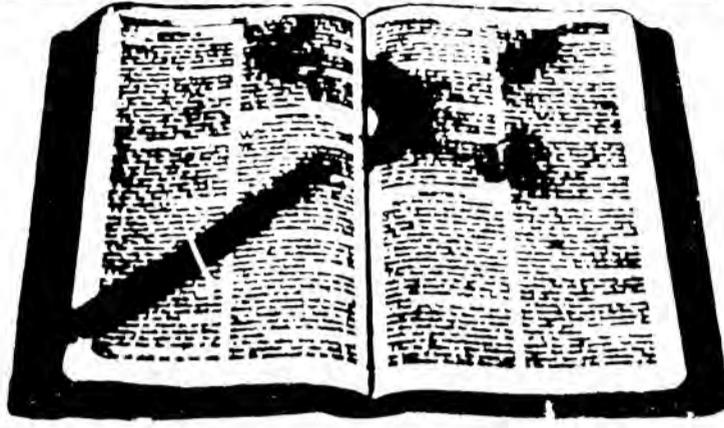


WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

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NUMBER 1

Gus Nichols, A Preacher Par Excellence

Once in a great while God blesses the earth with a person who is a rare jewel of humanity, coming all of those traits and characteristics that all men admire. Although God has given the church of our day many notable and capable preachers, few have been endowed with the graces of Christ, the powers of intellect, skills of oratory and the practical success as was Gus Nichols of Jasper, Alabama.

The author has known of Bro. Nichols since his college days, but only in the last seven years have I been privileged to know him personally. Yet in that time I have learned to love and appreciate Gus Nichols and to county him my "ideal" as a preacher this side of Christ and the apostles. Herewith are some of the characteristics that so impressed me.

He was great and highly successful, yet always humble and unassuming.

He was notable yet still a servant to God and man.

He was among the best of preachers, yet he was still approachable.

He was friendly, and open, willing to share his thoughts with others, and listen to others.

He was a scholar of distinction, yet he was always a student, studying and learning to the end.

He was a highly educated man without the benefits of a lot of formal training in religious schools. He taught himself!

He was a renowned preacher, yet he was very sympathetic toward younger preachers. He always had time and was willing to help young men.

He was a busy man, yet he took time to put his wisdom down in print for future generations.

He was in great demand as an evangelist, yet he was a dedicated and successful local preacher and congregation builder.

He was an able pulpiter, yet still a soul-winner, interested in the individual.

He reached the pinnacle of success, yet never retired. He was a tireless worker who fell at his post of duty.

He was a successful builder of a local congregation, yet he found time to become a noted scholar.

He was a dedicated worker at home, yet he

was interested in the welfare of, and took time for, the church abroad.

He was a great evangelist, yet also a capable debater and defender of the faith.

He could boldly defend the truth and attack error without being ugly or hateful to those with whom he disagreed.

He was a leader of adults, yet he had time for youngsters.

He excelled as a preacher, yet he was a dedicated family man, a beloved husband and father.

He practiced in life what he preached from the pulpit. He was godly, holy, and pure in thoughts, words and deeds.

Let it be told across the land that "a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel this day" (II Sam. 3:38.) As was said of righteous Abel

(Heb. 11:14), though Bro. Nichols be dead, he "yet speaketh" through his written words, through the thousands he won to Christ, through the hundreds of men he has influenced to preach. It will be difficult to replace such a warrior of the cross. Only a handful of his kind grace a generation of humanity.

John heard a voice from heaven saying, ". . . Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14:13.) I am richer because Gus Nichols lived; I am a better preacher because of his influence.

I look forward to seeing brother Nichols in heaven.

Congregational Edification

NOVIE C. PERRY

A church, in order to be acceptable to God, must continue to grow. In order to have this continuous growth there ought to be planning, organizing, motivating, periodic evaluation, and replanning.

PLANNING

Planning involves setting goals and defining the steps required to reach those goals. It often means setting priorities among goals for attention and energy. Without goals, a congregation is like a colony of ants adrift on a piece of driftwood — busy doing something to no avail. People need planned goals to give them:

- (1) agreed-upon objectives toward which to strive,
- (2) a feeling of united purpose,
- (3) a reason for existing,
- (4) satisfaction of accomplishment, and
- (5) motivation to use their greatest potential for productive progress and growth.

