3:15-18).

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

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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 23

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NUMBER 19

Some Things Baptism Can't Do

Baptism is a fundamental ordinance of the Christian faith. Christ commanded it (Acts 10:48). Salvation is conditioned thereon (Acts 22:16). It is surely a test of one's faith in God, for if we love him we will keep his commandments (John 14:15). However, with all its value and importance, there are some things that baptism can not do.



John Waddey

Baptism cannot make a BABY a CHRISTIAN. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:15). Infants are not capable of believing; therefore, they are not proper subjects of baptism. The fact is that infants, young children, and those who are mentally deficient do not need baptism -- for they are not lost. They belong to God by creation. Only when they have sinned do they need baptism to wash sins away (Acts 22:16). The disciples were called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26). A disciple is a learner, a student. This then demands a level of growth and maturity before one is capable of becoming, or of being, a Christian. Not only is infant baptism contrary to Scripture, it fails to accomplish what its practitioners wish.

Baptism will not allow you to keep what you have illegally taken. Peter said we must "REPENT and be baptized" (Acts 2:38). If you had stolen my car and then were baptized, repentance would demand that you return it. John the Baptist insisted that the Jews bring forth fruit worthy of repentance (Luke 3:8). If you have taken another person's mate, you cannot expect to keep him/her just because you have been baptized! Herod the Tetrarch

had taken his brother's wife. John the Baptist told him: "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matthew 14:4).

Baptism will not sanctify an unlawful marriage. Today some are teaching that upon baptism, an unscriptural second marriage is made holy and acceptable to God. Baptism will do many things for the sinner; but no where are we told that it will make a sinful relationship holy. Jesus said "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery" (Matthew 19:9). The "whosoever" includes aliens and Christians alike. Even as a homosexual 'marriage' remains sinful after baptism, so does an adulterous relation.

Baptism will not free one of legal penalties and responsibility for prior deeds done. Perhaps most preachers have seen some person who was afraid of the law show up, desiring to be baptized. He fondly hoped that the fact of his baptism would convince the judge that no penalty should be assessed. While baptism, sincerely sought, will bring him to forgiveness in God's sight, he still must answer to the civil law he broke, even if that means capital punishment for a capital crime.

His success in baptizing large numbers of people will not make a false teacher right in God's eyes; nor should it in the eyes of those in the church. Frequently we see obviously false teachers who plead that their success in conversions (?) should make us tolerate their error. Or they vainly hope that God will excuse their vagrant teachings in view of their many converts. Sad to say, some thoughtless brethren will seek to justify keeping or using a preacher who is unsound because of his ability to move people.

Many baptisms will not legitimize and excuse a factious movement that has wreaked havoc upon and divided the body of Christ. Strife, factions, divisions and parties are works of the flesh for which men shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven (Galatians 5:19-21). Conduct that causes division makes void

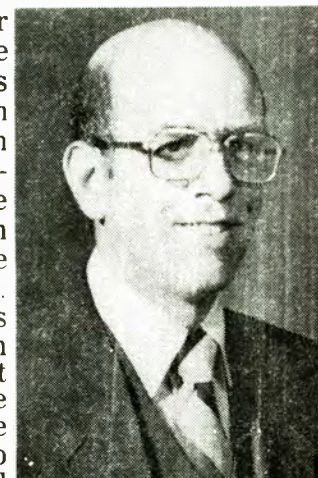
the prayer of Christ for unity (John 17:20-21). Christians are expected to give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). A method of evangelism that has disrupted numerous congregations is no less sinful because some of their campus workers report over 100 baptisms in a year's time.

Baptism is a vital part of the Lord's system. It beautifully typifies the Lord's death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:1-5). It is the appointed time, place and means wherein the blood of Jesus washes sins away (Acts 22:16). It puts us into the body of Christ which is the church (I Corinthians 12:13). But there are some things baptism can never do. Don't place your hope in such mistaken notions as we have studied. To do so will only bring disappointment and disaster.

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

Bulletin Article Hoaxes

Many times over the years we have noticed some articles being copied in bulletin after bulletin of various congregations. This can be good in making an excellent article available to many. But it has sometimes done damage when due effort was not made to establish the authenticity of the material being so widely reprinted and circulated. Regardless of how important a topic may be, or how



Joe E. Galloway

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

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Tireless Work?

I have often struggled with the fact that men like brothers Gus Nichols, Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, and other greats of by-gone years were so adept at accomplishing great things, while I seemingly have a hard enough time just tying my shoelaces! I suppose there are several reasons why they accomplished much and I am seemingly standing still in light of their service. Perhaps if we can recognize the reasons, we can either overcome our obstacles, or come to terms with them, and then move on.



Dale Jenkins

I suppose the first thing we need to investigate is the level of commitment that we possess. The greats of old (including Bible characters) were unquestionably committed to the cause they served. Look at the words of those zealous apostles as they responded, "for we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). Or notice Jeremiah, who tried to quit but could not -- for God's word was like a fire burning within him and he could not stay away (Jeremiah 20:9). Or there is Paul, who was "in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft" (II Corinthians 11:23). Yet he was determined not to know anything among his listeners save Jesus Christ and him crucified (I Corinthians 2:2). He surely desired to "make full proof" of his ministry, as he instructed a young preacher (II Timothy 4:5). Where is our commitment level? Was it not the late brother W. Claude Hall who used to tell the lads he taught, "Boys, if you can do anything else, don't preach." "Amen, brother Hall!"

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"It's Your Business To 'Learn' Him"

One of the requirements of a good teacher is a burning DESIRE to teach. One who sincerely wants to teach realizes he has information that will benefit those he loves. Love for people will motivate any person to want to help other people.

Ethel M. Patterson tells a very touching story which reveals love for people. England's great and good Queen Victoria was being honored in a great celebration while visiting a city. On a street corner a large stand was built where a great company of children was assembled to sing for her. That night, after all the excitement was over, the mayor received a telegram. Perhaps he thought it was a compliment about the celebration. But the message was a simple one, coming straight from a motherly heart: "The Queen wants to know whether all the children got home safely?"

Our Heavenly King is deeply concerned that all HIS children get "home" safely. This



Edsel Burleson

safe arrival will result from teachers and preachers who care, setting forth tenderly -- yet firmly and truthfully -- the gospel in its ancient, purity, power, and simplicity. "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).

There will be occasions when special efforts must be made to overcome some obstacles but the dedicated teacher, one who "cares," sees the PERSON instead of the obstacle.

One small boy always came to school in dirty clothing. It was quite noticeable from his odor and appearance that he had little contact with soap and water! The teacher sent home a note after a week or two which read: "Please give Johnny a bath so he will smell nice and clean." Imagine the teacher's surprise when Johnny appeared as before, bearing a reply to the note which read: "It ain't your business to smell him; it's your business to 'learn' him!"

He who teaches the Bible must never regard himself as a scholar; ne himself is always a student, too.

The MEDIOCRE teacher "tells." The GOOD teacher "explains." The great teacher "demonstrates." The SUPERIOR teacher "inspires." Which are you?

—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Restoration Convictions

The Christian has convictions relative to the uniqueness of the Bible and to the deity of Jesus. This conviction has cost the lives of thousands of individuals who have graced God's earth as his children. In the early eighteenth century in America, there was a breed of men who possessed this spiritual steel of courage.

Conscientious people do not leave the religion of their parents and friends over trivial matters. This article purports to cite the deep convictions of a number of our "fathers in the faith."

I. Thomas Campbell and his illustrious son, Alexander, broke with Presbyterianism. This was a difficult task, for their religious past was hoary with age. Thomas Campbell wrote the well-known document, "Declaration and Address" in September, 1809. This article set forth positions which were in direct opposition to all that he held previously to be dear. At the historic meeting at the home of Abraham Altars in August, 1809, Thomas Campbell coined the phrase, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent." Andrew Munro, the area bookstore owner, stated in response to this stated principle: "If we adopt that as a practice, then there is an end to infant baptism." Thomas Campbell then replied: "If infant baptism is not found in the Scriptures, we can have nothing to do with it."

II. After a major spiritual struggle, "Raccoon" John Smith made a break from Calvinism. His friends told him



Dabney Phillips

that his family would go hungry, and that he would lose his Kentucky farm. Bravely, "Raccoon" replied: "Conscience is an article that I have not brought into the market; but if I should offer it for sale, Montgomery County with all its lands and houses would not be enough to buy it -- much less that farm of one hundred acres!"

III. Barton W. Stone paid a dear price for returning to New Testament Christianity. Following his departure and four other preachers from Presbyterianism, the other four in time defected from the truth; two returned to the Presbyterian faith, and two went with the Shakers. It was then that Stone commented: "Of the five of us who left the Presbyterians, I only was left, and they sought my life." Stone informed the Cane Ridge and Concord congregations that he was resigning as their preacher due to his new convictions. He was willing to give up two salaries! But these congregations refused to accept his resignation, and in time they also came into the restoration fold.

IV. When Walter Scott accepted the assignment to preach on the Western Reserve in 1827-1830, it was a decision of tremendous proportions. We would be away from his wife and three children almost constantly. He would also leave his preaching at the church in Pittsburgh, and the teaching in his academy in the same city. Scott prepared himself by study, prayer, and consulting with brethren prior to launching into this evangelistic endeavor. His efforts were crowned with one thousand additions for three years, as the Mahoning River became a second 'Jordan River!' During this period of time he preached from two to three times daily, and ate and slept when he could.

V. The tender Moses Lard was in financial straits most of his life. He refused to write for an annual fee of \$5,000 for the secular

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Bulletin Article Hoaxes

Continued From Page 1

imperative it is to oppose wrong-doing and error, it is never right to use spurious material to motivate people to act. Not only do we become guilty of "doing evil that good may come," we also provide "ammunition" for the enemies of truth and right to use against us. When they point out the error in the material we have presented, this will cause some whom we hoped to influence for good to ignore other things we print which they need to learn and heed. Also, when the hoax article has provoked active response (such as writing a letter), and members later learn it was all in vain, it will probably be very difficult to get them to respond to a later need that is truly valid!

"Little Buddy." One such recent hoax involved a request for postcards to be sent to an address in Scotland to a child called "Little Buddy." As this article is being written such articles continue to appear in various church bulletins and it is stated that this boy's parents are members of the Lord's church, but the same article is worded differently in the bulletins of other churches. Supposedly, this little boy has leukemia and is trying to get into the book of world records by receiving the most postcards. The October 1986 CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE printed a correction regarding this and referred to a KANSAS CITY TIMES article that has shown this to be a hoax.

"An Amazing Story." One spurious article that has been circulated many times over the years has sometimes appeared under the above title. It relates a claimed use of a computer by a scientific group to calculate the position of the heavenly bodies at various times, past and future, for use in the space program. This article claims that the computer went back to a certain place in time and stopped. Supposedly, after much investigation it was found that an entire day was missing in the earth's history. Of course this article then asserts that it was finally discovered that the missing day was the day the sun stood still (Joshua 10:31). (Some printings of this article even go on to say several more minutes were missing on the computer until someone remembered the sundial going backward at Uzziah's request (Isaiah 38:8). Not only is it obvious to the thinking person that a computer could not function in this manner, but investigation made when the article began to be circulated showed it to be a hoax.

"Prince Edward Island and Alcohol." Another such article that has even made its way into at least one book claims that Prince Edward Island abolished all alcohol in 1900 and that the results have been so good that they need only 13 policemen, unemployment does not exist there, divorces are extremely rare, they have no child abuse and no penitentiary, and that auto accidents are unusually rare. The trouble with this utopian story is that it is not so! Canadian officials who have been contacted regarding this, state that the information is a hoax and not at all factual.

"Beethoven and Abortion." One of the bulletin article hoaxes of just a few years ago purports to tell of a medical school lecturer who asked his class what they would do in a particular case where everything the lecturer listed seemed to indicate a baby's birth would be disastrous. In the story, when the students all recommended abortion the lecturer is supposed to have responded,

"Congratulations! You have just killed Beethoven!" Checking the facts, though, shows that few, if any, of the things claimed about Beethoven's background and birth were authentic. Abortion can be proven by the Bible to be sinful, so should be condemned; but why resort to false information to convince people of its sinfulness? Not only have we weakened the valid case against abortion by printing such an article, but someone who was pro-abortion concocted a story that was designed to provoke the opposite reaction. It told of a supposed situation where all background pointed to a child's birth being calamitous, so the parents were advised to abort the baby. But, supposedly, the new Anti-Abortion League convinced them to have the child -- and they named him Adolph Hitler! If true, neither of the above stories would have proved anything, but both were groundless hoaxes!

Petition Hoaxes. There have been several spurious articles involving petitions to sign or letters to be written. When such petitions have been sent to various government officials they have embarrassed the church since there was no fact behind the matter of concern. This has weakened the effect of

petitions and letters when there really has been a valid matter of concern. (Remember the fable of the one who often cried, "Wolf! Wolf!?"?) This includes hoax articles and resulting petitions concerning prayer and Bible reading being prohibited in outer space, a claimed FCC ruling against religious broadcasts, and a claimed film that is supposed to be in the making concerning the sex life of Jesus. Any Christian would be concerned about these things IF there were substance to them; but all three have been shown to be unfounded hoaxes. Yet, we continue to see pleas being presented for petitions against these claimed dangers from time to time.

Editors should be careful to not accept all that we read as factual, especially when letter writing or a petition seems to be called for.

Investigate and make certain that the matter is really genuine. God's people need to oppose all false teaching and sinful conduct, and uphold all truth; but we need also to be honest and above board in all the material and methods we use in carrying out this responsibility!

—218 Pinecrest Dr., Greeneville, TN 37743.

Restoration Convictions

Continued From Page 2

New York Ledger, as he claimed he could not write on a schedule.

VI. T. B. Larimore said, as he described the convictions of Tolbert Fanning, his former teacher: "He preached as if he believed the temporal and eternal salvation of the human race and all the holy angels depended upon the discourse as then and there delivered."

VII. J. W. McGarvey indicated his convictions when he stated: "If I were in the ocean on a plank, I would fight to maintain it from anyone else."

VIII. David Lipscomb almost went back to the Primitive Baptist Church, upon the defection of Jesse Ferguson. However, he read

his Bible again, and concluded that the Bible is right -- and resolved that he would remain in the Lord's church! Lipscomb's slogan is indicative of his strong convictions: "Be true to the truth, oppose the error, but forbear with humanity."

It would be interesting to know how well we twentieth century Christians compare with those courageous Christians who lived approximately one hundred seventy-five years ago. May each reader make an evaluation of his faith (II Corinthians 13:5).

—100 Carlton Place, Gadsden, AL 35901.

Caleb, A Man Of God

Caleb was a remarkable man. Among a nation of disobedience he remained true to God. Listen to this pronouncement of the Lord: "Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I swear to give unto their fathers, save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the Lord" (Deuteronomy 1:35-36). Verse 38 points out that righteous Joshua would also enter the promised land.

Why was Caleb pleasing to God? "... because he ... wholly followed the Lord" (Deuteronomy 1:36). Does this statement



Ken Tyler

describe your life? It is not good enough to say there is just too much sin and temptation. Caleb stood among a nation and world of wickedness. It is bad enough to live in a world of wickedness; but even the people of God in Caleb's day were evil. Yet, Caleb still "... wholly followed the Lord." He refused to lose sight of the most important thing in the world -- that is, to please God.

Today, are you wholly following the Lord? Listen to these statements from Psalm 119: "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart" (verse 2). "With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments" (verse 10). "... I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart" (verse 69). Acceptance to God means the surrendering of our all to him.

Caleb has set a great example before us. If followed, it will lead us to our "promised land" -- heaven.

May we all take heed to the example of this great man of God. Truly, we need more Calebs today.

—P.O. Box 376, Arab, Alabama 35016.

Our Demonstration

Trenton McCluskey

There is a sense in which we as Christians offer a demonstration of our faith. We demonstrate in several ways, and it is seen in our character. Here are a few examples we have been setting forth before the world.

1. Promptness -- We as Christians demonstrate that it is, or is not, important to be prompt for Bible study and worship.

2. Friendliness -- We as Christians demonstrate that we love, or don't love, people as we greet and relate to them in daily activities. This is seen both by Christians and non-Christians.

3. Concern -- We as Christians demonstrate our concern with each effort the local congregation puts forth. The primary concern for Christians should be to see the lost saved. This concern, or lack of it, is demonstrated in many ways.

a. Our concern for how the world views us is demonstrated by our love for one another, and by our promptness.

b. Our concern for how the world views us is demonstrated by the broken window which stands unrepaired in the view of all.

c. Our concern for how the world views

us is demonstrated by the rusty old sign still weathering the years as time passes. The world sees this sign which needs painting as our representative!

d. Our concern is seen when careful efforts are put forth. There are no meaningless tasks in God's service. A stagnant, skim-covered baptistery says no one cared enough to keep clean water inside. Also, if you talk with a tender heart who has been hurt by neglect, you realize the need to be friendly.

Our demonstrations are protests that cut against the trends of the world. Our hustle-and-bustle, over-burdened society sees our demonstration. Remember: There are no small tasks. "Thank you" to all who sweep church buildings, care for baptistery garments, scrub bathrooms, and do the numerous things we often take for granted.

An effective protest must be a united effort. Our demonstration is not a fad! This is our demonstration to the world of a better value system, a worthwhile cause, a hope given through Christ. I commend all who have joined in this great demonstration.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be

salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, 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 5:13-16).

You are the salt of the earth. But what if salt goes flat? How can you restore its flavor? Then it is good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Men do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket. They set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, our light must shine before men so that they may see goodness in your acts and give praise to your heavenly Father.

—103 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

We Can't Be "Exclusive!"

Ronnie A. Missildine

It is very easy to get wrapped up in our own little corner of the city and involved in the works that we are striving to accomplish and forget that other Christians are working in other places. We are not the only congregation of God's people involved in the Lord's work.

It is tempting to not desire to be with other brethren for several reasons. First, there is much false teaching, and some even in the church and in other congregations. But because SOME might teach error doesn't mean that ALL do! Let us mark those who do, but not those who don't! And anyway, what are we calling "error?" Is it just because some don't do things the way we do them? Is it a matter of judgment? or a matter of faith? We'd better not shun others in the Lord's church over matters of judgment!

Secondly, we live in an increasingly busy society, and our amount of time seems to get less and less. So, instead of attending the gospel meetings and singings of other congregations, we neglect them because of "time." That is a mistake! Some of the greatest growth and progress for us AS INDIVIDUALS can come from sitting at the feet of great preachers of the gospel, and from fellowship with other brethren -- even if it is in a sister congregation's building! What better way to spend our time?

Thirdly, we need to be careful that we don't develop the "we are better than thou" attitude toward sister congregations. We are not in competition! We are working side by side WITH them to convert this city, yea the world! To do so we need a cooperative, unified spirit. We ought to be GLAD when a sister congregation grows, or builds a new building -- instead of feeling jealous, and making snide remarks. What did Jesus say the badge or mark of discipleship would be? "If ye (disciples) have love one for another" (John 13:35).

So, let us pray for, support, and encourage the good works of our sister congregations. Let us attend their meetings (not to the exclusion of our own assemblies, of course), and cooperate with them in every way we can. TOGETHER we will turn the world upside down for Christ -- but not until we ARE TOGETHER!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.

Tireless Work?

Continued From Page 2

Someone made the interesting comment recently, "You can't beat a terrorist." Strange, but correct! The very worst you could do is kill him and he would consider that an honor to die for his cause. Where is your commitment? How can any preaching brother stand before his audience and try to talk to them about spiritual commitment, and then show his own total lack of commitment by packing his bags every time something does not go to suit him? So I inquire first, Where is our commitment?

If I have closely scrutinized my commitment, and it is maximum, but I still feel inept at fulfilling my aims. Where do I look next?

Perhaps a second area to examine would be our motives. Paul was motivated out of a deep sense of love and debt. He said things like, "I am debtor . . ." (Romans 1:14), and "The love of Christ constraineth me" (II Corinthians 5:14). Often it seems today that some are motivated by a distorted sense of self-fulfillment. Such are too much like the old song:

"When I proudly said to Jesus,
'All of self and none of thee.'"

Most of us are not willing to admit that we simply believe that "nobody else can do as good a job as I!" "I am the best 'meeting preacher' I know!" or, "I can do better at the congregation I am with than anybody before me or anybody that comes after me!" Friend, "a proud look" is listed among the seven things that God hates (Proverbs 6:16-17). Don't you realize that perhaps the biggest church divider there is an unwillingness to admit that I can be wrong.

I heard my father (Jerry Jenkins) say several years ago that the publican in Luke 18 had "Big I's" on self, little 'I's' on his fellow-man and no 'I's' on God." Young people are singing a song today that comes from James 4:10: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he will lift you up." Peter said essentially the same thing in II Peter 5:6. And I like what is said in Philippians 3:4-11.

Why are you preaching, is it passion for

souls? or is preaching merely a "profession"? is it to see your name on the lectureship programs? or to see Christ glorified? is it to become a big name in the brotherhood? or to become a servant in the house of God?

Surely there are other areas for us to examine. Let us close with this one.

Why cannot I accomplish as much as many men of by-gone years? Perhaps it is because they were exactly that: "by-gone years." TODAY is remarkably different. It is possible those very "time-savers" that supposedly allow us more and more time to accomplish more, are the very things holding us back. While the car and jet get us around faster, do not they also steal some important time from us? In our rush to do more, more, more, we have misplaced some great pearls. Misplaced are the times for prayer, for deep study, for personal growth. Surely much of the writing of brother McGarvey and others of the past was done in the slow travel of his day. Surely much of the early study of brother Brents came from the shorter days and consequently the earlier mornings. Jesus even had this convenience that we overlook (Mark 4:35; 10:45-47; Luke 13:22). Shorter traveling days and boat trips gave time for his spiritual renewal.

But our day is different. Perhaps this is one of the temptations of the devil: to get us wrapped up in 'doing more' so that we do not take the time to realize that we must have an ever-deepening well to draw from. We must have time for rest, and for renewal.

Please do not imagine that I am taking anything away from these spiritual giants. Actually I am wanting us to learn from them. They served God their very best. That is your goal as well. Let us seek how we can make better, more productive use of our talents to effectively cause God's kingdom to be stronger.

Don't we all want to be better, and more productive, servants in God's glorious kingdom? Let us examine ourselves.

—Route 1, Box 3 Eva, AL 35621.



(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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Instrumental Music — And The Restoration

(Part 1)

From the standpoint of its far-reaching consequence, the introduction of instrumental music in worship was the greatest single disturbing factor in the restoration in the Nineteenth Century. Liberalism, and the missionary society, contributed to problems along various lines, but the dividing wedge was the insistence upon instrumental music.



R. W. Gray

In the early days of the restoration the instrument was not used and was seldom discussed. The question seems to have been first raised by a reader of the Ecclesiastical Reformer in 1851. In October of the same year Alexander Campbell wrote, "... Their church having all the world in them, that is, all the fleshly progeny of all the communicants, and being founded on the Jewish pattern of things ... I wonder not, then, that an organ, or a fiddle, or a jew's-harp should be requisite to stir up their carnal hearts, and work into ecstasy their animal souls, ... But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids should be as a cow-bell in a concert" (Millennial Harbinger, Vol. 1, No. 10, pp. 581, 582).

Four years after Campbell's death his widow wrote a friend, "... You know full well, too, that as sure as the morning and evening sacrifice was attended to, that the songs of Zion resounded in the old mansion. But never was instrumental music tolerated or called in to aid the worship in the family. No, the reverend patriarch advocated the 'melody of the heart' in unison with the 'human voice divine' in worship of the family and in the church ... " (Search for the Ancient Order, Vol. 2, p. 92).

In April of 1851 it was recorded in a diary by Aylette Raines of Millersburg, Kentucky, that "Brother Saunders wishes to introduce the melodeon into the church." Roy Deaver in a treatment of this topic observed: "The subject did not come up again ... until 1860." In response to Ben Franklin, L. L. Pinkerton wrote, "... So far as is known to me, ... I am the only preacher in Kentucky or of our brotherhood who has publically advocated the propriety of employing music in some churches, and that the church of God at Midway is the only church that has made a decided effort to introduce it".

By 1864 the controversy had gained such momentum that J. W. McGarvey decided to enter the battle against it. Joining with him was Moses E. Lard, who was destined to play a key role in the unfolding controversy. In regard to the controversy between the years 1866-70 brother Earl West observed: "The issue that was to find little abatement ... centered around the use of instrumental music in worship. ... The use or non-use of the instrument was symptomatic of an attitude toward the scriptures ... Although it was frequently contended that the use of the instrument was a comparatively innocent practice, advocated by some very spiritually-minded men; when viewed from the standpoint that it transgressed upon a very dear and essential principle, many were unwilling to compromise with it. It was this point that gave the controversy great vehemence" (Search for the Ancient Order, Vol. 11, p. 73).

Roy Deaver comments succinctly upon the difference of approach to scripture that would eventuate in the unhappy divisions that followed the instrument's introduction: "... The real issue involved is the question, 'What is the proper attitude toward the Bible? ... Can we do anything and everything not specifically and directly forbidden in the Bible? Or, must we do only that which the Bible authorizes?' The answer to this question involves the basic difference between the church of Christ and the Christian church ... " (The Problem of Instrumental

Music, p. 3). A careful perusal of the subject will reveal that the controversy revolved around this concept almost from the beginning.

After the Civil War, the practice was gradually increasing, and in almost every case where it was introduced a serious eruption resulted. In 1867 the church in St. Louis purchased a building from the Episcopalians in which was found a three thousand dollar organ. ... for two years agitation continued as to what should be done with the expensive machine. A popular vote was taken which showed that 104 favored retaining it and 24 opposed it. In 1870 Robert Graham, Isaac Errett, Alexander Proctor, and I. N. Rogers went to St. Louis in an effort to quiet the problem. A compromise that was destined to be short lived was reached, whereby the instrument, for the sake of peace, was kept out for a time.

Similar situations were occurring in Akron, Chicago, and Memphis. Typical of the trauma experienced by those in opposition to the instrument was an incident in the work of Ben Franklin. Franklin was invited to conduct a meeting in Arkon in April, 1868. He took his seat for the first service, waiting for the singing to begin. But when the singing began, so did the instrument. He later described his thoughts during the moments before he would rise to preach: "We have not been more tried in a long time. While this was going off, we reflected and turned the matter every way possible. What was to be done? We never felt more unhappy. 'Are brethren determined,' we involuntarily thought, 'to deteriorate the worship into music, and compel us to endorse it? If we refuse to preach, it may,' we further thought, 'create a lasting trouble, and some may blame us for it.' We decided to preach, and did so, but with a heavy heart, with the worship having been thus degenerated before our face" (American Christian Review, May 19, 1868, Vol. XL). More to follow.

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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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The Influence Of Jesus

No other person has maintained the lasting influence that Jesus has had on the world. Great men have made their marks on the stage of history, but none have compared with that Teacher from Galilee. Jesus has proved a real marvel to the world. The infidel with all his "expert" insight into humanity has not been able to understand why Jesus has made such an impression on mankind that even men of high status will bow before him in awe. Even Christians find that they, too, stand amazed -- as they never cease to learn more about Jesus that challenges them. What is it about Jesus that is so attractive, and demands the admiration of so many?

One thing that attracts us to Jesus is his REAL LOVE FOR PEOPLE. His attitude toward people in general is the perfect standard to guide our own attitudes. It is remarkable that Jesus, a Jew, would take time to talk with a Samaritan woman about her spiritual needs (John 4). His conversation with this woman suggests a love for humanity that reaches beyond social bounds, and weaves a picture of Jesus as one unburdened with the hindering prejudices of the day. While Jesus was not a social "rebel" (as some claim), neither did he allow general consensus to determine his course of action when souls were at stake. This same Jesus found time for a Pharisee named Nicodemus (John 3). Notice a striking contrast: In his love for mankind Jesus reached out to two very

Continued On Page 3



Jerri Manasco

The Gospel Message And Conversion

The book of Acts is replete with examples of New Testament conversion. In common these show that all people are required to do the same thing to be saved, regardless of their background and status in life. Each account of conversion stresses how the gospel message was delivered to, and was received by, the sinner to affect his salvation. After all, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Corinthians 1:2), and faith comes by hearing God's word (Romans 10:17).

We all have thrilled at the reading of the conversion of the treasurer of the queen of Ethiopia in Acts 8:26-40. Please read this account and consider some good lessons for us today as we stress the gospel message and its connection with this man's conversion.

The Man in Need of the Message

The man needing the gospel was undoubtedly a great man in his day, holding a responsible position. Verse 27 refers to him as "an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure." Sometimes great men in responsible positions of authority do not realize their need of the gospel; however, it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16). Undoubtedly, this great man was a busy man; but he was not "too busy" to worship God (verse 27), to search the scriptures (verse 28), nor to obey the gospel (verses 36-38). In view of a never-ending eternity we should never be "too busy" for spiritual things!

The eunuch was a devoutly religious man. One does not travel a thousand miles by chariot to worship if he is not devoted to his belief. This is further shown by his reading the scriptures as he rode along the homeward highway in his chariot. Only occasionally do we notice someone reading the Bible on a public conveyance. We immediately conclude that person to be very religious. Yet, this devout, sincere, religious man was religiously wrong, and needed to learn the truth to be saved. It is not enough to be sincere in religion; one must be religiously right to please God!

This Ethiopian was a truth seeker. Not only does his reading the scriptures indicate this, but when asked by Philip, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" he said, "How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him" (verses 30-31). A person who feels that he has already "arrived" will resent a suggestion that he needs help in understanding a matter. This man humbly requested help to better understand God's word.

The Man Who Possessed the Message

Philip, the man who taught the eunuch, was simply a Christian. He was not even one of the apostles. We first read of him in Acts 6 when he was one of the seven chosen to minister to the needy widows. In the first half of chapter 8 he went to Samaria and "preached Christ unto them," baptizing "both men and women." That he was a man of faith



Joe E. Galloway

is shown by his immediate response to the angel's instruction to leave this successful work and go south to the Jerusalem-Gaza road (verses 26-27). That he was an enthusiastic doer of the Lord's work is shown by his running to the chariot which the Lord indicated he was to contact (verses 29-30).

We learn in this God's method of imparting his saving gospel to the sinner. God always uses men for this task. ("How shall they hear without a preacher?" -- Romans 10:14). If there ever was a time when either an angel, or the Holy Spirit, might have been used to directly teach the sinner, surely this would have been it. God wanted this Ethiopian taught; but he had already left Jerusalem where the apostles were. Philip was engaged in a successful work in Samaria. The Lord did use an angel, but only to tell the preacher to go south to the proper place (verse 26). He also used the Holy Spirit, but again only to influence the preacher, telling him whom to contact (verse 29). God has never used supernatural means to teach the sinner directly. He has always depended on faithful Christians to teach his word to the lost!

The Message

When Philip approached the chariot he heard the eunuch reading from Isaiah 53. This is one of the most complete prophecies about the birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and resulting salvation in him. The eunuch asked Philip, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this?" (verse 34). No Jew today can reject Christ and explain this scripture either. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (verse 35).

Undoubtedly Philip taught him of the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, since the scripture he was reading dealt with this. But he also taught him Christ's requirements for salvation, including baptism. This is certain, for "as they went on their way they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (verse 36). There would have been no reason for him to have requested baptism, or no way for him to have even known about baptism, had Philip not taught him of it. So, we safely conclude that preaching Jesus necessitates the preaching of water baptism!

The Results of the Message

The eunuch having requested baptism, "Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (verses 37-38). This beautifully illustrates the obedience to the "form" of the death, burial, and the resurrection, of Christ (Romans 6:1-4, 17-18) that makes one a Christian. The man then "went on his way rejoicing" (verse 39), since he was then saved (Mark 16:16).

Unsaved friend, God still saves men today by the same, simple process! Why not obey God today? Christian friend, we still need to forcefully teach this saving message to all who are lost! God has no other means of leading men to him. "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me," said Jesus (John 6:45).

—218 Pinecrest Drive, Greeneville, TN 37743.

To Rear A Child

these responsibilities.

I want to share with you some lessons that I have learned over the years which I feel are most important. I am sure you will already recognize them; but allow me to indulge my grandfatherly prerogatives.

1. Every child conceived is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Thus every child has dignity, worth, and rights by virtue of that "image." This value is not dependent on mental or physical perfection, beauty, family origin, or talent. No matter what circumstances arise, your child deserves respect and treatment suitable to God's offspring (Acts 17:28).

2. Your child is "An heritage of Jehovah," a reward to you from him (Psalms 127:3-5). Not everyone is privilege to give birth. Although God has set up certain natural laws that when complied with normally produce offspring, experience tells us that not every couple is so fortunate. Always be grateful for

his marvellous gift.

3. Rearing a child is a full-time job. Experience proves that those children do best in life who are blest with a full-time mother at home. Granted that there are some emergency situations which would demand that a mother work outside the home; but few things are worth the cost of a mom's spending eight hours away from her youngster each day. A child's emotional, social, and spiritual development take precedence over all material niceties of life — no matter how pleasing they may be. Remember: "a child left to himself causeth shame to his mother" (Proverbs 9:15).

4. Your child's spiritual training is of paramount importance. No other area of training is of greater significance. School, social and cultural graces, recreation, and entertainment all place second to this great need. What is a child profited if he makes straight "A's" in school, achieves awards, degrees, and honors, and yet loses his soul (compare Mark 8:36-37)? There is no consolation in being the "best dressed," or class favorite, or any other honor, if the child grows up without God . . . to be lost in torment for eternity.

Spiritual training must begin the day he comes home from the hospital. Most of a child's basic values will be firmly established by the time he enters school. Values will be learned by observation and experience, rather than just by verbal instruction. Babies SEE sermons before they HEAR them. Solomon wrote what all experienced parents know: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Let your baby see in you the lessons you learned in Bible School: "God first, others second, self third." Let him see a demonstration of seeking first God's kingdom and righteousness, and you will witness the happy results in his future life (Matthew 6:33).

5. Any child will need discipline in order to develop as he should. Scripture rightly says: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Proverbs 13:14). Also "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15). No two children are alike — and the disciplinary needs of each will vary. Treat your little one as an individual. Conform him to God's holy standards, not those of your friends and neighbors. Always make sure your discipline is administered with compassion. Your discipline needs to be modeled after God's. "Whom the Lord LOVETH he chasteneth" (Hebrews 12:6). Punishment administered IN LOVE, not in anger, will produce the desired results. This may mean that you will have to take time to "cool your spirit" before you administer the penalty. Also keep in mind the Golden Rule of Christ. When WE fail, we want to receive understanding, mercy, pardon: so will your CHILD (Matthew 7:12).

6. A wise soul once observed: "We should all be grateful to our first child. It is he who taught us how to be parents." Most young parents feel obligated to rear "the perfect child." They naively believe they have figured out all the mistakes of other parents, and thus they subject their first born to a rigorous course of training and discipline that is tough on the child. Granted, first-born children are the greater achievers in life; but sometimes they pay too great a price. Let a child be a child. Let him find some joy in life.

(The following thoughts were shared with the author's daughter upon the announcement of her forth-coming child).

Dear Daughter:

Having a child is a privilege beyond description. Nothing is more fulfilling and satisfying than to join hands with God in bringing forth a little one that is truly bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. No privilege brings with it heavier responsibilities than that of parenthood. I feel



John Waddey

very confident that both of you are ready for

The Influence Of Jesus

Continued From Page 2

opposite poles of the social ladder -- a despised Samaritan, and a "high-brow" Pharisee!

Jesus did not regard people as mere "prospects" in some "assembly-line" program of soul winning. He saw PEOPLE, not computer-processed "things." Apparently those whom Jesus came in contact with were able to detect his sincerity. "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke 15:1-2). Jesus extended his hand to the desperate souls in Israel whom the Pharisees looked down upon with scorn. Jesus was harshly criticized by the religious "elite" for even so much as EATING with sinners! What a horrible crime! No doubt there is a "Pharisee" element in the church today that supposes that the more vicious they can seem to be the more effective they are at personal work or preaching. Others will allow the criticism of the local elite to hinder them from reaching the less esteemed in the community with the gospel. Jesus refused to let criticism stop him from leading people to the truth. He saw the publicans and sinners not as religious curiosities, but as needy souls.

Another reason for the attractiveness of Jesus is his APPEAL TO THE COMMON MAN. If anyone were qualified to impress others with superior oratory it would be Jesus, yet he employed grand simplicity in his teaching. His use of parables drawn from day to day events in people's lives skilfully stressed the greatest truths. The parable of the sower is so basic, yet it is a masterpiece of instruction (Matthew 13:1-23). The Prodigal Son parable strikes a tender cord with anyone whose heart is not totally beyond reach (Luke 15:11-32). His truths are burned into our hearts because of the practical manner in which he presented them. The scholarly (?) nonsense of the "doctors" of the law was not practical in the lives of the multitudes of Israel. Jesus brought a teaching that changed lives. No wonder the common people heard him gladly (Mark 12:37).

Men who preach need to take lessons from Jesus and quit running in the popularity contest to see who can out-preach the other! In a day when religious philosophy (modernism) and human reason (evolution, humanism, atheism) are gaining momentum, there is a need for the simplicity of Jesus' approach. Though Paul lived in a time

when human reason ruled (see Acts 17:16ff), he preached "Christ and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:1-2).

The genuine concern that Jesus had for human need is a third factor that draws people to him. Jesus was one who could be "moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). Jesus was concerned about justice (Isaiah 42:3; John 5:30; 7:24). He healed the sick and did many other acts of mercy (Matthew 4:23-25; 8:1-4; etc.). Peter said that Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Jesus dealt with the root of problems in order to help people deal with the problem itself. For instance, the young man who came to Jesus with the question concerning eternal life was told, "One thing thou lackest . . ." (Mark 10:21). That "one thing" was to rid himself of his covetousness; the rest would then take care of itself! Jesus loved this young man because of the need this young man had.

As imitators of Jesus, his disciples must find where we, too, can be of help to others in need. The twelve were ordered to freely extend their miraculous gifts in cleansing lepers, raising the dead, and casting out devils (Matthew 10:8). Similarly we must be willing to extend a liberal hand to our fellows. "How dwelleth the love of God" in one who sees need and yet won't lift a finger to do something about it (I John 3:17)? Christians must visit widows and orphans with the intention of assisting them in their need (James 1:27). However, this must be done, not because we "have" to do it as part of the "church program," but because of sincere interest in the distressed. The influence of Jesus is visible in the life of every follower of his who will do as he did.

The influence of Jesus has spanned the generations, and shall continue to do so. The infidel may scoff, and the atheist may rail, at the incomparable greatness of this Man from Galilee; but none can answer the challenge of history's testimony to Jesus.

One final question for consideration: Can you imagine what the present world would be like if Jesus had not come into it with his history-changing life and teaching nearly twenty centuries ago? What a difference Jesus makes!!

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Continued On Page 4

You Are Being Watched

There is no night so dark, nor a wall so thick, but that God is fully aware of all our actions. "The Lord looketh from heaven. He beholdeth all the sons of men" (Psalms 33:13-14). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3). He knows every word that we say (Psalms 139:7).

God is not the only one observing our actions. Even though our associates can not be aware of all our acts, nor have listened to all our words, they are still being influenced by the things we say and do. A wife can convert her husband to the Lord (I Peter 3:1-4). A husband can convert his wife (I Corinthians 7:14-16). We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16).

Once a traveler came to a French village. Night was approaching and the people were hurrying through the streets. The traveler noticed that each person was carrying a bronze lamp. To his inquiry about this he received this reply:

"These people are going to church. When the church was built it was decided that each member would bring his own light to light the services. There is no other way to light the church; and everyone goes to make it brighter. Each one realizes that if he is not there, the church will be darker."

The traveler went to the meeting house, and there he found that on every seat was a place to hang the lighted lamps. As more and more of the members came, the building became brighter and brighter.

Someone worded it this way poetically:
"There's a gospel according to Matthew,
To Mark, and to Luke, and John too."



Edsel Burleson

There's another that many are reading--
The gospel according to you.
The teachings we read in the Bible
Are facts we believe to be true.
You must live them to make them gospel:
The gospel according to you.

Every day you are writing a gospel;
In this life you may never know who
May be helped or hindered by reading
The gospel according to you.
Many read not the words of the Bible.

Is your name in the Book of life? This question involves heaven and hell. If your name is written there you are saved and headed for heaven. If your name is not there then hell awaits. John put it this way: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). We must conclude that all the saved are in the book of life, and the lost are not. David said of his enemies: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Psalms 69:28). Paul said "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlaborers, whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:3).



Ken Tyler

I will tell you what some of them do:
They read the book you are writing,
The gospel according to you.

There's power in the preacher's preaching,
So you say, and I believe it is true.
But the things that tell most to others
Is the gospel according to you.
God help you through Christ to be faithful,
And to live all the teaching true.
So that all may see His Spirit
In the gospel according to you."
—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

The Book Of Life!

Yes, one day the roll will be called up yonder. On that day all that will matter is if your name is there. Today you should know if your name is in the book of life. Are you saved from sin? In Acts 2 believers were told to "... repent, and be baptized ... for the remission of sins ..." (verse 38). According to verse 41 about 3,000 repented and were baptized. Their names were written in the book of life. If you do just what they did your name will be written there as well.

It is true that a person may have his name written in the book of life and then it be blotted out because he quit serving the Lord. The Lord told the church at Sardis, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Revelation 3:5). We learn from this verse that after we become Christians we are to remain faithful to the Lord. If not, our names will be removed from the book of life.

Again, the most important question in the world, "Is your name in the Book of Life?" If not, please do something about it so you can go to heaven.

—P.O. Box 376, Arab, Alabama 35016.

To Rear A Child

Continued From Page 3

Don't expect perfection; neither should you demand that yours be the perfect example for others. You need to ask God for wisdom to follow this line of moderation (James 1:5). There must be enough discipline to discourage rebellion and laziness. There must be enough kindness to understand human weakness and mitigating circumstances. There must be sufficient encouragement to achieve one's potential, yet enough patience to make life and learning pleasant.

7. Among the most important gifts to bestow upon a child is a loving relationship between Mom and Dad. It needs to be an open, warm relationship so the youngster can see and know that all is well. But beyond that, your child will learn how to give and receive love by seeing your demonstration. The lovely words of Paul to the Ephesians should be your guide: "Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she fear her husband"

(Ephesians 5:33).

8. Always view yourselves as stewards of God, and your child as belonging to the Master. He is placed in your care and keeping for some 20 years so you can send him forth a faithful Christian, prepared to take his proper place in life. Being stewards, we will answer to God for our stewardship of our child. May you do so with confident joy (I Corinthians 4:2).

Although I have spoken in this letter of your little one as "he" — of course we will be thrilled with either a prince or princess. My daily prayers will be with you for a safe nine months and delivery. Take the very best care of your self. We thank God for his marvellous gifts.

With love always,
Dad.

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

GUS NICHOLS —

WORDS OF TRUTH

LECTURESHIP

SEPT. 27 - OCT. 1, 1987

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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

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 1987

NUMBER 21

Instrumental Music-And The Restoration

(Part 2)

In a brief historical excursion it was noted in part one (of this three-part series) that the division surrounding the instrument gained more ground following the Civil War.

In the year 1869 J. W. McGarvey summarized the conditions that then prevailed when he wrote: "We are moving; we are progressing; at least some among us are advancing. Whether you think the movement forward or backward depends very much upon the way you are going yourself. Once we had no men among us who were known to tolerate instrumental music in worship. After that there arose some who contended that whether we use it or not is a mere matter of expediency. More recently, a few churches have actually used it, and their preachers have approved, but have not often ventured publically to defend it" (*The Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. II, p. 82).

The apology generally used for introducing the instrument during this period of history was the rapidly changing world. Those who opposed were viewed as legalistic, married to a frontiersman concept of church activity. Larger cities were springing up. Science was making new discoveries. The train was increasing its speed and efficiency. New standards were arising, and consequently, society was making its requirements. While it was well, some thought, that worship without an instrument was all right in a society that was accustomed only to the backwoods, new standards of respectability were now set up, and the church to progress must meet those standards. Men like Isaac Errett used *The Christian Standard* to sell the instrument to the doubters. While Errett was at first



R. W. Gray

silent on the question he broke that silence in the spring of 1870. He at first counseled against its employment as an opinion that would drive a wedge between brethren. Later Errett stood with the instrumentalists and against all who opposed it. *The Apostolic Times*, *The American Review*, and *The Gospel Advocate* stood firm for the old paths, pleading that the wedge to fellowship not be imposed upon the conscience of brethren who yet stood where the first Christians stood, and where all within the restoration had previously stood.

But the instrument was to come. Many would reject it initially, but once they were lulled into complacency by its soothing tones, they would soon be unwilling to hear any argument against it. There was to be bitter debate. In time, the rend would be complete. In time, brethren who had walked together would form a separate fellowship with seeming irreconcilable differences.

In the beginning, advocates of the innovation rested their case on the matter of expediency. They saw it in the same light as they viewed the meeting house, hymn books, the posture in prayer, etc. Lard and others responded: "I do not deny that expediency is sometimes right . . . When we plead expediency to justify practices unknown to the apostolic age, we are not within the limits of the expedient" (*Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 11).

In time, devotees of the instrument argued that it was acceptable in view of God's sanction of it in the law of Moses. It was urged by those in opposition that such a position would turn the church back to the Jewish rites at every point. Circumcision, polygamy, the lighting of candles, dancing, etc., would be justified under such an arrangement.

Later debates revolved around the command to "sing and make melody in the heart," as commanded in Ephesians 5:19. "Psallo," some would urge, "carries the idea of instrumental accompaniment." Respondents

noted that this argument proved too much in that it would demand that all worshippers both sing and play upon an instrument. Scholars were quoted as evidence that the instrument did not inhere in psallo in its New Testament usage. The strings of the human heart, and not the sound of the viol, they said, are the strings upon which we are to worship God in the Christian age. It was observed that the early church did not view Ephesians 5:19 as requiring the instrument; else they were in violation of the apostolic command in their failure to employ it.

Others came to say "we use it because we like it," while others sought to impose it upon their brethren through intimidation. But the issue refused to die; and the ugly division persists to this sad hour!

Students of restoration history, and particularly the role of the instrument during the period of 1860-70, will see marked similarities between the climate that then prevailed, and present-day trends and thoughts. While the leading advocates of the instrument have now abandoned practically all arguments made by their champions of the past, arguing that there is no authority for singing with or without an instrument in Christian worship, they continue to find sympathizers who insist upon its usage as a "permissible expedient." Even brethren who have traditionally opposed the instrument introduce ideas, innovations, programs, gadgets and gimmicks with little regard for their scriptural warrant, and those who question these are met with the charges of "traditionalism," "legalism," and "isolationism."

If we use the wisdom God gave his creatures we will profit from both the mistakes and triumphs of the past. We will not take a dead-end street toward liberalism, but will continue in the old paths measuring every step by a "thus saith the Lord." The instrument is not found in that path!

—Rt. 3 Box 306, Bremen, Ga. 30110



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 Price Of Discipleship

(No. 1)

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

It is an honor to be a disciple of Christ. A disciple is one taught or trained (Young's Analytical Concordance of the Bible). W. E. Vine says that the word **disciple** "denotes one who follows one's teaching, as the disciple of John, Matthew 9:14." (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words). Privileges are granted unto the **disciple** and blessings



W. Edwin Kearley

descend upon him in time and eternity. But in order to be a **disciple** and to attain these favors, a price must be paid. What is the price? The answer is found in our text.

SELF-RESTRAINT IS A PRICE WHICH MUST BE PAID. "Let him deny himself," said the Master. This does not mean one should torture his body and refuse life's joys. It does mean that he must curb his lower self and exercise self-control. Of what is a disciple required to deny himself? Paul said that the grace of God hath appeared "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts . . ." (Titus 1:12). John urged, "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" (I John 2:15-16). This is not a heartless restraint imposed by an arbitrary power. (1) Self-control is a law of development. The person who disregards it does not grow. (2) It is a law of protection. He who ignores it is exposed to injury. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway," Paul said (I Corinthians 9:27). (3) The Master denies us of "ungodliness and worldly lusts" for the same reason that a mother denies her child unwholesome food, or poisons. Every command is given through love for our good.

THE PRICE OF DISCIPLESHIP REQUIRES SELF-SACRIFICE. Jesus said, "And take up his cross." . . . There are two words which convey to the mind the darker experiences of life. They are: (1) Burdens. Burdens are the inevitable cares and strain of daily life. (2) Thorns. A thorn is a limitation. It may be mental or physical. It is that which makes life miserable and duty difficult. Paul had one. He said that he was given "a thorn in the flesh, lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations . . ." (II Corinthians 12:7). Paul prayed three times for it to be removed. The Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9).

Paul responded, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Corinthians 12:9).

—103 E. Lena Ct., Bay St Louis, MS 39520.

A Picture Of The Blessed Man

In Psalms one we find a picture of a blessed man. This threshold to the book which contains 150 psalms delivers a divine contrast between the blessed and the ungodly. Furthermore, it presents a portrait of two channels, or choices, for man: to obey God, or to disobey God (Matthew 7:13-14; Joshua 24:15). In studying this great chapter of inspiration, we find five important points.



Howell Bigham

A Profile of the Blessed Man

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful" (verse). Note the character of the blessed man. First, he is one who "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." A person who is blessed and righteous in the sight of the Creator will not follow the counsel or advice of the wicked, but rather will follow the advice that is given in the inspired word of Almighty God (Ecclesiastes 12:13; II Timothy 3:16-17)! The apostle Paul said, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11)!

Secondly, the character of the godly man is one who will not stand in the way of sinners. The blessed man will not congregate or assemble with those who follow the course of Satan! He understands the terrible influence that evil can have upon good! Paul spoke concerning such when he said: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Corinthians 15:33).

Furthermore, the blessed man also is one who will not sit "in the seat of the scornful." He will not take his seat with those who mock God and his word!! Rather, the blessed

man's walk, stand, and seat will be with God and his truth (Jeremiah 6:16).

The Pleasure of the Blessed Man

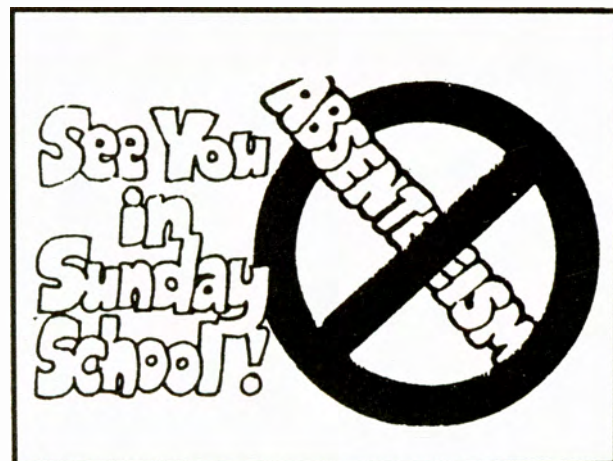
"But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (verse 2). Indeed the righteous man's profile consists of more than just "do not's;" it also contains his pleasure. His pleasure and delight is in the word of God (Psalms 119:103; 19:10)! He delights in the study of the Bible (Psalms 119:35; Acts 17:11-12), realizing that it is the source of eternal life (John 6:63). God's word is our guide to lead us through this dark world of sin, to our eternal home in heaven (Psalms 119:105)! Not only does he delight in God's word, he also meditates (studies seriously) upon the word of Jehovah (I Timothy 4:15-16; Psalms 119:97). The importance of meditating on God's truth is seen in the command of Paul to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

The Prosperity of the Blessed Man

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (verse 3). The Bible often affirms that the righteous man will prosper (Matthew 6:33; James 1:25; I Timothy 4:8). The blessed are described as a mighty tree. A mighty tree is one that is grounded and settled in mother earth. Likewise, the faithful Christian is rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus, the Savior of man (Colossians 1:23; 2:7). Furthermore, the righteous man is likened unto a tree that has been "planted by the rivers of water." This tree is one that receives an abundant source of nourishment. Likewise, the faithful child of God receives an abundant source of nourishment from the inspired word of God (II Timothy 3:16-17; Psalms 119:104)!

Continuing, the blessed man is described as a tree that "bringeth forth his fruit in his season." This mighty tree is fruitful. It is alive -- not dead! Therefore, the righteous are to be

Continued On Page 3



Some Just Don't Like Preaching

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.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolish-



Ronnie A. Missildine

ness:

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:17-24).

This scripture tells us that there were those in Paul's day who viewed preaching as foolishness or unnecessary. But Paul, in using a little irony said that "it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Some people just don't like to hear preaching. Consequently, you hear them say, "The sermon was too long," because it went 35 minutes. Or they say, "We shouldn't have gospel meetings any more: they are outdated." What they are really saying is, "I don't like preaching."

Don't think that I am saying that people ought to come just to hear the preacher entertain. I am not! There is something much more fundamental than that. People OUGHT to want to come to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ preached.

In an analysis, we might find two problems. First, maybe some preachers are trying to entertain instead of preaching the gospel. Consequently people are not really helped by an entertaining (?) little sermonette. It may be that more jokes and illustrations are given than Bible quotations, and people are not edified enough.

But second, it could be that some listeners are "dull of hearing . . . lest they should hear with their ears and understand with their heart and should be converted . . ." (Matthew 13:15). That, friends, is an attitude problem on the part of the listener! We ought to want to listen EVERY TIME the truth of God's word is preached, whether we are 'entertained' or not. We need it so we can be edified and grow and learn -- and (if nothing else) to hear the old, old story that we love so well!

The gospel is not outdated. It remains God's power to save (Romans 1:16). And the preaching of it is still "the power of God, and the wisdom of God!"

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171

Conversion

(No. 1)

Neil Myers

The word "convert" means to turn; to change the heart, attitude, moral life, habits, aims and goals. "Conversion" is the process of becoming a Christian, or of being born again (Acts 3:19; John 3:3-5). It is not something incomprehensible, inconceivable, or that cannot be understood. Wheat is "converted" into flour, flour into bread, wood into paper, paper into books -- all by orderly processes. Bible "conversion" is a mental and moral change in life from wrong to right, from Satan to God, from darkness to light (Acts 26:18). This "conversion" begins in belief and is completed in obedience (John 8:24; Hebrews 5:8-9).

What It Means To Be "Converted"

When one is "converted" he becomes a new creature. "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). To be "converted" is to be "in Christ." But one is "in Christ" only after he is "baptized INTO Christ" (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27; I Corinthians 12:13). "In Christ" is where all spiritual blessings are to be obtained (Ephesians 1:3). To be "in Christ" is to be in his body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Acts 2:47). If we are "in Christ" we are "converted," and Christ is in us (Ephesians 3:17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27). "Conversion" (or being in Christ) is a saving union and a transforming union. We become "new creatures," and "old things" are passed away. We are the same, yet changed --born again (John 3:3-5). We have the same hair color, skin, age, all physical features. We still love, hope, rejoice, and fear; but a revolution has taken place. Someone else is in our lives and thoughts. We have new aims, goals and pursuits (Galatians 2:20)

We have been "converted!" We are "in Christ." Our sins are forgiven (Acts 2:38). Our souls are made pure (Acts 15:9). We have found a new Lord, a new life, and a new family (Acts 2:36-37; Colossians 3:1-17; I Timothy 3:15). We have been "converted!" (More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2, Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

A Picture Of The Blessed Man

Continued From Page 2

fruitful in the kingdom of God (John 15:8; Mark 16:15).

Lastly, the prosperous tree is portrayed as one whose "leaf also shall not wither." The prosperous tree is an evergreen tree. It is a thriving, healthy, prosperous tree! Likewise, the faithful Christian is one who will live forever -- in the glory of heaven (Revelation 2:10). Yea, the blessed man will prosper, for he is one who lays his treasures up in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21; Revelation 3:17-18)!

The Perishing Way of the Ungodly

We read of the perishing course of the ungodly: verses 4 and 5 teach "The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." Notice that the "ungodly are not so." They are unlike the blessed man who: (1) walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly; (2) nor standeth in the way of sinners; and (3) nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. The ungodly are those who: (1) do follow the advice of the wicked; (2) assemble with sinners; and (3) sit in the seat of those who mock God. Therefore, because of their following the destructive

course which leads to eternal hell (Matthew 7:13), they are described as worthless "chaff which the wind driveth away." The reason for their unfit and perishing condition is because they follow after the creeds and doctrines of men (Matthew 15:9; 7:21-23), rather than the good word of God! Therefore, at the judgment bar of Christ, they will not stand (Matthew 25:41-46; John 5:28-29)!

The Purpose is Given

Finally, verse six presents the reason why the ungodly shall perish: "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." The judgment will be a day of revealing (Galatians 6:7-8; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; II Corinthians 5:10)! On that great day the Lord will approve of the one who follows his will (Matthew 7:21). However, to the ungodly, they will hear the despairing words: "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:23)!

In conclusion, Psalms one contains these five important points. There are two ways with two different destinations offered to every accountable person. Which will you choose? We pray that all will choose the way of the "blessed man" (Psalms 1:1-3).

—1412 Parsons Avenue, Sheffield, AL 35660.

GOSPEL BROADCAST

6TH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST

8:00 A.M. DAILY

WKIJ (11:30 K.C.)

How Much Of The Lord's Time Have You Stolen?

A Rochester, Texas, church bulletin told about a young man who was working in a large department store. His employer told him he would be required to work on Sunday. It so happened that the hours assigned to him would have prevented his attending any of the worship services which he had regularly attended since childhood. The young man informed his employer that he would not be able to continue his work under those conditions, and his employer told him he would have to go.

A few days later, the young man answered an ad in the paper from a bank which had advertised a vacancy for a teller. In checking the young man's previous employers, the bank president contacted the department store head and inquired as to the boy's record,



Edsel Burleson

and whether he could recommend him. The store manager replied, "Why, yes, I'll be glad to recommend him. He will make you a good man . . . I just fired him a few days ago." "Fired him?" the bank president exclaimed. "Why would you recommend a man whom you just recently dismissed from your service?" The store manager explained the circumstances under which the boy was released, and remarked, "I know he will make a good man for your bank, because if he won't steal the Lord's time, he won't steal your money!"

How much of the Lord's time have you stolen? It is such a temptation to take the Lord's Day and use it as our own!

Time is such a valuable possession. Each of us has exactly the same amount. But how differently it is used, or misused! Waste of time is the most extravagant and costly of all expenses. Schiller said, "He who neglects the present moment throws away all he has." The Apostle Paul urged: "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5).

Longfellow said, "It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong." Once we lose time it is

gone forever! One today is worth a dozen tomorrows.

The man who makes the best use of his time has most to spare.

—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Was Peter The First Pope?

Bob Prichard

According to Roman Catholic doctrine, the Pope is the successor to the apostle Peter, who supposedly established the papacy by becoming (?) the first Bishop of Rome, and Pope of the church. The word "pope" is derived from a Latin word meaning "father." Today's Pope, in addition to his title of "Pope," holds other titles including Vicar of Christ, successor of St. Peter, Supreme Pontiff of the universal church, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman province, and Sovereign of the State of Vatican City. These lofty titles are claimed, however, without a shred of Biblical authority.

All of the popes supposedly follow the precedent of Peter, and claim their authority because Peter is considered the first pope. While there are TRADITIONS about Peter as the first pope, the historical evidence is lacking, and the Bible itself shows that Peter could not have been the first pope. In actuality, the papacy evolved over many years, and the bishop of Rome did not claim the title of pope until more than two centuries after Peter.

Peter could not have been the first pope because there is no biblical evidence that Peter was ever at Rome. The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church at Rome, and as he closed the letter he saluted twenty-seven persons by name (Romans 16:3-15), but he never even mentioned Peter. In his last letter to Timothy from Rome, Paul wrote, "Only Luke is with me," and "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me" (II Timothy 4:11, 16). Clearly, Peter was not in Rome.

He could not have been a pope, because the pope must be celibate, and Peter was married. Matthew 8:14 mentions Peter's mother-in-law; so he must have been married. In following Christ, Peter left many things, but he did not leave his wife. Also, Paul asked the question, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" [Peter] (I Corinthians 9:5). In I Peter, Peter called himself an "elder," and according to Paul's letter to Titus, an elder must have faithful children. When Peter spoke of the "Chief Shephard" (I Peter 5:4), he was speaking of Christ, not himself.

There is no doubt that Peter was a man of great ability, a special servant of the Lord; but the church was not built on Peter. Jesus promised the keys of the kingdom to Peter and the other apostles, after Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ. This truth -- that Jesus is the Christ -- is the rock upon which Jesus would build the church, Peter's confession of Christ, not Peter himself (Matthew 16:15-19). Peter was prominent in the early church, but he was not pre-eminent, the "supreme pontiff."

—P. O. Box 269, Elba, AL 36323.

Faith

(No. 1)

(Note: This article was one of a few less than 200, received by the Oak Cliff church of Christ, Dallas. A contest was held, asking for articles on "Faith" not to exceed 100 words. This one was read along with three others over radio station KRLD, Dallas, by brother V. L. Oliphant on March 19, 1939.)

The great need of the world is faith in God. We need the faith of Abraham,



Frank D. Young

to trust God for his promises. We need the faith of Noah (Hebrews 11:7) to do what God has said. In our worship to God, we must have the faith of Abel (Hebrews 11:4). We need the faith of Moses, in deciding between conflicting voices of today (Hebrews 11:23-26). "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him" (Hebrews 11:6, A.S.V.). The necessity of faith is, therefore, emphasized in his statement.

The nearest to a definition of "faith" in the Bible is found in Hebrews 11:1, which says: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." This definition is two-fold. Faith is, first, that which gives substance to, or stands under -- it is "assurance of things hoped for." Also it is the "evidence" or the proving or testing of things not seen." One therefore might give mental assent to the truthfulness of a proposition, and still not have "faith" in the sense of this definition. As an illustration of this, Hebrews 11:30 says: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." This example harmonizes with God's definition of faith. In Joshua we learn how the walls of Jericho fell. God commanded Joshua and Israel to march

around the walls once each day for six days; then on the seventh day, they were to march around seven times. Joshua and the Israelites believed God -- he believed God would give him the city when he did what God said. He, therefore, was assured of the truthfulness of what God said. But that was only the first half of the definition of faith: he then must offer evidence, or accept the testing or proving. Hence, he began to march, as God had said. One does not have faith in the sense of this statement when he merely gives assent to the fact that Christ is the Son of God. But, when one has the faith spoken of in Hebrews 11:1, that one not only believes in Christ as God's Son, but he believes to the extent of DOING what Christ has said.

In Ephesians 4:5 Paul says there is "one faith." There had been other kinds of faith, as there had been other baptisms. In the early church there was miraculous faith; but that faith had ceased to be. Hence, Paul said there is "one," and calls it the "common faith" (Titus 1:4). Thus it is a faith all can have.

The Bible says: "We walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7). Whatever we do in becoming Christians, or in worship to God, we must do by faith. In Romans 10:17 Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Thus to walk by faith is to walk according to God's truth. If one walks by the way that merely SEEMS right, that one does not walk "by faith." Cain was condemned because he failed to walk by faith -- he did not do what God said. People can not bring into Christian worship mechanical instruments and not sin. The New Testament does not authorize them.

In becoming a Christian, one must 'walk by faith.' When one repents of his sins, he is walking by faith, since God's word demands that we thus do. One cannot become a child of God by faith without being baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3). God's word demands that we be baptized (Acts 10:47-48), and we must walk by it.

—500 Third Ave. NE, Jasper, AL 35501.



(USPS 691-760)

Words Of Truth

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

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1987

NUMBER 22

Instrumental Music And The Restoration

It is a mistake to assume that those we think of as pioneers of a restoration were alone in their battles over the instrument question during the last half of the Nineteenth Century. A book entitled "Instrumental Music In Public Worship" was published in 1888, authored by John L. Girardeau, a preacher in the Presbyterian Church. The preface contains the following interesting information:



R. W. Gray

"... It will, no doubt, be said that the attempt to prove the unjustifiable employment of instrumental music in public worship of the church is schismatical, since the practice is now well nigh universal, ... To all this one answer alone is sufficient, namely; that the attempt is grounded in truth ..."

The opening remarks of professor Girardeau before a graduating class at Columbia University were likewise interesting:

"Attention, at the outset, is invoked to the consideration which serves to establish the following controlling principle: 'A divine warrant is necessary for every element of doctrine, government and worship in the church; that is, whatever in these spheres is not commanded in the Scriptures, either expressly or by good and necessary consequence from their statements, is forbidden.'"

(Instrumental Music In Public Worship, p. 15)

In a section devoted to examination of arguments in favor of the instrument, Girardeau's book reads much like the debates within the restoration through the years. The first five arguments examined are as follows: (1) That God sanctioned it in Old Testament

worship. (2) It is not condemned or prohibited in the New Testament. (3) It is justified in the church on earth in view of its employment by the church in heaven. (4) We ought to consecrate every talent we possess to the service of God. (5) Instrumental music is among the things indifferent (pp. 183-186).

The foregoing excerpts will serve to show that the hermeneutical laws applied to this subject were not peculiar to what has been viewed by men of the Christian Church persuasion as a 'right-wing extremists' element of the restoration.

The Final Result

What has happened since the turn of the Century to the two warring elements of the restoration? What does history say happened in the wake of the Nineteenth Century controversy? The following from the late James DeForrest Murch of the Christian Church will provide some of the answers:

"Since 1906, when the U.S. Government Religious Census first listed Churches of Christ as a religious body separate from the Disciples of Christ, the 'right wing' of the Restoration movement has made remarkable progress.

"The 1906 figures ... indicated that there were 2,649 congregations located in 33 states. ... The total membership was only 150,158, and 639 congregations were meeting in rented halls. ... The value of all school property owned by churches of Christ was only forty thousand dollars. ..."

"In 1960 authentic statistical sources listed 16,500 churches located in every state in the union with a membership of 2,025,000, giving churches of Christ ... more members than the Centrist (Christian Church) and Leftist (Disciples of Christ) combined (Christians Only, P. 313).

Those who embraced the instrument did not find the path to freedom and numerical growth as smooth and as productive as their fore-fathers had predicted. They now form two separate fellowships with irreconcilable difference. This came as a result of ultra liberalism invading their ranks via their schools. Thus the end result of the loose construction upon the silence of scripture has

created numerous divisive elements within their number, threatening the very existence of any semblance of a restoration plea.

WHERE ARE WE?

Brother Rex A. Turner, Sr., summarized our current attitudes in the following manner: "The great brotherhood of the churches of Christ is undergoing many changes. ... A few of the changes are healthy, but the majority of them are very unhealthy. The church is sick--sick on too much materialism, sick on too much extremism, and sick on too much liberalism. ... One gradual change that is taking place within the brotherhood ... is the attitude and concept of many ... on the matter of unscripturalness, ... of the use of instrumental music in Christian worship. ..."

"Straws in the wind, so to speak, indicate that there have been, or are, music teachers on some of our college faculties. ... who have confided to their more intimate friends that they know of no real scriptural reason for the rejection of the mechanical instrument in the worship ..."

"There is a great likelihood that the majority of gospel preachers under forty years of age—and perhaps those above forty—have not made a serious study of the subject. ... Gospel preachers should be fully informed on this subject because the principles involved have bearing on matters other than the use of the instrument in the worship" (Fundamentals of the Faith, pp. 82, 83).

The late beloved Gus Nichols, as well as many others of the same stature, gave much of himself to preserve the purity of the faith, including pure elements of public worship. We grieve on their behalf to observe what is now taking place within our ranks, A sinister, Satanic power is abroad, and it is having a telling effect upon our great brotherhood. Men who once stood for the old paths are now turning toward the path of men like Isaac Errett who urged compromise on a principle of truth where compromise had no place. They will find themselves in the historical record, but most importantly, in God's book of records, along with others

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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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Conversion

NO. II

Much is said today about "conviction." Many are encouraged to look for some kind of "overpowering force" to change their lives; or, to wait until the burden of sin weighs heavily upon their mind. This is said to be the Holy Spirit working on such a one, and that he is "under conviction."



Neil Myers

What is "Conviction?"
The word "convict" (or its root form)

is found several times in the New Testament. It means: "to put to proof; to test; refute, confute, defeat, expose, lay bare, reprove, rebuke; to discipline, chastise." Passages where the word (or its root form) appears are: John 8:9, 46; James 2:9; I Corinthians 14:24; Titus 1:9; John 3:20; Ephesians 5:11, 12; Matthew 18:15; Luke 3:19; I Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 12:5 and Revelation 3:19.

In John 3:20 the word is translated "reproved." "For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." Note that the "reproof" (or "conviction") is brought about by the light. Jesus and the gospel, his word, is that light! "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Corinthians 4:4). "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 light, the gospel, is God's power to enlighten, to reprove, to convict, and

Continued on page 3

How The Liberals Won The Battle With The Disciples Of Christ

In his book *Christians Only, a History of the Restoration Movement*, J. D. Murch tells how the liberal churchmen gained control of the Disciples of Christ. A review of this bit of history will prove valuable to the Lord's church today.



John Waddey

Tools of Destruction
"Liberalism was introduced to the mainstream of the Restoration movement by the Disciples' Divinity Home, The Christian Century, the Campbell Institute and the Congress promoted by a small coterie of "forward looking brethren," (pp. 237-238).

The Role of Religious Journals

"The liberals needed an organ through which they could propagandize the brotherhood. The Christian Standard was opposed to their views. The Christian Evangelist was lukewarm. A small journal known as The Christian Oracle . . . was having financial problems, so the liberals took it over and named it The Christian Century . . . alienating their subscribers."

Destroy the Opposition

"Finally in 1908 C. C. Morrison bought The Century and a new policy of frank and open commitment to liberalism was inaugurated. His guns were trained on The Christian Standard, which he rightly figured was the one great barrier to the liberal program. He accused its publisher and its editor of 'vicious propaganda,' 'falsehood and bigotry' and of causing the 'dissension' which 'racked the brotherhood' (p. 238).

Hiding Behind the Mask of Scholarship

"The medium for the development of a liberal strategy for the capture of the schools and agencies of the Disciples was the Campbell Institute. This fellowship of college- and university-trained ministers and workers was organized in 1892. Its original purpose was to promote "a scholarly spirit, . . . quiet, self-culture, and the development of a higher spirituality," and to make "contributions of permanent value to the literature and thought of the Disciples." Since all members of this Institute had been duly exposed to the liberal philosophy and theology, it was a "natural breeding ground for liberal ecclesiastical action" (p. 239).

False Security of Naive Brethren

"Conservatives were slow to see what was happening in their Zion. Some were naive enough to be taken in by the liberal propaganda. Most of them trusted in a false security" (p. 240).

Take Over a School

" . . . at the death of McGarvey (1911) and others of the 'old school' at Lexington, the liberals moved in for 'the kill.' . . . Hal L. Calhoun, a Ph.D from Harvard, had been tagged by McGarvey to succeed him as president of the College of the Bible . . . certain

liberals on the board had other ideas. Almost immediately R. H. Crossfield, a liberal, was chosen president. . . . Calhoun was made dean of the seminary in 1912 and proceeded to do the best he could to maintain orthodox Biblical standard. But the inexorable liberal purge was on . . ." (p. 241).

Christian Colleges Became Unchristian

"The liberal strategy at Lexington was exactly the same as that used by educators in all Protestant denominations. They insisted that the educational standing of the college needed to be improved. . . . Professors were needed who could lecture and conduct 'co-operative' inquiry between student and teacher, with much reading and broad research on all sides of a question. There ought to be much freedom of discussion and stimulation of students to come to their own conclusions" (p. 242).

Accrediting Agencies and Colleges

"Motive and viewpoint in studying the Bible had changed, and the 'new approach' was essential if the school was not to be 'typed' and ostracized by the accrediting agencies." "At first in the name of academic freedom, the liberals appealed only for a place or two on the faculty in fairness to a new theological viewpoint that had attained wide acceptance. Later they maintained that there was no other viewpoint than theirs which had any scholarly standing. The liberal position was buttressed by action of the educational accrediting agencies, now in almost complete control of the liberals. . . . They created standards which eliminated much Biblical and doctrinal instruction from the curriculum and disqualified the older scholars and professors from holding a place on the faculty. In fact, the real basic issues of the educational controversy were not allowed to appear" (p. 242).

Blame the Conservatives for Causing Trouble

"And when evangelicals raised them (the basic issues) they were branded as trouble-makers 'bent on destroying the peace' of the brotherhood . . ." (p. 242).

Liberals Seldom Admitted Their True Colors

"Liberal educational strategists used many clever feints to keep the facts from the people who supported the schools, most of whom were evangelicals in dense ignorance of the battle going on behind the scenes. Some of the less honorable liberals . . . deliberately

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Instrumental Music And The Restoration

Continued from page 1

who led the faithful astray. Let us plead once more for brethren to "stand in the way and see," asking for the old paths, that we may walk therein and find rest for our souls (Jeremiah 6:16).

—Rt. 3 Box 306, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

The Whole Truth

Trenton McCluskey

There are a number of things being taught in religious circles concerning salvation. Some of these doctrines appear on the surface to be truth. One reason for this is that they take a portion of truth and treat it as the whole. Consider these:

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

At a shallow glance, one might go away saying, "Lord, Lord, Lord" in a sincere belief that this would result in salvation. As the student of God's word pursues his study, he would be hard pressed to explain this concept in the light of other Biblical teachings. For example, one would certainly be pressed to explain Matthew 7:21: "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." If the interpretation of "Call on the name of the Lord" (Romans 10:13) is to SPEAK, saying, "Lord, Lord," and results in salvation, then Matthew 7:21 conflicts with this passage.

Another such teaching proposed in religious circles is one based upon the 'belief only' doctrine. Those embracing this view turn to John 3:16: "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." Another is Acts 16:31: "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Also John 8:24: "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."

As you allow God's word to be your road map from earth to heaven, you will surely look deeply into the texts previously cited.

On the surface, either doctrine seems impressive. I am reminded of the phone call to my parents when my wife, daughter and I had to leave the roadway in order to avoid an oncoming vehicle. The term I used to describe our situation carries several thoughts. When my mother answered the call, I requested to speak to my Dad. I then told him, "We have had a wreck." The term "wreck" was accurate, yet too broad. How bad? Who is hurt? Is the car operable? None of these questions are answered by the surface information given, that is: "We have had a wreck." In the religious world, we must

explore the HOW of obedience.

Remember Romans 10:13. Allow the Bible to comment on itself.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, . . . calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

This passage explains HOW to call on the Lord. To "call on the name of the Lord is to submit the Lord's teaching even in the Great Commission. "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them 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).

This teaching was given by our Lord to Nicodemus: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-5). After his resurrection, Jesus plainly taught, ". . . 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).

One can not deny that a belief in Jesus is essential for salvation. How can one render obedience and submit to a being which he does not believe exists? In order to believe, one must hear about that in which he would believe.

"So then FAITH cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). BELIEF is a must for salvation.

The Philippian jailer "brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31). "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).

The false teaching on Romans 10:13 is that all

who believe are saved. But this is seen to be false from the following scriptures: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). To say otherwise is to say that Judas Iscariot was saved. The same theory would save demons: "Thou BELIEVEST that there is one God; thou doest well: the DEVILS also BELIEVE, and tremble" (James 2:19).

In Acts 8:37 belief was demonstrated by submitting in obedience to the preaching about Jesus. This was the pattern set forth in Acts 2, as Peter preached Jesus is Lord and Christ. "Therefore let all the house of Israel KNOW ASSUREDLY, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). When the word was received, those believing the word AND OBEYING the commands were added to the church: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

Therefore let us realize when we hear a half truth, it may be the wrong half.

—103 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

Guilty Until Proven Innocent?

Edsel Burleson

Several years ago the Minister's Monthly had a story of a stranger who entered a certain dwelling house. The "neighbors" saw him when he entered. They did not see him again until he departed an hour later. Then curiosity began its work, and the question arose. "What was the stranger's mission? Why did he enter the house?" All with one consent began to speculate, each according to his own practice or profession.

"He went into the house to secure votes," said the politician.

"I do not see it that way," said the trader. "He must have entered to trade and get gain."

"I have it," said the glutton. "He went in to fill his belly."

"My idea is different," said the cold blooded. "He must have entered to do a bodily injury."

"You are wrong," said the sot and the sensualist. "That man went into the house to carouse and commit adultery."

"All of you are in error," said the covetous one. "That man went in to cheat and defraud."

"I think," said the Christian, "that he must have entered to do some work of benevolence."

Isn't it strange how our own habits and areas of personal interest determine our conclusions about situations we encounter? It is not often that one is given the benefit of the doubt. Usually, others are "guilty until proven innocent!"

Paul told Titus that one's conclusions depend upon his own mental habits: "To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled" (Titus 1:15).

The only way to prevent our condemning others before we have reason to do so, is to make sure we have not cultivated a suspicious mind. Running uphill and running down

Conversion

Continued from page 2

to convert people today (Romans 1:16; Psalms 119:105; James 1:21; Galatians 1:6-9).

How "Conviction" is Produced

Those who brought to Jesus a woman charged with adultery were "convicted" when Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground" (John 8:7-9). They were "convicted" by their own conscience that was aroused and stirred as Jesus spoke and wrote.

The Holy Spirit was promised to the apostles to "convict" or "reprove." "And when he is come, he will REPROVE the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). But the Holy Spirit does this through the preaching of the gospel which he revealed and confirmed. Paul commanded Timothy: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; REPROVE, rebuke, ex-

hort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Timothy 4:2). The Holy Spirit would REPROVE through Timothy's preaching. The Holy Spirit works and speaks to the hearts of people through the gospel of Christ (I Timothy 4:1; Ephesians 6:17; Revelation 2:7; Acts 24:25).

Friends, don't wait for some mysterious, over-powering experience to come (?) to your life. You could wait too late! Please read and study the Bible; allow it to reveal to you your need of salvation (Romans 3:10, 23), and how and when Jesus provides such (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Mark 16:16; Hebrews 5:8-9).

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

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Salvation By Faith

(NO. II)

Salvation by faith is alvation which one receives as a result of his obedience to the system of FAITH. The scriptures say of Abraham: "And he believed in the Lord: and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 5:6). This statement is quoted three times in the New Testament. Each time it says, "Abraham believed God." There is no effort in Genesis 15:6 to tell us Abraham believed that God is, Abraham, in Chaldea, amidst idolatry, when God first spoke to him, showed he believed in God's existence. God said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee . . ." (Genesis 12:1). Having been so commanded, "Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him . . ." (Genesis 12:4). Hebrews 11:8 also says: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." From the time we meet "Abram," before he was called "Abraham," he believed that God exists. Abraham's "faith" refers to a faith which obeyed God.



FRANK D. YOUNG

But Genesis 15:6 is quoted by Paul in Romans 4:3 to contrast meritorious WORKS, with salvation by obedient FAITH. One isn't saved by his own plan, nor by his own works. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt" (Romans 4:4). If one could earn his salvation, God would be in debt to him, and would owe him his earned salvation.

The second time Genesis 15:6 is quoted in the New Testament, is Galatians 3:6: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Abraham was not saved by Moses' law. --In fact, Abraham lived before the law, and was "justified." Hence, we are told, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed'" (Galatians 3:8). Galatians 3:9 says: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

There was never true forgiveness under the Old Testament. Leviticus 18:5 says, "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them . . ." This passage would require perfect obedience to Moses' law. Thus to contrast the two laws, Paul says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, 'That the man which doeth those things shall live by them'" (Romans 10:4-5). Thus the purpose (end) of the law is realized in Christ. Strange as it may seem, people who talk so much about "not saved by works," also seem to think it strange that we don't go to the law for God's will today. Yet Paul in contrasting the two laws says, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith" (Romans 3:27). Moses' law

LAW of FAITH. In reference to Paul's own life, he says, ". . . touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless . . . I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord . . . and be found in him, not having MINE OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, which is of the law, but that which is THROUGH THE FAITH of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Philippians 3:6-9).

The last time Genesis 15:6 is quoted in the New Testament is James 2:23. James shows what saving faith is: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" (Incidentally, James says "works" save one)! "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, 'Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God.' Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:20-24).

Paul in Romans 4:3 says Abraham WAS NOT justified by works and quotes Genesis 15:6 to show such. James in James 2:20-24

says Abraham WAS justified by works, and quotes the same passage to prove that! These two arguments are in perfect accord. The faith which obeys, is the only faith which saves. But we are not justified by human merit, or by works of the law of Moses.

At no time has faith, without conformity to God's law saved one. No one has ever been saved by faith alone.

Noah's faith, even as Abraham's, saved him. Noah's faith appropriated the grace of God. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Again, "Thus did Noah: according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Genesis 6:22). Hebrews 11:7 says, "BY FAITH, Noah, BEING WARNED OF GOD of things not seen as yet, MOVED with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Describing Noah's preaching, Peter says of those who failed to heed Noah's teaching, they "were disobedient" (I Peter 3:20). "Noah became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Hebrews 11:7); whereas others (I Peter 3:20) "were disobedient."

—500 Third Ave. N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

How The Liberals Won The Battle With The Disciples Of Christ

Continued from page 2

misled inquiring brethren as to their stand on the issues" (p. 243).

The Wounded-Soul Tactic

"The favorite tactic, however, was to assume an aggrieved demeanor because inquiry was made and faith questioned, thus relieving the one questioned of the necessity of making a frank and honest answer" (p. 243).

Intellectual Freedom

"Always this was accomplished under the guise of intellectual and religious liberty and of advancing the best interests of the brotherhood. There were always protests of innocence to charges of disloyalty to the word of God and to the historic principles of the Restoration Movement" (p. 244).

Avoid the Real Issue

"Simultaneously the foreign missionary work, as well as education, of the Disciples

was infiltrated by liberals. Here again, the strategy was to keep the real issues from the masses. Unfortunately, those who opposed this penetration did not hold the ensuing controversies to the basic issues but allowed secondary considerations to obscure the real ones. The only histories of the tragic encounter have thus emphasized the fringe debate . . ." (p. 245).

Conclusion

This writer sees an alarming parallel between what happened to our former brethren 75 years ago and things happening among us today. May we who still hold to the old paths awaken to the very real threat that is abroad, and arm ourselves for the battle. Conservatives among the Disciples lost because of their failure to recognize and challenge the enemy on the basic issues of error. Let us not repeat their error.

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

Guilty Until Proven Innocent?

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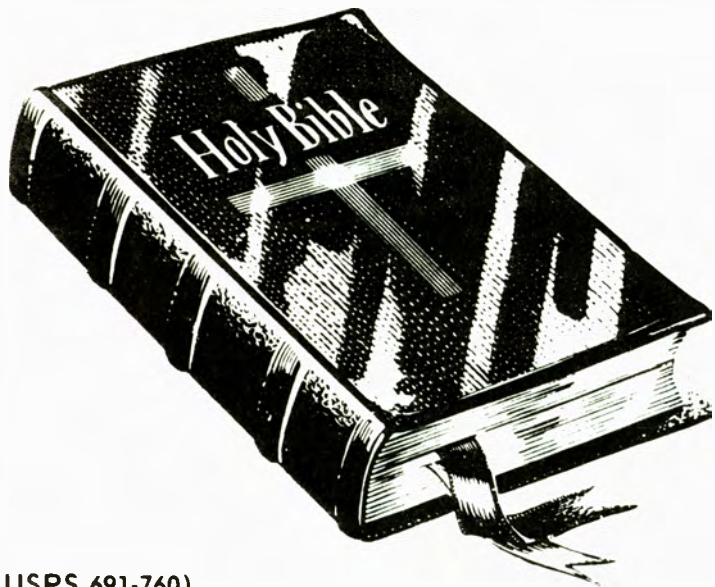
people are both bad for the heart!

A person can save himself from many hard falls by refraining from jumping to

conclusions. --Yet, that is about the only mental exercise some people get!

—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

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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

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Media Ethics And Modern Music

(No. III)

Wayne Coats
The Slime Of Illicit Sex

In a presentation of matters which deal with the lyrics of modern music, decency and propriety forbid that we sink into the lowest pools of slime, filth, and vulgarity; albeit, that is where one will be when following many of the rock groups, and even some of the Country and Western performers.

The scripture is still valid which says, "Beware of dogs . . ." (Philippians 3:2). Homosexuals, perverts, and punks of every stripe are involved in the music industry. It has been a very rapid way for several rock groups to gross millions of dollars. For example, the Van Halen Group toured the world in 1984 and "grossed over a half a million dollars per week." David Roth of Van Halen, said that after a concert, ". . . we sack the village. We go looking for women and children . . ." Chris Stein of Blondie said: "Everyone takes it for granted -- rock and roll is synonymous with sex." With this attitude, David Roth announced at a Detroit concert, "We are gathered together in celebration of sex, drugs, and rock and roll." "Sex is where it's at in music -- and I like it," said Johnny Bristol.

It boggles the mind of normal, God-fearing people to become aware of the success attained by so many punk rock and perverted groups. In the song, "I Love The Dead," Alice Cooper sings about sex with the dead. He cackles, "I love the dead before they're cold. The bluing flesh for me to hold."

Other offerings from Alice which parents and children can listen to are such as "Cold Ethyl," "Only Women Bleed," and "Muscle of Love." To assert that these kinds of songs do not influence the behavior of children and youth is a blatant lie. One has to have a deranged mind, or be totally dishonest as to the effects of rock music, to declare that such is harmless. Why is it that those who do the concerts are fully aware of the devastating effects, yet millions apparently see no harm therein?

The KISS group is internationally known;

and we might listen to two members of the group who are cognizant of the influence they have on young people. Paul Stanley asked:

"You know what we've been getting a lot of lately? Letters from 16 and 17 year-old girls with little Polaroid pictures of them naked. That's amazing. That's great. There's nothing like knowing you're helping the youth of America -- undress."

Gene Simmons said,

"The band is concerned with sex and little else."

Simmons also stated,

"I absolutely think there is nothing wrong with doing anything between consenting adults."