Organizing the best men and women for carrying out the plan is a necessity. It takes people to produce, as well as to work, the plan. An effective eldership can pride itself on how well it brings the congregation's resources to bear on implementing plans for growth, whether it be for a Vacation Bible School, or a six-year educational program.

MOTIVATION

Motivation, like every major element concerning congregational growth, is just one important requirement which must be present in every facet of growth — from start to finish. It is necessary to sell those who are recruited for any work in the Lord on the idea, "You are

THE person for this job, and we have full confidence in your ability to do well." There may be need for some special training course, or classes, to bolster the confidence of those recruited; and there must be periodic (verbal and physical) "patting on the back" for every member who is trying. The knowledge of the IMPORTANCE of the task; the ENJOYMENT of doing it; the OPPORTUNITIES for achievement, recognition, and personal growth; these things really satisfy the volunteer worker on the job, and cause him to feel needed (I Cor. 12:21-25).

EVALUATION

Periodic evaluation involves keeping track of whether the various assignments accepted are being done on schedule. This evaluation may be done in various ways, e.g., teachers' meetings, charting by graphs, elders' individual contacts with the workers, educational director, AD INFINITUM. The planned goals ought to include deadlines or stopping points, lest the workers "grow weary in well doing" (I Cor. 15:58). One major reason visitation, and personal work, program fail or (over a period of months) wind up with only a handful out of the many who began the program, is due to lack of a stopping place, according to brother Windell Winkler (Glen Gardens church, 6209 Abbott Avenue, Ft. Worth, Texas 76118). We ought not run anything until 'Old Betsy' falls exhausted to the ground! Let's change horses, or riders — or both! All programs ought to be treated like patients in the hospital, viz., give them a

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WORDS of TRUTH

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FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Editor

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Hands That

Shed Innocent Blood

[Editor's Note: This article is so vital that I am giving it editorial space.—FHN.]

God hates hands that shed innocent blood! (Prov. 6:16-17). To Noah God declared that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image God made he man" (Gen. 9:6). In every dispensation the law of God has proclaimed, "Thou shalt not kill."

OUR CHALLENGE

Today in our land there is a wholesale slaughter of innocent life. Each day some 4,000 unborn babies are destroyed by abortion. Abortion clinics advertise their business in local papers. This wanton destruction begins as early as the tenth week of pregnancy, and is widely done even in the last few weeks and days of gestation. All of this is "legal" with the blessings of our Supreme Court, and of the president's lady. Herod's killing of a FEW babies in Bethlehem pales before THIS grisly scene! The Pharaoh who ordered the Hebrew male children slain to hold down the population is made to look like a modern-day ecology hero! Each day, Nazi Germany gains respectability in the face of these modern atrocities!

WHERE WILL THE TRAIL LEAD?

The same element that has promoted the abortion legislation is now priming for an extension of their victory. Dr. William Gaylin, professor of psychiatry and law at Columbia University, told a conference of the American Association of University Women: "It used to be easy to know what we wanted for our children, and now the best for our children might mean deciding which ones to kill. We've always wanted the best for our grandparents, and now that might mean killing them. We have the awesomeness of



JOHN WADDEY

knowledge to do these things, and inevitably we shall be forced to act on it" (Feb. 17, 1972, as quoted in THE MERCY KILLERS, Dr. Paul Marx). Dr. Alan Guttmacher (president of Planned Parenthood) and liberal theological Joseph Fletcher (the father of situation ethics) are both pro-abortionists and members of the Euthanasia Education Council. Dr. Glanville Williams in his book THE SANCTITY OF LIFE AND THE CRIMINAL LAW, strongly advocates abortion and euthanasia and finally pleads for legalization of "humanitarian infanticide" and "euthanasia for handicapped children" (Marx, *ibid.*). Dr. R. A. Gallop warns, "Once you permit the killing of the unborn child, there will be no stopping. There will be no age limit. You are setting off a chain reaction that will eventually make you the victim. Your children will kill you because you permitted the killing of their brothers and sisters. Your children will kill you because they will not want to support you in your old age. Your children will kill you for your homes and estates. If a doctor will take money for killing the innocent in the womb, he will kill you with a needle when paid by your children. This is the terrible nightmare you are creating for the future."