It is most interesting that Simmons can use the word "wrong!"

"Rock music is sex, and you have to hit them (teenagers) in the face with it."

This was the comment of one from The Rolling Stones group.

Brother John Waddey related that an 18 year-old was stripped and sexually assaulted in the aisle at a rock concert in Knoxville, Tennessee. Although there were hundreds watching, no one cared enough to intervene when the victim pleaded for help. We can imagine that a rock concert would be a poor place to get help during a beastly sexual assault, but it would be a perfect place to go for illicit sex. If someone denies my assertion, then perhaps John Oates could give convincing testimony. He said:

"Rock 'n Roll is 99 percent sex."

The sex fiends and perverts get a thrill out of lurid rock performances. Malcolm McLaren said:

"... the true meaning of rock ... is sex, subversion, and style."

In the album, "Sloppy Seconds," Dr. Hook sings:

"Don't forget to bring your whips.

We're going to a freakers ball."

In the second verse he invites listeners to bring drugs. In verse three he lists some homosexuals; and in verse four he asks brothers to have sex with their sisters, and sons with their mothers.

We are not trying to be facetious when we ask the supporters of rock and roll if they take the advice of Dr. Hook?

One of the rock groups is known as "Blondie." Debbie Harry of this band declared:

"Rock 'n Roll is all sex. One hundred percent. Sometimes music can make you (expletive). I don't know if people (expletive) to my music. I hope so."

With this lascivious attitude being peddled, we would prefer to keep our distance from rock and roll as if it were a deadly plague.

In his description of the song, "Cat Scratch Fever," Ted Nugent uses words ". . . too vulgar to print, literally, which catalogues sexual violence, mutual oral copulation, and vomiting." He says of his song "Violent Love:"

"I hope you throw up when you listen to it."

One is offered a real treat by Donna Summer who sings, "Love To Love You Baby." She is billed as the "Queen of the Orgasm." The song runs on record for 19 minutes and she repeats the title 122 times. In the course of the 19 minutes, she simulates 22 orgasms.

The debauchery of rock music is portrayed by Prince who sings:

"Incest is everything it's said to be."

Again we cannot help but wonder if the people who are pleased by the performance of Prince are given to incest? Perhaps not; but why listen to that which is too rotten even for vultures, if one isn't influenced by such lyrics to some degree?

It is generally known that some rock groups exert a lot of effort and energy promoting

Continued on page 2

What Is The New Unity Movement?

(No. 1)

Introduction:

Unity is the will of Christ for his church (John 17:20-21). Unity is desirable, pleasant and beneficial for members of the body (Psalms 133:1). Unity is essential to evangelizing the world (John 17:20-21). Unity is practical and reasonable since there is but one body (Ephesians 4:3-4).

Every faithful preacher and elder acknowledges the need for unity. The question is, is the current "Unity Movement" which seeks to unite the Lord's church with the Independent Christian Churches proceeding according to the will of God? Will it be beneficial to the church of Christ? or, detrimental? I remind you that it is always right to "prove all things" (I Thessalonians 5:21-22) and to "try the spirits" (teachers), "for many false prophets" are in the world (I John 4:1).

Unity Movements With The Christian Church are Not New

E. H. Koch, State Secretary of the Tennessee Christian Missionary Society, launched a program in 1914 emphasizing Christian Unity.¹

John B. Cowden "made continuous overtures to the leaders of the churches of Christ for fellowship and fraternity. He pressed for a conference with the idea it would bring better understanding and more cordial relations between two groups." He concluded of our brethren: "They will have nothing to do with us but state openly and flatly that we are a separate and distinct people, and occupy irreconcilable positions: and there is nothing left for us to do but fall in or fall out with them."² His efforts produced a written debate on instrumental music between H. Leo Boles, President of David Lipscomb College, and M. D. Clubb, State Secretary of the Tennessee Christian Missionary Society. The debate was published simultaneously by the *Gospel Advocate* and the *Christian Evangelist*, April through July of 1926. There was also an oral debate at the Ryman Auditorium, May 31-June 5, 1923, between N. B. Hardeman, President of Freed-Hardeman College, and Ira Boswell on the same question. Following these, the unity quest failed.

In 1937-1938 James DeForest Murch of the Christian Church and Claude F. Witty of the church of Christ launched a series of unity meetings between representatives of their groups. They promoted a five-step approach to unity:

1. PRAYER. Definite private and congregational prayer for unity, seeking to determine how much we have in common in faith and practice.
2. SURVEY. Seeking to determine how much we have in common in faith and practice.
3. FRIENDLINESS. Establishing individual friendly relations by exchange of fraternal courtesies and through fellowship meetings.
4. COOPERATION. In enterprises which will not do violence to our personal or group convictions.
5. STUDY AND DISCUSSION. Open-minded

study and humble discussion of the things which at present divide us, in order to discover the way to complete a permanent unity.³

"National Unity Meetings" were held in Detroit, Indianapolis, Lexington, Kentucky, and Columbus, Ohio. According to Murch, the chief accomplishments were:

(1) a growing personal acquaintance among the brethren of both groups; (2) a growing knowledge of the current status of the churches -- their teaching, their programs, their problems, their aims and accomplishments; (3) a frank study and discussion of the obstacles to unity, the impelling motives toward it, and possible methods of achieving it; (4) dramatizing and publicizing the five-point approach; and (5) the creation of a spirit of prayer and surrender to God's will as supremely important requisites to any such endeavor.⁴

A *Christian Unity Quarterly* edited by Witty and Murch was published to promote these efforts.⁵

The premillennial churches and their paper *Word and Work* were enthusiastic supporters of this effort.⁶ A joint hymnbook, *Great Songs of the Church* was published by Standard Publishing Company.

Brother Witty was invited to address numerous schools and official gatherings of the Christian Churches. Some of our churches opened their pulpits to Murch.⁷ One is impressed by the remarkable parallels between the Murch-Witty unity program and the current Shelly-DeWelt effort.

These meetings faded following a powerful address by H. Leo Boles at the Indianapolis meeting on May 3, 1939. Boles' address is entitled, "The Way of Unity Between the 'Christian Church' and Churches of Christ." It is still in print and may be ordered from the Getwell Church in Memphis, Tennessee.

Among the points made by Brother Boles is the following: "It is not only wrong to bring such things (acts of worship based on human opinion) into the worship of God; it is wrong to tolerate them in the worship; it is wrong to affiliate with them or countenance those who bring them in. Hence, it is sinful to bring anything not commanded by God into the worship of God; it is unfaithful and disloyal to Christ to tolerate them in worship; it is wrong to encourage and fellowship those who walk by opinions; it is cowardly and rebellious to refuse to oppose them."⁸

Murch was an ecumenist who not only courted our brethren, but also served on a "Commission to Restudy of the Disciples of Christ" at the same time. That, too, was a unity program. Also, his "concern for Christian unity extended to our Baptist brethren."⁹

Another unity movement was attempted by Brother Ernest Beam of California. In 1950 he launched a journal called *The Christian Forum* which was dedicated to the promotion of unity among churches of Christ and Christian Churches. Beam was able to work with a congregation that embraced both groups and their practices.¹⁰

The mid-1960's saw the rise of another unity movement led by W. Carl Ketcherside of St. Louis. Through his *Mission Messenger* he spread his doctrine far and wide. Ketcherside

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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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Media Ethics And Modern Music

Continued from page 1

homosexuality. Holly Near said:

"I want to do songs about lesbians in such a way that both gay and straight teenagers will ask their parents to come to the concerts."

What kind of songs would this be? Why would intelligent parents want to hear songs about lesbians? Why would sensible teenagers want to hear such songs and want their parents to listen to them?

The "Village People" is a homosexual rock band. They do a number called "Crusin'" in which they are looking for a "partner." The manager of the band said, "I am sincerely trying to promote songs to make gay people more acceptable -- it is a protest against Anita Bryant."

In his song, "All The Girls Love Alice," Elton John sang, "She couldn't get it on with the boys on the scene;

But what do you expect from a chick who's just sixteen?"

We feel certain that Sodom and Gomorrah never had anyone as popular as some of the rock performers of our time! Surely none of the ancients could compete with a modern David Bowie who was voted the number three female star, and also the number one male star -- simultaneously!

The sexual orgies and promiscuous behavior so typical of rock bands and their fans caused a writer for *Creem* magazine to say,

"There's gonorrhea, syphilis, crabs, NSU, venereal warts, and herpes to consider -- I mean you'd be simply amazed at the number of times one has to schlepp to the VD clinic; it's almost a regular stop for some groups on the way to or from a gig."

Perchance one can now understand much better why we gave this chapter its unique title. The "Slime Of Lurid Sex" has a great appeal to punks, pukers, and perverts; and it would seem that their number is legion, and will probably increase until Jesus comes.

(To be continued).

[Editor's Note: A booklet from which this is reprinted by permission may be ordered from the author].

—184 Hillview, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122.

Conversion

(No. III)

Read Acts 2. God reveals the power of example. He gave several examples of "conversion" in the book of Acts. This book shows how large numbers, as well as individuals, were "converted," or became Christians. We can depend on the events recorded in this book because they occurred under the immediate surveillance or direction of the Holy Spirit. The events recorded really passed twice under the inspection of the Holy Spirit: once when they occurred (Acts 2:1-4), and again when recorded by Luke by inspiration. Many thousands of conversions occurred; but the Holy Spirit selected only a "few" to occupy a permanent place in the Bible to serve as our examples.

Acts 2 records the conversion of "about 3,000" people (verse 41). These were "devout



Neil Myers

Jews, out of every nation," in Jerusalem that day. It was the day of Pentecost, which under the Old Testament had been one of the three annual Jewish feast days. Jesus had been crucified at the Passover feast, and now fifty days later) was vindicated at Pentecost.

The Preachers And Their Preaching

That day the apostles, the preachers, were miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4, 13-14, 37, 42-43). The message was "Jesus!" (1) Jesus: approved of God, verse 22. (2) Jesus: crucified by their wicked hands, verse 33. (3) Jesus: raised from the dead by God, verses 24, 32. (4) Jesus' death and resurrection fulfilled prophecy, verses 25-32. (5) Jesus exalted, verses 33-36. (6) Jesus: the sender of the Holy Spirit, verse 33; John 16:13. (7) Jesus: Lord and Christ, verse 36.

The preaching of the gospel -- that Jesus is the Christ -- made these devout, pious people feel the burden and guilt of sin. Being "pricked in their heart" by the gospel, they "said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:38). "What shall we do" -- for what? To be released from the guilt of killing the Christ.

How They Were

"Convicted" and "Converted"

Please note they were being "converted"

from disobedient, Christ-killing Jews to obedient believers in Jesus. "Convicted" by the Holy Spirit through the preached word, they, as believers, were told by Peter to "... Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (verse 38).

Why "repent?" Because repentance is a part of "conversion" (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19; 17:30-31; Romans 2:4; II Peter 3:9).

Why be "baptized?" Because baptism also is a part of "conversion." Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; 16:30-34; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27; I Peter 3:20-21).

Please note in verses 41-47 that as they were saved they were "added" to the church, or added to the body of converted ones.

The process of conversion is clearly revealed. The people heard the preaching of the apostles, and were of honest hearts. They wanted to know what to do. They were given heaven's answer by inspired men. If today you will do the same as they were instructed, you too can be "converted." Nothing miraculous happened to those who needed to change. There was no overpowering influence, or impulse. Please do not wait for such today. The Spirit converts men by his preached word.

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

What Is The New Unity Movement?

Continued from page 2

was not a newcomer. He was known for his previous leadership of the anti-located preacher, anti-Christian College faction. Assisted by his old crony Leroy Garrett of Dallas:

"Ketcherside promoted his program for unity on the basis of a distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine." He contended that fellowship is governed by "gospel," that is, all who obey the gospel are in the fellowship. He maintained, however, that "doctrine" does not affect fellowship, meaning that doctrinal differences would not disrupt the fellowship of those who had obeyed the gospel. He called this position 'unity in diversity' or 'fellowship without endorsement.'"¹¹

Brother Ketcherside stated his program as follows:

No honest opinion arrived at from personal study of the sacred volume, and held in good conscience, can ever be made a test of fellowship without first becoming an unwritten creed. Regardless of whether one's deductions may be right or wrong about cups or classes, music or the millennium, he must be received and retained, recognized and respected.¹²

Ketcherside's unity plea was strongly resisted by Roy Lanier, Sr., G. K. Wallace, William Woodson, and others through the *Gospel Advocate* and *The Firm Foundation*. While Ketcherside never gained a wide following among our people, he was welcomed as a hero by the Christian Churches. He presented himself as, and they welcomed him as, a representative of the brotherhood of churches of Christ when in reality he was a member of the radical fringe. Other journals that espoused Ketcherside's unity program were

The Restoration Review, edited by Leroy Garrett, *Integrity*, and *Ensign*, formerly called *Ensign Fair*.

Movements to restore Unity between the Lord's church and the Christian Churches are not new. The present effort is an outgrowth of earlier efforts. Because those of the Christian Churches were determined to cling to their innovations in earlier days, those prior movements failed. Unless and until they are willing to repudiate and lay aside all their unscriptural practices and doctrines, we cannot have a scriptural fellowship with them in our day. At any point in time one (or more) individuals or congregations choose to do that, we should welcome them with open arms, and embrace them as brethren in good standing.

(More to follow).

¹Herman Norton, *Tennessee Christians* (Nashville: Reed and Co., 1971), p. 234.

²*Ibid.*, p. 25.

³James DeForest Murch, *Adventuring For Christ in Changing Times* (Louisville, KY: Restoration Press, 1973), p. 128.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 129

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 129-130.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁸H. Leo Boles, *The Way of UNITY Between "Christian Church" And CHURCHES OF CHRIST* (Memphis: Getwell Church of Christ, 1984), p. 30-31.

⁹Murch, *Adventuring*, p. 133-136.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 130

¹¹Alan Highers, *How Do You Spell (F)ellowship?* (Henderson, TN: published by the author, 1986), p. 6.

¹²*Ibid.*

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

Reincarnation

Bob Prichard

It is estimated that as many as one fourth of all Americans now believe in reincarnation. Reincarnation, or the transmigration of the soul, is defined as the rebirth of the soul in multiple successive bodies. Although this is sometimes supposed to include animal bodies, most usually limit it to human bodies. According to reincarnation's law of Karma, as a person lives many different lives, his soul goes through a purification process as it evolves higher and higher to greater spiritual awareness, until he reaches the point that he is fully aware of his spiritual oneness with the universe. Reincarnation is taught by many Eastern religions, the "New Age" movement, Rosicrucians, and others.

Men have taught reincarnation for thousands of years, but it is absolutely contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Hebrews 9:27 is clear: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Men die physically only one time, and all men will be judged by God on the great judgment day. Reincarnation teaches that there are multiple deaths, and a sort of judgment of the person at the end of each death. Paul said that God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

Reincarnation is also contrary to the Bible because of the Bible teaching of the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Christianity. Paul said

Continued on page 4

The Necessity Of Obedience

We are told in James 2:12. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." I want to examine each aspect of this powerful verse. I hope you will take a little time to meditate upon these thoughts. Our lives need it.

First, James said, "So speak ye . . . as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." What we say takes on a different meaning when we consider what James

is teaching. Each word we speak is to be spoken with the judgment in mind. Oh, what a



Ken Tyler

difference this realization can make in our speech! We will not curse, tell dirty jokes, gossip, speak evil of others, or be trouble makers. We will be kind, considerate and loving. We will discipline our tongues and make them speak what God wants. Do you realize you are going to give an account for what you say?

Secondly, James said, ". . . and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." This statement covers every aspect of our lives. At home, school, work, and play we must do as God directs. We must not leave undone the good things he asks us to do. Every hour of every day we must be conscious of the fact that we will give an account for the things we do. Do you take your actions this seriously?

Thirdly, James gives the basis of the judgment, "the law of liberty." Jesus had already

said, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Then again, "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 8:32; 12:48). Therefore, we must conclude that "the law of liberty" is the truth, the gospel of Christ. By this law we shall be judged. This is why it is so important that we study and obey this law.

I conclude this article with a statement made by Isaiah about Judah. Listen carefully, "For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory (Isaiah 3:8). He proclaimed in verse 9, ". . . Woe unto their soul! . . ."

May we not let this happen to us.

—P.O. Box 376, Arab, Alabama 35016.

Lads To Leaders

James E. Rogers

The LADS TO LEADERS program was founded by Jack Zorn in Warner Robins, Georgia in 1969. The program was begun to help develop boys into leaders in the church and community. The purpose is "to identify potential leaders early in life. We strive to ignite within them the desire to lead, and provide them with training and experience to assure maximum development. The program is designed to develop young Christians for responsible leadership roles in the church, home, school, community, and business world" (Adult Leaders Manual, Jack Zorn, p. 4).

This program is administered by each local congregation as it sees fit. The program is under the direction of the local leadership in every way. Each congregation decides what materials it will use, and how it will work the program. Brother Zorn will provide whatever assistance the congregation desires, and this is by invitation of the congregation.

The LADS TO LEADERS program has enlarged from its beginning to now provide leadership training for girls under the name LEADERETTES. This training is in accord with Bible principles. Girls are taught how to lead within the sphere of work given to them in the Bible. No girls are taught or encouraged to teach or usurp authority over men (II Timothy 2:9-12) in any way.

At the recent national gathering in Nashville, Tennessee, nearly 3000 people attended an awards program in which youths were rewarded for their participation in various aspects of the program. Among those who were rewarded were: 1,045 speakers, 735 Bible readers, 154 song leaders and 37 who memorized and recited scripture. Girls spoke and read to women and girls only.

Many adults give of their time and talents to help youths grow in this program. This is only another method that may be used, if congregations desire, to help prepare young people to function as God wants them to, as they grow and mature into adulthood.

I know something about this program since brother Jack Zorn helped me nearly 20 years ago to grow in speaking ability, and in filing

religious materials. We worked together before this program ever began, and have continued our association through the years. I recommend the program to congregations who want to effectively train future leaders. I do stress again that each congregation is responsible for what it does in the program, and must answer only to God for his work. There is no governing body that tells the congregation what it must do. There is

help and encouragement available if the congregation desires it.

If someone is interested in beginning a program, brother Zorn may be contacted in Montgomery, Alabama at (205-832-4077). I would be happy to supply any information possible. I can be reached at (205-362-2320).

—301 Joyce Street, Talladega, AL 35160.

Reincarnation

Continued from page 3

that "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Corinthians 15:14). He adds that because of the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, "we shall all be changed" as well, as our corruptible bodies put on incorruption in the resurrection (I Corinthians 15:51-54). Our hope of resurrection comes not because of struggling through multiple bodies in a sin-filled earth, but through obedience to the grace of a loving God who forgives us of our sins.

Through Malachi, the Holy Spirit prophesied, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Malachi

4:5). Some suggest that when John fulfilled this prophecy, he was literally Elijah reincarnated. Jesus said that John fulfilled this prophecy (Matthew 17:11-13), but when asked if he were Elijah, John said plainly "I am not" (John 1:21). John did fulfill the prophecy, as Jesus said, but he was not literally Elijah. He spoke with the spirit of Elijah. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ. If Elijah's soul had been reincarnated in John, then it should have been John -- not Elijah -- who appeared with Christ!

Reincarnation is not Biblical!

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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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Media Ethics And Modern Music

(No. IV)

Wayne Coats
The Drumbeat Of Dope
And
The Siren Of Suicide

To assert that many of the modern musical groups are sifting drugs through their bodies as if they were sieves would be exceedingly questionable if we did not have the statements of the musicians themselves. Those of us who live in the Nashville area are treated through the daily newspapers to a steady sheet of information of those country musicians who have to slip away for "chemical treatments." We used to know them as "dope-heads," but now they are "tired, and exhausted; and to keep their commitments to their loyal and devoted fans they have to rely on chemical help."

This is really beside the point. It misses the point completely. The "stars" openly sing about drugs, and encourage their use in some of their songs. Do we protest about these matters? Or are we content to live in blissful ignorance? Do not many of us really support such characters by purchasing their records, attending their performances, and listening to disc jockeys who delight in sending such noises over the airwaves?

Our society is staggering under the numbing effects of drugs. According to a report by the United States Department of Health and Human Services,

"... the rock scene is permeated by the values and practices of the drug culture."

We can say that our youth are permeated by the values and practices of the rock scene which is saturated with dope. Any part of a society built upon this type of decadent foundation is indeed without values. There are now 400,000 heroin addicts in the United States. Add to these the 4.5 million zombies who are blowing their minds with cocaine. In many areas, high school students are smoking, peddling, and getting zapped with marijuana.

While serving as a teacher in our local Junior High School, I saw evidence of drugs very frequently among the children. One stoned student fell out of his chair onto the

floor. Another eighth grade student brought a sack of marijuana into the classroom. This was confiscated and not one thing was done about the matter by the administrators. When I raised the roof, the county superintendent suggested that I was guilty of insubordination. I serve notice daily that I refuse to be subordinate to the imps of hell who encourage, foster, or tolerate the drug culture in any form.

When **The Beatles** burst upon the rock scene, drugs were popularized among teenagers. John Lennon was using drugs by the time he was seventeen, and later he declared that the road trips were orgies, and dope filled their rooms. Americans filled **The Beatles** coffers while they were helping to turn our children into dope-heads and on to death.

Time Magazine has informed us that rock and roll is drenched in drugs. Another has said:

"No matter what anyone tells you, drugs will always be a part of the rock scene."

Without rebellion, sex, and drugs, there positively could not be any successful rock culture. Those who are the performers realize this quite well. **The Jefferson Airplane/Starship** sings in "White Rabbit"

"One pill makes you larger, and the other makes you small."

The Rolling Stones sings a great tribute to drugs in "Sister Morphine." Another group belches forth in "Arrested for Driving Blind:"

"We broke open a case of proof 102.
You could say we was out of our minds.
But let me tell you,
We were flying while blind."

The Beatles have an album called "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club." **Time Magazine** relates that the album is drenched with drugs.

We have been reminded that fourteen different drugs were found in the corpse of Elvis

Presley, according to the forensic pathologist. Is this a successful formula for being "King"?

The list is rather lengthy of those who have wasted their lives away at an early age as they mixed rock and dope.

When one considers the songs presented by many of the modern singers, one is forced to the conclusion that the many stanzas and repeated choruses emphasize rebellion, sex, drugs, hopelessness, and suicide. **Black Sabbath** for example, sings:

"Hand of Doom,"
"Nativity in Black," and
"Eclectic Funeral."

Jackson Brown sings "Sleep's Dark and Silent Gate," while **AC/DC** blares forth with "Gimme A Bullet" and "Shoot To Thrill." "Don't Fear the Reaper" and "Good-bye Cruel World" are songs which encourage suicide. The same is true of "Death Can Be Fun" as sung by **The Kamikaze Kloners**. With suicide as the second major cause of death among young people, we certainly do not need encouragement from a gang of punk rock performers.

A local television panel recently discussed the epidemic rate of suicide in some areas. The panelists were alarmed, chagrined, puzzled, baffled, and uncertain why so many of our youth are choosing to self destruct. Even a tyro should be able to figure this out; yet the experts are shaking their heads in bewilderment! The answer is so simple that the "egg-heads" apparently cannot see it!

When your youngsters are exposed to the humanistic, atheistic, and evolutionary foolishness from their first day in school, they readily fall prey to the notion that there is no God, the Bible is a myth, the soul is a

Continued on page 3

What Is The New Unity Movement?

(NO. II)

The Current Efforts For Unity

The Unity Movement of the eighties among Christian Churches and some churches of Christ is an outgrowth of those earlier efforts led by James DeForest Murch and Claude F. Witty, and W. Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett. New faces have appeared as leaders and a new vocabulary has been developed; but in essence they are one and the same.



John Waddey

The first enunciation of this new unity theme, to my knowledge, was by Rubel Shelly in 1982. Late in that year he delivered a series of lessons to the Ashwood church in Nashville (of which he is minister) on the theme of "Un-denominational Christianity." On March 21, 1983, he delivered a lecture at a preachers' forum in Centerville, Tennessee, entitled "Is Unity Possible?" In this lesson, Bro. Shelly confessed that in his previous years as a preacher he had been thoroughly sectarian and was sorry. In a tract published shortly thereafter, brother Shelly affirmed that "There are sincere, knowledgeable, and devout Christians scattered among the various denominations . . ." Bert Thompson, *Non-Denominational Christianity: Is Unity Possible?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, Inc., 1984), p. 7. He declared that while he was only a Christian, he did not believe that we (churches of Christ) were the only Christians.² (Rubel Shelly, *I Just Want to Be a Christian* Nashville: 20th Century Christian, 1984, p. 132.)

He reasoned that there could be broader unity with more religious souls if we would accept the fact "that only such items as pertain directly to Ephesians 4:4-6 are of such a nature as to qualify as issues of faith" (i.e., doctrinal tests of fellowship). 3*ibid.* p. 91. At the Freed-Hardeman Lectureship in 1984, brother Shelly articulated his new views on fellowship. He reasoned that there were two levels of fellowship. Everyone born again was his brother, since they both had a common Father. They enjoyed Fellowship. This "Fellowship" continued no matter what future course might be taken. If the brother taught a practical error, on instrumental music (for example), we could withhold endorsement and fellowship. This, however, would not interfere with our Fellowship in Christ.⁴ (Highers, (F) (f)ellowship, p. 7.) Brother Shelly's message has been espoused and repeated by many brethren across the land. It has well been noted that they are confusing **brotherhood** which we do share with every soul that has obeyed that Lord's gospel, and **fellowship** which speaks of present acceptance and approval because of common faith and practice.

At the same lectureship, brother Shelly publicly stated that he did not believe that one had to understand that baptism is "for the remission of sins" for it to be valid; but he must know at least one of the several divine purposes for baptism. He stated that one who

was baptized to "obey God" has acted with adequate knowledge.

All the while up to this point, brother Shelly continued to affirm that he had not "moved away from any fundamental doctrine (he) had held since adolescence."⁵ (Shelly, *I Just Want, p. xx.*) He insisted that only his attitude toward others had changed.

August 7-9, 1984, the first Restoration Summit meeting between one hundred selected preachers of the Independent Christian Churches and churches of Christ was held at Joplin, MO., on the campus of Ozark Bible College. This meeting was the brain-child of Alan Cloyd, of the "Restoration Ministries" program of the Vultee Church in Nashville. Cloyd is a former minister of the Christian Church and had assisted several men in leaving it for the church of Christ. Collaborating with Cloyd was Don DeWelt, President of College Press and a prominent Christian Church author and preacher.

Many of the representatives chosen from our ranks were men of weak convictions and compromising spirit. The meeting has been praised to high heaven by those of the Christian Churches, but judged a fiasco by conservative brethren.

Brother Rubel Shelly played a significant role in the Joplin unity meeting. His book, *I Just Want To Be A Christian* has been widely and aggressively promoted by the Christian Church leaders.

The Joplin "Summit" was followed by similar national meetings in Tulsa at the "Soul Winning Workshop" in 1985; Pepperdine University in Malibu, California, July 7-9, 1985; and at Milligan College near Johnson City, Tennessee, April 29-30, 1986. Numerous "local unity" meetings also have been held.

One of the most significant statements from brother Shelly came during a Christian Church Encampment at Hillsboro, Ohio, August 14, 1985. Shelly said:

"I don't draw the line at the instrument. I don't think the Lord died over that. I am not going to make that a test of my fellowship with you in Christ . . ."

If I were in a congregation where the will of that congregation, the decision of the elders, was that the instrument was going to be used next week, I wouldn't mount the pulpit and condemn them and divide the church. I'd have a conscience question whether I could stay and worship with that church, but I would not stand up and say, "Let the faithful of God step across the line and stand with me."⁶ (Rubel Shelly, Hillsboro, Ohio, Encampment, August 14, 1985, tape recording; typescript copy of Question and Answer period.)

Brother Shelly has stirred more than usual interest with his bold statements and moves toward unity with the Christian Churches. This is because of his credentials and standing among us. He holds the Ph.D., formerly taught at two Christian Colleges, is Director of Publications for 20th Century Christian Publishing Foundation, is a prolific writer, a capable debater, minister for a large, flourishing congregation, and is a sought-after speaker. In days past he was a champion of the faith against just such

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

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Conversion

(NO. IV)

Read Acts 8:4-13. Conversion is the process or change that results in a person's becoming a Christian. All have sinned (Romans 3:10, 23). Although we are not born lost, we all have "gone astray" (Isaiah 53:6). To deny this is to make God a liar (I John 1:8-10). Thus all accountable people need to "turn" to God, or be "converted." Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Note with me how the Samaritans were converted.



Neil Myers

The City

Samaria was a noted city of the Old Testament period, built by Omri (I Kings 16:23-24). Filled with idols (I Kings 16:32), it was besieged by Ben-hadad, king of Syria (II Kings 17:24), and later was again besieged and carried into captivity by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria (II Kings 17:1-6). Some people from Babylon and other places were brought to Samaria (II Kings 17:24), and intermarried with Jews, so that the people of Samaria became a mixed people with whom the Jews had nothing to do (John 4:9). The Samaritans opposed the rebuilding of Jerusalem in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 4:9-10; Nehemiah 4:1-3). This resulted in a lasting division between the people. Jesus visited Samaria (John 4:4; Luke 17:11), and after his resurrection specified that the gospel was to be preached in Samaria (Acts 1:8).

The gospel was carried to Samaria by Philip. The name Philip means a "lover of horses." The first reference made to

Continued on page 3

“Stand, Therefore!”

Vance Havner was on target when he said, “It’s the vogue to be vague! It is a day of moral fogs and spiritual twilights. We are heading into another variation of the Dark Ages because we have compromised with what we should have confronted. Nothing is clear and the man who takes a positive, definite stand on anything is an out-of-date curiosity.”



R. W. Gray

A people once glued to the concept that any who propose to speak as a representative of Christianity have a divine obligation to speak as the oracles of God, we have fallen out of love with a “thus saith the Lord.” Fearful of answering questions modern man no longer asks we have joined forces with those who are infatuated with the aim of tickling the ears of their auditors, and have turned to fables (II Timothy 4:1-6).

Men of wisdom hate every false way while bewildered, unwise, unhappy and non-committed individuals ignore the evils of the land that demand moral and spiritual courage to combat. They find it easier to close ranks with the agnostics who cry, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). Assuming the enemies of the cross know “some new thing” many have infiltrated enemy lines; not to spy out the weaknesses thereof, but to learn the “how” of compromise without detection. They return to deliver a message so ambiguous they find it necessary to assure us again and again that they are yet with us. They are meeting man’s “felt needs,” they tell us, and have relegated the “out of date doctrines of the New Testament” to the back burner.

Excuses and pretexts galore are available to those who would bail out when the going gets rough: (1) “Some who preach are abnoxious witch hunters who have discouraged the very elect.” (2) “Division has resulted when faithful soldiers filled the gap, insisting that the way of the Lord is right.” (3) “Somewhere we lost our way as evidenced by the splinter groups within our (?) movement.” (4) “Negative preaching -- the kind that attacks error -- is not well received, and has created guilt feelings that must be dispelled by empty platitudes.” (5) “It is a reversal of the clock to speak on the old hackneyed subjects used by the pioneers.” (6) “The churches that are growing are getting into the mainstream of modern life.” (7) “If we do not water down the message and place a doctorate on the messenger’s marquee we will cease to exist.”

The abandonment of the front lines could be excused by numerous cliches in addition to the list in the foregoing. Oh yes, Satan knows how to turn a phrase. Each one sounds plausible to those seeking the easy way out. The challenge to fight the good fight of faith has lost it’s appeal for the man whose intestinal fortitude is suffering, who quakes at the sound of the critic’s voice, and who wishes to be “at east in Zion” (Amos 6:1-5).

The cause of our Lord is suffering in the hands of it’s friends. We are caught up in the spirit of this age, and if we fail to wake before we die, will perish with it (Colossians 3:1-5). We do not have to be a “pain” to make

the message “plain.” Neither must we coo as a silly dove in order to speak the truth in love. How desperately we need to stand in the way and see, asking once more for the old paths. When we walk again therein we will find the solutions we seek, and our souls will enjoy that seemingly illusive rest and peace (Jeremiah 6:16).

It is true that a clarion call for repentance is viewed as a voice crying in the wilderness. If we insist upon preaching the word “out of season” some will say we are mad. But far too much is at stake to do otherwise. Satan has had the offensive. It’s past time for a counter-attack. While the foe is formidable

we can do all things through the strength of Christ (Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 1:19).

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, . . . and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; . . . and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always . . . that we may speak boldly, as we ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20).

—Rt. 3, Box 306, Trenton, GA 30110

Media Ethics And Modern Music

Continued from page 1

legend, and future life beyond the grave is a scientific impossibility. With this set of ingrained ideas, the young person faces a stern and demanding world which subjects one to tremendous pressures. These pressures lead to undue stress, which in turn can result in severe despondency and ultimately to despair. When a ‘blob of nothingness’ or ‘mere protoplasm’ listens for hours to the siren songs of suicide as belted out by ‘great heroes’ (?), it is quite simple to “Shoot To Thrill.” When the deed has been finished, the social welfare and mental health experts look puzzled, and wonder: “Why?”

We applaud the efforts of some groups to counteract the filth that is being sold to the children of America. The Associated Press carried an article headed, “Tipper Gore Asks Rock Music Cleanup.” Mrs. Gore and other ladies are beginning to see the deleterious effects of the lurid lyrics of some of our modern music. M. Lee Smith of *The Nashville Banner* wrote on June 27, 1985:

“More dirty song lyrics -- They’re not just titillating, they’re vile.”

In a *Nashville Banner* story of July 21, 1985, reporter Pat Embry wrote about the . . . raunchy lyrics, album covers and videos associated with what is known as rock ‘n roll music.”

In her July 11, 1985, column in the *Banner*, Ann Landers responded to a letter about the song “Murder By Numbers” as follows:

“The lyrics to *Murder By Numbers* are indeed frightening. I agree with you that some of the lyrics are sexually provocative. I agree this is pretty trashy stuff.”

Indeed, when one begins to research the field of modern music, an enormous amount of trash will be found, and righteous people will surely reject such rotten offerings, and, instead, will choose to follow the Good Shepherd who pronounces a blessing upon all those who are pure in heart both now and forever.

[Editor’s Note: The booklet from which this is quoted by permission may be ordered from the author].

—184 Hillview, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122.

Conversion

Continued from page 2

him is in Acts 6 when he was selected as one of the seven to serve tables. The last reference to Philip is in Acts 21:8-9, where we learn he was living in Caesarea, was known as an evangelist, and had four virgin daughters which prophesied.

The Preacher

When a persecution had arisen against the infant church in Jerusalem, Philip, among others, had to flee. His duties in Jerusalem had been completed. You will note he was not (as denominations say) either an “ordained” minister, or a “licensed” preacher; nor was he “set apart” by some

ecclesiastical body as an evangelist. Philip had received miraculous gifts through the laying on of the apostles’ hands (Acts 6:6). He could do -- and did work -- miracles, but could not pass such power or this gift on to others. They WERE CONFERRED (past tense on purpose!) by the laying on of “the apostles’ hands” (Acts 8:18). Thus when all the apostles died, and all died on whom the apostles’ previously had laid their hands, miracles ceased!

(More to follow).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

What Is The New Unity Movement?

Continued from page 2

problems as he now defends. While lesser men might be heard as sounding brass and clanging symbols, many are listening to his new message.

There is the very real possibility that brother Shelly will accomplish that which others failed to do. This is more likely, since a generation of preachers and elders has grown up without proper indoctrination in the fundamentals of

the faith. Doctrinal error, and compromise, do not appear to be very bad to such men. Congregations with that kind of leadership are extremely vulnerable to the smooth and fair words of false teachers (Romans 16:18).

(More to follow).

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

That Which You Rely Upon

It is often the case of sinners that the very things they rely upon contribute to their ruin. When the wicked and ruthless nation of Assyria had exhausted the patience and longsuffering of God, and their overthrow had been prophesied by the prophet Nahum, the Assyrians possibly experienced this very thing.



Demar Elam

Assyria's capital city, Nineveh, was protected on its west by the river Tigris. Historians tell us that the Assyrians had built moats completely surrounding the city and that by properly channeling the water they could surround the entire city with water to protect it from the enemy. According to Fausset, "In the earlier capture of Nineveh by Arbaces the Mede and Belsis the Babylonian, Diodorus Siculus states that there was an old prophecy, that it should not be taken till the river became its enemy; so in the third year of the siege, the river, by a flood, broke down the walls twenty furlongs, and the King thereupon burnt himself and his palace and all his concubines and wealth together; and the enemy entered by the breach in the wall." There is a strong probability that Nahum 1:8 is metaphorical and describes the consuming of Assyria by Babylon. "In Isaiah 8:7-8, God described Assyria as a flood that would flow over Judah. Now Babylon is to be the flood that will flow over Assyria. God will consume Nineveh in his wrath, even as a flood overruns and makes desolate everything in its path." However, if Fausset's account indeed be true, we have an excellent example: the very thing the Assyrians relied upon to protect them contributed to their ultimate defeat.

Multiplied millions of times this principle is repeated in life. Some of the things man relies so heavily on for his successes, are the things that ultimately bring about his failures.

Man depends upon his **OWN WISDOM!** So often, man is too smart for his own good. Paul said, "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools" (Romans 1:22). **WEALTH** is another thing that man depends upon for his success and often wealth itself causes the man to falter in his life and fail. Timothy was told "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:9-10).

PHYSICAL STRENGTH or great **PHYSICAL CONDITIONING** gives many a false security regarding health or longevity. Paul said, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things . . ." (I Timothy 4:8).

Relying upon **A FRIEND** to an inordinate degree is not wise. Man often puts all of his trust in another human being only to be betrayed and disappointed. The Psalmist wrote "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I

trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Psalms 41:9).

How quickly the things or persons we rely upon can contribute to our ruin, or even to our demise. What or whom do you rely upon?

There is only one safe and certain reliance, and that is God. "For therefore we both labour

and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (I Timothy 4:10).

TRUST and **RELY** IN God, and be assured that he will not let your reliance be in vain. —185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

Are You Standing For The Truth?

Trenton McCluskey

In Acts 7:58 the Bible introduces a young man named Saul: "And . . . the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." The context in which this verse appears is just after Stephen preached. During his powerful discourse, Stephen uses strong and piercing words: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it" (Acts 7:51-53). The audience then responds. The response is not in an open and receptive way. The hearers attack the one who preached the truth to them. This truth was given for a purpose.

All is not in vain. Stephen remained faithful and true, not only in the words he spoke, but also in his conduct. Stephen did not get distracted and have his eyes filled with revenge and hatred. Verse 55 tells us Stephen looked up into heaven: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). Notice the Bible says, "looked up **STEDFASTLY** into heaven."

It is obvious to the most casual student that Stephen did not compromise. Stephen had a purpose. Stephen contended for the faith! Do you? Jude admonishes: "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).

Saul was present at this great event. Saul at that time would zealously participate in such persecution: "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3). Yet, later he would be changed or converted. Saul after conversion is known as Paul. That powerful contender for the faith would pen some 13 (possibly 14) epistles. He is one who would be imprisoned, stoned, shipwrecked, and would withstand false teachers in Athens. In Acts 17 Paul delivered a blistering truth to the idolaters: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

I ask you, in review of this brief glimpse at Paul and Stephen, Are you standing for truth? Can you, like Paul, say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21)? —103 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

If You Have Time To Talk About Jesus, I Have Time To Listen

One of the greatest weaknesses with many in the church is that they have become so pre-occupied with "incidentals" that they forget we are saved to save. Some become so bogged down in doing "church work" that they lose sight of our primary purpose — saving the lost (Luke 19:10).

It is so easy to do "things," yet never accomplish any real results. Someone told of a motorist in Minnesota who drove into a service station and asked for ten gallons of gasoline. Immediately three station attendants sprang into action. One began wiping the windshield; another proceeded to check the air pressure in the tires; the third replenished the water in the radiator. When they were through, the motorist paid for the gasoline, and drove off.

A few minutes later, however, he returned with a worried look on his face.



Edsel Burlison

"Did any of you put gas in my car?" he asked. The three attendants consulted among themselves . . . and then admitted very meekly that nobody had.

But not everybody gets "bogged down" with things. Some have good intentions, but, somehow, just never seem to find the "convenient" time. Others fail to see the numerous doors of opportunity opened to them almost every day. Such ignore the principle of the warning to Ezekiel: "If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezekiel 33:8).

Several years ago a preacher went into a bootblack parlor in St. Louis. He asked the boy who was cleaning his shoes "Are you a Christian?"

"I've been here for several months," he said, "and you're the first person to speak to me that way."

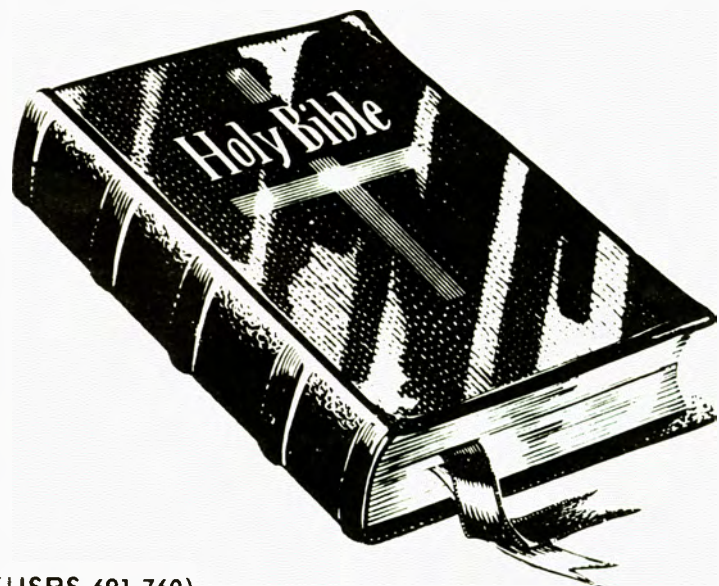
"Well," the preacher responded, "I'd like to talk to you about the Lord Jesus Christ."

His reply was one that should stir the heart of every Christian: "Mister, if you've got time to talk about Jesus, I've got time to listen."

In that busy shoe-shine parlor, he told the boy about Jesus Christ; and the bootblack listened with rapt attention.

Take time today to talk about Jesus!

—420 7th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.



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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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NUMBER 25

The "Lakeside" Church of Christ

Trent McCluskey

It is no new concept. Many see no conflict between this practice and what they refer to as the 'traditional' worship. Let us first agree that God demands a specific worship. We learn, "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Genesis 4:4-7). Cain's worship was unacceptable to God.

In Leviticus 10:1-2 we learn of worship which was NOT commanded being offered. "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

In John 4:24 we see characteristics of worship which today is to be offered. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

While I am introducing the "Lakeside" Church of Christ, be it clearly known that this is not the name of a local congregation. I intend to Biblically show some errors being embraced, seemingly without challenge, by a growing number of Christians.

A local church is to grow and develop to the point of having elders. While there are congregations which do not have elders, they are, hopefully, growing toward that goal. The elders are to oversee or shepherd the flock (John 10:1-18; Acts 20:28). Elders are to be men who have been selected in accordance with the qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-8.

Likewise, the local church is to have deacons who are qualified in accordance with scripture. From a mere glance, we now see

the Bible is telling us the organization of the church.

The word of God also teaches us that we are to assemble upon the first day of the week.

"Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

In the Old Testament David wrote: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1).

God's people are to be together, offering worship in a specified way, on a day which is specified in scripture!

During the worship which is offered to God, there is to be the singing of praises to his name.

"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30).

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (James 5:13).

"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).

We also are able to see a church that continued in prayer (Acts 2:42; 4:23-30).

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25).

Preaching and teaching was also a part of the worship of the New Testament church.

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house" (Acts 20:20).

Giving of their prosperity was likewise a part of the New Testament worship.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:1-2).

They "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (Acts 2:45).

'Breaking bread' was also a part of the worship in the New Testament church. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7; also I Corinthians 11:17-34).

The local church is to worship on a specified day; it must be organized as is specified in scripture; specified items of worship must be observed in it; and it must function under the oversight, or rule, of qualified elders (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

There are some in the church of Christ who are failing to do this. An apathetic attitude is storming the church. There are a few who openly forsake assembling with the whole church, and meet on the campground, river, or LAKESIDE, and some of them are not performing the specified items of worship. If all these items are truly being cared for, then where do the given funds go? What time is the service? In such worship (?) is there teaching of the Bible?

Did the Lord Jesus die for men to place a communion tray on a boat dock and take out 2 minutes to "worship" (?) while they primarily seek pleasure? Did Jesus die for elderships to ignore this blatant plague which openly encourages immodesty and immorality, as well as forsaking the services of the local church? The world has made it publicly apparent as to how the world dresses for such outings. I am made to

Continued On Page 4



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—Acts 26:35

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Is Yours A Borrowed Faith?

When Herod heard that the wise men had seen the star in the east and had come to worship the one born King of the Jews, he was greatly troubled. One would think he would have begun a personal search for the King. But, after a few questions to the chief priests and scribes, learning that the prophets had said "in Bethlehem," he was content to let someone else do his searching for him.



Edsel Burleson

"Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also" (Matthew 2:7-8). He was satisfied to "borrow" his faith from someone else.

Herod did not want to appear to be disinterested, because all Jerusalem had been aroused. Also, his misunderstanding the nature of the kingdom of Christ caused Herod to fear for his position of authority. But, he still wanted someone else to "find Jesus" for him.

So many folk are content with a "borrowed" faith. NO real, personal faith has been developed. But because a father or mother, with deep convictions based on truth, devote themselves to conscientious service to God, a son or daughter will often "go along." Or, a husband or wife manifesting an abiding faith will sometimes have a companion who "borrows" just enough

Continued On Page 4

What Is The New Unity Movement? Signs Of Growing Unity And Fellowship

(No. III)

At a preacher's encampment in Hillsboro, Ohio, on August 14, 1985, it was announced that great progress was being made toward unity and fellowship between churches of Christ and Independent Christian Churches. Don DeWalt related the following examples of unity already in progress:

1. Members of Christian Churches are now heavily involved in the World Bible School, directed by Ruel Lemmons.

2. Preachers of the Christian Churches are writing for Ruel Lemmons' new journal, *Image*.

3. That the Christian Church Benevolent Society, International Disaster Emergency Service, Inc., is cooperating with the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in the Ethiopian Famine Relief Program.

4. Both Rubel Shelby and DeWalt called for joint missionary efforts with the question of instrumental music left unresolved.

5. DeWalt's unity paper, *One Body*, is being mailed to every church of Christ and Christian Church in the land without charge. It carries articles by men of both groups promoting unity. It has carried numerous articles promoting their right to use instrumental music in worship. (Don DeWalt, Hillsboro, Ohio, Encampment, August 14, 1985 tape recording, typescript copy of Question and Answer period.)

6. Numerous congregations have engaged in fellowship activities such as joint worship services.

7. From another source we learn that Marvin Phillips, preacher of the Garnett Road Church of Christ in Tulsa, has been appointed an Adjunct Professor at Kentucky Christian College, a school of the Christian Churches. He will be teaching in the area of evangelism. His appointment is said to "be a demonstration of unity at the practical level." (2L. Palmer Young, President of Kentucky Christian College, promotional letter April 1986.)

8. "A group of Disciples (of Christ), Church of Christ, and Independent (Christian) churchmen have met twice to consider some form of retreat for Oklahoma Churchmen of all these fellowships." (3Victor Knowles, editor, *One Body*, (Winter, 1985), p. 29.)

9. One preacher of the church of Christ wrote: "We had a joint participation in a Vacation Bible School" with the Christian Church. He is "going to work toward an annual co-hosting of the V.B.S." He continues, "I believe the V.B.S. may be the best place of all to begin practicing fellowship. There are no prejudices among our little ones..." (4Ibid.)

10. A former missionary to Brazil writes that while there they "promoted... an annual conference of Christian workers made up from the Churches of Christ, Christian



John Waddey

Churches (Independent), and some from the Disciples of Christ." They also published a magazine for unity (5Ibid.)

11. From Korea we are told, "There was a merger of instrumental and non-instrumental Churches of Christ . . . in 1983. There was (sic) no actual changes in the local churches, instrumental churches continued to use instruments . . . We just decided to have one convention, one summer camp, one Sunday School lesson, and eventually one Bible College," (6Ibid., Winter 1985, p. 11.)

12. In Zambia a push is presently underway to unite churches of Christ and Christian Churches on a compromise basis (7Personal interview with Rod Rutherford, former missionary to Zambia.)

13. Just recently (September, 1986), I heard that a large contingent left the University Church of Christ in Denver along with an associate minister, and went to a Christian church.

14. Larry James, minister of the Richardson East Church in Richardson, Texas, and a writer for the Herald of Truth, wrote that after attending a local unity meeting, "I realized our history of division over the issue of instrumental music is truly ridiculous . . . Implicit in our dialog (sic) was the realization that our division in the past has been over an issue of opinion, not revelation. From my perspective in a non-instrumental congregation, it seems that I stand in the camp of the weaker brethren. I was made glad last week at the generosity and maturity of my stronger brothers from the Independent Christian Churches." (8Larry James, Care bulletin of the Richardson East Church of Christ, (Richardson, TX, Vol. V, April 24, 1985, No. 16), p. 1.)

15. On January 12, 1986, Jon Jones, pulpit minister of the Richland Hills Church of Christ in Ft. Worth, spoke to the Southwest Christian Church. The same sermon was delivered to his home congregation. On the question of why we object to instrumental music he said:

. . . you understand that the instrument for many people in the non-instrumental church is something that we've never had --we've had very strong feelings about because of the troubles that go back a hundred years nearly; and because of that built-in resistance that we have, we can't use it. . . . we would not consider using it. Uh, because it would, it would break the hearts and the spirits of so many of our people who have felt so strongly about it for so very long.

We have had to begin with a very big inferiority complex for a long time that goes back to the division in the restoration movement. Uh, when the division occurred, and, uh, whether we like to admit it or not, nearly all of us in the restoration movement have been very careful to say now we didn't have anything to do with the Civil War . . . That's not what we divided over, we divided over something else. But it's very interesting that in our division --uh, you retained, the instrumental congregations retained major strength in the north and

Continued On Page 4

The Church Of Christ--What Is It Like?

Jesus Christ did not come into the world to establish a religio-political government (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17). Thus, the Lord put a difference between the things of God and the things of men. "My kingdom is not of this world," declared Jesus (John 18:36). The boundaries of the Lord's kingdom are truth, righteousness, purity, and holiness.



W. A. Holley

The Lord's church is described by

various figures or symbols so that we may have the proper concept of its divine nature. Some examples are: "Body of Christ" (I Corinthians 12:13, 20, 27); "My kingdom" (Luke 22:30); "The church" (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25); "The church of God" -- "The churches of Christ" (Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16); "A spiritual house," "a holy nation" (I Peter 2:5,9); "The house of God" (I Timothy 3:14-15). Never is the church of Christ (in the Bible) referred to as a material building, a building made of brick, or stone, or marble, or wood. In its early days the church assembled in the private homes of its members (Romans 16:5; I Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 2). Hundreds of years passed before the church ever owned any real estate.

The Lord's church is like a "family." One's "house" is one's "family" (Joshua 24:15; Hebrews 11:7). The Lord's house is his family, his church. We quote: "... in the house of God, which is the church of the living God..." (I Timothy 3:15).

How does one become a member of the Lord's church or family? It is through the "new birth." It is impossible to enter it in any other way (John 3:3,5). What is involved in the "new birth"? Well, it is necessary for one to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 3:16), to repent of all sin (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus' name before men (Matthew 10:32-33), and to be baptized in Jesus' name for remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4). The NEW BIRTH, as mentioned in John 3:3-5, is not a birth wrought miraculously by the Holy Spirit, as is affirmed by some. Why do denominational preachers work so diligently to get rid of baptism as taught in John 3:5? The answer is, because of their denominational prejudice!

If the Holy Spirit works miraculously, separate and apart from the word of God, why are not all men saved -- since God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35)? Who will answer??

The wonderful blessings of the church or kingdom are of a SPIRITUAL nature. One may never become a member of the Lord's church, yet if one is industrious, honorable and upright, one may enjoy the same MATERIAL blessings which the most devout child of God enjoys (Matthew 5:45). Wicked men may materially prosper, but their wealth cannot sustain them in the hour of death and in the world to come (Psalms 37:1-3, 6-8, 14-16, 23-28; 49:6-10, 16-18; 73:3-25).

But for the Christian there is "the peace of God which passeth all under-

standing" (Philippians 4:7). God hath "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:3). To be in Christ is to be in his spiritual body, the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18-24; II Corinthians 1:20). In Christ we have "salvation" or "remission of sins" (II Timothy 2:10; Acts 2:38; Colossians 1:13-14; Ephesians 1:7).

Thus, the church is composed of men and women -- but not of just any kind. All who are in the Lord's church or kingdom have been born again; they have been called out of the world; they have become new creatures in Christ (Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:3, 13, 20, 27; John 3:3, 5; II Corinthians 5:17). All such can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." (Galatians 2:20). It is because of Paul's special relationship with Christ that he could say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

The church of Christ is a spiritual institution; it was not built for the natural man. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5). Jesus founded the

church for the spirit of man, that part of man that lives forever (Matthew 10:28; 16:26). Hence, the Lord's church shall not pass away with the death of our bodies (Luke 16:19-31). The gates of hell can never destroy it (Daniel 2:44; Matthew 16:18-19). Its divine purpose is to prepare man to live with God forever.

All civic organizations, all lodges, all human institutions, however great and wonderful they may be, can never take the place of the church. Death diminishes the membership of all human institutions, but not so with the church of the Lord. Note this fact: A Christian is just as much a member of the church after his death, as he was before he died (Ephesians 3:15; Cf. 1:10).

Human institutions (human churches, et al.,) may support, and comfort, and feed one's ego while he lives on earth, but beyond the grave they cannot go.

Why not become a Christian today? It is not a difficult matter. Hear God's word, believe it, obey it, live faithfully the Christian life unto death, and heaven shall be your eternal home. Do it today!

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Is Barking Authorized In Our Singing?

Tim Kidwell

Suppose this Sunday when you attend worship service the song leader makes this announcement, "Today, while we sing, everyone in this section will bark like a dog; everyone here will moo like a cow; you people over there will oink like a pig; and you people cackle like a chicken. The rest of you, sing the words."

What do you think your reaction would be? You would probably become upset and ask, "By what authority may we do this?" "Unscriptural!" -- I can hear the cry loud and clear. Yet, some of these same people will allow, without hesitation, other unauthorized sounds to be used in our singing.

A singing group that is presently being used at lectureships, youth rallies, and other special gatherings, emphasizes the fact that they sing only in an a cappella style. But while some of the group members sing, other members imitate the sounds of drums, and horns. This is done so well that if you closed your eyes you would think you were hearing a band. They even refer to themselves as a "vocal band."

How absurd! We argue correctly, using God's word, that instrumental music in worship is wrong; but then some turn right around and imitate the sound we say is wrong.

This particular group is being used often, in many places. They are popular. But, will you affirm that any religious act is scriptural because it is popular? To be scriptural, all actions must be authorized by the authority of Christ (Colossians 3:17).

Paul taught that, as we sing, we must be "speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19). What words are those "speaking" who are imitating a drum? or a horn?

Also, Paul said we should be "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16). What "teaching" and "admonishing" is being related by those imitating drums? and horns?

I hear the argument, "We should make a joyful noise to the Lord" (Psalms 100:1). I agree: but the New Testament teaches us that the "noise" to be made is that of SINGING words which teach, admonish and speak a message.

It is not that I don't like the sounds of drums, or horns; nor do I even think that they are immoral. Many things are not immoral -- but can be unscriptural. Eve's eating fruit was not immoral; but eating unauthorized fruit was wrong.

I like ice cream. But I can't put it on the table to be served as part of the Lord's supper. We have been told what to use for the Lord's supper. We have been told how to sing. To do anything else is sinful.

With practice we could sound good barking, mooing, oinking and cackling. But it would be wrong -- just as wrong as imitating horns and drums.

We should have seen this coming. Some congregations and singing groups have been HUMMING in songs of worship for years. HUMMING may sound pretty, but it is NOT AUTHORIZED -- no more than instruments, the sound of instruments, or barking sounds.

We are commanded to "sing," not necessarily well; just "sing." (If we had to sing WELL that would leave me and a lot of others out)! We are told what makes singing acceptable. Some are changing God's rules of acceptable singing. They are wrong. If we do not speak out, we are wrong.

—P.O. Box 192, Mountain Home, AR 72653.



Welcome Visitors!!

What Is The New Unity Movement Signs of Growing Unity And Fellowship

Continued From Page 2

the non-instrumental congregations retained major strength in the south. And that is true, and we, uh, we lost the war! That's what it amounts to! And the instrumentals won the war! . . . these things left us with an incredible inferiority complex and . . . we tended to bundle up all of our frustrations and to, uh, and then to zero in on what we considered to be a major issue in terms of the instrument. (9) Jon Jones, sermon to the Southwest Christian Church (Ft. Worth, TX, January 12, 1986, typescript of tape recording).

16. DeWalt's College Press offered to give a free copy of Leroy Garrett's \$24 book, **The Stone-Campbell Movement**, which effectively rewrites the history of our movement to conform with the "Unity in Diversity" philosophy, to any minister of the

church of Christ. Garrett delights to remind his readers "that winds of change are blowing," and cites Ruel Lemmons' new journal, **Image**, and Rubel Shelly's book, **I Just Want To Be A Christian**. He remembers with approval when a **Mission** magazine writer once called the church of Christ "a full-blown denomination." (10) Leroy Garrett, **A Special Message From the Author**, distributed with complimentary copies of his book. n.d., p. 2.)

17. Garrett also tells of a gathering of "Changing" churches of Christ hosted by the Central Church of Christ in Irving, Texas, in 1985. They now identify themselves as an ecumenical fellowship. (11) *Ibid.*

No longer are we discussing the theoretical question of should we reunite with the Christian Churches who continue to use the instruments of music in worship and

missionary organizations through which to do their work. Powerful forces are diligently at work to impose a state of unity, whether we like it or not. It is not now a scriptural discussion of what God demands, but what some are determined to have at any cost. Brethren, be warned, "Let no man deceive you with empty words" (Ephesians 5:6).

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

Is Yours A Borrowed Faith?

Continued From Page 2

faith to get him-her to the church building. Too many professed Christians "wave" at the Master from a distance rather than enlist and march in the parade.

Vance Havner once wrote: "To some, Christianity is an argument. To many, it is a performance. To too few, it is an experience. It is possible to be a walking encyclopedia of Bible knowledge and know all the answers without knowing Him who is the Answer. It is possible to work in a travel office, sell tickets, hand out posters, and talk glibly of foreign lands without ever leaving the old home town."

We must never forget that our accounting to God will be personal and individual. Regardless of the faithfulness of parents, companions, relatives, or dearest friends, I will answer to God for myself. I must "find Jesus" for myself. This kind of faith comes through hearing and accepting the word of God (Romans 10:17). Then will one be able to say with the apostle Paul, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Timothy 1:12).
—420 7th Street S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

The "Lakeside" Church Of Christ

Continued From Page 1

wonder: How do Christians (?) dress for such events? Is this pleasing to our Lord? How many souls are being saved as a result of this 'work'? When our Lord returns will your worship be "Lakeside," or Bible wide? Are the shepherds searching for you? Or, are you in subjection to the elders? To be in subjection to their rule, one must be with the flock! Perhaps some think that they are "floating" members, while actually they are SINKING at the lakeside!

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

—103 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

Conversion

(No. V)

Read about the conversion of the Samaritans in Acts 8:4-13. In our last article we noted the people, and the preacher. The Samaritans were a mixed race with whom Jewish people had "no dealings" (John 4:9). The preacher was Philip, one of the seven in the Jerusalem church selected to serve tables (Acts 6). Later he became known as an evangelist (Acts 21:8-9).



Neil Myers

Philip's Preaching

The preaching of Philip was the good news of Christ. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8:4-5). To preach "Christ" is to preach the "word" of Christ (v. 4). There were those who "preached Moses" (Acts 15:21); that is, they preached the word given through Moses. Paul said he "preached Christ crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2), which is part of "the gospel" of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

But note what is involved in "preaching Christ" to people: -- "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus

Christ, they were baptized both men and women" (Acts 8:12). So Philip preached about (1) the church (or kingdom), (2) the name of Christ, and (3) baptism. Yet the record says he "preached Christ unto them" (verse 5).

Hearers Believed and Obeyed

Philip's preaching lead people to "believe" in Jesus. This is the result when the word is planted into honest and good hearts (Luke 8:11). You will note his preaching was about "the kingdom of God." The "kingdom" is the church; for Jesus used these terms interchangeably (Matthew 16:18; note also Ephesians 5:5; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9). Those who were in the church at Colosse were in the "kingdom" (Colossians 1:13-14). These verses speak of the "kingdom" as existing then, and of people as being members or citizens of such. The "kingdom" is the "church" (Matthew 16:18-19).

Philip's preaching led men and women -- not infants -- to be baptized, because this is what Jesus said people must do to be saved or to be converted (Mark 16:16; John 3:3-5).

What did their believing in Jesus and being baptized make of these people? Answer: "Christians" only, and only "Christians" -- not Mormons, Lutherans, etc., etc. What will it make of you if you believe in Jesus and are baptized in his name for the remission of sins? Answer: Whatever it made of them. That will be enough!

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

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6th Avenue Church Of Christ

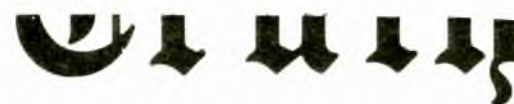
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Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 1987

NUMBER 26

The Hardening Of Pharoah's Heart

John L. Wheeler

To the Romans, Paul said: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared through all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" (Romans 9:15-19).

The context deals with Paul's answer to the Jews who thought that God would be unfair to cut them off and give salvation to the Gentiles. He has shown that the selection of Israel in the first place was entirely up to the will of God. Not all the seed of Abraham was chosen. If God had the right to choose them in the first place, did not he have the right to cut them off, especially since they were chosen without condition, and they were cut off because of their unbelief?

He goes further in his argument concerning the reasons for their rejection, citing Pharoah as an example. God told Pharoah, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?" (Exodus 9:16-17). God will harden whom he will (Romans 9:18). It is clear that God hardened the heart of Pharoah. At the same time, we see that Pharoah exalted himself against God and his people.

You remember that Moses had been sent back into Egypt to lead God's people out of Egyptian bondage. When God first called Moses at the burning bush, he said, "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand" (Exodus 3:19). Later, he said, "And I will harden Pharoah's

heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 7:3). Then after Aaron's rod had been turned to a serpent and had swallowed the serpents of the magicians, he hardened Pharoah's heart (Exodus 7:13). Several times the record says that God hardened the heart of Pharoah.

But we also read several times that Pharoah hardened his own heart. "But when Pharoah saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said" (Exodus 8:15). Then, "And Pharoah hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go" (Exodus 8:32). The Bible says that God hardened the heart of Pharoah; it says also that Pharoah hardened his own heart. Now, which is true? The fact is: both are true. God hardened the heart of Pharoah; Pharoah hardened his own heart. You see, God never took away Pharoah's ability to choose. He did not take away the will of Pharoah.

As we look at the facts in the case, we see the explanation of the hardening of Pharoah's heart. Here was the ruler of the greatest nation on earth at the time. He had some two-and-one-half million -- or maybe double that many -- slaves who were Israelites. They were very profitable in the building scheme of Pharoah. Further, it would be a political liability to let them go, for they might join his enemies. Three things were foremost in the mind of Pharoah regarding Israel; power, profit, and pride. There is no way that he would part with these slaves by his own choice. He had no mercy, nor love for mankind. He was hard and brutal, and was concerned only with his own position in the world. How would it look to other nations if he just agreed to let this multitude of slaves go free? The very demand of God that he let them go was contrary to his own best interest as he saw it. It was by and with this demand that GOD hardened his heart.

When Pharoah heard God's demand to let the people of Israel go free, he made his choice. So HE hardened his own heart. He still

had his own will, and he used it. It was not until he saw resistance as hopeless that he agreed to let them go. Even agreed to let them go. Even then, he changed his mind, and tried to bring them back.

God still hardens men's hearts today in the same way. Some so love the world and its pleasures that any demand to give them up results in the hardening of the heart. God does it by making the demand. Men harden their own hearts by rejecting God's will -- just as the Pharoah did, and now as the Jews have done.

—706 W. Georgia, Vivian, La. 71082.

We Can Not Live By Success Alone

J. H. Jowett said: "We live by disappointment as well as by attainment. The cloudless skies make a Sahara. It is the strangely-mingled weather with its dullness and cold, searching, mists and rain which makes our hillsides and valleys green with pleasant land. So in life, we cannot live by success alone. Success alone would make us hard and dry."

The following information appeared in the "20th Century Christian" several years ago. When Abraham Lincoln was a young man, he ran for the Legislature in Illinois and was badly swamped.

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Edsel Burleson



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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False Optimism

"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Isaiah 56:12).

Doesn't this sound like some people today? Don't you know people who seem to get their greatest pleasure from having a "good time?" Our culture has caused our vocabulary to be stretched to include such words as "happy hour." "Party" once was something one HAD; now it is something one DOES!

The context of Isaiah 56:12 indicates the prophet was speaking to people who were just like so many today. They were wilfully ignorant (II Peter 3:5, K.J.V.) of what lay ahead of them. Just as the people of Noah's day (Matthew 24:37-39), they were eating, drinking, and partying up to the time of their destruction. God's warnings against them were clear; yet it never entered their mind that the world would ever be any different than it was. They felt it could only be better.

Is this not the reason men today do not take spiritual matters seriously? Is this why life (to some) is an endless series of "good" (?) times? Even God's children often forget that life is more than just food and drink? (Matthew 6:25).

Peter reminds us of those who perished in the flood. They failed to heed the warning of Noah because they felt that life would never be any different. ". . . for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Yet, this was not true; for the day came that God



Ancil Jenkins

Continued On Page 4

What Is The New Unity Movement? Problems That Prohibit Fellowship

(No. IV)

One of the principal promoters of our fellowshipping the Christian Church is Alan Cloyd, director of "Restoration Ministries," which exists to win denominational preachers to the Lord's cause. Brother Cloyd was for many years a minister among the Independent Christian Churches before coming to us. Surely he has the inside story on the beliefs and practices of those churches. Remember, too, that he was the driving force behind the first Restoration Summit meeting. He has identified twelve common problematic differences between independent Christian churches and (institutional) churches of Christ. From him we quote:



John Waddey

*NOTE: It would be unfair and untrue to suggest that all independent Christian Churches engage in all of these problematic areas. However, in my experience, all of them are involved in some of the areas mentioned. It should be further noted that these areas are listed at random.

1. Church "Boards"

The church "board . . . is composed of elders and deacons. Frequently, "trustees" and other unauthorized "officers" will sit on the "board." Deacons always outnumber elders, consequently their "vote" can outweigh that of the elders. Happily, I perceive there is a move away from this system. Presently, however the "board" system remains normative.

2. Voting Memberships

After the "board" renders a decision, it is frequently presented to the congregation for ratification. Many congregations embrace this democratic structure within "congregational by-laws." It should be understood that the "church board" arrangement and the practice of membership voting are inseparably linked.

3. "Evangelistic Associations"

While independent Christian Churches reject the "United Christian Missionary Society" of the Disciples of Christ, they frequently practice essentially the same concept through smaller local "associations." These local efforts are composed of men from a number of congregations. They "plant" new churches not overseen by any one eldership. This leaves the preacher in a pastoral role where he answers to no one save the association board.

4. Women's Role

Women preachers amongst Independent Christian Churches are virtually unheard of, though there are a few. I have heard of 2 or 3, though I personally do not know any of them. What is

normative is the use of women who lead singing, direct choirs, teach in mixed classes (often with elders as students). Women leading in public prayer is also very common.

5. Holy Spirit

Views on this subject vary widely. Increasingly, a direct-operation sentiment is being espoused with little or no opposition from conservative leaders, journals, etc.

6. Fellowshipping Denominations

I am personally wholly in favor of going anywhere to preach the truth. When such opportunities present themselves, I take advantage of them. However, it is the practice of many Independent Christian Church brethren to have "big name" denominational people come and preach to them. Men such as W. A. Criswell have in fact dealt with much more than methods before Christian Church audiences. It is my conviction that this is the single greatest contributing factor to the problems outlined here. It is not uncommon for Christian Church leaders to promote Billy Graham Crusades, and now even "Christian rock concerts" where the lyrics embrace a virtual "smorgasboard" of false doctrines. Perhaps as a result of a serious lack of conviction in this area, it is not uncommon for Christian Churches to accept denominationally immersed persons without question as to the reason for the baptism. This practice greatly contributes to a lack of evangelism on the part of individuals within the Christian Church. Why evangelize those who have embraced error, if you really already believe them to be saved?

7. Lack of Church Discipline

I have been either part of, or close to, the Independent Christian Church since 1954. During that 31-year period I have personally known of discipline being exercised only twice. Obviously discipline has been applied more than that; but it is without fear of being challenged that I suggest discipline is not commonly exercised within the Independent Christian Church. This also contributes greatly to these and other problem areas.

8. "Pastor" System in Name and Duty

Christian Church preachers are now openly referring to themselves and their colleagues as "pastor." One need only read the "Christian Standard" to verify this. This is a natural event, as many Christian Church leaders associate closely with Baptists and other "evangelicals." Refer again to item 6 in this list.

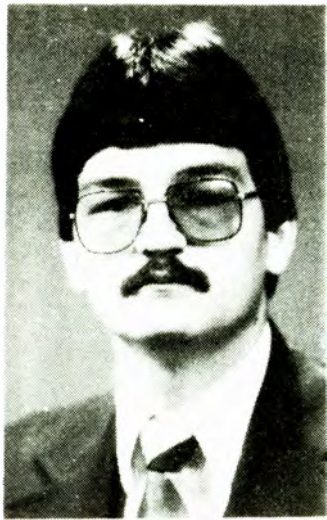
9. Mixed Swimming

Mixed swimming (and other items such as dancing, etc.) is indicative of people becoming conditioned to the social behavior (or lack of it!) around them. Mixed swimming is endorsed and practiced at every Christian Church youth camp I have ever known any-

Continued On Page 3

"What Is A Christian...In The World's Eyes?"

The Lord's church has often been accused of being "nit-picky" and "narrow-minded." Many in the world think we have been too limited in our definition of who is, or is not, a Christian. Recently some brethren have questioned our previous stand in this highly-sensitive area. To simplify the issue for the purposes of this article, please allow the following definition:



Douglas W. Milligan

A Christian is one who has "been saved by grace through faith," has been "born again of water and of the Spirit," and who, because of that obedient response to his faith, belongs to Christ (Ephesians 2:8; John 3:3, 5; Romans 6:3-6, 16-18).

On this definition, surely, we can agree. This is recognized as a test of Christianity. But what does the world look for in a person who professes Christianity? What is a Christian... in the world's eyes?

In John 13:34-35 Jesus said the world would expect Christians to love one another. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

We Can Not Live By Success Alone

Continued From Page 1

He next entered business, failed, and spent seventeen years of his life paying up debts of a worthless partner.

He was in love with a beautiful young woman, to whom he became engaged -- then she died.

He then tried to get an appointment to the U.S. Land Office, but failed.

Entering politics again, he ran for Congress and was badly defeated.

In 1856, he was defeated by Douglas.

One failure after another -- bad failures -- great setbacks. In face of all this, he eventually became one of the country's greatest men!

Yet, how easily many of us become discouraged. If things take a turn we did not anticipate, we are prone to give up quickly. Paul assured the Corinthians, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

We must accept the fact that "into each life some rain must fall," but realize also that "every cloud has a silver lining." The Roman Christians were told, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

—420 7th Street S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Christians are supposed to love one another in such a way that people in the world can "see" their love. I recently overheard a denominational member telling about her congregation -- how it had grown from seven members to several thousand in just a few short years. She told of the love and care that went into nurturing new members -- how they were visited and made to feel at home. She explained that they were "assigned" to various couples of the same age and interests for the space of an entire year until they were grounded; and then they themselves were put to work nurturing other new members. Everyone was involved and felt loved and appreciated. This lady exuded enthusiasm! She made one wish to be a part of such a loving group!

Beloved brethren, this is what the world is looking for in Christianity. No, this denominational group is not "true to the old paths." No, they have not rejected the doctrines and commandments of men in favor of pure New Testament Christianity. But, brethren, they do love one another! Let us examine ourselves "whether we be in the faith." Can we say that we, as a whole, love one another this way? If so, then "what meaneth the bleating of the sheep?" Why do

churches "label" one another, and refuse to support each other's efforts? Why not sit down and reason together? Why are so many articles increasingly critical and harsh? Beloved, let us "love one another with a pure heart, fervently!" "Let all your things be done with charity!" Let us "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (I Peter 1:22; I Corinthians 16:13; Ephesians 4:2-3).

The world is not primarily concerned about whether we have a piano. They are not interested in how often we partake of the Lord's Supper. It does not matter to the world what we call our preachers. They chiefly want to know if we love one another!

Brethren, it is vitally important to teach "doctrinal truths" to all men. We must "contend earnestly for the faith." It is imperative that we preach the PURE gospel to all men! But beloved, they will never listen to a word we say if they cannot see love demonstrated in our lives. Brethren, let us strive to develop the kind of love that will cause men to be drawn to the doctrine of Christ as we preach it. May we let the light of God's love shine through each of us.

—Rt. 5 Box 99N, Gordo, AL 35466.

What Is The New Unity Movement? Problems That Prohibit Fellowship

Continued From Page 2

thing about.

10. Premillennialism

This commonly-held view is taught in both schools and churches throughout the fellowship of Independent Christian Churches. This has been allowed to flourish virtually unopposed. Refer again to item No. 6 in this list.

11. Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage

I make no claim at having all the answers to this thorny problem. I have not found any answers at all within the Christian Church. Divorced and remarried persons are commonly found within and without the leadership of Independent Christian Churches. This loose attitude toward divorce and remarriage and one's example continues to weaken the fabric of the Christian Church.

12. Instrumental Music

Originally, those who adopted the innovation of the instrument as an "aid to singing" did so over the earnest protests of those who could not conscientiously concede to its use. Such actions made a strong statement that the innovators preferred the instrument over their brethren. I believe this to be the original "bottom line." Today, within the Independent Christian Church one finds the proverbial "Instrumental tale wagging the dog." No longer is the instrument simply an "aid to singing." It is no longer a means to an end. It has become an end in itself. Instrumental preludes, postludes, offeratories, communals and "specials" are the order of the day. Such use has nothing to do with an "aid to singing" -- as no singing is done (Alan Cloyd, private correspon-

dence with Rod Rutherford, Knoxville, TN, May 28, 1986)

Brethren: the matters that divide us from the Independent Christian Churches are far more than "instrumental music in worship." All of the above are serious matters that stand as major impediments to fellowship. More significant than any of these is their attitude toward the authority of the New Testament as the regulating authority in all matters of faith and practice.

Scripture teaches us that nothing can be done in the Lord's church that is not authorized by Christ. We must teach men to do all things whatsoever he has commanded (Matthew 28:20). We must not go beyond what is written in the new covenant (I Corinthians 4:6, A.S.V.). To go beyond the doctrine of Christ is to transgress and to forfeit God's blessings (II John 9). That authorization may be generic --not spelling out the details of how to implement the command; or, it may be specific, giving the command and the mode of fulfillment.

Christian Churches commonly affirm that they have the right to do that which the Bible does not forbid. This is their means of justifying the right (?) to do that which the Bible does not specifically forbid: namely, their use of musical instruments in worship. A wise man realizes that this approach to Scripture leaves the door open to a thousand abuses. In fact, almost any innovation could be justified in the absence of a specific prohibition. Are we ready to enter into fellowship with those who hold such a view?

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

Can We Be Sure That "Sunday" Is The "First Day" Of The Week?

The church began on the day of Pentecost, which always fell on "first day of the week" (Leviticus 23:15-16). The universal practice of the New Testament church was to meet on the first day of the week. Paul told the Corinthians, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (I Corinthians 16:2).



Bob Prichard

Paul waited seven days at Troas, so that he might join with the Christians there to worship. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples were come together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow" (Acts 20:7).

But is it possible that the real first day of the week has been lost as the calendar has been changed over the years? Even though there have been some changes of the calendar, there have been no changes of the days of the week since the first century. The calendar in use in the first century Roman empire was the Julian calendar, established about 46 B.C. by the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar. This calendar, used for the next fifteen centuries, was an improvement over previous calendars,

but was not accurate, because it assumed that the solar year is exactly 365 $\frac{1}{4}$ days, whereas it is actually about eleven minutes shorter. Although this seems small, it made a difference as it accumulates over a long time.

Calendar reform came in 1582 under the authority of Pope Gregory XIII, who issued the calendar we now use. The Gregorian calendar was a refinement of the Julian calendar. It did nothing to change the days of the week. The inaccuracy of the Julian calendar had caused an error of ten days to accumulate. The vernal equinox, the first day of spring, had been on March 21 in the year 325 when the council of Nicaea met; but by 1582 the vernal equinox was falling on March 11. To remedy this situation, Pope Gregory decreed that in the year 1582 the fifth day of October would not be called the fifth, but would instead be the fifteenth. So the day after Thursday, October 4, was not Friday, October 5, but instead was Friday, October 15. Ten days were removed from the calendar, but there was absolutely no change in the seven-day regularity of the week.

This change was resisted in many countries because of opposition to the papacy. England and its colonies did not make the change until 1752, when parliament decreed that the day following Wednesday September 2 would be called not the third, but Thursday September 14. Although certain days of the calendar were skipped, there was no change at all in the seven-day cycle of the week. Thus we can be confident that our day Sunday truly is the "first day of the week," the day God has

authorized for worship under the New Testament (I Corinthians 16:1-2).

—P.O. Box 269, Elba, AL 36323.

False Optimism

Continued From Page 2

broke up the fountains of the deep and caused rain to fall from heaven. All living creatures that breathed were drowned in the flood (II Peter 3:3-7).

"The day of the Lord will come" (II Peter 3:10)! God has reserved our world for destruction. We know not the day or hour (Mark 13:32), but we should not delude ourselves by thinking that tomorrow will be just like today.

The fact that God has not yet intervened into our world and destroyed it, is no source of comfort. Just because he has been long-suffering does not mean that we can bring on the beer and wine to "celebrate!"

God's patience is not a cause of celebration. It should encourage us to soberness and reflection (I Thessalonians 5:6). Time will not always be the same -- let us be ready. Let us watch and be ready!

—8445 SW 72nd Street Miami, Florida 33143.

An Appeal For Information About the Multiplying Ministries

The Bible faculty members at Freed-Hardeman College have been asked by brother E. Claude Gardner, to participate in the Third Annual Preachers and Church Workers Forum October 10, 1987. The theme is "Discipling, Church Growth, and Unity." Representing what is called "Discipling," "Multiplying Ministries," or the "Crossroads Movement" will be Steve Johnson (evangelist of the New York City congregation) and Al Baird (an elder of the Boston congregation). We will represent the

point of view who have some serious reservations about the movement. However, in keeping with the unity forum framework, both sides have been advised to be as open as possible to whatever evidences are available to help us understand and evaluate this movement according to the teachings of God's Word. In keeping with this stance, the two of us invite any of you in the brotherhood who have either positive or negative experiences with this movement to write us as briefly as possible about these experi-

ences, giving dates and names of the people involved. However, to avoid hearsay evidence, we wish to limit this request to people with firsthand experience in the movement.

If you are in such a group and are really convinced of its methods, organization, etc., please let us hear from you. If you have been in it and have left it because you were dissatisfied, or if you were in a congregation you believe this movement was responsible for splitting, we would also like to hear from you. Do your best please to hold your summary of experiences to two pages single spaced, and possibly including, then, any other (longer) supporting documents. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Please send information to: Winford Claiborne and Earl Edwards Freed-Hardeman College Henderson, Tennessee 38340.

Faulkner University Lectureship

Set For October 4-8

"Bible Answers to Sincere Current Questions" is the theme of Faulkner University's annual LECTURESHIP, to be held October 4-8 on the Montgomery, Alabama, campus.

Directed by Wendell Winkler, dean of the Alabama Christian School of Biblical Studies, the LECTURESHIP will feature fifty-six sessions. More than forty speakers, will include Franklin Camp, Furman Kearley, Hugo McCord, Flavil Nichols, Earl West, William Woodson, and Rex A. Turner, Sr.

The LECTURESHIP will explore answers to nine categories of questions daily: Personal

Questions Textual Questions, After-Life Questions, Fellowship Questions, Ethical Questions, Eldership Questions, Translation Questions, and Godhead Questions.

"We're trying to structure our offerings broadly in order to address both doctrinal questions and questions of a practical nature," said Winkler.

"This theme was selected to be of the greatest possible benefit to the brotherhood. By focusing on 'Bible Answers to Sincere Current Questions' we touch on some very vital concerns," he said.

—5345 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36193.





(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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What Is The New Unity Movement

(No. V)

Some Observations On Where It Will End

Not being a prophet, one can only speculate on the possible or probable outcome of the new unity movement. Jesus did indicate, however, that we should read the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3).



John Waddey

Being an avid student of restoration history, I am persuaded that the history is being repeated. We are faced with a very similar situation to that which ravaged and wrecked the church from 1875 to 1915. Those of our brethren who are zealous for reunion with the Christian Church occupy the same basic ground as did Isaac Errett and the Christian Standard at that time. Errett was personally opposed to instrumental music, but could work with those who used it. Most of the Christian schools in those days embraced the more popular, progressive cause. There was a radical opposition group led by Daniel Sommer and his *Apostolic Review*. His radicalism actually encouraged and reinforced the liberal element. We have our radical right. David Lipscomb and the *Gospel Advocate* occupied the middle ground of truth between those two extremes. The end result was that eighty percent of the brotherhood was lost to the progressives. On the far right was a radical "anti" group of perhaps five percent. We today are the heirs of that fifteen percent of moderate brethren who stood solidly on the Scriptures.

The current meetings to explore possibilities for Unity were started by men like Alan Cloyd. It is obvious that the ball is now in the hands of Don DeWelt. The planning, promotion, and direction are being done primarily by the Christian Churches. Some of our brethren

are eagerly following their lead.

Efforts for unity will not be limited to Independent Christian Churches and us. Already overtures are being made toward some of the Disciples of Christ -- a far more liberal body. Also there have been hints that other religious bodies are very close to the Bible and that we should not reject any man who has been (?) born again through Christian immersion.

Brother Rubel Shelly's announced position that any man that has been immersed to obey God is thus a Christian, will make it very difficult for him to withhold fellowship from any immersionist church -- since they all are surely baptized to obey God.

Leroy Garrett, a long-time promoter of unity between the two churches, has written, "It is risky, in the light of Scripture, to make immersion absolutely necessary to becoming a Christian."² This was the conclusion of Alexander Campbell in his Lunenburg Letters. This is a document which the Christian Churches highly tout and widely circulate.

Four options stand before brother Shelly and those who have joined his cortege:

1. They may leave the Lord's church and unite with the Christian Church. Some could readily do this, since they have no conviction about the authority of the Scriptures and the things that separate us.
2. They may totally abandon the Restoration and move into denominationalism or irreligion. Once faith begins to wither, the ultimate end is death.
3. They could choose to stay among us and effect a change in brotherhood thinking by their propaganda. Generally our brethren eventually awaken to such dangers, reject and isolate the false teachers as they did Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett.
4. They could repent, renounce their foolishness, and return to their former faith. This is not likely to happen. As a rule "evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13).

It is my expectation that if they meet a solid

line of resistance among us, most of them will move to the 'greener pastures' of the Christian Church. A careful study of their articles and speeches shows that they have nothing but sweetness and accolades for those of the Christian Church, and little but harsh criticism for those of the church of Christ. Why should they stay among such "bad people" when they would be warmly welcomed among their new-found brothers?

The original intent of these brethren was to heal wounds and promote unity among the heirs of the Restoration Movement. The actual results are that they have stirred raging controversy among their own brethren which threatens to add yet another unhappy chapter to our book of divisions. Whatever their motive, they have failed in their intentions.

What Shall We Do?

1. "Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).
2. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:21-22).
3. Search the scriptures daily to see if these things are so (Acts 17:11).
4. "Take heed what ye hear" and what ye read (Mark 4:24).
5. "Let no man deceive you with empty words" (Ephesians 5:6).
6. "Whom withstand steadfast in your faith" (I Peter 5:9).
7. "Stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught . . ." (II Thessalonians 2:15).
8. "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse . . ." (Titus 3:10).
9. "Mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine . . ." (Romans 16:17).
10. "Put the brethren in mind of these things

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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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Conversion

(No.6)

Read Acts 8:26-40. Here a man from Ethiopia was "converted." We have defined "conversion" as the process or change by which a person becomes a New Testament Christian. The example before us is one that all can understand. Read the text carefully and note five points: the sinner, the preacher, the Spirit, the Savior, and the saved.



Neil Myers

The Ethiopian

The sinner, this man, a eunuch (one unable to beget a child), was of the country of Ethiopia. He was a man in a position of authority (verse 27) who served the queen as her treasurer. He was a very religious man, for he had traveled a vast distance -- perhaps a thousand miles -- "for to worship" (verse 27). He had made this journey by chariot, perhaps taking three or four weeks. Apparently he was either born a Jew, or one who had been converted to the Jewish religion. He was a business man, but he did not allow his work to become his god. He was studious, friendly, and open-minded (verses 28-31). This demonstrates that one who is good, devout, and religious can be wrong! --And lost!

The Preacher

The preacher was Philip (one of the seven chosen to serve tables in Jerusalem, Acts 6:5). Philip developed and used his talents. He preached in Samaria (Acts 8:4-25), and became known as an evangelist (Acts 21:8). He was ready and willing to serve wherever God sent him.

God Gets the Preacher and Sinner Together

The Spirit (verse 29), and the "angel of the Lord" served to bring Philip (the preacher), and the sinner (the Ethiopian eunuch)

Continued on page 3

Faith And Belief

(No. 3)



Frank D. Young

The system of faith is the New Testament. Paul says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16). Salvation by faith in Christ includes obedience to his word. Nothing short of obedience brings salvation.

"Faith" and "Belief"

The words "faith" and "believe" are used interchangeably. Notice Matthew 8:10 and 13. Verse 10 says, "Verily I say unto you, 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.'" To this same Centurion, in the same conversation, Jesus said, "Go thy way; as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (verse 13). Again, Jesus said to Thomas: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27). Another oft-quoted passage also parallels these two words: "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). The difference in faith and believe is in the part of speech: "Faith" is a noun; "believe" is a verb. One would not say, "I faith it;" but he would say, "I believe it." Neither would he say, "My believe is;" but he would say, "My faith is so-and-so."

The words "faith" or "belief" are used to denote a condition of pardon. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Acts 18:8 says "... and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." Compare this illustration with Exodus 4:30-31: "And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed . . ." As faith, or belief, are used as a condition of salvation in the New Testament passages, so the Hebrews believed; but they were still -- at that time -- in Egypt. Not until they began their march, and crossed the Red Sea, were they delivered from bondage. At the Red Sea God saved them by their faith when it expressed itself in obedience (Exodus 14:30-31).

"Faith" also refers to an obedient life. Romans 1:8 says of the Roman Christians: "Your FAITH is spoken of throughout the whole world." And in the same letter he wrote them, "Your OBEDIENCE is come abroad unto all men" (Romans 16:19).

This same comprehensive view of faith is used in many passages. John 3:16 says, "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." One well knows John 3:16 is a faith that obeys God. It cannot be faith only, as false teachers claim. In Acts 26:27 Paul is quoted as saying, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou liest." But Agrippa was not a Christian! Verse 28 tells us

that Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Then too, John wrote John 3:16 years after the Pentecost of Acts 2. But John, and all apostles who preached, said in Acts 2, even as Peter is quoted, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for" (in order to obtain) "the remission of sins . . ." John 3:16 and Acts 2:28 are not contradictory.

In John 3:36 one reads, "He that BELIEVETH on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that BELIEVETH NOT the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." This is really a contrast between faith and disobedience. The American Standard Version says: "He that OBEYETH NOT the Son . . ." The one who believes not is in disobedience to God.

The word "faith" is used in reference to the system, that is, the New Testament. In Acts 6:7 the Bible says, "... a great company of priests were obedient to the faith." When Paul was at Cyprus, Acts 13:7 says, Sergius Paulus "desired to hear the WORD of GOD." But verse 8 says the sorcerer "withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the FAITH." The "word of God" was "the faith." Galatians 1:23 says: "But before faith came, we were under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." This same use is made of the word "faith" in Jude 3. Jude exhorts "that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Another Old Testament prophet wrote: "But the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4). Like some others, this passage is quoted three times in the New Testament. In Romans 1:16 where Paul explains "the gospel is God's power to salvation," he then says: "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Verse 17). One is either justified by faith, or he is not justified! He can be righteous only as he obeys God's gospel. To be righteous, or to be justified, are the same. To obey the gospel is to be saved by faith.

Paul further says, "But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." Galatians 3:11). Thus Paul applied Habakkuk's prophecy to the New Testament system of faith. Thus Paul said he was "separated unto the gospel of God, which he (God) had promised before by the prophets."

A bird hunter said, "The Old Testament is the hind sight through which we get the bead on the New Testament." Or as one of the 'Church Fathers' said, "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed. The New Testament is the Old Testament revealed."

We have one more quotation from Habakkuk, as applied to the New Testament. Read it! "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back to perdition; but of them who believe to the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:39). This same truth is elsewhere confirmed in this book of Hebrews: "Take heed, brethren lest there be any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called, Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews

Continued on page 4

How To Profit Most From The Sermon

Gospel preachers are eager for their sermons to be as instructive, interesting, and influential, as possible. Paul expressed his concern for the effectiveness of his sermons in the following words: "... Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified" (II Thessalonians 3:1). Many times, after his presentation of the gospel, Paul had witnessed the fact that "some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not." It is obvious, therefore, that God's word does not always bless the hearer (Hebrews 4:1-2; II Corinthians 2:14-17). If the seed of the kingdom falls on rocky ground, or among thorns, or by the wayside, no harvest is produced (Luke 8:4-15).



W. A. Holley

The word of God profits only when it enters into the heart and there abides, exercising control over both soul and body (Luke 8:12; Hebrews 5:14). Hence, the word of God is full of power, and works effectively in the believer, to the salvation of his soul (Hebrews 4:12; Philippians 2:13; I Thessalonians 2:13; Psalms 19:7). When gospel sermons do not produce the desired results, it is not the fault of the word of God; rather it is the fault of unbelieving hearts.

We offer the following suggestions which will help honest hearers ---

(1) Before going to the service, take a little time to prepare your heart through prayer for the reception of the truth of God (Proverbs 8:5; James 1:5-7). Almighty God is abundantly able to give wisdom and understanding to

all who ask for them.

(2) Resolve to eliminate all preconceived notions, opinions, and prejudices; and listen with an open mind and an open book -- the Bible. This is no easy task. It is the truth of God, not our opinions and prejudices, that shall make us free (John 8:30-32). Be honest with God and His word; search the scriptures daily, in order to know the whole truth of God (Acts 17:11).

(3) Be prepared to accept truth spoken by the preacher as from God. For, actually, if you refuse and reject the truth proclaimed, you have not refused and rejected the preacher: you have refused and rejected God (Luke 10:16; I Thessalonians 4:8). A word of warning: Do not hesitate to challenge the preacher! Not all preachers are true gospel preachers (I John 4:1). We sincerely urge each reader to cultivate a deep yearning, a compelling demand, a gnawing hunger, for the right way of the Lord.

(4) Do your best to develop a warm sympathy for all gospel preachers, and for the task they seek to accomplish. By all means, be much in prayer for them, and wherever possible, encourage them. How often Paul expressed a desire for the prayers of his brethren. Obviously, the preacher's job is not an easy one. Hence, try to put yourself in his place, and try to know and understand and admit some of his problems (Ezekiel 3:15). We should not except too much of the preacher, since he is but a man. And, too, it should be remembered that gospel preachers are not required to preach only those things with which you agree -- they must preach the truth of God even if no one likes it (Romans 3:3-4; II Timothy 4:1-5).

(5) Upon entering the assembly, be just as quiet as possible. Reverence and respect for God and his word should everywhere abound. Any unnecessary noise or uncouth remark or thoughtless action may destroy what might otherwise have been a very effective sermon (Psalms 89:7; Hebrews 12:28).

(6) During the assembly never play with a child, or a song book, or write notes to others, or do anything that may draw the attention of others away from what the speaker is saying. All types of confusion should be avoided. "But let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40).

(7) Never sit and daydream, thus paying no attention to what the preacher is saying. A person may be present in body but absent in spirit, if the mind is allowed to wander. How often have preachers witnessed those who are no more aware of what was being said than if they were not present. The apostle Peter commanded: "... Gird up the loins of your mind ..." (I Peter 1:13). The person who wishes to please God must "by reason of use," have his "senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14).

(8) It is imperative for you to learn that YOU are partly responsible for the success of the sermon! If you have brought a friend to the service, you will probably be much more interested, because you will want him to understand the sermon. You will try, therefore, to create a warm, friendly atmosphere, even before, then during the service -- and after it is over. Here is a simple way to make the sermon more effective. In this respect, Cornelius has set us a wonderful example (Acts 10:30-33).

(9) If you would profit most from the sermon, you must realize that preaching occupies a supremely important position in God's scheme of things. Some say preaching may be dispensed with; that it is a waste of time and money; that it is outmoded; that it can accomplish no good. But God has chosen "the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (Mark 16:15-16; I Corinthians 1:21). To disparage gospel preaching is to disparage the wisdom of God!!

(10) To gain the most from the sermon, you must understand that you must give account to God for your attitude toward his word (Luke 8:18; Mark 4:24; I John 4:1). You are going to be judged by his word (John 12:48). If you believe and obey his truth, all will be well in the day of judgment (Romans 14:12; II Corinthians 5:10-11); but if not, it will be too bad.

—P. O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Conversion

Continued from page 2

together. You will note that the Spirit did **nothing** to directly impress or sway the sinner. Neither did the angel! It was the preaching of Jesus done by Philip that worked the change (verses 35-40).

Jesus Saves the Obedient

The Savior is Jesus. He was the preacher's topic (verse 35; I Corinthians 2:2). Note that when Philip "preached Christ" unto him, that inspired preacher told the sinner what to do to be saved. The preaching must have included the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. It must have included repentance -- for the sinner changed! It included confession, for he confessed his faith in Jesus (verse 37). His preaching included baptism, for he desired baptism immediately (verses 36-39). To preach less today is to mutilate the gospel, and destroy the souls of men.

He Believed and was Baptized

The saved man became whatever the people in Jerusalem and Samaria were -- for Philip had served the church in Jerusalem (Acts 6), and this same preacher had taught and baptized the Samaritans (Acts 8:12), before he taught and baptized the eunuch. They all became "Christians," part of the church or

kingdom (Acts 2:47; 8:12).

Please note that baptism requires a going "down into the water" and a "coming up out of the water." Thus it is a "burial" (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12).

The eunuch did not consult anyone, or obtain permission, to be baptized; and nobody "voted" whether or not he was a proper candidate. Neither was it necessary for Philip to return to Jerusalem to get permission from a higher authority in order to baptize the man. He already had Christ's authority (Matthew 28:18-20).

This is a very simple, yet beautiful, example of how one man was converted and became a New Testament Christian. He did not delay, or postpone baptism -- for he knew it had to do with his eternal destiny (Mark 16:16).

Did the eunuch do right by obeying the gospel? If you do the same, will you be doing right? If you are not baptized, knowing you should be, then what??

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

Did You Ever Tell A Lie?

Many sins are immediately recognized, and the temptation to commit them can be quickly resisted. Satan would have us steal, kill, or commit adultery, and we resist without hesitation; but the problem with lying is another matter. Once David hastily said, "All men are liars" (Psalms 116:11).

There is so much lying and deceit about us that one often has



Edsel Burleson

Continued on page 4

"A Remnant Will Be Saved"

John L. Wheeler

To the Romans Paul said: "I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Know ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:1-5).

Even though God had rejected Israel as a whole, not all had been rejected. He no more rejected the Jews because they were Jews, than he accepted Jews because they were Jews. Paul gives himself as an example of a Jew who was saved. Here is the kind of Jew that can be saved. Paul was a believer in Christ and obedient to him. Now these are the people of God, and he has not cast them away.

Paul refers to a period in history in which Israel as a whole had rejected God. Ahab was king and Jezebel was queen. "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria" (1 Kings 16:31-32).

Jezebel slew the prophets of God and set up 400 prophets of Baal that were fed at her table. During this time Elijah, the prophet of God challenged the prophets of Baal. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 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 ye on the name of your gods,

and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and saith, It is well spoken" (1 Kings 18:21-24).

In the contest, the prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice and cried from morning till evening. Elijah taunted them by saying, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (verse 27). They cut themselves so that the blood gushed out; but still Baal did not answer. Late in the evening, Elijah prepared the sacrifice to Almighty God and ordered water to be poured over it till it was soaked and the trenches were filled. Then he prayed, and God answered by fire, and the sacrifice was consumed. The people then took the prophets of Baal and killed them (verses 29-40).

It had not rained for three years, and Elijah prayed and it rained. But do you think Jezebel was pleased? She sent a messenger to Elijah and said, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time" (1 Kings 19:2). Elijah then fled. He told the Lord

to take his life, that he was the only one left, and they sought his life. But God said, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:18). Paul refers to this and quotes from these verses in Romans 11.

There was never a time in the history of Israel when they seemed so completely rebellious against God as in the time of king Ahab. But even during that time, there was a remnant that was faithful to God. Just so now, during the time of Paul, Israel as a whole had rejected Jesus, and had therefore been rejected by God. But there were those Jews (like Paul) who believed in Jesus and were therefore saved. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). The Jew could be saved by grace through Christ. He could not be saved by the works of the law of Moses. The remnant were saved by the election of God. That election, or selection, was by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

—706 W. Georgia, Vivian, La. 71082.

Did You Ever Tell A Lie?

Continued from page 3

difficulty determining what to believe. Young people proceed so as to deceive their parents. Parents sometimes mislead children by failing to be honest with them. Business men will occasionally make fraudulent deals, or public officials will be guilty of taking bribes. All of these acts fall into the category of deception.

Webster defines lying "to tell or act that which is not true for the purpose of deceiving." One would be in ERROR to tell an untruth unknowingly, but he would not be guilty of LYING. One "lies" when he knowingly and intentionally perverts truth, holds back facts, or in some way alters truth.

Sometimes we give too little thought to the thing we are actually saying, and will make a deceptive statement to cover up some other mistake. For example, one will say, "I just don't feel like it," or, "it was just too cold," or, "I just didn't have time," with reference to some task expected. In reality, it is often a matter of indifference. To be truthful, one has lied.

EXAGGERATION is often used to deceive others into assuming one has been more successful in business, or, has seen more of the world, or, has more financial investments.

A college football coach was questioning a high school prospect who was applying for an athletic scholarship.

"I can run 100 yards with full equipment in less than 10 seconds," the boy said. "I was named outstanding defensive player in five of our games. I scored 18 touchdowns and kicked every extra point. And I was on the honor roll."

The coach was greatly impressed. "Do you have any weaknesses?"

"Well," the young man replied, "I am

inclined to lie a bit."

Sin has many tools; but a lie is a handle that fits them all. It is easy to tell one lie, but hard to tell just one.

God hates a lying tongue (Proverbs 6:17). John said, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and ALL LIARS, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8).

—420 7th Street S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Faith And Belief

Continued from page 2

3:12-13). One more warning from the same writer: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1).

The scriptures teach that a BELIEVER will be saved. But, not a believer who has become DISOBEDIENT. No believer, who becomes an unbeliever can be saved in his unbelief. When one "draws back," he does so "unto perdition" (Hebrews 10:39).

—500 Third Ave. N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

What Is The New Unity Movement

Continued from page 1

(and) thou shalt be a good minister of Christ..." (1 Timothy 4:6).

ENDNOTES

1U.S. Religious Census Report, 1906.

2Leroy Garrett, Restoration Review, September 1985.

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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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Can "That" Faith Save Him?

(No. 4)

EVERY LOST PERSON needs to be saved. Hell is a horrible existence. Jesus referred to this condition as "unquenchable fire" (Mark 9:43), and where "the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48). In Matthew 13:42 Christ refers to one's being lost when he said, "Cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."



Frank D. Young

Hell is eternal. When Jesus contrasts heaven and hell, he says: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46). To be lost eternally is a calamity. However, to die in one's sins is to be lost. Hence, Nothing else can be more important than being saved from sin!

James asks: "Can THAT faith save him?" The answer is obvious: NO! THAT FAITH cannot save him. One is saved by faith. But not all faith saves. In Hebrews 11:6 we are told: "Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Without faith, one is not saved; nor can he be saved -- so long as he continues to be without faith.

The Scriptures declare that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). To avoid perishing, one must believe on Christ. Faith saves!

Paul argues: "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). One is not at peace with God, until he is justified from his sins. And this justification is "by faith" Faith saves!

One becomes a child of God by faith. In Galatians 3:26 the apostle emphasizes

that our salvation is by the gospel of Christ, and not by the law of Moses. He says: "For ye are all the sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus." By faith one becomes a child of God. And not until one is "in Christ" has he become a child of God by faith.

A Christian gains heaven by his faith. The apostle Peter says: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I Peter 1:9). This apostle also says we have "an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded THROUGH FAITH unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter 1:4-5). By man's faith, holding to God's power, children of God will reach their reward -- and only in this way. Faith is necessary to save us from sin. Faith must continue to govern our lives, if we safely gain the eternal abode with God.

But James asks: "Can THAT faith save him?" James says faith apart from obedience does not save.

Hear him further: "Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well; the demons also believe, and shudder" (James 2:19). Do you believe that God is? So did the demons. Do you believe that Christ is "the Son of God?" So did the demons. Luke says: "And demons also came out of many, crying out, and saying, 'Thou art the Son of God.'" (Luke 4:41). Luke further says that Christ "suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ" (Luke 4:41). It isn't enough to merely believe in one's mind that God is, or that Christ is God's Son.


James continues to emphasize that "FAITH" apart from works is barren" (V. 20). Faith without works is nonproductive. Faith which does not obey God is a faith that does not serve God. Faith without works is incomplete. Faith must work that it may accomplish its purpose. Abraham was justified by works when he offered Isaac. The Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness" (James 2:23). Every reference to Abraham's FAITH shows his OBEDIENCE to God. By faith alone, Abraham would not have left Chaldea. We would never have heard of Abraham,

except because his faith moved him to do God's commands. Thus Paul said, "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed . . ." (Hebrews 11:8). James therefore concludes: "Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith" (James 2:24).

FAITH, short of OBEDIENCE, does not make one a child of God. The scriptures say: "As he spake these things, many believed on him. Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:30-32). These people believed him to be the Christ, but still were not "free." When they asked the Christ, "How sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Jesus replied, "Everyone that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin" (John 8:34). Though they BELIEVED in Christ, they were still sinners -- in bondage to sin. Why? The truth had not made them free. Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your OBEDIENCE to the truth . . ." (I Peter 1:22). These Jews, in their hearts, accepted his claims for divinity; but they refused to follow him. Of others like them John said: "Nevertheless even of the rulers, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God" (John 12:42-43). People who refuse to confess Christ, cannot follow Christ, and will not obey him. To refuse to confess Christ is to reject him. Jesus said: "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33). The apostle Paul said: "With the heart men believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). The rulers who BELIEVED on him, yet refused to confess him, had a measure of FAITH. But James says: "Can THAT faith save him?" The rulers had faith only!

Paul said: "Ye are all sons of God, through

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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—Acts 26:35

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Conversion

(No. 7)

In Acts 9:1-9 Luke records Saul's conversion. In Acts 22:1-16 Saul describes the same events before an angry mob in Jerusalem. Then before king Agrippa (Acts 26:1-18) Saul (or Paul) again tells of his conversion. To get a good basis for our study, all three of these passages (along with Galatians 1:11-24 and Philipians 3:1-9) should be read.



Neil Myers

SAUL BEFORE HIS CONVERSION

Saul (or Paul, Acts 13:9) was a Jew (Philipians 3:5; Acts 22:3), born in Tarsus, yet brought up in Jerusalem and schooled at the feet of a teacher named Gamaliel. He was taught the "law of the fathers" (Acts 22:3). He was young and more radical than his teacher, Gamaliel, who advised moderation (in Acts 5:34-40). Saul was filled with fire and zeal for God (Acts 22:3) and for the traditions of the fathers (Galatians 1:14). He was untiring in his efforts to rid the world of Christianity and the influence of Jesus. He was making his mark!

Saul comes upon the scene in Acts 7:58 as he holds the garments of those who were stoning Stephen to death. No doubt he was directing the affair. Some think he then was about 30 years of age. Saul was not content to remain in Jerusalem, but traveled 150 miles to drag Christians back to Jerusalem to be punished and killed (Acts 8:5; 9:1-2; 26:11).

Saul THOUGHT he was doing right. Some say that "If a person thinks he is right, then he is right" -- but not so! "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). His actions were not right just because he "thought" he

Continued on page 3

Permissive Parents Produce Pitiful Problems

As a people, we have been led to conclude that it is unavoidable for the crime rate to increase annually. The home blames the school, and the school blames the home. A December, 1975, Gallup Poll of American Adults shows that parents believe that lack of discipline is the number one problem in the public schools today.

Today's young people are the best educated, most talented, healthiest, and wealthiest in the history of the world. At the same time, they are becoming the most tyrannical, most destructive, and most rebellious generation in history.

Our young people face a long, hard, uphill battle in their opposition against evil. Their problems are multiplied when those in leadership roles in our society justify (?) sinful behavior, and ridicule those who try to do right.

Dr. Karl Compton, scientist, warned before he died that annihilation would be imminent unless spiritual and moral advances kept up with scientific advances.

Col. James Collins, of Atlanta, arriving back in the United States following his release from a Hanoi POW camp a few years ago observed: "As I look around our nation, I see things that frighten me. I see the moral fiber of our nation being torn apart. I see us turning our backs on things that have made this country great -- the family unit, religion, trust of one another and basic honesty."

It does not have to be that way. We have not YET reached the point of no return. Others can and have reversed the order of things, and so can we.

In the August 8, 1974, issue of "The Gospel Advocate" there appeared an article that was most startling and revealing. It stated that during a recent ten-year period that saw crime increase 300 percent in New York City, it decreased in Tokyo by 10 percent. Mr. Ed McDowell was sent by the Wall Street Journal to Tokyo to find why. He learned that the year before, Tokyo had 200 murders, New York City had 2,000. Tokyo had 435 robberies, New York City had 100,000. His investigation showed the Japanese, too, had inadequate housing, and dimly-lighted streets and alleys.

Mr. McDowell's explanation of the contrasting results gave these causes:

1. In Japan, there is a family closeness. Japanese children are almost always home for dinner. Japanese young people are very much concerned about how their behavior may reflect on their families.

2. Japan's schools have two hours every week for moral and ethical education. This education stresses respect for others.

3. The Japanese are workers. Most are too busy for mischief.

4. The law is enforced in Japan. Tokyo police have been called the most modern



Edsel Burleson

and best-equipped army in the world.

5. Crimes are punished. More than 50 percent of all reported crimes in Japan are solved, and the preceding year 99.18 percent of all defendants were found "guilty as charged." Compare this with Chicago, where only 7 percent of criminals are indicted and only 3 percent of these are punished.

Permissiveness is rebellion against God; and rebellion against God leads to being given up to uncleanness, to vile passions, and to a reprobate mind (Romans 1:18-32). Truly, **PERMISSIVE PARENTS PRODUCE PITIFUL PROBLEMS.**

—420 Seventh Street S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Brother Howard Winters On First Corinthians

I have been hindered from reading every specific word in this book. However, I have read it sufficiently to be able to truly commend this Commentary.

The Introduction to this book by brother Clayton Winters is good. His introduction, together with an introduction to the First Corinthian Epistle, by brother Howard Winters, are worth the price of the book. One not conversant with its background should study this Introduction. It also broadens one's insight as to why certain passages are in this Corinthian letter.

Brother Winters writes for us who need him. This Commentary is complete, yet not overly verbose, or unnecessarily wordy. It will surely enlighten us in some areas.

I am not wholly convinced, as I am not with many others, that his conclusion on I Corinthians 7:39 is correct. However, I do not have to fully agree with one in order to commend his book, or to appreciate his sermons.

On some disputed passages in First Corinthians, brother Winters takes a sober view. To illustrate, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit has been wisely dealt with. Even if wrong, his conclusions are not harmful to the Bible, or to one's faith. I think his style helps the average student.

One who needs help for his weekly Bible class, or in his daily devotions will do well to use this Commentary. The book has nearly 250 pages, and is bound in good paper. Order from:

Carolina Christian,
P.O. Box 5423, Station B.,
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Frank D. Young

How to Determine the Identity Of Churches Of Christ

"... The churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16). Thus the holy scriptures mention the church that Jesus established (Matthew 16:18-19). The birthday of Jesus' church is the first Pentecost after his resurrection (Acts 2:1-4, 36-38, 41-42, 47).

All churches should be scriptural. But, unfortunately, the Catholic and Protestant churches are not. If you think they are, we challenge you to find their identifying marks in the Bible. All human churches pick out a few scriptures upon which to build their claim. But they reject large portions of the Bible as not germane to their practice. How can the Bible be true, if it teaches all the conflicting doctrines taught by various denominational churches?? Answer, please!!

To be scriptural a church must be one that meets the demands of the Bible -- scriptural in origin, in name, in faith, in doctrine, and in practice. We shall note--

(1) The church of Christ is scriptural in origin.

It began at the right time and place. Where did the church of Christ originate? In the city of Jerusalem. When? Circa 33 A.D. These facts account for the reason the holy scriptures contain all the necessary identifying marks of the Lord's church or kingdom. In order to have the original church, we must have the original seed. Jesus said, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Seed always produces after its kind (Genesis 1:11-12; Galatians 6:7-8). The pure word of God has



W. A. Holley

never produced Protestant denominationalism nor Roman Catholicism!

(2) The church of Christ is scriptural in name. Many contend that 'there is nothing in a name.' But the Bible condemns such a false idea (Acts 4:12). Who would purchase real estate with another's name on the deed? What man would be happy to have his wife wear another man's name? If there is nothing in a name, why is forgery a crime?

The "church of Christ" (Matthew 16:18) and the "church of God" (Acts 20:28) are terms which refer to the same religious institution as related in sacred scripture (John 17:10). I Corinthians 1:10 reads as follows: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." We must "speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11), and when we do, we use Bible terms to describe Bible things. If one wants to know about the Baptist church, one goes to the Baptist Manual. Go to the Methodist Discipline if you want to know about the Methodist church. This same principle applies to all other churches established by men -- or by women, for that matter!

(3) The church of Christ is scriptural in faith. According to the Bible there is but one faith, just as there is but one God, or one Lord, or one Spirit (Ephesians 4:3-6). One can no more choose his faith than one can choose the God, or the Lord, of his choice!! Jude wrote, "... It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). "The faith" is the gospel of Christ, the word of God, that body of truth contained in the New Testament (Acts 6:7; Colossians 1:23). "The faith" (or, God's truth) has been once delivered for all time to come, and is never to be superceded, amended, or modified, neither by the Pope, nor by denominationalists of whatever shade or color (Revelation 22:18-19).

This body of truth -- "the faith" -- was infallibly delivered by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 1:11-12; I Peter 1:10-12; II Peter 1:20-21). "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).

Loyal preachers of the church of Christ

preach what the Bible teaches concerning God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the blood of Christ, the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, the inspiration of the Holy Bible, the second coming of Jesus Christ, and the great judgment day to come -- to name just a few of the wonderful topics taught in the Holy Bible. All other biblical principles taught in holy writ are taught too, including what man must do to be saved, how to worship God acceptably, and how to live the Christian life (Mark 16:16; John 4:24; Titus 2:11-12).

(4) The church of Christ is scriptural in doctrine. The "doctrine of Christ" (not "doctrines") is taught. Paul warned Timothy that he could teach "no other doctrine" (I Timothy 1:3). It is sinful to teach the "doctrines and commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). "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).

Preachers who teach continuous revelation, salvation by faith only, or salvation in answer to prayer, are false teachers. Verily, the gospel (or, the doctrine) of Christ is God's converting power. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

(5) The church of Christ is scriptural in practice. We practice immersion (not sprinkling or pouring) where baptism is demanded (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). We baptize believers only, not infants (Mark 16:15-16). On the authority of Jesus, we urge all men to confess Jesus' worthy name (Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:37).

We assemble each Lord's day to worship God (Hebrews 10:24-25; John 4:24). We preach and teach God's word (Acts 2:42), sing scriptural songs (non instrumental music, organs, or the like), and we pray (I Corinthians 14:15; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19). We partake of the Lords supper each Lord's day (Acts 20:7).

Each local church among churches of Christ has its own elders and deacons (Philippians 1:1; Acts 20:17, 28). Moreover, we urge all members of Christ's church to live holy and godly lives (II Peter 1:5-11).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Conversion

Continued from page 2

was right! People can "think" wrong, and consequently do wrong; but they are accountable for the wrong done (II Kings 5:11; Proverbs 14:12).

Saul had a "good conscience" in spite of his waging war against Christians. He said: "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1). Herein do I exercise myself, to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always" (Acts 24:16). Was Saul right before God just because his conscience was clear? No! Our conscience or feeling is no safe guide in matters relating to God.

Saul was ignorant. Yet he was not excused on that basis. He later said that he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, but he was ignorant (I Timothy 1:13). Many times we are unlearned because we choose to be. Some were "willingly ignorant" in Peter's day (II Peter 3:5). Saul (or Paul) was at first ignorant; but, thank God, he found the truth and surrendered his life to it. Let this be characteristic of us!

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.

Computer Church Program

Brother Ray Hawk has written a program that churches which have an IBM PC/XT/AT or compatible may use to keep up with individual and family records and a bulletin mailing list. Family records may be used to print out a directory. Individual records will keep track of attendance. A visit date may be used to show when a person has last been visited; non-members who are related to members may be included in the database; a print out can be made to show when these folk also need a visit. The local congregation can have its name on the program. The database can be adapted to contain whatever information any specific church needs. It can

be adapted for those who have only one floppy disk drive, or two; or, a hard disk drive.

The program is "menu-driven" so those with little knowledge of computers may use it. It includes a "Help" section which a person may use if not sure about any selection. Most programs like this cost \$150 to \$600; this one sells for \$50.00. It is priced low to help churches who are in need of such a program, but don't want to purchase the more expensive ones, only to discover they have paid for something that does not meet their needs.

Brother Guy N. Woods, commenting on this

Continued On Page 4

A Matter Of Choice

In recent times the church has faced many conflicts. There have been efforts to erase our differences. One of the most widely-discussed has been whether or not the mechanical instrument is a matter of faith, or a matter of opinion.

Many who bring up this subject refer to Romans 14:1-3: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one



Trenton McCluskey

believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him."

It must be realized that the subject being discussed in Romans 14 is not a situation where anyone has erred! One may rightfully choose never to eat meat. This is not a sin. On the other hand, if one should abandon that choice, and then eat meat, this is not a sin.

However, eating meat is no more a part of worship to God than is eating a vegetable! The same is true with the usage of mechanical instruments. They have no more place in New Testament worship than does eating meats and vegetables.

Let us realize that the God of Heaven did not command such to be used, any more than he commanded the strange fire of Leviticus 10:1! "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not."

God demands true and spiritual worship. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The only choice man has is whether or not we will worship God in the manner he has set forth in scripture.

Many would refer to Psalms 150 for an example of music with the instrument. Indeed, Romans 15:4 tells us the Old Testament was written for our learning. Yet, we must understand that the Old Testament was fulfilled in Christ who said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17). Christ "filled it full," when he took the Old Testament out of the way, nailing it to the cross: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Colossians 2:14).

Notice these Old Testament passages: "Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for thou shalt not hear the melody of thy viols" (Amos 5:23). [Woe unto them] "that chant unto the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David" (Amos 6:5).

And we learn in Matthew 26:28 that Jesus shed his blood for a new covenant: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." We see an example of Jesus' SINGING just 40 verses later: "And when they had sung

an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30).

We have long realized the words of Ephesians 5:19. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Likewise, we refer to Colossians 3:16. "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."

In light of these and other passages, we do

need to make a choice. The choice should be the same as the choice of Joshua: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

Will we serve the god of human reason? or the God of all creation?

It is a matter of choice.

—185 Bradford Dr., Fayetteville, GA 30214.

Second Annual

Mississippi Lectures Aug. 23-27

The East Main St. Church of Christ in Tupelo, MS will host its second annual lectureship August 23-27, 1987. The theme: God's Mission For The Church Today. A wide variety of material will be covered by 35 men speakers. There are to be 4 special lectures for ladies only.

A daily "Question and Answer Session" (Monday-Thursday) will discuss assigned subjects: "Modern Versions," "The So-called 'New Hermeneutics,'" "Grace and Law," and "11 John 9-11." After a lecture on the subject questions from the audience will be encouraged.

Housing is available in members' homes on a first-come-first-served basis. Electric and

water hook-up will be available for RV/camper vehicles. Several major motels are located in the area.

Audio and video tapes will be available, as well as a book of all the sermon outlines containing approximately 70 pages. All three may be purchased and/or ordered at the lectureship.

The Second Annual Mississippi Lectureship, like the first, is the result of cooperative efforts of brethren of like faith and kindred spirit in the greater Mississippi area. For further information write P.O. Box 1761, Tupelo, MS 38802 or call (601) 746-4604/842-6116.

—Bill Clayton, P.O. Box 476, Yazoo City, MS 39194.

Computer Church Program

Continued from page 3

program, said, "This is a superb church program that will streamline and make far more efficient the operation of any church office. I am pleased to be able to commend it un-

reservedly."

You may contact Ray Hawk, 90 McDaniel Drive, Jackson, TN 38305 or call 1-800-668-6819 or 427-9511.

Can "That" Faith Save Him?

Continued from page 1

faith, IN Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST did put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). One is a child of God IN Christ. One is not a child of God, OUT OF Christ. Paul says, we are baptized "into" Christ. The FAITH which makes one a child of God is a FAITH which puts one "into Christ." But this faith leads one to be "baptized into Christ." Hence Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). The reason is that salvation from sin is LOCATED "IN" Christ: "In whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins" (Colossians 1:14). Thus when Paul says, "Being therefore justified BY FAITH, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1), he but declares that in OBEDIENCE to Christ's GOSPEL, these Romans have been saved. And Romans 6:3 affirms that the Romans who had been "baptized into Christ Jesus" were those who were "baptized into his death." THAT faith saved them, and will save

that obeys."

—500 Third Ave., N.E., Jasper, Alabama 35501.

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Words Of Truth

k forth the

—Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, JULY 17, 1987

NUMBER 29

Why Did Jesus Appear To Saul?

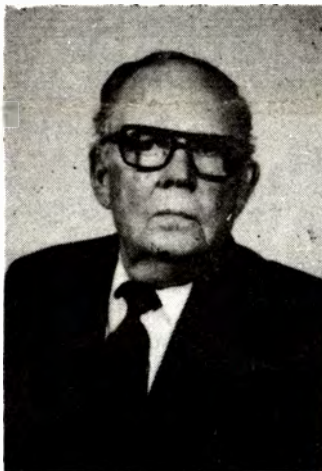
Yes, Jesus, on the Damascus Road, did appear to Saul. Did Jesus appear to Saul for the purpose of saving Saul miraculously, directly, separate and apart from the preached word?

When sinners were converted to Christ in the New Testament, the preacher was always present; the word of God was always declared. Those who wanted to become Christians always believed, repented of sins, confessed Jesus Christ, and were baptized into Christ for remission of sins.

Hear Jesus: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Listen to Peter: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:36-38). Is it possible that both Jesus and Peter are wrong in what they said? Certainly not!! Surely, honest and sincere readers of the Bible would make no such assertion.

Reasonable men and women will agree that Saul obeyed the same gospel that all others obeyed in becoming Christians in apostolic times (I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

If Saul were saved on the Damascus



W. A. Holley

Road, Saul didn't know it; for he asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). If Saul were saved on the Damascus Road, Jesus didn't know it; for his reply to Saul's question was, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). And if Saul were saved on the Damascus Road, Ananias didn't know it; for he understood that Saul's sins were as yet unforgiven. Ananias commanded Saul: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Does " . . . Calling on the name of the Lord" in Acts 22:16 refer to praying to God and asking to be saved through prayer? The answer is NO! There is a rule in grammar which says, "The active participle following an injunction points out the manner in which it is to be obeyed." Jesus did not say, "He that believeth and PRAYETH shall be saved" (Cf., Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 10:48; Romans 6:3-4).

Why, then, did Jesus appear unto Saul? We shall permit Jesus Christ to settle this matter: Listen as Saul quotes Christ: "And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:14-18). Other scriptures having great bearing on the subject we are discussing

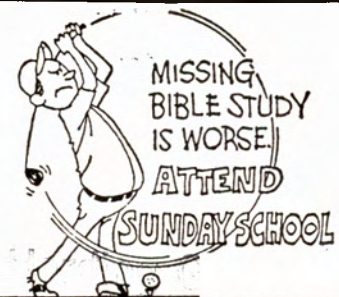
are Acts 9:15 and 22:14-15; I Corinthians 9:1; 15:8.

From the scriptures cited it is evident that Jesus wanted Saul to be an apostle. Qualifications necessary for one to be chosen as an apostle are stated in Acts 1:21-22: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

Thus Saul (later called "Paul") became an apostle. "Paul, an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead:), and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia. . . ." (Galatians 1:1-2). Here is the biblical reason why Jesus personally appeared to Saul. It is not necessary for Jesus personally to appear to any one now. The written word of God (John 20:30-31) possesses power to convert sinners to Christ, if sinners will but believe and obey (Hebrews 4:12; I Peter 1:22-25).

We still have the ORIGINAL apostles as recorded in the New Testament; they need no successors (I Corinthians 4:9). The New Testament apostles guide and direct and rule through their words as written in the Holy Bible. The Lord Jesus saved Saul (as he saves all sinners), when he heard and believed and obeyed the Lord's gospel truth.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.





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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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Conversion

(No. 8)

We have considered Saul before his conversion, as being a Jew who had much to give up (Philippians 3:4-8; Galatians 1:13-14). A man of fame, power, fortune and popularity, he traded these to become part of a despised, poor, and unpopular group -- the Christians. His conversion serves as a great evidence of Christianity,



Neil Myers

and proof of the resurrection of Jesus. "Let us remember that no infidel now has so great opportunity to disprove the claims of Christianity, nor such important reasons for doing so, as Saul did." Yet he could not! Thus he changed! He already had been "religious," but was not a Christian. Some think that if a person leaves one religion and becomes a simple, non-denominational New Testament Christian, that he is bad, or his faith is shallow; but not so. Saul was religious, and did right by changing! It takes great strength of character and faith in God and his word to make such a change.

Saul's Conversion

Saul was going to Damascus when the Lord appeared to him. Jesus did NOT appear to Saul to preach to him, for the gospel then (as now) was in "earthen vessels" (11 Corinthians 4:7). Nor did Christ tell him what to do to be saved or pardoned: Ananias did this (Acts 22:16). Jesus appeared to him to qualify him as an apostle (Acts 1:21-22). His appearance to Saul was "for this purpose, to make thee a minister" (attendant, special servant) "and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" (Acts

Continued On Page 3

To Save Souls We Must Cooperate With God

Through the centuries the value of co-operation has repeatedly been recognized. Every great task is made easier when the combined efforts of the participants can be had. The sooner Christians realize the role of each toward the salvation of the lost, the sooner great results will be forthcoming.

Marcus Aurelius, a great Roman statesman and philosopher, and later Emperor, once said: "We have been born for mutual help, like the feet, like the hands, like the rows of upper and lower teeth. To act in opposition to one another is therefore contrary to nature."

Many would not think of openly opposing an effort of another Christian in the interest of a lost soul; yet, the very failure of one to lend his encouragement is a hindrance.

Paul explained cooperation in I Corinthians 12:14-18: "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall



Edsel Burleson

say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

All goes well as one travels along the highway as long as all four tires are fully inflated. When one tire decides not to "cooperate," the rest are then ineffective. A chain may be used for an important job; but if one link decides not to "cooperate," it destroys the work of the others.

The wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt by cooperation. Nehemiah said, "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work" (4:6).

God can grow trees, raise mountains, populate the world, or fill the space with stars; but he has arranged that in the salvation of souls and the expansion of his kingdom we must cooperate with him to the completion of the task.

"Christ has no hands but our hands

To do his work today;

He has no feet but our feet

To lead men in his way;

He has no tongue but our tongues

To tell men how he died;

He has no help but our help

To bring them to his side."

—420 7th Street S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

Faith

(No. 5)

Martin Luther and Faith Alone

Mr. R. Laird Harris in his "Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible," page 18, says: "The two great principles of the Reformation were justification by faith alone, and the supreme authority of the Bible." He then adds that the "most enduring fruits of the works . . ." of Luther, was "Luther's translation of the Bible, a translation which, four centuries later, is still loved by many a German." Luther has commonly



Frank D. Young

been quoted as believing James and Paul could not be reconciled on faith and works. It is doubtless true that the German people -- and I suspect Lutherans elsewhere -- do love Luther's translation. However, I often have wondered: if "faith alone" is taught in the Bible, why did Luther feel the need to add the word "alone" to God's word? In Romans 3:28 Paul said, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." But in this verse (Romans 3:28) Luther inserted the word "alone," thus adding to what Paul had said. (Incidentally our own brethren need to quote correctly. It was not Romans 1:17; nor was it Romans 5:1. Our

brethren were wrong when they assign Luther's addition to these passages). Does Romans 3:28 teach "faith alone?" Not as long as James 2:24 is true. James says, "You see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT by faith only." Romans 3:28 and Romans 5:1 teach that salvation is "by faith" and not by the law. But neither is it by faith ALONE!

The Faith That Saves

Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). The apostle Peter, when he gave emphasis to our redemption which is by "the precious blood of Christ," added: "who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth . . . being born again" (1 Peter 1:18-23).

Luke says, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). But surely not all "believers" are in Christ. Not every believer is added to the Lord. To illustrate: Luke in his gospel (4:34), quotes one with an "unclean devil" as saying, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." From circumstances like this, James wrote, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest

Continued On Page 3

Lessons From A Lost Cause

A restoration movement began in New England at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Led by Elias Smith and Dr. Abner Jones, a host of pious souls broke with denomination-ism and determined to go back to the Bible. Smith wrote: "that we might be prepared to form ourselves into a church according to the New Testament, and to be called Christians, without any sectarian name added" (*The Life, Conversion, Preaching, Travels, and Suffering of Elias Smith, 1816, p. 298*). Their movement came to be known as the Christian Connection. Crowds of up to 3,000 flocked to hear the old gospel proclaimed. Daniel Hix reported 662 additions to the cause in 1808. Flourishing congregations sprung up all over New England. Their success, however, was short lived. In his book, *The Christians of New England*, James Gardner identifies a number of serious mistakes in judgment, faith and practice that brought an early and shameful demise to their great movement. We will list these without comment, asking the reader to look around him in the brotherhood. Think about the preachers, programs, and papers, the sermons, attitudes and practices around you and see if any of these deadly symptoms are evident among us today.



John Waddey

"The most serious problem facing the Christians by the 1830's was not a particular false doctrine, but rather the absence of doctrine at all" (p. 82).

"The Christians grew increasingly reluctant to hold themselves or each other to the biblical standard" (p. 82).

Their preaching soon "gave way to vague

appeals to every man to do that which was right in his own eyes" (p. 82).

"Jones' preaching gradually lost its challenge to the world. He gave up the demanding intensity of a prophet for the emotionalism of a revivalist" (p. 56).

They came "to accept a large number of converts as proof that God approves of a particular church . . ." (p. 56). They "regard(ed) bigger as necessarily better" (p. 82).

"One of the worst effects of the mania for numerical growth was the prestige it gave some of the most unstable and unprincipled ministers among the Christians" (p. 83).

"As their first generation of great leaders grew old and died, the Christians began to listen to a class of preachers who were more showmen than saints, more publicity agents than biblical scholars" (p. 83).

"Closely associated with their passion for outward success was the fundamental problem of emotionalism" (p. 83). "Preachers found it easier to frighten or excite people into the church than to convince them" (p. 84).

"The Christians . . . generally followed the denominational practice of preaching on short passages of scripture, usually no more than a verse or two, without any detailed study of the Bible" (p. 102).

"Where Jones and Smith had pled for no creed but the Bible, many among the second generation of Christians wanted no creed at all, but even the word of God" (p. 101).

"The Christians gradually changed their teaching concerning the organization of the local church" (p. 78).

"Beginning about 1825 the Christians began to refer unashamedly to themselves as a denomination among denominations, still pleading for unity among all the followers of Christ . . ." (p. 78).

In December of 1831 Mark Fernold, a leading Christian preacher wrote "that while we had enlarged our borders, we had lost sight of some of the landmarks" (p. 85).

In 1831 William Miller, father of the modern Adventist denomination, began his work in New England. "He found a particularly

receptive audience in the Christian Connection Churches of New England" (p. 114). "Perhaps as many as half of all the New England Christians came to believe in . . . Miller's prophecy of doom . . ." (p. 115). "In 1844 "The Christian Connection lost approximately half it's total membership in a single year" (p. 122). Although Miller's predictions of Christ's return failed, his adherents could not go back. They flowed into the newly formed Advent Christian Church. "Many small congregations were wiped out, and larger ones were severely crippled" (p. 122).

"Finally in 1929 the remnant that was left joined with the Congregational Church, now known as the United Church of Christ, thus officially ending the history of the Christian Connection" (p. 122).

A wise man has said, "He that does not remember the lessons of history is doomed to repeat the mistakes of history." The mistakes that destroyed the New England Restoration will destroy us today. It is alarming that all of those fallacies are found in our midst today. If they are allowed to flourish, they will produce a bitter harvest.

May all of God's people renew their commitment to restoring the church of the Bible by conforming in every detail to the New Testament of Jesus her Lord.

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

Faith

Continued From Page 2

well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). No, not every believer is saved! Not every "believer" IN CHRIST is saved! John says: "As he (Christ) spoke these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, 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 8:30-32). But our Lord spoke again: John (12:42-43) says: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." In Matthew 10:32-33 our Lord contrasts "confessing" Christ, with "denying" him, and says: "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven." Here Jesus declares that "faith-only" believers are not saved believers!

Only ONE kind of believers is saved. Read Acts 2:37-44: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart" (a peculiar believer, if saved!) "and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, '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. . . Then they that gladly received his word were baptized . . . And all that believed were together . . ." Acts 4:32 adds this note: "And the multitude of them that BELIEVED were of one heart and of one soul . . ." One does not read, in the Bible, about saved "believers" in Christ, until after their baptism into Christ. It is absolutely true, that salvation by faith, includes baptism for the remission of sins. —500 Third Ave. N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

Conversion

Continued From Page 2

26:16).

From Acts 1:22 we learn that in order for one to be an apostle of Jesus, it was necessary for him "to be a witness with us of his resurrection." In defense of his apostleship, Paul asked: "Am I not an apostle? . . . have I not seen Christ Jesus our Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9:1). He also wrote: "And last of all he was seen of me . . ." (1 Corinthians 15:8). He states, "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" (11 Corinthians 11:5; note also 12:11). Thus the appearance of Jesus to Saul was to fully qualify him to be an apostle of Jesus.

Saul Believed, Repented, Confessed the Lord, and was Baptized

He entered the city of Damascus and prayed three days and nights without eating or drinking. On the road to Damascus he became a believer in Jesus. His actions now indicate he has repented of his past sins. Repentance is a change of mind that results in a change of life for the better. Ananias, God's messenger (Acts 9:10-15), came with a message for Saul: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"

(Acts 22:16). Saul was NOT saved on the road to Damascus, nor during the three days and nights of prayer -- for when Ananias came he still retained his "sins" (Acts 22:16). Upon his obedience in the act of baptism, the blood of Christ would "wash away" his sins. The blood of Jesus is WHAT washes away sins (Revelation 1:5); but we contact the blood WHEN we are baptized into his death (Romans 6:3), where his blood was shed (John 19:31-34).

Note: (1) No alien sinners in the book of Acts were saved without water baptism. (2) When salvation and baptism are mentioned together, salvation always follows baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:20-21). (3) Baptism is the means by which we enter the death of Jesus, where we come into contact with his precious blood (Romans 6:3-4; John 19:31-34).

Dear reader, do what Saul did! Become what he became, live like he lived, and go where he went.

(More later).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549

Fifty Years A Gospel Preacher

The first sermon I preached was the last Sunday in June, 1937. I was encouraged to preach by my parents, my late uncle, H. M. Phillips, Howard Horton, and James Tolle. The initial sermon was entitled, "The Whole Duty of Man." Roy Key (of Town Creek, Alabama) led the singing that Sunday at my home congregation at Ridgetop, Tennessee. I have done local work in five states. I have conducted 162 gospel meetings, and have preached at 210 congregations. It has been my privilege to speak on 20 different college lectureships. Gospel meetings have been conducted in 10 states. I have presented more than 60 "Restoration Series" at congregations throughout the brotherhood.



Dabney Phillips

What have I learned while preaching fifty

years? First, I have learned the value of committing scriptures to memory (Psalms 119:11; Colossians 3:16). Second, I have learned to work with and under an eldership, or peacefully make a change. Third, I have learned not to yield to ministerial infidelity by trying to please men, to love the present world, to espouse hobbies, or to be filled with envy of others.

There have been changes in gospel preaching during these fifty years. A false concept of love has developed. Love is not excluded from the teaching of Christ (I John 5:3). "Grace" (by some preachers) has been stressed out of Biblical perspective. I have observed a downplay of doctrine (Acts 2:42; I Timothy 4:16). There are those who are maintaining that vocal music in worship is a church of Christ "tradition." Recently in a gospel meeting the visiting evangelist did not give the plan of salvation. Problems, such as "Crossroadism," "unity in diversity," and the purpose of water baptism are now being questioned by some members of the body of Christ.

"Itch" for novelty is ancient (Amos 8:11; II Timothy 4:1-5). There is today an undue emphasis on youth and recreation. Too many

are becoming politically involved. Too many today are presenting "ethical sermons" only, and strike the theme of do-good-ism. Fifty years ago the family of God underscored the identity of the church, and felt that the fundamentals were a MUST in preaching.

There are some present day pluses. The gospel is being gotten out of the building. Multiple uses of television, radio, and the printed page are being employed. Workshops are available for preachers, elders, and Bible class teachers. There is an increase in mission and benevolent work. To my knowledge, fifty years ago the only child-care facility among us was the home at Spring Hill, Tennessee, which opened in 1913. Today there are numerous facilities for caring for the young, and many for the aged.

The evening time of a preacher's life can be sweet, peaceful, and rewarding. Through God's providence I have reached that beautiful and mellowing plateau of life. How sweet and tranquil are the memories. I have been blessed with a faithful wife of 44 years, and four devoted sons and their families. I pray the Lord will permit me to continue to serve him for additional years.

—100 Carlton Place, Gadsden, AL 35901.

Spiritual Robbers

We believe that most people will agree that 'religion' in America is in a state of confusion, division, graft, and corruption. People are dismayed at the constant begging for more and more millions of dollars, while they see the so-called "Ministers" of such funds wallowing in wealth and luxury, far in excess of any reasonable needs. Yet, they continue to beg, cajole, threaten, promise, and pressure their followers for more and more. We have to ask the question: "Is this the kind of 'religion' for which our Lord died?" We think most will agree that it certainly is not.



Roy Fuller

It is evident that many "Ministers" of modern America are committing robbery by unscriptural use of God's word instead of using a hand gun. The Bible says: "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:18). Yes indeed, they use their skills of cunning and deceit to rob widows, poor people on limited incomes, and others who are carried away with their promises of "pie-in-the-sky blessings," if you will only GIVE! The ultimate tragedy is that there is no law against this kind of robbery. Still sadder is the fact that they are not only robbing listeners of their money, they are robbing them of their souls. In view of this, is it not reasonable for all people to ask some straightforward questions and seek some straightforward answers?

Some of the questions which should be asked are: 1. "What is the final authority in religion today?" (Matthew 28:18-20; John

12:48). 2. "What is the truth?" and, "Where can it be found?" (John 8:32; 17:17; II Timothy 2:15) 3. "Are there false teachers in religion today?" and, "How can we know of such?" (II John 4:1; II Peter 2:1; Mark 13:22) 4. "Is there one true church on earth which teaches and practices the truth, which can be verified?" 5. "Does the true church practice benevolence and aid to mankind with support from its own members, instead of begging from the general populace?" (I John 3:17; Galatians 6:10).

We believe that these questions are both fair and important. We recommend that the scripture references be studied as given at

the end of each question. Remember, our Lord said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). We urge all people to be noble as were the Bereans, who "Searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). It is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith, to test all teachings of men against the word of God and reject those who do not teach the truth. And furthermore, let all who are taught in the truth be brave and forthcoming in exposing the frauds and hypocrites who prey upon the unwary and unsuspecting to fulfill their own avarice and greed.

—Rt. 4, Box 479, Elba, AL 36323.

Third Preachers and Church Leaders Forum Scheduled

E. Claude Gardner

The Third Preachers and Church Leaders Forum is set for Oct. 10, 1987, and will focus on "The Discipling Movement." The forum will be held at Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN.

A full agenda will cover topics such as discipling, pray partners, evangelistic methods, Bible talks, church plantings, house churches, organization of the church and more. The panel will consist of two participants selected by the New York City church and two selected by F-HC President E. Claude Gardner.

In recent years, a movement began in the brotherhood with the Crossroads church in Gainesville, FL. The method of evangelism used has spread into other areas, where some congregations have modified the plan. Today a cleavage has developed in the brotherhood. The forum is designed to discuss the differences in a brotherly manner with the hope that unity among brethren may be promoted.

—President, Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, TN 38340.

A Little Bird

Glenn Colley

While it is true that all of us face temptations that are somewhat peculiar to us, there are others which are quite common. For example, I think we all are tempted occasionally to tell things that really are not any of our business.

A verse in the Old Testament is interesting along these lines: "Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter" Ecclesiastes 10:20.

When I tell something "out-of-turn" I have no guarantee that the person I told can keep from telling it. After all, I apparently wasn't able to.

James 3:2 says, "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect (or complete) man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

Today let us pay particular attention to tasting our words before we speak them.

—509 E. Madison, Pulaski, TN 38478.



(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 24

FRIDAY, JULY 24, 1987

Number 30

Rights And Responsibilities Of Gospel Preachers

In the ninth chapter of First Corinthians, the apostle Paul discusses his rights and privileges as a preacher of the gospel. He had proclaimed the message of Christ in Corinth, converted many and organized a church. Now some of them were challenging his authority and integrity as a minister of Christ.



John Waddey

The chapter under consideration is an elaboration of the preacher's prerogatives and duties, and is most helpful for both congregations and preachers today.

A Preacher's Rights

Paul claimed the right of freedom in Christ. "Am I not free?" (9:1). He wrote the Galatians: "For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (5:1). Christ is our only Lord and Master; no man has the right to dominate our spiritual lives, nor dictate our actions (Romans 14:4). Since each shall give account of himself to God (Romans 14:12), he does not have to answer to any man or group. He must not however use his freedom for an occasion to indulge the flesh (Galatians 5:13). Brethren sometimes forget that their preacher has the freedom to have his own home, to buy whatever clothes and possessions he can afford, to live his private life as he chooses. Of course we are quick to note that his freedom is not unlimited. He does not have the freedom to live in sin, nor to bring shame upon the church. God expects us to respect our

preacher's freedom, even as we would want ours respected (Matthew 7:12).

Preachers have the right to have a home and family. Paul asked "Have we no right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" (9:5). Catholicism has denied her preachers the right to marriage and a family. They do so in the face of this clear teaching. Marriage is honorable for all (Hebrews 13:4), including ministers. Experience has shown us that on the whole, those men can function best for the Lord, who have faithful helpmates. It is important to note that Paul said he had the right to a wife who was a believer, i.e., a Christian. A wife who does not share the faith would be a hindrance.

Those who devote their lives to preaching God's word have the right to financial support while so doing. Paul asked, "Have we no right to eat and to drink?" (9:4). Note that he uses rhetorical questions not for information but to affirm his case. "Or I only, and Barnabas, have we not a right to forbear working? What soldier ever served at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof . . . Even so did the Lord obtain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (9:6-14).

There have always been those disciples who resented the fact that preachers are supported for their work. They have their cute jokes about 'greedy,' 'lazy' preachers, and always raise a question about a man's motives if he is supported. Such an attitude suggests that either the person is ignorant of God's teaching, or that he ignores such plain instruction as this. To the Galatians Paul wrote: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (6:7). Again he wrote: "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (I Timothy 5:18). It is appropriate to add that the faith-

ful minister deserves support comparable to brethren with similar training, experience, and competence in the secular realm. Preachers pay the same prices for food and clothes, transportation and housing, as do others. The day of miracles is past: they cannot multiply loaves and fishes as did Jesus! No preacher should be treated as a beggar if he has done his job well!


A preacher has the right to waive his lawful rights. After stating his prerogatives Paul said, "But I have used none of these things; and I write not these things that it may be so done in my case . . ." (9:15). Some men may choose to work a secular job to provide their income while they preach, or to supplement the limited salary of a small church. That is their privilege. A man may forego marriage, or any number of earthly amenities, for the kingdom's sake. I have the right not to claim these privileges; but you do not have the right to deny them to me.

Responsibilities

It is a preacher's duty to preach the gospel. "If I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (9:16). Those who would fill the post, and receive the support of a congregation, have a solemn duty to study -- and then to proclaim -- God's will to both saints and sinners. There is no place in the pulpit of God's church for the doctrines and commandments of men (Matthew 15:6-9). While an occasional funny story or illustration is in order, these must always be secondary to the word of God. Those preachers whose talks consist of fascinating fables and personal experiences with only a sprinkling of Scripture, prostitute the Lord's pulpit, bringing shame to themselves and harm to the church! We are in

Continued On Page 4

Did Jesus Die For All Men?



Words Of Truth
(USPS 691-760)

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Acts 26:25

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Conversion

(No. IX)

In earlier articles we have considered Saul BEFORE and DURING his conversion. Saul heard, believed, repented, confessed Jesus as "Lord," and was baptized to "wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27; I Corinthians 12:13). Saul spoke of himself as the "chief" of sinners (I Timothy 1:15), yet he could --and did-- become a Christian. There-



Neil Myers

fore none are so bad but that they can change; and none are so good but that they need to change (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 53:6; I John 1:9-10). He said his conversion is a "pattern" for all (I Timothy 1:16).

Saul Became A Christian

Saul's faith in, and his obedience to, the gospel resulted in his becoming a New Testament "Christian." Later he preached the gospel to king Agrippa and urged him to be a "Christian" (Acts 26:27-29). Saul was added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47). He preached immediately for the church at Damascus (Acts 9:20). Later he preached "boldly" in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-31). Saul returned to Tarsus (Acts 9:30), during which time Barnabas worked with the church at Antioch (Acts 11:19-25). Later Barnabas went to Tarsus to get Paul ("Saul," Acts 13:9) to help in the work. During their work at Antioch the name "Christian" was divinely given to the disciples (Acts 11:26).

Note: Paul preached for the church at Damascus, Jerusalem and Antioch. All were simply "Christians," united in Christ. He could preach the same gospel (Galatians 1:6-9) in each congregation. He was a member of the New Testament church in a

Continued On Page 4

The Calvinists say, "NO." Their claim is that Jesus made a limited atonement. We quote: "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number



W. A. Holley

is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished" (Quoted from **The Westminster Confession**).

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath God chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving him thereto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Therefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only.

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice" (Ibid).

From the above quotation, what do we learn?

(1) That God, before the foundation of the world, determined who should be saved and who should be lost.

(2) That man has no choice of where he will spend eternity.

(3) That man cannot do anything to be saved, and that man cannot do anything to be lost.

(4) If the foregoing statements are true, all efforts of a religious nature are worthless, useless! Preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ is time and effort wasted, if God from eternity has already determined the eternal destiny of the elect and the non-elect. Logically, from the Calvinistic point of view, a man might just as well curse as pray, might as well go to a saloon as to church, so far as his salvation is concerned. --Who can believe it??

The Bible does teach election, predestination, and foreordination -- but it is conditioned! The elect are those who obey God (Titus 1:1; I Peter 1:2; 2:6; Hebrews 5:8-9). As taught in the Bible, God's predestination and foreordination is of character, not of individuals. Verily, God has **predestinated and foreordained** that all who will hear his word, repent

of every sin, confess the lovely name of Jesus before men, be baptized in the name of Jesus for remission of sins, and remain faithful unto death, shall be saved eternally (John 6:44-45; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-4; Revelation 2:10).

That Jesus died for all is clearly taught in the Bible. According to Acts 17:26, God is the Creator of all men. All men have sinned and need salvation (Romans 3:9, 23). God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). God loves all the world (John 3:16).

"The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

Through Abraham God promised to bless all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3). "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8). Verse 16 shows that God's blessings were to come through Jesus Christ.

That Jesus died for all people is shown in I John 2:2, which reads: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only" (those already saved through obedience to the gospel), "but also for the sins of the whole world" (those yet unsaved). The apostle John recognized the world was/is lost and needs to be saved, because "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19).

Almighty God desires the salvation of all men, not just a limited few: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4). For this cause Jesus "tasted death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9).

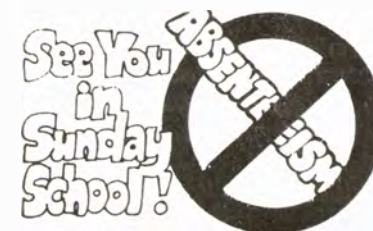
Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). God has provided natural bread for all, yet it is a conditional gift (Matthew 6:11; II Thessalonians 3:10-11); even so, spiritual bread offered by Jesus Christ is a conditional gift -- conditioned upon the Lord's commands of faith, repentance, confession, and baptism (Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 2:38). In no place does the Holy Bible teach that God unconditionally predestinated some to salvation and others to destruction --without regard to human responsibility.

Some for whom Christ died can be lost: "For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died" (I Corinthians 8:11; cf. Romans 14:15, ASV). It is utter folly for one to argue that one cannot fall from grace!!

Jesus has offered salvation to all (John 12:47-48). All must be taught the truth of God (John 6:44-45; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). All are invited to come unto Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 22:17).

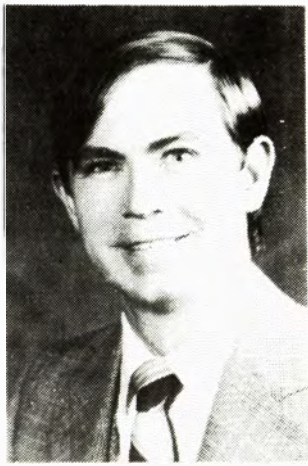
"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," said Jesus Christ (John 7:17).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.



What's In A Name?

The last few years in this writer's estimation, have seen an increase in name-calling among brethren. Faithful gospel preachers are being labeled with phrases and descriptions that may sound fairly innocent but which carry serious implications. Name-calling among God's people is not new. King Ahab long ago called Elijah "thou troubler of Israel" (I Kings 18:17). In New Testament times, Paul and Silas were accused of having "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).



Weldon Langfield

The surprising thing about the modern surge of name-calling, however, is that much of it is being done not by those openly opposed to the gospel. Rather, some brethren who pride themselves on their love and tolerance specialize in this practice. What are some of the names being cast about?

"Legalist" is a favorite. The term has been so overworked in the pulpits of some congregations that we have heard "rank-and-file" members using it in casual conversation. Let us not be deceived by its familiarity; to call a man a "legalist" is to make a very serious charge. According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, "legalism" is "the doctrine of salvation by good works." A "legalist," then, believes that one can literally be saved by his own righteous deeds. This philosophy eliminates the need for a savior or for any kind of divine atonement. Because of the rejection of Christ, which is implicit in the doctrine of legalism, the "legalist" is "severed from Christ" and "fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). To call a man a "legalist," then, is to say that he is outside of God's grace and headed for hell! Biblically, it is to say that he is a false teacher of the worst stripe.

This writer was called a "legalist" by another Christian, who then suggested that while "legalism" had characterized the church since the beginning of the restoration movement, a new age was dawning. This writer then pointed out to that brother that if "legalism" had characterized the brotherhood up till now, his deceased grandmother and virtually all Christians for the past 150 years were doomed to hell. According to Galatians 5:4, "legalists" cannot be saved in their "legalism."

"Negative" is a common label. In areas of expedience, we need to avoid undue "negativism." Growing churches, like businesses, benefit from vision and creativity. But what about the realm of Bible teaching? First, the Bible contains many truths which (from a human standpoint) appear "negative." The sins of the Pharisees (Matthew 23), the fall of Jerusalem (Matthew 24) and statements throughout the Old Testament prophets and New Testament epistles are quite "negative." In fact, virtually every book of the New Testament contains numerous "negative" statements.

Secondly, a gospel preacher has no right to cull out what he considers 'positive' in the Bible, and present that to the exclusion of what he thinks is 'negative.' Faithful

preachers will teach "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), and will "reprove, rebuke (and) exhort" (II Timothy 4:2). God has a name for those who tell their listeners only what they want to hear: "teachers after their own lusts" (II Timothy 4:3).

"Concordance preacher" is another pejorative. This writer was taught a valuable truth some years ago: If the whole counsel of God is to be known on any subject, one must, with the aid of an exhaustive concordance, look up every verse in which the subject is dealt with. These verses then must be studied in light of each other. We are now told that in certain quarters this approach leads to the "insidious" practice of "concordance preaching."

Frankly, it is not hard to understand why

some want to belittle and discourage the exacting use of a concordance: it exposes many of their misconceptions and errors! A careful study of the word "works" proves salvation is not by grace alone (John 5:36; 9:4; James 2:21-26). An examination of the word "church" proves there is only one body spoken of in the Bible (Matthew 16:18; Acts 8:3; et. al.). And a study of the word "fellowship" indicates that in the early church it existed only among obedient believers (II Corinthians 6:14; Philippians 2:1; I John 1:7).

What's in a name? Sometimes a smoke screen to hide the real truth about the name-caller.

—2913 Brock Way, Bakersfield, CA 93306.

What Did It Cost Me?

Glenn Colley

All of us deep inside want to be people who help people. For those of us who are Christians, this is particularly important. Galatians 6:10 says, "Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." In other words, when I help others, I am doing something to please my God. There is however a part of this that deserves our reconsideration.

A little girl came home from Sunday school wanting a can of food to help fill a basket for needy people. As her mother was scanning the pantry shelves, she suggested, "You can take these cans of sardines that none of us

likes." The little girl thought a minute and with disappointment asked, "But doesn't that mean the poor people are helping us?"

Now, there is nothing wrong with giving away things that we no longer want or need. But let us make sure that that is not the total of our benevolence.

David understood this: ". . . Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price, neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing" (II Samuel 24:24).

—509 E. Madison, Pulaski, TN 38478.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity (I)

Novie C. Perry

Marvin Powell (Tennessee School of Preaching) and Burton Coffman (Houston, Texas) compiled some basic principles concerning New Testament Christianity a few years ago. These principles are basic to the fiber of New Testament Christianity, the unity of the body of Christ, and are biblically sound. In a series of articles I wish to expand on some of these principles.

One basic principle upon which Christianity is founded is the all-sufficiency and alone-sufficiency of the Bible. By the ALL-SUFFICIENCY I mean the Bible as we have it, viz., faithfully translated and transmitted since its completion in the last part of the first century. With the death of the beloved apostle on Patmos, after his writing of Revelation, the Holy Spirit finished his mission of guiding the apostles into "all of the truth," just as Jesus promised the Spirit would (John 16:13). By ALL-SUFFICIENCY of the scriptures I mean "All 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).

By ALONE-sufficiency of the Bible I mean God "through his divine power hath given unto us ALL things that pertain unto life

and godliness . . ." (II Peter 1:3) [Emphasis mine, NP]. If God has given us ALL things, what else could he give us that pertains unto life and godliness? Nothing more! Anything more than the Bible is too much; and anything less than the Bible is not enough. The Bible and it alone, is sufficient to guide man into living the godliest, holiest, and most spiritual life possible on earth. Whoever will read, study, obey from his heart, and live to the best of his ability, the teaching of the Bible, will be the happiest person on earth. God gave us the Bible to mark our pathway from earth to heaven; and Isaiah said the path would be so clearly marked that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein (Isaiah 35:8).

Of the writing of books there is no end; but the ONLY divinely-inspired, word for word, book the world has is the Bible. Paul affirmed that the things the apostles spoke were not "in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:13). The very WORDS of the Bible were chosen and given by the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. No other book on earth can make such a claim and stand up to the test of divine inspiration like the Bible.

—3133 Wellborne Dr. W., Mobile, AL 36609.

Rights And Responsibilities Of Gospel Preachers

Continued From Page 1

the business of sowing spiritual things (9:11). Social, recreational and civic matters are not the primary interest of a man of God.

A faithful preacher is concerned to "cause no hinderance to the gospel of Christ" (9:12). A responsible man will carefully weigh every word and action to make sure he brings no shame or reproach upon God's kingdom. He is thoughtful of the sensitivities of others and is concerned to help, rather than to hinder, men's souls. He knows that "how" a word is spoken is just as important as "what" is spoken (Proverbs 25:11). When exercising his privileges he will be concerned that his liberty not become a stumbling block to others.

A preacher should be willing to "become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (9:22). A wise man of God will be able to distinguish harmless social customs and traditions from the will of God. He will adapt himself in those cultural matters to gain a better hearing for the gospel. He will never trample on men's consciences in those

matters that are not essential to the gospel. Paul reflected this attitude in his dealings with different races: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews . . ." (9:20). It is a careless and reckless man who refuses to be flexible in these areas.

A true man of God practices self-control. Paul wrote: "I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected" (9:27). A public leader will oft be tempted by Satan to indulge himself in forbidden ways. Sin will present itself in attractive forms. A faithful man must be able to resist the devil (James 4:7). He must be master of his appetites and desires. Not all temptations are to immorality; there is the temptation to overeat; or to be lazy; to be extravagant in dress, in material possessions; or in one's temper and words. The mark of a mature Christian is his mastery over his members, his own body. Without self-

control one will fail as a preacher -- worse still, he cannot enter heaven (II Peter 1:5-11).

A minister must see his work as a stewardship. Paul said "I have a stewardship intrusted to me" (9:17). A steward works for another. He manages the property of his master. He realizes that he must give an accounting to his master for his work and use of the master's property. He will not take liberties with that which is not his. A preacher works for God. The congregation he serves is God's house, and he will "give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12). Men who see themselves as stewards of God make good ministers. Those who fail to understand this do not.

May God grant all who preach his gospel the wisdom to know their rights, and the zeal to fulfill their responsibilities.

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

Massive Effort Planned To Counteract Boston/Crossroads Movement

Duboise McClish

In July, 1985, brother Alvin Jennings mailed his book, *How Christianity Grows in the City*, to over 15,000 congregational addresses (unsolicited, enclosing a bill for the book!). The book is filled with speculations upon which a most dangerous system of church government, similar to that of Roman Catholicism, is advocated. Significantly, the book is dedicated to the "Boston Church of Christ," recent heir to the Gainesville, Florida, Crossroads religious empire. Brother Jennings stated in his dedication that the Boston Church has most fully implemented its dreadful tentacles into all parts of the world.

Brother Wayne Coats, Mount Juliet, TN, has now written an expose' of the Jennings book, entitled, *A Critique of How Christianity Grows in the City*, which deserves as wide a circulation as the error-filled Jennings book. The 30-page tract by Bronwen McClish Gibson, *Crossroads from the Inside*, which lays bare the insidious nature of the mind/behavior-control tactics which are used by the Boston/Crossroads leaders, also deserves the widest possible circulation among the Lord's people. Accordingly, the Pearl St. congregation in Denton, Texas, has undertaken the project of mailing a complimentary copy of the Coats book and the Gibson tract

to over 15,000 addresses, involving every congregation of the Lord's people in all of the earth! Brother Coats and sister Gibson have graciously made their publications available at their absolute cost for this worthy work. All of the materials (books, tracts, cover letters, envelopes, etc.) are on order. Without a penny of profit to anyone, with the lowest prices obtainable on all expenses involved and by using donated labor (Pearl St. man/woman power) we can accomplish this work for a mere \$25,000 (only about \$1.70 per package). The Pearl St. church is not

large, but her elders, Harry Ledbetter and Millard Smith, have shouldered the leadership in this vital effort, believing that many individuals and congregations will want to join hands with them.

If you are concerned about the trail of tragedies continuing to be produced by Crossroads/Boston advocates, and want to help stop them, please send any help you can to Church of Christ, 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201. Mark your check: "book mailing." Your assistance is needed urgently and immediately.

The Eldership (I)

Demar Elam

It has been said, "When there is only one elder, you are missing the ship!" Though the Bible does not use the suffix "-ship" when referring to elders, the use of it is not improper. However, we need not even use the term "eldership" to prove that each congregation in the New Testament had a plurality of elders . . .

Resplendently, the Bible teaches that the eldership is always a PLURALITY of specially qualified men (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 15:4, 6, 22, 23; 14:23; 20:28; 16:4; Hebrews 11:2; and I Thessalonians 5:12). The above scriptures clearly show that the churches in Ephesus and Thessalonica had elders (plural). Paul's charge to Titus says, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge" (Titus 1:5). Not only are there to be elders in every city, but in every congregation. In Acts 14:23 Paul "ordained them elders in every church, and . . . prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Where is the single passage that teaches that any New Testament church had one elder ruling over it? Acts 20:28 mentions the "overseers," not "overseer," and "yourselves," not "yourself." Why would anyone propose that the

eldership could consist of one elder when the plain teaching of the Bible contradicts it?

Paul called for the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:17), and in verse 18 we read, "And when they were come to him he said unto them . . ." Please notice the plural terms "elders," "they," and "them."

James understood that there was a plurality of elders who were to oversee the flock. He stated, "Is any sick among you? let him call the elders of the church and let them pray for him . . ." (James 5:14). Please note again the plural terms, "elders" and "them."

Peter revealed the truth that there was a plurality of elders over a church and not a single elder. He spoke of himself as one of the elders when he wrote, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed (I Peter 5:1).

Let it suffice to say that one can scripturally prove that there was in every revealed instance a plurality of elders over each congregation. To teach that a single elder can preside over a congregation is to speak without the voice of inspiration.

—185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, Georgia 30214.

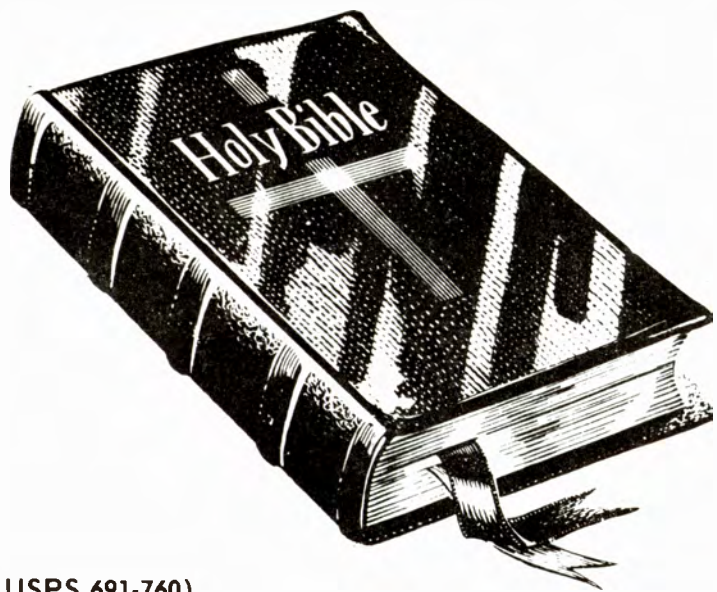
Conversion

Continued From Page 2

universal sense, yet he 'placed membership' (as we would say) when he worked and worshiped with a local congregation of the church (Acts 9:26).

Conversion made Saul a Christian, a member of the church which is the body of Christ. We must be no more -- nor less! In Christ the greatest of minds are challenged; yet the gospel is simple enough that "unlearned" men (Acts 4:13) can believe and obey it, and be saved "by grace" through "faith" (Ephesians 2:8).

—West Walker Church of Christ, Rt. 2 Box 57, Carbon Hill, AL 35549.



Words Of



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

—Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

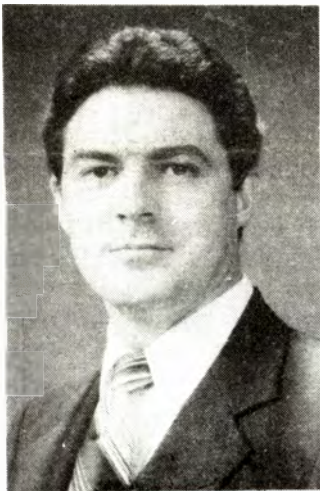
VOLUME 24

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NUMBER 31

Modest Apparel

It is Summer that time of year when many feel the need to undress publicly. What is wrong with that? Paul said, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Timothy 2:9-10). The word "modest" indicates decency, and "shamefacedness" means restraining from an unworthy act. "Sobriety" means inner government with its constant rein on all the passions and desires.



Bobby Liddell

Why should we be concerned about what is worn? Why wear clothes at all? God created Adam and Eve and put them in that perfect Paradise, in which they -- its only occupants . . . were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Genesis 2:25). After the fall, ". . . the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7). Later, Adam said to God, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat (Genesis 3:10-11)? Verse 21 says, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

The Bible shows plainly that public nakedness is shameful. Listen to II Samuel 10:4-5, "Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved off the one half of their beards,

and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away. When they told it unto David, he sent to meet them, because the men were greatly ashamed . . ." Isaiah prophesied: "So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt" (Isaiah 20:4). In giving instruction to Israel concerning an altar for sacrificing to God, God said, "Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not uncovered thereon" (Exodus 20:26).

As the priests of old were not to have their nakedness uncovered, so should Christians, who are an holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices (I Peter 2:5), likewise keep their nakedness covered. Paul says that Christians are to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God (Romans 12:1). While clothing does not determine character, character determines the type of clothing worn. One's character may be judged by the clothing he wears or does not wear. Genesis 38 is a perfect example of this. Judah was tricked by his daughter-in-law, Tamar, into lying with her. Judah thought the woman with whom he lay was a harlot for she was in the place where harlots, by custom, sat, and she was dressed as harlots dressed (Genesis 38:12-19). Women who dress as they should not, and put themselves in places they ought not to be, will be looked upon in that way today, and should not be surprised to be thus viewed and considered.

What is "modest" clothing? Sometimes one will say, "What is modest? Is one inch above the knee a modest length, but two inches immodest?" Modest apparel is not too short, but neither is it too tight. One might be covered from neck to ankle, yet be wearing a dress that is too tight, and still be immodestly dressed. One may likewise be immodestly dressed when one's dress is too thin, or when one's neckline is too low, or when one's skirt is slit too high. Modest apparel is neither

too short, too tight, too thin, nor too low. When one dresses in such a way as to attract the stares and incite the desires of men, such an one is immodestly dressed.

In a letter supposed to have been written to Emperor Hadrian (117-138 A.D.), is the following,

The Christians know and trust God. They placate those who oppress them, and make them their friends. They do good to their enemies. Their wives are absolutely pure and their daughters are modest. Their men abstain from unlawful marriages and from all impurity. If any of them have bondwomen or children, they persuade them to become Christians for the love they have for and toward them, and, they become so they call them without distinction "brother." They love one another.

Contrary to the modesty of the early Christians, Mary Quaint, dress designer, known as the "mother of the miniskirt" was quoted thusly: "Mini-clothes are symbols of those girls who do not want to wait until dark to seduce a man into bed." Theodor Reik said, "The other day the owner of one of our most elegant dress stores stated that a dress is successful when it wakens in the man who looks at the woman the wish to take it off." Christians must not fall into Satan's trap. Remember the Holy Spirit enjoins us: "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 for ever" (I John 2:15-17).

The acceptance of near nudity has promoted the moral breakdown of our nation. Statistics show that the two major influences that trigger rape and violent assault are:

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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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"Maybe Tomorrow"

Brent Missildine

James says, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). We have all heard it said so many times, "We are not promised tomorrow." But occasionally something will happen that makes us understand the reality of that truth.

Recently I was given the privilege of baptizing a sixteen-year-old young man at Indian Creek Youth Camp. I had known this young man and his family for several years through the fact that they attended the congregation where my father preaches. His parents are strong Christian people, and had brought him up to be a fine young man; but he had not yet obeyed the gospel. Through the encouragement of his family, and through the encouragement he received at camp from his friends and counselors, he recently decided to give his life to the Lord, and was baptized. He seemed so happy!

His brother picked him up from camp, and on the way home he talked of his excitement about his commitment. He talked about the strength that he had gained and his desire to be strong. His brother was pleased with his determination and his sincerity.

As they arrived home, a thunderstorm had come up, and they had to get out in the rain. As they were walking from the car to the house, suddenly the young man who had just given his life to the Lord a few days before, was struck by lightning and was killed instantly. My father and I were asked to

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Modest Apparel

Continued From Page 1

(1) Alcohol; (2) Immodest dress, pictures and movies. Mrs. Walter Ferguson wrote, "I am inclined to attribute the moral breakdown to two great changes in our society. The first is the deplorable emphasis on sex in our literature, movies and press. The second is the decline of modesty among women." Consider this: In Granby, Canada, paid admission dropped 72 percent over a five-year period when the town fathers decided to stop mixed swimming by men and women in the public swimming pool. L. M. Boyd, in an article in "The Daily Mountain Eagle" (3-3-83), said: "Favorite sports among young women are swimming, tennis and bowling. Theorists contend there's a reason. These sports in particular permit a minimum of clothing. Or at least, numerous variations of revealing costumes. Except for those female athletes of championship caliber, most sports-minded women are said to be more interested in the costume of the sport than in the sport itself."

Someone objects by saying, "Some men will lust regardless! I can wear what I want and if they lust, that is their problem!" Another might say, "Short shorts and halter tops are fashionable and comfortable, that is why I wear them." Still another might say, "Well, I want to be popular. There is nothing wrong with that is there?" Dear sisters, such excuses still do not make immodest clothing "modest," nor do they change sin into righteousness. First, one does not have to answer for the sin of another (the man who lusts -- (Matthew 5:28); but one does have to answer for dressing in a way that INCITES a man to look and lust (Galatians 5:19-21). Second, being pleasing to God (Galatians 1:10) is more important than being fashionable, "comfortable" or popular (Matthew 7:13-14).

Men do not have to be wicked nor evil-minded to be in danger when in the presence of nearly-naked women. One college

professor noted that a normal healthy man could not look long on an immodestly attired woman without entertaining thoughts unbecoming a Christian. If one claimed to be able to so do and say, "That does not bother me," one of the following must be true, he said: (1) He is too young; i.e., a child (2) He is too old; (3) He is too ignorant; (4) He is not normal or not healthy; or (5) He is lying!

David was not a wicked or evil-minded man, but he was tempted and fell into sin by seeing Bathsheba bathing in the open (II Samuel 11). How that story might have been different if Bathsheba had not so done.

Fathers and husbands, of all people, should know the effect of looking upon an immodestly dressed woman. Amazingly, some men still allow their wives and daughters to publicly display themselves! Suppose a teen-age daughter is about to leave the house dressed only in her underwear. Do you think her Dad would allow that? Certainly not! However, the same young lady can stroll out of the house in a bikini -- which displays more of her body than her underwear did -- and her father does not so much as lift an eyebrow. Something is wrong.

A Christian man has both the RIGHT and the DUTY to set standards for the women in his home. God gave him that right and duty as the "head" of the house (Ephesians 5). God expects him to carry out his responsibility, and will hold him accountable.

Christians are to be "examples" (I Timothy 4:12), not mindless followers of the world's wicked ways. Some day, we shall give an account of the things done in this body (II Corinthians 5:10). Shall we approach that day as the Devil's disciples, dressed as prostitutes? or, with robes that are washed white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 3:4-5)?

—P.O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580.

Dr. John Thomas, Heretic

Among the early preachers of the Restoration was Dr. John Thomas. Born in England he immigrated to America in 1832. He first lived in Cincinnati where he became acquainted with Major Daniel Gano who was associated with the Restoration efforts of Alexander Campbell. Gano introduced the young immigrant to Walter Scott. After hearing one sermon and a Sunday afternoon spent with Scott, Thomas was immersed in the Miami Canal for the remission of his sins that very night.



John Waddey

In 1833 he made the acquaintance of Alexander Campbell. Campbell insisted that he present a sermon. This was the beginning of a preaching career that wrought havoc and ruin to the churches of Virginia and

Great Britain.

Thomas was a medical doctor and at times practiced medicine for his livelihood. Circumstances soon thrust him into regular preaching and the editorship of a religious journal called the Apostolic Advocate. From the beginning he was obsessed with the Old Testament prophecies, and those of the Revelation. In his first issue he set forth his speculations about a millennial reign of Christ, which theories later grew to be the dominate theme of his teaching.

The doctor had an exaggerated view of his wisdom and scholarship. We see it reflected in his words about his article on the Revelation:

"... and I flatter myself that I shall not have laid before my readers the result of my humble efforts, without having substantiated my claim to the discovery or solution of certain problems in the Apocalypse, which have hitherto baffled the ingenuity and learning of some of the most celebrated illuminati of the religious world" (Dr. Thomas, His Life and Work, p. 30-31.) He often styled

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“Maybe Tomorrow”

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preach the funeral. On Monday I had baptized him; only six days later I was preaching his funeral.

Needless to say, everyone who knew him was in shock and disbelief. Anyone who has children can imagine the pain his parents and family have had to endure. He was so young! He was so full of life and joy in his faith! And now so suddenly gone! It leaves us with many questions.

We must trust God. None of us, however, grieves for him. We feel the pain of our own loss, and the loss of his family. We have every confidence that he is experiencing the reward promised to him on the condition of his obedience. He had obeyed the Lord.

But what if he had continued to put off his

obedience? What if he had thought, like so many often do: “Why do it now? There’s always plenty of time.” But we never know if our next breath will be our last. When we are driving our cars, we never know if, over the next hill, another car will be on the wrong side of the road. We do not know, if we walk into a restaurant, that a psychotic killer might not pull out a machine gun and start shooting. We never know if a simple accident at home might have fatal consequences. Life has no guarantees.

Knowing this should not put a morbid gloom over our lives, nor make us constantly afraid of daily living. But it should make us realize our need to be in a right relationship with our Lord at all times, and not to count on

tomorrow. It should cause us to spend our time on the most important things in life, and spend less time in the trivialities that so often bog us down.

Life is so fragile, and death must come to us all, some sooner than others. But as Paul tells us, through Jesus Christ we can have the final victory! (I Corinthians 15:54-58). Knowing this, we need not fear. The apostle Paul said, “Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Proverbs 27:1).

—2304 26th Avenue, Northport, AL 35476.

Dr. John Thomas, Heretic

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his lectures as “the Deep Things of God” (Ibid., p. 145).