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

It is truly depressing that so few voices are heard in defense of the unborn victims of abortion. The pro-abortionists have a virtual monopoly of the public news media. We see Catholics protesting. Some Baptists have begun a right-to-life movement. Most of the large, liberal Protestant sects have actually endorsed this bloody practice. I am distressed that so few members of the Lord's church are speaking out. Are there no prophets to protest this evil?

Surely the problem is a matter of education. Likely most brethren are like the author was before I made a serious study of the matter. I just did not realize the awful implications of the abortion question. For many years, virtually no material was available dealing with the moral, religious, and ethical issues involved. The abortionist in the meantime has succeeded in convincing most people that this is a "personal", "individual" matter, and not our concern. They have sold most people on the idea that the unborn child is NOT a human being, rather it is only a "blob" of tissue, or a part of the mother's body. While we groped about, or slept, the Devil won a great victory. Something must be done, and done quickly. Today, abortions are the most frequently-performed legal surgery next to tonsillectomies, according to Christopher Tietze in an Associated Press release.

WE ARE OBLIGATED

We Christians have a moral, spiritual responsibility to speak out and work to change the situation. In Nazi Germany, the euthanasia program put to death some 350,000 people which were judged unworthy of life BEFORE the government elected to exterminate the Jewish population. Scores of M.D.'s and doctors of social medicine eagerly volunteered to participate in helping to relieve the "suffering" of the unfortunate patients of mental hospitals and homes for defective children by dispatching them with lethal injections or deadly gasses. The churches in Germany offered only a mild, weak protest. "Dr. Karl Brandt stated that it was Hitler's opinion that resistance to the euthanasia killings on the part of the churches would under the circumstances not play a great role. The efforts were sporadic, isolated, and fragmentary. At certain levels the attitude was for a long time so passive and ambiguous that a top bureaucrat in the mercy killings, Hans Hefelmann, could state truthfully in court in Limburg that it had been his understanding that the church was willing to tolerate such killings (at the time) under certain conditions" (Frederick Wertham, M.D., CAN THIS HAPPEN AGAIN?, from his book, A SIGN FOR CAIN, AN EXPLORATION OF HUMAN VIOLENCE, Warner; Paperback).

When historians write the story of our

generation, how will they describe the church's response to this heinous evil? Will your conscience allow you to stand mute? or will it force you to cry out against it?

HOW TO HELP

Information is now available. Look up and get in touch with your local RIGHT TO LIFE GROUP, ask for reading materials, and inform yourself. If such is not available, write the author and he will send you some study materials. Speak out in the pulpit and in other public areas against this evil practice. The time is far spent, we must redeem every moment. Send a self-addressed stamped (2 stamps, please) envelope to John Waddey, Rt. 22 Weaver Road, Knoxville, Tennessee 37921.

Bride and Groom Relationship

STEVEN CLARK GOAD

Jeffersonville, Ind.

What a joyous and beautifully heart-warming experience to observe a couple in love pledge their devotion and lives to each other in the vows of matrimony. God made woman for man that the two might grow in love and join themselves to each other in a permanent relationship, one which is even honored by heaven. The bride should naturally long to be in the bridegroom's arms — that honored place of protection and affection intended for such a relationship.

Our relationship as the bride (the church) to Jesus is just as warm and even more beautiful, because it is a relationship which has a spiritual emphasis to it. When we are joined to Jesus at salvation (Gal. 3:27), we pledge our fidelity to him alone, forsaking any "adulterous" extra-marital relationship with the devil. "You also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God" (Rom. 7:4). May we never be guilty of breaching that holy union!

What bride who truly loves her husband wants to miss the honeymoon, and refuses to live in her husband's house? It would be obvious by such action that love was not involved at all. Isn't it distressing to see people "give themselves to Jesus" in baptism, then never show up at the groom's "house"? (I Tim. 3:15). What bride who loves her husband will deliberately miss the opportunity of eating with him? But so many of my brothers and sisters, claiming to be "married" to the Holy One, refuse to commune with him at the Lord's table (I Cor. 10:16). What a reproach to the "adulterers" of the church bring upon the rest of the Christian family!

Christian And Atheist To Meet In Debate

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Brother Thomas B. Warren, faithful and able gospel preacher, Editor of *The Spiritual Sword* and professor of Christian Evidences at the Harding Graduate School of Religion, with a degree in Philosophy from Vanderbilt University, has been invited to meet Dr. Antony Flew, Professor of Philosophy at Reading University in England, to a public debate. They both have accepted. This debate will be September 20-23, 1976. The place will be on the campus of North Texas State University at Denton, Texas, and will be conducted in their new coliseum.