The first agitation Thomas stirred had to do with rebaptism. Contrary to the other Restoration preachers, he insisted that no immersion was valid unless the convert had a complete understanding of the gospel doctrine of the subject. Many of the preachers and members of our churches had been baptized as Baptists before learning of the back to the Bible movement. Thomas viewed them as not truly saved. This caused a raging controversy to erupt. (It is interesting that today almost all of our brethren would subscribe to the same position as Thomas on denominational baptism).

Soon he began to advocate that the spirits of wicked men in no way survived the experiences of death, and thus he denied everlasting punishment. This prompted further controversy and caused Alexander Campbell to write a number of articles in his *Millennial Harbinger* exposing these errors. In October of 1838 Campbell and Thomas met and debated his doctrine at Richmond, Va. Campbell insisted that it not be opened to the general public, but only to brethren, and that it not be published lest it cause embarrassment to the Lord’s cause. Thomas was no match for Campbell and his friends urged him to sign an agreement that he would cease to publicize his views for the welfare of the church. This he honored for only a short while.

When he recommended his work, it was filled with hateful personal attacks against Campbell whom he viewed as the epitome of all evil. It is evident that he saw Campbell as the chief obstacle to his goal of parating the restoration churches for his own new movement.

The damage done to our churches in the southern Piedmont and southeastern sections of Virginia was great. Before this heretic appeared on the scene, it looked as though the Restoration plea would sweep the whole land. Dr. Chester Bullard wrote, “But oh, what a blunder to have Dr. Thomas. . . . The animus of this visit of his, together with his trailing “Advocate,” threw a pall over the church not lifted for twenty years. Even

A. Campbell . . . could not remove the blighting mildew” (J. Z. Tyler, *The Disciples of Christ in Virginia*, p. 102.) For a while, he continued, “the cause did indeed seem dead in Southeastern Virginia.”

His attitude and tone toward those with whom he disagreed was bitter and insulting, whether they be sectarians or brethren. When the Episcopalians allowed the brethren to use their meeting house, Thomas insulted them, to the chagrin of the disciples. A pious Methodist family extended him lodging in their home, yet he refused to participate in their devotional prayers since they were unimmersed. Such an arrogance turned the local citizens against the church and made it very difficult for others to gain a hearing.

In 1844 Thomas pulled away a small group of disciples from the church in Richmond and began separate meetings. This was the beginning of a new religious sect later to be known as the Christadelphians, or Christ’s Brethren. Only four or five were then meeting with him.

Campbell well described Thomas as “another of these infallible dogmatists, so supremely devoted to his own opinions, and his own glory in defending them, so confident in asserting them, so diligent in propagating them. . . .” (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1837, p. 578.)

Later Campbell wrote:

Dr. Thomas is “no longer building upon the foundation with us, but having set out to form a party for himself, has openly completed the character of a schismatic as delineated by the Apostle Paul, and as such is to be rejected by all the brethren. He is now engaged in the work of discord and division in Eastern Virginia” (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1843, p. 419).

In 1847 Thomas concluded “that when he was immersed by Walter Scott, he was immersed into a sect merely, and not into Christ;” thus he was rebaptized according to his new-found “faith in the hope of Israel.” Following this, he published his *Confession and Abjuration* which set forth the reasons for his change and the sum and substance of his new-found faith (Dr. Thomas, p. 152-164).

Not finding a ready reception in the States, Thomas set sail for England June 1, 1848.

His biography (which consists largely of his personal correspondence and published writings) makes it evident he was determined to invade the “restoration” churches there to build his following. Having received letters of recommendation from sympathetic brethren in this country, he was able to make inroads. He hesitated not to use deception in order to gain entrance. Though stoutly resisted by brothers David King and James Wallis, he still was able to lead astray numerous brethren and splinter several churches.

While in England in 1849 he published his speculative heresies in a book entitled *Elpis Israel*. While his new sect was slow in gaining a following in his life-time, his converts eagerly spread his message throughout Great Britain. They found a more fertile ground in New Zealand and Australia. Many of our modern-day missionaries have encountered these Christadelphians. Here in the States they claim some 800 churches with more than 16,000 members.

In doctrine, the Christadelphians are Unitarian, denying the eternity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit. They reject belief in a personal devil. They are strongly premillennial. They have congregational government, and call their local groups “ecclesiae.” They have no paid ministers. They do not vote, or participate in war. They baptize by immersion. (Frank Mead, *Handbook of Denominations*, p. 55-56).

John Thomas died March 5, 1871. He made his place in history, not as a preacher of the gospel of Christianity, but as Hymanaeus and Alexander who made shipwreck concerning the faith (I Timothy 1:19-20). He went out from us because he was not of us (I John 2:19). He was but one of a multitude who have troubled the body of Christ, “and by their smooth and fair speech . . . beguile(d) the hearts of the innocent” (Romans 16:18). We yet have his kind in our midst!

May we learn from the experiences of the brethren in yesteryear. “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).

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

Conduct In The Church

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:14-15).



Jerri Manasco

Maintaining proper conduct is not an optional concern for the Christian! One whose faith has led him to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27; Acts 2:38) must understand that he has agreed to forsake his old life and commit himself to a new style of living. Formerly a child of Satan, he is now a child of God with the attendant blessings and responsibilities. Having been previously content to satisfy his own desires and to please himself and his peers, he now must yield to Jesus in everything. He must devote himself now to the pursuit of proper conduct in the church as he sets himself to the task of leading others to Jesus. (Read I Peter 4:1-5).

What is written is for our instruction in the way of life. Paul penned, "These things WRITE I unto thee . . ." Remember that Timothy had been left in Ephesus to guide the church and its teachers in the proper direction (I Timothy 1:3-4). Even he needed to be reminded, though, that if his life were not a proper portrayal of Christian character, he should not expect others to be much impressed or motivated by his preaching. Though he had the advantage of being with Paul personally, he now has the added benefit of receiving a letter from that great apostle, which he could read and re-read as he improved himself in the Master's kingdom. Modern Christians ought to be impressed with the importance of carefully studying the inspired scriptures, for these writings can make us what we ought to be (II Timothy 3:14-17). When we fail to maintain the proper conduct in God's church, it is not because we don't have the means of knowing how to act; this failure must be attributed either to (1) ignorance of God's will (through lack of study) or (2) unwillingness to behave well in God's church. Either way, it is scarcely possible to imagine that we will be excused.

Though living some twenty centuries after the time of the early church, we must remember that God is timeless (Isaiah 57:15; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8). His expectations of his people remain constant. That we live in more modern times, with (perhaps) greater pressures and temptations, does not excuse us from meeting God's terms of discipline and self-restraint in life. God still wants his church to be a fitting reflection of his purity and holiness (Ephesians 5:27). The only way we can do this is for us to be students of the word of instruction, and practitioners of the same!

The conduct of the Christian is important because of the relationship of the church to the truth, and because of what others perceive the church to be. In a time when truth is

doubted, and the church is disregarded, it behooves each Christian to present as untarnished a picture of Christ and the church as possible. We must reflect the divine character of the church. The church is the Lord's, being the "house of God, . . . the church of the living God." The idea that the church belongs to man, and the divine element is only secondary, is probably one reason why the church is not often seen for its divinely-designed purity. Since the Lord adds people to the church (Acts 2:47), then it is the Lord whose purpose must be accomplished in the church! This cannot be done by those who are set on accomplishing their own will when God's will is just too inconvenient for them.

What sort of picture of the church does the surrounding community receive from YOUR life-style? "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). I fear that we have allowed ourselves to grow weary of this precept of Jesus, probably because it is so often recited. The real problem, however, is not the repetition of inspired words, but our forgetting that the Christian's purpose is to SHOW society what the good life is. The church is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). It upholds the truth, but it does not invent truth. It is not within our jurisdiction as Christians to modify God's truth in order to salve modern society's conscience or to justify our own yearnings for spiritual and moral compromise. Sadly, though, prominence of the human element has tended to oust Jesus from his rightful preeminence in the church. The result in too many cases has been that the image of the church which God wants conveyed has been colored beyond recognition!

To behave properly the Christian must be consistent with his calling and profession. His calling is holy and his profession is Jesus (Matthew 10:32-33; Ephesians 4:1-3)! If the church member is like the unconverted world around him, then what is the motive for the worldling to become like the "Christian"?? Christians, by their very existence, stand out in society. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. . . And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:8, 11). "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (I Peter 1:14-15). Certainly one who pays little heed to these simple divine decrees is not behaving well in the house of God.

Proper behavior is necessary because the life of the Christian is an open book rather than a sealed scroll. People are watching us daily. Truly it is unfair for the world to select the worst specimen in the local church as their measuring rod for the whole; but the fact that it does is reason enough for us to be even more cautious about conduct. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:14-15). Both Timothy and Titus were cautioned to so live that they could not be despised (I Timothy 4:12; Titus 2:15). This does not mean that the

world will not seek and find flaws in us -- but Christians must do all they can to make it awfully hard for them to find legitimate complaints! Paul was not beyond sin or temptation, yet he did not hesitate to invite careful inspection of his life (II Corinthians 1:12; 4:2; etc.). The old prophet Samuel confidently did the same thing (I Samuel 12:1-5). Many church members would not stand for such investigation of their lives to be made -- yet they are "known and read of all men" day by day!! Proper behavior requires that the Christian bury himself so that Christ can shine. Thus shall the house of God prosper!

—Crestview Church, U.S. 431 N., Boaz, AL 35957.

Make Up Your Mind (No. 1)

We are told that our minds are powerful things. And what has been produced by the minds of men certainly proves this to be a fact. God is the giver of man's mind, and we should remember to use it for his cause. There are manifold ways by which we can do so.

One way is very important for us personally. In fact, our very souls' salvation depends on it. It is the power we have to decide; to firmly and definitely make up our minds regarding our actions, and the course of our lives.

Many of us allow ourselves to be victims of indecision. We vacillate back and forth, maybe doing what others want, or following our own selfish and changeable whims. That causes a lot of heartache and trouble.

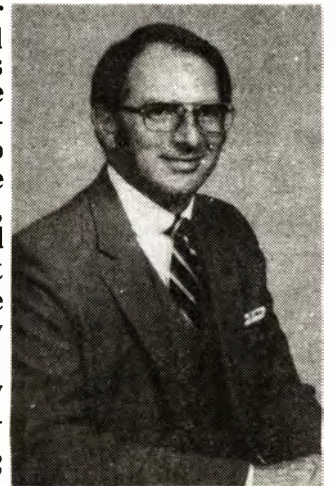
God has strictly commanded that we exercise careful mind-control. A number of principles are based on our decision-making capabilities. We must control our attitude toward those of the opposite sex who are not our mates (Matthew 5:27-28). We have to keep our tempers under control (Ephesians 4:26). We can't allow anything to possess our minds and bodies, such as alcohol or other drugs -- nor even food, for that matter (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Maybe that's why we often have such a hard time living righteously, with temptation being so severe, and so often. Could it be that we just haven't made up our minds firmly to refuse the wrong? When we see the meaning of repentance, and its attending fruits, it is clear that the first thing necessary is the change of mind. Once the mind is firmly changed, then our actions change. It may take some time and effort to affect the changes, but with the changed mind, THE CHANGED LIFE WILL COME!

Is this not what Peter meant when he said, "Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out . . ." (Acts 3:19)?

We will not make any progress until we make up our minds to change!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.





(USPS 691-760)

Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 1987

NUMBER 33

What Do Elders Do?

Elders are charged with the responsibility of feeding the church spiritual food. Paul's charge to the elders at Ephesus is beautifully revealing. The great apostle says, "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"



Demar Elam

(Acts 20:28). The American Standard Version translates "overseers" as "bishops." It carries the idea of being watchful, to look over, or supervise. Please note the word "feed" in the text listed above. In Ephesians 4 the word "pastor" or "shepherd" is used and carries with it the idea of "feed" or "tend." An elder is one who is seasoned, matured, or older in the faith.

In I Timothy 3:1 we read, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The Greek word translated "office" is perhaps unfortunate in that it makes some think of the eldership as an OFFICE to be held, rather than a WORK to perform. It might be better translated "overseership" because the eldership is not an office to be held but is a WORK to be performed.

Good elders carrying out their duties and responsibilities assigned to them by the heavenly Father are extremely busy men! It requires diligence of effort and above-average energy to shepherd a flock of God's people, to know them, to care for them, to feed them, and tend to them. Read John 10:1-18 for a better insight into the work of a shepherd. Christ, the Good Shepherd, explains in those verses what is involved in being a

good shepherd.

Most members are simply unaware of the long hours which elders spend serving the flock as pastors. Elders are often at the church building or in someone's home late into the night, counseling; often they engage in meetings pertaining to the work of the local church which last for hours or even days in length; they spend hours in Bible study each week; they visit the sick in hospitals and nursing homes; they visit the erring members of the church; and they do other things too numerous to list. Perhaps most members have not stopped to consider how busy a dedicated eldership is and how much they need the help, cooperation, and prayers

of the flock.

Elders do not want our sympathy, but they merit our understanding. They are not able to attend or actively participate in every function or program in an active church. However, that does not mean that they aren't functioning as good shepherds. Let us pray for our pastors and help lift beings, and each one has his limitations. An individual can be stretched only so far! Let's pray for our pastors and help lift up their hands in the great work they are doing for Christ.

—185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, Georgia 30214.

The Sin Of Drunkenness

In the Bible Noah is recorded as the first example of one who became drunk (Genesis 9:21). Noah's shameful act brought great sorrow and distress to his family (Genesis 9:22-27).

Nazarites were not permitted to use any form of strong drink: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or



W. A. Holley

woman shall separate themselves unto the Lord; he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk"

(Numbers 6:1-4).

Many drinkers seek to measure their strength by dissipation and excess. We quote, "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink; that justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him" (Isaiah 5:22-23, A.S.V.). The Northern Kingdom even had priests and prophets who were enslaved by alcohol. "And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; they are swallowed up of wine, they stagger with strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (Isaiah 28:1, 7-8, A.S.V.). When alcohol flows like the Mississippi River in the halls of government, it is time to call a halt!

And more: "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, to thee that addest thy venom, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness" (Habakkuk 2:15, A.S.V.). One of the finest descriptions of delirium tremens ever written is found in

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Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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Make Up Your Mind

(No. II)

In last week's article we discussed the need and necessity of resolutely and finally making up our minds to live righteously and overcome sin. But that is not a simple process, nor is it easy. But you CAN do it! Here is how.

The first step in the mind-set process is to determine that you WANT to do right. Many do right when pressured by others. But the problem with this is that when we are away from that pressure, we will do wrong because WE never wanted to do right! We create a need to do right by (1) observing carefully the consequences which occur when we do wrong. Consequences should be incentives. (2) Concentrate on the love, mercy, and grace of God and Christ as they gave so much for us. This also should prompt us to want to return that love by obeying and living righteously (I John 4:10, 19).

The second step needed to make up our minds to bring about a WANT to do right, is to avoid temptation. Plan your life and activities so you will be away from those people and circumstances which tempt you to sin. If a man has seen the need to stop drinking alcohol, and wants to do so, he needs to stay away from drinking places and drinking people. If one MUST be near tempting people and things (such as a bad working atmosphere, etc.), then keep things strictly on a business basis: conduct your business -- and leave! This is why Paul taught us to "abstain from the very appearance of evil" (I Thessa-



Ronnie A. Missildine

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Are You Dwelling In Sin?

The word "sin" has little meaning in the mind of the average person today. Much has been done by the Humanistic and Atheistic forces, along with those engaged in immorality, to push consciousness of "sin" out of the mind of today's society. Two things must be done before they can completely succeed:

(1) They must do away with the tragedy which results from sin: the diseased bodies caused by dissipation; broken homes because of divorce; other tragedies are envy, jealousy, murder, fornication, etc. (2) In order to do away with "sin," they must do away with the law given by God. John was inspired to write, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). Also, "All unrighteousness is sin . . ." (I John 5:17). James wrote, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

The word of God is the law. James stated, "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass [Mirrow, WEK] . . . 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 1:23, 25).

Some are confused because they do not understand the difference between the law which God gave Moses, and the law of Christ. Paul taught, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster ("tutor," A.S.V.) to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith is come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24-25). In the next verse he says the Galatians were children of God by faith. Faith came on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2). Though the law of Moses has been abolished, let none think we are without law. If there is no law, there is no sin. All who live today would be free from sin.

God promised that under the new covenant (or will, or testament) "I will put my laws into their mind, and on their heart will I write them" (Jeremiah 31:31-34, which is quoted in Hebrews 8:8-10). The inspired writers of the New Testament wrote the revelation placed in their minds by the Holy Spirit. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would "guide" them "into all truth" (John 16:13). Peter said they received "all things which pertain unto life and godliness" (II Peter 1:3). Paul said the Spirit's teaching combines "spiritual things with spiritual words" (I Corinthians 2:13).

The words "faith," "gospel" and "law" refer to the same thing in the New Testament. The "faith" is something for which to "contend" and something which "was delivered" (Jude 3). The "gospel" is the "power of God" to save, for in the gospel is "the righteousness of God" revealed (Romans 1:16-17). Of these things consists the "law of Christ." There are things to believe and obey.



W. Edwin Kearley

Christ ". . . became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

No one lived the law of Moses perfectly. The law of Moses demanded perfection. To those who wanted to go back under the law, Paul said, ". . . for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ died in vain" (Galatians 3:2). Without the cleansing blood of Christ, no one would be free from sin (Ephesians 1:7). Christ has laws or conditions to be met before the blood of Christ cleanses one of sin. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). This act puts one into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).

There is a continual warfare inside the Christian. He is not immune to temptation. Paul tells of this conflict in his life: "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God 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 of sin which is in my members" (Romans 8:21-23). But God has given a second law of pardon to the penitent sinner. John promised, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

In the words of the apostle Paul, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

—127 Melody Lane, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Stick To Your Bush!

T. Pierce Brown

This is July 4th, and feeling rather independent, and expecting my children and grandchildren this afternoon, I decided to go pick some blackberries for them. The thought occurred to me that I do not know whether any of them have ever experienced the joy of sharing with someone they love that which has been won by blood, sweet, and tears (for berry-pickers, the word may be "tares!"); but I wanted them to have this joy vicariously, at least.

Aside from the fact that I stepped on a hornet's nest, chiggers abounded, and most of the berries were so small that perhaps I should have brought along a magnifying glass, things went rather well. I do not remember seeing any blackberries in Texas; but if they ever had any like these, they would have sent them back to Tennessee!

I kept looking for bigger berries, and fewer briars, but was disappointed on both counts. But after about half an hour, I had picked almost a quart! Then a sudden lesson hit me, not quite with the sting of a hornet, but with power. I had learned that lesson about 56 years ago, but had forgotten it. My mother and I had gone out on the old red hillside 20-acre farm where I grew up, and were picking blackberries. After a while I noticed that she was not covering much territory; but I had ranged up and down the side of three hills.

Continued On Page 3

Leadership

(No. 1)

The success of any government or business depends upon its leadership. When the affairs of a nation are mismanaged and its resources squandered, its great possibilities are never realized. Privileged classes and monopolies will multiply and grow strong to the hurt -- and sometimes the destruction -- of the nation. National respect for law



M. L. Sexton

and order are destroyed, and if not corrected the nation will be despised.

The sad state of Judah is described in Isaiah 1: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward . . . Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been like unto Gomorrah" (Isaiah 1:4-9). Jerusalem, in her rebellion, had become a harlot: "How is the faithful city become a harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now, murderers" (Isaiah 1:21). The insensibility of these people was described as being lower than the ass or ox. The ox at least knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib (Isaiah 1:3). Judah and Jerusalem did not know their master. These people did not "retain God in their knowledge" (Romans 1:28). "Wherefore the

Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: . . . for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish . . ." (Isaiah 29:13-14). When leaders become wise in their own conceit they will deteriorate, and there is more hope for the fool than for them (Proverbs 26:12). Their leadership had become haughty and they walked "with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes." They were so weak that children oppressed them and women became their rulers (Isaiah 3:4, 12). Their leaders caused them to err, and those that were led by them were destroyed (Isaiah 9:15-16).

The apostle Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning . . ." (Romans 15:4). This record seems to have been written for our present time; and it fits our present situation in the church. It is my firm conviction that some of the church and our Christian universities have fallen into the same crisis in leadership as was characteristic of Judah.

The need for good leadership is obvious. We must fill this need with men trained and developed in the way of the Lord, and not in the ways of the world. We do not need men to lead the church who are "wise in their own conceit." There is more hope for a fool (Proverbs 26:12). Such people have exalted themselves above others. They have forgotten that "God made foolish the wisdom of this world" (I Corinthians 1:20). Such leaders will lead the church off into apostasy. Many of our young men have gone off to institutions of higher learning where man's theology is

taught, and have come away spoiled "through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). It is a rare thing for a man to sit at the feet of such teachers day after day, week after week, and month after month, without his having some of this philosophy "rub off" on him. These men are getting into our pulpits and universities where their "good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

THE BURDEN OF GOOD, TRUE LEADERSHIP

Good leadership involves a great weight of responsibility. A godly leader is deeply interested in those over whom he is placed (Acts 20:28-32), and their affections, privations, and sufferings sorely pain him. Their meannesses and sins cast a heavy burden upon him, and he will blush in shame for their ungodliness (Hebrews 7:7-13). Antoninus the Emperor said, "To be a governor of others is to be plunged into an ocean of miseries."

"Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and mighty in words and in deed;" yet he sought God's help because he knew that he could not "bear all this people alone" (Numbers 11:14; Acts 7:22). He was painfully conscious of his insufficiency. God had promised Moses that his presence would go with him (Exodus 33:14). Moses was no doubt one of the ablest and holiest leaders of all time and yet he knew that he could not live up to his responsibility without God's help. God gave him help by giving him men who would help him bear the burden of the people

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Stick To Your Bush!

Continued From Page 2

I wandered back to where she was with my quart and found that she had about a gallon!

The realization came to me: While I was running hither and yon trying to find more succulent, savory, and larger berries, she was picking what she had in front of her! I have not picked many blackberries since boyhood, but I want to try to impress this lesson, especially on younger persons.

STICK WITH YOUR BUSH! Preachers need to learn this lesson. When things get sticky

and you feel that you have stepped in a hornet's nest; when you start "sweating" instead of just "perspiring;" when you begin to get an itch to move on to some other field; just remember: the chances are that the berries on the next bush are probably about the same size; the chiggers are as plentiful over there; and even if there is not a hornet's nest in every clump, sweat-bees can be aggravating! Because, hornets will normally leave you alone unless you stir them up, while sweat bees will not.

There is little doubt that the preachers who do the most good, have the most stable

families, and are happiest in the long range, are normally the ones who stay the longest in a place, learning patience, forbearance, tolerance, and love.

But the same lesson can be applied in many situations in life faced by all sorts of persons. The boy in school who is working on a lesson needs to stick with it until he gets from it all the "goodies" he can find -- not just skim the surface looking for the big lessons. The basic lesson that applies to almost every walk of life is, **DO WHAT YOU CAN, WHERE YOU ARE, WITH WHAT YOU HAVE!** Stick with your bush!

A person who while working on any job, is continually looking around for greener pastures (or better bushes) instead of doing his job well, needs to look at Paul's admonition where he emphasizes that our service is to be as unto the Lord and not unto men:

"Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way of eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Ephesians 6:5-7).

—T. Pierce Brown Box 144X, Rt. 2 Wartrace, TN 37183.

Make Up Your Mind

Continued From Page 2

lonians 5:22), and to "be not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2).

A third step in making up your mind -- once you WANT to, and you decide to avoid tempting people and situations -- is to busy yourself with good, holy, and righteous things. We do not live in a vacuum. If something sinful is taken out, it must be replaced with something good and right. This is the principle of Jesus' parable of the empty house in Matthew 12:43-45. (Read it).

If we (1) want to do right, if we (2) will

avoid temptation, and if we (3) will do right, we can make up our minds! And God has promised that if we will try to do right, **HE WILL HELP US!** (Hebrews 13:5-6; I Corinthians 10:13). Also, I don't know a faithful Christian brother or sister who would not help you, too.

WE CAN live righteously IF WE WILL MAKE UP OUR MINDS!

—Warrington Church, P.O. Box 4171, Pensacola, FL 32507-0171.

The Sin Of Drunkenness

Continued From Page 1

Proverbs 23:29-35. In the New Testament drunkenness is always classified as a sin, which, if not repented of, will keep one out of heaven (I Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21).

What are the consequences of drinking alcohol? We answer: IMMORALITY, INSSENSIBILITY, and IRRESPONSIBILITY. There is not a word in the Bible that allows so-called moderate drinking! Verily, the breweries and the distilleries, like the tobacco companies, refuse to assume any responsibility for any damage done to any one who uses their products.

Beside the dollar cost of alcoholic beverages for its consumers, there are social and health costs as well. For example: "About two-thirds of all deaths in this country are premature," said Dr. Kenneth Pelletier, and author and professor of medicine at the University of California in San Francisco. "And about two-thirds of all deaths under 65 are preventable," he said, "because they involve lifestyle and are brought on by personal choices -- whether to smoke or drink, for instance."

We offer another quotation: "Liver disease, the traditional alcoholism indicator, is among the top 10 killers in the United States. But the total number of alcohol-related diseases, plus accidents and homicides associated with alcohol, could be considered the No. 3 killer in the nation, after heart disease and cancer" (The above quotations are taken from *The Birmingham News*; Health and Science, 2-10-1987). Whether we wish to admit it or not, alcohol impairs one's physical and mental health!

Question: If you drink alcoholic beverages, are you ready to accept the consequences which necessarily follow? Stop and think for a moment! When one drinks, one must accept all that goes with drinking, whether one wants to or not.

What is "alcoholism?"

This term must be defined before we can understand it. We quote: "Anyone who repeatedly drinks alcoholic beverages to the point of loss of control, is an alcoholic. Note that this definition covers a wide range of people, including skid-row derelicts, housewives, blue collar workers, executives, and elected officials. It may well include friends, family members, and you . . . It is a paradox that we often drink to obtain the supposed 'stimulating' effect of alcohol, when in fact alcohol 'depresses' body functions. There is a loss of inhibition, but decreased ability to act out our wishes" (*New Family Medical Guide*, p. 23).

Signs of Alcoholism

What are some of the signs of alcoholism? We submit: (1) The urge to drink in tense situations. (2) Inappropriate behaviour when drinking. (3) Drinking when alone. (4) Drinking early in the day. (5) The need to drink in order to function. (6) Gradual increase in regular alcohol intake. (7) Mixing drinking and driving. (Ibid). Dear drinking friend, read carefully, and take warning.

Drunkenness is a sin because of the toll it exacts of both the guilty and the innocent. We shall see--

1) Alcohol abuse contributes to higher incidences of diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, certain kinds of cancer, and various liver diseases.

2) Fetal alcohol syndrome is the third leading cause of birth defects, with one in 750

newborns suffering the effects, which include mental retardation.

3) On the average, every U.S. resident 14 years old or older consumes 2.65 gallons of pure alcohol a year.

4) Alcohol abuse causes 98,000 deaths a year.

5) Alcoholism accounted for an economic loss in this country alone estimated at \$116.9 billion in 1983.

6) Alcoholics are 6 to 15 times more likely to commit suicide, 10 times more likely to die from fires, 5 to 13 times more likely to die from falls, than are non drinkers.

7) More than half of those convicted of violent crimes (such as assault, attempted murder,

or murder) were drinking before committing the offense.

8) In 1984 in the U.S.A., 23,500 of 44,241 highway deaths were alcohol related.

9) About 65 to 100 people at some point in their lifetime will be involved in an alcohol-related crash.

10) Alcohol is a contributing factor in at least 15,000 fatal and 6 million non-fatal injuries in non-highway settings.

11) More than 50 percent of all ninth-graders have tried alcohol. By the time they become seniors, nine of 10 have done so. (Source: National Council On Alcoholism).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

(No. II)

Novie C. Perry

A second basic principle upon which Christianity is founded is the right of private judgment. If a person loses the right of making a private judgment in spiritual matters, he simply cannot do God's will. How can a person decide right or wrong, or decide if he should accept the great invitation of Jesus (Matthew 11:28), or decide if he will believe and confess faith in Jesus as Lord, unless he is free to privately study and reason, and make a personal decision for himself concerning such matters (Romans 10:9-10; Isaiah 1:18-20)? People need to be persuaded to do God's will, but each must still be given the right of private judgment (II Corinthians 5:10-11; Philippians 2:12). A Christian has the primary responsibility of sowing the seed with hope and prayer that it will fall upon honest and good hearts (Luke 8). No matter how much we cry, pray, beg, persuade, or try to motivate a sinner to believe, repent, confess faith in Christ, and be baptized to wash away his sins, we must leave the final decision up to that soul.

Note the underlying reasons the right of private judgment cannot and should not be divorced from New Testament Christianity:

1. Sinners must obey "from the heart" in order to be set free from the bondage of sin (Romans 6:16-18).

2. Sinners must confess Jesus as Lord and believe from their heart that he has been raised from the grave (Romans 10:9-10).

3. Where the word does not find "an honest and good heart," there can be no faith; and where there is no faith, God will not give an increase (Hebrews 11:6).

4. Since all men will be judged according to the deeds they do in this life, and our deeds are done as a result of decisions we make, then the judgment seat of Christ demands we have freedom to make private judgments (II Corinthians 5:10).

Whenever we deny a saint (or a sinner) the right to make a private judgment, we violate a foundation principle upon which New Testament Christianity is built. Each accountable person has a right to make wrong decisions, commit sin, ruin his life, and lose his own soul if he so chooses; but he shall not escape the judgment of God. Christians are not at liberty

to make decisions for others in matters pertaining to spiritual life and death, else such decisions would not come from the individual's heart, nor be exercised by his faith, would they? Oh, we may know God's will in the matter under consideration, and may try to persuade the individual to respond in faith; but the final decision must be made by the one to be converted.

If God himself never forced any man or woman to do his will, what right have we to do so? Let us be careful in our zeal that people are free enough from the pressure of our persuasion to make private judgments from their own heart.

—3133 Wellborne Dr., W., Mobile, AL 36609.

Leadership

Continued From Page 3

(Numbers 11:16-17). Moses realized that it is important for good leaders to turn to others for help in their leadership roles. This is the reason why God ordained that there should be a PLURALITY of elders in each church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). This will eliminate a one-man rule. A man may fail even in the strongest point of his character, and like Moses he will need the help of his co-workers. Cooperation in leadership is absolutely necessary (Judges 1:1-5). Great honors involve great obligations. However, leaders must earn these honors by fulfilling their obligations (Romans 13:7). Every leader should look to Jesus as the "author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2).

—P.O. Box 8400, Fort Worth, Texas 76124.

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—Acts 26:25

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Walking By Faith

"Walking by faith" does not mean that one is saved by faith alone. If that were the true meaning, then the devils would also be saved. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). Thus, the doctrine of salvation by faith alone would save the devil!

The truth is, the Bible expressly denies that one can be saved "by faith



W. A. Holley

only." We quote: "Ye see then how that by works" (faith demonstrated by works of obedience) "a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24).

"For we walk by faith, not by sight," declares sacred scripture (II Corinthians 5:7). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Grace and faith work together in the salvation of sinners. Not grace alone -- not faith alone; but grace plus faith is God's plan of salvation. "Not of yourselves," teaches that the means of salvation does not originate from ourselves (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12).

"It is the gift of God" means that salvation is a gift; but it is a conditional gift (Matthew 6:11; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). "Not of works, lest any man should boast" refers to the "works" of the law of Moses, because the law of Moses demanded perfection, and if the law were once transgressed, "the blood of bulls and of goats" could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:1-4). Nor can men earn salvation through moral goodness.

What does "walking by faith" mean? It means to act and live as prompted by faith

as taught in the Bible (Jude 3; Philippians 1:27; II Timothy 1:13). It is believing God and acting accordingly. "... For I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25). Each step must be taken on the word of God (Romans 10:17).

Example of Abel

Abel is a fine example of what it means to "walk by faith." "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). If the reader will read Genesis 4:1-8, he will observe that Abel offered his sacrifice as God commanded him, but Cain offered his sacrifice as he pleased. Cain's offering was bloodless, thus God rejected it. Cain walked not by faith.

Moses

Moses is another wonderful example of what it means to "walk by faith." "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of reward" (Hebrews 11:24-26). Moses walked by faith despite all doubts, provocations, obstacles, and other hindrances which beset his long journey through the unfriendly wilderness (Cf. Hebrews 11:27-29). Moses' faith was more than mere mental assent; it expressed itself in obedience to God's commands.

Noah

Noah exemplifies what it means to walk by faith. We quote: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Hebrews 11:7). "Faith," as used in the Bible, is far more than mere mental assent. Noah exercised his faith when he

heeded God's warning of impending destruction. By faith he preached to his generation, all the while preparing an the ark "to the saving of his house" (II Peter 2:5; Luke 17:26-27). His faith moved Noah to obey God Almighty!

Abraham

Abraham is presented as one who walked with God. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead: from whence also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:17-19). Thus, Abraham's faith was put to the sternest test. How was his faith tried? He was commanded to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God. Abraham's faith did not fail him -- he "offered up Isaac" -- believing that if he should kill Isaac, God would raise him from the dead, and still fulfill his promises to Abraham, that through Isaac the Messiah should be ushered into the world.

No trial could have been more difficult than the one God imposed upon Abraham. When God commanded, the patriarch responded promptly. Even when he knew what was ahead, he calmly spoke to his servants: "Abide here ... and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Genesis 22:5).

Walking By Faith Today

What about those of us who live today? Is it possible for us to walk by faith, as did Abraham? Yes, of course. How can we do it? We can believe and obey those commands of God now addressed to us.

For example: When we "walk by faith," we hear and obey the gospel of Christ that we might be added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:36-38, 41-42, 47). One does not "walk by faith" if one seeks to be saved from alien sins at an altar of prayer (Mark 16:16; Acts

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A Letter To A "Weak" Brother

A brother in Texas recently wrote of his delightful meeting with a group of Christian Church ministers. From that session he concluded that we were mistaken in viewing the use of instrumental music in worship as sinful, and that in actuality we are the "weak" brethren in this controversy. Below are some thoughts I shared with him.



John Waddey

I have just read your bulletin article expressing your impressions after a unity meeting with preachers of the Christian Church.

I am appalled at your statement regarding the question of instrumental music as a part of Christian worship. You say that you "realized that our . . . division over the issue of instrumental music is truly ridiculous." I would say rather that it seems ridiculous that you cannot see the seriousness of this issue. I ask you: "Is Christ the founder and head of his church (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22)? Does he claim all authority in matters relating to Christianity (Matthew 28:18)? Are we warned not to go beyond the things that are written (I Corinthians 4:6, A.S.V.)? Does Christ's word anywhere authorize instrumental music in worship? Can you be faithful to him while doing that which he does not authorize?"

We scripturally can sing his praises and observe whatsoever he has commanded (Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 5:19). To offer up instrumental music as worship, one must go beyond the doctrine of Christ. In so doing he forfeits God's fellowship and approval (II John 9-10).

I certainly agree with you that you "stand in the camp of the weaker brethren." It is not, however, because you do not presently worship with an instrument, that you occupy this camp:

1. You are "weak" because of your general lack of knowledge of scripture; and
2. Your lack of understanding of the doctrine of Christ.
3. You are "weak" because of your lack of knowledge of how we know what is, or is not, authorized by God's Word;
4. You are "weak" because you do not know the history of the Lord's church of the last century. It is evident that you are not aware of

the issues debated, the battles fought, the wounds inflicted upon the body of Christ by those who introduced unscriptural innovations into the worship of God.

5. Clearly you do not perceive the causes of the ensuing division that produced Disciples of Christ and Christian Churches.

6. Your willingness to compromise with doctrinal error reflects your spiritual weakness.

Your conclusion that our differences with those of the Christian Churches are just 'matters of opinion' says a great deal about your faith and your respect for the word of God. Scripture plainly says to sing and make melody in the heart (Ephesians 5:19), and the New Testament of Jesus says not one word about using instrumental music in worship. Hence the will of God is plainly given. Our options are to obey that will, or to disobey it. But you conclude that we may sing with or without instrumental accompaniment as our personal opinion dictates. I must deduce from your words that really it does not matter if I obey God or disobey him; I am free to decide such matters. In this you exalt man's opinion above God's revealed will. If we can do this in our song worship, why not also in communion, the plan of salvation, and church government?

A century ago, W. K. Pendleton and Isaac Errett (leading spokesmen of the digressive brethren) argued that the use of instrumental music in worship was a matter of opinion, and not of faith. They freely acknowledged that there is no Bible authority for its use. Faithful men of God resisted this contention and saved a remnant of the Lord's people from apostasy. Now you are saying what the teachers of error said then. Had you lived in that past era, it seems obvious where you would have pitched your tent. I urge you to read Earl West's *Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. II, pp. 80-92 and 226-249 for an enlightening history of the controversy over instrumental music.

I write not this as your enemy, but as a concerned brother. I send it with a prayer that you will heed Paul's admonition to "take heed to yourself and to your teaching" (I Timothy 4:16); that you will try your own self to see if you are still in the faith (II Corinthians 13:5).

To abandon God's truth and strike a compromise with error is a grievous sin of which a faithful soldier of Christ must never be guilty. I pray that you will repent.

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

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

(NO. III)

Novie C. Perry

Not only the all-sufficiency and alone-sufficiency of the scriptures, and the right to private judgment, but also the necessity of having a "thus saith the Lord" in matters of faith and practice is a biblically sound principle of New Testament Christianity. This third principle is basic to man's relation-

ship to God. It is clearly seen, even from man's beginning, in the lives of the patriarchs, viz., Able, Noah, Nadab and Abihu, Moses, et. al. (Genesis 4:6; Leviticus 10; Exodus 25:9, 40; I Samuel 13:8-14; 15).

During the Reformation, Martin Luther was
Continued On Page 4



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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Leadership (NO. II)

It is one thing to teach by word of mouth, and another to teach by example. The right kind of oral teaching is good; however, teaching by example as well is much better. A good leader will lead by example and not by words only (I Timothy 4:12; I Peter 5:3). Jesus is the perfect example of teaching by example as well as by word of mouth (Hebrews 5:8-9; I Peter 2:21-25). We learn much faster and better when we are shown how to perform a work. A student will learn math, science, English, etc., much better when given an example. This is true of farming, driving a vehicle, flying, etc. Similarly, we teach people how to live by example. The example must accompany the oral instructions.

The Old Testament is filled with examples of good leadership. For centuries God has used men who exemplify the qualities of leadership. Some of the same characteristics demonstrated in these men are qualifications for elders in the Lord's church (I Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-16; I Peter 5:1-3). Let us now direct our attention to some of these men.

ABRAHAM

The key to Abraham's ability to lead was his great faith. It is said that Abraham is "the father of the faithful" and rightfully so. He is ". . . the father of all them that believe" (Romans 4:11). Abraham's faith came by revelation (Genesis 12:1; Romans 10:17). His faith was directed by God, and not by subjective feelings. Abraham followed God's commands by an unwavering faith; he believed his promises without doubt (Genesis

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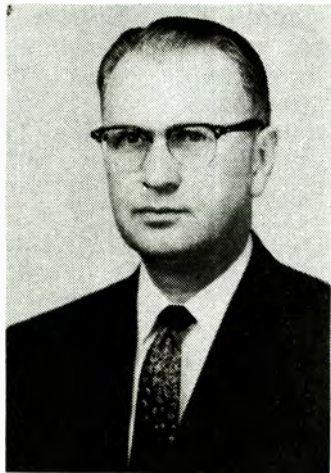
M. L. Sexton

The Inspiration Of The Bible

(NO. II)

Its Indestructibility

Concerning his prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, our Lord said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). The Holy Spirit through Peter affirmed, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever . . . But the word of the Lord endureth forever . . ." (I Peter 1:23, 25). What the Lord said about Jerusalem is also true of every other word he uttered -- such can not be destroyed, but will always stand. The words "not corruptible" (quoted from Peter) comes from the Greek word *aphtharos*. The same Greek word in I Timothy 1:17, describing the Christ in heaven, is translated "immortal." Therefore, the words of Christ given by the Holy Spirit, the New Testament, are just as indestructible as Christ in glory. Many efforts have been made to destroy the Bible, but all have miserably failed. A few examples follow.



Roy J. Hearn

said to be one of the most fertile writers of his day) sought by his pen to wipe out Christianity. He called Christ "the cursed wretch." He said that it took twelve men to write the Bible, but by his single hand he would destroy it. Ironically, shortly after his death, the very house in which he made his boast became a distributing center for the Geneva Bible Society. At his death he cried in desperation, "I am abandoned by God and man . . . then I shall go to hell . . . O Christ! O Jesus Christ."

Thomas Paine, who published a paper called "The Crisis" during the American Revolutionary War, and perhaps did much good toward freedom, left his field and exerted much influence against God and the Bible. He wrote a book called "The Age of Reason," in which he sought to destroy the Bible, and predicted that within fifty years from then the Bible would be found only in museums. Nearly two hundred years have passed, and Thomas Paine and his book have been all but forgotten, while the Bible remains! In his last hour in 1809 he cried: "I would give worlds if I had them, that the 'Age of Reason' had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ help me! . . . Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. If ever the devil had an agent, I have been that one." Infidels live, but they don't die.

One of the greatest enemies of the Bible has been the Roman Catholic Church. Sidney Collett, in his book, "All About the Bible" (pages 32-35), records the following: "About the year

1320, John Wycliffe, the great Reformer, was born. He was the first to translate the whole Bible into the English language . . . Wycliffe had been much opposed in his work by the Roman Catholics who eventually forbade the reading of the English Bible under penalty of death; and history relates a long list of martyrs who died at the stake rather than give up the blessed Book. Wycliffe died of paralysis at Lutterworth December 31, 1384. Forty years after his death Roman Catholic authorities dug up his bones and burned them, and scattered the ashes on the river Swift." They called him the "arch heretic."

Further, "In 1525 William Tyndale made another English translation . . . secretly imported into England in bales of cloth, sacks of flour, etc. Every effort was, however, made by the Roman Catholics to prevent the New Testament from getting into the hands of the people . . . thousands being burnt at St. Paul's Cross . . . On October 6, 1536, Tyndale was strangled and then burnt at the stake by those who have ever been the unchanging enemies of an open Bible, -- viz, the Roman Catholic authorities. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!"

In view of Tyndale's suffering prayer, consider this: How does anyone know but that God extended his providence to cause King James of England to make arrangements for the King James Version? This great version has been used for generations

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Leadership

Continued From Page 2

12:2; Romans 4). Please read Genesis 12:25:1-8. Abraham's role as a PEACEMAKER is a classic example of his qualities as a great leader (Genesis 13). This, as well as the example of his offering his son, was a demonstration of his great faith; and this faith was the foundation of qualities of a great leader (Genesis 11:27; 15:22; chapter 22). Abraham was willing to make the necessary adjustments in his own life for the best interest of God and his people.

Abraham was not self-willed. Those of us who serve as elders and preachers would do well to follow these examples (Titus 1:7; Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18; 14:19).

JACOB

(Genesis 25:24-36; 27; and 49). Even though Jacob was weak in his early life, even to the point of being deceptive and defrauding, he outgrew this weakness and became a strong, courageous leader of God's people. Jacob learned his first great lesson at Bethel (Genesis 28:10-19). For the first time in his life he seemed to be aware of God's presence and of what the future held for him if he would follow God's plan (Genesis 28:13). From this point in his life he began developing his character until he became a great leader of God's people. He became aware of the fact that he could not do this without God's help. Due to the fact that his faith gave him power with God and men, his name was changed from Jacob to "Israel" (Genesis 32:28). Jacob lived a shepherd's life and became the head of the great nation of Israel. Jesus is our Good Shepherd (John 10:11) and as "shepherds" of the flock, elders must follow the pattern of the Good Shepherd (I Peter 5:1-4).

JOSEPH

Joseph (Genesis 37-50) lived in a time of transition for Israel. This always requires men of unusual ability in the leadership. They must know when to hold to fundamental principles, and yet be flexible in matters that do not involve the unchangeable. Good leaders realize that we are living in a changing world, and that the best way to do things in the past may not be the best today. Many changes in communication, transportation, medicine, etc., have been made. In spite of all these changes, sin and truth remain. The Bible has not changed. Good leaders can discern between the two, and will lead accordingly. Joseph lived in a changing time but never sacrificed his principles of faith and righteousness (Genesis 39:9).

Joseph did not let his disappointing experiences "sour" him on the world nor against his brethren who sold him in Egypt (Genesis 30:27). Experiences can be a great teacher; and unless one learns how to use properly the experiences of life, he will never be able to develop the characteristics of good leadership (Hebrews 5:13-14).

Joseph was surrounded by hatred, yet he cultivated love. He was not resentful nor vindictive. He did not "feel sorry" for himself, but was kind and forgiving. A man who has never developed this spirit can never pray acceptably to God; hence he can not be a good example (Matthew 6:14-15). Even though Joseph was mistreated and misrepresented, he did not let others lead him away from God. "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). Elders and preachers should lead in

these qualities by setting the proper example (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-3; I Timothy 4:12).

MOSES

If all preachers, elders, deacons, and other Christians would study Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, they would profit a great deal. This is especially true of those in leadership, since these books deal with the character of Moses.

Israel suffered the bondage of Egypt. In order for Israel to break this bondage there had to be a transition. A new leader was necessary for the situation to change. God chose Moses to become their leader. Training was necessary, and Moses was given his training: "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds" (Acts 7:22). Moses received much of his training in Midian (Exodus 2:15; 3). Preachers must be trained to carry the gospel (Titus 1:4; II Timothy 2:15). The preacher must make full proof of his ministry (II Timothy 4:5). This cannot be done without training.

-Elders also must be trained before taking on the responsibility of overseeing the church. When Titus was left in Crete to "set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city . . ." (Titus 1:5), the men appointed to this office had to be trained for this work, or things would not have been "in order." Through his dedication and faith in God, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and prepared them for the 'Land of Promise,' and he became the lawgiver of Israel (Deuteronomy 5:1-5).

-P.O. Box 8400, Fort Worth, TX 76125.

One Is The Product Of His Thinking

Solomon wrote, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" (Proverbs 23:7).

A person is not always what he expresses himself to be. Solomon illustrates his statement: A grudging host watches every bite which his guests eat, and grudges what he appears to offer so liberally. The Pulpit Commentary quotes the Talmud: "My son, eat not the bread of the covetous, nor sit thou at his table. The bread of the covetous is only pain and anguish; the bread of the generous man is a source of health and joy"



W. Edwin Kearley

(Volume IX, page 441).

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees: "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). One cannot long hide his true character.

Man is defiled by allowing vile thoughts to be entertained in his mind. The Bible often uses the word "heart" to tell what occurs in the mind. Jesus said, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matthew 15:19). Therefore when thoughts of the above sins, or others like them, enter our minds, we should push them out of our thinking. This problem has been illustrated by the statement, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from making nests in your hair." This illustrates that one may unintentionally think evil thoughts, but one must not allow them to take root in his "heart" or mind.

We must focus our thinking on spiritual

things. Paul stated, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:1-2). Paul gave some rules to govern the Christian's thinking: "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). Therefore, self-control must be exercised to channel our thoughts on things which are high and holy.

It is essential that we control our thinking. If we allow our lusts to control us, we destroy our present and our eternal future. Let us be guided by Solomon's admonition: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

—127 Melody Lane, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

Continued From Page 2

persuaded that whatever was not specifically forbidden by the scriptures was something men were free to do or practice in Christianity. Ulrich Zwingli was convinced that whatever was not expressly stated in the scriptures could not, and must not, be taught or practiced by Christians. Those men and women who have followed Luther's line of thinking, in their approach to religious faith and practice, conflict with major warnings in the Bible: Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; II John 9; Revelation 22:18-19.

When God clearly tells man what he wants to do, and even tells man how he wants it done, man must not only do what God says to do, but man must do it in the way God says to do it! For example, the ark had to be built not only according to the exact dimensions God gave Noah, but it also had to be built out of gopher wood before God could say, "Thus did Noah according to all God commanded him" (Genesis 6:22).

The principle of having verbal or written authority to do what we do in religion has parallels in other areas of our lives. If mom sent me to the store with a list to buy three

items, (e.g., a quart of milk, a dozen eggs, and a loaf of bread), I knew I did not have the liberty to also spend money on a candy bar, nor to substitute a dozen doughnuts for the loaf of bread. Most of the folks I grew up among never entertained the idea that mom was unloving, stingy, or terrible, for not giving me what I wanted. She was the one in charge of managing the home, and she saw to it that I was provided with all I ever needed -- and

more. Who is in charge of the whole universe? Who knows what is best for man? Who has never mocked one holy desire of man?

Thus, the principle of having a "thus saith the Lord" in matters of faith and practice, is not only biblically sound, but also history and common sense proclaim the necessity of following instructions without changing them to suit ourselves or others.

—3133 Wellborne Dr. W., Mobile, AL 36609.

The Inspiration Of The Bible

Continued From Page 3

to defeat and vanquish all forms of religious error, and bring the Lord's church to a restoration of New Testament Christianity. Yet, it is now ridiculed and scorned, even by many who claim to be true gospel preachers.

Many other examples can be given of efforts to destroy the Bible and its influence, but space forbids production here -- except to say that for generations, denominations by their peculiar doctrines and practices have destroyed the faith of many. For a long time

they tried to get the Bible into their creed books to uphold their many and contradictory doctrines; now they are putting their creeds into the Bible, into the text of new so-called "versions," as the **New International Version**, **Good News for Modern Man**, **Revised Standard Version** and others. But, "the firm foundation of God standeth sure!" and will never be destroyed; and all must meet it at the judgment.

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

Walking By Faith

Continued From Page 1

2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4). Prayer is a grace that belongs to the children of God, not to the children of the devil (John 8:44; I John 3:10; Psalms 66:18; Proverbs 28:9).

We "walk by faith" when we, as Christians, worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 teach that we must sing, not play on mechanical instruments of music, in worship.

We "walk by faith," when we partake of the Lord's supper, as we do on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:1-2). We cannot "walk by faith" if we eat the Lord's supper on Friday (or some other day) rather than the first day of the week. Why is it sinful

to eat the Lord's supper on Friday? The answer is simple: Because the Lord has not so authorized such a practice!

Where baptism is concerned, we "walk by faith" when we baptize (immerse, bury -- not sprinkle or pour) those who wish to become children of God (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12).

In all matters we are duty-bound to submit to the authority of the Lord. "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).

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 1987

NUMBER 35

The Inspiration Of The Bible

The Bible As A Literary Production

The Bible is unique and amazing! Its unity is evidence of its inspiration. The following from the beloved and great N. B. Hardeman expresses it well.

"In this one library or collection there are sixty-six books, penned by practically forty different writers, stretching over (first to last) sixteen hundred years.

And I ask: Who are they? Not a people surrounded by the advantages that characterize modern times, with all our equipment and facilities for learning; but descendants of a people that had been in bondage four hundred thirty years, whose lives were burdened, and whose tasks were exceedingly difficult under the overseers and masters that used them to fill the already overflowing coffers of the Egyptian government. They passed from under that bondage by the hand of God and the leadership of Moses, and wandered forty years in the wilderness. Under Joshua they crossed the River Jordan and drove out the enemy, and finally took possession of the land promised unto their fathers. Untutored and unlearned though they were, not a literary folk by any means, scattered over a period of sixteen hundred years, writing about the same events, in a country not much larger than Davidson County, Tennessee; yet when their product is brought together and woven into one complete whole, there is not a contradiction or discrepancy of serious consideration found in the entire collection." Forty men over that period of time could not have written harmoniously without divine guidance, thus, the Bible is inspired of God! Consider:

Suppose forty artists were assigned the task



Roy J. Hearn

of painting forty different parts of a scene, being separated from each other by distance, and say, twenty-five years in time. When the parts of the picture are brought together, do you think they would fit and form a perfect picture? Not without miraculous help! So without supernatural guidance forty writers over much longer periods could not possibly produce such a great work as the Bible without being supernaturally guided by divine inspiration.

Further evidence is found in the fact that the Bible is written in clear, simple language. If present-day scholars were to write it, such words would be used that only a small minority could understand. For example men would likely express themselves thus: "There is a man who possesses no follicle appendages at the cutaneous apex of his cranial structure, anterior to the sagittal suture and posterior to the lambdoidal suture, where follicle appendages habitually germinate." But the Holy Spirit would have wisely said, "There is a bald-headed man." God is so great he does not need anything great from man! He recognized the need for simplicity, and thereby tests the faith of man.

Further, the Bible is a well-rounded book, and deals with every human problem (Amos

4:13). It treats of every branch of literature, better than any mortal man has ever done. If one desires to deal with law, read the five books of Moses. If one is interested in history read the books of Joshua to Esther. If one is interested in romance most beautiful, peruse the book of Ruth, and the Song of Solomon. Job long has been considered the greatest epic poem the world has ever been blessed with. The greatest poetry otherwise, the writers of the Psalms have provided. The world prides itself on its philosophy and wisdom; but for true philosophy and wisdom that will really benefit the world, turn to the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Some may be interested in exposition and argument: for success in polemics, study the works of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was continually being challenged by his opponents; and study the methods of argument in the writings of the apostle Paul. The greatest words on sociology are found in the Sermon on the Mount. Job and Genesis have scientific statements that have stood unchanged for thousands of years. If one is interested in drama and tragedy turn to the book of Job and the life of Christ.

Indeed, the evidences of inspiration are overwhelming!

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

IV

Novie C. Perry

A fourth basic principle upon which New Testament Christianity is founded is unity upon the basis of the New Testament. Since the New Testament is the new covenant God promised to give to his people, Christians must follow it as the base for unity everywhere (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13). The world still has to learn that the law of

Moses was given EXCLUSIVELY to the Jews, was fulfilled by Christ and nailed to his cross; or they will continue to stumble at this basic principle of unity (Deuteronomy 5; Matthew 5:17-18; John 19:30; Colossians 2:14-17).

Although it is true that Christians learn much

Continued On Page 4



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
1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, AL 35501

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Faith (NO. VI)

Salvation By Works? Yes, and No!

In God's plan for man, salvation is attributed to "works;" and yet certain "works" are NOT involved in one's salvation. In Ephesians 2:8-9 Paul says: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast." Thus boastful "works" are plainly said to be excluded from one's salvation. Such "works" would

mean that one deserves his salvation. (Ephesians 2:8-9 merits a more lengthy study). But our salvation is a gift from God. No man can earn his salvation. Again Paul told Timothy (II Timothy 1:9): "Who (God) hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to OUR works, but according to HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." God's plan is the means by which we are saved. We, as human beings, had nothing to do with its being arranged and given.

Neither are we saved by the "works" of the law. Galatians 2:16 says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Thus none is saved by the law, which was a system of works.

But not all "works" are outlawed. Without some kind of "work," none is saved. In Acts 10:34-35 Peter said: "Of a truth I perceive



Frank D. Young

Jesus said: "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). He was speaking to people who should have known what the Old Testament had to say concerning Lot's wife. What is there to learn about Lot's wife? Were it not for the Old Testament we could not know what Jesus had in mind.

We suggest that our readers turn to Genesis 18 and 19, and carefully read the inspired record of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. These ancient cities were removed "because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous" (Genesis 18:20).

Jesus gives his stamp of approval to the biblical account of the terrible fate that befell the wicked and sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. We read, "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17:28-29). Is the story of Sodom and Gomorrah true or false? It is true, and Jesus Christ so declared!!

What are some pertinent lessons we can learn from Lot's wife?? We shall note--

(1) The example of Lot's wife shows that one can be lost in spite of God's warnings. Lot had been warned: "Lot, hast thou here any besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it" (Genesis 19:12-13).

God has warned sinners today of their impending destruction unless they repent of their evil ways (Romans 3:23; 6:23). "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23). Jesus warned the people of his day; but "...ye (they) would not" (Matthew 23:37-39). We sincerely urge our readers to believe and obey the commands of God Almighty while they have time and opportunity (I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

(2) Lot's wife was lost even though she made some effort to escape the forthcoming destruction of Sodom. "And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hands, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee. . . . But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:15-17, 26).

It is good to be a believer; but it is far better to believe and obey (John 12:42-43; James

"Remember Lot's Wife"



W. A. Holley

2:14-26). King Agrippa was "almost persuaded" to be a Christian! But Paul did not want the King "almost, but altogether" persuaded (Acts 26:27-29). "Almost persuaded" is not sufficient for the Lord's demands!! One must go all the way, or he does not go at all! (Matthew 6:24; Galatians 1:10; I Timothy 6:17-19).

(3) Lot's wife was lost even though her husband was saved. Lot, who had acted selfishly and foolishly when he chose to pitch his tent toward Sodom, where his family would be soiled by the city's shame, where the vilest, most unspeakable brand of sin was practiced openly and brazenly, tried to protect God's holy messengers who had been sent there to apprise the situation (Genesis 19:1-11). The New Testament has the following to say concerning Lot: "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)" (II Peter 2:7-8).

There is a great need for one to try to convert one's unsaved companion (I Peter 3:1-3), not by compromise, but by the finest example possible.

(4) Lot's wife was lost even though others were saved. Lot and his two daughters escaped the fire and brimstone which consumed the city. Three people were saved, while many were lost. Jesus warned, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14).

The time to be saved is now (II Corinthians 6:1-2; Hebrews 3:7-8). Tomorrow may be too late. A "more convenient time" may never come (Acts 24:24-25). What is required? Obey the commands of Jesus Christ (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4).

(5) Lot's wife was lost although she had left the city of Sodom. It is good for one to start; but one must finish the journey, if he is to arrive at the proper destination. "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John 12:42-43). What is the lesson here to be learned?

If one believes in God, but will not repent of his sins, he has not gone far enough (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38). If one believes and repents, but will not confess Jesus' name, he still has not gone all the way with the Lord (Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:37). If one believes, repents, and confesses Jesus' name, and is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins, one has done what the Lord commands. According to Romans 4:12 there are "steps" of faith. Partial obedience is equal to disobedience (I Samuel 15:10-23).

Read this story and learn.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Peter's Mother-In-Law

Little-known people are soon forgotten, but a few are remembered because of some unique or unusual event in their lives. This is the case of Peter's wife's mother, who was healed by the Lord (Matthew 8:14-16).

Peter's Home

Peter and his family made their residence in Capernaum on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee (Luke 4:31-38). Being a fisherman's house, it would most assuredly have been an humble dwelling. His evidently was a godly home: Peter felt comfortable in having the Lord visit him, which would not have been the case if sin had been their lifestyle. Theirs was a hospitable home, and ours should be as well (I Timothy 3:1). We need to be reminded that God has so graciously given us our homes and property. They are to be used for his honor and glory in serving his people.

Peter's Family

Roman Catholicism has exalted the practice of celibacy, i.e., an unmarried priesthood; yet they claim Peter as their first Pope. But Scripture makes it clear that Peter was a married man while serving as Christ's apostle. Paul notes that Peter's wife sometimes accompanied him on his missionary travels (I Corinthians 9:5). Of course, she was a believer, i.e., a Christian. Peter identifies himself as an elder of God's church (I Peter 5:1); yet elders (or bishops) must be married men who have their children in subjection (I Timothy 3:2-4). [The Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures seems to have delighted in demolishing false doctrines even before their genesis!]

Peter's Mother-in-law

This woman found a welcomed haven in the house of her son-in-law. It is tragic that today there is hostility between in-laws in so many families. This should never be the case among Christians. Those were the days of the extended family. Paul admonished, "If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened" (I Timothy 5:16). The modern nuclear family has much to learn from the past. What our parents did for us as children, we should be willing to do for them in their declining years. Luke, the physician, describes her condition with a doctor's insight. He reports that she "was holden with a great fever" (Luke 4:38). "Holden" means "in the grip of," a medical term for someone LAID UP with a sickness. She had a "great fever." The ancient physicians distinguished between a slight, and a high, fever. She was so ill that they "besought" the Lord to help her (Luke 4:38). This suggests that her family was greatly concerned about her condition. We know that Capernaum was surrounded by marshes, and was continually plagued with malaria. This may well have been her problem.

The Great Physician

Christ had already demonstrated his power to heal "all manner of disease and all manner of sickness" (Matthew 4:23). The family was confident he could help their loved one as well.



John Waddey

He came and stood over her, according to Luke 4:39. Mark says he took her hand (1:30). With a word he rebuked the fever -- and it left her immediately (Luke 4:39). Our Lord needed no crowd to work a miracle, nor did he work in secret. There is no evidence that he asked for or demanded faith on her part, as do modern "faith healers." He sought no contribution or "love offering" for what he did. His genuine miracles provided instant healing, not gradual recovery -- as today's self-proclaimed healers do. The differences in the Biblical miracles of healing and our 20th century 'healers' is that of light versus darkness, genuine versus counterfeit.

Lessons to Remember

May our homes be such that Christ would always be a welcomed guest.

Let our homes be havens of hospitality, for such is a hallmark of a Christian's home (Romans 12:13).

Each spouse must strive to love the family of his mate, and make them welcomed in his/her home (Romans 12:18).

May you who are mothers of daughters succeed as did this woman in rearing fine daughters to serve by the side of godly servants of the Lord.

When healed, this lady immediately set about ministering to the Lord, and to others present. She understood that she was saved to serve. She obviously did not enjoy being upon the bed and being served, as some folk do. Serving others is the meaning of Christian discipleship.

Those who would serve Christ as elders and preachers have every right to take a lawful mate in marriage. Marriage is honorable before God (Hebrews 13:4).

Christ is able and eager to bless us in soul and body, both in spiritual and temporal things.

Like Peter's family, we must learn to take our needs to the Lord. "Take it to the Lord in prayer" is not only a beautiful hymn; it is sound advice for every saint!

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

The Unknown God

Paul stood in Athens among the masterpieces of Greek art and the memorials of Greek wisdom. Here he found a religious people. Luke tells us Paul walked around and observed the objects of their worship. Holding the mind and devotions of the people were (1) the Epicurian and (2) the Stoic philosophies. Epicurus, the founder of the Epicurian sect, was born in Athens about 341 years before Christ. Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, was born on the isle of Cyprus about thirty years before Christ. Other philosophers of the day included students of Plato and Aristotle.

The Epicurians believed one should give vent to every emotion and lust. This was the philosophy of the "Rich Fool" of Jesus' parable in Luke 12.

The Stoics believed one should deny pain. They prided themselves in their ability not to give vent to their emotions. Christ taught men to distinguish between right and wrong. He taught men to enjoy the good with self-control, and to refuse to participate in evil.

Among the Athenian altars was an inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. They evidently realized their heathen gods did not give all of the blessings they received. Paul began his speech by saying, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, I declare him unto you" (Acts 17:31).

Man may know God EXISTS by the observation of nature. The Psalmist exclaimed, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalms 19:1). However there are many things which nature does not reveal.

Paul affirmed that "God . . . dwelleth not in



W. Edwin Kearley

temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24). God, the Lord of heaven and earth, made the world and all things therein. The apostle John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3).

God is to be worshiped "in spirit and in truth." The PLACE does not matter. Christians are to assemble. The author of the book of Hebrews exhorted: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is . . ." (Hebrews 10:25). A building may be the most spacious, serviceable, and comfortable place. The important matter is worship must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). Many a cathedral is empty because those two items were not considered.

God is "not worshiped with men's hands," as though he needs anything. He gives to all "life, breath, and all things" (Acts 17:24). We are the offspring of God. In him we live, move, and have our being. Therefore we should not think of God as being made by our hands from gold, silver, or stone. The "unknown" God is not graven by art and man's device (Acts 17:28-29). Man is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). The God of the universe is not made in the image of man.

All men are brothers in the flesh through creation. Paul said God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . ." (Acts 17:26). All humanity was created by God. All sprang from one common ancestor (Adam), or one blood. Men are not to have their several national gods. All should be united in the worship of the one true and living God, the Father of us all. James warns: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with respect of persons" (James 2:1). Many stand condemned for allowing political, racial, cultural and traditional lines to cause them to show respect

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Faith

Continued From Page 2

that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS, is accepted of him." There is a "work" all must do to be saved. Faith itself is called a "work." Paul says of the Thessalonians, "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith . . . (I Thessalonians 1:3). Faith works! In John 6:29 Jesus said to the crowd, "This is the WORK OF GOD, that YE believe on him whom he hath sent." Does one say, "This is God's work?" I ask: Who does the believing: God? or man?

But repentance is also a "work." (Incidentally, when one REPENTS, he does something MORE than BELIEVE). If one must repent, he is not saved by faith alone! Repentance and faith are not the same. Repentance always comes after faith. In Matthew 12:41 Jesus said, "The men of Ninevah shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah . . . But in Jonah 3:10 we are told: "And God saw their WORKS, that they turned from their evil way . . . Jonah 3:5 says, "The people of Ninevah believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth . . ." The faith which saved Ninevah led them to believe and turn -- to believe and repent. The faith which saved Ninevah was a faith which "worked," as Jonah 3:10 says.

Although no reference in the Bible is ever made to baptism as being a "work," yet it is a command of God, which requires faith and obedience on man's part (Acts 10:48).

In reference to one's living as God directs, Paul says: "For we walk by faith, and not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7). "Walk" refers to one's living. If one walks by faith, this means he obeys God. And one cannot think of walking, without taking steps. Hence "Works" are involved in a Christian's "faith." Now, I ask: If, when one obeys God in the Christian life he lives "by faith," why is it that the faith that saves one from his past sins is any less obedience? Listen to these truths. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Galatians 5:6). In reference to Abraham, James says: "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness . . ." (Verses 22-23). Again the Bible says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be

good or bad" (II Corinthians 5:10). Jesus says we are to be rewarded according to our "works;" "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then

shall he reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27). The faith that saves is the faith that obeys!!

—500 Third Ave., N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

Lectureship To Address "Sincere Current Questions"

Does the present Arab/Israeli situation have any Biblical significance? How should a Christian regard test tube life, genetic engineering and surrogate motherhood?

Should we restore, or, fellowship, the Independent Christian Church?

These questions, and many more, will be addressed at the Faulkner University (Alabama Christian College) Lectureship to be held October 4-8.

Entitled, "Bible Answers to Sincere Current Questions," the Faulkner University Lectureship will examine ten categories of questions, including Personal Questions, Eldership Questions, Grace Questions, Translation Questions, and Godhead Questions.

Where to draw the line, and Christian liberty, will be considered in Fellowship Questions. Local Church Questions will address such topics as "Biblical Discipleship Versus the Modern Discipling Movement." First Corinthians 7, Genesis 1 and 2, Revelation 20, and Romans 14 are among the scriptural passages explored in Textual Questions.

After-life Questions will investigate degrees



Wendell Winkler

of punishment, and the difference between the soul and spirit; and Ethical Questions, will cover such topics as abortion and AIDS.

We want to arm today's soldiers of Christ in the best way possible. This Lectureship offers, in my opinion, one of the greatest repositories of practical information in the brotherhood.

"Bible Answers to Sincere Current Questions" will also feature actual and mock debates on the issues of the Godhead, instrumental music, water baptism, and carnal warfare.

Speakers for the lectureship include Franklin Camp, Tom Holland, Furman Kearley, Roy Lanier Jr., Hugo McCord, Lynn McMillon, Bert Thompson, Rex Turner Sr., Earl West and William Woodson.

Jane McWhorter and Lois McCord will lead the ladies' classes.

A special feature this year is the Leadership Dinner honoring Bible School teachers. The evening's speaker will be John Waddey, editor of Christian Bible Teacher. The dinner will be held on Tuesday, October 6, at 5:00 p.m.

The annual Alumni Luncheon will be at noon Wednesday, October 7.

**8TH ANNUAL
GUS NICHOLS —
WORDS OF TRUTH LECTURESHIP
SEPT. 27 — OCT. 1
6TH AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST
JASPER, ALABAMA
"God's Plan For His Church"**

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

IV

Continued From Page 1

about their spiritual roots, profit from the mistakes of others, and gain hope and comfort from the Old Testament (I Corinthians 10:1-13; Romans 15:4). Christianity is a New Testament religion. The Old Testament is just as inspired as the New, and it is all truth; but the purposes of each are different, and God wants his people united in Christ, not Moses (Galatians 3:19-25; Romans 7:4-6).

Jesus prayed for unity -- that his followers will be united upon the words he gave the apostles to teach and preach (John 17). With the death of Jesus, his last will and testament came into effect, and the world was given an international spiritual law to draw all men to God in one body by the cross (Hebrews 9:15-17; Ephesians 2:14-16). From out of the past come the words of one who grasped this basic principle well when he wrote:

That although the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inseparably

connected, making together but one perfect and entire revelation of the Divine will, for the edification and salvation of the Church, and therefore in that respect cannot be separated; yet as to what directly and properly belongs to their immediate object, the New Testament is as perfect a constitution for the worship, discipline, and government of the New Testament church, and as perfect a rule for the particular duties of its members, as the Old Testament was for the worship, discipline, and government of the Old Testament church, and the particular duties of its members.

(Thomas Campbell, Declaration and Address, The Bethany Press, St. Louis, Missouri, p. 45).

—3133 Wellborne Dr. W. Mobile, AL 36609.

The Unknown God

Continued From Page 3

of persons with their brethren. Faithfulness, or unfaithfulness, to God should be the only consideration.

Paul concluded by saying, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). He then promised a day of judgment with Christ as the judge.

Are you ready for the judgment?

—127 Melody Lane, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.



(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 24

FRIDAY AUGUST 28, 1987

NUMBER 36

Elders And Deacons

Rather than functioning as a mob, all groups of people must have leaders, if good is to be accomplished. If a school has no principal, if a nation has no president, if an army has no commander, if the church, locally, has no leadership, nothing worthwhile can be achieved.



W. A. Holley

The New Testament clearly sets forth the qualifications of both elders and deacons. Let our readers now take time to read I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; I Peter 5:1-4, if they wish to be well-informed.

In the apostolic church there was a plurality of bishops and deacons in each church: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). In New Testament usage, "elders," "presbyters," "overseers," "pastors," and "bishops" refer to the same office (Acts 20:17, 28; I Timothy 4:14; Ephesians 4:11). Roman Catholicism and protestant denominationalism do not follow the New Testament pattern. Those often have a "bishop" over several churches, such as dioceses, synods, or associations, and the like. The church of Christ follows the New Testament order of things as therein revealed.

We shall now discuss the biblical qualifications of elders and deacons --

(1) Such men must be blameless, without reproach. Elders ought to set such a fine example that no reproach or blame will ever rest upon them (I Timothy 3:1-2).

(2) An elder or deacon must be the husband of one wife. It is always safe to appoint men who have had one and only one wife. If an elder or deacon has a second or third wife, a cloud of suspicion is likely to overshadow him (I Timothy 3:2).

(3) These men need to be vigilant and temperate (I Timothy 3:2). They must watch over themselves, and over the Lord's church, being constantly aware of dangers which lurk along the way.

(4) Another qualification is to be sober-minded (I Timothy 3:2, A.S.V.). Such men must not be worldly-minded. Leaders of the Lord's people must not act from impulse or passion, but from sober thought.

(5) Those selected as elders and deacons must be men of good behaviour. These would be men of modesty, well-behaved, conservative in their approach to their responsibilities.

(6) Another requirement is hospitality toward one's fellowman. These social duties require church leaders to provide for those who need their services (Hebrews 13:1-3).

(7) Elders must be "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2). This requires them to read and study their Bibles, read tracts, and various religious papers that they might know well the truth, and, at the same time, be able to correct those who might be in error (Titus 1:9).

(8) Moreover, elders and deacons must not be "given to wine" (I Timothy 3:3). Church-leaders must not be contentious, quarrelsome, fussy, quick to get into scrapes with other people. Ill-gotten money, wealth, or "filthy lucre" cannot be their master. Stinginess turns others off! "Not greedy of filthy lucre" (I Timothy 3:3). Not covetous.

(9) Elders are men who are patient, gentle toward all, not brawlers, not contentious, not insulting or abusive, not quarrelsome by nature or disposition (I Timothy 3:3; Philippians 2:3-5).

(10) "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity . . ." is another of the Lord's requirements (I Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6). If one has failed in his own home, he is unlikely to succeed in the church!

(11) "Not a novice," or a new convert -- because such an one lacks knowledge and experience. An elder also needs to be a man of "good report" from those who are without

(I Timothy 3:6-7). Also, elders and deacons must be in control of their anger (Titus 1:8), just and fair in their relations with others, and holy in their manner of life (Titus 1:8). One who is hot-headed and high tempered is unlikely to help others.


(12) Elders cannot be self-willed: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre" (Titus 1:7). No elder should ever seek "to lord it over" God's church (I Peter 5:3). Hence, elders are not dictators who can boss others around. Bible elders rule through persuasion as they follow the power of truth (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

(13) Elders must fast the word of God: "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). Hence, elders should not be compromisers. They are commanded to watch for the souls of those who are under their oversight. "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 unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

Thus, elders are "overseers of the church," and it is their responsibility to plan the work-program for all. "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 20:17, 28).

The elders are to look after the spiritual welfare of the church. They may wisely ask the deacons to look after temporal matters (Acts 6:1-8). One further note: Acts 11:29-30, teaches that the elders have divine authority to handle the money of the church. We quote: "Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

—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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Elders And A Checkbook Mentality

(IV)

An eldership that has only a "checkbook mentality" has failed to comprehend its work. There is no WORK on this earth of greater importance and magnitude than being a bishop over God's heritage.

Properly spending the money given by the free-will offering of the saints is not to be minimized. It certainly is important! It is the responsibility of elders to decide how funds are spent; but

that is only ONE ASPECT of the gigantic WORK God has given them to do.

Elders need to be decision makers and efficient administrators, but their work extends far beyond those functions. Men unwilling to perform their duties of FEEDING, TENDING, AND CARING for the flock should not occupy the office. "Elder" is not a TITLE to be worn, but a WORK to be performed!

Congregations need men serving as elders who are LEADERS! Congregations without leaders are like babies; they need milk; they sleep most of the time; they are passive to things around them. Leaders of men don't waste time with the mundane. Their work is too lofty and demanding.

Too often is the case where the preacher does the work of the elders; the elders do the work of the deacons, and the deacons sit on the pews, frustrated! Thermostats, wallpaper, drapes, carpets, lawns, and buildings must not be the chief concern of God's pastors. Almost anyone can write a check to cover these matters. But, not everyone can shepherd a flock, caring for the spiritual needs of God's sheep. Our need today, brotherhood wide,

Continued on Page 3



Demar Elam

Lessons From The Eunuch

Of the thousands of cases of conversion in the book of Acts perhaps more has been written about the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch than any other. (Please read Acts 8:26-39).

PHILIP

Much has been said about Philip's part in the conversion of the eunuch. Philip

was a great evangelist who had gone forth from the church at Jerusalem because of the persecutions which came upon the church there (Acts

8:4). He "went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them . . . When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:5, 12). In this chapter we have also the account of the conversion of Simon the sorcerer, his fall and what he was told to do to be restored from his fallen state (Acts 8:9-24). Then in verses 26-39 we have the account of Philip's being instructed to "Arise and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert;" his coming in contact with the Ethiopian eunuch, the queen's treasurer, his preaching Christ unto him, his subsequent confession and baptism. Truly Philip was a great man of God, a powerful preacher of the gospel of Christ, and one eminently worthy of commendation.

THE MAN TO BE CONVERTED

But we now want to change our focus from Philip to the eunuch. Even before his conversion there are some outstanding characteristics in this man that are worthy of notation and imitation.

SINCERE

One of the obvious characteristics of this man was his sincerity. He traveled a distance of approximately 1000 miles to worship God, from Ethiopia to Jerusalem (verse 27). There were no automobiles nor airplanes in his day; but he was so devoted to the old Jewish religion [he was evidently a Jewish proselyte] that he traveled this great distance in a chariot rather than miss worship. Many today who live only minutes from the church building -- which is warm in winter and cool in summer, and which has padded pews! -- find excuses not to get into their air-conditioned automobiles and drive the short distance to worship God. People do not miss worship because they live too far from the church building but because they live too far from God. The writer of Hebrews said to Christians: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25). In I Corinthians 14:23 Paul talks about "the whole church" being "come together in one place." In most places the "whole church" is never together in one place because of members' forsaking the assembly. Christians need the sincerity of the Eunuch when it comes to worship.



Guy F. Hester

HE WAS READING THE SCRIPTURES — VERSE 28

He had time on his hands and was using it wisely. We have time on our hands; how wisely do we use it? Paul said, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). What better way do we have of "redeeming the time" than by reading and studying the scripture (II Timothy 2:15; John 5:39).

DESIRED GUIDANCE

The place of his reading was Isaiah 53:7-8, a prophecy concerning the crucifixion of Christ. When Philip asked, "Understandest thou what thou readeest?" the eunuch replied, "How can I except some man should guide me?" Although he was an important man, and was no doubt very learned in many things, he realized that there were some things he did not know, and that he needed the assistance of others in learning of these matters. He was not ashamed to ask questions concerning that which he did not understand. None of us knows so much but that he can learn from others. Apollos was an eloquent man who "was mighty in the scriptures," but he was taught by Aquila and Priscilla "the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:24-26).

HE LOVED THE TRUTH

Not understanding what he was reading he asked, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself? or of some other man?" (verse 34). He loved truth! He was not interested in an opinion, but truth. One must love the truth in order to be saved. Paul wrote of some in II Thessalonians 2:10-12: "With all deceitfulness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they might all be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

HE OBEYED THE GOSPEL — VERSES 36-39

He heard Christ preached; he believed; he repented of sin, including his religious error; he confessed Christ; and he was baptized. These are exactly the same conditions that one today must meet in order to be saved (Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 2:38).

All of those who do not obey the gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

HE REJOICED — VERSE 39

"And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." And what reason he had to rejoice! He had been "born again," "born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:3,5). His sins were remitted (Acts 2:38). He was a new creature in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17). He was a Christian (Acts 11:26). All Christians should rejoice. Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4).

Each of us should strive to possess in his own life those same outstanding qualities that characterized the eunuch.

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Some Problem Verses In First Corinthians Explained

Paul's first letter to the saints in Corinth dealt with a number of problems and disorders that had surfaced in that young church. Someone had written to Paul asking his advice on a number of questions (I Corinthians 7:1). The material in this epistle is yet relevant for God's people. We shall briefly review one of those problem sections.



John Waddey

Paul's Opinions

Paul's Opinions

In the seventh chapter, the apostle responds to questions having to do with marriage. In so doing, he offers three kinds of answers:

1. That which the Lord Jesus said while here on earth (7:10);
2. That which the Lord did not address or speak to, but which the Holy Spirit had given to Paul as a divine commandment (7:12);
3. That which was not a matter of divine command, but to which Paul gave his opinion as a wise man of God (7:6-9).

Before one can properly understand Paul's lengthy response to these several questions, he should note a qualifying factor that colors each statement. "I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us; namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is" (7:26). While we are uncertain as to just what this distressful situation was, it was clearly one of persecution and hardships for Christians; and in view of that, Paul gives his advice.

God ordained marriage as the ideal state for man (Genesis 2:20-23). The writer of Hebrew (13:4) states, "Let marriage be had in honor among all . . ." Paul later wrote that those who deny man the privilege of marriage teach a doctrine of demons (I Timothy 4:1-3). Yet to the Corinthians, Paul declared; "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (7:1). He urged them to remain single (7:8). But he did not do this because he thought celibacy to be superior to the married state; rather, it was expedient in view of the "present distress" that confronted them.

Responding to their question, "Should one marry?" Paul argued that in view of the "distress" it would be better not to marry; but if they were not able to live the celibate life, they could marry. In either case, it was "not a commandment." Rather, it was a concession for each to make his own choice (7:7-9).

When asked if "virgins" (i.e., the never-married), should marry, the apostle responded: "I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy. I think therefore that this is good by reason of the distress that is upon us, namely, that it is good for a man to be as he is" (7:25-26). He had no command expressed by Christ on this topic; nor had he received a divine revelation on the matter. "He was inspired or led by the Spirit, in this matter, not to command, but to advise. His advice, however, was worthy of great deference" (Charles Hodge). Lenski observes: "This is

not a mere personal preference, it is the weighty judgment and advice of one who is in every way qualified to render it."

The fact that this is advice, but not a command that demanded conformity, is demonstrated in verse 28. After having advised against marriage, he plainly states "But shouldest thou marry, thou has not sinned. . . ."

Again, when asked about a Christian widow's remarrying -- he responded that she could marry a Christian; but he observed" she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment: and I think that I also have the Spirit of God" (7:40). Under normal circumstances, Paul wrote, "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household . . ." (I Timothy 5:14). Charles Hodge writes " . . . it was an opinion founded, as he says, on the peculiar circumstances of the time, and not intended to bind the conscience or to interfere with the liberty of others." He continues, "The meaning here clearly is, that the apostle was led by the Spirit to give the advice in question, so that his advice is, so to speak, the advice of the Spirit obligatory? Certainly, if he meant it to be so; but if he meant simply to lay down a general rule of expediency and to have everyone judge of its application to his or her peculiar case, then it leaves all concerned free" (Charles

Hodge).

Those who read this chapter from the perspective of the Corinthian saints will have no problem distinguishing between Paul's authoritative commands, versus his opinions which were not binding. The problem arises when the man with a low view of the scripture grasps at Paul's concession as a 'handle' to question the whole of inspiration. The skeptic views all of the Bible as the uninspired opinions and philosophies of the authors. This we reject in toto. Rather than disclaiming inspiration, Paul "insists that he has 'the Spirit of God' . . . in the expression of his inspired judgment on this difficult, complicated, tangled problem of marriage. But he has discharged his duty, and leaves each to decide for himself."

David Brown sums it up well: "When the apostle thus sharply distinguishes between what he utters by authority -- under immediate inspiration -- and what in the exercise of his own Christian wisdom he judges to be right and recommends to be done, we may be sure that wherever no such intimation as this is given, he is to be understood as speaking authoritatively, both in the expression of truth and in the giving of commands" (Philip Schaff).

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Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

No. V

Novie C. Perry

A fifth basic foundation principle of New Testament Christianity is the continually concentrated effort of all Christians to call Bible things by the use of Bible names. Notice Paul's stress upon this very principle in his letter to Corinth:

"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).

How much more unified in communication can people be than when they all use the same terms having the same definitions? The closer we try to use the very same words the Holy Spirit used, the farther we will be from division and confusion in Christianity. The following words are among the most misused words among popular religions in the world that foster division and confusion: pastor, church, inspiration, repentance, baptism, witness, love, faith, God, sin, faithful, Christian, unity, and fellowship. The biblical use of these (and other) terms is lacking greatly among many who claim to be Christians. You have to know the language of Ashdod to carry on an intelligent conversation with some folks, or you within a few minutes will become quite puzzled concerning which track they are on (Nehemiah 13:23, 24).

For instance, a woman told me she had been baptized for the remission of her sins. I knew the denomination to which she belonged never taught that baptism is for forgiveness of sins. I brought an older preacher with me to see her, and in a few minutes she admitted she was "saved" when she "accepted the Lord" and came down the aisle and "prayed through" with her pastor. If the older preacher had not heard such terminology that was common to that denomination, I might have concluded this

woman had met some denominational preacher out there who was practicing baptism "for the remission of sins." Speaking the same thing as the Bible speaks can have a bearing on a person's salvation from sin or believing a lie (II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

Within the past two months I have heard reports that there are some preachers in denominations who baptize for the remission of sins. The reports came from three different brethren, and had reference to three different geographical locations. If preachers use the Bible as their authority, they are bound to discover the biblical reason for baptism.

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Elders And A Checkbook Mentality

Continued From Page 2

is for scripturally-qualified and scripturally-working elders. Congregations having such men need to thank God for them, pray in their behalf, commend them to others for their work's sake, tell them personally that you appreciate them, and be willing to participate in the work that they have outlined for the church to achieve.

Elders having a "checkbook mentality" will never lead the church they serve to great heights. They will never see the church experience the numerical and spiritual growth that it could otherwise achieve if they did not have such a mentality. Churches that are well led today have elders who have a VISION OF A GREAT CHURCH DOING A GREAT WORK FOR GOD. Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." The vision has to be much greater than a balanced checkbook.

—185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, Georgia 30214.

Faith No. 7 Steadfastness

Hebrews 10:32-39 is a delineation of the conflicts which early Christians were called to endure. Hebrews 11 includes Old Testament 'greats' also. The writer says: "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction" Jesus said, ". . . he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). To Christians Paul said, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord; walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8). Though Paul's exhortation is what we all must do, it became an extremely difficult path to walk, especially for first century Christians.



Frank D. Young

Not every one even today has the easy life we Americans may almost universally think. Where I sit as I write this article, we have a young man, capable, and loyal; yet upon his learning the truth, his father suggested to his former preacher: "Let us go and whip the preacher" (the preacher who taught him the truth)! [In this case the preacher would have accepted such]. In my preaching career, I have known several who have given up home and family to be Christians. (I have also known some who refused to obey the gospel, on account of family). I baptized a young lady, when her mother said: "It will not hurt me one bit more than it did the night your father died!" I have visited the week I write this article where a little lady is living in poverty conditions, and other severe situations, simply to live with her husband, and to rear some

children in the Lord.

Those professional, money-for-hire preachers evidently know nothing of the sacrifices many make for the church. I fear they may have no concern for such situations.

Many of us cannot "call to remembrance" in our days, afflictions for Christ's sake. But even when we can not, we need to get our Bibles, and live for a while with the early church. We need truly, to know the price paid for our faith. This writer is not here for long, probably. But young men now alive may live to see days which have not been seen for a few generations!

The Hebrew Christians "were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions." Public abuses and insults are not easily endured, I am sure. No afflictions, nor sufferings, are easily endured. However, such make us take a look at what has been done for us, even beginning with Old Testament prophets, and above all with our Lord and the apostles! We surely should bow in humility and gratitude -- or else go farther from God and the Bible! Evidently these Hebrew Christians did not hesitate to become "companions of them" who had reproachful epithets hurled at them. It would have been easy to go to Rome, and fail to see Paul. One could easily "not have time," or be "too busy" to identify himself with one "who had turned the world upside down." One could easily say, "I know not the man." Paul exhorted: "Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner" (II Timothy 1:8).

I was told the following fifty years ago, by a lady who claimed it to be a true incident. Read it and weep! A real old former slave had faithfully served his master, and loved him dearly. For some reason, they became separated by many miles, and for a long time. After a period the slave's master went to a now big southern city. At a large gathering, both the slave and his master attended. Upon learning his master was there, the slave,

now old, looked up his master, and lovingly rushed to greet his master. However, the master refused to pay attention to the slave's pleading, and greetings. He simply refused to recognize him. After continuing such pleadings for so long, the old slave turned away, embarrassed and deeply hurt.

May God's mercy be ours. But may our love and devotion to him never wane. Paul said: ". . . I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace" (Philippians 1:7). Again read: "Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my afflictions" (Philippians 4:14).

Back to Hebrews again. It is said they "took joyfully the spoiling of your goods" (Hebrews 10:34). There are reports this week of one who has given up his fortune to be a Christian. May God bless him, and his kind. Surely the Jewish people of Bible days underwent such sacrifices to be Christians. In times of persecutions, many losses of property would be seen. The Bible says of the apostles: "They departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41). Nor did these men lose their faith. Verse 42 says: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Neither did their zeal fail. This passage in Hebrews (10:34) says they knew they "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." The Bible says of Abraham, "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). Further, Hebrews 11:16 says of the great servants of God of old, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

'Tis far better to be in the lowly position of the old slave, than finally to be denied by God!

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Being Of The Same Mind And Judgment

W. Edwin Kearley

There was division in the church at Corinth. Paul had been informed of this state of the church from the family of Chloe.

Paul said, "Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (I Corinthians 1:12, A.S.V.). There was no division among those over whom Corinth was divided. They were followers of Christ. There were some at Corinth who were even following Christ in a divisive sense. They were filled with the party spirit.

Paul asked them, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (I Corinthians 1:13). Paul said to the Ephesians concerning Christ, "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7). Peter wrote, "For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21). Luke said of Apollos, "For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:28, K.J.V.). There was no justification for the

church at Corinth to be divided.

They were not divided over doctrine these proclaimers taught. There was a group that said Paul is our preacher. Others said Apollos is our preacher. Yet others accepted only Peter as their preacher. This partisan spirit was condemned by Paul.

Paul said, "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel . . ." (I Corinthians 1:14-17).

Paul did not say baptism is not important; but rather baptism is the fruit of preaching Christ. Of the gospel which Paul preached, he said, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, 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 scripture; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the

scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1-4). If one's baptism were not based upon faith in these facts, it was of no value.

Paul's plea to the Corinthians was, "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). From the beginning Jesus demanded unity of his followers. During his personal ministry he prayed to the Father in heaven. His prayer for his disciples was that they "all may be one," as he and the Father are one. This would signal to the world that he was sent of the Father (John 17:20-23).

Paul commanded the Romans to ". . . mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). John taught that those who transgress and abide not in the doctrine of Christ do not have the approval of God (II John 9-11).

Those who practice the doctrines of men and human creeds cannot have the approval of God.

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(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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To Help Our Children Mature Properly

INTRODUCTION

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 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. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1-4).



Dan Winkler

Paul charged parents to "nurture" [lit. "nurture up to proper maturity"] their children. The context of this charge reveals at least four basic lessons children need to be taught for them to mature properly. For this study, consider two of these four.

I. CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY (Ephesians 6:1)

(1) Children are to "obey" [lit. "hearken to the commands of, commit themselves to, allow themselves to be captivated and governed by"] their parents. It has been suggested that children used to say, "No, Sir." Then came the generation which said, "No." Yet, for some in today's generation it is: "No way!" Blessed are the children who can echo the words of one who said, "I loved my mother because she was on 'speaking' terms with God, and on 'spanking' terms with me." Children must be taught a respect for authority.

(2) Such has always been a part of proper child training. So it was in the Patriarchal Age (Genesis 18:19), the Mosaic Age (Cf. Proverbs 6:20), and so it must be in the Christian age (I Timothy 3:4; Cf. 3:12-13; I Peter 5:3). In fact, one's respect for God's

authority (Cf. I Corinthians 4:6; Colossians 3:17; II Thessalonians 2:15; I Timothy 1:13; II Timothy 1:13; 4:2-4; Revelation 22:18-19), hinges on his being taught early in childhood to respect parental authority (Hebrews 12:9-10).

II. CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT THAT GOD'S BLESSINGS HINGE ON RESPECT FOR GOD'S COMMANDS (Ephesians 6:2)

(1) Children must learn that God's promises are conditional. The command for children to obey and honor their parents is described by Paul as "the first commandment with promise." There is some question as to the meaning of this parenthetical description. If reference is to the Ten Commandments, the command, "Honor thy father and mother" is the fifth, not the first. Too, of the Ten Commandments, the second is accompanied with a general promise which would make the command to honor parents the second with a promise, not the first. Someone objects by saying, "It is the first of the Ten Commandments with a 'specific' promise." However, such being true, it is the only command of the ten with a specific promise, not the first. In explanation of Paul's description, place it back within its immediate context. It could possibly be first in connection with the previous command for children to obey their parents. Thus, children must first be taught to honor their parents and then out of said respect they should and will obey their parents. Note: this command is attached to a promise, thus emphasizing the conditional nature of God's blessings.

(2) God has always worked under this principle. So it was in the Patriarchal Age (Cf. Genesis 2:16-17; 6:12-14, 17-18), the Mosaic Age (Cf. Malachi 3:7-10), the days of Jesus (Cf. Matthew 6:33; Mark 16:16; Luke 6:36); and so it must be today (Acts 2:38; James 4:8; Revelation 2:10). Said a boy to his father: "I'm going to jump off this skyscraper and defy the law of gravity." Said the father to his son, "No, Son; you will only demonstrate the law of gravity." In analogy, children must be taught that in disobeying

God they only demonstrate the principle under which he operates: "Obey me and be blessed; disobey me and be punished!"

CONCLUSION

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And, as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were past--
The bit of clay was hard at last;
The form I gave it, it still bore,
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay,
And gently formed it day by day;
And molded it with power and art,
A young boy's soft and yielding heart.

I came again when days were gone,
It was a man I looked upon;
He still the early impressions wore,
And I could change him never more.

In keeping with these words of the poet, parents will have fewer concerns over the "early impressions" if they teach their children to respect authority [God's, in specific], and give them insight into the conditional nature of God's promises.

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Basic Foundation Principles of New Testament Christianity (No. VI)

Novie C. Perry

A sixth basic foundation principle of New Testament Christianity is a complete rejection of human creeds. The word "creed" is from the Latin word CREDO, meaning "I believe." Since the Garden of Eden the Devil has been trying to get men and women to either add their own beliefs to God's will or substitute man-made teachings for divine truth. Christ warned that the doctrines and traditions of men resulted in vain efforts of men to serve and worship God (Matthew 15:1-9). Jesus said the "plants" resulting from the creeds of men would be rooted up by the Father (Matthew 15:13). For the religious foundation of any church to be right, it must be founded entirely upon the teaching of God's word, not on the wisdom of men (I Corinthians 3:11; II John 9-10). Paul warned Timothy of some who would "depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," and to "refuse profane and old wives' fables" as well as "vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (I Timothy 4:1-7; 6:20).

By the fourth century A.D., a major written creed had been formulated at Nicea, and numerous ones have sprung up over the centuries. They reveal mankind's urge to write his beliefs instead of adhering to "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Man's effort to write creeds may have started with very noble purposes, but over a period of time men exalted creeds to the same level as inspired scripture, then finally held the creed in GREATER esteem than God's word. To compound the problem, creeds are filled with many teachings that directly or subtly contradict the Bible. "Let God be true . . ." (Romans 3:4).

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—The Unity Of God's People—

"And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ. . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me" (John 17:3, 20-23).

Here we have Jesus Christ praying for the unity of all Christians, all believers. Jesus knows of the terrible destruction of religious division. He says, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?" (Matthew 12:25-26).

One of the greatest causes of infidelity is the rank and rampant religious division which now characterizes so-called Christendom. If the Holy Bible teaches all the contradictory doctrines and practices of Roman Catholicism and Protestant Denominationalism, how can any sober-minded man believe it? Verily, religious division in the name (?) of God is the seed of atheism!

All sowers of discord have the curse of God resting upon them: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations; feet that be swift in running to mischief; a false witness that speaketh lies; and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

What should be done with those who sow or cause division? "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

If unity is to prevail, we must all speak and do the same things. "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). Many in the church at Corinth were seeking to follow preachers, rather than the Lord. We note: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (Verses 12-13).

It is just as sinful to follow John Calvin or Martin Luther or John Wesley or the Pope,

as it was to follow Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, or any other human being.

Following Jesus' word is the way of unity. We must follow divine truth without addition, or subtraction, or substitution (Revelation 22:18-19). "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ." (I Peter 4:11).

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). It is impossible for people to walk together while following various manuals, disciplines, creeds, all drawn up by sundry leaders (Matthew 15:1-9).

In the Holy Bible, there are seven 'planks' upon which "the unity of the Spirit" is to be built: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:3-6).

The "one body" is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24). One has as much right to worship the 'God of his choice,' as one has to be a member of the 'church of his choice.' One has as much right to follow the 'Lord Jesus of his choice,' or to be led by the 'Spirit of his choice,' as one has to observe the 'faith of his choice.'

Christians are to live in accord, "in the bond of peace," that they may maintain peace and unity among themselves. That state of mind which promotes the unity of the body of Christ is that gentle, long-suffering, forbearing spirit that keeps down all strife and division, that crushes out selfishness, and makes each member seek not his own but another's good (Philippians 2:1-5; Ephesians 5:21).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Hall L. Calhoun: "The Christian Scholar"

Drs. Adron Doran and J. E. Choate have written "The Christian Scholar," a biography of Dr. Hall Laurie Calhoun, protege of John William McGarvey. Hall L. Calhoun was one of the most outstanding teachers, ministers and writers of the third generation (1863-1935), during the Restoration Movement in America. He earned the Baccalaureate of Arts, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from some of the most prestigious universities in our land.

Calhoun served as a professor and an administrator in Georgie Robertson Christian College, the College of the Bible, Bethany College, Freed-Hardeman College, and David Lipscomb College, over a period of 35 years. During the first 20 years of his adult life, he was associated with the Churches of Christ in Tennessee and Kentucky but spent the next 25 years in affiliation with the Christian Church in Kentucky and West Virginia. He returned to preach for the Church of

Continued On Page 4

The Inspiration Of The Bible

(No. 4)

Claims For Inspiration

Before citing Biblical claims to inspiration, it might be good to acquaint the reader with what is called "Higher Criticism" and "Lower Criticism."

The first may imply it is better; but not so. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia states: "Higher criticism . . . manifestly tends to widen out illimitably into regions where exact science cannot follow it; where, often, the critic's imagination is his only law." Higher criticism is obviously not concerned with the accuracy of the Biblical text, and would contribute to destruction of faith in the Bible. "Lower Criticism" on the other hand, ". . . deals strictly with the text of Scripture, endeavouring to ascertain what the real text of each book was as it came from the hands of the author" (p. 749).

"Higher Criticism," it seems, has been given impetus by infidel German theologians and philosophers. The term "Higher Criticism" was given by a German Biblical critic, Eichorn, about the beginning of the nineteenth century. The reader can easily see that "Lower Criticism" is much more valuable than "Higher Criticism" in that this science seeks to give us the true text, whereas the former would destroy such. In view of the fact that even some among us, so-called 'gospel preachers' and 'professors' of the Bible, have become so enamored with the false critics as to deny the verbal inspiration of the Bible, classify parts as inaccurate, thereby affecting the faith of many and leading many into error, it is in order to continually warn and to uphold the inerrancy of proper translations of the Bible.

Now let us consider Biblical claims to inspiration. Let it be emphasized again that God did not give Biblical writers merely an idea or thought, and allow them to write of their own volition; but the Holy Spirit gave the actual words they were to use. No writer of the Bible ever claimed credit for originating his writings; nor does one ever find any mere human production claiming such inspiration as does the Bible. More than two thousand times such statements as follow are found in the Bible.

The apostle Paul made it clear that what he spoke and wrote were not words of men: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet . . . let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Corinthians 14:37). "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God . . ." (I Thessalonians 2:13). Even the Lord Jesus Christ never presumed to speak of himself, but said: "For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak" (John 12:49). The apostles were told not to "premeditate" what they should speak, "for it is not ye that speak, but the



Roy J. Hearn

Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11). The Scriptures are called "The oracles of God" (Romans 3:2); "The word of God" (Luke 8:11); "The word of the Lord" (Acts 13:48); "The word of Christ" (Colossians 3:16); and the apostles spoke "the mighty works of God" (Acts 2:11).

Now observe these claims in the Old Testament: God promised to be with Moses and "teach thee what thou shalt speak" (Exodus 4:10-12). Balaam sent this message to King Balak, "The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Numbers 22:38). We read again: "The Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth" (Numbers 23:16). Later Balaam asked the King: "Told not I thee, saying, All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do?" (Numbers 22:36). David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (II Samuel 23:2). Jeremiah wrote: "And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jeremiah 1:9). Nearly one hundred times Jeremiah said, "The word of the Lord came unto me" or in other ways declared that he uttered "the words of the Lord" and "the word of the living God." Isaiah (1:10) says, "Hear the word of the Lord . . ." and no fewer

than twenty times does he so declare that what he spoke were God's words, not his. God testified "by the Spirit in the prophets" to Israel (Nehemiah 9:20, 30). Peter declares, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21). About sixty times Ezekiel said what he wrote are the "words of God." "Son of man, all my words that I speak unto thee receive in thine heart . . . and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord God . . ." (Ezekiel 3:10-11).

Keep in mind that well over 2,000 times are such expressions used, showing that the words of the Bible came from God, not from any man. The apostle Paul summed up the whole matter in these words: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth . . ." (I Corinthians 2:13). So we can join the peerless apostle in saying, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

(Next, Proof From Prophecy).

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

Faith

(No. 8)

The great truths found in Hebrews 10:32-39 stir one's heart. Faith will truly be strengthened as one lives with Hebrews for a while. Our better "possession" in a world to come is a great incentive. Peter says we have an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4). Hebrews 10:35 exhorts: "Cast not

away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." The writer of Hebrews goes to Habbakkuk 2:4 to arouse us to our need for steadfastness. He says: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Hebrews 10:38). Today one loathes to see young people, who do not "live by faith." I suppose hell is no more horrible to one of any given age, than to another. Yet through our young folk the church lives, and will live in the next generation. It is also of great concern to see any one, young or old, turn from the truth.

The confidence expressed toward these Christians is surely evidence of the great hope all can possess: "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them who believe to the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:39). From where I write now, we have several who have endured a "great conflict" to hold to their faith, beyond what any one



Frank D. Young

would expect today. Truth, even now, has become most precious to some. Love for families has not diminished; yet love for truth has found a place in the hearts of these people. Each of the following incidents has been related to me by other people, and no reference to them has been made by the persons themselves.

Christians have two choices: We can "live by faith" or we can "draw back." However, be it remembered, that those who "draw back" do so "unto perdition." Rather, every one needs to "believe unto the saving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:38-39). To these same Hebrews, the writer said: "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Every sphere of life calls for patience. Steadfastness in one's work gains him greater positions of trust. Better jobs and greater pay come as a result of patience. Stubborn minds, and ignorant people, are brought to humility; but knowledge is attained as a result of one's patience in study. The patient steadfastness of a widow (as related in Luke 18:1-8) is a gem. She had a need; nothing less than what it required would satisfy her. The judge "feared not God, nor regarded man" (Luke 18:8). But the woman's continued petition brought her relief from her "adversary." Jesus uses her persistence to emphasize our need for steadfastness in "faith." Our Lord's piercing question needs to concern every one: "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). The faith by which we live here, and that faith which will avail in the eternal world, requires loyalty and patience. There must be resistance to evil, and steadfastness

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Faith

(No. 8)

Continued From Page 3

in doing right. In a meeting where I preached, a brother lead, for an invitation song: "Yield not to temptation!" (This was a first for me)! Another lead "O why not to night?" at a morning service! I was somewhat apprehensive. But as I sang, I reflected upon the price this brother had had to pay for his faith. Whereupon, I think I joined more heartedly into the song. I had preached on the church, and after the service this brother expressed gratitude for what I said.

When one 'buys the truth, and sells it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding' (Proverbs 23:23), others often know not the price the other has paid for it.

I laid this article aside to talk with a visitor -- a lady who said: "I'm eighty-five years of age; and I'll be glad when the Lord welcomes me home." She seemed to be in good health, and not a worry. Yet she was anxious for hope to be realized. Her love for the church, and her deep loyalty to the Lord, holds out such hope.

Both epistles to Timothy present beautiful

illustrations teaching the need for continued loyalty to the faith. One of these is the well-known figure of "shipwreck." Paul wrote: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (I Timothy 1:19). Every one is sailing the great ocean of life. The vessel in which we sail is FAITH. The port at which we hope to arrive is heaven's shore. All must "get on board." "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).

The faith which "puts one on board" is a faith which obeys Christ's gospel. One passage says, "A great company of priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:5). When the Roman Christians had obeyed that faith, it is said: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). However rough the way became, they had made peace. Thus their

reconciliation, which brought to them this peace, had put them into contact with the saving power -- the blood of the Christ. "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" (Romans 6:3-4). Though the figure is changed (Paul in Romans calls it a "walk"), yet the truth is the same. When Paul relayed the message of God to the heathen on board, he said, "... for I believe God" (Acts 27:25). In life's great ocean, and regardless of how rough sailing becomes, we all need to "believe God." None truly believes God, who does not obey God's will -- all the way, from "getting on board" till the "sailing is over" and we reach the heavenly store.

—500 Third Ave. N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

Elders Are Important People

(No. III)

Elders are important people! Scriptural church government calls for elders to rule over each local congregation. Paul, the great apostle of Christ, had "fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and the region that lieth round about and there preached the gospel" (Acts 14:6-7). Paul healed a lame man at Lystra who had been crippled from his mother's womb.



Demar Elam

When the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted their voices in the speech of Lycaonia and said, "... The gods are come down to us in the likeness of man" (Acts 14:11). Paul and Barnabas had to restrain the people from doing sacrifice unto them. Then the scripture states that certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium arrived and persuaded the people. Paul and Barnabas, who prior to the arrival of the Jews had been called Mercurius and Jupiter, were then rejected by the people. Paul was taken, stoned and left for dead. However, he rose up and came into the city, and the next day departed with Barnabas to Derbe. They preached the gospel to that city, returned to Lystra and to Iconium and Antioch, confirming the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith. Then we read in Acts 14:23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." It is quite obvious that they appointed elders in those places mentioned above. They appointed elders in EVERY CHURCH, not in just the

large city church.

Leadership in the kingdom is vital! Where there is no leadership, the vitality and energy of a congregation is sapped. We need elders with the ability to truly lead and shepherd a flock! An elder must lend himself to the Lord. He must study (II Timothy 2:15). He must realize the importance of the WORK he has taken on (Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:2-3). Peter said, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:3-4). Notice the elders are to FEED the flock and take the OVERSIGHT. They are to do this willingly and of a ready mind. Some have said a good shepherd smells like the sheep. In I Peter 5:4, the verb form of the word "shepherd" means "he lives with the sheep." This requires TIME on the part of an elder. Elders are basically spiritual counselors (Acts 20:17,

28). Elders must surround themselves with good helpers (deacons and other faithful members). Elders are to RULE over the church, and Christians are to SUBMIT to them, for they watch for our souls (Hebrews 13:17). They are important people!

Elders guard the church doctrinally, morally, and spiritually; they advise in family matters; they direct attitudes toward the church; they admonish Christians; they correct erring brothers and sisters; they discipline the church through withdrawal of fellowship when it is demanded (corrective discipline); they determine programs of work to advance the church; they lead or guide the congregation in missionary endeavors; they help set the spiritual tone of a congregation; they are decision makers and administrators; they are examples in their lives and conduct; they see that the church is properly fed the Word of God.

Elders are important people!

—185 Ashley Dr., Fayetteville, Georgia 30214.

"The Christian Scholar"

Continued From Page 2

Christ in 1925.

Calhoun was one of the central figures in the great controversy between the conservatives and the liberals over the teaching of Destructive Criticism in the College of the Bible, Lexington, Kentucky, in 1917. He became one of the pioneer radio preachers,

as the minister of the Central Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee (1927-35).

You may order this biography from: Adron Doran 8605 Shelbyville Road Louisville, KY 40222. Paperback copy is \$8.95 (postpaid); Hardback copy is \$14.95 (postpaid).

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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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The Inspiration Of The Bible

(NO. V)

Isaiah 46:9-10 states: "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do my pleasure" (A.S.V.). Deuteronomy 18:22 says:



Roy J. Hearn

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken." Thus was God's challenge to false prophets to predict future events. Only God can do that. These passages deal with or apply to all uninspired prophecies of all ages. God has done in his Holy Book, the Bible, that which no other book of a religious nature (such as the Koran), although they may be regarded by some as "sacred books," has done. None of these contains predictions of the future. True, many (like Ellen G. White, of Adventist fame, and Jeanne Dixon) have uttered 'prophecies;' but both have miserably failed. Over 3,000 years ago God said they would.

The Bible is the only book that contains such accurate predictions. The predictions in the Bible are declared to be the utterances of God Almighty, and show beyond doubt that the Bible is a supernaturally-produced book, which could not possibly be produced by man without divine guidance. The rejection of the Bible as God's divine revelation is widespread. When the Bible PROPHECIES are studied and compared with accurate historical accounts (apart from the Bible), and with archeological discoveries, the honest person is forced to accept the Bible as the inspired word of God. Fulfilled pre-

dictions of the Bible give some of the most conclusive evidence that the Bible truly is God's revelation to man.

PROPHECY OF THE OVERTHROW OF BABYLON

Isaiah 13:19 records: "And Babylon . . . shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." Verses 20-23 show that Babylon would disappear and never again be inhabited. This was a magnificent city of about 196 square miles. Its walls made a circuit of nearly fifty-six miles; they were nearly ninety feet thick and more than three hundred feet high. Impregnable -- they thought! Around the walls was also a moat, broad and deep, full of water -- added protection! The city was built on both sides of the Euphrates River. The streets were straight, laid at right angles, like most of our cities today. At the end of each street that reached the river was a great brazen gate, in another wall which ran along the river's course. Space prevents giving here a description of the inner city, with its palaces, temples, towers, and hanging garden -- "the glory of the Chaldeans!" Of more concern to us now is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Read Isaiah 44:27 through 45:4. The name of "Cyrus" of Persia was recorded in Hebrew writings about 150 years before this time, when the Medes and the Persians overthrew Babylon. The sixth chapter of Daniel gives account of this which occurred about 536 B.C. (Darius the Mede was uncle of Cyrus of Persia). Please read the chapter. When Cyrus saw his name which had been inscribed some one hundred years before he was born, he was impressed and, "Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me and he hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah" (II Chronicles 36:24; Ezra 1:2). The Book of Ezra gives account of this part of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Now note the fulfillment of the overthrow and utter desolation of Babylon. Some ancient histories record that the Medes

and Persians diverted the course of the Euphrates River and entered the city. God had said: "And I will dry up the rivers." During the drunken feast of Belshazzar the city of Babylon was taken with hardly a struggle. But what about the desolation? The following quotes tell the story: "In 460 Theodoret remarks that it was no longer inhabited by either Assyrians or Chaldeans . . . We have seen how the ocean of human life gradually receded from this city, once the home of vast multitudes . . . The Bedouin, though he pastures his flocks in the immediate neighborhood, regards the ruins themselves with superstitious dread. The tents of the Arabs are pitched on the Chaldean plains, but not one of them is pitched amid the ruins of Babylon. Other cities named in the prophecy have become folds for flocks; but no shepherd makes his flocks to lie down among the mounds of ancient Babylon."

As Isaiah said concerning "doleful creatures," excavators have discovered that owls, jackals, lions, scorpions, serpents, and such are found where Babylon once stood; but no people.

Evidence abounds concerning the once-glorious city of Babylon and its destruction! Truly, it has "become as Sodom and Gomorrah" which God destroyed utterly (Genesis 19). No vestige of it remains above the sands of the desert.

Suppose one were to predict such concerning the city of Memphis to come to pass just five years from now? One may say, 'It just happened so.' But, the Bible abounds in such predictions that happened hundreds of years after being predicted -- just as foretold, in every detail; thus in no way did it "just happen so!"

(To be continued)

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Faith

(No. 9)

When Faith Brings Its Reward

In this final installment, I wish to emphasize that one's faith can be lost. Or, to better state it: one can lose his faith. The proof of such statement is in numerous Biblical texts, both in the Old and the New Testaments. But in addition, when one preaches a number of years, he will find this written on humanity's pages all too often.



Frank D. Young

The apostle says, in regard to Hymenaeus and Philetus: "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Timothy 2:18). The brother who, then, or now, denies a future resurrection is in this class. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (I Corinthians 15:19). Possibly certain conditions prevailed then which made this truth more strongly seen. II Corinthians 5:7 (an oft-quoted scripture) is directly written in such a context. Paul said, "Our earthly house of this tabernacle" will be dissolved," and then he observes: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 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). That he refers to our bodies we inhabit while in this life, he shows when he says (among many passages): "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (I Corinthians 15:51). The student in school looks to

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The Paraletic Let Down Through The Roof

The popular song "Vincent" of a few years ago spoke of "nameless faces hung on nameless walls." The Bible is filled with stories of hundreds of nameless characters whose deeds or experiences contain vital lessons for us today. Such a one is the paraletic whom four friends brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 2:1-12).



John Wadley

The Setting

This event occurred at Capernaum in the early days of Jesus' ministry. It is thought by some that it was Peter's home where it happened. Christ spent time there on other occasions. Mark's account reflects an eyewitness account. It is generally held that Mark gained much of his information from Peter, who could have been that eyewitness (I Peter 5:13).

Palestinian homes were small. They were often built around an open courtyard. There was frequently a larger upper room suitable for gatherings. Doors opened directly onto the streets. Roofs were flat and were regularly used. A stairway to the roof was located on the outside, making easy access. Windows were small, usually about 18 inches in diameter. This would explain why they could not gain entrance by a window.

Roofs were constructed with beams spaced about 3 feet apart. These were covered with reeds, branches, and grass, with a final covering of sunbaked mud. Such a roof could be easily broken up and a hole made in it.

The Cast of Characters

The great physician of this episode was the Lord Jesus. He was busy teaching the gospel. Though he was involved with a large crowd, he had time for one insignificant man. We marvel at his great compassion and sympathy.

All we know of the sick man is revealed in these short lines. Even his name is unknown. His condition was pitiable. He suffered from severe palsy and was hopelessly paralyzed. He had to be carried by others. He was evidently a young man, for Jesus used the Greek term that means child. In that culture, one was considered young until age 30. It is remarkable that none of the records indicate that he spoke a single word throughout the whole exciting episode.

The four friends were genuinely concerned about the poor man's plight and were willing to do something about it: they brought him to Jesus. They risked much and went to great and unusual effort to get the job done. (If you have problems seeing the "risk," just try tearing a hole in your neighbor's roof!) These men had faith in large proportions.

There were the ever-present critics of the Lord: the Pharisees and doctors of the law (Luke 5:17). They had come from the villages of Galilee and Judea, and even from far-away Jerusalem. The record reveals that they had not come to learn, but to seek

some accusation against him (John 8:6). This might explain the rudeness of the crowd in not allowing the friends to bring the man through to Jesus. Pharisees were never known for their charity to others.

The Miracle

We can imagine the startled response of the crowd as the roof was torn away. See the poor fellow being lowered by ropes at the Lord's feet. The air would have been charged with excitement. The man and his friends were hoping that Christ would honor their efforts and grant a blessing. He might have resented their interruption of his teaching. The crowd surged forward, wondering if they would see some spectacular miracle.

The blessing received was unexpected. Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven" (Mark 2:5). But that was not what his friends had gone to all their trouble for. They were seeking PHYSICAL healing of his diseased body. But Christ could see into the depths of the man's soul and discern the actual root of his problem. Having cured the cause, he could then relieve the symptoms.

The Critics Refuted

The Pharisees were not impressed with Jesus' action. They reasoned among themselves, likely whispering to one another, according to Luke's account (Luke 5:21-22). They correctly reasoned, "Only God can forgive sins." For a mere man to make such a claim would be indeed blasphemous! But herein was their fallacy: they thought Jesus to be only a man. They did not recognize or acknowledge him as God in the flesh (John 1:1-3, 14).

Jesus forced them into the open with their doubts and criticisms. In so doing, he overwhelmed and routed them. The very fact that he knew their thoughts and whispered criticisms demonstrated his omniscience.

The Pharisees mistakenly connected all suffering with personal sin. Rabbi Ammi said, "There is no death without guilt, no suffering without sin." Rabbi Alexandrai said, "No man gets up from his sickness till God has forgiven all his sins." Thus Jesus was doing precisely what they normally would agree had to be done prior to healing of the body. Yet, they were rejecting Jesus' so doing.

To drive his enemies to their knees, Jesus delivered an unanswerable argument. They no doubt reasoned, "Any one can SAY 'Your sins are forgiven,' since there is no way to prove or disprove it." Christ accepted their challenge and took a position that would make or break his claim. He said, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." We thrill at his boldness! This was his first recorded public claim to forgive sins. In so doing he used the Messianic title "Son of man" from Daniel 7:13. Then he said to the sick man, "Arise, take up thy bed and go unto thy house." If he could cure the disease, by their own doctrine he could then forgive the sin which they said caused it!

They said that only God can forgive sins; but Jesus could forgive sins. If so, then he is truly God. He demonstrated that by using their own logic. Therefore Jesus was God! We must never forget this great truth: "The

Continued On Page 3

The Paraletic Let Down Through The Roof

Continued From Page 2

Word was God" (John 1:1-3, 14). Thomas confessed him as "my Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

The Response

The palsied man was immediately healed. He arose, took up his mat and left. His four friends were overjoyed. The crowd was amazed and glorified God (Luke 5:26). The carping Pharisees were speechless. We can visualize them as they shoved their way through the buzzing crowd with teeth clenched and chin jutted out, seething anger and humiliated pride.

Lessons to Remember

Even today, those who seek the Lord and his true gospel often find the way cluttered and blocked with human doctrines and traditions, and sometimes by personalities that keep them from him.

Each of us has our sin-sick friends and loved

ones who desperately need to be brought to the Savior.

There are some folk whose case is such that a band of helpers is needed to get them to their Lord. Preachers, personal workers, Bible class teachers, and prayerful petitions are all needed to save them.

There are some cases that require thought and planning ahead if we are to save them. We cannot be too concerned about proprieties and conventions lest we lose our chance. We must become all things to all men in order to win them (I Corinthians 9:22). We need "holy ingenuity" to get them to the Savior.

No matter how great the crowd, Jesus had time for the individual, and so must we.

Sin is the original cause of all human suffering (Romans 5:12). The root of most of life's problems is unforgiven sin. Therefore, good spiritual health is valuable for good physical

health.

We rejoice in Christ's compassion and his willingness to forgive our sins. The glory of the gospel is expressed in I Peter 5:7: "He careth for you." His pardon is available at any moment we choose to accept it (Matthew 11:28). Obedient faith is the fundamental prerequisite if we would enjoy his blessings (Hebrews 11:6; Galatians 5:6). No man nor team of men can do in a lifetime what Christ can do in a moment.

We still have our "scribes" who find it hard to speak a noble word about a fellow preacher.

The multitudes saw Jesus' deeds and believed; the intellectuals did not.

Jesus yet stands ready to grant us forgiveness if we with trusting faith come on his terms.

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

Faith

Continued From Page 2

graduation. Not only does he finish something, but also a new life begins. The one in combat hopes to win. The runner in the marathon has a goal before him. Runners do not run, expecting no goal line. Recently in New York, a runner ran the twenty-six miles in less than two-and-one-half hours, whereas the last to finish -- a man with no legs -- took about ninety-six hours. But both had the same goal in mind.

If there be not a future resurrection, we are but pilgrims, wanderers, and strangers -- with no home to reach. Should there be no resurrection, God's creation is something begun, but never finished. "I have finished my course," is but an idle, and hopeless, statement (II Timothy 4:7).

Our resurrection is based on God's promise of immortality. "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (I Corinthians 15:32). What difference does it make as to how one lives, if there be no resurrection? Our bodies are mortal. Romans 6:12 says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body . . ." Paul says, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (I Corinthians 15:53-54).

When one's faith is overthrown, he goes to death deceived. His awakening will be a terrible, hopeless nightmare. One's conscience can truly be deceived. But God's will will not change, though some don't believe it. Our hopes will then end in an endless night. In spite of clear, plain truths, we can be deceived. Paul says, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his,' and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Timothy 2:19). This last admonition immediately follows verse 18 where the apostle warns of one's faith being overthrown.

In II Timothy Paul uses other truths which warn us of one's giving up his faith. Look at one of our great hopes: Paul said, "I have kept the faith" (II Timothy 4:7). One can thus

cling to the faith; or, he can turn from it. In this illustration, faith is a trust. It is as if we are stewards, with a trust from God. When Paul writes of those who forsook him, he says, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook me . . ." (II Timothy 4:16). Those were untrue to their God-given trust.

When faith fails us, our hope is gone. One of the charges Paul made to Timothy was:

"O, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust . . . which some professing have erred concerning the faith" (I Timothy 6:20-21). An all-inclusive statement is, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (II Corinthians 4:2). We must be faithful to God in our lives, and in our teaching. One can deny the faith -- he can err from it in either relationship. Acts 20:23 records a test for Paul's trust. He was warned "bonds and afflictions abide you." Yet Paul said, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself . . ." Christians, be warned! We can miss the mark. We can err in life, and give up our reward. The ultimate purpose of our faith, is to finally cause us to reach the "golden shore." We cannot afford to swerve from the way. A vehicle swerved to miss hitting a dog: the occupants were killed; the dog lived! To err from the faith is to miss the way. The wrong way will not lead us home.

The man of God, Paul, said, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some

have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:10). The love for money, has ruined too many lives. Sorrows, prisons, a ruined name, loss of friends, have come to some because of the disgrace the love of money has caused them. Today's world is money-mad. I fear the church has become too involved. The church is "made merchandise of." These preachers who basically have no faith, and deal in "profane and vain" discussions, which destroy the faith of their hearers, are dangerous and need to be refused a place in the church of the Lord. Those who deal in "science falsely so-called" are truly responsible for "opposition" to the faith of all, and especially the young. Men in our schools, Bible class teachers, people in the pew, all who have an influence in any way, who deny the plain, explicit truths of the Bible, "err from the faith," and do cause others to depart from God's will. They wreck the faith of mankind. The church which uses them, has departed from the faith -- and the sooner it folds, the better.

When we come to the end of life's journey, our money will not avail. All our psychology, and human wisdom, will have failed. Paul said, "I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH." And he did, at great cost! But he gained the riches of all riches!

—500 Third Ave., N.E., Jasper, AL 35501.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

(NO. VII)

Novie C. Perry

A seventh basic principle of New Testament Christianity is that Christ must be the only "creed." Christians must determine that the only major "belief" for our origin, existence, and purpose on earth, is centered in Jesus the Christ.

To claim Christ is the only "creed" of

Christianity is simply to hold the position that Christians base their entire faith upon the scriptural evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. Such a "creed" (or "belief") is founded upon all that Jesus said and did

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The Virtue Of Godliness

"But refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come" (I Timothy 4:7-8).

The word **godliness** means: "Respect, reverence . . . piety toward God; godliness" (Thayer, p. 262). It is used

fifteen times in the New Testament. The word **ungodliness** is also found in the Bible and its definition is: "Want of reverence toward God; impiety; godliness" (Ibid. p. 79). It includes all evil thoughts and deeds, all ungodly works and desires (Matthew 15:18-20). Involved in "ungodliness" is dancing, including all the evils which go with it. Men and women wrapped in each others arms, dancing together, never had the approbation of God. Cicero (an ancient Roman writer) said, "No man who is sober dances, unless he is out of his mind, either when alone or in decent society; for dancing is the companion of wanton conviviality, dissoluteness, and luxury." In Old Testament times, the Jewish dance was performed by the sexes separately. It is impossible for men and women to keep their minds on sacred and holy things while dancing together (Romans 13:13-14). The prominent idea in the word "wanton" is "shameless conduct." Dancing, with the fruits which go with it, is deemed indecent in men and women of character and wisdom.

Manifestly, the lives of the great men and women of the scriptures were characterized by godliness, rather than ungodliness. For example, Joseph was so concerned about his relationship with the Almighty that he, while in Egypt, resisted the overtures of Potipher's designing wife, asking, ". . . How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). To him, such a sin as adultery would be a sin against God Almighty. Here is a man who had too much respect and reverence for God to run roughshod over the will of the Lord.

Godliness cause Samuel to wish to obey God completely (I Samuel 12:1-5). It was reverence and respect for God that enabled Job to courageously bear the torments of his affliction and the sickening taunts of his friends. Dear Reader, take time to read the entire book of Job. The wonderful lessons taught in Job, though centuries old, are just as applicable now as they were then. The Psalmist recognized that, wherever he might go, whether asleep or awake, at home or abroad, living or dead, he was always in the presence of God (Psalms 139:1-24). It was that deep feeling of piety toward God that supplied Paul power to tolerate the sufferings and toils and persecutions which befell him (II Corinthians 11:23ff). The virtue of godliness gave both Stephen and James the strength to become martyrs for Jesus (see Acts 7 and 12).

Throughout the ages, countless millions have been characterized by "want of reverence toward God, impiety, ungodliness." For



W. A. Holley

instance, Nadab and Abihu lacked that respect for God's commandments which demanded strict obedience. Hence, they "offered strange fire before Jehovah, which he had not commanded them" (Leviticus 10:1-2; Cf. 6:12-13; 16:12). Another example is that of Dathan, Korah, and Abiram, who, because of their irreverence for God's divine appointments regarding Moses and his position as leader of the Lord's people, led 250 princes to rebel against divine authority (Numbers 16:1-35). Judas' ungodliness was instrumental in his betrayal of Jesus Christ (Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:18-19). Diotrefes' impiety regarding things sacred caused him to prate against John the apostle with wicked words, and thus to resist the right ways of the Lord (III John 9-11).

Do you think that men and women should manifest godliness? Would not the virtue of godliness beautify and sweeten our relationships with one another, and with God? Man's heart should be filled with that fear and love which constitutes respect for God's authority (Matthew 28:18-20). For example, Zacharias and Elizabeth "were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1:6). The Hebrew writer exhorts: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28-29, K.J.V.).

Why should adults and youth alike be interested in promoting godliness in our world? (1) Because godliness is one of the "Christian graces" that must be added to our faith if we wish to be saved eternally (II Peter 1:5-11). (2) "The mystery of godliness," as embodied in Jesus' life, death, burial, and

resurrection supplies those motives necessary to godly living (I Timothy 3:16). (3) Because godliness magnifies and enhances the power of the truth of God (Titus 1:1). (4) Godliness (not alcohol, nor drugs, nor promiscuous sex) contributes toward "a tranquil and quiet life" for mankind (I Timothy 2:1-2) (5) Because godliness is the most profitable form of spiritual exercise known to mankind (I Timothy 4:7-8). (6) Because godliness exemplified by friends of truth has a salutary and an ennobling effect upon others (I Timothy 4:12; Cf. Romans 2:24; Titus 2:7; Philippians 1:27).

And, what does godliness mean to the individual and to the world? It means: More love and less hate; more respect and reverence for things sacred and less disrespect; more dependence upon God and less dependence upon ourselves; more humility and less haughtiness; more concern for the moral and spiritual welfare of others and less concern for the immoral and fleshly; more of the good, and pure, and the true enshrined in our hearts and less garbage and filth of the world; more sharing and bearing and less complaining; more working at duties and less shirking them.

Hence, to the extent that **GODLINESS** grows and thrives in the lives of men, **ungodliness** and its withering influence is diminished. We urge all to work and pray that the virtue of **GODLINESS** may so increase that it may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"In reverence and in godly fear

Man finds the gate to wisdom's ways;

The wise his holy name revere;

Through endless ages sound his praise."

—Anonymous, P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

Continued From Page 3

according to the scriptures as information that is totally sufficient for the standard required to live the Christian life to its fullest. To hold Christ as our only "creed" includes adopting his purpose for mankind, his teaching for mankind, his attitude towards all men (good, or evil), his expectations for all who have been purchased by his redeeming blood (Luke 19:10; Mark 10:45; Matthew 7:12; Romans 6:6-10; 6:4-6; Colossians 3:1-2; I Corinthians 6:19-20; et. al.).

Christians of the first century did their best to teach and preach only "Christ and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). They tried to live in such a way that Christ could be seen living in them, rather than the "old man of sin" that once reigned within their past lives (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:6, 11-13; Ephesians 4:20-32; I Peter 4:1-4).

Thus, the plea for Christ to be the only "creed" of the Christian religion can be perceived by studying the above-mentioned scriptures. It is evident that Christians did their best to walk in the very steps of Christ and to allow the mind of Christ to have free and full reign in their attitudes and actions (I Peter 1:22-23; Philippians 2:5).

The great commission, given by Christ, specifically commanded the apostles to teach

others what he had taught them (Matthew 28:19-20). If Jesus had wanted the apostles to teach and preach all that he had taught them, and to try and persuade people to believe the revelation of Christ, how else could he have said it? All that Jesus said and did that we know about is recorded for our belief (John 20:30-31). We have no authority or right to teach, preach, or require that people believe more or less than the inspired record of the life and teachings of Jesus the Christ (II John 9; Galatians 1:8-9).

If Christ were the only "creed" of every person who taught or preached from the Bible, creeds of men would disappear and people would be moved toward unity in belief. It is a plea that is biblical, sensible, livable and authoritative.

—3133 Wellborne Dr. W., Mobile, AL. 36609.

8th Annual

Gus Nichols --

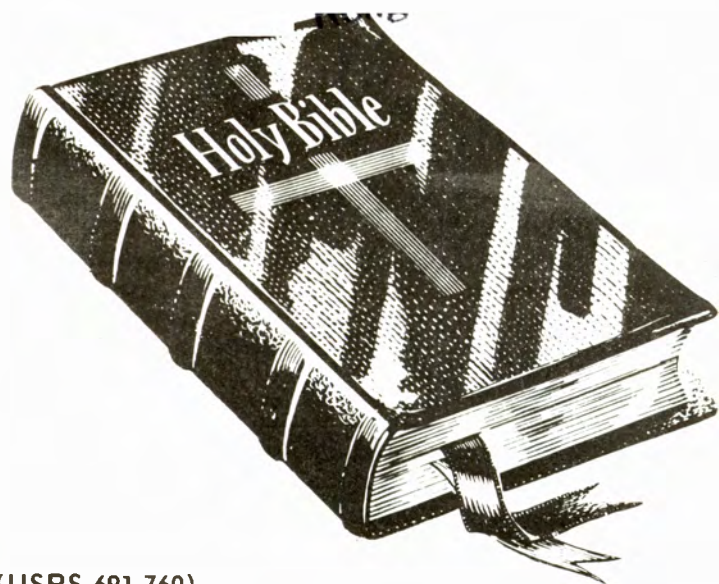
Words of Truth Lectureship

Sept. 27 - Oct. 1

6th Avenue Church of Christ

Jasper, AL

"God's Plan For His Church"



(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 24

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 1987

NUMBER 39

The Inspiration Of The Bible

(VI)

The Bible And Prophecy: (B) Destruction Of The City Of Tyre

Ezekiel 26:4, 12, and 21 says: "And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock . . . and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy dust in the midst of the water . . . yet shalt thou never be found again."



Roy J. Hearn

Ezekiel began to prophesy the fifth day of the fourth month of the fiftieth year of the captivity of king Jehoiachin (Ezekiel 1:2). This was during the seventy years of captivity of Judah predicted by Jehovah. Thus, the time of the beginning of Ezekiel's prophesying began about 592 B.C., according to Edward J. Young, (Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 26). The above-mentioned prophecy about Tyre came to pass about two hundred sixty (260) years later!

Tyre became a city of considerable importance. I Kings chapters 5-7 show how Hiram, king of Tyre, aided Solomon in preparing for the building of the temple at Jerusalem, furnishing timbers, intricate works of brass, etc. Yet some 300 years later God became displeased with Tyre and predicted her destruction. "Why," is not the burden of this article; but we are seeking the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy. Ezekiel states that many

nations would come against Tyre. Verses four through eleven reveal that Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians laid waste the city and left the ruins; but the prophecy was not completely fulfilled. The city was deserted and the people moved to an island in the Mediterranean sea, about one-half mile from shore; however verse thirteen had not yet been fulfilled.

About 332 B.C., Alexander the Great, son of Phillip of Macedon, went forth to conquer the nations. The East was alarmed by the swift advances of Alexander. Tyre sent ambassadors to meet him, who were favorably received. They thought Tyre was out of danger of being overrun. But upon arrival at those parts Alexander desired to worship in the island city. They knew that he would not come alone, and would not leave them in peace. They decided to stand against the Great Alexander. The army of Alexander arrived at the sea and saw the city a half mile from shore. Any navy Alexander may have had was no match for the seaworthy ships of Tyre; hence, he met only defeat there. Therefore, he conceived a new plan to reach the island: he would build a "mole," or a causeway (or, as we would say, a dump) from the mainland to the city. The Tyrenians succeeded in destroying the mole, and caused great loss to the Macedonians. Finally, Alexander engaged the ships of countries he had subjugated along the Phoenician coast and blocked the port. Thus he finished the causeway. Doubtless those who heard or read Ezekiel's prophecy scoffed, as did some regarding predictions of the end of the world (II Peter 3). So long a time had elapsed!

In building the mole, Alexander's men used the timbers and stones of the buildings left by Nebuchadnezzar's hordes two and one-half centuries before. Tyre's mounds and ruins, walls of houses, temples, palaces, and the city were cast into the sea! So desperate was Alexander that the very dust of the city

was scraped up and laid in the sea, as Ezekiel said: ". . . and they shall lay thy stones and thy timbers, and thy dust in the midst of the water." Though centuries had come and gone with no fulfillment, finally it came! Though God's judgments may linger long, yet they are sure to come! The prediction and fulfillment were so far apart in years it is impossible that mere humans could have had sufficient foresight to predict such to happen in detail. There is not even a mound to mark the location of the ancient city, though another place called Tyre was built.

(C) DESTRUCTION OF SIDON

Read Ezekiel 28:20-23. Note God's judgment upon Sidon, a nearby city: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying: Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it, And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I am the Lord." Suppose the results had been revealed, and Sidon was destroyed and blood had instead run in the streets of Tyre? Ezekiel's prophecy would have been nullified! But secular and sacred history show that Sidon continued through the centuries. How is this? John Urquhart has put it very well:

It is, that He speaks here whose thoughts grasp the ages, and before whom the future has no veil, and who, in these proofs of His faithfulness, writes on man's heart the assurance, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.'



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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Before You Divorce

(Note: The following letter was written to a Christian sister who because of continued marital difficulties was contemplating divorce. Personal items have been deleted.)

Dear Sister:

I trust this note finds all things well with you. I have thought of you and your problems each day and prayed for God's blessings to be upon you in these difficult times.

Life is hard; to succeed in marriage is difficult; but to break up a family by divorce is the most painful experience of the three. In fact, doctors who deal with victims of emotional stress tell us that only death in the immediate family is more hurtful than divorce. It is hard on the mates who disassemble their lives and homes; -- but it is even more so on children who are caught in the clash and who cannot comprehend the why's and wherefore's. Sometimes the damage and scars to them are permanent.

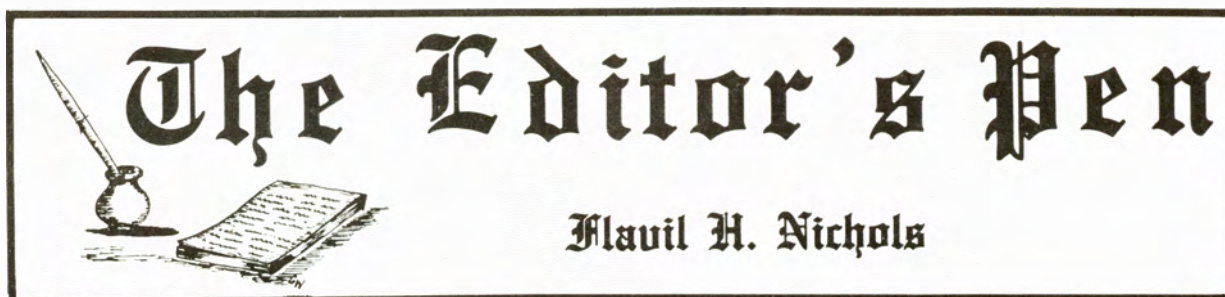
I say all of this to encourage you to think long and hard before you proceed with a divorce. You should allow yourself a cooling-off period. Things usually look different after a few weeks away from the problem. Also, an erring partner can come to himself and make appropriate changes. Before severing the bonds you should take adequate time to make certain this is a wise choice. Even if you are sure of your decision, you owe it to your child to explore every possibility of reconciliation before a permanent action is taken.

I can fully understand your hurt, your frustration, and your fears. They are real. But



John Waddey

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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

8th Annual Gus Nichols -- Words Of Truth Lectureship

Sept. 27 - Oct. 1, 1987

The Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, Jasper, Alabama, presents the Gus Nichols -- Words of Truth Lectureship each year. It begins the last Sunday night in September and continues through Thursday night.

This year's theme for the series will be God's Plan For His Church. Many even within our own ranks seem to have no proper concept of the divine mission of the Lord's church.

At the request of the Eldership at Sixth Avenue, each year some member of the Gus Nichols family presents the opening address. Therefore the first speaker this year will be Hardeman Nichols, of Dallas, Texas. Hardeman began his preaching in the Jasper area, but has lived in Texas most of his life. Sunday night at 7:00 his topic will be "God's Plan For His Church To Be Established."

Daily sessions Monday through Thursday will be conducted at 9:30 a.m. by brother Jerri Barber, of the Central Church, Dalton, Georgia. His theme will be "God's Plan For His Church In The Book Of Acts."

Brother Hugo McCord, Chancellor of Oklahoma Christian College, Oklahoma City, and a dearly-esteemed grand old soldier of the cross, will speak daily at 10:30 a.m. on the subject: "God's Plan For Personal Growth In His Church."

At the same hour, sister Bill (Gerrie) Nicks, of Knoxville, Tennessee, will speak to the ladies. With her husband, who teaches in the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, she has done extensive mission work in Africa. She plans to discuss each morning a different aspect of woman's role. Daily her subjects will be:

Monday--"Heirs Together: HER POSITION."
Tuesday "Teachers of Good Things: HER RESPONSIBILITY."

Wednesday--"Her Children Rise Up: HER IMAGE."

Thursday--"Let Her Own Works Praise Her: HER REWARD."

Daily at 1:00, brother Jerry Jenkins, minister at the Roebuck Parkway church in Birmingham, and who conducts the oldest religious television program in Birmingham, will discuss "God's Plan For Elders In His Church." His discussion will cover their re-

sponsibilities, their qualifications, their authority, and their relationships.

The veteran preacher and beloved brother in the Lord, Franklin Camp, of Leeds, Alabama, will discuss daily at 1:45 "God's Plan For Deacons In His Church." His discussion will cover their responsibilities, their qualifications, their authority, and their relationships.

At the same hour -- 1:45 p.m. -- sister Hugo (Lois) McCord will speak to the ladies on "Some Proverbs To Live By."

The last afternoon session will begin at 2:30, with a different speaker each afternoon presenting some lessons for the church today from New Testament congregations. The line-up is:

Monday -- The Church At Jerusalem -- Bobby Duncan, Adamsville, Alabama.

Tuesday -- The Church At Antioch -- Jeff Jenkins, Montgomery, Alabama.

Wednesday -- The Church At Rome -- Bill Nicks, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Thursday -- The Church At Ephesus -- Winfred Clark, Athens, Alabama.

Nightly sessions of congregational singing will begin at 6:30, except on Wednesday night. That night it is customary for us to invite one of our black brothers to speak. Accordingly, this year we will hear brother James McCune, who is enrolled at International Bible College. His topic will be "Some Lessons For Today From The Church At Corinth."

Brother George Bailey, of Dallas, Texas, will speak nightly Monday through Thursday. He will discuss various responsibilities God has laid upon his church. Under the general topic, "God's Plan For His Church," his lessons each night will deal with the following:

Monday -- "Its Organization."

Tuesday -- "Its Worship."

Wednesday -- "Edification And Fellowship In It."

Thursday -- "World Evangelization."

Areas for displays are available. Housing in the homes of Christians or in motels may be obtained. Contact the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper Alabama 35501 (205) 384-6446 (office); (205) 387-1670 (office); or 221-9496 (my residence).

**Be Sure To Attend
Worship Services
This Week**

Let Us Not Act Like Fools

The words fool, foolish, foolishly, and foolishness are Bible words. The word fool is defined as: "want of mental sanity and sobriety; a reckless and inconsiderate habit of mind . . . the lack of commonsense perception of the reality of things natural and spiritual . . . or the imprudent ordering of one's life in regard to salvation" (Vine, p 113)



W. A. Holley

Jesus, in Matthew 5:22, says, ". . . But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Those who are stupid, foolish, or morally worthless are fools in God's sight. We shall classify some who act like fools:

(1) Those who will not listen to good advice act like fools. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). "Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words" (Proverbs 23:9). "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes; but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Proverbs 18:2). "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 28:26).

(2) Those who pay no attention to danger signs are fools. All warnings against drug abuse, all danger signals regarding tobacco, all red flags cautioning against the consumption of alcohol, and all advice against illicit sex, seem to fall on deaf ears of fools. We read: "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth and is confident" (Proverbs 14:16). "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself: but the simple pass on and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3). Jesus plainly taught: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," but some simply -- foolishly -- will not see (Mark 16:16; Cf. II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

(3) Those who believe everything they hear, apart from proper investigation of God's truth. "The simple believe every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going" (Proverbs 14:15). All preachers are to be tested, tried by the Bible: "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). Jesus taught: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). The worthy hearer is one who "searches the scriptures daily, whether those things are so" (Acts 17:11). "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:21). There is nothing worse than a lying "spirit," or a lying prophet or preacher (I Kings 22:22ff; II Chronicles 18:21ff). One can safely follow his preacher only if one's preacher follows the Lord (I Corinthians 11:1).

(4) Those are Bible "fools" who make a mock of sin, thinking they can indulge in it with impunity, and still go on to heaven. Proverbs 14:9 says, "Fools make a mock of sin: but among the righteous there is favor." To some, sin seems to be a sport. "It is as

sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom" (Proverbs 10:23). Some have become so hardened and enslaved to sin they feel no shame, nor can they blush. "Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush . . ." (Jeremiah 8:12). Some are so brash in their dress, or manners, or speech, nothing embarrasses them! The law of sowing and reaping never fails (Galatians 6:7-8).

(5) Those who are contentious and who display excessive anger, are fools. "A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes" (Proverbs 18:6). "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly" (Proverbs 14:17). "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools" (Ecclesiastes 7:9). "A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both" (Proverbs 27:3). It is absurd for one to argue that one's anger cannot be controlled. "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).

(6) They that talk too much are fools. Ecclesiastes 10:14 says, "A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?" "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness" (Proverbs 15:2). "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Proverbs 10:19). "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards" (Proverbs 29:11). "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh through a multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words" (Ecclesiastes 5:1-3).

(7) Those who are deceived by strong drink are fools. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived

thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). All people should avoid all alcoholic beverages because of its final fatal consequences. ". . . 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 its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder . . ." (Proverbs 23:29-35). How dreadful are the consequences of drinking alcoholic beverages! One can never slide downhill if one never starts down the grade! How forceful is the comparison to a serpent's venom, and how apt. Does the writer imply that a little alcohol is acceptable, but that one must not go too far? That is not our attitude toward a serpent's venom!!

(8) Those who deny the existence of God are fools. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God . . ." (Psalms 14:1). All nature is one of God's proofs that he does exist. ". . . God, which made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein, who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:15-17). Just as houses do not build themselves, worlds do not build themselves. "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4). Do you want your faith increased? Read the Bible (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6).

(9) Those who fail to make ample preparation for life after death are fools. Of the Rich Farmer, Jesus said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:16-21).

There are wise -- and there are foolish -- people in our world (Matthew 25:1-13). Some build on a rock, others build upon sand (Matthew 7:24-27). We sincerely urge our readers to believe and obey the truth of God today.

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

To Help Our Children Mature Properly

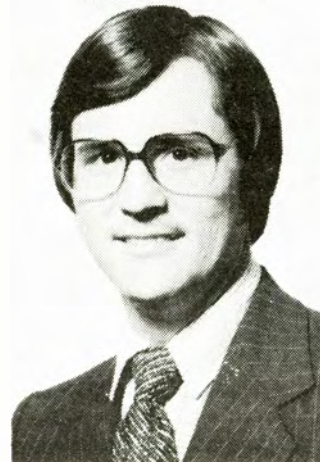
No. 11

INTRODUCTION

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 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. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1-4).

Paul charged parents to "nurture"

[lit. "nurture up to proper maturity"] their children. The context of this charge reveals at least four basic lessons children need to be taught for them to properly mature. A



Dan Winkler

previous study focused on the first two: children must be taught respect for authority (Ephesians 6:1); children must be taught that God's blessings hinge on one's obedience to his commands (Ephesians 6:2). For this study, consider two more lessons children need.

I. CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT TO KEEP THEMSELVES PURE (EPHESIANS 6:4)

(1) Children are to be nurtured or brought up in the "chastening" of the Lord. The word translated "chastening" emphasizes the whole training of a child; yea, training which aims at the increase of virtue. When one's kindergartener comes home with profanity, he is corrected with a gasp, "Oh, we don't talk that way!" As the child grows older, why does correction and restraint weaken? It is often disguised by the statement, "Oh, self-expression is important!" The children of God's people, regardless of age, must be taught: "We don't talk that way, feel that

Continued On Page 4

Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

(VIII)

Novie C. Perry

An eighth basic principle of New Testament Christianity is the use of the name "Christian" as the exclusive proper name for those belonging to Christ. The "disciples were first called Christians at Antioch" of Syria (Acts 11:26). The name was NOT used in derision, as some allege; but was given by Jehovah himself as promised through Isaiah the prophet (Isaiah 56:3-5; 62:2).

True, Christians were known as disciples, saints, and brethren; but the term "Christian" is a proper noun, not simply a designation. As one studies the three passages where the name "Christian" is found, it becomes clear that this name was and is used exclusively for those who belong to and follow the teaching of Jesus (Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16). James refers to the

name as "that worthy name" (James 2:7).

The name "Christian" glorifies Christ, not the followers. This name does not stress some doctrine believed and practiced by Christians; nor does it glorify any synod, council, or conference. This name does not glorify or describe the followers of any un-inspired mere human, like one can find by the hundreds of thousands in this country. This name is NEVER hyphenated. There were no "hyphenated Christians" (or different KINDS of Christians) in the first century. Christians NEVER called themselves by different religious names nor did they ever tack onto the name "Christian" as you find today. According to the New Testament, a person was either a "Christian," or he was NOT A "CHRISTIAN" AT ALL. To hyphenate the name "-Christian" would be equivalent to saying one was a "Christian" as well

as a member of another religious body. It would be similar to calling one a "Buddist-Christian" or an "Infidel-Christian." Thus, trying to serve two different faiths, founders, and religious systems is implied whenever one hyphenates the name "Christian."

How would Peter, Andrew, Paul, and other Christians of the first century respond to someone who came up to them and introduced himself as a "Mormon-Christian," "Adventist-Christian," or one of the other eight-hundred-plus religions of today? They would be perplexed, to say the least! The reason for their confusion would be because hyphenating the name "Christian" did not occur until hundreds of years this side of the cross. The rise of Protestant denominations caused people to begin to hyphenate it. People were not satisfied with simply following the New Testament teaching of Christ, but they still wanted to cling to that worthy name, so they started hyphenating it with their denominational name. Sick!

The Holy Spirit said we ought to call ourselves after the one who died for us, and into whose name we were baptized, or we would be guilty of causing division in the church of Christ (I Corinthians 1:10-13). Division is still in full swing today over this same sin.

The plea of this New Testament principle is clear: unity in Christ is to be based upon a common name -- "Christian." We should strive to be nothing more, nor nothing less, than New Testament CHRISTIANS. That is what the disciples of Christ were called, that name glorifies the founder of Christianity, and all believers can be united upon a common name. Call yourself a "New Testament Christian," because it is the ONLY kind of "Christian" one can read about in the New Testament!

—3133 Wellborne Dr. W., Mobile, AL 36609.

To Help Our Children Mature Properly

No. 11

Continued From Page 3

way, dress that way, or act that way. We are special people" (Cf. Titus 2:14; I Peter 2:9)!

(2) **Such has always been a part of proper child training.** So it was under the Patriarchal Age (Cf. Genesis 6:5-8, 18); the Mosaic Age (Cf. Leviticus 11:44; Psalms 78:5-7); and so it must be today (Romans 8:6-8; I Corinthians 6:9-11, 13, 18-20; Galatians 6:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-3; 5:11; Philippians 3:18, 19; II Timothy 2:22; Titus 2:11-12; James 1:27; 4:4; I John 2:15-16). "Virtue" versus "vogue" is the choice set before children today. Christian parents must forever call for their children to choose "virtue!"

II. CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT THE BIBLE (EPHESIANS 6:4)

(1) **Children are to be nurtured or brought up in the chastening and in the "admonition [lit. "exhortation"] of the Lord.** Some of today's children can mimic television commercials; some can recall the television schedule for each night of the week, regardless of the network desired; still others can recite the current standings in the NFL or NBA; while others can tell you the batting averages of each player on their favorite baseball team. However, some of these same children can not quote a handful of Bible verses, do not know who the twelve apostles were, are at a loss in recalling the three great dispensations of time, nor can they accurately name and spell the books of the Old or New Testament. How tragic! The children of God's people must be taught God's word!

(2) **Such has always been a part of proper child training.** So it was in the Patriarchal Age (Cf. Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:6, 9); the Mosaic Age (Cf. II Timothy 3:15); and so it must be today (II Timothy 1:5; 2:15). Man must "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (II Peter 3:18), and no one is too young to begin such a quest.

CONCLUSION

Children have been described as "a promise

seeking fulfillment." Being aware of such, what a responsibility God's people have in training their children properly.

One final note should be stressed. Children are to "honor" [lit. "fix a value upon, revere, honor with honors"] their parents. If a mother and a father give heed to the implicit and explicit instruction of Paul in the passage previously studied, their children will have many reasons to shower their parents with the love and respect they so deserve.

—P.O. Box 166, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344.

Before You Divorce

Continued From Page 2

given your present circumstances, 50 years is a long time to live alone.

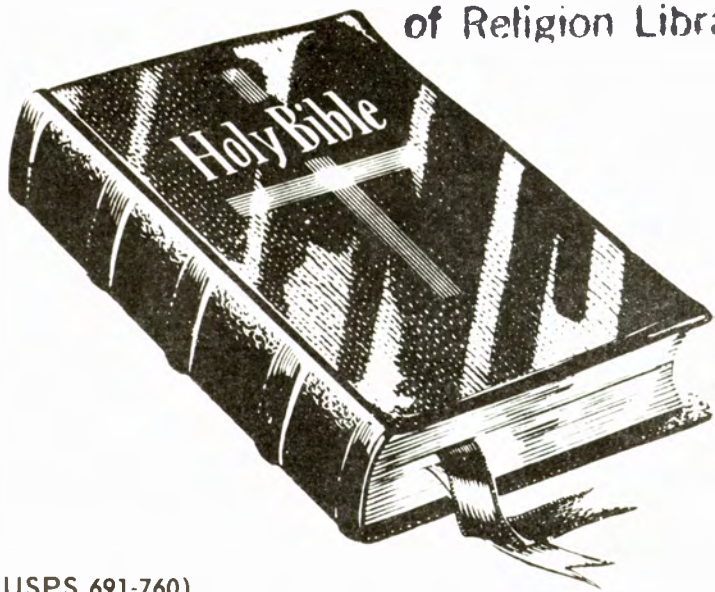
The God who made us knew that one marriage for a life-time is the best for all concerned. So he tells us: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Because divorce is so destructive, he says, "I hate putting away, saith Jehovah" (Malachi 2:16).

So think long and hard before you act. Pray about this like you've never prayed before. Peace of mind and the satisfaction of knowing you have done the right thing in the sight of God is worth more than silver and gold. When contemplating, "Can I live with him any longer,?" also ask "Can I live with myself if I pursue this course?"

Be assured of my continuing friendship and brotherly concern. May God watch over and care for you. Please feel free to write or call if I can be of help. I remain,
Yours in Christ,
John Waddey

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Words Of

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

—Acts 26:25

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The Inspiration Of The Bible

(VII)

Prophecies contained in the Bible, and their fulfillment recorded in both the Bible and profane history, constitute one of the strongest evidences of the divine origin of the Bible and Christianity. A more extraordinary group of men has never been known than the Old Testament prophets. No other writings of the world contain specific and detailed prophecies that were fulfilled with such accuracy. Suppose one were to predict that thirty cities in the United States would experience tragedy this year, and it came to pass. Amazing, perhaps. But suppose one predicted the destruction of thirty cities over the next ten years, and specified that each would be in an entirely different way, and predicted the exact time and means of their downfall — this would be nothing short of miraculous! Such are the prophecies of the Bible, over hundreds of years (not just ten!) — and no human being could have made such predictions without divine aid.

PROPHECIES OF THE JEWS AS EVIDENCE

Frederick the Great of Prussia once asked the court chaplain to give him an argument, in a word, that the Bible is inspired. He answered, "Your Majesty: 'Jew.'"

To the Jews were committed the oracles of God (Romans 3:20). All the predictions of the overthrow of nations and cities referred to in previous articles — and many more — were made by the Holy Spirit through Jews. More significant is the fact that their prophecies involved the fortunes of the Hebrew people, and their predictions included both the good and



ROY J. HEARN

bad.

Deuteronomy chapter 28, in the first fourteen verses, pronounces blessings upon Israel if they would be faithful to follow God. The next fifty-four verses declare God's wrath upon them if they did not. Beginning with the book of Judges all through the prophets, one can see the fulfillment of this chapter (and others in the Pentateuch). Because of sins, seven oppressions were brought upon them at different times during the Judges; and when they repented, God raised up a judge to deliver them.

After the division of the kingdom (in 975 B. C.), Jeroboam, who became the first king of the tribes on the north (called Israel), led the nation into idolatry. Although eighteen other kings followed, none was good; and finally God sent them into Assyrian captivity, never as a unit to return (though obviously some from each tribe escaped to Judah (see II Kings 15:29). This was about 721 B. C. Judah, continued about 115 years longer, with some good kings; but finally because of sin, Judah was taken into Babylon Captivity (606 B. C.) for seventy years. Their return was predicted in Deuteronomy 30:1-3.

Isaiah 44:27-28 predicts that Cyrus would rebuild the temple destroyed by the Babylonians. Also the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt (Isaiah 45:13). The books of Ezra and Nehemiah give details of the return of the Jews. These events occurred hundreds of years after the prophecies were recorded. (Bishop Ussher dates the writing at 712 B. C., and the return under Ezra at 536 B. C.).

For another amazing prophecy that was fulfilled over 1,500 years later, read Deuteronomy 28:48-57. In A. D. 70 the Roman armies besieged Jerusalem. The eagle was their standard. They spoke in Latin, which the Jews could not understand. The Lord Jesus Christ reaffirmed the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew 24.

The destruction was terrible, as history also shows.

Read again Deuteronomy 28:53. Now note the fulfillment: Josephus (page 819) tells how a woman during the siege "snatched up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast," and cooked him. She ate part and hid part. When the Roman soldiers found she had food they demanded she show them. When they saw she was eating her own child they were sickened and went out trembling (see also verse 57).

Verse 68 states Jews would be taken to Egypt in ships and there be sold as slaves, "And no man will buy you." When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, all who were not killed, about seventeen years old, were sent to the mines in Egypt where they were forced to work without rest until they dropped dead. Josephus says 97,000 were taken. There were so many there ceased to be buyers.

Verse 64 says the Jews would be scattered among the nations. Various prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel also state they would be scattered. Even today (1987) Jews are to be found in practically every nation on earth. Through the centuries they have been persecuted. The words of these prophecies could not apply to any other nation.

Please note one other prophecy, and this will suffice: "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jeremiah 30:11). Persecutors and captors of the Jews of centuries past, as Moab, Ammon, Edom, Assyria, Babylon, and the old Roman Empire are gone — but the Jews continue as living testimony to the validity of the Bible! However, the Jews will never be gathered back to Jerusalem en masse, as a kingdom, as some claim (Jeremiah 19:11). Modern day "Israel" is not a kingdom, but a republic. Christ will never reign there (Hebrews 10:8 with Zechariah 6:12-13).

— 4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.



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"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." Acts 26:25

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Basic Foundation Principles Of New Testament Christianity

(IX)

NOVIE C. PERRY

A ninth basic principle of New Testament Christianity that must help to preserve it from division, destruction — and an immediate worldwide apostasy — is the fact that each local congregation is self-governed or autonomous. The government of one congregation of the Lord's church has never been free to legislate to, nor to impose its will upon, another church. Each congregation in the universal church of Jesus Christ recognizes the oversight of its own elders (who are also known as bishops, pastors, or shepherds by designation — names never used as religious titles). Each church chose and appointed its own elders, usually with the help of their minister, with whom they would work and worship (Titus 1:5).

For instance, Paul's instruction to the elders of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17) only dealt with that church over which those men

were authorized to oversee, superintend, and feed (Verse 28). The bishops over a congregation were held responsible for the spiritual welfare of **ONLY** the flock over which they had the rule (Hebrew 13:7, 17).

The wisdom in God's arrangement of having each and every local church to be autonomous can be realized from the New Testament as well as from church history. When one congregation would be overcome by error, false teachers, or some other problem of division, a 'domino effect' would be impossible. Without a synod, society, universal council, etc., governing the churches of Christ, error and division would be greatly hindered from spreading rapidly. Error and division could be more easily opposed and exposed with churches following the New Testament pattern of church government. No leader or group of leaders (be they bishops, deacons, or preachers) of one congregation ever had authority from Christ to dictate even one single, solitary command to another congregation or to the church universal.

The purity of New Testament Christianity must be guarded jealously by every dedicated Christian. Every local congregation must guard its God-given right to be self-ruling.

— 3133 Wellborne Dr. W., Mobile, AL 36609.

The Third Annual Freed-Hardeman College Preachers And Church Workers Forum

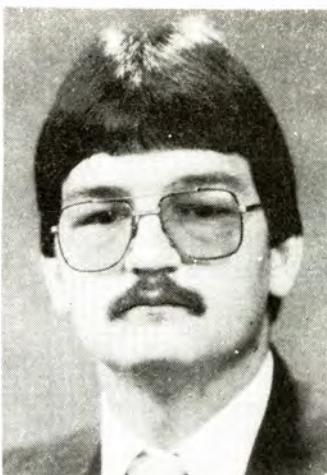
The Third Annual Freed-Hardeman College **PREACHERS AND CHURCH WORKERS FORUM** is scheduled for **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1987**, at 9 a.m. in Loyd Auditorium on campus in Henderson, Tennessee. The theme selected this year is "Discipling, Church Growth, and Unity." The four major topics which will be discussed are (1) discipling, (2) church growth and methods of evangelism, (3) Biblical church organization, and (4) causes and remedy for division among brethren promoting church growth.

President E. Claude Gardner invited Steve Johnson, minister for the New York City Church of Christ. Al Baird, an elder in the Boston Church of Christ was selected by Johnson to participate with him. President Gardner also asked two Bible faculty members of the college to speak. They are Earl Edwards and Winford Claiborne. Howard Norton, editor of the **CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE**, will serve as the moderator.

Each speaker will give a theme speech, evaluation speech, and a summation. Each section of speeches will be followed by questions from the audience directed to the speakers.

"Till Death Do Us Part...."

A young man and a young woman meet. After a time they "fall in love." The young man gives his sweetheart a ring, and they begin to plan a beautiful life together. Soon they set that all-important date. On the big day, they stand before a preacher in the presence of their joyous families and friends, and promise "before God and these witnesses... to love, honor, and cherish" one another "UNTIL DEATH DO US PART!"



DOUGLAS W.
MILLIGAN

This story is supposed to end, "and they lived happily ever after." All too often, however, they don't "live happily ever after." Too many times a few years pass and adversity raises its ugly head. Money gets "tight," the young man has trouble at work. The young lady feels older and unattractive. She has to bear the pressure of every day living. The kids seem always to be sick. They argue all the time. This is not the beautiful life they had planned. The young man and his once blushing bride decide they just can't take it any more!

A bewildered, young child wonders what went wrong. He wonders "Why don't mommy and daddy love each other any more?" Torn between his love for both parents, the child will often tragically reason, "I must have done something really bad for God to be letting this happen to me!"

The parents on both sides are crushed. They know in their hearts they shouldn't interfere, but this is their child! They love them and can't stand to see them hurt. And what about the grandchildren? How can they stand quietly by and watch their precious grandbabies be torn apart? "We have to DO something," they reason.

This is divorce. The anguish of divorce is

everywhere about us. When I was a child, my parents and Bible-school teachers urged me to date Christian girls and to choose a fine, young lady who was a member of the church to be my bride. I was very blessed to have married just such a Christian young lady. My teachers and parents were concerned about the "problem of divorce" and wanted to protect me from its terrible grip. Unfortunately, marrying a Christian is no longer an adequate defense against divorce. The plague of divorce has entered the church of our Lord to an extent we before have never known. Almost every congregation has at least one case of divorce, and most large congregations have several. Preachers and elders warn young people. They counsel, plead, and pray — yet the divorce rate in the church continues to rise. Concerned individuals everywhere wring their hands and cry out; "What can we do about this terrible problem?"

Brethren, the answer lies in doing what we promised "before God and these witnesses." Despite all the difficult questions about divorce and remarriage, there is one principle which the Bible emphatically points out: **Marriage Is Sacred In God's Sight!** (Hebrews 13:4). If we are going to save our marriages we must remember this cardinal rule. When we stood before the minister, and promised "before God" that we would "love, honor and cherish" one another "until death do us part," we made a solemn oath for which God holds us responsible.

We all know that no marriage is absolutely perfect. Problems arise in even the best of marriages, because even the best of marriages involves two imperfect human beings. Sometimes the problems originate outside the home. Difficulties on the job, financial pressure, health problems (and such) often strain even good relationships. The key is to remember that we promised to remain faithful "for better or worse." This is very easy to do when things are going fine; but what about the "worse" times? is our promise to God any less binding because "times are hard?" The words

David's Wonderful Ark-Moving Machine

What a wonderful idea — move the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem! Since David now reigned there, why not also move the ark of the covenant there? It had been at Kirith Jearim since the Philistines had returned it in the days of Samuel.

David had such wonderful plans. He would have his own tribe, the men of Judah to move the ark. To carry the ark, he prepared a cart, pulled by oxen. It would be a time of great rejoicing and celebration. Yet on the way to Jerusalem tragedy occurred. One of the men accompanying the ark had touched it to prevent it's falling off the cart. He was struck dead.

This event angered David. How could God act like this when David was attempting to please him. God then reveals to David a great lesson. One must not only do **WHAT** God says: if God has revealed **HOW** something is to be done, man does not have the option of doing it another way.

God had spoken about how the ark was to be moved (Exodus 25:13-15). The Levites, not the men of Judah, were to move the ark. It was not to be moved on a cart, but carried on poles on the shoulders of the priests. David pinpointed the failure: "... for we sought him not



ANCIL JENKINS

according to the ordinance. . . " (I Chronicles 15:13). David failed to look to God's word to determine his will in this matter. Let us earnestly desire to learn this same great principle.

SINCERITY DOES NOT REPLACE OBEDIENCE. One cannot doubt the motives of David. He, a man after God's own heart, wanted to give God glory and provide a suitable place for the ark. He was completely devoted to God in this matter. Yet, this did not replace searching the word of God, to see if he had spoken on the matter.

CONVENIENCE DID NOT REPLACE OBEDIENCE. No doubt it was easier to move the ark on a cart. The ark, which was covered with pure gold, must have been heavy! Why should men have to carry it, when oxen could pull it? Yet, man's convenience is not to be considered when God has spoken.

TRADITION DOES NOT REPLACE OBEDIENCE. Why did David choose this method of moving the ark? Was it because it had been moved this way before? The Philistines used this method when they returned the ark to God's people (I Samuel 6:7-12). David may have chosen this as a method since it had worked once before. Yet these reasons (?) did not justify man's failure to obey.

What does this mean to us? God has told us what he desires in worship. When he has thus spoken, we are not entitled to an opinion. We must do it God's way.

Also, God does not have to specifically **FORBID** something for it to be wrong. He did not tell David "not" to move the ark of the covenant on a cart. However, he did forbid it

in the sense he told **HOW** the ark was to be moved. David still disobeyed God.

Never let our desire for conformity to the world, or our own preferences, to lead us from doing God's will.

— 8445 SW 72nd Street, Miami, Florida 33143.

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."



EDSEL BURLESON

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 actions. 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 is 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 this 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 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:

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., Sw. S. Birmingham, AL 35211.

The Price Of Discipleship

(II)

In speaking of self-sacrifice, Jesus says that we must bear our cross. The "cross" we bear is the pain we voluntarily suffer on behalf of others. The cross of Jesus meant this to him. Paul spoke to the Colossians of the gospel and of their conversion, saying: "Whereof I, Paul, am made a minister: **WHO NOW REJOICE IN MY SUFFERINGS FOR YOU, AND FILL UP THAT WHICH IS BEHIND OF THE**



W. EDWIN KEARLEY

AFFLICTIONS OF Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God" (Colossians 1:24-25). Other than Christ, Paul voluntarily suffered more than any other character of the first century.

Every man must bear his own burden, endure his own thorn, but the cross may be escaped. However, without the cross there can be no crown!

Self-expression is a price of discipleship which must be paid. Jesus said: "And follow me." Only the negative life of a disciple involves restraint. The positive life of a disciple requires activity. Christianity is not altogether repression; it is also expression. It is the cultivation of the higher self. A disciple of

Christ is a most active, aggressive person.

As a disciple of Christ, (1) He must not go before the Christ; for that would be presumption. "Presumption" is "daring," (R.V.) shameless and irreverent daring (Epository Dictionary of New Testament Words, by W. E. Vine). Peter uses the word: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (II Peter 2:10). A disciple must be willing to be governed by Christ. (2) He must not **TURN ASIDE FROM** Christ. The result would be worldliness. (3) A disciple of Christ must not follow from afar. Such would exhibit cowardliness, and would result in denial. (4) The faithful disciple will follow in nearness. This means to obey his word to tread in his steps (I Peter 2:21-23).

May we now consider the cost of **NOT** following Christ. We would lose the joy of obedience as the Ethiopian nobleman experienced (Acts 8:39)? There would be no access to the throne of God (John 15:7). In the day of Judgment, there will be no welcome plaudit (Matthew 25:21).

One may say, "Oh, it is such a costly thing to be a disciple of Christ!" This statement is true; but the way of sin is far more costly! "The way of transgressors is hard (Proverbs 13:15). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). "... he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Galatian 6:8).

WON'T YOU BEGIN FOLLOWING CHRIST TODAY?

— 103 E. Lena Court, Bay St. Louis, MS 39520.

A Class Commentary On Ephesians

INTRODUCTION:

Ephesus was a part of the Roman province of Asia. Charles Pfeiffer, in *Baker's Bible Atlas*, tells us "Four districts of western Asia Minor — Caria, Lydia Mysia and Phrygia — were united as the Province of Asia. About 650 B. C., the city that was later to be called Ephesus was under the rule of Croesus, king of Lydia. In 546 B. C. it was conquered by Cyrus and became a part of the Persian Empire. Alexander the Great took it for the Greeks and Attalus II, king of Pergamos, willed it to the Roman Empire at his death. In 190, the Romans formed the province of Asia and made Ephesus a part of it. Much of the Roman communication with the East went through the city and ships traveling the coast both north and south bound would often stop there.

E. J. Banks in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, tells us Pergamos was the capital city of Asia, thus the center of Roman religion and government. However,



GARY C. HAMPTON

Ephesus' location made it the commercial center; and it was the home of the temple of the great local goddess, Diana. Seven times the temple was destroyed by fire. Each time it was rebuilt on a larger and more ornate scale than before. In New Testament times, it was 425 feet long and 220 feet wide. Its colonnade was 60 feet high and was supported by 127 pillars. Some of its columns were provided by the wealthy king Croesus, and pilgrims from much of the oriental world brought their wealth to it. Eventually, this temple owned valuable lands, controlled the fisheries, and became a banking center. Many beautiful art pieces were displayed in it, including painting and statuary. Also a large number of artisans were employed by the temple to make statues to sell to temple visitors.

New Testament Christianity may have come to the city as a result of the sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2:9); but it was Priscilla and Aquilla, with Paul, who really began to take the city for Christ. In Acts 16:6, we learn Paul was forbidden to preach in Asia while he was on his second missionary journey. On his return trip, he did make a brief stop in the city and left Priscilla and Aquilla there (Acts 18:18-21). Apollos, an eloquent Jewish preacher from Alexandria who was mighty in the scriptures, arrived at Ephesus some time after Paul's departure (Acts 18:24-25). McGarvey notes that Apollos had to be quite a student of God's word since he was wholly dependent upon his personal knowledge of the scriptures to make his arguments, while the apostles gained inspired insights from the Holy Spirit. Apollos taught such truth that he caused people to follow Jesus. Unfortunately, he did not know of Christ's baptism until Aquilla and Priscilla taught him "the way of God more perfectly."

Remember, Paul had sailed from Ephesus to Caesarea, had gone up to Jerusalem, down to Antioch, then all over Phrygia and Galatia strengthening churches. In Acts 19, he returns to Ephesus, and has to teach some of Apollos' early converts the difference between John's baptism and Christ's, after which, they were baptized in Jesus' name (Acts 19:1-7). Paul, as was his custom, began by preaching in the synagogue for three months. When strong opposition arose, Paul and the disciples separated themselves and began a two-year program of daily teaching in the school of Tyrannus and all Asia heard of the Lord Jesus (19:8-12). All of Asia was effected by the works going on in Ephesus.

"Magic" played a part in the worship of Diana. There were some mystic formulas inscribed on the base of her statue, and monograms were manufactured to be sold as charms. A large number came together and burned their books on "magic" (19:13-20). Demetrius, and other members of the silversmith guild that made silver shrines for Diana, began a riot against the Christians. Paul's friends kept him from entering the theatre where they assembled, and the town clerk eventually was able to disperse the crowd (19:21-41). Having completed three years of work, Paul then said farewell to the disciples and went into Maceodnia (20:1, 31). Subsequently, Paul called the elders from Ephesus to Miletus and gave them instructions on overseeing the work of the church in their city (20:15-38).

Later, Paul charged Timothy with the job of

opposing false teachers who began to work Ephesus (I Timothy 1:3, 20). Christ addressed the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2:1-7.

The letter to the Ephesians contains clear references showing Paul to be the author (1:1; 3:1). No serious challenge has ever been made to Paul's authorship. Some early manuscripts, such as the Chester Beatty Papyrus, omit the phrase "that are at Ephesus." It is possible as some suggest, this was a circular letter sent from Paul by the hand of Tychicus to all the churches of Asia. However, it could also be that later copyists omitted "Ephesus" so they could substitute the names of the various churches they might read the letter to. In either case, the Ephesian brethren would have heard its contents.

There is no doubt Paul was a prisoner when he wrote the epistle (3:1; 4:1, 6:20). Since Tychicus bore this letter, and the one to the Colossians, we believe they were written at about the same time (6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-8). Likely, Paul was in his first Roman imprisonment; therefore we can give it a date around A. D. 62.

Since there is no internal reference to actual happenings, Paul's purpose for writing cannot positively be found. Coffman notes: "Thirty times the expression 'in Christ,' or its equivalent, is used, providing the most definitive and specific statement of the blessings 'in Christ' to be found in the New Testament. Such challenges us to greater thanksgiving, and can prepare us to face life's storms with joy in our hearts.

— 2576 Pleasant Valley Road, Mobile, Alabama 36600.

"Till Death Do Us Part...."

Continued From Page 2

of Paul in I Corinthians 10:13 should be of comfort to us in these times: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

The difficult times come and go. It is better to work through these times together, than to use them for an occasion to hurt one another. Let us remember that God intended marriage to provide suitable companionship for both partners. When we come "one" in marriage, that means we have to share sorrow as well as the joy, pain and adversity as well as the pleasant times, the bad times as well as the good.

Brethren (and this term includes sisters, too), if you are contemplating divorce, please remember your promises before God. Try to remember the good times and build upon them. Think about the children and others who will be hurt. Seek counsel. There is no disgrace in seeking help. The disgrace is in destroying a God-ordained home without even making an effort to save it. Jesus said (Matthew 19:6), "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Brethren, my prayer for the church is that we might return to a time when marrying a Christian is a very strong safeguard against divorce. That time will never come, however, until we, as God's people, learn to keep our vows. We must learn to remain faithful to those vows "UNTIL DEATH DO US PART!"