Dr. Flew is perhaps the most able defender of the atheistic view in the Western World. This debate promises to attract as much attention as any debate on this subject since the famous Campbell-Owen debate. Brother Warren is making adequate preparation to meet this well-known advocate of error. Prayers of faithful saints, as well as your presence would be deeply appreciated.

Edited and adapted from the Getwell church of Christ bulletin, via The Beacon.

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



EVEN GREAT MEN HAVE PROBLEMS

JOB 1:2-4
Job

Chapter one

There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. He had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and very many servants; so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each on his day; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

— verses 2, 3, 4.

A perpetual appeal to troubled hearts are the words of the ever popular song,

Tempted and tried we're oft made to wonder

*Why it should be thus all the day long,
While there are others living about us,
Never molested tho in the wrong.*

— Stevens

The popularity of this song reveals a wide-spread sentiment that some people never have problems. And we tend to feel that applies especially to people who have achieved fame or wealth or position. An envious note seems to indicate that we would like to be without troubles so we could be great, too. The grass across the fence in their pasture seems so much greener than ours!

But make no mistake about it! The great of the earth have their troubles — oftentimes more severe than ours. The folk who live in the big house get sick. Capitalists crack-up. Governors die. The rich need things that money cannot buy. The healthy need things which pills cannot produce. The well-known of the earth are often scared and lonely. In spite of these things, they go on, enduring day by day their anxieties.

Lord Byron had a clubfoot. Alexander Pope was a hunchback. Robert Louis Stevenson had tuberculosis; Julius Caesar was an epileptic. Thomas Edison was almost deaf; Beethoven became stone deaf; and Helen Keller was both deaf and blind! Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver were born in slavery. Franklin D. Roosevelt was a cripple. The apostle Paul had a thorn in the flesh! But none of these allowed their troubles to get them down!

God tells about a supreme example of a great man's suffering. Inasmuch as God deals in superlatives, when He gave an example of a great man who had trouble, rest assured that it was a man who was the greatest of his age, and trouble such as none other was ever called upon to bear. Otherwise, some distressed soul would say, "But it was worse with me!" Consider His servant Job. Was he great? "So that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east" (1:3). Job was rich, honorable, influential, and good. Yet he had the greatest trouble any man has ever endured — total loss of children, possessions, and health. Of him could no one say, "Never molested tho in the wrong." One could scarcely consider this man, yet use problems to excuse failure. The grass was not greener across the fence and into his pasture!

"Hardships could not be responsible for the accomplishments of Pope, Edison, Roosevelt, and others of the troubled great of the earth? And especially of Job?" Don't be too sure! It may be that they achieved because of their

handicaps — at least their success was despite them. It is the common lot of man to be tested and tried. The results are determined by the one tested, not by the severity of the tests. The sun that melts the butter hardens the clay. It is the same sun in either case — the difference is in the material. Hardships which crush a timid soul will forge a man out of another. Richter said, "Joys are our wings, sorrows our spurs."

*A few seem favorites of Fate,
In Pleasure's lap caressed;
Yet, think not all the Rich and Great,
Are likewise truly blest.
But Oh! what crowds in every land,
All wretched and forlorn,
Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
That Man was made to mourn!*

— Burns

Paul found the key to success is triumphing over trouble. He said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for

Christ's sake; for *when I am weak, then am I strong*" (2 Corinthians 12:10). He took his weakness and made it his strength — "my strength is made perfect in weakness." He turned his liabilities into assets. He took the strong stones of trials and suffering and built a house of character which became indestructible.

*Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.*

— Longfellow

The great are not great because they drew a life without problems, nor because they were born lucky, nor in the right sign of the moon, nor because they got "all the breaks." They suffer, too. And their greatness seems to shine all the brighter when, in spite of their troubles, they maintain integrity as Job did.

Hear Longfellow again:

*Satan desires us, great and small,
As wheat to sift us, and we all are tempted.
Not one, however, rich or great,
Is by his station or estate exempted.*

Modern Versions: Creators of Confusion



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

For several months this writer has presented a number of articles in WORDS OF TRUTH dealing with the new versions and some of the grievous dangers they pose in the religious world of our day. We have done this due to requests from brethren in a number of states. At the best we are but touching the hem of the garment in this matter. It is altogether impossible to note more than a few of the multitudes of errors which are incorporated in the so-called new Bibles.

NO LONGER A UNIFORM BIBLE

The presence of the new Bibles presents many problems. We no longer have a uniform Bible as the Restoration leaders did at the turn of the nineteenth century when they set out to return to Jerusalem and the apostles for religious authority. Preaching from the pulpit with many conflicting Bibles in the pews is becoming more and more difficult all the time. The same is true in Bible classes and personal-work. This writer has already faced in his public and private teaching, as have many other preachers, teachers and personal workers.

If the time ever comes when the Lord's church goes into apostasy, as it did centuries ago, and there needs to be a new restoration movement undertaken, those who sent such a restoration will be at great disadvantage due to the presence of such a multiplicity of Bibles. Tedious foundational work would have to be done over a long period of time just acquainted people with what constitutes the reliability of God's work as opposed to its many perverted opponents. The religious world took a great step backward when it vacated a uniform Bible and began the production of scores of perverted Bibles.

CREATORS OF CONFUSION ABOUT INFIDELITY

Imagine studying about the virgin birth with an infidel who is well aware of the rendering of Isaiah 7:14 in the Revised Standard Version, the New English Bible and a number of the other new Bibles. These perverted versions change the Hebrew term "almah" from "virgin", its absolutely correct rendering, to "a young woman," a totally unwarranted rendering if there ever was one. Perhaps he also is aware of the change from

Mary the virgin to Mary the girl between editions number one and two of Today's English Version. With Satanic glee in his pleased eyes he states, "Your own Bibles are not sure of Mary's virginity. How can you Christians be so sure? We infidels have always been sure she was not a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus of Nazareth. Now your Bibles are closer and closer to our way of atheistic thinking. Toward this change for the better I register my immediate and emphatic approval."

CREATORS OF CONFUSION OVER CATHOLICISM

Imagine the difficulties encountered in studying Roman Catholicism with an informed Catholic when he brings out a copy of the New English Bible. The topic to be discussed is Peter's so-called Primacy, whether he was the first pope or not, and whether the church is built on him or upon Christ, the son of the living God. The informed Catholic brings out his NEB and turns right to Matthew 16:18 where Peter indeed has become (?) the Rock on which Christ proposed to build his church. He might even say something like the following in the study, "Why your own Protestant Bibles are now beginning to teach that which we Roman Catholics have known all along. We have long contended that Peter is the ROCK in Matthew 16:18 upon which the Lord proposed to build his church." The informed Catholic might also remind the Christian with whom he is in study of one of the newest and latest Bibles to come forth from the presses. It is a Bible that has been produced by cooperation of Catholics, Protestants and the Eastern Orthodox church. He might remind the Christian friend in the study that this new Bible has made room for the Apocrypha. With delightful glee in his eyes he might well say, "We Catholics are mighty happy to know that Protestants, to some degree at least, have begun to recognize the proper place of the Apocrypha within the Bible." Spineless concessions such as this should greatly please the world of Roman Catholicism. Such was a great victory for their cause.

CREATORS OF CONFUSION OVER PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONALISM

Imagine studying the "faith only" -ism with a person who has already marked its three occurrences in Bratcher's TEV where "faith only" is taught in Romans 1:17; 3:28 and Galatians 2:16. Imagine studying the Bible with a person on the subject of baptism and yet he does not believe that baptism is essential for salvation. He has no time at all for Mark 16:16. When you arrive for the study he produces an earlier copy of the Revised Standard Version and shows where Mark

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Congregational Edification

(Continued from page 1)

periodic checkup to see HOW well things are going.

ARE CHANGES NEEDED?

Replanning of the original plan or some facet of it is sometimes necessary after some periodic evaluation. Caution should be used if it is determined that a volunteer is not accomplishing the purpose or goal for which the plan calls. Unless the volunteer is a mature person one can expect some repercussions if informed, that after all the "selling" about their being THE ONE for the job, we need to replace you. There are several tactful ways to replace a person without hurting feelings, e.g., "We need you more for job 'X' than for this one, and no one else will do." Or, "Sister M would be thrilled to help you for a while, and we think it would help her grow."