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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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The Inspiration Of The Bible

(NO. 8)

(D) THE BIBLE AND PROPHECY

When the prophets of the Old Testament spoke and wrote of affairs to come hundreds of years after that time, they never said: "Maybe," "Perhaps," or "Most likely"; but they were certain of the outcome, as shown in this series of articles. However, the greatest proof of inspiration of the Bible is found in the prophecies about the



Roy J. Hearn

Messiah (Christ) who was to come. Consider the following, provided for this writer by Willard Collins, while he was President of David Lipscomb College:

"What would be the chance of a group of men uninspired from God to write down 25 things about the coming of a baby, 500-700 years before this baby was born? And for all these to be fulfilled in the baby's birth, life, death and subsequent events? Dr. Hawley O. Taylor has provided this answer. In his book, **Modern Science and Christian Faith** (page 178) this mathematician states there would be "one chance out of a thousand trillion." Dr. Taylor gives a mathematical equation to prove his point.

D. R. Dungan in his book, **Hermeneutics**, gives a list of 60 prophecies and their fulfillment! However, consider further: It has been shown by various scholars that there are some 332 prophecies in the Old Testament about the Christ, beginning with Genesis 3:15 (approximately 4,000 years before the Lord was born); and he was further portray-

ed in types thousands of years before he came to earth! What are the odds of his fulfilling these prophecies by chance? In another book, **Reasons for Faith**, John H. Gerstner (page 115) gives the probability as figured by other mathematicians. The possibility that all 332 prophecies should be fulfilled by chance is 84 followed by 123 zeros, or 84,000 trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion-to-one! This is a clear way to show the utter impossibility of fulfillment by chance! To that figure we could add another 123 zeros and the answer would be the same. Read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and observe: There is enough evidence in those twelve verses and their fulfillment to prove the prophet to be inspired and Jesus Christ to be what is claimed for him! The Bible is right!

Following are listed some of the prophecies and their fulfillment. The time of some prophecies (their approximate dates B.C.) and their fulfillment (between the birth of Christ and A.D. 33) with New Testament passages showing their fulfillment are cited in some cases.

1. Genesis 3:15. He was to be literally the seed of woman (4,000 B.C.). Matthew 1:18, 23.
2. Genesis 12:1-3, 22:18. To be the seed of Abraham (1,500 B.C.). Galatians 3:16.
3. Psalm 132:11. The seed of David (1,000 B.C.). Acts 2:30; 13:22-23; Romans 13.
4. Isaiah 7:14. To be born of a virgin (700 B.C.) Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 2:7).
5. Isaiah 7:14. To be called "Immanuel" (700 B.C.). Matthew 2:1.
6. Micah 5:2. To be born in Bethlehem in Judah, (700 B.C.). Matthew 1:23.
7. Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1. To be introduced by John the Baptist (700 B.C., 400 B.C.). Matthew 3:1-3; Luke 1:17; 3:1-6.
8. Isaiah 53:2. Predicted his poverty (700 B.C.). Luke 9:58.
9. Isaiah 35. He was to work many miracles

(700 B.C.). Matthew 8; Luke 7:18-23.

10. Psalm 41:9. Betrayed by a friend (1,000 B.C.). Isaiah 13:18-21; 18:1-3.

11. Zechariah 13:7. To be forsaken by disciples (520 B.C.). Matthew 26:31-56.

12. Zechariah 11:12. To be sold for thirty pieces of silver (520 B.C.). Matthew 26:15.

13. Zechariah 11:13. The betrayal money to be used to buy the potter's field (520 B.C.). Matthew 27:7.

14. Micah 5:1. To be smitten on the cheek (700 B.C.). Matthew 27:30.

15. Psalm 2:1-2. The rulers, Jews and Gentiles, join against him to put him to death (1,000 B.C.). Luke 23:14-25; Acts 4:27-28.

16. Psalm 22:18. They parted his garments among them (1,000 B.C.). Matthew 27:35.

17. Isaiah 53:12. Prayed for his murderers (700 B.C.). Luke 23:34.

18. Zechariah 12:10. After his death they pierced him (520 B.C.). John 19:33-37.

19. Psalm 34:20. No bone of his body to be broken (1,000 B.C.). John 19:33-36.

20. Isaiah 53:9. He was to be buried with the rich (700 B.C.). Matthew 27:57-60.

21. Psalm 16:8-10. His flesh not to see corruption (1,000 B.C.). Acts 2:31.

22. Psalm 16:8-10. He was to rise from the dead (1,000 B.C.). Luke 24:7, 21, 46.

23. Psalm 110:4. To become a priest like Melchisedec (1,000 B.C.). Hebrews 5 and 7.

24. Isaiah 2:1-2. His law to go forth from Jerusalem (700 B.C.). Luke 24:46-49; Acts 2:1-40.

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The Final Judgment

(NO. 1)

Wheeler Pounds

Please read Matthew 25:31-46. Jesus sat upon the Mount of Olives when his disciples came inquiring regarding the end of the world and Christ's second coming. Christ explained many things to them regarding their question (Matthew 24, 25). He ended the discussion by describing the judgment scene (Matthew 25:31-46). Those who will be rewarded are placed on the right hand, and the lost shall be on the left. On that day some will be surprised!

'When that judgment day arrives, will we be one of the surprised? Will we listen for the praise, "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34) -- but instead hear the shocking condemnation: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41)?

The duties listed in this context all relate to benevolence and good works. It is our Christian responsibility to fulfill these obligations. We give food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, assistance to the stranger, clothing to the needy, and we visit the sick and the imprisoned. Some, however, choose

to ignore their responsibilities.

We sin by omitting to do good works (James 4:17; Matthew 25; I John 5:17; Hebrews 2:3; 10:25) as well as by doing what God has forbidden (I John 3:4; Galatians 5:19-21). Christians must realize and accept these good works; otherwise we sin.

The basis of our fulfilling these obligations is love. We do that required of us, not because of necessity, but because we are motivated by love for God and one another. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is illustrated by the actions of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). The first and greatest commandment is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and the second commandment is: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:34-40). Simply, we must love and care for the souls of others! We are not alone in this world; therefore we must practice the "Golden Rule:" "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them likewise" (Luke 6:31; Matthew 7:12).

At certain times with certain people it may be easy for us to be compassionate, while at other times it may not be so easy. If a relative or friend is involved, we find compliance easy. We feed our friends -- and they feed us. We have our family reunions, and we eat sumptuously; but the unfortunate may get only the crumbs that fall from our table (see Luke 16:19-31). If a dear friend or relative is sick, we visit (maybe); otherwise visiting the sick is "too depressing," or "we don't have enough time," or "I may catch something anyway." The stranger we completely ignore -- "who knows what they might do!" The needy can get assistance elsewhere; "After all, we have enough problems of our own!" And the prisoners???

God's message, therefore, is: we are to be ready unto every good work (II Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:10; II Thessalonians 2:17; I Timothy 6:18; Titus 3:8). We are known -- and will be judged by -- the fruit that we bear (Matthew 7:16; Luke 6:44). Christians are sincerely concerned for those who hunger and thirst. We share God's blessings to us with the needy; and we are concerned for the stranger, the sick, the imprisoned (see also Hebrews 13:1-3). We are to do good unto all men especially to those of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10).

When Christ gave the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16) he included every creature in all nations. All are precious in his sight! Christians must be as a light to reflect this message to all the world. "Every creature," every soul, all races, every nation! -- Everyone is important! Every soul can benefit from the love God has for us. One must hear and obey his gospel from which all blessings flow (Romans 1:16).

How can we get this message to the hungry and needy if we fail to reach out to them? How can we reach the stranger, if we avoid him? How can we impress upon the prisoner (sinner) the need for God's guidance, if we fail to visit and teach him? Can we carry out the Great Commission by selecting and choosing only the DESIRABLE to help and teach? Can we expect to be on the right hand on the day of Judgment if we ignore his commandments?

Think on these things.

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A Strange Thing

T. Pierce Brown

Most of my life I have read John 5:39 in the King James Version and assumed that it was a command of Jesus to "search the scriptures." Since we know the admonition is good and scriptural, there is no harm done by this conclusion, even if it is wrong. After reading it in the Greek text, and after having examined the context with more care, it is now my considered judgment that the word "search" is not an imperative, but is in the indicative mood, giving a statement of fact. There are several reasons for this conclusion.

First, since it was known by Jesus that they already searched the scriptures, even with extreme care, and were meticulous in having them verbally accurate to the "jot and tittle," it would be a little peculiar for him to urge them to search the scriptures, doing what they already did. He said, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do ye not after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:2-3). He admitted that they had searched the scriptures and knew what was in them, but did not practice it.

Second, it seems evident that the context of verses 39-40 indicates that their concept of how to get eternal life was wrong. We should not in any way disparage the value, yea, the necessity, of searching the scripture to find God's will and discover how to gain eternal life. But the Jews, who were already so interested in searching the scriptures so intensely that they were able to tell how many times a particular letter of the alphabet was used in the Law of Moses, seemed to conclude that being an authority on what the Law said would gain for them eternal life. This, apparently, is the point of Jesus' remarks.

Third, this conclusion is strengthened when we notice that he said, "In them ye think ye have eternal life." It is my judgment that if he had been wanting to emphasize that it is through the knowledge of the scriptures that

one DOES find the way to eternal life, his statement here, and especially the contrast in verse 40, would have been different.

His whole point is, "You search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life. They testify of me, so you should have been able to find eternal life if you had FOLLOWED those scriptures, instead of simply being satisfied with KNOWING them. But you did not. You did not allow the scriptures to lead you to ME, where eternal life is found."

My point in this article is that it is possible for us to do the same kind of thing. Denominational theologians have done it for centuries. They can write enough books to fill a library, and yet deny the Virgin Birth, the resurrection of Christ, the necessity of obeying the gospel, or any number of other strange things.

However since they probably will not be reading this article, but you are, I will try to impress you with the fact that YOU can do the same thing. You can have your schedule of daily Bible readings. You can attend every gospel meeting in your area. You can even be scholarly enough to check the original Hebrew or Greek word in any passage under consideration, and still never come to Christ.

When I find a person who would drive 100 miles on ice to attend a Soul Winning Workshop (or speak on one) and would not walk across the street to set up a Bible study with his neighbor, I am aware that this principle still is applicable.

I find in congregation after congregation the desire expressed to have "sound doctrine" taught (and I thank God for that, for in many of them now it is not desired nor taught). Yet I find that some of those who so loudly proclaim it's value could not be beat out with a bull-whip to actually try to develop the mind of Christ or try to lead some soul to him. This makes me strongly suspicious that "Ye

Continued on page 3

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. Despite such warnings, many prefer to do "their own thing," convinced that (somehow) everything is going to turn out all right.

A little boy 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 grown-ups have decided! And they are ignoring all the danger signs which would prevent their own eternal destruction. Paul warned: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

Destructive forces often come upon us so



EDSEL BURLESON
teacher then asked

gradually that sometimes there is no reason, seemingly, to be alarmed or even concerned. Yet, frequently when we feel completely secure, tragedy strikes.

A little girl playing in the sands along the seashore built 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 leading to 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 wind was growing chilly. She was too busy with her city. She did not notice that the tide was coming in, with 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 his 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 this 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?" Yes, WHAT THEN?

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

In Times Like These When False Teachers Are Encouraged By Christians

(NO. 1)

James Meadows

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. 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. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 1-4). This is the battle cry of the church. The great truths set forth in this text are demanding and challenging to our nature. It eliminates the idea that we may contend for anything that is not the "faith." It demands that we give nothing less than "all diligence" in contending for the faith. It summons every member of the church -- every one who is "sanctified" -- to be loyal in the conflict between truth and error.

Our land is filled with many different teachings, with each claiming to be upheld and supported by the word of God. Such a state of affairs poses a number of problems to a sincere seeker after truth. He sees good, sincere people in all religions, each one "proving" (?) his doctrine by the Bible. He sees these doctrines contradicting one another; and he wonders which one to accept. If they are all right, which one is best for him? If they are all wrong, then how does one determine what is truth? It is also sad when one realizes that our Lord prayed that his followers all be one (John 17:20-21). The early Christians were "of one heart" and of one soul" (Acts 4:32); and Paul begged the Corinthians to be of the same mind (I Corinthians 1:10).

THERE IS SUCH A THING AS "SOUND DOCTRINE" (ABSOLUTE TRUTH) AND WE CAN KNOW IT

There is such a thing as sound doctrine. First, the word "sound" is defined "to be in

health, healthy, be sound." The Greek word *Hugianin* is translated "in health" (Luke 5:31); "whole" (Luke 7:10); and "safe and sound" (Luke 15:27). **Second**, when Jesus finished the Sermon on the Mount, the people were "astonished at his doctrine" (Matthew 7:28; cf. 22:33; Mark 11:18). **Third**, the gospel accounts further reveal that Jesus "said unto them in his doctrine" (Mark 4:2; 12:38); "my doctrine is not mine . . ." (John 7:16); and "The high priest then asked Jesus . . . of his doctrine" (John 18:19). **Fourth**, the early church "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). **Fifth**, the high priest accused the apostles of filling Jerusalem "with your doctrine" (Acts 5:28). **Sixth**, Sergius Paulus was "astonished at the doctrine of the Lord (Acts 13:12). **Seventh**, Paul told Timothy to charge "some that they teach no other doctrine (I Timothy 1:3), and then named a number of things "contrary to sound doctrine" (I Timothy 1:8-10). **Eighth**, Timothy was admonished to give attendance "to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Timothy 4:13), and to "take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" (I Timothy 4:16). **Ninth**, servants are to obey their masters that "the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed" (I Timothy 6:1). **Tenth**, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine . . ." (II Timothy 3:16). **Eleventh**, some will not "endure sound doctrine" (II Timothy 4:3). **Twelfth**, a man appointed to serve as an elder is to "hold fast the faithful word . . . that he may be able by sound doctrine . . ." (Titus 1:9). **Thirteenth**, Titus was admonished to speak "the things that become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). **Fourteenth**, the apostles claimed that they received a message from God and proclaimed it unto the world (Galatians 1:6-12). Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth (John 16:13); they were to remain in Jerusalem until this power came (Luke 24:49); this power was to be given when

A Strange Thing

Continued from page 2

think ye have eternal life by searching the scriptures" needs to be examined anew by a large number of US.

Do you think it exceedingly strange that the Jews who knew the Law so well rejected the Lawgiver? Is it not even more strange that in an average congregation of the Lord's people today, less than half of those who claim membership in the local congregation even come at all more than one time a week? and if anywhere close to half are in attendance on the Monday night of the gospel meeting, both preachers gush with praise for "this good Monday night crowd!" Then in addition to that, if more than 10 percent of those who do come do any more than just attend, we are so thrilled we can scarcely contain our emotions.

Is it any wonder that Crossroads and Boston (and other places where man-made systems have replaced the way of the Lord) are making such headway? They have swallowed the idea that almost anything is better than nothing!

When those of us who teach true doctrine "rest on our laurels" and assume that in that fact we have eternal life, we do greatly err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. The real quintessence of Christianity is to "let the life of Christ be manifest in our mortal flesh" (II Corinthians 4:11). If your searching the scripture does not lead you to that, you merely "think that in them ye have eternal life."

—Box 144X, Rt. 2, Wartrace, TN 37183.



Sunday School
DON'T MISS IT!

Continued On Page 4

Sixth Annual Denton Lectures News Release

Dub McClish

The SIXTH ANNUAL DENTON LECTURES, November 8-12, Pearl St. Church of Christ, Denton, TX, will be on **Studies in I, II, III John.** Five types of material will be presented: 1) Introductory and expository sermons on I, II, III John; 2) Lectures dealing with false doctrines relating to I, II, III John; 3) Lectures on some of the difficult passages; 4) Sermons on principal topics in I, II, III John; and 5) Daily "Discussion Forums" on controversial subjects.

The "Discussion Forums" will deal with the following subjects: 1) "The Need to Try

the Spirit;" 2) "Imputed Righteousness;" 3) "The Teaching of Christ," Fellowship and Unity;" 4) "Agnosticism." After a formal, prepared lecture on each of these subjects, questions will be invited from the audience.

The strength of this lectureship is seen not only in the subject matter, but in the men who will prepare and deliver the material. Alphabetically listed, the speakers are: Tom Bright, David Brown, Dan Carter, Curtis Cates, Bill Clayton, Bill Cline, Darrell Conley, Andrew Connally, Owen Cosgrove, Mac Deaver, Roy Deaver, Garland Elkins, Steve Gibson, Burt Groves, Alan Highers, W. N. (Bill) Jackson, B. B. James,

Dub McClish, James Meadows, Richard Melson, J. Noel Merideth, Jerry Moffitt, Goebel Music, Johnny Ramsey, Ira Y. Rice, Jr., Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Bert Thompson, Mike Vestal, Tom Wacaster, Thomas B. Warren, Marvin Weir, David White, Jack Williams, Wendell Winkler, and Gary Workman.

Housing in the homes of area Christians will be available on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Denton is served by several motels. Water and electrical hook-ups are available at no charge for trailers and motor homes (call or write for reservations - we had 29 rigs last year!). A staffed nursery will be provided for all sessions at no charge. Exhibit space will be available subject to space limitations and/or approval of the Pearl St. elders.

This lectureship is conducted to provide sound, solid and practical Bible teaching. Much of the material presented is also intended to combat false doctrine, both within and without the church. A book of these lectures containing approximately 500 pages will be available during ADL for \$13.00 and by mail (add \$1.50 for one book; 7 percent for more than one book for postage and handling). Audio and video tapes will also be available. Address inquiries to 312 Pearl St., Denton, TX 76201, 817/387-3531.

What Shall I Do With Jesus

(NO. 2)

"LET HIM BE CRUCIFIED," WAS THE CRY OF ENVY. Pilate sought to give the Jews a choice to release Jesus. Therefore, he gave them a choice between Barnabas, a notorious criminal, and Jesus. "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barnabas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They say Barnabas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified" (Matthew 27:18-23).

Others have been answering in the same way down through the centuries. Though their language may have been less offensive, the effect has been the same. If they had their way, there would be no Bible, no gospel, and no church. Before Christ died, the Jews were the people of God. The CHURCH is the people of God today. To the church the writer of Hebrews wrote, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6). Apostasy is a threat to every Christian. Paul said, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12). Do not allow the situation determine your decisions. Be guided in every facet or aspect of living by the word of God.

"I'll be neutral" was the answer of a politician. Pilate was too weak to take a positive stand for Christ, yet too fearful to deny him altogether. Therefore, he played the part of a coward. He tried to be neutral. This is an impossible position. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30). Sometime people take the position of neutrality today with Christ. Some say they are convinced they need to obey the gospel, but are waiting on a husband or

wife. Some who have obeyed the first principles of the gospel and have fallen, say, "I want to go to church, but I am waiting on my mate." Jesus says that neutrality will not be accepted.

What is your attitude toward Christ? If you are in sin you need to obey Christ today.

-103 E. Lena Ct., Bay St. Louis, MS 39502.

the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8); the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Paul claimed that God revealed his wisdom unto them "by his Spirit" (I Corinthians 2:6-10), and that we speak these things "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:13). What a claim for verbal inspiration!

There is such a thing as sound doctrine; and we can know it. There are those today who contend "there is such a thing as absolute truth, but we can never know it, thus we must ever view it as a goal which demands unflagging effort to attain it . . . If we cannot learn the truth, then the Bible is not even a meaningful revelation from God to man. What difference would it make (if the Bible is not God's truth) if none of us can possibly learn the truth?" (Thomas Warren).

The following facts plainly reveal that one can know the truth; if not, these things are impossible! One can know the doctrine (John 7:17); be made free by knowing the truth (John 8:32); be sanctified by truth (John 17:17-19); be saved by truth (Romans 1:16); speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15); have his loins girt about with truth (Ephesians 6:14); be chosen unto salvation through belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13); come to a knowledge of the truth (I Timothy 2:4); rightly divide the truth (II Timothy 2:15); acknowledge the truth (II Timothy 2:25); be begotten by the truth (James 1:18); be purified by obeying the truth (I Peter 1:22); and walk in truth (II John 4).

"How long can New Testament Christianity survive in an atmosphere where its teachers question everything, are tentative in all things, are non-militant in all their positions,


In Times Like These When False

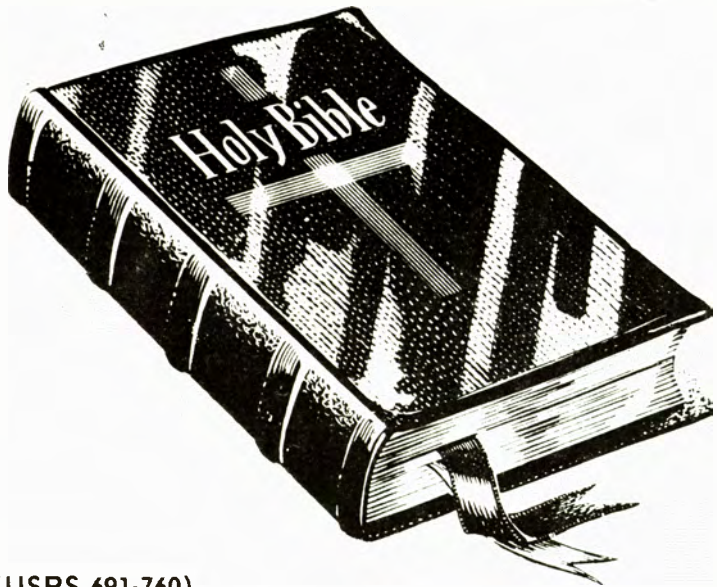
Teachers Are Encouraged By Christians

Continued from page 3

who must view all as in the same tentative quest, and to whom it is said that a healthy respect for the tentative finds of others would become mandatory?" (James Bales). (More to follow).

-P.O. Box 203, Jackson, TN 38302.

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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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In Times Like These When False Teachers Are Encouraged By Christians, Part II

James Meadows

There Are False Doctrines And False Teachers

Some are contending today that there are really no false teachers, but "mistaken teachers" or "misled teachers." (How they distinguish I don't know). But the Bible plainly declares there are false teachers. **First**, Jesus warned us to "beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). **Second**, Jesus said that some teach "for doctrine the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). **Third**, Elymas the sorcerer sought "to pervert the right ways of the Lord" (Acts 13:10). **Fourth**, Paul warned the elders from Ephesus that grievous wolves shall "enter in among you . . . Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). **Fifth**, there were false apostles and deceitful workers at Corinth who transformed themselves "as the ministers of righteousness" (II Corinthians 11:13-15). **Sixth**, some do not "walk by the same rule" and are "the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Philippians 3:18). **Seventh**, there are those who try to lead astray from the true doctrine "by sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:14). **Eighth**, Paul told Timothy there would be those in the latter times who would give heed to "doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1). **Ninth**, it is possible for one to "believe a lie" and be damned rather than believe the truth and be saved (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). **Tenth**, Peter plainly declares "there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you . . ." (II Peter 2:1). **Eleventh**, "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).

What Are Some Of The False Doctrines Being Advocated In The Church Today

Names, dates, and places where this writer has heard these false doctrines advocated would add nothing to the purpose of these

articles; but such can be given.

First, "instrumental music is not a doctrinal matter to be discussed with non-Christians." One said "we have boggled too long over baptism and instrumental music . . . I never bring up doctrinal matters in assemblies composed of non-Christians." Another said: "but if we harp on doctrine, we'll drive them away." Such reasoning ignores the fact that true teaching includes doctrinal matters and the Bible teaching that authorizes singing (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).

Second, some are accepting the "situation ethics" standard in practice while rejecting it in word. "The different attitude of our time makes things different," we are told. It's sad when those who claim God's word as the standard of authority make such statements. ". . . the Bible has absolute authority over the lives of men and constitutes an absolute standard of morality . . . Right and wrong are determined in relation to the will of God. Those things which are condemned in Scripture as sinful are wrong at all times and under all circumstances" (Rubel Shelly)

Third, some are advocating: "We preach Christ, but say nothing about the church and baptism." All would agree we must preach Christ; but to argue that one can preach Christ without mentioning the church and baptism, shows a total ignorance of what it means to preach Christ. "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. . . . But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:5, 12). Philip's preaching Christ included the church and baptism! "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). The eunuch soon asked: "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Where did he learn he needed to be baptized? He learned

it when Philip preached Jesus unto him. When one preaches Christ, the church and baptism will be included.

Fourth, some are accepting the doctrine of "miracles" and "tongue-speaking" today like those performed in the days of the apostles. One said, "My position is to let every man decide for himself about the miraculous gifts." Such a statement reminds one that in the days of the judges "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). The word of God says miracles were for the purpose of confirming the word of God (Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:1-4), and that they would cease when God's word was "perfect" or complete (I Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-16). Paul says the word of God is able to furnish us ". . . unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:17). Peter wrote: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness . . ." (II Peter 1:3). Jude challenges us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). An acceptance of God's word rules out "miracles" and "tongue-speaking" today.

Fifth, many are urging us to extend "open fellowship" to all, regardless of their views on such matters as baptism, instrumental music, the Lord's supper, etc. The word of God clearly reveals that baptism is for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:21); that singing is the only kind of music authorized by God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16); and that the Lord's supper is to be observed every first day of the week (I Corinthians 11:17-34; 16:1-2; Acts 20:7). This is the doctrine of 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). "That which we have seen and heard declare



Words Of Truth

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—Acts 26:35

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Our Quest For Happiness

Our quest for happiness has taken us down the wrong road many times! You would think we mortals would learn. Happiness is not achieved through a higher standard of living, prestigious jobs, more leisure time, broad educations or the freedom to do as we please. It comes through a right relationship with God.



Charles Cook

In the last two decades we have tried to convince ourselves that by lifting all restraints on our sexual behavior we would be happier. The sex education experts were sure that the problem of teenage pregnancy would disappear once we "amoralized" sexual behavior -- once we taught them how to use birth control devices! Also, they convinced the homosexuals to come out of their closets and the whole society just went wild for a time. The experts were wrong! Our problems in this regard are only compounded. Again, we have had to learn that the penalty for permissiveness has to be paid. Unwed teenage births went up a frightening 200 percent from 1960 to 1980. And now we face a problem called AIDS that may end up taking millions of lives before the end of the century. Paul's inspired warning, if heeded, would have spared tons of heartache: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7 R.S.V.).

Our society has believed for a long time that the amassing of wealth and goods would bring lasting happiness. So we told ourselves: "Get a big car, get a big home, get a big

Continued On Page 4

The Inspiration Of The Bible

No. 10

(B) The Bible And Science



Roy J. Hearn

In view of the fact that the God of heaven is the author of both the Bible and true science, it is impossible that there should be any contradiction between the two. True "science" deals only with that which has been proved to be fact, beyond any doubt. Theories and hypotheses are not factual; therefore, they are not true "science." Hence,

theories may contradict the Bible; but true fact does not. Please consider more scientific facts recorded in the Bible thousands of years before humans discovered or proved them to be true.

Job 26:7 states: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Consider the latter part, the suspension of the earth. Early Egyptians thought the earth rested upon five great pillars, one at each corner and one in the middle. Greek mythology had the earth being held upon the shoulders of Atlas. [In neither case did they tell upon what the pillars, and Atlas, stood!] The Hindus thought of the earth as being carried upon the back of a giant turtle which swam about in a cosmic sea.

Question for today: "What holds the earth in place?"

Modern answer, "Gravity."

"But what is gravity?"

Answer: "That which holds the earth in place."

BRILLIANT! That is what Job said 4,000 years ago. How did he know? He did not; but he said it. Not by guess, but by **INSPIRATION!**

Job had suffered long and desired to plead his case before the tribunal of heaven. He did not understand, "Why." God never did tell him, but gave him an examination that taught him not to question God. Note Job 38:3: "Gird up thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee; answer thou me." Then God asked Job a series of scientific questions he could not answer, nor could man for thousands of years thereafter -- and some of them, not even now. Read Job chapters 38-40 and see how many you can answer.

Read Job 38:4-6 and consider the measures pertaining to the earth. They are exactly correct. A. Cressy Morrison, former president of the New York Academy of Science, in his book, "Man Does Not Stand Alone," gives some interesting information.

First, if the earth rotated one hundred miles an hour instead of its usual 1,000 miles per hour, the long days would cause all vegetation to burn up, and the long nights would be so cold everything would freeze. If the sun gave off only half its radiation all would freeze; if fifty percent more, all would burn; so, the God of the Bible at creation established a perfect balance.

Second, if the earth were only ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen, and all animal life would die. If the ocean were a few feet deeper, carbon dioxide and oxygen would be

absorbed, and vegetable life could not exist. Third, if the earth's atmosphere were much thinner, some meteors now burned in space would fall to earth, and would set fires everywhere.

Fourth, if the moon were only 50,000 miles away, instead of 248,000 miles, tides would be so great that twice a day all continents would be submerged.

Therefore, it is conclusive that the measurements of the earth and other things that pertain thereto were not accidental, but by divine design. How could Job possibly have known? Correct! Inspiration!

"Where were you, Job . . . when the morning stars sang together . . . ?" Do the stars really sing? If so, how did Job know? Some of the readers have likely been to music stores and have seen and heard color and sound come from that same stereo system. Physicists now know that light and sound are basically the same. Thus when the musical notes are sounded, corresponding color shows at the same time. There are rays or beats passing rapidly through space, some reach the eye as color and others the ear as sound. There are rays of color so slow and long the human eye cannot see them. Some are so short and fast they cannot be seen. (They are classified as infra-red and ultra-violet). Fairly recent experiments, we are told, have shown that every ray of light has a tonal quality, and likewise has every color. The light from the sun emits sound, but human ears are not attuned to hear them. Thus the stars in space also send forth sound waves. Hence, modern day scientists have corroborated the Bible. Job's book does not ASSUME (as do evolutionists), that "maybe, perhaps, likely, or it could have been," etc. He stated for a fact that the earth is measured, and the lights give out sound.

When God's inspired word declares a scientific fact, it can be counted on to be true and correct, whether man can understand it or not.

(Next article will continue with Job 38).
—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

The Final Judgment - No. 11

Wheeler Pounds

"Lord, When Saw We Thee . . . ?" Please read **Matthew 25:31-46**.

In the first article from this text we examined the final judgment scene as a separation is made and judgment is rendered. Let us now study some specifics of this judgment which are important to our salvation.

A question, "Lord, when saw we thee?", is asked by both the righteous and the unrighteous (verses 37, 44). They wondered: "Lord, when did we see you in these situations? When were you hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick and in prison? Did we see you in flesh-and-blood in need of these things?"

The answer -- "Inasmuch as you have" (verse 40) or "have not" (verse 45) done it unto one of the least of these my brethren

Continued On Page 4

A Few Questions Concerning Christian Music

Why is instrumental music in Christian worship unacceptable? Is it wrong because it is mechanical? or is it wrong because it is not authorized by scripture?

Upon what basis is singing in worship to God acceptable? Is it right because it is non-mechanical? or is it right because it is divinely authorized?

What constitutes "singing" as commanded in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16? Is singing to be defined as any non-mechanically produced sound issuing forth from the human voice box?

Thayer, in his *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, defines "singing" in these passages as "the lyrical emotion of a devout



Dalton Key

and grateful soul." Webster defines "lyric" as "the words of a song, as distinguished from the music."

What, then, is authorized within the New Testament with respect to music in our worship? The answer should be obvious: Singing, the uttering or chanting of words, is authorized. Through the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" we are to make melody in our hearts as well as teach and admonish one another.

Is it possible to make sounds with the voice which are not singing? Of course it is. Are these sounds authorized in Christian worship any more than mechanical instruments of music are authorized? In what way are such sounds different, or on a higher plane of

scriptural authority, than the sounds produced by a mechanical instrument of music?

The reason the organ is wrong, and singing right, is not because one is produced mechanically and the other vocally. The organ is wrong in worship because it does not fulfill the scriptural command to sing. Singing is right because that is expressly what the scriptures command.

In short, not all sounds produced by the human voice box are authorized in our worship; only singing is authorized.

The question is not: "Is it mechanically, or vocally, produced?" The question should be: "Is it singing or is it not?"

—P.O. Box 563, Liberal, KS 67901-0563.

Repentance

Michael D. Greene

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. Joe 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."

Joe's uncle took the terrapin into the house and set him on the hearth. It was but a few minutes until the terrapin began to get warm. Joe's new-found friend pushed out his head, and then his feet, 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, 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



Edsel Burleson

Jesus' first recorded words of public proclamation are "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). He later informed the Pharisees that he came to call not the "righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matthew 9:13). As with all faithful preachers of the ages, the message of today should be for men to repent, for God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30).

Just a casual survey of the New Testament will show that repentance is a part of God's plan for man. Peter told the multitudes on Pentecost to "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). He also told those gathered at Solomon's porch to "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). To the fallen Christian, Peter's message is: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). We can safely conclude that repentance is as much a prerequisite to salvation, and as much a part of conversion, as is baptism or belief!

What exactly is repentance? The Greek word translated "repent" (metanoeo) means literally to have another mind, or to change one's mind about a matter. Thayer defines it in these words: "to change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins."

An excellent illustration of repentance is found in the account of Jonah and the people of Nineveh. When Jonah finally preached the appropriate message, the people of Nineveh "believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them to the least of them" (Jonah 3:5). The king, who also donned sackcloth and ashes, proclaimed that all the people should "cry mightily unto God: yea, and let them turn everyone from his evil way and from the violence that is in their hands" (Jonah 3:8). The result: "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not" (Jonah 3:10). Of this action our Lord said: "The men of Nineveh . . . REPENTED at the preaching of Jonah"

(Matthew 12:41).

In the letter to the church at Ephesus, the risen Lord said: "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5). From these examples it is clear that this repentance is not only having a change of mind, but also a change of action; that is, you stop doing what you are doing! You change the actions of your life. It is stated plainly by Paul: "Let him that stole, steal no more" (Ephesians 4:28).

In order then to repent of a sin, one changes his mind AND changes his action. If he steals, he stops stealing. If he lies, he stops lying. If he covets, he stops coveting. If he hates, he stops hating. Repentance is this and this only!

What is it that motivates such a drastic change of mind and life? Paul tells us that "the goodness of God" leads to repentance, coupled with godly sorrow (Romans 2:4; II Corinthians 7:10). When one ponders the glory, holiness, love, and mercy of God contrasted with the sinfulness of his own life -- especially in light of what the attributes of God have moved God to do for man-kind he becomes sorrowful for his sins and is led to repent, to change his thinking and his actions.

When one "repents" as did the people of Nineveh, two things are sure. First, "joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). Secondly, that person will be received by God as the prodigal son was received by his father (Luke 15:11-32).

Let us all take heed, for God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

—Riverside Church of Christ, 119 4th Avenue, Columbia, TN 38401.

Why Not Fill Up Your Oil Can Tonight?

Continued From Page 3

"put on kindness" (3:2). 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, tender hearted, 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.

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 problems, 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.

Our Quest For Happiness

Continued From Page 2

job . . . and you'll be happy." Again, we must bow to the wisdom of scripture, this time to Solomon: "Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart re-

joiced in all my labor; and this was my reward from all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11).

Then there was that dream about Paradise: . . . "If I could just fish, and surf, and play tennis, or golf, every day . . . I'd be happy!" There is nothing wrong with wholesome exercise; but leisure as a way of life is full of futility . . . ask Solomon!

It would be an understatement to say that many in our day have turned to drugs and alcohol in their pursuit of happiness. We are just now beginning to realize the price that has to be paid for these abuses. Millions of souls have already been destroyed. The U.S. Government ranks alcoholism as the third most serious health problem in the nation -- just behind heart disease and cancer. We are a drugged society!

A Doctor recently wrote this: "Everyone yearns for God, but today's young people don't find this yearning fulfilled in religious circles, so they turn to drugs . . . but this is a false road which leads to despair." Wherever people have turned to permissiveness, drugs, immorality, affluence, and pleasure to try to satisfy their deepest longings, they have systematically failed. When will we learn that our excesses produce disaster? and that we will only be "happy" when we have established a right relationship with God?

Christians are, by definition, the happiest people on earth. They trust in Jesus, and have found in him a treasure which is a million times greater than anything in this world! They have found eternal life with God (John 20:30-31).

JOHN 5:12: "He who has the Son has the life: He who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."

—Church of Christ, P.O. Box 803, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96745.

The Final Judgment - No. 11

Continued from page 2

(verse 40), you did [or failed to do] it unto me." We can help Christ only by helping others! He shall not reappear here on earth, in the flesh, and have need of food and drink. He will not appear bodily as a stranger, to be sick, or cast into prison. As Christians, we must do these Christian duties in his name through benevolent works.

Our bodies are to be presented a living sacrifice unto him (Romans 12:1-2). We are the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16-17; II Corinthians 6:16-17; Ephesians 2:18-22). We are his workmanship "created in Christ Jesus unto good works . . ." (Ephesians 2:10).

From God we receive all blessings. He created; he provides! God, however, is a Spirit (John 4:24). He does not bodily hand us a gift to unwrap - No man has seen him (John 1:18; 5:37; I John 4:12). It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot feed him personally; we cannot so clothe, or visit him. He made man in his likeness (Genesis 1:26-27), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). Man is, therefore, God's agent on this earth.

We cannot minister unto God and Jesus Christ unless we minister unto others. Do you help GOD by being righteous? There is nothing God needs from you! It is your FELLOWMEN who suffers from your sins; and the good you do helps them (Job 35:7-8). The gospel is for all. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). We, therefore, must share these blessings -- We cannot claim individual favoritism! If we become greedy, we become as the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21) who was not permitted to enjoy his many blessings.

"Inasmuch as you have (not) done it unto the least of these, you have (not) done it unto me." We must search for him in our fellow-

man, not only in the mighty, but in the "least." We can find him in the hungry, the poor, the sick, the prisoner, the unfortunate. James teaches (James 2) that without these works our faith is dead. Christ ministered unto the poor and sick, the unfortunate! True, he associated with the mighty, the doctors (Luke 2:41-52), lawyers (Matthew 22:35; Titus 3:13), public officials (Luke 19:1-10; Matthew 9:9), and men of many professions. When he chose apostles, however, he started with "lowly" fishermen (Luke 5:10-11), men we might today choose to ignore. Every soul is precious to him!

This teaching is so plain we cannot fail to understand it. As a student I disliked tests. Some subjects were difficult for me to understand; therefore, when a teacher announced, "This will be on the test," I marked it plainly and studied it carefully.

In Matthew 25:31-46, I perceive Christ, the master teacher, as warning, "THIS WILL BE ON THE TEST!" Study this closely, know it, as you will be judged by these works. This is not to exclude other commandments, but this will be one of the test questions. This is important. **Have you done these good works?** Be assured that God knows the answers and will grade you correctly.

Those who pass this test will be on the right hand; those who fail, on the left.

Those on the right hand shall be promoted to eternal life; the left, shall be sentenced to eternal destruction. Could it be made clearer? Can we, therefore, afford not to underline this scripture, study it, and obey? Let there be no surprises on Judgment Day. An eternity is at stake.

—Rt. 1, Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.

In Times Like These When False Teachers Are Encouraged By Christians, Part II

Continued from page 1

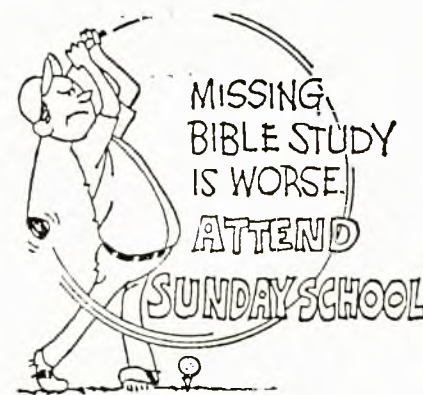
we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3).

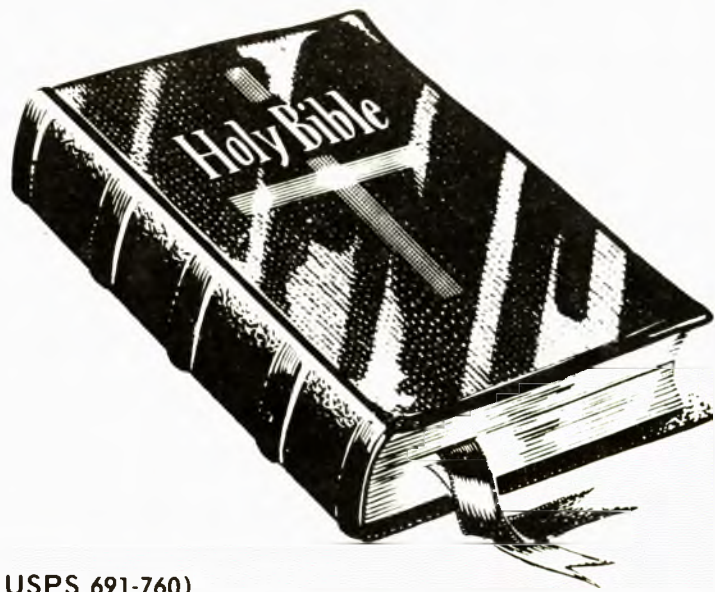
We have the right to have fellowship with those with whom God, Christ and the apostles

have fellowship; and they have fellowship with those who have accepted and are continuing in the doctrine of Christ.

(More to follow).

—P.O. Box 203, Jackson, TN 38302.





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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1987

NUMBER 43

The Final Judgment

Part III

Hungry

Wheeler Pounds

Please read **Matthew 25:35-42**. In the final judgment scene (**Matthew 25:31-46**), we shall be judged according to whether or not we have done benevolent works. One of these works is feeding the hungry. Food is an essential! Have we had compassion toward the less fortunate who does not have this essential? Has this compassion motivated us to kill the fatted calf (**Genesis 18:7**; **Luke 15:23**)? or, have we provided only "crumbs" from our table (**Luke 16:19-31**)?

Hunger was not uncommon in the Bible. Abraham was driven to Egypt by a famine (**Genesis 12:10**). Esau sold his birthright while faint from hunger (**Genesis 25:27-34**). "All countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all the lands" (**Genesis 41:54-57**). When Samaria was under seige (**II Kings 6:24-33**) hunger caused an ass's head to sell for "four score pieces of silver" (approximately \$6.00), and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung to sell for "five pieces of silver" ($\frac{2}{3}$ of a pint for about \$2.75). Children were even boiled to provide food (verses 28, 29). The widow of Zarephath informed Elijah when he requested bread . . . "I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die" (**I Kings 17:8-16**). [God provided for them when they were willing to share with Elijah]. In a New Testament story, it took hunger to bring the lost son to himself, and return to his father (**Luke 15:7-32**).

The poor in Old Testament times were to be fed by gleaning in the fields (**Leviticus 19:9-10**). It was this practice that led Ruth to meet Boaz (**Ruth 2**). This ingenious method required work on the part of the poor. The Bible does not endorse unconditional handouts to those able to provide for themselves (**II Thessalonians 3:10**).

In this country it might be difficult for many to understand the meaning of HUNGER. We have become so accustomed to LUXURIES that we tend to forget that there are those who do not have ESSENTIALS. Our

abundance shadows the fact that hunger and malnutrition not only exist, but these are the number one problem of millions of people. Hunger is so removed from us we may take the attitude, Why worry? After all, in these United States we have our own problem!

How do we eat less? Americans, therefore, spend enough on weight control to feed millions who are hungry. Not only do we waste money through over eating and waste, we also spend fortunes for diet food, books, pills, tapes, programs, exercise machines, classes, spas, and an array of gimmicks aimed at getting money from those who over-indulge. We are becoming a nation of gluttons! The diet book has become a best seller -- more important to many than the Bible!

Can we expect to be on the right hand in Judgment if we spend more for remedies for our gluttony than for benevolence? Can we continue to buy our luxuries, pay for our entertainment, and continue such waste, and be pleasing to God? Can Americans continue to spend billions of dollars a year for pet food (last year two billion for cat food alone) and be pleasing to God? Perhaps it is time we consider where we are storing our treasures (**Matthew 6:19-21**; **Luke 12:34**).

"Well, I pay my taxes to help feed the poor!" True, and thankfully those hungry in our nation benefit from our taxes. But as Christians, what are we doing more than others? Almost all citizens must pay taxes; does that give them a ticket to Heaven? Christians must stand taller, hold our lights higher, and show the world that Christians care. It involves more than the paying of taxes!

As congregations, are we using the Lord's money in a benevolent way? We build fine air-conditioned church buildings with luxuries -- carpets, padded pews, kitchens -- we pay the preacher well -- Great! We need the best for the Lord's work! How much do we spend on BENEVOLENCE? Should this not be an important part of our mission here?

"Well, it's hard to find hungry people!" Yes, if we are looking in fancy restaurants and among our luxuries, it is. If we don't want to

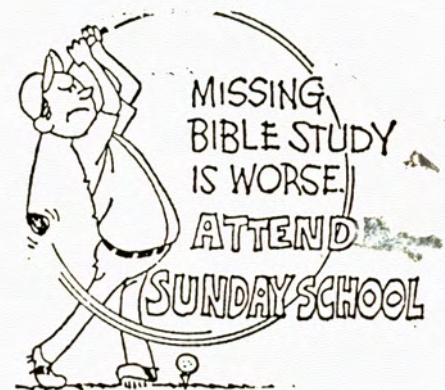
find them we probably won't. Therefore, we must be benevolent minded.

"They bring it on themselves!" Many do, because of sinful practices, mismanagement, and waste. But many times there are innocent victims of such situations -- wives, children, etc. There are the unfortunate, disabled, handicapped, those who have lost jobs. There are starving and dying people in drought-plagued countries. We can think of many excuses not to help these people; but will Christ accept them? We must, therefore, search out the needy, and do our part to feed the hungry.

In Africa, Christian missionaries tell of a Christian mother who suffered with the rest of her country during the recent drought. She had fed the family the last of their food, and prayed to God that he provide food, or else the family would die -- as had so many others.

What if Christians had not cared? It would have been easy to make an excuse that because of race, nationality, fear of mismanagement, etc., we should not give to help those "foreigners." Why should we bother, anyway? If Christians had not cared, a prayer would not have been answered, and our souls would be in danger. How many prayers go unanswered because we don't care? Are we doing our part to answer the prayers of the hungry? Our salvation depends on our response to these questions.

—Rt. 1, Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.





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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Saving Our Young People

"Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). They come into this world completely innocent and pure. To a large degree they will become what they are taught to become, both by word and by example. All parents want the best for their children. Since Christian parents already have access to the best life through the gospel, we might conclude that their children will certainly grow up to be obedient and faithful to God. But, often such is not the case at all!



Joe E. Galloway

Many times we have read or heard that we are losing half of our young people by the time they leave home. Accurate figures would be impossible to come by, but in some congregations I am sure the figure would be even higher than this. And some whom we think we have "kept" are probably with us in name only. Their names remain on our rolls as they attend services spasmodically; but their attitudes and actions belie our assumption that they are faithful Christians.

Whom To Blame?

Often the church is claimed as the culprit! It is said that the church does not have an adequate program for the young people -- that we have let them down. Sometimes the elders more specifically are accused of not providing enough activities to hold our young people; or the preacher is said to not relate to the young people adequately; or perhaps the Bible class teachers are not doing their part to draw, hold their interest, and adequately teach our children. We acknowledge that we ALL have an obligation to help ALL other Christians onward toward becoming what God wants them to be. But we suggest that attaching the blame to the church for losing our young people is actually "passing the buck."

Parental Responsibility

God has given parents the primary obligation of seeing that their children are brought up properly. The Bible pronounced that it is "right" for children to obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1). Fathers are given the obligation concerning their children to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). It has been this writer's observation through the years that when parents prayerfully fulfill this obligation to their children, the result will usually be children who are faithful Christians when they are grown up, even where little special emphasis is given to youth in the local church. On the other hand, when parents do not fulfill their obligation, the children often go astray regardless of how much emphasis was placed on youth activities by the congregation.

Parents have the responsibility of teaching their children.

They should teach them the facts of God's word, but their teaching must go far beyond this. Children must be taught how to determine right from wrong, and how to resist temptations. They need to be taught proper manners, respect for authority, to show appreciation, to accept responsibility, to establish

proper values, and to cultivate reverence for God and his word. While some teaching is done in Bible classes at church, it is extremely unrealistic to think that all these things can be adequately taught in less than one-and-one-half hours per week, even in the best of Bible school programs. Often, with a rapid turnover of Bible teachers, with poor classroom discipline, and with little planning or system in topic selection, the actual good instruction the child receives is minimal.

Parents must show what it means to be a Christian by proper example. It will not be difficult to get a child to accept what is taught verbally when he sees Daddy and Mommy putting God and his will first in their lives. On the other hand: Why would we expect a child to like to attend services, if he sees a parent letting nearly anything and everything keep him away from services? Why expect a child to be honest, when he hears Mommy tell a "white" lie on the phone? Why are we surprised that a child uses dirty words, when Daddy's speech is often filled with them? Can we expect our children to love the Lord and his church above all else, when we are so tied up in material pursuits that we have neither time nor money for spiritual things?

Parents owe their children proper discipline. It is still true that "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" [or, "when it is needed," J.E.G.] (Proverbs 13:24). Loving, consistent discipline will re-inforce proper instruction, resulting in a child's learning to almost "automatically" choose the proper action in daily living. It will result in better acceptance of the child by society, so less embarrassment for the parents. Better yet, it will help assure the child's growing into a well-behaved, responsible adult.

Parents should provide proper entertainment and social activities. This area has become the source of much present-day complaining regarding the church and young people. Nearly any place we travel among churches, some are heard to complain that their congregation does not have enough social activities (entertainment) for the young people. None seem to stop and ask, "Where in the scriptures is the CHURCH given this responsibility?" Two things would usually help this problem: (1) Christian parents should help their children plan wholesome activities that will involve other young people in their age group. (2) Parents should encourage their children to participate in such activities which are planned by others. We often see such opportunities (both within the congregation, and among young people of other congregations) ignored, while the complaining continues that "our young people are being neglected."

We live in a busy society. Often both parents work outside the home. The non-Christian majority nearly lets their children rear themselves, with the help of babysitters, child-care centers, and the public school system. But such parent-substitutes cannot bring our children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!" Christian parents are needed for this important task, and this task cannot be done without their devoting much time to it! We need parents who are willing to sacrifice material things in order to properly train the most precious things we possess -- **the souls of our children!** "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

—218 Pinecrest Drive, Greeneville, TN 37743.

Leadership Workshop At Kosciusko

Cecil May, Jr., President
Magnolia Bible College

Magnolia Bible College announces a Leadership Workshop November 13 and 14. The Friday program, in lectureship style, will focus on "Ethical Concerns." Speakers for Friday are David Lipe, Hugo McCord, David Lane, Franklin Camp, David Jackson, and F. Furman Kearley. Beginning at 9:00 a.m. we will conclude with a singing at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday will be a workshop on leadership and church growth. Sessions will focus on how congregations have successfully grown and overcome obstacles. Don Jackson and A. L. Franks will deliver keynote addresses, and 15 preachers from throughout Mississippi will appear in classes and on panels. Ladies' classes will be taught by Patsy Loden and Nelma Ivey. The Saturday program will last from 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

This 2-day program is taking the place this year of a lectureship which normally has been in March, and a leadership workshop that has been in December. For further information, contact us at (601) 289-2896.

—Magnolia Bible College, P.O. Box 1109, Kosciusko, MS 39090.

An Attitude

Peggy T. Crump

Gladstone said: "Duty is a power that rises with us in the morning and goes to rest with us at night."

One of the most common practices among professed Christians of our day is to see how little one can do and still be regarded as a "Christian." It makes little difference what a person knows about the Bible if he does not practice what he knows is required of him. It is interesting to note that the very first thing the newly organized church did was put into practice the things they had been taught (Acts 2:42).

Love of one another, as Christians, is one basic thought taught throughout the New

Continued on page 3

An Attitude

Continued from page 2

Testament. The first act of love is seen when the believer is converted to Christ and is set apart from the world (Matthew 16:24). He is then sanctified in God's sight (Hebrews 10:10; Ephesians 1:11-14; I Peter 2:9). Then as he grows spiritually, he dies more and more to sin and self, and lives more and more for Christ. This love and Christianity are a way of life which first begins in the mind (Romans 7:25). The more we know of the will of God, but do it not, then the greater our punishment will be (Luke 12:47-48). It does not require any effort to be lost! A simple neglect of the essential measures which Christ commands is all that is needed. With every opportunity we must do our best, and thus know we are pleasing our Master. We are not merely told to perform certain deeds, but rather must do our best (James 4:17; note also Ecclesiastes 9:10). It will be our works and faithfulness (Matthew 16:27; Revelation 20:12), rather than great deeds, which will count in the last day. But then works and accomplishments depend on our love for Christ and the word of God.

The early church began its existence on loving God and one another (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35). Loving one another is the badge of Christian discipleship as stated by Jesus: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35). John later shows LOVE'S supreme importance (I John 2:9-11; 3:14-16; 4:20-21).

If we expect to dwell with Christ in eternity, we must love one another. When Jesus named the greatest commandments of the law, he said the first relates to God (Matthew 22:37), while the second requires that we love our neighbors "as ourselves" (v. 39). We must make others aware of this love by showing it.

It is not necessary that one perform great deeds (as the world measures greatness) in order for his life to be great and successful in God's sight. Jesus makes it very plain that "he that is faithful in very little is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10). God didn't tell us to be successful -- just be faithful (Revelation 2:10).

This principle is illustrated by the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Too many people have the idea that intelligence, authority, power, etc., are necessary ingredients of greatness and success. But anyone who understands the teaching of Jesus, knows these are not the marks of true greatness. Like the apostle Paul, we should always be willing to "spend and be spent" for the good of others, along with having the attitude which was first and foremost to the teachings of Christ. His determination to be faithful to God and his Son Jesus Christ, are qualities of greatness in the Lord's eyes (II Corinthians 5:9-10).

The reason those who serve as Christ directs are great, is because they are engaged in the work for which he gave his life, inasmuch as the souls of people are more valuable than even the entire world (Matthew 16:16).

It then follows that those who serve are engaged in life's greatest work, are more like Christ himself. Jesus did not come to earth to have men serve him, but that he himself might serve (Matthew 20:28).

This is a lesson we need today: serve one another, not ourselves. The devil must laugh when he can occupy our time and energy with a concern for our own interests to the neglect of the love of Christ and his teaching.

When people are willing to listen to the Lord, and will do that which he commands, the blessings which he will bestow upon us are unlimited (Luke 6:28). The life of Christians can be beautiful, if we have the spirit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, faithfulness, self-control, and meekness (Galatians 5:22-23), because all these put God first in our lives.

Love of brethren in the New Testament is NOT OPTIONAL with God's people! It is commanded (John 15:17; I John 4:21)! This command exists because of God's concern for his people. No child of God, with the love of his father in his heart can live to himself. He must share this love and seek its object, the greatest good (John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8). John, the apostle whom Jesus loved, uses the word "love" twenty-five times in the book of I John.

Remember, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Proper attitude is never the product of ignorance, but is a cultivated

habit. Anything done in the name of Christ is "vain" unless done for the right reason, the right motive, and with the right attitude. Brotherly love is an element of character (II Peter 1:7). Christianity with the right attitude is a way of life which begins in the heart. Attitude is the heart and soul of a person. All that a Christian feels and does should be the result of his having the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5-11).

Let us make up our minds that we want to enjoy the blessings that come by loving; and then may we discipline ourselves to have such love. Think of the love of God and what he has done. Think of the price of this love. This, that a man lay down his life for his will find the fruits of a loving life.

Can we not then say with Gladstone: "An attitude of love is a power that should rise with us in the morning and go to rest with us at night?"

—East Gadsden Church of Christ, Rt. 11, Box 454-B, 27, Gadsden, AL 35903.

Leadership

(No. 3)

The Preacher As A Leader

Someone has said, "As the pulpit goes, so goes the church." The preacher is an intrinsic part of the church, and his leadership can build, or can destroy, the church. The elders are the spiritual overseers of the local church and must "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." We will deal with the ELDERS and their responsibilities as leaders in the future;

but we must not overlook the PREACHER and his responsibility in leadership. The Lord thought the work of the preacher is so important that he has three books of the New Testament devoted to inform preachers of their responsibility. Some of the responsibilities of the preacher and elders will overlap. Let us notice some of the essentials necessary for a preacher in exercising good leadership.

STUDY THE BIBLE

The Lord said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee . . ." (Hosea 4:6). The apostle Paul had a desire that the Colossian brethren " . . . be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing . . ." (Colossians 1:9-10). There are those among us who love to think of themselves as 'intellectuals.' They base their intellectualism on man's philosophy and concept of what the Bible teaches, and not on the Bible itself. They have become "wise in their own conceit" (Romans 12:16; 11:24-25). The first two chapters of I Corinthians give a good picture of what God thinks of such reasoning. We must not be spoiled through "man's philosophy and vain conceit," "traditions of



M. L. Sexton

men," and the "rudiments of the world" (Colossians 2:7-8). Many have become so obsessed with the idea of impressing the world with their "intellectual" standing that each has become "wise in his own conceit" (Proverbs 26:12). Such will profess "themselves to be wise, they become fools" (Romans 1:22). These preachers are conceited, arrogant, lovers of themselves, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (II Timothy 3:1-7).

We must approach the Bible with the spirit of humility and a sincere desire to know what God's message is to us. Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (II Timothy 2:15). We have professed a "Good profession" (I Timothy 6:12), and we must not be ashamed of it. We must "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering" (Hebrews 10:23; 4:14). Our commitment to Christ must be decisive and preemptory.

SET THE EXAMPLE

Preachers cannot be good leaders in the church unless they set the proper example before others. In fact, each preacher is commanded to be "an example of the believers in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12, A.S.V.). If our lives are not consistent with the word of God, then we are not good leaders. We are the servants of Jesus Christ, but by love we must "serve one another" (Philippians 1:1; Galatians 5:13).

MAKE FULL PROOF OF MINISTRY

The word ministry, as it is in the original, means service of any kind. It carries with it the responsibility to serve. In order for us to carry out this command, we must love people and be interested in mankind. We must not grow highminded in our work but "condescend to men of low estate" (Romans 12:16). The preacher should serve the poor as well as the rich, the weak as well as the strong. He must do all things without partiality (I Timothy 5:21; James 3:17). This may not be easy to do; however, if we do

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The Inspiration Of The Bible (No. II)

(C) The Bible and Science

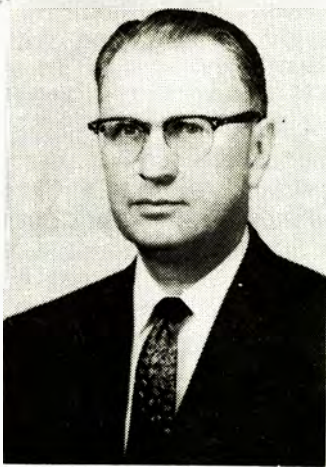
Attention is again called to Job 26:7: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Over forty years ago the beloved W. Claude Hall, professor of English and Bible at Freed-Hardeman College, told of a young astronomer's sweeping his telescope about the heavens, when suddenly he could see NOTHING. He had discovered a void in the north, not hitherto known. He contacted older astronomers, who likewise viewed the phenomenon with amazement, because in any other direction, myriads of stars and planets were visible. In the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, December 31, 1981, appeared an article, "Large Cosmic Hole Puzzling to Scientists" (page E-2). Four astronomers had found a great cosmic hole so far from earth "that light takes more than 360 million years to bridge the gulf." The area is said to be 300 million light-years (roughly 18 quadrillion miles) in diameter, and 180 million light-years deep. (A light-year is the distance light travels in a year's time at the rate of 186,200 miles per second, or about 5 trillion, 883 billion, 603 million, 200 thousand miles)! Multiply that by 18 million, and you get the size of the hole! Job did not have even a pair of EYEGLASSES! So, how could he have known what men would discover with highpowered telescopes nearly 4,000 years later??? Are the skeptics ready to give up "coincidence" and admit inspiration??

When one stands upon the seashore, the ocean looks round, piled up. Ships can be seen to disappear over the horizon. Suppose the ocean suddenly flattened out? Would not the land be covered? Read Job 38:8-11 and see why not. God likens the seas to a newborn baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a crib or cradle, and said: "Now you stay there." He shut up the sea with doors, and said: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Even with great hurricane force the waves are limited. HOW the oceans are contained, no man knows; but the Bible tells us: "He upholds all things by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3).

Job 38:12-14 reveals the rotation of the earth before the sun: "It is turned as clay to the seal." This writer once worked for Railway Express Agency and handled valuable packages. When picked up the packages were sealed. Brown wax was melted upon certain portions of the package and a metal "seal" rolled in the wax to make an impression to guarantee safe deliverance of the item. The tomb of Jesus was "sealed" with clay (or like substance) and Pilate's ring was rolled in it and the clay allowed to harden. Job speaks of the same, and shows the earth rolls before the sun.

Although we sometimes would like to command the morning to come, we must wait.

Job (38:16) asks: "Hast thou entered the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?" Man has now dived deep into the sea, but he has not been to the



Roy J. Hearn

lowest depth; the pressure is so great no instrument has been made to endure it.

What about "springs?" In the great salty oceans, streams of FRESH water have been found; but their sources are unknown. Some think they come from rivers; others great artesian wells; but so far as this writer has learned, nobody has determined their sources. "Well, Job, how did you find out, since you never waded across an ocean? was it accident? or coincidence?" Job answers, "No; the God of heaven made it known through supernatural means."

"Job, hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?" (Verse 22). Sometime prior to 1942 Dr. Franklin T. Shutt, Dominion chemist of the Canadian Department of Agriculture set forth the result of seventeen years of research in the value of snowfall. He found that

snow accumulated from the atmosphere four kinds of chemical fertilizers: free ammonia, nitrates, nitrites, and albuminoid ammonia. These chemicals are in a form that they can be used by plant life. It was estimated that the value was \$14.08 per acre. (Now in the days of inflation it could be ten times that)! On the western peninsula of Michigan, which juts out into Lake Superior, a winter's snowfall has reached as much as twenty-four feet (288 inches)! (Memphis cannot handle ten inches; what would we do with over 200 inches)? How did Job know there is value in snowfall? Yet, he wrote it!

Somewhat disgusted with his false, pseudo-intellectual friends, Job said, "No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you" (12:2). Sarcastically Job spoke; and such language can be applied to those today who scoff at the Bible!

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

"Character Is What You Are In The Dark"

Edsel Burleson

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 in Colossians 3:12-13: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." 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 there would be 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 the points of 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 of 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.

Leadership

Continued from page 3

not follow these instructions we are no better than those of the world (Matthew 5:43-48). We must be honest, fair and diligent in all of our activities as ministers (I Thessalonians 4:5; II Corinthians 8:21).

WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

In the original, an evangelist is "one who announces good tidings." In the New Testament it refers to those who preach salvation through Christ. The apostles were evangelists; however, only those evangelists who were appointed by Christ to serve as apostles were designated as such (Matthew 10:16:15-20). There are no living apostles today (Ephesians 4:11-16). Those of us who preach the gospel today are not inspired as were the apostles; but we must preach the same inspired word (II Timothy 3:14-17; 4:1-5). We are charged before God and the Lord Jesus Christ to "preach the word." Remember, that the charge is before God, and not before man!

God is our judge, and not man. In preaching the word we must declare the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The work of an evangelist is to preach the gospel to those who are Christians, as well as to those who are non-Christians (I Peter 1:25; Romans 1:16). The work of elders is confined to the local church, while the work of the evangelist goes beyond the local church in preaching the gospel to the world as well as to the local church (Acts chapter 8, etc.). The evangelist is exercising leadership when he strengthens Christians and leads people to Christ. There is no greater work. The evangelist must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). If he fails to do this he will receive the curse of God (Galatians 1:6-12). He must be firm, and yet present his message in the spirit of love and compassion (I Corinthians 13:1-8).

—P.O. Box 8400 Fort Worth, Texas 76124.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most
Words of Truth and s

(USPS 691-760)

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1987

NUMBER 44

The Inspiration Of The Bible

(NO. 12)

(D) The Bible And Science

A brother in Christ, and a great gospel preacher, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., in his defense of the Bible, said: "Man could not have written the Bible if he would; and he would not have written if it he could." No human could have predicted as did Bible prophets, nor anticipated discoveries of modern science, thousands of years before they were learned as facts. Generally, man "would not" have written the Bible because it demands righteousness, purity, holiness -- which the human race seems to disdain. But the evidence of divine inspiration continues to mount. The facts thus far presented in these articles should convince any honest soul that they could not have occurred coincidentally, but only by divine guidance. Only the divine mind could have accurately foreseen and foretold them.



Roy J. Hearn

Do the planets move? Does the earth revolve about the sun? See Job 38:31-32. Two constellations of stars are named: PLEIADES appears more prominently in the Mesopotamian skies in spring time; and ORION in the winter. God asks: "Can one bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" Or, Can one keep the springtime, with its revival of vegetable life, pleasant temperatures, and beauties of that season to remain permanently? Or, in the extremes of winter can one make the cold to pass immediately? So none can "break the bands of Orion," that is, break the bands of winter, and bring on the spring. The changing positions of these constellations indicate the movement of heavenly bodies, relative to the earth, or the earth relative to them. The modern theory was set

was punished by ignorant monks for adopting the same theory. Now we know for a fact what Job wrote nearly 4,000 years ago. "Job, did you happen to guess correctly?" No, it was God who revealed it."

Matthew Fontaine Maury has been called "the pathfinder of the seas." He established the science of Oceanography. His efforts led to the establishment of the Annapolis Academy. One day Maury's son read to him from the eighth Psalm: "... and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea." Being a devout believer in the Bible he remarked that if the Bible says there are "paths" in the sea, then there are! And he was determined to find them. He finally gained a commission to make the study, and discovered the great ocean currents, such as the Canary Current, flowing around the western 'hump' of Africa; the Humboldt Current which flows northward along Chile; the Japanese Current that is found along Alaska and the Northwest United States. Most familiar to us is the Gulf Stream that passes along the southern United States and flows back across the Atlantic and spreads out north of the British Isles. Later these streams became principle shipping lanes of the world.

In a book entitled, "Science and the Bible," by H. W. Morris, published in 1871, the author remarks: "The sea has its Streams as well as its general currents. Nothing can be more striking than the fact that the oceans of our globe are traversed by rivers that flow as definitively as the Danube or the Nile. Their channels are established, and for thousands of miles they pursue their courses along beds and between banks of other and different water, as fixed as if built of granite rock. And if the shipwrecked mariner commits his raft to one of these, it will conduct him along its known and established route, as certainly as the Mississippi would carry him down past New Orleans" (page 154; on page 155 he mentions Maury's discussion of the Gulf Stream).

How did David know about ocean currents

Likewise one may ask, "How did Solomon know the hydrologic cycle?" Perhaps he did not have such scientific understanding; but by inspiration he wrote in Ecclesiastes 1:7: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from which the rivers come, thither they return again." Water is about 1,800 times as heavy as air. The sun shines upon the oceans, warms the surface; water vaporizes, becomes lighter than air, and is transported to land by the winds, where it condenses in various types of precipitation, and falls to the earth. Some of it is absorbed as ground water, some is collected in creeks and rivers, and much of it finds its way back to the ocean. Then why is the sea not yet full? It is estimated that 286,000 cubic miles of water flow into the oceans annually; yet the level of the seas does not rise one inch! Why not? The cycle of evaporation and precipitation explains this. The sun evaporates water from the ocean as fast as it flows into it. How did Solomon know? -- You answer!

--4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

The Final Judgment

(NO. IV)

Wheeler Pounds
Thirsty

Please read Matthew 25:35-42. Modern-day Americans have no problems satisfying thirst. We feed coins into vending machines, turn faucets, drink from water coolers, and generally have numerous ways of getting a drink. Americans spend billions of dollars yearly on cold beverages of every description. Vending machines and ice chests keep our drinks cold, and seldom do we have a situation where we experience real thirst.

It may be hard to comprehend that an offer of water could be a true benevolent act. In Bible times, however, it was of extreme importance. Travelers had no vending machines to dispense beverages and no coolers to



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 Pope's Recent Visit

W. A. Holley

All our readers will recall the visit of the Pope to the United States of just a few weeks ago. Our remarks are not intended to attack the character of any one. One may agree with others on all true moral issues, and yet disagree on many religious issues as promoted by the Pope.

It may come as a surprise to our readers to recognize how little the Pope said about the Holy Scriptures. This writer watched television and read newspaper accounts of the Pope's so-called "messages," but as far as the reports go, he never appealed to the Bible as authority for his statements. He thinks authority resides in "the church" and in "the Pope;" but all Biblical authority resides in the Lord Jesus Christ, with nothing said regarding the Catholic church or the Pope. We challenge our readers to read Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 1:22-23.

Many hailed the Pope's visit as a great success; but was it in God's sight? It is well to remember that pageantry, however rich in color and splendid display, can never prove any religious movement to be right before God. Communism and atheism of all shades may put on spectacular entertainment which might enthrall millions; but that does not prove God endorses such worldly programs. Just here, read John 4:23-24.

"What does the Bible say?" is the most important question of the day. With these thoughts in mind, and without any efforts to wound the feelings of others, we shall proceed—

(1) Where does the Bible say any thing about the Pope? One reads in vain looking for the word. The apostles, including Peter, had no successors (I Corinthians 4:9, A.S.V.). Jesus condemned calling others "father," and "master," in a religious sense (Matthew 23:8-12). But the Pope thrives upon such an unholy practice.

In addition, the Catholic church has many other offices unknown to the Bible, as for example, Monsignor, Archbishop, Cardinal, and the like. Bible authority, please??

Continued on page 4



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Sanctification

(NO. 1)

"Follow after peace with all men, and HOLINESS, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). The American Standard Version reads: "Follow after peace with all men, and the SANCTIFICATION without which no man shall see the Lord."

Some things are "unimportant," while others are VITAL.

"Sanctification" (or "Holiness") is absolutely essential to one's salvation! Just as man cannot live without oxygen, and fish cannot live out of water, so man cannot go to heaven without HOLINESS, or SANCTIFICATION! Without it, one will never hear the angels sing in a better world than this! It therefore behooves us to study carefully the subject of SANCTIFICATION, or HOLINESS.

WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

Bear in mind that, whatever it is, we must not neglect it! Our text makes it unmistakably plain that without "holiness" (or "sanctification") we will never see God in peace! Webster's definition of "Sanctify" is: "Separate from common condition and use; dedicated to God, to be, as it were, exclusively his; set apart to a sacred purpose or religious use." Alexander Cruden defines it: "Dedicated; set aside for holy uses; made holy."

Our English word "sanctify" comes from the Greek HAG-I-A'-ZO, which Thayer defines as follows: "To render or acknowledge to be venerable; to hallow; to separate from things profane and dedicate to God; to consecrate and so render inviolate; to purify." Bagster's Greek-English Lexicon says it means: "To separate; to consecrate; cleanse, purify, sanctify; regard or reverence as holy."

The Bible clearly illustrates what SANCTIFY means. God instructed Moses to go tell the Israelites: "SANCTIFY unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast; it is mine" (Exodus 13:2). Moses accordingly called the people together, and said: "Thou shalt SET APART UNTO THE LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's" (verse 12). Thus it is clear that "sanctify" means to "set apart."

SOME THINGS THAT WERE SANCTIFIED
Deity is said to be "sanctified." Jesus Christ



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

is described as "...him whom God the Father hath SANCTIFIED and sent into the world" (John 10:36). While he was on earth, the Son of God made this claim: "...for their sakes I SANCTIFY myself" (John 17:19).

Yet there is a sense in which human beings can "sanctify" Christ. The apostle Peter wrote: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" (I Peter 3:15), or, as the American Standard Version reads: "SET APART in your heart Christ as Lord."

Numerous mundane things in general have been sanctified. These include Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:23); the Tabernacle (Exodus 29:44); the Altar and the vessels of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:9-10); later the Temple (II Chronicles 7:16); an individual's house might be "sanctified" (Leviticus 27:14), and so might his field (Leviticus 27:16-17); the Fasts of the Old Testament were also "holy" (Joel 1:14; 2:15); the first-born of the animals (Exodus 13:2, 12); [all animals used in various sacrifices belonged to God]; people who were "sanctified" included the firstborn males (Exodus 13:2, 12), all Israel (Exodus 19:10; Deuteronomy 14:1-2), the Levites (Numbers 8:14, 17), the Nazarites (Numbers 6:1-2), and individual Christians (John 17:17; I Corinthians 6:9-11). The entire church is "sanctified" (Ephesians 5:25-27; I Corinthians 3:17; I Peter 2:9; Hebrews 3:1).

Do you know of a passage anywhere, after the Lord established his church, which says that one who is not a member of the church is SANCTIFIED? Are you a member of the church? Remember: Our text (Hebrews 12:14) says that without "sanctification" (or "holiness") "no man shall see the Lord." (Next: How Are We Sanctified?)



BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH WITH YOU ON SUNDAY!

The Final Judgment

Continued from page 1

provide cold water. Physical activity, such as work and traveling, produced thirst which placed a premium on scarce water. Water, therefore, became a possession of utmost importance.

Battles were often fought over the right to possess water sources (Genesis 21:25-31; 26:15-32). In wars, wells were often filled by the enemy (II Kings 3:19-25; Genesis 26:15). A gift of land was of little value without a well or spring of water (Judges 1:15). Moses was denied permission for the Israelites to pass through Edom, even though he offered to pay for water that might be drunk on the journey (Numbers 20:14-21).

The Bible relates many activities which occurred at wells. Hagar was forced to leave Abraham's household with her child, Ishmael (Genesis 21:14-19), and was given one bottle of water which was soon consumed. Having no water source, she laid her child in the shade of a shrub to die of thirst. She went away so as not to see the child die, but with God's help she saw a well from which she filled her bottle and saved her son.

Travelers, when first entering a city or a country, went first to the well or spring to replenish their supply of water and to get a drink. It was at wells, therefore, that strangers many times met the countrymen who came to get their water, and to water their animals. In this manner the Bible relates marriages which began at wells. Abraham's servant, who had been sent to find a wife for Isaac, found Rebecca when she went to draw water from a well (Genesis 24:11-49). Their son, Jacob, after fleeing from home, met Rachel at a well (Genesis 29:1-14). He was permitted to marry her after first marrying her sister, Leah. Moses, after fleeing Egypt, met Zipporah and her sisters at a well (Exodus 2:15-21). After assisting them, he was permitted to marry her.

Jesus sat on Jacob's well and talked with a Samaritan woman about her marriages. She questioned his request for a drink, and he offered her "living water" from a "well of

water springing up into everlasting life." This "water," unlike that drawn from Jacob's well, would end all thirsts (John 4:5-23).

After leaving the Egyptian bondage, the children of Israel went into the wilderness of Shur where they found no water (Exodus 15:22-25). After three days without water, God sweetened the bitter waters of Marah; and they drank. This story and many others in the Bible magnifies the inestimable value of water to the ancient Hebrews. References throughout the Bible (Exodus 17:1-7; Numbers 20:1-13; Nehemiah 9:15-20; Isaiah 5:13; 41:17; 48:21; 49:10; Psalms 107:5; et al) show the importance of having an adequate water supply. Is there any wonder, therefore, that water was made to be an emblem of the spiritual blessings from God and Jesus Christ (Isaiah 3:1; John 4:5-23; John 6:35; John 7:37-38)?

After considering this, perhaps we can better understand our text (Matthew 25:35-46). Things of importance can be compared to a drink of "cold waters to a thirsty soul" (Proverbs 25:25). In the same manner our souls should "thirst" for God (Psalms 42:2; Psalms 61:1). We should, therefore, have the love and compassion for our fellowman to be eager to offer a "... cup of cold water in his name ..." (Song: **There Is Room In The Kingdom**). This should extend even to our enemies (Proverbs 25:21; Romans 12:20).

Our ultimate goal should be an eternal inheritance where there shall be "fountains of living water" which shall end all thirsts (Revelation 7:16-17). This is the promise of Christ to the Samaritan woman at the well.

CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE!

The rich man lifted up his eyes in hell and cried for mercy -- "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23-24). This request was denied and he was condemned to an eternity of torment -- of thirst! It would be wise to consider this while we still have time to gain a place on the right hand in Judgment! Those on the left

hand shall be condemned to this everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46).

What can we do? We must first have a compassionate spirit motivated by God's word. We must be ready unto every good work (II Corinthians 9:8; Titus 3:1). We offer water to the thirsty, making sure they know of Christ who can provide "living waters of life."

Perhaps we ignore some opportunities. As I write, it was only yesterday, upon reflection, that I missed an opportunity to offer a cup of "cold water" in his name. Friends were visiting and our children had just been called onto the driveway as dusk was falling.

Suddenly a speeding car went out of control, passing through the yard where the children had been playing a few minutes earlier, and the drunk driver struck a tree and blew a tire. I was upset that a drunken driver had disturbed our visit and endangered lives! And I did not want the two "sinners" that were in the car around! Nevertheless, I made arrangements for a sober person to drive them home and took my tractor and pulled the car onto the road, lending tools to replace the blown tire. After working feverishly replacing the tire and getting the car in shape to drive, one of the hot, tired "drunks" came onto the driveway looking around. "What do you want?" I snapped. (I just wanted him to leave!) He pointed toward the long garden hose stretched across the yard and said, "Water." I in turn pointed to the nozzle at the end of the hose, and he drank from it.

Why did I not offer him a cup of cold water in Christ's name? -- might it have made a difference? might compassion at that time have made a favorable impression on him? I can imagine how foul the hot hosewater must have tasted. With God's help, I will be more considerate next time. I want to be on the right hand in Judgment!

May God help us all to share our blessings, not only to our brethren, but also to all men, even to our enemies.

—Rt. 1, Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.

Leadership

(NO. 4)

Elders In The Leadership

The term **elder** is an adjective in the comparative degree, and its primary meaning is **older**. Many words have technical significance in addition to their primary meanings. For example, the adjectives, **general**, **corporal**, **judge**, **professor**, etc., have official as well as primary significations. We are discussing the "official," not the primary, sense in which the word **elder** is used.



M. L. Sexton

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Timothy 3:1). Men should "desire" the office for its work and for an opportunity to be more effective in every good work of the Lord's church (Titus 2:14; 3:1). This desire must not be for personal glory, gain, or power; but it should result from an unselfish desire to serve God and the people of the local church (Acts 20:28; I Timothy 5:17). God is in charge, and all elders must assume the role of leadership within God's system. They dare not go beyond the authority that has been given them in the word of God (II John 9:10; II Timothy 3:16-17). An elder must, first of all, take heed unto himself by examining himself (II Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 6:3-4). If a man is not willing to accept this responsibility, he should not seek nor serve in this office. If he does, he will be a liability -- not an asset -- to the church.

THE AUTHORITY OF ELDERS

Elders must assume the responsibility that God has given. Jesus has been given "all

power . . . in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). Elders do not have this kind of authority. Elders have only the authority that has been delegated to them by the word (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:7, 17). God has established the obligations of elders to the church, and they must fulfill these responsibilities in keeping with God's word. Elders must make decisions that will enable them to discharge the obligations God has placed upon the church. Elders have the authority to oversee and rule the local church (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17); however, this does not give them the authority to abuse, dictate, and ignore the advice and suggestions of other Christians. Elders do not own the church (however, some act as though they do)!

When elders follow Christian principles, the membership must "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 this is un-

Continued on page 4

It is impossible for a nation, institution, or organization to rise above its leadership. This fact is also true of the church.

DESIRING THE OFFICE

Leadership

Continued from page 3

profitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17). The authority of elders never goes beyond the sphere of the local congregation in which they serve (Acts 14:23; 20:28; Philippians 1:1).

RULING WITH WISDOM

"Wisdom" is the "ability to judge soundly and deal sagaciously with facts, especially as they relate to life and conduct; discernment and judgment; discretion; sagacity" (Webster's Dictionary).

Chaos erupts in many churches due to the fact that some elders do not exercise "wisdom" in dealing with the church and its activities. They may not deal with a problem soon enough, but allow it to fester by procrastinating. On the other hand, they may be premature in their judgment and act too fast, without considering all aspects of the problem. An elder may show partiality on one hand, and no consideration for some on the other. It may be that he can not be objective in his judgment. This elder may be a good Christian and yet may not have the ability or wisdom to direct the affairs of the church in a way that promotes peace and harmony (Romans 14:19; James 3:17-18).

Each elder must be capable of discerning between God's law and incidentals. He must understand how God's law is to be applied in the lives of Christians (Philippians 1:27ff). He must understand that the gospel of Christ is God's power to save the believer; and at the same time he needs to be capable of discerning between preaching the word and the use of methods. We have a choice as to the method, (such as, by word of mouth, press, radio, television, etc.); but we do not have a choice as to whether or not we preach the word (Romans 1:16; Mark 16:15-16; Colossians 1:6-9). "Wisdom" is developed through observation, knowledge, meditation, experience, and a desire to do what is right (Hebrews 5:12-14).

There are many great elders who serve with the welfare of the church in mind. They are unselfish and conscientious, and they have the interest of the souls of the Christians at heart (Hebrews 13:7, 17). They will earnestly contend for "the faith" regardless of the opposition they may encounter.

(2) Who knows where the "rosary" is mentioned in the Bible? One reads in vain looking for it. What is a "rosary?" "A rosary is a chaplet of beads upon which we say certain prayers; the prayers have an added benefit due to the indulgences attached to the beads by the blessing of the church." Dear readers, where do you read of "indulgences" and "beads" in the Bible??

(3) Where does the Bible mention "purgatory?" What is "purgatory?" "Purgatory is the state of those who have died guilty of slight sins, or who have not entirely atoned for grave sins, though these have been forgiven. In purgatory they are detained for a time and purified of sin." The doctrine of purgatory is the doctrine of a second chance. It also involves the payment of certain monies for the release of any who may be held there. Thus, purgatory is used to swell the coffers of the Catholic church. For shame, preying on the dead!! Purgatory is never mentioned in the Bible!

(4) What about "the confessional?" As used by the Catholic priest, it is never referred to in the Holy Bible. --Of course, Christians must confess their sins (James 5:16). But where does the Bible authorize a Catholic priest to pry into the innermost recesses of the human heart? If a priest should commit adultery with

However, there are some who are unlearned and unstable (II Peter 3:16; James 1:18). These people will 'politic' and go wherever the wind blows (Ephesians 4:14; James 1:6). There are those in the church who lobby the elders to promote their particular interests. They will resort to flattery, and if this doesn't work, they will use other members to pressure the elders into unwise decisions. These people are usually skilled in their maneuvers, and the elders should be men who are wise enough to detect the deception behind these activities. Elders should be men who can discern between sincere compliments and flattery. They should welcome any suggestion or advice from any God-fearing Christian. Many times others can give elders an insight into matters that will help them to do a better work. They should never take flattery as a compliment but should show gratitude for sincere compliments. It is easy for men to succumb to flattery, and if elders are not careful, they will let flattery dull the sense of objectivity.

Perhaps the greatest assets that Solomon had were the recognition of his inability to judge and the realization that he needed God's help (I Kings 3:9ff). He did not think of the people he was to govern as his subordinates; he thought of them as a great people, perhaps even greater than he was. This attitude was a prerequisite to his wise and understanding heart. Even though Paul was an inspired apostle, he recognized his own weaknesses and his inability to cope with them without God's help (I Timothy 1:15; I Corinthians 9:27).

Great elders come from all walks of life, such as farming, blue collar working, business, common labor, teaching, medicine, etc. I have seen some great elders with less than a high school education, and others with their Ph.D's. God can make great elders out of any who are willing to learn and who will apply Bible truths to their lives. Good Bible examples of this are the apostles Peter and Paul. The quality that made them great was that they followed Jesus (Acts 4:13; I Corin-

thians 11:1) and not that they had advanced formal education. Elders must humble themselves and follow the "golden rule"; else they will be poor leaders in the Lord's church (I Peter 5:6-7; Matthew 7:12). Elders must be "... steadfast, unmovable, 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).

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Elders, like the apostle Paul, and Barnabas are "... men of like passion" and must realize this. They are subject to mistakes, error, and sin, and should be big enough to admit it (I Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 6:1-3). They must not be self-lovers but lovers of the church (II Timothy 3:2ff; I Corinthians 14:12; Hebrews 13:17).

Elders have to deal with temptations of life just as anyone else. The membership should realize this and encourage them in every righteous endeavor. However, elders are the leaders and overseers of the church and must set the proper example in every walk of life (I Peter 5:1-3). The apostle Paul exemplified this when he said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1). How many of us can truthfully admonish others in this fashion?

Elders can not very well lead by example unless they have the know-how. This comes by a knowledge of God's word: "... My people are destroyed by lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). An elder must be able to "... convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). The wise elder who has knowledge will increase in strength (Proverbs 24:25). An elder must be one who loves people, and loves working with them. He should love them enough that he will put their needs and welfare before his own (Titus 1:7-9). Please read Acts 20:28-32).

Service to God is based on faith and conviction and must be manifested in the lives of the leadership; else the local church will fall asleep in apathy (Ephesians 5:13).

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The Pope's Recent Visit

Continued from page 2

a woman, could he arise from the bed and say to her, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," accompanied by the sign of the cross. What a religion! What about the priest? What chapter and verse mentions any such thing??

(5) The Pope would have done well if he had but quoted the scripture which authorizes the "Mass." What is the "mass?" "The mass is the sacrifice in which Jesus Christ through the ministry of priests, perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross by his real presence under the appearances of bread and wine." The holy scriptures deny that Christ is continually offered unto God (Hebrews 9:25-28). According to the Bible the Lord's Supper is a memorial which refreshes and strengthens the believer's faith as he seeks eternal acceptance with God (I Corinthians 11:23-30). Nothing is said in the Bible about Roman Catholic priests having any authority to "sacrifice" the Lord Jesus Christ continually.