These thoughts concerning planning, organizing, motivating, periodic evaluation, and replanning work are designed to help congregations in their efforts to grow. These things have helped churches to grow just as they have helped large business enterprises to double or triple. However, the growth is determined by our being willing to work. The willingness to work is determined by our dedication to the cause of Christ. Only when people are willing to place the cause of Christ first (Matt. 6:33) are they willing to lay aside selfishness and apply loving concern to others for whom Christ died (I Cor. 13:1-7). — Rt. 1 Box 184 A, Nauvoo, Ala. 35578.

Modern Versions: Creators of Confusion

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16:9-20 has been relegated to footnote status. With marked glee in his eyes he informs you, "That takes care of one of your key verses." Ben Bogard, the eminent Baptist debater of an earlier part of this century, was born several years too early to take full advantage of this footnote concession in the initial copies of the RSV. How greatly he would have yearned to have had this footnote concession, for he frequently denied this highly important portion of the Bible when he met some of our brethren in debate, such as Brother N. B. Hardeman. Of course he would have had to stick closely to his King James and American Standard Versions which have retained these last dozen verses in their products when he debated "dear Aimee" McPherson and stood in need of Mark 16 to meet her in arguments.

Imagine discussing the false doctrine of "original sin" with an open advocate of the Living Bible Paraphrased who has underscored Psalm 51:5 and Ephesians 2:3. Kenneth Taylor, the one man translator of the Living Bible Paraphrased, frequently complained in earlier years of his ministry because he was having so much trouble with the King James Version as source material for his highly Calvinistic sermons. So he turned out his own Bible (???) and filled it full and overflowing with his own preferred Calvinistic renderings. Speaking of Taylor and the Living Bible Paraphrased the writer had this to happen recently. It was being announced that I would present some lessons dealing with modern versions. One person just got the Taylor part and the new version bit and asked, "Is he the Taylor that has brought out his own Bible?" PERISH THE THOUGHT OF THERE BEING IDENTITY AND SIMILARITY HERE!!! Kenneth Taylor has done more to dishonor the name Taylor than any other religious-minded person by that name known to this writer.

Imagine discussing Jesus' Deity with a Jehovah's Witness when he has his own perverted version of such passages as John 1:1-3 in which the Deity of Jesus is dealt a

blasphemous blow. These people do not believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ. They say he is a created being. They could not prove their infidelity relative to Jesus Christ by resorting to a reliable version such as the King James or the American Standard Version; therefore they brought out their own version. Imagine discussing Genesis 11:1 with a modernist who has at his fingertips the NEB rendering on that passage. They make it begin as one would a fairy story or tale. And no wonder! for this is precisely what Dodd and his demolition crew on the NEB thought they were doing — translating fairy tales and unbelievable folklore in the opening chapters of the Genesis account. Some time ago this writer presented much of this material in a lectureship in the Atlanta, Georgia, region. Brother L. O. Sanderson was present; after the lecture was concluded he came and told the writer that they were already facing the very things outlined in this message in the Atlanta work. (Brother Sanderson has recently moved to Memphis, Tennessee.)

CONCLUSION

Some among us have studied so many versions for so long that they cannot quote any one of them correctly. They are now in a state of conglomerated confusion. This is one of the prices which people have to pay for flitting from version to version in their study.

The avid advocates and strong supporters for the new Bibles have been saying that their presence makes the word of God more clear. We emphatically deny this. With all their glaring errors and grievous mistranslations how could they lead to clarity? Instead of leading to greater clarity for the religious people of our time they have led to greater and greater degrees of confusion.

The new Bibles have led to a different nomenclature or system of language for the Bible. About this facet of the problem we propose to write at length in a future article in this continuing series.

(Note: While preparing this article for WORDS OF TRUTH the writer had a call from a long-time friend whose son out west is being unduly influenced by the use of the new Bibles. Such but accents the acuteness of this growing malady!)

The Desire For "More" In Religion

In a discussion of the embryonic beginnings of the Pentecostal Movement, Frederick Dale Bruner said in his book —

A Theology of the Holy Spirit—pp. 47-48:

"What came to be known as Pentecostalism appears to have originated among those who were already active Christians but who, according to the Pentecostals, wanted something more than they were getting from their churches. This 'more' came to them in the form of the experience of speaking in tongues which, when joined to the persuasion that this speaking was the evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, created the embryo of Pentecostal conviction."

The desire for something "more in religion" thus gave rise to another denomination.

The desire for something "more," in addition to the all-sufficient Scriptures, is not a new philosophy in religion. Naaman (II Kings 5) struggled with the same problem when told to dip seven times in the Jordan to be cleansed of leprosy. Instead of taking God

at His word and doing as He had commanded, he said, "Behold, I thought, he will surely strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper." (verse 11). Thus Naaman desired "more" than God had offered through His word as revealed to him by the messenger of the prophet Elisha. It was only when Naaman trusted in what already had been revealed unto him that he obeyed and was cleansed of leprosy.

Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10) were advocates of the same philosophy of desiring something "more" in religion in their function as levitical priests. They "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" (verse 1-2). The desire for something "more" in religion cost them their lives.

We in churches of Christ plead for a return to the inspired, all-sufficient, complete revelation of God — the sacred Scriptures — for all authority in religious matters! In doctrine, the Scriptures are sufficient in teaching. In worship, the Scriptures are complete in description. In work, the Scriptures are definitive in command. In all things God's Word should quench the desire for something "more", in addition to the Scriptures in faith and practice!

John warned "He that goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God" (II John 9.) Paul lamented "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.... But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6,8).

Let us, as God's Kingdom on earth, stand solidly on the belief of the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures which are able to make one wise unto salvation (II Timothy 3:15) affirming to the world that God has granted unto us ALL things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Peter 1:3.) Let us speak as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11) Where God has spoken, let our acts of worship and service be done in Bible ways, and let us identify Bible things with the use of Bible names. "In matters of faith let us have unity. In matters of opinion let us have liberty. And in all things, let us have love" for God and one another.

The inclination on the part of some for "more" in religion should be suppressed and overthrown with the knowledge that God's way, as revealed in His Word, is all sufficient for our work and service in Him.

Don't Let Your Mistakes Destroy You

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

Throughout human history, man has been inclined to make mistakes. M. W. Larmour sagely observed that "If mankind profits from past mistakes, what a honey of a future is coming up!"

Even Paul, the great apostle who carried the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome, had made some extremely serious mistakes; but, refusing to be discouraged and defeated by them, he optistically said: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

According to Tryon Edwards, "Some of the best lessons we ever learn we learn from our mistakes and failures. The error of the past is the wisdom and success of the future."

Cicero said: "Any man may make a mistake, but none but a fool will continue in it."

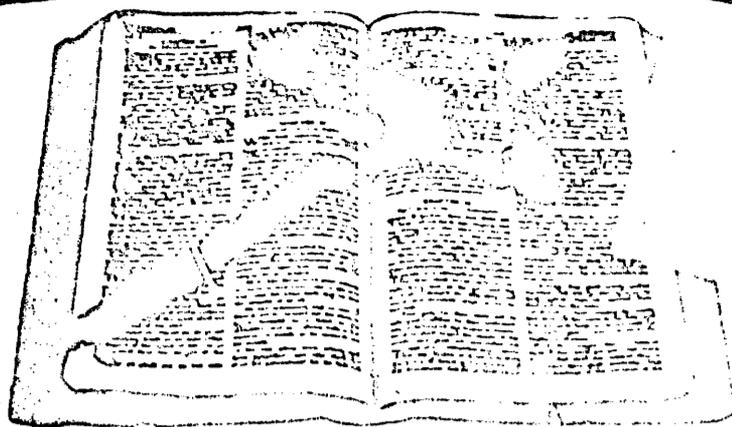


James A. Horton

WORDS OF TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



VOLUME 12

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NUMBER 2

What If You Were The Person In The Pew?

In two previous lessons attention has been focused upon the preacher and his family and the elder and his family. This is the concluding article in a three-part series regarding some things which need to be stated, faced, and placed into practice. Each article is written within the fundamental framework of the Golden Rule. That rule as stated by Matthew reads, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). The beloved physician, Luke, says, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31).



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Some beginning reflections are now in order. The church of our blessed Lord is composed of interpersonal relationships. There are preacher-elder, preacher-preacher, preacher-deacon, preacher-member relationships, and vice-versa. There are elder-elder, elder-deacon, elder-member relationships, and vice-versa. There are deacon-deacon and deacon-member relationships. There are member-member relationships. Uniformly, wisely, and completely the Golden Rule fits all these complex relationships within the body of Christ. Entirely too frequently, though, the Golden Rule has been ignored in the overall functioning of these interpersonal relationships. How sad! When done the reaped results frequently have been disastrous for the body of Christ and the beautiful harmony and brotherly unity which prevail therein.