(6) While the Pope was touring the United States, he should have told the truth concerning Mary the virgin. What is meant by the "perpetual virginity" of Mary? "By the perpetual virginity of Mary is meant that both before and after the birth of Jesus Christ

she preserved her virginity." Listen further: "St. Joseph was the legal spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but Mary always preserved her virginity. St. Joseph was, therefore, only the foster father or guardian of Jesus Christ. He and Mary always lived as brother and sister." Who can believe the foregoing quotation and the Bible? The quotation contradicts the Holy Bible! If Joseph and Mary "always lived as brother and sister," how can Mark 6:3 be true? We quote, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?" (Cf. Matthew 13:55-56). According to the Bible, in the family of Joseph and Mary, there were at least seven children ... count them.

(7) While the Pope was here, how this writer wishes that he had told lost sinners how and what to do in order to be saved. Alas, he did not. What must one do to be saved? According to the scriptures, one must believe, (Hebrews 11:6), repent of all sins, (Acts 17:30-31), confess the name of Jesus, (Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized --immersed-- in the name of Jesus Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38; Romans 6:3-4).

Do not be deceived, obey the truth today (Hebrews 5:8-9).

—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

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The Inspiration Of The Bible

(NO. 13)

(E) The Bible And Science

This article is number thirteen dealing with the inspiration of the Bible, and a fifth on the Bible and science. Only a few of the scientific statements given in the Bible have been considered, but enough to show that people who lived thousands of years ago could not have uttered such accurate details without divine aid -- inspiration! Note further evidence.



Roy J. Hearn

1. Acts 17:26 says, "And God hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." This truth was recognized by science less than a century ago, or, perhaps, fifty years ago. Harry Rimmer in his book, *Harmony of Science and Scripture* (page 115), states that if seven drops of blood were taken from as many different kinds of animals, scientific investigation would take only a few minutes to show from which creature it came. More important is that every analysis of human blood and animal blood shows that human blood is different from any other creature. However, if seven drops of blood from seven different races and nationalities are brought into the laboratory, no scientific process can distinguish one from the other. The blood from white, black, brown, red, or yellow races will be the same -- whether Chinese, English, Mongolian, Ethiopian, African, or other. The blood of a human can be easily distinguished from the monkey, hence, they definitely are not of the same stock. The apostle Paul had no laboratory nor precision instruments; yet he uttered a great scientific fact 1900 years before scientists discovered it. During J.

Edgar Hoover's administration of the Federal Bureau of Investigation was the process of blood analysis developed. How did Paul know these facts before science discovered them to be facts??

2. Another notable example is found in I Corinthians 15:39: "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." Again we hear from Paul in the field of cytology, the branch of biology dealing with the structure of cells. For many years scientists argued the continuity theory -- the idea that cells of all living creatures contained a basic substance called protoplasm. They assumed that all protoplasm is the same, making all cells the same; therefore, all flesh is the same. Within the past few decades scientists have proved the correctness of Paul's statement! If all flesh were the same, it would taste the same; but even the unlearned can tell the difference between the taste of bird and beast. Since one can study cell and tissue structure only with a very powerful microscope, and Paul had no such equipment, how did he know? Echo: "Inspired of God."

3. Hebrews 11:3 states: "Through faith we understand that worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Two thoughts are offered here, both of which are correct: (1) God made the universe from nothing, having no pre-existing materials with which to work. (2) The basis of matter that God created, from which all else material is formed, is invisible. The latter position is discussed here. Dr. Robert Milikan set forth and proved the theory of the atom and received \$40,000 for his accomplishment, as Nobel Prize winner. The inspired penman did not receive a nickel!

The atom has been described as "a skin full of nothing, with satellites of nothing revolving around the nucleus -- except there is no skin!" The atom is not seen, and the component parts -- protons, neutrons, electrons -- are still

smaller and weightless. Thus these parts composing the basis of matter, can not be seen; therefore (from the viewpoint of this discussion) the Bible is absolutely right: "Things which are seen are not made of things which do appear!" How did the writer of Hebrews know about the invisibility of matter nearly 2,000 years before modern science?

Note another thought on cells. Every human cell, male and female, is composed of chromosomes and genes, the former containing the latter. As Cressy Morrison in his book, *Man Does Not Stand Alone* (page 86), states, genes constitute the deciding factor as to what every living thing will be, human and otherwise. These genes are the keys to all individual characteristics, with their individuality in race, color and psychology. If all the genes of the human race presently were gathered into one place, a thimble could hold all of them. Small place to hold all the characteristics of all humans! Wonder who made it so?

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

How Can I Make My Country A Better Place?

Edna Ellis

No country can ever enjoy sound, lasting peace and lasting prosperity in the absence of spiritual prosperity and values. Each Christian should strive to be the best citizen he can possibly be, knowing that "none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Romans 14:7). Each man and woman exerts what is called "influence," and should seek to make his/her country the best possible place to live. But what can just one individual do?

First, one must love God supremely, and

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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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Good Intentions Don't Get Work Done

The writer to the Hebrews said, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. 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 5:12-14).

Inspiration is here stressing the importance of not only doing what we know but also what we could have known. Far too few are doing as well as they know much less trying to increase knowledge.

A young solicitor for a farm journal was canvassing in a farm community trying to get subscribers for his paper. He approached an old farmer who was leaning against a rickety fence in front of a dilapidated house, reflectively chewing a wisp of hay which dangled across a chin bristling with a two-week's growth of whiskers.

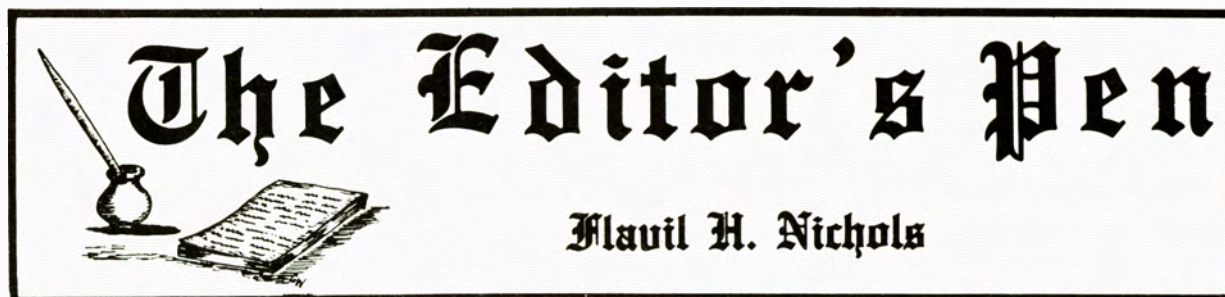
"My paper will be of immense value to you," argued the young salesman. "By reading it, you will be able to learn to farm better, to be more efficient and economical, and you will naturally make more money." The farmer shook his head decisively. "Nope," he said, "tain't no use fer me to read your paper, young feller. I ain't farming now as good as I know how."

How sad that this illustrates the con-



Edsel Burleson

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Flavil H. Nichols

Sanctification

(NO. II)

"Follow after peace with all men, and HOLINESS," [A.S.V. "SANCTIFICATION"] without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Last week we observed that without "sanctification" (or "holiness") one cannot enter heaven. We also noted that this word means: "separate from common condition and use, and dedicated to God, to be, as it were, exclusively his." We saw that numerous things have been "sanctified," including the New Testament church. Now let us consider how our sanctification is accomplished.

HOW ARE WE SANCTIFIED?

In the Bible, our "sanctification" is attributed to a number of things, rather than to one thing only.

We are said to be sanctified by God. Jude wrote "... to them that are sanctified BY GOD THE FATHER, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" (Jude 1). Paul desired that "the very GOD OF PEACE sanctify you wholly" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

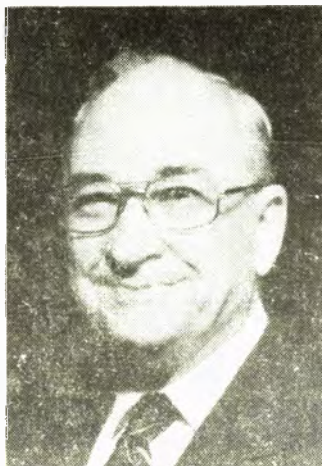
We are "sanctified" also by Christ. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). Christ abolished the Old Covenant, that he might establish the New Testament, "by the which will" (the New Testament) "we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). However, some who were thus consecrated, later "counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29).

Our "sanctification" is attributed also to the Holy Spirit. Paul speaks of our "... being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:16). To the Corinthians he wrote: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 9:11). Peter wrote to the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification OF THE SPIRIT and belief of the truth" (I Peter 1:2). We also read that "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13).

Thus Deity has a part in sanctifying us. God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit -- all three -- have a part in our sanctification.

Not by Spirit Baptism

While the Bible clearly teaches that we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, it is NOT by Holy Spirit baptism. Only two cases of Holy



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Spirit baptism are recorded in the New Testament. The first of these was about A.D. 33 (Acts 2), and the second was about A.D. 41 (Acts 10). However, about A.D. 64 --thirty years after Pentecost, and 23 years after Cornelius' conversion-- the apostle Paul wrote, "There is . . . ONE baptism" (Ephesians 4:5).

In view of the fact that all Christians are sanctified, whereas not all Christians received Holy Spirit baptism, we must conclude that our sanctification by the Holy Spirit is NOT by Spirit baptism.

The scriptures clearly teach that Deity works or operates through the word. Jesus himself said this is true: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). This text proves that we are sanctified through the truth. This fact is affirmed again by Jesus: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:19). We are said to be sanctified by the New Testament, or new covenant: "By the which WILL we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). Christ loved the church, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it . . . by the word" (Ephesians 5:26).

It is abundantly clear that we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, as he works in us through his word, not by Holy Spirit baptism.

Our SANCTIFICATION "by the truth" is also conditional on man's part. Therefore we are said to be sanctified by our belief of the truth: "... that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are SANCTIFIED by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18).

Also we are sanctified by "purging" ourselves from the intentional practice of sin. This is accomplished through our REPENTANCE: "If a man therefore PURGE HIMSELF from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, SANCTIFIED, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Timothy 2:21). The Greek word (METANOEO) translated "repent" is defined as: "To change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins" (Thayer). God requires us to come out of the sinning business, and wants us to stay out, in order to be his exclusively. Until one will "purge himself" (repent), he is not "sanctified."

Baptism also is essential to our sanctification: "... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might SANCTIFY and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27). This "washing" takes place in water baptism, for Ananias directed Saul --a penitent believer who already had

Continued on page 4

The Final Judgment

A Stranger
Wheeler Pounds

Please read **Matthew 25:35-43**. In flesh and blood we must realize that WE are but "strangers and pilgrims" on this earth (Hebrews 11:13; I Peter 2:11). The "stranger" TO us is also encountering a "stranger" IN us. We might find a stranger in need, or we may find ourselves to be the stranger in need. To those we do not know, WE are the "strangers!" We need a realization of this, else we may lose the perspective of this message.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus states: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them . . ." (Matthew 7:12). If we be the stranger in need, the message in Matthew 25:35 is clear: "I was a stranger and you took me in."

An examination of the word "stranger" in Matthew 25 reveals that it originates from the Greek "E,e' yos (Xenos)" meaning "strange, stranger, foreigner." A closely associated word is "sojourner." Strangers (sojourners, foreigners) were common-place in the Bible lands. Travel was frequent between cities and countries.

As was evident at Christ's birth when no room could be found in the Inn, lodging was sometime difficult to find. "Strangers" relied on the generosity of "strangers" for accommodations! Indeed, the first Christians relied on one another for their existence (Acts 2:44-47). Surely many of the 3,000 initial converts were strangers to one another; but they "had all things common." (Verse 42). This is Christ's way! God has blessed us and we shall share these blessings.

The apostles often relied on strangers to provide much of their needs. Paul is an example of this as he traveled on his missionary journeys. He relied on the generosity of others, sometimes strangers, and at other times, friends. It is refreshing, therefore, to read of his entering such cities as Corinth and lodging with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-3), or Justus (verse 7) Lydia at Philippi (Acts 16:15, 40), Phillip at Caesarea (Acts 21:8), and with others. Remember: after once meeting, we are no longer "strangers." Hopefully meetings with strangers result in friendships, as in the case of Paul and his helpers.

There is a beautiful story in II Kings 4:8-37 regarding a great woman (verse 8) from Shunem. The prophet Elisha passed through, and she "constrained him to eat bread." She then said to her husband, Let us build "a little chamber . . . on the wall and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." What more could they have done? This generosity was repaid when Elisha, by God's power, raised their son from the dead!

Abraham entertained "strangers" in the Plains of Mamre. The three men were angels (Genesis 18). Lot, Abraham's nephew, also entertained angels in the city of Sodom (Genesis 19), who warned him to leave the city before its destruction. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:2).

Perhaps we can relate to the story in Luke 10:25-37 regarding the "stranger" in need. He was in trouble on the roadside. Robbers had wounded him, leaving him half-dead --they had abused a "stranger." The priest and the Levite came by and ignored him. The

Samaritan had compassion on him, and helped him, even though he was a "stranger."

As Christians we might condemn the robbers; but might we fall into the category with the "righteous" priest and Levite? Perhaps those two were on a religious errand, and had no time for the stranger! "I can't stop to help; I may be late for my religious services!" "One cannot trust 'strangers' anyway!" "No matter that you might die! I have other things to do!"

It is true that not all "strangers" can be trusted. But what about those who are truly in need? -- Sure, the robbers could NOT be trusted! We should take the necessary precautions not to "fall among thieves." But we cannot ignore those who obviously are in need! We have no obligation to the unkept "stranger" hitchhiking to a possible drug party; but the stranded mother with her children might be in desperate need of our help. Fortunately, God gave us the power of judgment and reason to handle these situations. The lesson here is that we as Christians are to "be ready unto every good work" (II Timothy 2:21). A compassionate spirit motivates us to help.

We have all probably found ourselves in a situation where we had to rely on the help of strangers. Do we not appreciate that thoughtfulness? Does it not then give us great

satisfaction to be able to return the favor to other "strangers"? An Iowa farmer was recently named Person of the Week by ABC Television News when he offered excess hay to a drought-stricken farmer in another state -- a "stranger" in need.

When living in Arkansas, while returning from Memphis with my father, we noticed a woman with children in a parked car on the roadside. Sure she appeared to be in need, we stopped. An extremely frightened lady explained an engine problem which disabled her automobile. She had sat in the car for a while praying for help, afraid to leave the automobile. As we took the woman and children home she repeatedly expressed her gratitude, and stated that she perceived our assistance to be an answer to her prayers. Although she lived quite a distance from us, she appeared at our door a few days later with more thanks for our kindness.

But what if WE had not stopped? -- Suppose "ROBBERS" had reached her first? Would that lost opportunity for us to help "strangers" have affected our position on Judgment Day? Do we neglect opportunities? Are we as Christians letting God use us as servants through which prayers are answered?

--Even to "strangers?"

--Rt. 1, Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.

Pride: A Deadly Sin

The sin of pride strikes a deadly blow at man's heart. Solomon lists it first in his list of the seven abominations (Proverbs 6:16-19). Many vices are the anti-thesis of some virtue. The opposite of pride is identified by James: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

Sometimes pride becomes great arrogance. For example: Moab and the people who composed his tribe were rebuked by the prophet Jeremiah: "We have heard the pride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud), his loftiness, his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart . . . And Moab shall be destroyed from being a people,



W. A. Holley

because he hath magnified himself against the Lord" (Jeremiah 48:29, 42).

To be lordly, haughty, overbearing has always been a grievous sin before God Almighty. The scripture says: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud" (Proverbs 16:18-19). An old Welch proverb says, "The Devil has three children: pride, falsehood, and envy." Augustine remarked, "It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men angels."

We suggest that just here the reader should consult Luke 18:9-14. Here, brought into sharp contrast are the attitudes of the Pharisee and the Publican. The haughty Pharisee probably strode up the steps into the temple with measured tread. Did he, with his broad phylacteries on display, allow his pride to show through? Perhaps he also positioned himself at a conspicuous place for prayer. Measured by the demands of the Bible, no

Continued on page 4

Good Intentions Don't Get Work Done

Continued from page 2

dition of so many in the church. Consider just about any area of the activities of the average congregation and note the number of folk who "ain't doing now as good as they know how."

A dressmaker's apprentice, after being severely reprimanded for having ruined a costly dress of a regular customer, replied, "I did the best I knew. I don't see what she is blaming me for." The dressmaker replied, "I'm not blaming you for doing the best you

knew how, but for not knowing any better. You should -- you have been here long enough. You meant well, but good intentions are not enough to carry on the dressmaking business."

And may we hasten to add, GOOD INTENTIONS ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO CARRY ON THE LORD'S BUSINESS!

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

Pride: A Deadly Sin

Continued from page 3

real prayer came from his lips. Notice the text: He . . . "prayed thus with himself." His prayer was a recital of his own goodness. Read carefully, the Pharisee's prayer. He asked for no mercy, confessed no sin, expressed no desire. In fact he used the personal pronoun "I" five times.

Do we give too much emphasis to "I"? Isaiah mentions this type of attitude: ". . . Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day" (Isaiah 65:5). A righteous God cannot tolerate such an unholy spirit! The climax of his self-righteousness is expressed in his contempt for the humble publican: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." After the Pharisee's prayer, he left the temple, unjustified, because he indicated no repentance -- indeed, he confessed no sins, no weaknesses, no mistakes. Just about all he could say for himself was that he was better than the humble publican. Almighty God has said, "He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

What a different man is the publican! He goes to the temple in deep humility. His life is sinful, and he knows it. There is no bragging or boasting here. Arrogance and haughtiness do not fill his heart. His heart is filled with sadness. Evil in his life bothers him. He longs for a higher life, and an inner peace.

Standing afar off, he threw himself upon the mercy of God, saying: "God, be thou merciful to me a sinner."

We ask a most important question: Are you too "proud" to obey the simple gospel of Jesus Christ? Those on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection were not. About 3,000 heard, believed, repented of their sins, and were baptized in Jesus' name for remission of their sins (Acts 2:1-4, 36-38, 41, 47). Those who, on that occasion, thus obeyed Christ, were saved, and were added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:47). There is no "joining the church

Sanctification

Continued from page 2

confessed Jesus as his "Lord:" -- "Now why tarriest thou? Arise and be BAPTIZED, and WASH AWAY THY SINS, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). This is exactly in harmony with what Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

To a young preacher, the apostle Paul wrote of God, that "according to his mercy he saved us . . . by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). Notice, please, that the apostle Paul did not say God saved us "without" the washing, nor "before" the washing, but "BY" the washing. The same apostle was inspired to write: "But ye are washed" --there is their baptism! --"but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11). When they were "baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3), they were "washed" in the blood of Jesus shed in his death (John 19:31-34), and then they were "sanctified."

Next: Where Is Sanctification?

of one's choice" here!!

Another question: Are you too "proud" to confess your transgressions which you have committed against a brother or sister? Jesus declared, "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3-4; Cf. Matthew 18:15-17, 21-22).

When David sinned in taking Bathsheba from her husband (Uriah), he finally saw the enormity of his sin, and under the guidance of Nathan was led to confess his sin, saying: "I have sinned against the Lord" (II Samuel 12:13). The difference between David and Solomon is that David would confess his sins but Solomon would not! Where is the evidence

How Can I Make My Country A Better Place?

Continued From Page 1

each must love his neighbors as himself. When Jesus was asked, "Master, which is the great commandment of the law?" (Matthew 22:36), he replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (verses 37-39).

That alone would solve so many of our problems. Our "neighbors" include the ones living near us, but of course they are not our only "neighbors." In his story of "the Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus taught that this word ("neighbor") comprehends the ones across the street, or across the ocean -- or any one to whom we may be of help.

If we really have the love for others that we have for ourselves, we will never have corrupt government. I know each can play only a small part as an individual, but each can live the life that a Christian is commanded to live; and (in America) each can be a good citizen of this great country of ours, the U.S.A.

As we live day in and day out, it will influence our children, grandchildren, friends, neighbors, and all we come in contact with. If my family, your family, and all our friends, follow good examples, the result will be a chain reaction -- with almost no limits or end to the good that can come from one Christian life!

We can make our country a better place to live while we are here. Then when life is over for us, if we have lived as God has commanded us to live, think of the HOME awaiting us in heaven with God, Jesus, and all his saints. No earthly government can offer such a reward!

Americans may not realize it, but we are extremely blessed just by having been born American citizens! We have great privileges in this country! Let us thank God every day for this. We have the freedom of speech. Let us concentrate on all the good things that we are blessed with, instead of constantly thinking of all the bad things that human governments are involved in. Let us do our part as individuals to help make America, and the whole world, better by searching for the good, and not the bad, in our fellow-man. Tell each other the good we see in them. Let Christians know that we appreciate their concern and efforts in the Christian life.

No one is all bad. We all have some good in us. Let us try for one day, all day, not to say anything but good about people. If we

that Solomon ever repented of his sins?? Perhaps, Solomon possessed too much pride!

Dear reader, does your pride cause you to think more of the doctrines and commandments of men, than you do of the commandments of God? (Read these reference: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4).

Does your pride cause you to think more of churches established by men, than you do of that church established by Jesus Christ? (Matthew 16:18-19). Religious "plants" which the Lord has not planted are certain to be rooted up (Matthew 15:13-14).

Listen to Jesus: ". . . For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

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can do this for ONE day, we can do it EVERY DAY! How much better we will feel when we pillow our heads at night. All Christians are working for the same goal: a home in heaven! Let us help each other make it. "By love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

Jesus promised, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

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Beware The Mania For Big Words

Dalton Key

Someone gave me a copy of "The Grandiloquent Dictionary," a book which catalogues and defines hundreds of lesser-known, seldom-used words. Among the scores upon scores of entries are: **astucious** (unusually perceptive); **dromomania** (an exaggerated longing for travel); and **sesquipedalian** (believe it or not: -marked by long, ponderous words). The dictionary boasts on the back cover: "Now you can move up to a more elegant vocabulary -- with words that sound better, mean better, and let you insult people without their knowing it."

We can be thankful the Bible speaks in simpler, more understandable language than is found in "The Grandiloquent Dictionary." B. C. Goodpasture observed, "In point of length, the average word of the Bible contains fewer than five letters. What a lesson for the fellow who has a mania for big words."

The brevity and simplicity of the scriptures should serve as an example to those of us who teach and preach from its pages. The world is in desperate need of distinctive messages which are within the mental grasp of the general population. The pulpit -- or teacher's rostrum -- is no place for strutting intellectual or academic accomplishments to the neglect of simple, saving truth.

The legendary David Crockett, after hearing one of Daniel Webster's speeches, is said to have rushed up to him and commented, "I had heard you were a very great man, but I don't believe it. I heard your speech and understood every word you said!"

If communication is our goal, we had best leave off the sesquipedalian verbiage, if you'll pardon the expression.

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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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The Final Judgment

(NO. VI)

Wheeler Pounds

"Naked"

Please read **Matthew 25:36-43**. After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they realized that they were naked, and sewed together fig leaves and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3:7-11). Since that time nakedness has been shameful and modest apparel has been appropriate (I Timothy 2:9).

A number of Bible references depict the shamefulness of nakedness (Genesis 9:21-27; Isaiah 20:40; Leviticus 20:17-21; Nahum 3:5-7). We, therefore, have an obligation to clothe the "naked" (Matthew 25:31-46). By doing this the poor unfortunate person can regain some of his dignity, without which he is reduced to shame and isolation.

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content" (I Timothy 6:6-8). All people have one thing in common: we came into this world naked -- rich, poor, great, and small.

Job, after losing his wealth, stated, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord gave; and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21; see also Ecclesiastes 5:15). As all blessings come from God, we should delight in sharing our food and raiment with others. Many, however, want MORE luxuries and BETTER things! The wife of a recent Philippine ruler is accused of having an unbelievable excess of clothing, while her countrymen were sometimes naked. Is God pleased with such greed?

We cannot see "a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily bread . . ." and profit by giving mere lip-service to his problems (James 2:14-26). We must have a faith activated into work in order to please God.

When Christ was born he was wrapped in "swaddling clothes" (Luke 2:7). John the Baptist wore clothes of camel's hair and a

wore a leather girdle (II Kings 1:8). After aprons of fig leaves, Adam and Eve wore coats of skins made by God (Genesis 3:21). Aaron wore a robe and a brodered coat (Exodus 28:4). Joseph had a coat of many colors (Genesis 37:3). David wore a robe of fine linen (I Chronicles 15:27). The singers of the Levites wore white linen (II Chronicles 5:12). The rich merchants wore all sorts of things (Ezekiel 27:24).

There was, therefore, a large variety of clothing worn in Bible times. There were also many in need of clothing. When Ahaz was king of Judah, the Israelites fought against him and killed one hundred and twenty thousand valiant men in one day, capturing two hundred thousand women and children. God was not pleased with the children of Israel for fighting with their brethren and, therefore, "with the spoil [he] clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink . . . and returned to Samaria" (II Chronicles 28:1-15). This account tells of their being clothed before being fed -- their nakedness was covered so that they would not have to eat their food in shame. This emphasizes the value of clothing. Food and drink are essentials; but if we must eat in nakedness, we eat with shamefulness.

The rich man in Luke 16:19-31 was clothed in purple and fine linen while Lazarus lay at his gate in sores, and probably in rags. The rich man died and was buried, probably wrapped in the finest grave cloth. But he could not take his riches! ". . . in hell he lifted up his eyes." Should he have been allowed to return to earth he would gladly have exchanged his fine wardrobe for the rags of Lazarus! But it was too late!

In addition to clothing the naked, we should also have respect for the poor. The kind of clothing worn should not influence our perception of an individual in regard to his worth, and should not increase or decrease

our love and respect for him. The second chapter of James clearly teaches that should we respect a man for his fine clothing (verse 2-4) we commit sin (verse 9). Should we keep the whole law and offend in one point, we are guilty of all (verse 10). Note the importance! Should we study and know the whole law of God and obey all the commandments, attend all the assemblies of the church and follow every point of doctrine, and have respect of persons without compassion for the poor and the good works that accompany it, we are transgressors of the law and, therefore, commit sin (James 2:8-12; I John 3:4).

As Christian wives, husbands, parents and neighbors, we should clothe ourselves with love, compassion, peace and good works. It is the "hidden man of the heart" that is important, not the "outward adorning . . . the putting on of apparel" (I Peter 3:3-4). Instead of trying to wear clothing that will exalt us, we should be clothed with humility (I Peter 5:5).

As a "preacher's boy" I learned young that I was not too good to wear "hand-me-downs!" I benefited many times from the generosity of Christians who passed shoes and clothing on to me. I in turn passed them down to my three brothers, until they were worn out.

Today we are more inclined to earn a few dollars at a yard sale, selling discarded clothing instead of passing them on to the needy. By doing so we might miss the satisfaction of seeing someone attending church services wearing clothing we have outgrown or bought for them. We might miss the opportunity to help restore dignity and self-respect to the unfortunate. And like the rich man in Luke 16, we might miss heaven!

Our RAGS may be RICHES to the poor -- if we share!



Words Of Truth

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—Acts 26:35

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Some Perils Of Preaching

Some may think of preaching as an "easy job" with few demands, few problems, few risks, and few perils. Such folk obviously do not have a clear understanding of the work or the challenges connected therewith. Paul writes of the numerous perils he faced. "... in perils of robbers, in perils of perils from the among false brethren . . ." (II Corinthians 11:26). A twentieth century preacher who serves Christ loyally will experience similar perils.



John Waddey

my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles . . . in perils among false brethren . . ." (II Corinthians 11:26). A twentieth century preacher who serves Christ loyally will experience similar perils.

I. Because he must please God before any man or group, he will often be in peril. If he should compromise to please men, he should not be a servant of Jesus (Galatians 1:10). This will sometimes set him at odds with some (or all) of a community, and on occasion even with his congregation or members thereof.

II. He must preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27). This means that at times he will preach lessons that some (or all) of the congregation may not appreciate. They may argue that such lessons are unneeded; which, translated, means **unpopular**. His loyalty to his commission will place him in peril of incurring the wrath of carnal-minded brethren. He may even lose his job. One preacher asked his brethren, "Am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16).

III. He will preach on subjects which are needed, even if they are unwanted or unappreciated. He is charged to "be urgent

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The Editor's Pen



Flavil H. Nichols

Sanctification

(NO. III)

[Without HOLINESS (or SANCTIFICATION) "no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). In former articles we have seen that these two English words are used for the same Greek word. It means: "Separate from common condition and use," and "dedicated to God, to be (as it were) exclusively his." Our sanctification is brought about by God the Father, by Christ the Son, and by the Holy Spirit, and by the TRUTH which the Spirit revealed and confirmed].



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

SANCTIFICATION IS LOCATED: "IN CHRIST"

Paul addressed an epistle "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS, called to be SAINTS, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (I Corinthians 1:1-2). Since those who are sanctified are "IN CHRIST JESUS," it must logically follow that one who is not "in Christ," is not sanctified. But from Hebrews 12:14 it is clear that if one is not "sanctified," he shall not "see the Lord" in peace! Therefore it is essential to our eternal happiness

that we get INTO CHRIST, where "sanctification" is located.

Since "sanctification" is "IN CHRIST JESUS," it is imperative for each to learn how one gets "into Christ." No where does your Bible say that one may 'believe INTO Christ,' nor 'repent INTO Christ,' nor 'confess INTO Christ,' nor even that one may "PRAY INTO, CHRIST." However, your Bible --and everybody's Bible-- does say that BAPTISM puts one "INTO" CHRIST! "... all we who were BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST were baptized into his death" (Romans 6:3, A.S.V.). Again we read: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST did put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27, A.S.V.). It is clear from these texts that baptism puts one "INTO Christ."

The preposition "into" denotes a transition from without to within --from the outside to the inside. Before one gets "INTO" Christ, he is "OUTSIDE" Christ, or, "WITHOUT Christ," (Ephesians 2:12, or "separate from Christ" --A.S.V.). So when a penitent believer (Acts 2:36-38; Mark 16:16) is baptized, he is "translated" (Colossians 1:13) from outside Christ, "INTO" Christ (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27). Then he partakes of that SANCTIFICATION that is "IN" Christ (I Corinthians 1:2).

But sanctification is located "in Christ." It is therefore essential that I get "into Christ," where "sanctification" (or "holiness") is, for without it I can never enjoy the Lord's approval.

"Only A Vegetable"

Sandra F. Cobble

"Poor thing," whispered one of the visitors as they left my hospital room; "she is only a vegetable." The words dug deep. Why had God let me survive an almost unsurvivable accident only to become a burden to others? There was no family to miss me. Someone would have to care for me the remainder of my life. There was insufficient insurance. I would be a burden to the taxpayers. Already a faithful Christian, I was ready to go to meet our Lord, or, if it were his will, to remain. But why? How could my helplessness glorify God? It was not a question asked in despair, anger, or rebellion; the question came from a sincere heart, a heart that was hurting.

"We have this assurance in approaching God, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him" (I John 5:14-15; NIV). The Greek word for "ask" used in this passage is "aiteo," which generally means to ask for something. In numerous other passages "erotao," meaning "to

question," is translated "ask." When the disciples asked (erotao) Jesus concerning the parables he answered their questions. He even answered the questions they were afraid to ask! We pray for many things -- usually things of this world. Yet somehow we think it wrong to ask, "Why?" And if we were to ask as would a spoiled, belligerent child, we might receive just the same treatment as would he. But if we ask to know the truth about something that we might be comforted, would not we be asking according to his will? And though we cannot comprehend ALL truth, will not he give to us that portion which we ARE able to comprehend?

What are human "vegetables?" Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia College Dictionary defines "vegetable" as the edible part of any herbaceous plant; any member of the vegetable kingdom, a plant. Used as an adjective it may refer to "resembling or like a vegetable in activity, etc.: dull, passive." This is the idea that usually comes to mind when

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“Doubting” Thomas And His Faith

T. Pierce Brown

Most of us probably have not done justice either to Thomas or the subject of faith as we have discussed them.

First, we have little reason to apply the pejorative appellation “doubting” to him any more than to the other apostles. (You may now suspect what the “T” in my name stands for!) But Mark 16:11-14; Luke 24:11-41, and other references show that the other apostles had also heard that he was risen and “believed not.”

Although it behooves us to be skeptical of many reports about miraculous events and supernatural things, I am not particularly interested in upholding the skepticism of Thomas in this instance -- though it does have some redeeming features. He at least expressed the willingness to believe when he was presented with what he considered adequate evidence, and was not intellectually dishonest! He did not disregard it when it was available.

But my purpose now is to suggest some additional thoughts on the scope, nature, and

basis of faith. Most of us in the Lord's church have properly emphasized the Biblical truth that “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). But John implies (John 20:21) that faith also comes by sight, or as a result of sight. The fact that “we walk by faith and not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7) does not mean they are antithetical.

This involves another truth that we seldom emphasize: There is a difference in a general “faith” in a person, and specific “faith” in a proposition. Suppose we had been in the presence of Jesus and had seen him raise the dead, cast out demons, and do all the other mighty works that he did, and someone had asked us: “Do you believe in Jesus -- that he is indeed the Christ, or that he has power to cure blind eyes?” We could answer, “Yes,” even though we had not heard him say, “I can cure blind eyes.” That faith would not have been produced by hearing the word of God on that particular issue, but by seeing the acts of Christ in various other circumstances. But of a particular proposition such

as, “I have faith that Christ will cure the blind eyes of John Doe,” we have no right to say this unless we have heard his word with reference to opening John Doe's eyes.

Paul illustrated this truth in Romans 120-21 when he says “they are without excuse” because they should have had faith in God (recognized his eternal power and Godhead) as a result of what they had seen -- “the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” The atheist, who does not believe in the person of God is guilty and without excuse, not because he has not read the word and allowed it to produce faith, both in God, and in propositions about God; but because he has not been honest with what he has seen. “Faith” in the reality of God can come from seeing nature, as well as by hearing the word of God. But faith in a particular proposition may come only by hearing that proposition. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” is a proposition that can not be believed simply as a result of looking at nature; but this is believed by hearing it because of a prior faith in the person of Jesus who said it.

Notice another important thing: If one has proper faith in Jesus (or anyone else) as a person, it necessarily involves faith in any proposition he may announce, or statement he may make. But the converse is not necessarily true. That is, one may believe a particular statement of a person without having faith in that person. For example, an atheist who is a known liar may say, “You can buy chickens at the grocery store for 39¢ per pound.” And you may believe that statement, without having any faith in the person. But if you have faith in a person as a truthful, trustworthy person, and he says, “You can get them today at this grocery store for 29¢ a pound,” you will believe that statement no matter how improbable it may be because you have faith in the person who made it.

Thomas acted improperly in rejecting the testimony of credible witnesses. But it was not a result of an atheistic disposition nor a deliberate refusal to examine testimony. When he saw Jesus and heard him speak, he then had faith in the person of Jesus, and as a necessary consequence, faith in anything that Jesus might say.

Part of my purpose in this article is to suggest that we need to do more than have faith in particular propositions; we need to so examine the evidence that we have faith in the person of Jesus, and therefore be willing to trust in any statement or proposition he makes. In addition to that, we need to trust in him to the extent that we are willing to commit all our lives to him beyond any reference to any particular statement about specific events, or belief in any particular proposition.

It seems apparent that one of our failures is that we may have equated belief in a particular proposition of or about Jesus with trust in the person of the Saviour. They are different things. For example, you may believe that Jesus arose from the dead, but not be willing to trust him with your life. You may believe that “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” and not willing to do that. You may admit the proposition expressed by Jesus that “All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18), and that

Some Perils Of Preaching

Continued from page 2

in season (or) out of season” (II Timothy 4:2). Ezekiel was faced with just such a situation. God said to him, “Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak my words unto them. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are of a hard forehead and of a stiff heart” (Ezekiel 4:4-7). Here was a preacher with a perilous assignment. But God gave him strength for his task. God made his head harder than theirs’ (Ezekiel 4:8-9).

IV. A preacher must preach God's truth without respect of persons. One cannot hold the faith of Jesus, and respect of persons, in the same heart (James 2:1). Should a minister favor any man because of wealth, race or influence, he is convicted by God's law as a transgressor (James 2:9). Many a man has faced perilous times by refusing to favor those in power!

V. Some will actually hate him because of his commitment and loyalty to Christ. His enemies could find no fault against Daniel except “concerning the law of his God” (Daniel 6:5). The apostles suffered greatly for their loyalty to the Cause. They were “as men doomed to death . . . made a spectacle unto the world . . . fools for Christ's sake.” They were reviled, persecuted, and defamed. Men treated them as the “filth of the world” (I Corinthians 4:9-13). Christ anticipated that very peril when he said, “Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake” (Luke 6:22).

VI. Because of the gospel preacher's success in the Lord's work, some will be envious and jealous of him. Paul was confronted with brethren who preached “Christ even of envy and strife . . . (Philippians 1:17-18). They thought to raise up affliction for Paul, even when he was in prison.” It was envy that prompted the Jews to crucify our Lord (Matthew 27:18). When a brother is envious of a preacher, he may become critical of his life and work, scrutinizing every word and deed in search of a flaw. The good the brother does is

discounted, and any shortcoming or failure is magnified.

VII. Folks may revile and persecute their minister because he has challenged their sinfulness or interfered with their ambitions for power. Thus Diotrophes, who loved to have the preeminence, prated against John with wicked words (III John 9-10).

VIII. Some would seek to have a preacher fired or driven out by questioning his honesty, integrity, or his work. Paul faced that in Corinth. We can determine the nature of the attacks by his defense. “Did I take advantage of you . . .?” he asked (II Corinthians 12:17). Again he said, “But I hope that ye shall know that we are not reprobate . . .” (II Corinthians 12:6). A preacher is vulnerable to the vicious person who would attack his character or integrity. False accusers do not always have to prove their charges; they need only to convince enough of the congregation that there is some question involved. Even if they only win one or two powerful, influential people to their side, they may demand and force his removal. Such are the perils we face.

IX. I would be remiss if I closed this article without stating that the rewards of preaching are greater than any hardships. Remember, Jesus said, “Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute 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: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you” (Matthew 5:11-12). To faithfully do God's work while evil men seek to hinder you assures a Christian a heavenly reward. What more could be asked? Paul expressed his attitude thusly, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed” (Romans 8:18).

Judas allowed Satan to enter his heart and prompt him to betray God's son (John 1:32). May we never allow the evil one to use us to betray a faithful servant of the Lord who preaches the gospel.

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Why Preach The First Principles?

Waldeon Langfield

In a recent conversation this writer was told by another Christian, "The first principles should never be taught from the pulpit." He cited Hebrews 6:1-2, "Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

Is the writer of Hebrews instructing all churches to abandon all preaching on the foundational truths? Certainly not. Rather he is commanding Christians who have refused to go beyond a mastery of the first principles to move on to maturity. The first principles are to the whole truth like a "foundation" to a building (v. 1). While a well-laid foundation is absolutely essential to any building, a frame, walls, roof, etc., are necessary for its completion. Likewise, this passage is teaching that to be a complete "building" in Christ, a congregation must have more than a knowledge of rudimentary truths. The first principles, then, are not the only truths to be preached. There are reasons, however, why they need to be preached in every congregation regularly.

First, they need to be preached because they are in the Bible. All of the word of God is inspired, or "God-breathed," and the entire body of inspired writing is necessary to make

us "complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17). Timothy was instructed to proclaim all of inspiration's message -- to "preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2). His instructor, Paul, had set the example, presenting "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Therefore all of the Bible -- the Old and New Testaments, the accounts of the lives of the patriarchs, Israelites, and Christians, as well as the subjects of baptism, the one church, and the instrumental music question, must be presented.

Secondly, they need to be preached to teach new members in our congregations. To assume Hebrews 6:1-2 forbids the preaching of first principles is to assume congregations are full of people already well-grounded in these fundamental truths. Such is rarely the case. Visitors who are not Christians and new converts, need to be thoroughly taught the basics. Members from other congregations where first principles might not have been presented need to be grounded in the truth. Recently-restored brethren, likewise, need to again hear these foundational truths.

Among the new members should certainly be included our young people, many of whom may have been recently baptized. If Christian youth cannot learn the basics in the church of Christ, just where are they going to learn these things? The failure of many congregations to proclaim the truth about baptism, the church, the Holy Spirit, etc., has already given rise to a generation in many places, like that spoken of in Judges 2:10, "that knew not Jehovah."

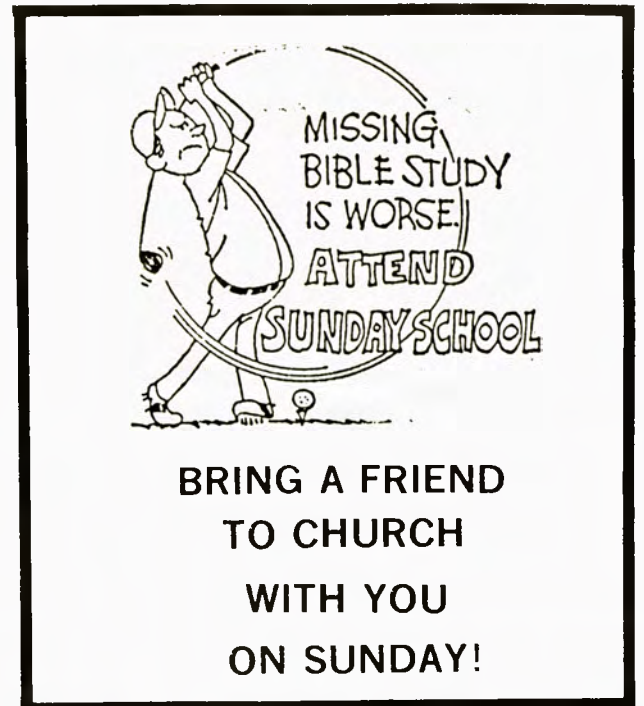
Thirdly, first principles need to be preached as a reminder to mature Christians. Faith comes from hearing God's word (Romans 10:17). When there is little hearing, belief grows dim. Several years ago this writer preached a fairly basic sermon dealing with the operation of the Holy Spirit. An otherwise well-grounded deacon's wife complimented the sermon, commenting afterward: "I hadn't heard anything about the Holy Spirit in so long, I had begun to wonder how he does operate."

We tend to forget spiritual truths that are

not constantly before us. Peter wrote his second epistle in order to put the brethren "in remembrance" (II Peter 1:12). He reiterated shortly thereafter: "I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance" (II Peter 3:1). As God looks down upon congregations where the basics are almost never preached, and therefore not strongly believed by their memberships, perhaps the lament of Jeremiah 2:32 is on his mind: "My people have forgotten me days without number."

God intends for his entire word to be boldly proclaimed. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Let us as preachers keep the congregations where we labor well-instructed in the first principles. Teachers, present lessons on the basics to your classes. Elders, demand that these truths be vigorously taught to the congregations under your charge. Preachers, present these basic, yet critical, truths boldly and frequently.

—2913 Brock Way, Bakersfield CA 93306.



"Doubting" Thomas And His Faith

Continued from page 3

which Paul expressed in Colossians 3:17), "Whatsoever you do in word or deed do all in the name" (or, "by the authority") "of the Lord Jesus" without actually trusting the Lord enough to do that!

So the following things should be realized: 1. Belief in the being of a person or a proposition about a person, and faith in the person himself are two different things. You may believe that God IS, or that a doctor has a degree without being willing to let either of them operate on you! 2. Faith in a person may come in two ways: (a). By hearing (Romans 10:17; John 20:31), or (b). By seeing (John 20:29). 3. Faith in a particular statement of a person, or about a person comes by hearing. For example, you might say, "I have great faith in you, so I believe you will take me to Nashville tomorrow." You have no right to do that, for faith in a proposition, "I will take you to Nashville tomorrow" comes by hearing. If you have faith in me either because of what you have seen or heard, and you heard me say, "I will take you to Nashville tomorrow," you would have a right to believe that proposition. Otherwise, it is merely an opinion.

The religious world in general continually makes the kind of mistake suggested above. Because they have a general kind of belief in the person of Jesus, they assume this gives them the right to believe almost any kind of specific proposition they can imagine as if he had said it. That is not "faith," but opinion, and some of our brethren seem to be as guilty of such as any member of a denomination.

—Box 144X, Rt. 2, Wartrace, TN 37183.

"Only A Vegetable"

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used of a person.

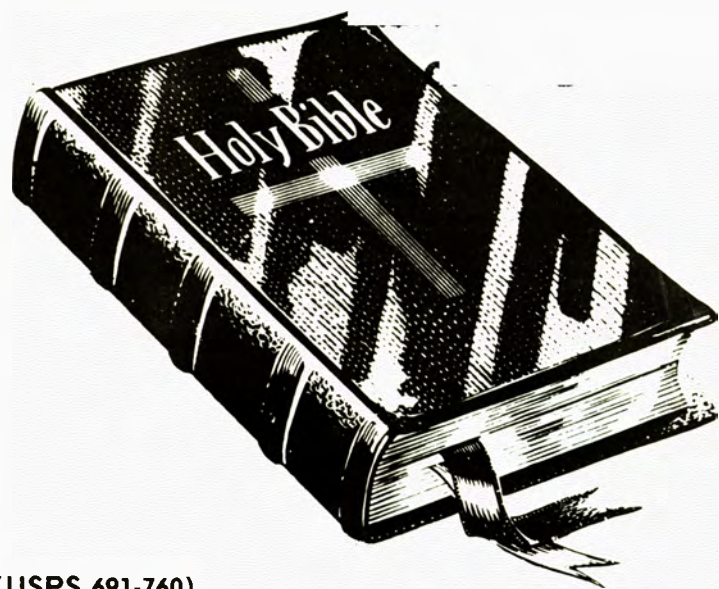
Our elders try to provide many opportunities for us to serve others as did our Lord so that we may have the proper spiritual nutrition and exercise that we may grow properly. But perhaps there is one avenue that is sometimes overlooked. It is not easy to be a "vegetable" and let others express their love through their service. We want to feel "independent." But John Milton, the English poet, wrote, "They also serve who only stand and wait." Milton was blind.

We have been begotten from above (John 3:3-6), which was culminated in baptism for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38). We grow through proper nutrition and exercise. When I see the glow on the face of a small child as he eagerly runs to open a door for me, I realize he is partaking of our Lord's nature. He is getting needed nutrition. When members of the congregation perform needed tasks for me, I realize that they are getting needed

nutrition -- they are partaking of that which will make them "lively."

And if it be our Lord's will for me to remain and to serve through being a "vegetable," then I willingly and faithfully do so. For in that way I, also, will get MY proper nutrition. And perhaps one day I will reach the level of maturity of one of our elders. As he toiled in the hot sun to make a bridge safe for my wheelchair, there was a song on his lips. When I asked him why he was singing when many would have been cursing. He replied, "I get joy out of helping those who are not able to repay me." There are many ways to bring joy into the lives of others. Being a vegetable may be one of those ways. And as I mature, I, too, will find joy in serving others. Yes, even helplessness may be used to glorify God!

—Cedar Lane Village, Apt. 1601 Tullahoma, TN 37388.



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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VOLUME 24

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1987

NUMBER 47

The Final Judgment

(NO. VII)

Wheeler Pounds

"SICK"

Please read Matthew 25:36-43. "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil," God asked Satan (Job 1:8; 2:3). Job was a benevolent and compassionate man. He fed the hungry and helped the poor (Job 31:16-18). He entertained strangers (Job 31:32). From his own flock of sheep he made woolen clothes and clothed the naked (Job 31:19-20). He did those things which our text instructs us to do.

God, however, allowed Satan to test Job by destroying his family and property and by placing a painful disease on him. Sores covered his entire body. Hearing of his sickness, three of Job's friends came to visit him. While still a long way off they saw Job and failed to recognize him because of his condition. When they realized that their friend Job was in such distress, in grief they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights without saying a word. Job broke the silence after that time; and a discussion ensued regarding the cause of his suffering.

Job had true friends who displayed love and concern. How many would sit with a sick friend, day and night, for seven days -- without speaking? Today might we come, observe, express sympathy -- and leave!

The fact that we are frail mortals means that we will have sicknesses. During times of sickness we like to know that there is someone who cares. We appreciate assurances from our relatives and friends regarding their concern for our suffering. It also pleases us when acquaintances visit or send cards to express get-well-wishes. We even appreciate an expression of concern from friendly strangers who might take time to listen to us complain about our health problems.

At times, because of extreme illness, we may

not want or need visitors. In such cases as this, isolation should be respected. Remember Job's friends sat for seven days and seven nights without speaking. They waited until he was ready to talk with them and they were there to comfort and reason with him. A fourth friend (who had listened) spoke after all three had finished: afterward God joined the conversation, and Job was assured the return of his health and riches.

Job "prayed" for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. "Then came unto Him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been his acquaintance before . . . And they comforted him and gave him food, money and gold" (Job 42:10-11). "After this lived Job a hundred and forty years, and saw . . . even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days" (Job 42:16-17).

When Lazarus, brother of Martha and Mary, and a friend of Christ's, became ill, the initial result was somewhat different from that of Job (John 11:1-44): Lazarus died. Many of the Jews came to comfort Martha and Mary concerning their brother (verse 19). Lazarus had been in the grave four days when Jesus arrived. After his arrival Christ raised Lazarus from the dead. He said to Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die . . ." (verses 25-26).

On earth Christ had the power to heal the sick and raise the dead. During his personal ministry the New Testament gives many accounts of his concern for the sick, the blind, the lame, and those who were infirm (Matthew 14:35; 8:16; Mark 1:32; etc.).

In heaven "God shall wipe all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain . . ." (Revelation 21:4).

The days of sickness will be past, and there shall be an eternity of happiness.

Lazarus, the beggar, "which was laid at (the rich man's) gate, full of sores," which the dogs came and licked, died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. His days of pain and suffering had ended. The rich man who died and was buried, lifted up his eyes in hell and his suffering was just beginning. He, however, did not want his brothers to come to him there (Luke 16:19-31)!

In order to prevent this damnation of an eternal torment, we must make sure that our soul is not sick. Paul talks about this spiritual sickness in I Corinthians 11:30 when he says that there were many "weak and sickly" among them. This lesson is taught by Christ in Matthew 9:9-13 when, referring to publicans and sinners, he said to the Pharisees: "They that be whole need not a physician but they that are sick." He said, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," James said (James 5:16). In this same context, he said (verses 14-15): "Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him . . . and the prayer of faith shall save the sick . . ." We can be assured that prayer for the sick is heard by God. He knows what is best and, therefore, we must understand that his will be done.

The power of prayer cannot be over-emphasized. Recently the editor of this journal shared with me one of the most touching stories I have ever heard. It involved his father, Gus Nichols, and my father, J. G. Pounds, both ministers of the gospel long-time and Christian friends. A series of "mini-

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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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The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Congratulations

To Brother Rex Turner!

On November 1, 1987, brother Rex Turner retired as President of Alabama Christian School of Religion in Montgomery. My family and his have been closely allied in the Lord's work for more than half a century. Therefore I wish to reminisce a little.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Brother Rex Turner has often told that, soon after he began preaching, he rode the bus about thirty miles to Jasper, where (with suitcase in hand) he walked to Gus Nichols' house. Introducing himself, he explained that some brother who had heard him preach thought it would do him good to go study a week or two with Gus Nichols. The young preacher announced that he was there for that purpose!

I was about a high school freshman that year, but well remember that my father and mother "took in" the stranger as if he were a relative. From that day to this the Nicholoses have felt as if Rex Turner our kin to. Since then on numerous occasions he has been a frequent visitor in our home.

That week he stayed with us day and night,

studying with Dad all day long --and into the night! If Dad had to preach a funeral, brother Turner accompanied him, utilizing the travel time to learn more about the work of a preacher. They probably discussed how to study the Bible, how to make sermon outlines, how to baptize, and how to perform a marriage ceremony. Dad probably gave him several sermon outlines he previously had made and mimeographed for other young preachers.

Dad was preaching in a meeting every night, and brother Turner accompanied him to the services. Some of the time he was called on to read the scriptures, or lead in prayer. The sermons he heard helped him to grow in knowledge, as is required of all Christians (II Peter 3:18). He also was introduced to many brethren of the area.

Before supper each night I would take my shoe-shine box into Dad's room and shine his shoes. Since brother Turner would also be out among the brethren, I was permitted that week to shine HIS shoes, too. I count it an honor to have been so privileged!

Brother Turner knows that I love him like a brother. With other Christians across the nation I admire him as a preacher, an educator, an editor, author, and publisher -- and as an encourager of every good work. The world is a better place because he has lived in it!

We salute him upon his retirement!

The Final Judgment

Continued From Page 1

strokes" had disabled brother Nichols and he had been unable to respond to conversation for some time. His family constantly talked to him, expressing their love and concern for him; but they did not know if their words were heard and understood by brother Nichols.

Although the doctor had posted a "No Visitors" sign, brother Pounds requested permission to visit him briefly. Permission was granted; and he was told that should brother Nichols be able to speak, he would probably want to hear a few scriptures, and have brother Pounds lead a prayer. He began quoting what he felt to be appropriate scriptures. Brother Nichols' hearing aid was not in his ear, so my father was speaking loud, as requested. Even if brother Nichols were not aware of things around him, still there was the love being expressed by one Christian brother to another. After quoting several scriptures, brother Pounds, in his booming voice, began a prayer: "Our Father in Heaven" -- and there was a rustling of the sheets! Flavil opened his eyes to see what had made the rustling noise: his father's hands, which had not moved in weeks, moved! Muscles that strokes had stilled, reacted to the prayer! His hands came together as they had done so many times as he prayed! He held them together for only a moment and then they slid apart. But that moment was a mighty testimony of Christian love and the power of prayer. Brother Gus Nichols who lived his life in the service of God, Christ, his Church, and for the good he could do for others, had reacted one last time to God's word and to prayer. Shortly thereafter he went to his reward.

Could we want a more powerful testimony than this? "I was sick, and you visited me."

—Rt. 1, Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.

BRING A FRIEND TO
CHURCH WITH YOU ON
SUNDAY!

Preachers: Then And Now

Solomon observed that "there is no new thing under the sun." He asked, "Is there a thing whereof it may be said, See this is new? It hath been long ago, in the ages which were before us" (Ecclesiastes 1:9-10). A modern wise man notes that he who does not learn the lessons of history is doomed to repeat the mistakes of history.



John Waddey

Many among us are concerned about the quality of preaching in our congregational pulpits. While brethren sense that something is lacking, many of them are baffled at the causes, and do not know the solution to the problem.

While studying some of the historic literature of our brotherhood I came across a remarkable article by Moses E. Lard, distinguished writer and editor of the nineteenth cen-

ture. As you read his pungent lines, reflect on the general fare of preaching you are familiar with and see if you recognize an analogy. I do not say that all preachers fall into this category, but the number who do is sufficient to be alarming.

"... A falling away will occur, and the iniquity which will induce it is at this moment at work. The sturdy love for the primitive faith which characterized the early preachers in the reformation is cooling in men who still linger in our ranks and call us brethren..."

"In the first place, they are intensely sentimental; rather, they are intensely transcendental. They are very clerical in bearing, soft in speech, and languid and effeminate in spirit. They . . . never condemn anything except their brethren . . . They are "beautiful" men, and preach "beautiful" sermons. Their prayers are "beautiful" things, their songs "beautiful" songs. Moreover, they are very abstract men, and the aesthetic, the moral, the true, the beautiful, and the good are very fond phrases in their bloodless and

Continued on page 4

They Turned Their World Upside Down!

It was said of the apostle Paul and company, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6). This little band of disciples had not been in Thessalonica many days before the citizens began talking about them. In fact, their reputation preceded them. Their's was not a reputation based on profession, or the work of an advanced



Charles Cook

public relations team, but rather one earned by action and holy living in the power of the Holy Spirit. And what they proved was simple: Christians can turn the world "upside down." Believers in any century since then can accomplish the same! By the power of God even 20th Century Christians could turn their world upside down if we had the desire!

In Jerusalem the Holy Spirit caused the twelve to proclaim the resurrected Christ and open up the kingdom of God (the church) on earth. Christ has caused a tremendous jolting of religious thinking which culminated in his death and resurrection. Then on Pentecost the full gospel, including his resurrection, was preached. There was a revolution in Jerusalem which permeated into the whole world. That early church, without the aid of radio, television, newspapers and advertising agencies, literally turned their world upside down. Within thirty years the gospel of the kingdom was broadcast to every creature of the civilized world (Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:23).

Luke records how the pagan worshippers of Asia Minor felt the impact of Paul and others as they proclaimed the Christ. People were persuaded to turn from idols and ungodliness to serve the living God. In cities like Ephesus idolatry crumbled when matched against the force of God's word (Acts 19:26-27). So effective was their work that Paul could say there were converts "of Caesar's household" (Philippians 4:22). Some historians believe that by 100 A.D. approximately 10 percent of the Roman Empire claimed to be "Christian." One wrote: "Had the latter generation of the church followed the example of the first, the world would have been evangelized fifty times by now."

It would behoove us today to thoroughly investigate what those early Christians had and how they accomplished such a tremendous task. That is, if we too want to be world turners, and change the direction of our world as they did. Let us note some of their actions and attitudes:

1) The early church followed the teaching of the inspired apostles and prophets, and thus were led by the power of the Holy Spirit. There was a continuance in the "apostles' teaching" and an understanding that all believers were united because of that revealed by the Spirit of God's "holy apostles and prophets" (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 3:5). They preached and believed the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible!

2) In the early church every member was a worker. Real Christianity was never the "spectator religion" which prevails today.

Every believer proclaimed the gospel of Christ wherever he went. When they were persecuted, they didn't give up: they went out sharing the good news of the kingdom (Acts 2:46-47; 8:4).

3) That early church was constantly praising God and exalting Christ as the resurrected Saviour of the world. When they were ostracized or persecuted for their belief, they cared not. They just kept on serving Jesus as their only Master (Acts 2:47; 4:12, 29-33).

4) They had a mission, a purpose for existence. Jesus had commissioned them to take his cause to the whole earth. Some went south to Egypt and others finally took Christ's message as far west as Britain and Spain. There is historical reference to Thomas' taking Christ east to India and dying at the hands of angry Hindu priests. Indeed, they turned their "world" upside down (Acts 17:6)!

5) They were a praying church. They did not rely on their own strength. They went to God

for help, wisdom and guidance. They met life's problems because they walked with God daily (Acts 2:42).

6) They were not plagued by preachers who preached for money, fame, or glory. Contrast this with the fund-raising televangelists of our day. There was an increase sense of responsibility for one another; consequently early believers were respected, even by their enemies (Acts 2:44-47).

7) And finally, they were a loving people. One historian wrote: "O how they love one another." Jesus said that the world would know his followers by the way they love each other (John 13:34-35).

The effectiveness of our work today in trying to turn our world upside down for Christ will be in direct proportion to how well we apply ourselves to behaving like that early Church. Let us each commit to doing our part.

—P.O. Box 803, Kailua-Kona, HI 86745.

In Consideration Of "If"

John L. Wheeler

Paul said, "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Romans 11:17-24).

Much could be said about the rejection of the Jews by God because of their unbelief. The acceptance of the Gentiles was because

of their belief. The very thought of Israel's being grafted in again is an intoxicating thought. It has challenged the thinking of this generation as probably no other thought has. The official position of the government of the United States in Mid-East diplomacy is based upon the assumption that "Israel" will be grafted in again. They are regarded as God's people, and that one day soon, they will be grafted in.

But how many of these people have stopped to consider the word "if" in this connection? "And they also, IF they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again." We do not question the ability of God. But God no where promised to overpower the Jews and force them to accept Jesus. It is a matter of their own choice. They chose to reject him. They still have the power of choice to continue that rejection, or to change to belief. It has been almost two thousand years since Jesus was upon this earth. No sizeable number of Jews

have ever believed on Jesus. Nothing short of a miracle upon the minds of the Jews, which would take away their will, would make a large number of Jews accept Jesus today. That miracle would take away their ability to disbelieve. However, God has always allowed man to make his own decisions (Joshua 24:15).

If Israel is ever to be saved, it will be on the basis of their own choice to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. It is not a question of the power of God. It is not a question of the power of the gospel of Christ. It is a question of the free will, and choice, of a people who have a long history of unbelief.

If God did work a miracle on the hearts of the Jews and make them believe against their will, and thus save them, would that not make him a respecter of persons? To be fair, he would have to work a miracle on the hearts of all the Gentiles and make believers out of them also. If he did not do so, he would be unfair in taking away the will of one people

so they could not be lost, and to take away the will of others to keep from being lost. The consequence of that argument would mean that no one, either Jew or Gentile would be lost. Then the "rapture" and "the tribulation"

would be just figments of the imagination -- which is exactly what they are! God never taught that there would be any such thing.

For man to get so wrapped up in his own theory contrary to the word of God, so as to make God forget the "IF" and save Israel anyway, is to play loose and fast with the word of God and the destiny of men. Such falsehoods will result in many being lost who might otherwise have been saved. The "IF" is very much present regarding the salvation of the Jew. There is no miraculous intervention from God to bring about any one's salvation against his will. Neither are those believers among the Gentiles guaranteed eternal life without an "IF." IF the believer does not continue in his belief, he will be cut off. He will be lost. On the other hand, IF the unbeliever turns, and believes, he will be saved. It is just

Continued on page 4

Covetousness Puts One In Forbidden Company

Ours is such a selfish and greedy age! 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 the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). Paul warned faithful Christians not to associate 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 that Mrs. Emma Buhl DeHart 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, she had 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 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 therewith solve the problem 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, 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.

In Consideration Of "If"

Continued from page 3

as simple as that.

God has based the salvation of both Jew and Gentile upon an IF. There are certain conditions that either must meet in order to be saved. If any one fails to meet God's conditions of salvation, that person has no promise of salvation.

—706 W. Georgia, Vivian, LA 71082.

Finding its source, he 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. But he has not sense enough to let go of his bounty so that he may escape. He pulls and pulls without success; and in the morning he is quickly and easily taken.

The Virgin Birth's Importance

(No. 1)

VICTOR M. ESKEW

Matthew and Luke, two writers of the gospel narratives, record the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Many today who are considered scholars of the religious world reject the truthfulness of these accounts. Others, if they do not reject the event altogether, do not believe that it really makes any difference whether it is true or not. These individuals fill their sermons, lectures, and articles with their misgivings about the Lord's miraculous birth. Thus, many people have come to believe the virgin birth to be of little or no significance.

This, however, could not be further from the truth. If one rejects the virgin birth, he calls into question the truthfulness of the inspired writers. Matthew writes: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. . . . And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:18, 21-23). Likewise, Luke writes of this event: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And,

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.

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 shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:30-31, 34-35).

Did Matthew and Luke record the above events accurately? OR, did they lie?

Did the virgin birth take place as these two penmen recorded? Or, was it a mere fabrication similar to pagan myths and legends? To answer by saying that the writers were not entirely truthful and that these portions of their gospel are fictitious, calls each of these men into question on every jot and tittle of their writings. If we cannot believe THESE portions of their writings, how them? How do we know that they are telling the truth elsewhere, if they had the audacity to lie about these happenings?

From this one point alone one should be able to see the serious implications of rejecting the Lord's virgin birth. In our next article we will continue to show why it is dangerous when one doubts or denies this fundamental doctrine of Holy Writ.

— P. O. Box 126, Belmont, MS 38827.

Preachers: Then And Now

Continued from page 2

virtuous lips . . .

"In the second place, they have an enormous fondness for sects and sectarians; and scowl on no one so indignantly as on the brother who dares to speak against them. With them sectarians are all Christians; and it is a favorite saying among them that "we are as sectarian as any other people." They seldom speak of their brethren except to disparage them; and never of "the other" parties of the day except to laud them. In plain English, these men see nothing good in the great brotherhood to whom they are an offense, nor anything bad in the sects with whom their affinities really are . . .

"To the brethren everywhere I say, See to it that your preachers are kept to the Book. Allow no departure from it; and all will be well." (Lard's Quarterly, Vol. 4, pp. 347-348).

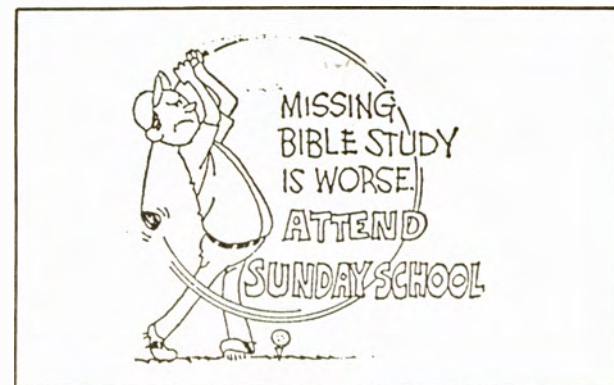
Does this not sound vaguely familiar? Those men described by brother Lard were the ones who gradually drifted into the apostasy of the Disciples of Christ/Christian Church. They made shipwreck concerning the faith (I Timothy 2:19). Their direction was set; it was just a matter of time.

No congregation can long be stronger than its pulpit. As the old proverb has it, it is, Like preacher, like people Somehow, somewhere

there has been a serious failure in the indoctrinating and training of a generation of ministers. They make speeches but do not preach the soul-saving, church-building gospel (Mark 16:15). They stay busy, but not in doing "the work of an evangelist" (II Timothy 2:5). If we do not come to grips with this problem, dark and difficult days lie ahead for the kingdom of God.

May God raise up a band of faithful men to stand in the gap while we rebuild the crumbling walls of Zion (Ezekiel 22:30). May we learn the lessons of our history so we will not repeat those awful mistakes.

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





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W

Of

Truth

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

—Acts 26:25

VOLUME 23

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1987

NUMBER 48

Mailing List Being Purged

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS, EDITOR

Our mailing list is being revised, and several hundred who have received this religious journal each week — 52 weeks a year! — will not receive another issue! It has been a pleasure to study Bible truths with you each week through these columns.

Your receiving this paper does not have to end this week. We urge you to take advantage of one of the ways cited later in this article to continue receiving your paper weekly. First, however, please understand the publisher's problem.

This journal carries no paid display advertising, but contains only what we believe are true-to-the Bible **WORDS OF TRUTH!** Our readers benefit from the combined knowledge of the Bible possessed by our writers. Each of them has helped guide you as you sought to "grow in . . . the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18). To read W.O.T. is like attending Bible classes taught by these writers week after week.

Since the first issue appeared (December 6, 1963), in addition to private or individual subscriptions, churches have submitted names of those to whom they want **WORDS OF TRUTH** sent. After receiving the paper for a month, the bill is sent to, and paid by the subscribing church. Month after month additional names are submitted by the churches. Very seldom has any congregation notified the publisher to **CEASE** sending W.O.T. to members who died, or who moved. — And in our mobile society, **MOVE THEY DO**—by the dozens, week after week. The postal department notifies the publisher of the new address, to which the paper is subsequently sent, with the bill still being paid by the subscribing congregation—regardless of where reader moved. So, some churches sent **NEW** Lists of those for whom they "currently"—at that later date— wanted to pay.

However, it did not help reduce the actual publishing costs for a church to submit a **REVISED** list of those for whom it **NOW** wants to pay, unless that church also identified which of its subscriptions to **CANCEL**. The publisher had to keep on sending the paper to

all, unless notified which one(s) to stop. He simply had no authority to discontinue sending the paper, dropping readers merely because their addresses changed. (—Sometimes the local **POST OFFICES** changed the numbers of routes, or of boxes on a route). But somebody must "foot the bill" for each copy, every week. Hence, over two decades the cost of sending out this journal has become a financial burden to the publisher.

Furthermore, the problem is compounded week after week by another fact: nearly 50 'Change of Address' notices are received each week—at a cost of 30¢ (actual cash outlay) for each, **PLUS** the office expense of deleting the old address, recording the new one, and substituting it.

This week the computerization of the mailing list is almost completed. Each address is coded to reveal who pays for that particular subscription. It will be easy to identify the private individual subscriptions, and also to identify which congregation is responsible for any one of the thousands of names to whom the paper is sent by the churches—to aid in subsequent billing, regardless of address changes. Under the former system, this was impossible.

We are grateful for the cooperation of all the

churches in updating their lists of readers whom they want to receive **WORDS OF TRUTH**. Additional names may be sent in at any time. And each congregation will be asked annually to revise its own list.

Here are the two ways to **YOU**—the reader—to continue receiving **WORDS OF TRUTH** each week. (1) Ask your congregation to subscribe **AT ONCE** for each member. Of course, you may include also non-member friends whom you think will read it. Or, (2) Use the form below to send in your individual subscription (or, send the same information in a letter). Why not also subscribe for each member of your family who does not live at your address? For the price of only one first-class postage stamp per week (22¢) you can receive this paper by direct mail. The price is the same (22¢ per copy each week) for bundles sent to one address to be distributed in the assembly — so why not let the postal service distribute them for you?

To those who choose **NOT** to subscribe, we bid you a reluctant farewell, and "commend you to God and to the word of his grace which is able to build up" (Acts 20:32).

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Continued on page 3

Repentance Again

Michael D. Greene

When one ponders the meaning of repentance, a question comes to mind: "Does repentance involve restitution?" A diligent search of the scriptures will show that when God commands a man to repent, that does not -- in fact, cannot -- demand restitution for his sins.


The closest thing to such is found in two places. First, John commanded the self-righteous Pharisees and Saducees to "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:8). Was he telling them to make restitution for all their sins? Or, was he in fact saying "bring forth proof of your

repentance?" The latter certainly seems more reasonable. How is this done? By a change of life.

Second, Paul tells Agrippa that, in obedience to the heavenly vision on the Damascus Road, he told the Gentiles "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:10). That is, they were to perform works appropriate to the act of repentance, not make restitution for their sins!

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that repentance does demand restitution. If a man steals and spends a million dollars, or any

Continued on page 4



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—Acts 26:35

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The Virgin Birth's Importance

(NO. II)

As stated in our first article, many in the religious realm are either doubting or denying the teaching that Jesus was born of a virgin named Mary. Because such belief is widespread, we felt the need to show the implications of this denial. We began by noting that if the virgin birth is not true, then we must call into account the integrity of the writings of Matthew and Luke. Both of these men wrote about the virgin birth in no uncertain terms. Did they lie? If so, can we trust the rest of their writings?

As we continue in this article on the importance of the virgin birth, we call to the reader's attention that to deny the miraculous birth of Jesus to a virgin is to throw suspicion upon the prophets of old. In Genesis 3:15 we read the first prophecy of the coming Christ. God in speaking to the serpent 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." Notice that God spoke of the "seed of woman." Why did he not refer to the seed of the man? Unmistakably, we have a clear reference to the virgin birth. To deny the virgin birth would make suspect God who stated the words of this verse, Moses who penned them, and the Holy Spirit who inspired Moses to write them. It would also cause one to doubt all of Moses' writings, as well as all of the prophetic writings in general.

Isaiah was another who wrote of the virgin birth. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). Many have attempted to do away with the word "virgin" in this verse. The Revised Standard Version translates the word as "young woman." All attempts, however, fail; for the Lord himself rendered a commentary on the word in Matthew 1:22-23. There he says the term should be translated "virgin." If the virgin

Continued on page 4



The Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Sanctification

(No. IV)

[Without SANCTIFICATION "no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14, A.S.V.). One who is "sanctified" is "dedicated to a holy or a religious use." We are sanctified by the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and by the TRUTH divinely revealed and confirmed. Our holiness is also conditional on our faith in that truth, and on our repentance, and baptism. Sanctification is located "in Christ;" hence only those who have been "baptized into Christ" (Romans 6:3) are "sanctified" (I Corinthians 1:1-2).]



Flavil Nichols

SANCTIFICATION IS NOT THE REMOVAL OF 'INBORN SIN'

From the creed of a popular denomination, read this:

One is born totally depraved; and, some time after justification, he receives a second blessing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is for sanctification; then, his inbred and depraved nature, and all fleshly propensities and desires, are destroyed, thereafter leaving him sinlessly perfect.

Few paragraphs ever contained more false doctrine than that one does! Man is NOT "born totally depraved." Adam was created and described by God as "very good" (Genesis 1:31). He was not created a sinner; yet he became guilty and lost -- a sinner -- by yielding to temptation. Similarly, all little babies are born innocent and holy, but become sinners when they reach accountability, because they yield to temptation, and sin. Since "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34), what he said of one man is doubtless true of all others: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezekiel 28:15). He also declared: "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father" (Ezekiel 18:20). This passage alone should be sufficient to refute the doctrine of 'inherited sin.'

Jesus said men must become like little children in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:1-2). Does this sound like little babies are born "totally depraved?" Nay, verily!

If "man is born totally depraved," just what part of man is it that is depraved: his flesh? or, his spirit? If you say it is his flesh, why was Jesus not born depraved? Through his mother, Mary, he inherited a body of FLESH! He was flesh, just as we are! In an effort to dodge the unavoidable conclusion that Jesus inherited a 'sinful fleshly nature,' our Roman Catholic friends invented the doctrine of the 'Immaculate Conception' of Mary.

--It IS true that Mary was born without such 'hereditary total depravity' -- but so are all other little babies!!!

Of Jesus, inspiration says he "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). Again we read of him: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same . . ." This was true to such an extent that the Holy Spirit affirmed of Jesus: "in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren" (Hebrews 2:14, 17). If the FLESH is born totally depraved, why was Jesus not thus born???

On the other hand, if it is the spirit of man that is (?) hereditarily depraved, from whom does this depravity come? The spirit comes from God! Can one inherit depravity from the sinless God???

That the spirit comes from God is abundantly clear. "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the FATHER OF SPIRITS, and live?" (Hebrews 12:9). Repeatedly we read of "the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zechariah 12:1). The inspired Preacher wrote that at the death of the body, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God, who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

The doctrine of 'inherited sin' cannot be true, because sin is of such a nature that it simply cannot be inherited: "Sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). But even if that doctrine were true --which it is not! -- of children born to unregenerated (sinful) parents, what about the baby born to 'sanctified' parents? If 'sanctification' makes one sinlessly perfect, does it not seem that one born to 'sanctified' parents should be SINLESS??? Can a child inherit traits which his parents do NOT possess??? Absolutely not!!

Inasmuch as the doctrine of 'Hereditary Total Depravity' is false, it must also be false that SANCTIFICATION is for the removal of that (imagined!) 'inborn sin'!!!



Signs Of Spiritual Decline

(NO. V)

It is scriptural to examine one's self. "Try your own selves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate" (II Corinthians 13:5, A.S.V.). The King James Version, says, "Examine your own selves . . ."



W. A. Holley

Admonition of the first order is found in I Timothy 4:12, 16.

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity . . . Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee" (A.S.V.). How powerful a good example is!!

SOME SIGNS OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE

(1) When one dislikes Bible conversations and the company of Christians. (Read I John

1:6-7).

(2) When one reads pornographic books and magazines rather than the Holy Bible (I Timothy 4:13; Isaiah 34:16-17).

(3) When one can stay away from the Lord's day assembly by one's own choice, yet feel no twinge of conscience (I Timothy 4:1-5).

(4) When one's spiritual temperature is lukewarm, having no real enthusiasm or inspiring zeal or fervor for the Lord's will and way (Revelation 3:14ff).

(5) When one is more concerned about a clean environment than one is about a clean and pure heart (Matthew 5:8; Hebrews 12:14; II Peter 2:20-22).

(6) When one can trifle with temptation and play with sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man: but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15, A.S.V.).

(7) When one condemns in others what one tolerates in himself (Matthew 7:1-5). The sin of fault-finding is one of man's greatest faults. The "judgments" that Jesus condemns are rash, censorious and uncharitable judgments in which church members often engage. A fault-finding spirit or disposition, in the light of the fact that the judgment of

God awaits us all, must be overcome.

(8) When one is "too ill" to attend the Lord's day assembly, but well enough to attend all sports events. (Read Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25).

(9) When one indulges in a life of lawlessness and dissipation is a sure sign of spiritual decline. One who becomes a slave to alcohol, drugs, or sex, is going down hill. "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience: wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things . . ." (Colossians 3:5-7, A.S.V.). Is it possible for one to "live" in such sins? Yes, indeed. This passage so says.

(10) When one offers excuses for not doing the will of God. No Christian can afford to be hindered by the love of material possessions, the affairs of business, or various social relationships, however important they may seem to be. Just here read Luke 14:15-24. The kingdom of God, the Lord's church, must be first in one's heart if that person is ever to reach heaven.

"But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33, A.S.V.).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Advice For Christian Writers

Those who take up the pen to express their views regarding God's word should feel a heavy responsibility to be good workmen who "handle aright the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15, A.S.V.). The pen being mightier than the sword, means that we have at our disposal great power — both constructive and destructive.



John Waddey

Our brotherhood has been powerfully influenced by its journals over the years. Alexander Campbell popularized his reformation by means of the *Christian Baptist*. Issac Errett and his progressive writers of the *Christian Standard* led the majority of the brethren into apostasy during the last half of the nineteenth century. Daniel Sommers and his co-writers sought to bind the fetters of legalism on the church — the baneful effects of which are yet with us. Through *The Gospel Advocate*, David Lipscomb and a host of faithful scribes fought manfully to save a remnant of the Lord's people from the corruptions of church government and worship. So today a score of gospel papers — some large and some small — make their impact on God's people.

When differences and controversies arise, there is always a temptation to lash out against the personalities involved. Such

personal attacks feed the fires of hostility, hatred, and partyism. While most will concede the truth of this, there is a recurring lapse into personal attack.

David Lipscomb, long-time editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, saw the destructiveness of such writing, and thus stated in his editorial policy:

"We shall always demand that all investigations be conducted in a kind, Christian spirit . . . and all personal strifes and contentions shall be rigidly kept out of the *Advocate*." (*Gospel Advocate*, Vol. IX, No. 43, 10/24/1867, p. 842).

He further wrote: "The *Advocate* was not established to attack, nor to defend, the characters of individuals, either it's editors or others. It hereafter shall be desecrated to no such ends. It matters but little to the great interest of the cause of God in the world, whether I or any other man be a hypocrite or not. Principles and institutions that effect the interest of humanity, not men, shall demand our attention. It is only as men become identified with such principles and institutions that we shall ever notice them" (*Ibid*, 12/5/1866, p. 717).

"Bitterness is not force, nor is personal denunciation argument. We hope our scribes will remember these things" (*Ibid*, 2/6/1866, pp. 83-84).

"The *Advocate* was never established to emblazon before the world the personal shortcomings of the brethren. The most precious earthly treasure the earth possesses is the character of her true and worthy children, and faults personal in their nature, of which we are all, to a

greater or lesser extent, guilty, will never be lightly paraded to the public, to the detriment of the cause or the annoyance of any brother" (*Ibid*, 1/24/1868, p. 85). All of these citations are found in Earl West's *The Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 2, pp. 17-18).

Brother Lipscomb was a wise and successful editor. His policy helps us to understand why the *Gospel Advocate* won so wide and loyal a following and wielded such salutary influence on the brotherhood. May all we who write appreciate and heed his wise advice. Then will our words be a blessing and not a curse to the cause we love.

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Continued from page 1

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Sanctification

T Pierce Brown

Since Jesus prayed in John 17 for God to "sanctify" his disciples, the subject and the act must be important. We need to know (1) what sanctification is, and (2) how it is to be achieved.

The word "sanctify" comes from the Greek "hagiazō," and means "set apart." It is translated "hallow" twice, and "sanctify" 26 times. The related word, "hagios," is translated "holy" 161 times and "saint" 62 times.

If we read carefully every reference of the word and its cognates, we discover that the basic meaning has to do with position or function rather than quality. But there is a definite and important connection between "positional," and "qualitative" and "functional" sanctification that we need to understand. If the King of Kings is coming to visit in your home and you have a special vessel that you set apart for his use, this is a "sanctified" vessel. This is "positional sanctification," for it is set apart for his use, this is a "sanctified" vessel. This is "positional

sanctification," for it is set apart -- put in a particular position for his use. But the fact that you set it apart from the King's use would properly involve your consideration of its quality. It would be the best you have. If you were feeding him soup, you would not feed him from the bowl from which you fed the dog. Nor would you just give him an ordinary plate from which to eat it, nor a fork with which to eat it. You would give him the best bowl you had. So this "sanctification" would have to do not only with position -- the fact that it was set apart only for his use. It would have to do with quality (the best you had) and function (that which would be most useful or appropriate for the task at hand).

So, although the word "sanctify" means "to set apart," it necessarily implies, when it is used with reference to our relationship to God and Christ, personal purity, reverence, respect, dedication, and functional usefulness.

Notice now, how it is to be accomplished: "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth"

(John 17:17). It would be sheer mockery to be set apart positionally (be saints -- I Corinthians 1:1) and not be set apart in terms of quality and function. Peter points this out in I Peter 1:15: "But as he who called you is holy, be ye holy in all manner of conversation." This means that your manner of life ("conversation") should conform, both qualitatively and functionally, to your position as a saint. So the second element involved in sanctification is purification. Paul stated, "If a man therefore purge himself from these" (things dishonorable), "he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use" (quality), "prepared unto every good work" (function) (II Timothy 2:21).

This sanctification, which ultimately involves freedom from sin, purity of life, transformation of life, and zeal for good works (Titus 2:14) is accomplished by God's truth. There must first be love of truth, else a person will suffer a strong delusion and be damned: "because people received not the love of the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). Then if you love truth, you will strive to learn what it is, as Jesus said in John 8:32: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But there must be also a strong faith in that truth, as Paul makes a connection between "sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thessalonians 1:13).

Too there must be obedience to the truth. Not only does Romans 6:17 show that one is made free from sin when he obeys from the heart the truth, but Peter specifically says: "Ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth. . . ." (I Peter 1:22).

There are at least four important reasons Jesus wants us sanctified. (1) For our own sakes, he wants us separated from the world of sin. (2) For the glory of God, for it is not a glory to God when the vessels for his use are impure. (3) That we may function properly in his service and do the tasks he ordained for us. (4) Then, ultimately, that we may dwell with him in the eternal glory of God (John 17:24).

Will you help answer the prayer of Jesus, not only for the unity of all believers, but also for their sanctification, positionally, qualitatively and functionally?

—Box 144X, Rt. 2, Wartrace, TN 37183.

Repentance Again

Continued from page 1

sum which he hasn't the capacity to repay in a lifetime (or more); can he make restitution? If he cannot, and if repentance includes or demands restitution in order to be complete, can he really repent of that sin of stealing? Suppose one spreads vicious lies about another throughout the city. If repentance demands restitution, how can he repent of his lies? Suppose a man stole an irreplaceable work of ancient art and destroyed it. If repentance demands restitution, could he repent and be forgiven for his theft? If a man murdered another, could he repent of his sin, if repentance demands restitution? Indeed, how can anyone even be aware of the cumulative damage his sins years in the past might have caused, and therefore be able to make restitution? Repentance is repentance, a turning away from sin; while restitution is a repayment of damages and is not a part of repentance! One can repent of any and every sin; but his forgiveness is not dependent upon his ability to make restitution.

Does that then relieve him of any responsibility to the victim of his sins? Certainly not. The Bible teaches how to deal with damaged relationships (Matthew 5:21-24; 18:15-17; Luke 17:1-5). Each of these texts demands that an effort be made to "make it right." I believe that the love and character that would be reflected by the penitent Christian life would move one to do what he could to make things right, but in some cases, such is beyond human capabilities. Here one can see the wisdom of God in not asking men to do what he knew could not be done.

It is my conviction that repentance is the most difficult of God's commands for the alien sinner, or the erring child of God, to obey. One can believe in Jesus and know he needs to make changes in his life as sincerely as a man could believe anything; but when it comes to repentance, that is where the "rubber meets the road."

Repentance requires action that reflects beliefs. That is why John demanded that the Pharisees show proof of their belief and repentance (Matthew 3:8); and that is why

they were never baptized! How many sins do we attempt to cloak in secrecy due to our failure to repent of them and give them up? How often do we rationalize rather than repent?

Someone wrote "To repent is to alter one's way of looking at life; it is to take God's point of view instead of one's own." Martin Luther said "To do it no more is the truest repentance." But Paul said it best: "Let him that stole, steal no more" (Ephesians 4:28). Let us preach that message, and urge men to "repent and turn to the Lord!"

—Riverside Church of Christ, 119 4th Avenue, Columbia, TN 38401.

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The Virgin Birth's Importance

Continued from page 2

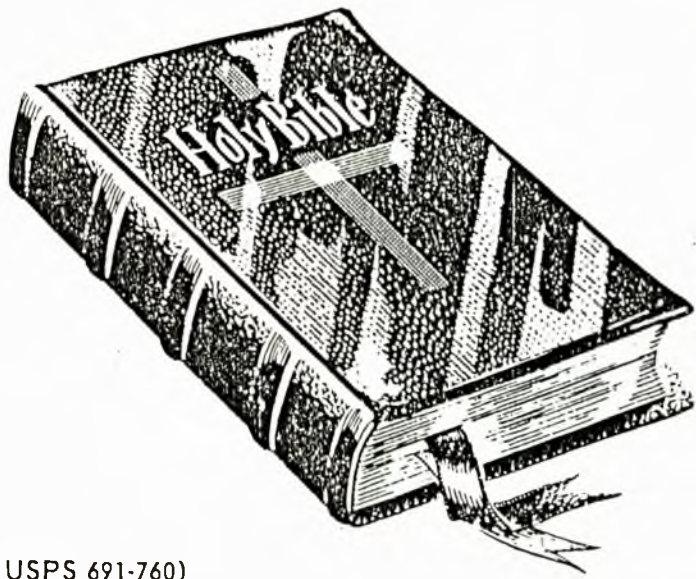
birth is fictitious, however, we must not only question Matthew's words, but also the words of the prophet Isaiah. And if he must be held as unreliable here, we might also think the same of all his writings.

Jeremiah was another who prophesied of the virgin birth. His prophecy is found in Jeremiah 31:22: "How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man." This "new thing" can be nothing other than the virgin birth. For as brother Rex A. Turner, Sr. said: "If by this is meant that a woman would enfold or embrace a man in her arms, what would be new about that? How have men been led to the altar, anyway? If by the statement is meant that a woman would house a male child in her

womb, what is new about that? How do men have their entrance into the world, except by an exodus from the womb? If by the statement is meant that a woman would house in her womb a male child without having had the agency of male, that would be new!" But if the virgin birth never occurred, then a "new thing" was not created in the earth, and Jeremiah lied. And if he lied here, did he lie elsewhere in his prophetic writings?

Thus, we see the second implication of denying the virgin birth. In so doing, one throws the shadow of suspicion upon such prophets as Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. He is also saying that God, too, must be doubted. Does this not help us to see the virgin birth's importance?

—P. O. Box 126, Belmont, MS 38827.



Words Of Truth

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NUMBER 49

The Preacher Of The Church

God ordained the office and the work of the gospel preacher. There is a work for the evangelist to do (II Timothy 4:5). In scripture the man who fills the role is called a minister, i.e., a servant (II Timothy 4:6); an evangelist, i.e., a bearer of good news (II Timothy 4:5), and a preacher, i.e., a proclaimer (II Timothy 2:7).



John Waddey

Elders were ordained to be shepherds and overseers of the flock. Preachers are primarily engaged in teaching the gospel to those within and without the church. From the case of Timothy and the Ephesian elders we learn that a preacher can work with a local congregation that has elders (I Timothy 1:3).

Unscriptural views of the preacher's work have evolved among some of our people over the years. Like the Protestant churches, some view their preacher as a pastor. In this role he actually has the authority of and functions as an elder. Usually, he is the ultimate authority in the congregation. He is expected to personally attend the needs of every member. Nowhere does the Bible give him this authority in the congregation. He is expected to personally attend the needs of every member. Nowhere does the Bible give him this authority in or responsibility. Like the Catholics, some view their preacher as a priest. Sins can be confessed only to him. He is a superior, clergy type of Christian. Of course, the Bible makes no such distinctions. All Christians are God's KLEROS or clergy (Ephesians 1:11) and are royal priests under Christ (I Peter 2:9).

Some have demanded that preachers never locate, rather they must always be traveling evangelists; This view flourished briefly among the followers of Carl Ketcherside in the 50's and then fell of its own weight.

Yet others view preachers as employees hired by the congregation to do their work for them. They must go into the homes to teach the lost, visit the hospitals and the shut-ins, for the church.

For some the preacher is a hired performer for the local group. He must be present at all gatherings and functions to perform for them. This would include all weddings, funerals, social get-togethers, youth activities and assemblies.

The Bible Concept of His Work

The preacher is a servant of God (Titus 1:1). He is a soldier of Christ, obligated to please him in all things (II Timothy 2:3-4). He works for God and is accountable to him for his life and ministry.

A preacher is on assignment to the local congregation. It is his duty to assist them in doing God's work and evangelizing their world. He helps them to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ (II Peter 3:18). He is a member of the congregation he serves and under the supervision of its elders. He must obey them as do all other members (Hebrews 13:17). Of course, this implies that he enjoys equal privileges of membership. The congregation supports him financially so he may fulfill his duty to God in proclaiming the good news of Christ (Galatians 6:6). They in turn benefit directly from the fruit of his ministry in their midst.

It is essential that we learn that the scope of our minister is larger than our local community: it is the whole world (Mark 16:15). We must be concerned to make the church grow everywhere. It is wrong for a church to restrict their preacher's work to only their local community. We should rejoice equally whether a soul is saved in our community or across town or across the seas. In either case, God's kingdom is built up.

A preacher must be afforded ample time to study and grow in the word of God if he is to teach others effectively. Only by giving diligence to his studies will he be able to handle aright the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15). It is a common mistake for a congregation to saddle their preacher with scores of other duties and expectations that rob him of adequate study time.

Some Practical Observations

A preacher's first duty and responsibility is to the congregation which provides his support. He should participate in every activity and encourage and promote her welfare. Common sense demands as much, as does also the golden rule (Matthew 7:12).

A preacher is an assistant to the elders in their work. His knowledge, training and experience are of great value to them. He can offer counsel and such expertise as he possesses, and aid them in planning, promoting, and activating such programs as they adopt. He cannot -- and should not -- do their personal work and his too. He is their helper, not their substitute, nor their equal. If he does their work, his will surely suffer.

The local church and the preacher will both prosper and be rewarded if they can agree to work together for the long haul. Growing together they will strengthen each other and do a better work for God. When the preacher spends years with a church, there must be some variety and change of scenery in the pulpit now and again to avoid boredom and "wearing thin" of the regular speaker. Wise elders will help to plan for guest speakers and make sure the congregation understands the reasons for such.

A preacher with any degree of talent and ability will be called upon to speak on lectures, forums and in gospel meetings. His congregation may react in one of two ways. They can resent it and refuse to let him go, reasoning that they hired him for their local work -- not everyone else's. On the other hand, they can gladly share his talents with the brotherhood at large. (There is another alternative: a church can have a preacher that no one else wants to hear. They will not have to worry about his being away!)

It is important to remember that your preacher benefits greatly from visits made to lectures and other churches. The ideas and lessons learned are brought home and shared with the church. Brethren, remember: every guest speaker who conducts meetings and workshops for your congregation has to be

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Words Of Truth

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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 Goodness And Severity Of God"

John L. Wheeler

Paul said, "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?" (Romans 11:18-24).

Paul used the figure of grafting in a wild olive branch after a natural branch had been cut off. The application of this figure is the rejection of the Jew because of his unbelief and the acceptance of the Gentile on the basis of his faith. Paul calls their attention to the goodness and severity of God. The goodness of God is expressed in the acceptance of the Gentiles; the severity of God is shown in the rejection of the unbelieving Jew.

Many people think of God as being only an easy-going, loving God who would not lift his hand against anyone. Some have even expressed the idea that God is too merciful to send anybody to hell. I submit to you the fact that there are two sides of God. Paul refers to them in these verses. He is a loving God who very much wants everybody to be saved. God is also a just God whose very nature cannot countenance sin. The only way that God could approve sin would be for him to lose

Continued On Page 3



Flavil H. Nichols

Sanctification No. VI

[SANCTIFICATION which is necessary to our ultimate salvation in heaven (Hebrews 12:14, A.S.V.) means "dedicated to a holy or a religious use." On the divine side, our sanctification is by the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and by the TRUTH. On the human side, it is also conditional on our faith, repentance, and baptism. Since it is located "in Christ," only those who have been "baptized into Christ" are "sanctified" (I Corinthians 1:1-2). Sanctification is not for the eradication of that (imagined) 'Inborn Sin,' neither is it a 'second blessing.']



FLAVIL NICHOLS

NOT SANCTIFIED BY SPIRIT BAPTISM
From the creed of a popular denomination, read this:

One is born totally depraved; and, some time after justification, he receives a second blessing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is for sanctification; then, his inbred and depraved nature, and all fleshly propensities and desires, are destroyed, thereafter leaving him sinlessly perfect.

Another gross error from the creed quoted above is the doctrine that Holy Spirit baptism is for our sanctification today. The idea that, subsequent to being "justified," one "receives a second blessing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is for sanctification," is simply not taught in the New Testament. In fact, it is erroneous to assume that Holy Spirit baptism is for us today.

Christ Only Administrator
Only Christ could administer Holy Spirit baptism. Of him alone God said, "the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (John 1:33). Hear also the testimony of John the immerser: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11).

Men can administer water baptism, for Jesus directed his apostles --men!-- to "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Matthew 28:19). We read also of Philip (a man) that "he baptized him" (the Ethiopian, Acts 8:36-39). Since Christ alone could administer Holy Spirit baptism, but the baptism of the great commission could be administered by the disciples (Matthew 28:18-20), it follows that Holy Spirit baptism is NOT for us today.

Is Only One Baptism

About A.D. 64 the apostle Paul wrote that there is only ONE baptism for today. 'For there is . . . one Lord, one faith, one

baptism" (Ephesians 4:4-5). Prior to this there had been the baptism unto Moses (I Corinthians 10:1-4), the baptism of John, (Matthew 21:25), and Christ's 'baptism' of suffering (Matthew 20:22-23). Also there had been two -- and only two -- recorded cases of Spirit baptism: 1) On Pentecost, the apostles, who were Jews, Acts 2; and (2) the Gentiles at Cornelius' house, Acts 10. At Christ's return the wicked will receive the "fire" baptism (Matthew 3:10-12) in hell. But now, subsequent to A.D. 64, there "IS" --present tense!-- "ONE BAPTISM."

"But," someone asks, "how do you know that the 'one baptism' (of Ephesians 4:5) is water baptism?" Because water baptism must last to the end of the world. We know this is true, because the baptism which will last "to the end of the world" is a baptism that could be administered by the disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). Since only Jesus could administer Holy Spirit baptism (Matthew 3:11; John 1:33), but the disciples could administer a baptism that will last to "the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20), it must be true that water baptism will last to the end of the world. Therefore the "one baptism" which Paul mentioned in Ephesians 4:5 (A.D. 64) must be water baptism. Since water baptism is for us today, and there is only one baptism, it must follow that water baptism is the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5. Since there is only "one baptism," and that one is water baptism, we are driven to conclude that Holy Spirit baptism is NOT for us today.

Syllogism No. 1--

1. Major Premise: Christ's disciples could administer a baptism designed to last "unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20).

2. Minor Premise: Only Jesus can administer Holy Spirit baptism, Matthew 3:11; John 1:33.

3. Conclusion: Therefore the baptism designed to last to the end of the world is not Holy Spirit baptism.

Syllogism No. 2--

1. Major Premise: The baptism which the disciples administered is to last "unto the end of the world," Matthew 28:18-20.

2. Minor Premise: Christ's disciples could and did administer water baptism, Acts 8:36-39; I Corinthians 1:14, 16.

3. Conclusion: Therefore water baptism is to last to the end of the world.

Syllogism No. 3--

1. Major Premise: Water baptism (which was administered by the disciples) is to last "to the end of the world," Matthew 28:18-20.

2. Minor Premise: But since A.D. 64 there is only "one baptism," Ephesians 4:5.

3. Conclusion: Therefore none today are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

"The Goodness And Severity Of God"

Continued From Page 2

his goodness and become evil himself. He cannot do this. For example, it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18). It is also impossible for him to do evil, or to approve of evil. His very nature will not allow it.

Justice demands death for sin. That sentence was passed upon man in the very beginning. Jesus died in order that we might live. There was no other way for God to save a sinner than for another to take his place. The death of Jesus upon the cross shows just how terrible sin is. We love to reflect upon the goodness of God. We love to talk about his mercy and his grace. These qualities make it possible for us to be saved.

But upon those who sin and refuse to repent, there is divine severity. The Jew who had rejected the Son of God, has been rejected by God. He has been broken off. The only way he can be grafted in again is to turn from unbelief to belief. He must accept the same Jesus he has rejected. Paul expressed the

severity of God on them that fell.

There are many examples recorded in the Bible of the severity of God. Adam and Eve were driven from Paradise because of their sin. God made them pay the penalty. Years later when the wickedness of man became great in the earth, God swept the human race from the face of the earth in a great flood. By heaven's grace, Noah and his family were saved because of their faith. The rest of the earth's population was not fit to live.

Another example of the severity of God is in the destruction of Sodom and Gommorah because of their great wickedness. Their most prominent sin was homosexuality. God would have spared these cities if only ten righteous people could have been found; but they could not. So Lot, along with his wife and daughters, fled. But Mrs. Lot violated God's command and looked back and became a pillar of salt.

Seeing that God destroyed such a people for their sins, what do you suppose God thinks

about the sins of homosexuality and lesbianism today? God will tolerate such sins only so long. It is an admitted fact that the greatest victims of AIDS are homosexuals. They are also the greatest carriers of the disease. They cannot escape the physical consequences of their sins. There are many innocent who also suffer as a result of their sins.

We must never underestimate the severity of God. He is "longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish" (II Peter 3:9). "But the day of the Lord will come" in which the wicked will receive their just deserts. God has given man every chance to repent and be saved. Man cannot blame God, for his justice demands severity. Let us respect both the goodness and severity of God.

—706 W. Georgia, Vivian, La 71082.

"Daddy Have I Ever Seen A Christian?"

A little boy asked his dad what a "Christian" is. The dad replied that a Christian is a person who loves and obeys God. He loves friends and neighbors, and expresses his appreciation for other Christians. He even loves his enemies and prays for them that they might be blessed. He prays often and blesses God's holy name in reverent worship. He lives a life that is pure and holy and is a Christian through and through. The little boy thought for a moment, and then asked: "Daddy, have I ever seen one?"



Edsel Burleson

Most of the New Testament is instruction designed to help us know how to live so as to bring honor to God. How sad that so many are "hearers" but not "doers" of the word. For this reason many little boys could very well ask, "Have I ever seen a Christian?" Jesus said, "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).

A good brother was plowing his field when a neighbor came over to talk about insect trouble. The brother was very eager to get his plowing done, but he took time to visit.

After a while the neighbor said, "I hear you are having a good interest at church."

"Fair," the brother replied.

"You say that the church is the only one mentioned in the Bible," the neighbor asked.

"Yes, Sir, it is," replied the brother proudly.

"You must be very happy to belong to such an important church," suggested the neighbor.

"Well, yes, I am," the brother replied.

"Sometime I would like to go with you and learn more about the church," offered the

neighbor.

"Fine," said the brother, "I'll be glad to take you any time."

"Isn't tonight mid-week meeting night for you folks?" asked the interested friend.

"Yes, it is," was the brother's answer; "but I CAN'T go tonight-- I've got too much work to do."

The friend said, "Well, I don't reckon your church is any more important than any other. WE don't think one has to belong to the church, or attend its services, to be saved;

and if YOUR work is more important than that of the church, I reckon your church isn't very important either."

As the neighbor walked away the brother started his tractor, jerking it into gear, and muttered something about narrow-mindedness. --No, he didn't attend the service that night, nor has he been able to bring his neighbor with him since. Nor does his neighbor seem interested in talking religion with him any more.

—4207th St., S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.

When God Breaks The Bottle

Foolish men of our day have proclaimed that God is dead. According to them, our universe is clicking along in its orderly fashion all on its own. Nations are rising and falling, in the thinking of some, by the might or weakness of man. However, nothing could be further from the truth.

God is not dead! God is not sick either, for such is impossible for an omnipotent Being (Revelation 19:6). God has never

stopped reigning over the universe. Israel of old was blessed in that God reigned over them (I Samuel 8:5). God harkened to their voice and gave them a king. Thus, God moved back and granted Israel's request: "... Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (I Samuel 8:19-20).



Demar Elam

God granted Israel their request, telling Samuel, "... Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (I Samuel 8:7), but he never stopped being over the kings. Saul was appointed to be the first king of Israel, and reigned until God removed him, because of a failure on his part to do right. Samuel told Saul, "... for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David" (I Samuel 28:17). God both enthroned and dethroned Saul, demonstrating that he is the sovereign ruler of the universe.

Jeremiah was commanded by the Lord, "... Go and get a potter's earthen bottle..." (Jeremiah 19:3). He was about to make Tophet, "... desolate, and an hissing; everyone that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof" (Jeremiah 19:8).

God instructed Jeremiah, "Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, and shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a

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Restoration Mountain-Peaks

Dabney Phillips

The Metallic Token

An interesting incident occurred involving Alexander Campbell when he was a student in Glasgow University in 1809. The Seceder Presbyterian church, of which he was a member, observed the Lord's supper twice a year. They also practiced "closed communion." Having come from Ireland, Alexander was required to pass an examination to determine his qualification to receive the communion. To keep those considered unworthy from partaking, those who passed the examination were given a metallic token. The hour for the communion arrived, and Alexander was perplexed as to whether he could commune with a group in which he was no longer freely accepted. Rather than partake of the emblems, he dropped the metal token in the plate. Its ringing tones announced his purpose to separate himself from everything that tended to divide God's people. This act marked his complete break with Presbyterianism.

The Declaration and Address

The major written production of Thomas Campbell was the Declaration and address, which was issued on September 8, 1809. The paper was fifty-four pages in length and contained thirty thousand words. The document was divided into four divisions: Declaration, Address, Appendix, and Postscript. The production has been called the Magna Charta of the Restoration Movement. The basic points of the paper can be summed up as follow: (1) The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice; (2) Sectarianism is evil, as the church is essentially and constitutionally one; (3) Divisions result as the people neglect the revealed Word and introduce human innovations; (4) Human expedience must not be given a place of authority in the church. Interestingly not a single position of this document was debated by its opponents for a long time. The emphasis was placed on the necessity of restoring the original ordinances of the New Testament church. The Brush Run congregation was organized on May 4, 1811, on the principles laid down in the Declaration and Address.

The Sermon on the Law

Alexander Campbell dropped a "bombshell" in the Baptist camp when he preached his famous sermon on "The Law" at the Red-Stone Association at Cross Roads, Virginia, on August 30, 1816. There were twenty-two preachers present in an audience of one thousand. In this eventful sermon based on Romans 8:3, Campbell first determined the meaning of the term "law" in the Scriptures. This was followed by revealing the weakness of the law of Moses. The point was made that Jesus sent out the apostles to preach the gospel, rather than the law of Moses. Uniquely, Campbell stated that the patriarchs are the bud, the Jews the blossom, and the Christians are the divine mature fruit of grace. There were electrifying results of the sermon, especially among the preachers, who were determined to expel him from the Association on the grounds of heresy. Tension was eased when the Brush Run congregation withdrew from the Red-Stone Association, and joined the more tolerant Mahoning Association. In time the Mahoning Association accepted the Restoration principles, and as a result the Association

dissolved.

Campbell-Rice Debate

Initially, Alexander Campbell doubted the wisdom of public discussions; but he later decided that one debate did more good than a year of preaching. Campbell's fifth and final public discussion was with Nathan L. Rice, a Presbyterian minister. Henry Clay served as the moderator of this discussion, which was held in Lexington, Kentucky, the latter part of 1843. Baptism, creeds, the church, and the Holy Spirit were the prime subjects under consideration. In the debate, Campbell presented a clear-cut explanation of Acts 2:38. He also struck hard at the doctrine of Calvinism. Relative to creeds, Campbell commented: "Creeds are the roots of bitterness and apples of discord." His material on the Holy Spirit needs to be studied by every Christian today, especially young Christians. The debate was published in a book of 912 pages, and may be purchased today. Every gospel preacher would be wise to read once a year the entire Campbell-Rice Debate.

The Last Will and Testament

On June 28, 1804, Barton Warren Stone and five other unhappy Presbyterian ministers published, "The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery," one of the most unique productions in religious literature. It contained less than 800 words

and was written eight years prior to the immersion of Thomas and Alexander Campbell (and others). This famous document contained a proclamation, a propaganda and a plea. It made a plea for men to hold fervently to the Bible alone as the standard of faith and conduct. Independent Bible study caused these men to abandon infant baptism and sprinkling. The preachers first immersed each other, and then immersed their congregations. It should be noted that all of this occurred five years before Thomas Campbell issued the Declaration and address.

The Gospel Advocate

In July of 1855, the Gospel Advocate made its first appearance. Tolbert Fanning was the first editor, assisted by William Lipscomb, the older brother of David Lipscomb. Except for a short time during the Civil War, the paper has been continuously published to the present time. When the paper resumed publication on January 1, 1866, its editors were listed as Tolbert Fanning and David Lipscomb. One purpose for the existence of the Gospel Advocate was to combat creeping liberalism. It took the lead in opposing instrumental music in worship, and the missionary society organization. It has fought doctrinal battles on premillennialism, legalism and liberalism.

—100 Carlton Place Gadsden, AL 35901.

When God Breaks The Bottle

Continued From Page 3

potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again" (Jeremiah 19:10-11). God punished this city, ". . . because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words" (Jeremiah 19:15).

God still has a "bottle," and you can be assured that he still controls the universe, and the affairs of men.

—P.O. Box 623, Forest Park, GA 30051.

The Preacher Of The Church

Continued From Page 1

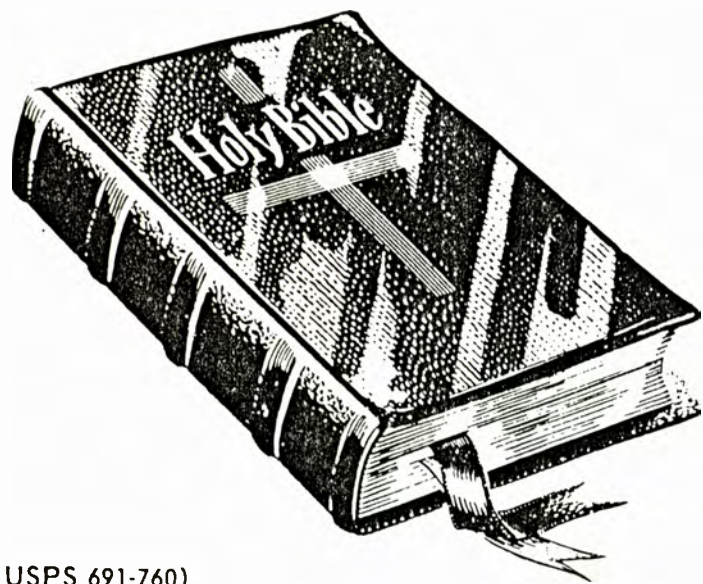
away from HIS home church while doing so. Do not then resent sharing your preacher with others.

Most all of us have been directly blessed by one or more gospel preachers. Let us be thank-

ful for these men and uphold their hands as they work for God.

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

Invite A Friend
To Attend Services
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 23

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NUMBER 50

The Final Judgment

No. IX

Wheeler Pounds
In Prison

Please read once more Matthew 25:31-46. Because sin was introduced into the world, and because laws were necessary to govern a sinful people, ways of punishment were also necessary. Laws without enforcement are of little value. Since the first writer of the Bible penned the first book, prisons have been one of these means of punishment, and a method of removing the law-violator from society.

Ironically, the first mentioned prisoner in the Bible was innocent of the charges against him. Joseph was falsely accused of misconduct by Potiphar's wife, and was cast "into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison" (Genesis 39:20-23). But God was with Joseph and he was made a "trustee:" all the other prisoners were placed in his hand. While in prison he interpreted the king's dream, and thereby eventually was made Governor of Egypt.

When Jesus spoke to his disciples in Matthew 25:31-46 religious persecution had already begun. John the Baptist had already been placed in prison by Herod for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife, which led to his death (Matthew 14:1-12). Christ knew that it would be only two days before he would be betrayed to be crucified. Immediately after finishing the description of the judgment scene, he informed his disciples of that fact (Matthew 26:1-2). Two days later he was betrayed by Judas (Matthew 26:47-57). This arrest led to his crucifixion (Matthew 27).

The religious persecution would continue during the time of the apostles. After the establishment of the church, a great persecution arose against it (Acts 8:1). The apostles, because of their teaching, were all placed in a common prison, but were freed by an angel (Acts 5:17-26). Stephen was stoned to death after preaching the truth (Acts 6:8-7:60). Saul consented to his death (Acts 8:1-4) and made "havoc of the church, entering into every house, and hailing men and women com-

miting them to prison." Paul, before Agrippa, tells of his role in the persecution of Christians (Acts 26:9-11). To the Corinthians, however, he relates his own experiences as a victim of the persecution (II Corinthians 11:23-33). He was in jail often, and at times had other Christians with him -- as in Philippi when Silas was jailed with him (Acts 16:19-40). At the close of Acts, Paul was imprisoned in Rome; but there is evidence that he was released from this first Roman imprisonment. He was released but is reported to have been seized in Spain (around 67 or 68 A.D.), and was returned to Rome as a prisoner where, after writing II Timothy, he reportedly was beheaded.

Herod the king "stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the church," and to kill James, the brother of John, with the sword. And because it pleased the Jews he proceeded further to take Peter also . . . "And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison . . ." (Acts 12:1-4). Peter was freed by an angel (verses 5-19). Late tradition has it that Peter was martyred in Rome during the persecution of Nero; but this is not based on fact. It is fact, however, that Nero falsely accused the Christians of burning the city, and ordered Christians in large numbers to be killed.

John was exiled from Ephesus to the Isle of Patmos (around A.D. 95) where he wrote the Book of Revelation. He was there "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9).

Under various rulers Christianity was made an illegal religion, and Christians were punished for no other "crime" than being Christians! They were punished in numerous ways as rulers tried to stamp out Christianity. As in the case of John, some were exiled and their property confiscated. Many were stoned to death, or beheaded. Crosses were said to have lined roads with bodies of Christians. Some were burned at the stake;

others were fed to wild animals for 'sport' at the great arenas where thousands gathered and cheered.


Today in some countries there remains religious persecutions; but we do not fear this in the United States. An understanding of the religious persecutions common during New Testament times will help us better understand the words of Christ in Matthew 25:31-46 regarding visiting the prisoners: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me" (verse 40).

Because we do not have religious persecutions does not mean that we do not have a Christian duty toward prisoners. We have an obligation to preach Christ, who came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). A great work can be done through prison ministry. Jesus had compassion for a prisoner (thief) who was crucified with him, and who wanted to be remembered "when thou cometh into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:39-43). The other thief "railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us" (verse 39).

The actions of the two thieves on the cross might be typical. One wanted what he could get physically from Christ; the other wanted salvation. True, many in prison will want only what you may give them in the flesh, but others might be reached spiritually.

Recently I attended the National Jail/Prison Ministry Workshop sponsored by churches of Christ, which was held in the Chicago area. In a panel discussion by three former inmates, a female member of the group made an interesting comment. Being reared in a Christian home, she knew of Christ, but had never accepted him in her life. Her sinful ways had resulted in her being imprisoned twice. A Christian friend of her family visited her in prison. She stated at that time she did not want anything to do with religion! When she learned that the visitor was coming, she

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The Death Of The Righteous

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (Numbers 23:10).

Balaam was a man of an enigmatic character, being unable to fully make up his mind as to his course of action. He wanted to serve God, Balak, and himself, all at the same time. Jesus teaches that "No man can serve two masters . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 16:24).

Balaam seems to have had some good intentions, but he could not bring them to fruition. His services were for sale to the highest bidder (II Peter 2:15-16). Balaam was an innovative teacher: If he failed in his efforts to "curse" the people of God, he would look for another way to bring them down. ". . . Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to Idols, and to commit fornication" (Revelation 2:14). Even today many still follow Balaam's advice. "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 11). A battle was afterward fought against the Midianites, in which Balaam joined them, and was slain by the sword of the people whom he had endeavored to curse (See chapters 22-25, and 31 of Numbers).

Balaam had said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like



W. A. Holley

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A Painful Lesson From The Past

R. N. Gardner

(The following narrative was written by the late R. N. Gardner, gospel preacher, who for many years taught at Harding College. His son, A. K. Gardner, shares it with us. In a day when men are urging a reunion with the Christian Churches, its message is timely. — John Waddey).

In 1884 the county seat of Greene County was moved from Gainesville to Paragould, Arkansas. My father was County Court Clerk and moved there at the same time.

At that time there was no church of Christ in Paragould. However, a few Christians began to meet in private homes. At the first meeting in my father's home there were six members present: brother Riley Smith and wife, brother Tyner and his wife, sister Shannon, and my father.

In the summer of 1885 they began a meeting in the Methodist church house with brother A. Alsop of Tennessee doing the preaching. During the first week of the meeting brother Alsop taught that sprinkling is not baptism. For this the Methodists refused to allow any further use of their house.

At once the brethren made plans to build a church house. After some delay and much sacrifice the house was finished. Brother Smith, brother Tyner and my father were selected and appointed elders. The members met for worship every Lord's day. They used no man-made instruments of music -- for they believed singing is the only music ordained of God to be used in worship.

Preachers and money were scarce. For several years they had preaching only once a month, and a gospel meeting once a year. Some of the preachers who held meetings for the Paragould congregation during the early years were: James A. Harding, James E. Scoby, M. C. Kurfrees, S. M. Jones and F. W. Smith.

Several years after the church was established a brother Yantis, his wife and two daughters, also a son-in-law and his wife, moved to Paragould. Brother Yantis was a druggist, and his son-in-law was depot agent for the Cotton Belt Railroad. They were likeable people and all were talented musicians. They believed in having instrumental music in the worship. They were regular in attendance and brother Yantis led the singing. At first they did not agitate the instrumental music issue, for they knew the elders and members were opposed to it. As time passed they gained friends and had influence with some members of the church and with townspeople. Several members of the church accepted their views on the music question. With this additional force and influence, they insisted that they were entitled to be heard in deciding matters concerning activities of the church.

They had sympathy from some of the members because they were active in the work of the church, contributed of their means and helped otherwise. They wanted to use a piano in connection with the singing. This was not permitted.

They clamored for the privilege of selecting a preacher for a gospel meeting. Finally, for the sake of peace, the elders granted their request. They chose a preacher from Missouri whose name was Davidson. He was a sensational evangelist, a pleasant man, a smooth speaker. He had large audiences. There were about forty additions to the church. Some of these were from the denomi-

nations. With their numbers increased, those who favored the use of instrumental music seemed more determined to have their way even at the risk of division.

Early in the spring of 1901 the church engaged brother M. H. Northcross of Franklin, Tennessee, to preach during a meeting to be held the following summer. This meeting was announced and advertised for several months before it was to begin. Brother Northcross was a preacher of long experience, a devoted Christian, loyal to the truth, kind in his preaching, and a forceful speaker. He arrived in Paragould and began the meeting at the appointed time on Sunday morning. He preached a week without any special public interference by those favoring instrumental music.

On the second Sunday night of the meeting Brother Northcross, brother Smith, my father, and I went to church together. Though we were early, as we approached the meeting-house, from within came strains of music: the tones of a piano and the voices of singers! When we entered the building, we were completely surprised and astonished -- for the sight was so unexpected and disappointing. That afternoon the "digressives" had brought a piano into the church house without the knowledge of the elders or the congregation! In the pulpit there was a "digressive" preacher. There was a choir. At the piano was a daughter of brother Yantis.

Though they were engaged in religious service, all of them were committing a two-fold sin: disobeying the voice of God, and unlawfully taking possession, by force, of a church building put there and paid for by Christians conscientiously opposed to what these "robbers" were doing. In firm fact they were acting like bandits holding up (not a man for his money), but a group of Christians. As effectually as with bullets they were taking from Christians, who owned this property, the building so precious and useful to them. Then, though a party to these pernicious, treacherous proceedings, and guilty before God of the sin, the imported intruding preacher got up to warn OTHERS of the danger of sin which damns the soul. When his sermon was ended the congregation was seated. What followed then was enough to make angels weep and the devil rejoice!

The preacher asked if any one had anything to say. Brother "Dump" Thompson, whom the digressives claimed as one of THEIR "elders," stood up and said, "We have this building and we are going to keep it. We will put new locks on the doors in the morning and we will prosecute any one who molests or tampers with them." Then he pulled up his sleeves, raised his arms, clinched his fist, and added a threat: "If any one of you does not like this; just come on!"

There was a short pause. Then my father arose and with trembling voice said quietly, "Brethren, I would rather you would come over and take MY DWELLING away from ME!" He sat down. The congregation was dismissed. We went home. For fifty years many of us never entered that building again.

The brethren loyal to the Bible left their meetinghouse in Paragould that night with the blessing of God upon them for humbly suffering such injustice without retaliating. Of this I am firmly convinced. They did not believe in

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The Rebaptism Of Samuel Rogers

Elder Samuel Rogers was one of the great leaders of the first generation of Restoration preachers. He was widely known and deeply respected for his sacrificial service and faithfulness to God's word and work. In his autobiography, Elder Rogers (1789-1877) wrote:



John Waddey

Most of my old brethren, in coming into the Reformation, differed from me in one particular: They were quite satisfied with their baptism; I was not satisfied. (He speaks of those who had received immersion, usually in the Baptist churches). I heard with disquiet conscience the command, "Be baptized for the remission of sins." It was urged by my brethren that the highest and purest motive had actuated me in my baptism; that is, a desire out of a pure heart to obey God; that it would be unreasonable to believe that, because his loving children did not understand all that was in store for them in their obedience, therefore, he would withhold any good thing from them. They argued that no earthly parent would be so hard with his child. . . . (autobiography of Elder Samuel Rogers, (P. 127).

Rogers was not impressed with their arguments. He reasoned that it was fallacious to assume that God would necessarily do what a human parent would do. He insisted that he had not obeyed the command to be baptized "for remission of sins," since he had sought remission at the mourner's bench and later requested baptism. He saw his obedience as defective, because his understanding and faith as to the purpose of baptism had been faulty (ibid, pp. 127-128). A few days later he settled the question by being baptized "for the remission of sins," and from that point on his conscience was at rest. He was convinced that he had done the right thing.

Years later Rogers wrote,

To my mind, an unintelligent baptism is little better than no baptism at all. . . . Christian baptism is not simply an act, else an immersed infidel could claim the blessing of remission. Faith must precede it, all admit; but are the antecedents more important to make it baptism than its consequents?

A Painful Lesson From The Past

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having lawsuits among brethren.

When division over the use of instrumental music first occurred, the digressive element USUALLY took our church buildings! In many instances, as in Paragould, Arkansas, they simply stole the property. From what I observed and learned then, I know they did this by force rather than on the principle, or basis, of justice and righteousness.

—Sent to Words Of Truth by John Waddey, 6608 Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, TN 37931-9599.

Certainly not. . . I claim that the antecedents are defective, necessarily, if they do not embrace the consequents; there can be no intelligent faith that does not embrace the promises connected with any act of obedience we are required to perform (ibid, p. 128).

Bro. Rogers' experience is timely for us today as the subject of what constitutes scriptural baptism is once more a point of discussion. From this we learn:

1. That the question of 'rebaptism' for those coming from denominationalism is not a new issue. It is rather a recurring controversy.

2. It is a mistake to assume that ALL the pioneers in the east were willing to accept without question those immersed into sectarian bodies.

3. It is a mistake to assume that only radical men made an issue of rebaptism in the past. Sam Rogers was no radical! He was one of the most highly respected men of that first generation of 'restorers.'

A heated discussion on this subject later transpired between the editor and writers of the Firm Foundation and their counterparts at the Gospel Advocate. "The avowed purpose of the establishment of the Firm Foundation was occasioned by (Austin) McGary's growing alarm at the practice of some preachers of 'shaking in the Baptists' (Earl West: Search For The Ancient Order, Vol. I, pp. 405-406).

David Lipscomb believed that if an individual was baptized from the motive of wanting to obey God, that motive was acceptable whether the individual understood that baptism was in order to the remission of sins or not. Austin McGary, on the other hand, denied this, insisting that obeying God 'from the heart' required an accurate understanding of the purpose of baptism (ibid, p.

407).

The battle was hard-fought for some 40 years (1880-1920). A clear victory was never won by either side. Over the years, however, brotherhood thinking evolved to the point that most preachers and congregations would decline to accept a Baptist or any other denominationalist unless he could demonstrate that he had been baptized in order to receive remission of sins.

This is clearly Biblical ground. The apostles told candidates why they should be baptized: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

"... be baptized and wash away thy sins. . . ." (Acts 22:16).

Those baptized without proper faith and understanding, Paul 'rebaptized' (Acts 19:1-7). It is better to say, he "baptized" them properly for the first time -- thus they received the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5.

Many have had the experience of meeting that occasional prospect who insisted that he DID understand correctly the divine purpose for baptism; that he obeyed with that clearly in mind. If such a man is willing to repent of any error in his life and worship, we gladly extend to him the hand of fellowship, leaving the disposition of the matter to him and God, since it is God, not man who adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47).

Let us preach boldly those truths plainly revealed in God's book. Let us teach men not only TO BE BAPTIZED, but also WHY they should do so. In so doing we can't be wrong. On judgment day no man will regret having been baptized upon a proper understanding of God's purpose in that ordinance.

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

Let The Bible Mean What It Says And Say What It Means

Three-year-old Bobby didn't like the routine of being scrubbed, especially when soap was applied.

"Bobby, don't you want to be nice and clean?" his mother asked.

"Sure," replied Bobby. "But can't you just dust me?"

Bobby's concept of cleansing illustrates the kind of "logic" frequently used in religious thought.

Paul told the church at Rome, "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" (Romans 6:4). He then added, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine



Edsel Burleson

which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (vs. 17-18).

They understood that the cleansing (freedom from sin) occurred when they had been washed.

How many mistakes in religion would be avoided if man would allow the Bible to say what it means and mean what it says! The problems come when men "fit" the teaching of the Bible into their previously-made molds.

Too often, application of scripture is made without any thought as to the speaker, persons spoken to, under what circumstances, etc. The context of any statement is so very vital in order to determine the application.

To fail to carefully consider the circumstances surrounding a passage of scripture can lead one to the same mistake made by little Nellie, a 6-year-old, who complained: "Mother, I've got a stomach ache."

"That's because your stomach is empty," the mother replied. "You would feel better if

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The Death Of The Righteous

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his;" but how far he missed the mark!! Balaam is a representative of a large class in the world who express a wish for the future blessedness of the Lord's people at last, but are averse to a life of obedience to Almighty God (Matthew 7:21-23; Hebrews 5:7-9).

In all sincerity, consider with me: how can one go about living a life that will assure his dying the death of the righteous? We shall appeal to the direction and guidance of the holy scriptures:

Love Righteousness

(1) It is absolutely necessary to love righteousness. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:8-9). Amos, the prophet, long ago, declared: "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (Amos 5:14-15). Paul, in the Roman letter, urges: "... Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). One must never, never love the evil things of the world (I John 2:15-17).

Want Righteousness

(2) Righteousness can never be attained unless one wants it. According to Jesus, one must "hunger and thirst after righteousness," if he is to be filled (Matthew 5:6). One whose mind is filled with garbage, whether it be filthy writing or dirty speech, can never truly know what righteousness is. One can enjoy the fruits of righteousness, if he is striving for a better world, here and hereafter. The Lord's way is far better than the way of drunkenness, or the way of illicit drugs, or unlawful sex (Galatians 5:19-21).

Seek Righteousness

(3) To attain righteousness, one must seek it. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). If one wishes to find true righteousness, let him look upon the pages of holy writ (Isaiah 34:16); not to the doctrines and commandments of men (Mark 7:1-13). Righteousness is found in obeying the commandments of the Lord (Psalms 119:172). Now, since the death of Jesus Christ, righteousness is found through obedience to the demands of the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16-17; 10:16; I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-10). Those who try to become righteous by the Old Testament, or by their own standards, must abandon such, and accept God's New Testament standards of righteousness (Romans 10:1-4).

(4) God has established his own due order of righteousness. "For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order" (I Chronicles 15:13). According to Paul (Romans 9:30-33), one can seek righteousness, but seek it in vain, if one does not arrive at an obedient faith in Christ. When a man is forgiven, when his sins are blotted out, he is righteous (Romans 6:16-18; 6:3-4).

Hence, for the sinner to become righteous, he

must become obedient unto the law of Christ. What is involved in obedience? We answer: Obedience includes belief in Christ, repentance of all sin, confession of the name of Christ, and baptism in the name of Christ for the remission of sins.

Without faith one cannot please God (Hebrews 11:1, 6; John 3:16-17; Philippians 3:9; Acts 6:7). Yes, we are saved "by faith," but not by faith alone (James 2:14-26). Faith is a work, as taught by Jesus (John 6:28-29). Peter taught the same lesson (Acts 10:34-35).

Repentance is also required of the Lord (Luke 13:3, 5). It is required of "all men every where" (Acts 17:30-31). On Pentecost, Peter commanded all who wished to obtain remission of sins to "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38).

Jesus taught that those who wish to be confessed by him, must first confess him

(Matthew 10:32-33). We quote Paul, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Cf. Romans 10:9-10).

Revelation 14:13, teaches: "... Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ..." How can one "die in the Lord," if one is not IN THE LORD? How does one get into Christ, the Lord? As a matter of fact, one cannot believe or repent or pray into Christ; but, by faith one can be baptized into Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we were 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" (Romans 6:3-4; Cf. John 19:33-34).

After becoming Christians, we must live soberly, righteous, and godly, if we would claim the eternal prize (Titus 2:11-12).

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Let The Bible Mean What It Says And Say What It Means

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you had something in it."

That afternoon the preacher called, and in conversation remarked that he had been suffering all day with a severe headache.

Little Nellie was alert: "That's because it's empty," she said. "You'd feel better if you had something in it!"

—420 7th S.W. Birmingham, AL 35211.

Judgment

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anticipated a 'sermon,' but would have rebelled against it. But she didn't get a 'sermon!' She got a visit from a loving, caring person who let her know that she did care ("I was in prison and you visited me"); and the friend continued to visit, and continued to care. The 'sermon' the friend preached was through action, not words.

Consequently, when the prisoner was released, she started attending church with her new Christian friend. She then heard the sermons preached orally which she had expected in prison; but she was then prepared to listen -- and was baptized into Christ. "I still have a long way to go to be a strong Christian," she stated: "but everyday I grow and become a little stronger -- with the help of my Christian associates."

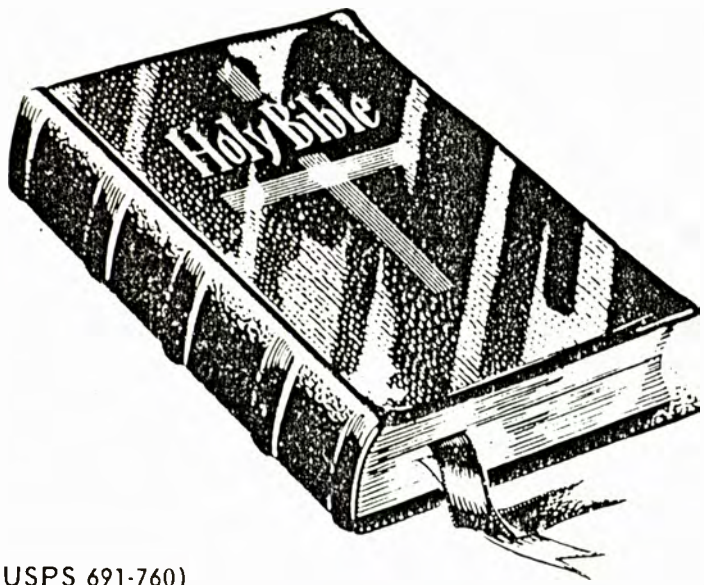
Stated another panel member who was baptized in prison and then served about nine additional years as a Christian in prison:

"When I was released and came to the church building for the first time, they tied yellow ribbons around the posts in front of the church building, knowing that I was coming! The congregation let me know that they cared for me and that I am important to them." This individual is now actively involved in a prison ministry.

Can this be a lesson for us? Is there a prisoner whom we might visit, not necessarily to "preach" to, but to show love and concern for a lost soul? It might be that we could write a letter to a prisoner, to show someone that we care in a Christian way. We may even find a post on which to tie a yellow ribbon, welcoming a Christian convert released from prison. Most importantly, on that Judgment Day we all -- ex-prisoners included -- may hear: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!"

—P.O. Box 176-B, Oakman, AL 35579.

Season's Greetings



(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 23

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1987

The Inspiration Of The Bible

(No. 9)

(A) The Bible And Science

Science has been defined briefly as "a correlated body of absolute knowledge." Some have claimed that science contradicts the Bible. Whosoever so affirms is ignorant of either the Bible, or science, or both. Others say the Bible is not a textbook on science; others say it is. The purpose of this article is not to argue that point; but be it observed that the Bible contains many scientific



Roy J. Hearn

statements that have stood without need of correction for thousands of years. Not so of human textbooks on science. It has been said that by the time a new textbook of science comes off the press, it is in need of revision, due to new discoveries. One writer reports that in the library of the Louvre, Paris, France, there are three and one-half miles of shelves holding volumes of science that became obsolete within fifty years.

While the Bible may not be classified as a 'textbook' on science, nor does it use highly scientific terms, yet it is highly "scientific," and the statements of a scientific nature contained in it remain unchanged these thousand of years. The French Academy of Science in 1861 published a list of sixty-one scientific "facts" that they alleged contradicted the Bible. As time passed these so-called facts were rejected, but the Bible statements have stood firm. Actually, the Bible corroborates science, not science the Bible.

The word of God contains scientific facts not found in any other ancient writings -- such facts that were impossible for the writers to have known except by inspiration, since

they had no modern-day instruments to help them do scientific research. Open your Bible and consider the following facts.

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) classified the five fundamentals of science as time, force, action, space, and matter. All five are contained in the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning" --time; "God" --force; "created" --action; "the heavens" --space; "and the earth" --matter. If Spencer is correct, how did Moses know to write such 3,300 years before Spencer was born? Somebody says, "Coincidence." (Assume that for now)!

Read Genesis 1:9: "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place." "One place" is said to be translated from the Hebrew word "maqom," and means literally "one bed." Further, verse 10 says the waters were called Seas. Observe a world map and see that all seven of the great "seas" (or, oceans) of the world are connected; therefore literally they all lie in "one bed." Also, how did Moses know there are a plurality of "seas," since he had never traveled beyond Egypt and Midian? Enemies of the Bible again cry, "Coincidence;" but we call it INSPIRATION.

The rotation of the earth upon its axis, which brings us day and night, light and darkness, is declared in the first chapter of Genesis also. Notice that in verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23, and 31, at the end of each period of creation, the record says: "The evening and the morning" constituted a "day." Be it observed that these periods of time were approximately twenty-four hours, exactly as they occur today. Exodus 20:11 states, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the seas and all that in them is, and rested in the seventh day." This writer believes that what determines a day NOW, did also then: --the earth revolving upon its axis in the light of the sun. (If this is challenged, he will gladly explain). But, again, how did Moses know, since he wrote some 2,500 years after these events of creation? Once more, we declare:

"Inspiration!"

Please read Leviticus 17:10-14, where God forbade the eating of the blood: "For it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." Why this prohibition? Three times in these verses it is said, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." How did Moses know? In 1628 William Harvey set forth the theory of the circulation of the blood in the body -- 3,100 years after Moses wrote; but it was only in the last century that science proved it as a fact. Formerly it was thought that blood was stationary in the body, and when physicians bled a patient they were careful to take the same amount from each side lest the patient be unbalanced! The blood transports food and oxygen to various parts of the body, and removes impurities. Too, when the blood is gone, physical life also is gone. That is the reason transfusions are now given, to help sustain life. Literally the "life" of the flesh is in the blood! How did Moses know 3,300 years before modern science? Only one answer is adequate as supplied by the apostle Peter: "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21).

—4035 Barron Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111.

Have A Safe And Happy Holiday!



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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"Lord, Fix The Roof....Quick"

Someone told this story about brother J. D. Tant. Not long before his death, he went to hold a meeting in a little Arkansas town in the foothills of the Ozarks. He was met at the depot by a grizzled old tobacco-chewing brother who gave him the sad history of the little congregation as they drove out to the brother's home. He



Edsel Burleson

said, "Brother Tant, I've been in the harness here for nigh onto forty years, and this church just ain't made no growth at all." After staying for several days in that little town, brother Tant related publicly what the brother had told him, and then said, "Before God, Brethren, I've been looking at the harness our brother has been in for the last forty years, and the only piece of it that shows any signs of wear at all is the backing strap!"

Isn't it sad that this is a picture of many in every congregation. We all put on the harness when we were baptized into Christ. Too few keep the "traces" taut! The Holy Spirit guided Paul to warn the Ephesian church of this problem when he told them to "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Ephesians 5:14).

God has blessed us with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians

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"Go...And Preach...The Preaching That I Bid Thee"

Jonah 3:2 contains the words which state the topic for our present study. We suggest that the entire book of Jonah be read, word by word, line by line.

Is the story of Jonah and the great fish true? Of course, it is! In both Matthew and Luke, Jesus referred to Jonah and the whale (Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-30), thus giving the facts as set forth in the Old Testament scriptures his certification. The account of Jonah and the great fish is true, or Jesus is a false teacher!! Never, never!!

What was Jonah commanded to do? Jonah was to go into "that great city" --Ninevah --and "preach . . . the preaching" which God Almighty commanded him to preach. Hence, just any kind of preaching does not please God. Only the preaching that God has commanded, is acceptable to him. Human wisdom, human oratory, human experience, et al., can never meet the demands of God (I Corinthians 1:18-25). One can never preach the doctrines and commandments of men with God's approbation (Mark 7:6-13).

"... SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE," is Paul's admonition (Ephesians 4:15). No effort toward compromise should ever be engaged in by gospel preachers. We should be as tactful as possible; but we should never soften the demands of God Almighty. To add to, or to subtract from, God's holy word is to sin against him (Revelation 22:18-19). Countless thousands of our day would like to "sip" lightly God's word, but they do not wish to drink deeply of it (Cf. Malachi 1:12-14).

"Go . . . preach . . . the preaching that I bid thee" is the only kind of preaching that can please God. Verily, it is the only preaching that can accomplish the holy purposes of the Father in heaven. According to the Bible, one of the greatest tragedies of our time is the tendency of men to substitute their own wisdom for the wisdom of God (II Timothy 4:1-8). Man in all his wisdom can never improve the gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:6-10).

Now, under the terms of the New Testament, what is "the preaching" the Lord has commanded all gospel preachers to preach? We shall note--

(1) To "preach . . . the preaching that I bid thee," does NOT include salvation from alien sins in answer to prayer (John 9:31; Psalms 66:18; James 4:3; Mark 16:16). Nor does it include the direct operation of the Holy Ghost on the sinner in conviction and conversion, separate and apart from the word (Acts 2:1-4, 6, 36-38).

New Testament preachers never advocated "taking Jesus as your personal Saviour." Where did Peter or Paul or John ever urge people to "join the church of one's choice?" What New Testament preacher told alien sinners to "get on their knees and pray until they were saved?" What verse of scripture teaches "once in grace, always in grace?"



W. A. Holley

What New Testament preacher preached "salvation by faith alone?" (James 2:14-26). What scripture justifies (?) all the religious division and confusion that exists today? Did not Jesus pray for all his disciples to be one? (John 17:20-23). What passage of scripture teaches that a sinner can be saved in heaven whether he has been baptized or not?? (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-4).

Now, what did Jesus command?" "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). Does a single one of our readers think that Jesus was in error when he uttered any of the verses just quoted? Surely, not!

(2) Who would wax bold enough to say that Peter was mistaken when he spoke those words quoted from Acts 2:36-38? We quote: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" Is it fair for preachers to ignore these words, and pretend they were spoken by the devil??

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). The gospel of Christ must be heard, and believed, and obeyed, if one's soul is to be saved (I Peter 4:17; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). Obedience to the gospel of Christ is extremely important (Cf. Romans 10:16). Verily, Jesus saves those who obey him (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Today is the day!

—P.O. Box 274, Parrish, AL 35580.

Do You Know Who I Am?

Edsel Burleson

Someone has written this very challenging description of an ever-present problem:

"I have never been guilty of wrong actions, but on my account lives have been lost, trains have been wrecked, ships have been sunk, cities have been burned, governments have failed, battles have been lost, and because of me a few churches have closed their doors.

"I have never struck a blow, nor spoken an unkind word, but because of me homes have been broken, friends have grown cold, the laughter of children has ceased, wives have shed bitter tears, brothers and sisters have been forgotten, and parents have gone broken-

Continued On Page 4

Lessons From The Conversion Of Saul Of Tarsus

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus is unique in several respects. (1) It is recorded three different times in the book of Acts (chapters 9, 22, 26). And, like all other cases of conversion in the book of Acts, it came under divine surveillance twice: whenever the conversion took place, and when it was revealed by the Holy Spirit to the historian Luke and recorded by inspiration. (2) It is the only detailed account of the conversion of any of the apostles.



Wendell Winkler

From the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, many are the lessons which can be gleaned.

I. The Depth Of God's Love

Concerning Saul's past life he wrote, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief . . . this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (I Timothy 1:13-15). The conversion of Saul of Tarsus illustrates those marvelous words we sometimes sing from the pen of Brother Tillit S. Teddlie: "Oh, the depth and the riches of God's saving grace!" Indeed, though a man's sins be as scarlet they can be as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18-20). Did not God's love embrace the murderous Pentecostians (I Corinthians 6:9-11)?

II. Conscience Is Not A Safe And Reliable Guide In Religion

Though Paul was "Chief of sinners," as just observed, he engaged in such in "all good conscience" (Acts 23:1; 26:9; 24:16). He himself said, "And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him" (Acts 22:20). And, in good conscience he so did. Was he right? No! Our Lord said in John 16:2, "Yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." But, such does not make it right.

III. The Holy Spirit Does Not Operate Directly In Conversion

God told Saul to, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). Note that he was not informed as to what to do to be saved while on the road! In this economy, God has chosen to use human instrumentality to accomplish the marvels of his will. Hence, Ananias, a gospel preacher, was dispatched to instruct Saul to, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). In further development of the operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion, please note: (1) Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit, (John 16:7). (2) When the Holy Spirit came he was to convict the world (John 16:8). And (3) the Holy Spirit was to use words in said convicting (John 16:13). Now, Acts 2 is a literal fulfillment of these matters. (1) The Holy Spirit did come (Acts 2:1-4). (2) The sinners on that day were convicted of sin (Acts 2:37). And, (3) the Holy Spirit used words in the convicting process as can be seen by noting that

"when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart?" (Acts 2:37). To affirm the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion (1) is to make God a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35), (2) is to render the sinner passive in conversion (Acts 2:40), (3) results in making the word of God non-sufficient (II Timothy 3:16-17), (4) is to render preaching as being nonessential (I Corinthians 1:21), and (5) voids the mission of the church (I Timothy 3:15).

IV. The Alien Does Not Pray His Way To Pardon

When Ananias arrived on the scene of action, had not Saul been praying (Acts 9:11)? However, Ananias, upon arriving, did not encourage him to continue to pray until he had "gotten through," nor until he had "received the assurance of pardon." Rather, he was told to, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). Prayer is the privilege of the Christian (I Peter 3:12; John 15:7; Hebrews 10:21-22; I Timothy 3:15), and not a condition of pardon to the alien sinner (Matthew 7:21; Proverbs 28:9).

V. Baptism Is Essential To Salvation

Again, we call attention to the fact that Saul was told to be baptized in order that his sins might be washed away (Acts 22:16). No, he had not been saved "on the road." If such had been the case, (1) he would have been the most miserable saved person anyone could ever want to see (Acts 9:9), (2) he would have been saved before he entered Christ (Romans 6:3; note Paul's use of the personal pronoun), and (3) he would have been saved with his sins still charged to his account (Acts 22:16).

VI. Religious Devotion Is No Evidence Of Being Right With God

Paul affirmed in Acts 22:3 prior to his conversion he "was zealous toward God." Yea, he was "more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers," he affirmed in Galatians 1:14. How zealous? To the extent that he "persecuted the church of God beyond measure and wasted it" (Galatians 1:13), even to the point of having "persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prison both men and women" (Acts 22:4). He also said that when the early Christians "were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I have punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:10-11). Indeed, Saul was a religious zealot! But, he was not right religiously! You see, a person can be a "religious" sinner! The late C. E. McGaughey used to preach a sermon entitled "Religious Sinners" in which he would show how men can be religious sinners by (1) worshipping, but worshipping the wrong God, (2) worshipping the right God but in the wrong way, (3) worshipping the right God but having never obeyed the gospel, and (4) worshipping the right God, having obeyed the gospel, but then not living up to the standard.

VII. Responding To The Lord's Plan And Plea Is Urgent

When Saul came face to face with what he was to do to be saved, there was no tarrying. In fact, in the book of Acts, after one had heard what to do to be saved there is no account of any sinner's either eating, sleeping, or drinking until he had been baptized into Christ, thus completing his primary obedience to the gospel. In Saul's case it was baptism and then eating (Acts 9:18-19). In the Bible the emphasis is on obeying now! "Be-

hold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2). "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:12-15). We are not to boast ourselves of tomorrow (Proverbs 27:1). After all, before tomorrow, (1) we may die, (2) the Lord may come, (3) we may be rendered incapable of responding to the invitation of the Lord, or (4) we may lose all desire to serve the Lord. Obedience is urgent!

VIII. Upon Conversion, We Are To Start Converting

Upon his conversion, concerning Saul we read, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20). Are we not exhorted, "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" (II Timothy 2:2)? We have been won to win, saved to save, and converted to convert.

CONCLUSION

In the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, (1) we can learn what to do to be saved, (2) we have information which will assist us in meeting religious error, (3) we have information which will assist us in being soul winners for Christ, and (4) we have instruction which will help us in living the Christian life.

—Dean, School of Biblical Studies, Faulkner University, 5345 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36193.

"Lord, Fix The Roof...Quick"

Continued from page 2

1:3). It is amazing that one will use none of his talents, time, money or influence to aid the Lord's cause, and yet will expect all the Lord's blessings to continue uninterrupted. Many never give the Lord or the church a thought until some hardship comes and then they expect something done immediately.

An Associated Press dispatch some time ago told of a Georgia deputy sheriff who had a man come to him in need of official advice.

"Boss, I want you to find out who owns the house I live in!"

"To whom do you pay the rent?" the deputy asked.

"Ain't paid none yet."

"How long have you been living there?"

"Nine years."

"Well, then, what's your trouble all of a sudden?"

The man replied, "Boss, the roof has started to leak and if the landlord don't fix it quick, I'm going to move."

When the roof starts to leak it is too late to find out who owns the house! When hardships come it is too late to punch the emergency button. Stay on praying terms with God, and he will keep the "roof" fixed!

—420 7th Street S.W. Birmingham, AL 35211.



Sunday School

DON'T MISS IT!

If I Had Three Wishes

INTRODUCTION

Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20). In keeping with these divine directions, Paul charged, "Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are upon the earth" (Colossians 3:2).

An excellent way to test one's priorities is to ask, "For what would I wish 'If I had

Three Wishes'?" The athlete might wish to be stronger, more agile, or a whiz at any athletic challenge. The sportsman might wish for a year-round hunting season, a dead-eye shot, or the best fishing hole in the country. The housewife might long for a husband who is more thoughtful, children who are successful, or a dream house where she could live worry-free. A career person might wish for an executive suite, unlimited expense accounts, and assured promotions/raises. Today's Christian can develop proper priorities if he walks in stride with Paul and the three wishes he itemized in Philippians 3:4-14.

I. Paul Wished To Live In Christ (Philippians 3:7-9).

Paul longed to be "found in" Christ. The words "in Christ" bear reference to one's being "in the church of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 1:1-2; II Thessalonians 1:2). God has a unique people he calls his own (Titus 2:14; I Peter 2:9-10; Cf. I Corinthians 6:19-20). Among other figures, this unique body of people is described as Christ's spiritual body (Ephesians 1:22-23; Cf. Colossians 1:18). Paul's first wish was to belong to God as a member of Christ's spiritual body, the church.

(1) Why would being a member of the church, Christ's body, rank "top-billing" in Paul's life? In the first chapter of his letter to the Ephesians, Paul made twelve references to being "in Christ" (verses 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20) and pointed to such as the location of "every spiritual blessing" (verse 3). Of the blessings in Christ, Paul went on to list several in this same chapter: the opportunity of being a member of God's chosen (verses 4-5); being recipients of God's grace (verse 6); redemption and the forgiveness of one's sins (verse 7); a heritage (verse 11); hope (verse 12); as well as the seal and earnest of the Holy Spirit (verse 13-14). Is it any wonder why Paul longed to be in the church of the Lord?

(2) Every Christian should ask, "Is the church first in my life?" Consider the following series of questions. "Does the church receive your support in her Bible school?" As goes the Bible school so goes the church. "Does the church receive your support in gospel meetings, Sunday evening services, Wednesday evening services, singing emphases, etc.?" Nothing is more important than building up the church through proper attendance habits, and the personal strength that can be derived therefrom. "Do you make room for church work -- or does everything else fit into your schedule



Dan Winkler

BEFORE church work?" The work of the Lord must take precedence in one's life. "Do you talk the church down, or talk her up?" -- How important it is to put the kingdom of God first (Matthew 6:33)!

II Paul Wished To "Live Like Christ" (Philippians 3:10, 11)

Paul longed to know the power of Jesus' resurrection and be conformed to the death of Jesus. Such terminology reminds one of his words to the Romans (Romans 6:3-5). God sets a unique challenge before man: that being, to live like Jesus (II Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 2:5; I Peter 2:21). Paul's second wish was to measure up to this challenge.

(1) Why would living like Jesus rank 'top-billing' in Paul's life? In the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul concerned himself with the law of the Holy Spirit (verses 1-4), the mind of the Spirit (verses 5-8), the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit (verses 9-11), the leadership of the Spirit [he leads solely through his word - II Timothy 3:16-17] (verses 12-14), and, the intercession of the Spirit (verses 26-30). According to Paul, these things "work together for good" to those who are in Jesus, striving to live like he lived (verses 28-30). Is it any wonder why Paul would long to live like Jesus as a member of his church?

(2) Every Christian should ask, "Is living like Jesus first in my life?" Someone has said, "Nature forms us [such is accomplished through the natural laws which have been in existence since the creation of time]; sin deforms us; school reforms us; but only Christ can transform us." How important it is to so live as to sincerely re-echo the words of Paul, "Christ shall be magnified in my body. . . for to me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:20-21)!

III. Paul Wished To "Live With Christ" (Philippians 3:12-14).

Paul longed for and "pressed on toward the

goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Cf. II Timothy 4:7-8). God has extended the unique promise of eternal life to all who faithfully love and serve him (Titus 1:2; I Peter 1:3-4). Such is also termed a reward (Matthew 5:12), a treasure (Matthew 6:20), a mansion (John 14:1-3), and an incorruptible crown of life (I Corinthians 9:24-25; Revelation 2:10). Paul's third wish was to enjoy this reward, partake of this treasure, live in this mansion, and wear this crown.

(1) Why would living with Jesus rank "top-billing" in Paul's life? In the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians, Paul specified three reasons why he longed to live with Jesus. Paul longed to live with Jesus because of the incorruptibility he would enjoy at such a time (Verse 1-5). Paul longed to live with Jesus because of the home that would be his at such a time (verses 6-8). Paul also longed to live with Jesus because it would entail his avoiding hell (verses 5:10-11).

(2) Every Christian should ask, "Is the hope of heaven first in my life?" Often the lyrics are sung "Heaven Holds All To Me." Is such true?

CONCLUSION

There is no "Aladdin's Lamp" for granting these three important wishes. In following the example of Paul (Cf. I Corinthians 11:1), one must sacrifice (Philippians 3:4-8), submit himself to the will of God (Philippians 3:9), and have a stick-to-it disposition (Philippians 3:12, 14) for these wishes to come true in his own life.

The faithful Christian cherishes his opportunity of "living in Christ," of "living with Christ."

—P.O. Box 166, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344.

Do You Know Who I Am?

Continued from page 2

hearted to the grave.

"I have intended no evil, but because of me talents have come to naught, courtesy and kindness have failed, and the promise of success as well as happiness has yielded sorrow and disaster.

"I have no sound; just silence; no cause for being myself. I have no offering to make except grief and sorrow. You may not in an instant call me by name, but surely you are personally acquainted with me.

"My name? . . . NEGLECT!!!"

It is highly unlikely that any single factor more often enters into the careless and indifferent situations of our lives than does neglect. So many times God warns us of this danger. Through Paul we are urged to "be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1). He told Timothy to "Neglect not the gift that is in thee" (I

Timothy 4:14).

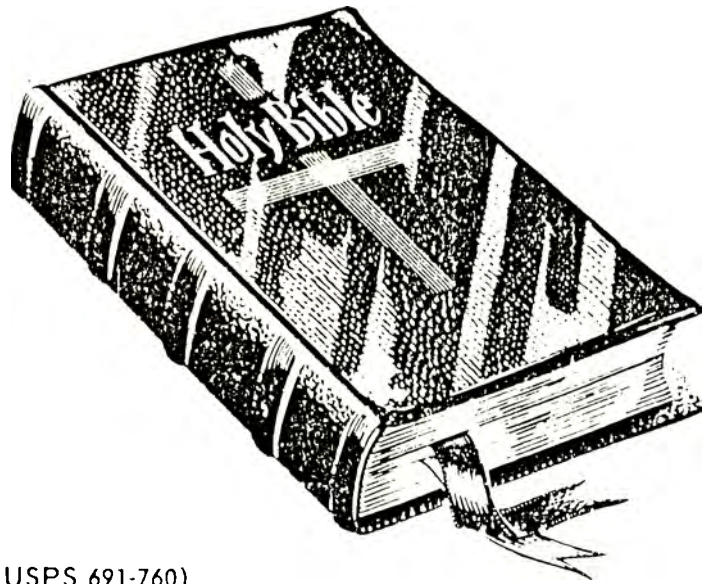
What is the difference between the atheist who supports no church, and the member who will not support the church of the Lord to which he belongs? What is the difference between the skeptic who does not believe the Bible, and the negligent church member who never reads it?

Too many churches are singing "Standing On The Promises" when they are in reality just 'sitting on the premises!' Someone has said that every church is made up of willing workers: 10 percent are WILLING to do the work, and the other 90 percent are WILLING to let them do it.

Too many have learned that heaven will be a place of rest, and are going to be all practiced up for it!

—420 7th Street SW, Birmingham, AL 35211.

Season's Greetings



(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 24

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1987

NUMBER 52

The Foolish Rich Man

The Lord's favorite method for imparting great moral and spiritual values was the use of parables. These down-to-earth stories about people were (and are) easily understood and remembered.

Sixteen of the 38 parables of Jesus are concerned with stewardship of material possessions. While Scripture mentions faith and prayer some 500 times each, material possessions are discussed nearly 1,000 times.

In Luke 12:13-23 a man asked Jesus to "bid [his] brother divide the inheritance with [him]." The Master responded with the story of the foolish rich man who "laid up treasure for himself, but was not rich toward God" (12:21). When his fields brought forth plentifully he reasoned: "I will pull down my barns and build greater." He said to himself "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." In this lesson we will analyze the rich man's life and the mistakes he made.

About The Man

Our subject was a wealthy farmer. Observation teaches us that farmers have to be hard workers, and diligent workers, if they succeed. We have every reason to believe that he acquired his wealth in an honorable, legitimate way. There is no indication that he either abused his employees or engaged in illegal practices.

The man was no miser. It seems he was willing to spend his money. His building projects would benefit many in the community: namely, those who provided the building materials, and the carpenters. He was willing to take "early retirement," thus providing others a chance at success. We cannot fault him for saving his money.



John Waddey

Nor have we any reason to question his goodness and integrity as a family man, neighbor, or citizen. No doubt in the eyes of his neighbors this man appeared to be a shrewd, astute and successful businessman.

God's Evaluation of the Man

While he was yet basking in his prosperity and his dreams for the future, "God said unto him, Thou foolish one (Luke 12:20). Be assured that the farmer did not think himself a "fool." He thought he was pretty smart! Wealth has a way of distorting one's vision. It is strange that our society tends to honor the very type of man whom God calls a "fool!" Today he would be a good candidate for the "Farmer of the Year" award! He was a "fool" -- not an "idiot," but a man whose priorities were scrambled.

The Mistakes He Made

This rich man forgot God. He thought of himself as a self-made man -- that he had obtained his wealth all by himself. Old Nebuchadnezzar made a similar mistake in Daniel's day, and it cost him dearly (Daniel 4:30-31). Actually there is no such thing as a self-made man. That rich farmer was really just a share-cropper with God! God has furnished the land which he had cultivated (I Corinthians 10:26). Even the seed he planted was given by God (Genesis 1:29). The water for his fields came from God (Psalms 147:7-8). His very intelligence and ability to plant the crop, and to harvest it at the appropriate time, was heaven-given.

He forgot the purpose of his labor, he thought only of himself. We need to ask, "Why do we work?" Some today are like him: they work only to acquire more possessions, or to enjoy more pleasure. Christians must have a different motive. We work to provide for our own families (I Timothy 5:8). We labor, working with our hands "that we may have to give to him that hath need" (Ephesians 4:28). With Paul we labor that we may help the gospel to be spread to all the world (I Thessalonians 2:9). Covetousness is condemned along with idolatry and fornication (Colossians 3:5). W. M. Taylor says, "Covetousness is not simply the desire for a possession of property;

it is the desire of having it simply for the sake of having it. . . ."

Our subject forgot his fellowman. As far as he was concerned, there were no homeless children, nor poor widows, in all the world. He may have enjoyed success in every way, even in his synogogue; but he failed miserably in terms of religion. Pure religion demands that we "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" (James 1:27). The second great commandment is to love one's neighbor as one's self (Matthew 22:39). Something in the reflection of silver and gold tends to blind us to the needs of others.

The man was foolish in thinking he could satisfy his soul with material things (12:19). He lacked spiritual perception to accompany his business skills. He thought his soul could feed on wheat and corn. Too late he learned that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). With Solomon he learned that all his possessions were "vanity and a striving after the wind and no profit without God" (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11).

He was foolish in laying up his treasures in the wrong storehouse: his barns, instead of heaven (Matthew 6:19-20). He failed to consult his partner (God) as to the proper investment of his earnings -- and it cost him!

He failed to understand that life is more than the sum of one's possessions.

Thinking he had a perpetual "lease on life" led him to make a foolish decision. He was thinking in terms of many years of retirement, God, was thinking about hours (Luke 12:19-20).

Lessons to Remember

God is the actual owner of all things: "For the world is mine and the fullness thereof" (Psalms 50:12).

We are totally dependent upon God. We owe him our all. We serve him as stewards of his possessions. Every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17). With David we confess "of thine own have we give thee"

Continued On Page 4



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 Editor's Pen

Flavil H. Nichols

Elders, Send Words Of Truth

As "overseers" (Acts 20:28) of the Lord's church, elders have solemn obligations! They must take heed to themselves, plus take heed to the entire congregation. "They watch for your souls" (Hebrews 13:17) places a grave responsibility upon them. No weightier duties were ever borne by our fellow human beings.



Many of us lament the fact that some FLAVIL H. NICHOLS preachers now give forth uncertain sounds. The spirit of compromise seems to be growing. Finding a sound, loyal, faithful, congregation with which to work and worship is becoming difficult in many areas. Some preachers have ceased to "preach the word" as commanded (11 Timothy 4:2). 'Book, chapter, and verse' preaching is no longer popular in many congregations, and is even ridiculed by some who occupy the pulpit. Both orally and in writing, some teach 'rotten' doctrine, not "sound doctrine," as the Holy Spirit demands (Titus 2:1; 1:9).

But there is help! Subscribe to this paper for each family in your membership. Sending Words Of Truth to each family is like adding our fine writers to the teaching staff of your congregation!!! Frequent contributors include Edsel Burlison, Demar Elam, Joe E. Galloway, Roy J. Hearn, W. A. Holley, Dabney Phillips—to name only a few. I also plan to publish more and more material by my father, the late Gus Nichols.

A sermon my father preached to a group of approximately 100 who had begun to meet separately from their local congregation, will soon appear. After hearing this sermon, the ENTIRE GROUP returned to their former congregation! This taped sermon has not until now been put into manuscript form.

All our columns are used for teaching. We do not carry any paid advertising. This, plus the fact that an issue is printed each week, means that month by month our volume of teaching approximates that in the bi-monthly brotherhood journals, which do print display advertising. The size of our four pages equals eight pages their size. Also, we print 52 issues a year, while they send out only 24.

Words Of Truth costs only as much as one (1) first-class postage stamp each week -- only 22¢ per week. For \$11.44 per year this journal can be mailed directly to each family. The rate is the same (22¢ per copy) for a bundle of papers mailed to one address.

Let me encourage elders everywhere to have Words Of Truth mailed to each family in your membership. Mailing it to the members' home addresses has several advantages. (1) If a bundle is distributed at church services, only those who attend will receive copies. (2) Some weeks a family that attends every ser-

vice may forget to pick up a copy. (3) Sometimes more than one in a family will pick up a paper, leaving none for other families. (4) A copy taken home from a service may get 'mislaid' with coats, or other paraphernalia, including the Sunday newspaper. (5) Many feel that on Sundays they get 'enough' religious instruction at the church services.

By subscribing for each family by direct mail, even the absentees will benefit from it. By its being delivered on a week-day by mail, it will receive prompt attention. If one issue is laid aside unread, or only partially read, next week there will be another issue in the mailbox calling for attention. By its delivery on a week-day, many will feel a need for spiritual guidance not provided that day in a church service. While it is true that some people get such a volume of mail that they may be inclined to lay aside Words Of Truth without reading it, many, many other people get so little mail that they are 'hungry' for good reading materials.

Elders, send the mailing address (including zip code) of your entire membership list to--

Words Of Truth
P.O. Box 430,
Haleyville, AL 35565

to subscribe for Words Of Truth for each of your families. Of course, you may subscribe also for prospects, or those who no longer are faithful in attendance. You may request that it be sent for a month before the bill is submitted for payment by the publisher.

Important Notice To Subscribers

Unless you notify him, our publisher has no way to know when any one dies for whom you agree to pay. The same is true of those who move out of your area, or transfer to some other local church. It costs 30¢ for each copy returned, or for each notice of address changes. You should keep a copy of your original list submitted, plus a copy of all additions to that list. Periodically you should 'update' your subscriptions list by deleting those for whom you no longer wish to pay (such as: those who die, or move away, or whom you withdraw from), as well as add new members to your list.

"Let Us Go...And Visit... And See How They Do!"

This statement, (in Acts 15:36) was made by Paul to Barnabas after the apostles and elders had gathered in Jerusalem to discuss the future of Gentile Christians. Paul and Barnabas had established churches in various cities, and returned to see how these brethren were doing. Why did they desire to go? The verse refers to these Christians as "our brethren" -- brothers and sisters in Christ. They had all become children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26). Thus, there was a closeness, a kinship, because they were all part of the family of God (Ephesians 3:15).



Don Williams

For the same reason, we today need to visit others. There need to be some modern-day Pauls and Barnabases who are willing to "go and see how our brethren are doing."

The word "visit" or "visitation," is found at least twelve times in the New Testament. The word has within it the idea of inspection, looking over -- seeing the needs one might have and fulfilling those needs. Such is the meaning of the word in James 1:27: "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." Seeing and fulfilling the needs of widows and orphans meets with God's specific approval.

We see this same idea exhibited in the story

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Invite A Friend
To Attend Services
With You On
Sunday

In Times Like These When False Teachers Are Encouraged By Christians

(NO. III)

James Meadows

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE FALSE DOCTRINES BEING ADVOCATED IN THE CHURCH TODAY?

Sixth, some are saying we must take the attitude -- "Who am I to say they are wrong when they are so sincere?" -- about religious error. Another would say: "we must not judge."

First, the Bible nowhere makes sincerity alone the test of right. If sincerity is the standard of right, then the only ones wrong regardless of what they believe are hypocrites. Does sincerity change falsehood into truth? Does error become truth just because one is sincere in his beliefs? "If sincerity does not change error into truth, it must follow that truth is not important if one is all right because he sincerely believes error" (Franklin Camp).

Second, the Bible teaches: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). But the Bible nowhere teaches "Ye shall be sincere, and sincerity shall make you free."

Third, the Bible clearly reveals that one's actions which are contrary to truth, regardless of how sincere one may be, always result in God's displeasure. Uzzah was not killed because of his insincerity (II Samuel 6:6-7) but because of his error ("rashness," margin). If it does not matter what one believes so long as one is sincere, then it should not matter what one does -- so long as one is sincere. But it did!

Fourth, the consequences of such a position are to destroy the Bible as a standard of faith and practice. If sincerity becomes a substitute for truth, then for what "truth" does it become a substitute? who is going to decide which error can be sincerely accepted and please the Lord? is it just one specific error that can be sincerely accepted? or is it any error? if it is only specific error, and not any and every error, who will determine the specific error and what will be the standard by which it will be determined? if any error can be accepted so long as one is sincere, then what need is there of the Bible?

Fifth, it is not, "Who am I to say people are wrong when they are sincere," but what does God say about it? If one says, "A man is justified by faith only" and I read James 2:24 which says a man is not justified by faith only, am I the one who says he is wrong? or is it God? If another says, "A man is saved before baptism," and I read Mark 16:16 which says "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," am I the one who says he is wrong? or, is it God?

Seventh, "Social drinking is approved by the word of God and must not be labeled a sin." "Drinking in America is condoned, popularized and advocated. It has been made glamorous and even essential to social mobility. Tippling and 'social drinking' have been galvanized into respectability" (Claude Gardner). Some Christians are arguing: "The Bible condemns drunkenness, but does one condemn the use of a little strong drink or social drink." Surely all, in view of plain scriptures (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; I Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 5:21), agree that

drunkenness is a sin. But those who attempt to defend 'social drinking' need "to understand that the difference between a social drinker and a drunkard is only a difference of degree, not a difference of kind . . . The degree of drunkenness depends on the concentration of alcohol in the blood . . . Obviously there are degrees of intoxication, but remember the Bible does not say 'don't get dead drunk,' it just says 'Don't get drunk' . . . The Scriptures which condemn drunkenness also condemn social drinking because social drinking involves enough alcohol consumption to affect the brain in those areas that are most important morally and spiritually" (Flavil R. Yeakley).

Eighth, some are teaching that "women are free to do anything in the church that men are free to do." They argue, "But in Christ there is no male or female (Galatians 3:28) but they are all equal in every sense of the term. In Christ a woman has been restored to her creation standing -- equality in every sense in Christ." First, Galatians 3:26-28 shows that all, regardless of nationality or social standing, can and must enter Christ in the same way. Second, these verses also show that all can and do enjoy the same spiritual blessings in Christ. Third, Galatians 3:28 does not say all distinctions are erased -- there are still men, women, slaves, masters, etc. -- else Paul's instructions in Ephesians 1:5-9 means nothing. Third, if such be true, there can be no subordinate positions in Christ; yet God's word does place woman in a subordinate position to man (Genesis 3:16; I Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23). Fourth, I Timothy 2:11, 12 states that a woman is to learn ". . . with all subjection" and is not to "usurp authority over the man." "Subjection means the quality or state of being subject and esp. under the power, control, or government of another" (Webster). "In its original sense, however, to be under subjection means to be placed in an order; to be under definite 'tagmata' (arrangement of things in order, as ranks, rows, classes)" (Fritz Zerbs). In this

passage it represents the proper position of a woman. No, a woman is not free to do everything a man is free to do.

Ninth, some are saying that "elders do not have authority by reason of office. One becomes a qualified elder by reason of qualifications, service, leadership, etc., is the authority elders have." It is true that elders are not to lord it over the flock (I Peter 5:3). It is also true that elders who do not lead, serve, and set the proper example will have little influence and be able to exercise little authority over the flock (Acts 20:28). But, if only moral qualifications are all the authority elders have, then what authority does an elder have after appointment that he did not have before? If every congregation were ideal, then "moral authority of service" might be enough; but every congregation is not ideal. If "moral authority of service" be all the authority an elder has, then how can elders exercise discipline in a local church? If "moral authority of service" is all the authority elders have, then why would a Christian be any more obligated to submit to appointed qualified elders, than to men who are qualified, but not appointed? If a man becomes qualified by service, leadership, etc., and this gives him "moral authority," why wouldn't a congregation be obligated to appoint every man that reaches this stage? The word for "obey" in Hebrews 13:17 is the same word used in James 3:3 in connection with putting "bits in the horse's mouth, that they may obey us." Exert whatever influence is necessary to get the job done. To "claim that hegeomai" (the Greek word for "rule" in Hebrews 13:17, J. M.) "does not imply that elders have authority is to ignore the evidence. Well did Westcott write: 'The word occurs frequently in the LXX, of various forms of authority. . . yet some would have us believe that elders have no authority'" (Steve Williams).

(To be concluded).

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A Shipwrecked Faith

"Holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (I Timothy 1:19-20).

We live in a day of wrecks: wrecked cars, planes, trains. Among human beings there are physical, as well as moral and spiritual



W. A. Holley

wrecks. Sin has wrecked countless thousands of homes, even in America. But the greatest wreck is that of a shipwrecked faith; in which instance, Satan has taken over. We shall study the life of King Saul as told in the Old Testament.

King Saul's first step downward was his impatience under trial. He offered a sacrifice unto God when he should have waited for Samuel (I Samuel 13:8-14). When Samuel learned of Saul's rash act, he said to Saul: "Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath

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Discouragement, The Devil's Costliest Tool

Discouragement affects every phase of our lives. In business, there are many developments that cause one to often wonder, "Why did I ever decide to undertake this task?" In the home, there are those situations that prompt one to say, "How could this ever happen to us?" Yea, in the church, conditions are sometimes seen that have many saying, "Is it really worth it?"



Edsel Burleson

Discouragement is not a respecter of persons nor of age. The youngster who always comes in second says to himself, "It's no use. I can never be a

A Shipwrecked Faith

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commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee" (1 Samuel 13:13-14). Learn to wait on the Lord; do not run ahead of God!!

Another step in Saul's downfall was, he became extremely self-willed and power-mad. He wanted his own way. When Saul went into the land of the Amalekites, his commission was to destroy every thing there; but he kept the best of the cattle, and saved King Agag alive. (Read the story in 1 Samuel 15). His sin was not one of ignorance. His obedience was only partial. Saul tried to justify his disobedience by substituting sacrifices for true obedience. Saul found it difficult to repent of his sins (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31).

King Saul had another flaw in his character: he did not properly appreciate a loyal friend. Samuel was that special friend! Samuel was so concerned about Saul's weaknesses that he prayed all night in Saul's behalf (verse 11). Samuel not only prayed for Saul, but came to him and talked with him about his sins. Compare David with Saul: David would have repented; but Saul was too stubborn and hard-headed.

Saul allowed envy, jealousy, and hateful passions to engulf him. (Read the sad story). The longer he lived, the worse he became. His jealousy came only occasionally. Sin grows! And it becomes a terrible habit (James 1:13-15). He came to hate the goodness and wisdom of David (1 Samuel 18:7, 8, 17, 21). Saul permitted his religion to become a sham (James 1:26-27). Any religion that does not meet the demands of God is a false religion.

Look at King Saul -- a man who has shipwrecked his faith:

A) The Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul (1 Samuel 10:6-10).

B) Saul prophesied. (Ibid).

C) God departed from Saul (1 Samuel 28:16).

D) God became his enemy (Ibid).

E) Saul visited the witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28:7-14)

F) Saul tried to communicate with the Lord, but it was too late (1 Samuel 28:6).

G) Saul is now left without God. When it is too late, it is too late!

One day it will be too late for you!

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winner." The adult, seeing efforts fail to produce desired results, decides, "I'll just let someone else do it." The aged, with eyes dimmer and steps slowed, often concludes, "Everywhere I go, I'm in the way."

Sometimes these problems seem to pile up on one another. Troubles heap upon troubles. Life is so different from what we had hoped, and so many dreams are shattered. Seemingly, all we know is disappointment.

How desperately we need to learn what the great apostle to the Gentiles had learned. He said, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:12-13). Truly, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalms 46:1).

Someone tells of an announcement by the devil that he was going out of business, and would offer all his tools for sale to whoever would pay his price. On the night of the sale, they were all attractively displayed-- and a

bad-looking lot they were! Malice, Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Sensuality, and Deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out, each marked with its price. Apart from the rest, however, lay a harmless looking, wedge-shaped tool, much worn -- and priced higher than any of the others.

Someone asked the devil what it was. "That is Discouragement," was the reply. "Well, why do you price it so high?" "Because," replied the devil, "It is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man's conscience with that when I could not get near him with any of the others -- and once inside, I can use him whatever way suits me best. It is so worn because I use it with nearly everybody, as very few people yet know it belongs to me."

It hardly needs to be added that the devil's price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it -- and is using it every day.

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"Let Us Go...And Visit ...And See How They Do!"

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of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10. Although this was not "a planned visit," the Samaritan saw him, had compassion on him, and went to him. He then ascertained the need, and met it. He bound up the man's wounds, put him upon his beast, and carried him to the inn and took care of him (Luke 10:33-34).

How many people, like the beaten Jew, need us to visit them, and show them compassion in the name of Christ? How many widows need, maybe not money, nor even food, but our time and attention invested in them? How many "potential" Christians are waiting in our own cities and neighborhoods, needing their physical requirements to be met, so that we might then meet their spiritual needs through Christ?

No child of God is closer to heaven than when he aids in visiting and taking care of the needs of others. Solomon tells us in giving unto the needy "we lend unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Proverbs 19:17). A visit, a dish of food, a bouquet of flowers -- even a cup of cold water (Matthew 10:42) -- each is seen and credited to man's account in heaven. Perhaps, Jesus puts it best when he says, "Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

LET US GO OUT, VISIT THOSE IN NEED, AND HELP THEM IN THE NAME OF CHRIST!

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The Foolish Rich Man

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(1 Chronicles 29:14).

We will give account to God for the way we use our material possessions (Romans 14:12).

It is our duty to "honor Jehovah with [our] substance, and with the first-fruits of all [our] increase" (Proverbs 3:9-10).

We must think of ourselves as partners with God in the disbursement of our material possessions (1 Corinthians 3:9).

"It is better to make a life than a living" (W. E. Russell). THINGS may be necessary to a living but they can never make a life.

Our treatment of money and possessions is the ultimate test of character -- both in how we make, and how we use, it. Money is strange in that only beings with souls can use it, multiply it, and glorify God with it. The old Romans said "money is like sea water - the more you drink the thirstier you become." Financial success implies neither wisdom

nor godliness.

Men frequently make the mistake of measuring themselves by what they have, rather than by what they are.

We must take heed to keep ourselves from all covetousness (Luke 12:15). Covetous men put cash before character. Riches, said Solomon, can be kept by the owner thereof to his own hurt (Ecclesiastes 5:13). John Wesley's wise philosophy is yet a good one "Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can."

How much did the rich man leave behind? All of it! "There are no pockets in a shroud."

This parable provides us a vivid word-picture of a "fool." He "laid up treasures for himself and was not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

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