It would be both wise and well for every person who fills the pulpit to put himself in the pew as listener in the selection of themes, in their presentation and in the attitudes and actions he sustains to the truth and those who hear it. It would be wise and well for every person who serves in the eldership to put himself into the pew as one who is overseen, and govern himself accordingly, as the Scriptures and the best interests of the flock demand. And we might add that when the Scriptures are followed loyally and adhered to carefully in these weighty matters, the best interests of the flock will be served. That is the way Jehovah God intended the matter to

be.

THE PULPIT AND THE PEW

We are not talking about the person in the pew who is listless, heartless, unconcerned, lukewarm, does not want to go to heaven, but wants a watered-down religion continuously projected from an impotent pulpit that has long lost its evangelistic zeal and spiritual vigor. Quite to the contrary we are speaking of the person in the pew who wants to have the whole truth and nothing but the truth dispensed in every syllable that descends from the pulpit. His is the admirable attitude of Cornelius as eloquently expressed in Simon Peter in Acts 10:33, "Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, TO HEAR ALL THINGS that are commanded thee of God." We are writing about people in the pews who have the disposition of good breeding and noble character as was marvelously manifested among the Antiochians in Pisidia on Paul's first missionary journey. Luke says, "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together TO HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD" (Acts 13:44). A driving desire to hear proclaimed the word of God prompted their presence. We are speaking of people in the pews who should evidence a disposition comparable to those beautiful Bereans. Luke portrays the nobility of their unique character by affirming, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). We are speaking of the kind of people who will not go away in a fit of anger, as did some because Jesus had said some hard things to them and they did not feel like they could hear any more. The Bible says of them, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it? . . . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:60-66). We are not speaking of people in the pew who will become the preacher's enemy because he tells them the truth, or insists on telling it like God has written it. Paul wrote in Galatians 4:16, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"

If you are the right kind of person in the pew, what would you desire from the pulpit? Would you not want back, chapter and verse preaching? (Luke 10:26; 1 Pet. 4:11). Would you not want a man before you who shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God? (Acts 20:26-27). Would you not want a man as preacher who speaks truth in love? (Eph. 4:15). Would you not want a man who knows

nothing in the presentation of his theme save Christ and him crucified? (1 Cor. 2:2). Would you not want a person who loved your soul, as a dedicated nurse loves her child, and as a loving father exerts and charges his children whom he loves with both a whole and holy heart? (1 Thess. 2:7-11).

Were you this type person, you would not be content to hear the social gospel, a modernistic or a liberalistic theological discourse in which the fundamentals of the ancient faith were mercilessly massacred, would you? You surely would not want to hear an aimless sermonette, a psychological-sociological brew of secular events, or an enthusiastic pep-talk on the latest methods already discarded by fading Protestantism. Would you not want a man who would meet your needs with the riches of God's Word? Preacher friend, is this what the people in the pews where you preach receive from time to time as you appear before them? If not, why not? This is surely a question this writer needs to face; it is a question every preacher among us should face and answer realistically. The Golden Rule applies to preachers also, and we need to practice it as much as anybody. Let us never ignore the wisdom of this binding rule when we face eternity-bound souls in the pews. Both they and we will one day give account in the judgment of how we have acted and reacted in the pulpit and the pews respectively relative to God's eternal word. Let us remember the vital connection between the pulpit and the pew. They should be a complement to each other. The pulpit has nothing to impart if there is no one in the pew willing to listen; the person in the pew will not profit unless there is something worthwhile emanating from the pulpit. As preachers let us remember that those who fill the pews are made in the image and likeness of Jehovah. Each is either a Christian, or is a potential child of the living God. Let us ever treat him as we should want to be treated, were the positions reversed. That is what the Golden Rule is all about.

THE ELDERSHIP AND THE PEW

The Bible clearly establishes the elders are the overseers or shepherds over the flock in the local congregational setting (Acts 20:28; Tit. 5:1-4). The flock is to be obedient and submissive to the eldership so long as the elders remain loyal to, and adhere closely to, biblical demands (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17). How would you wish to be overseen were you in the pew? How would you wish to be spiritually fed and led? Would you wish to be so insignificant that the elders never made

Continued on Page 4

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Confession Before Baptism

[This article was written by my late father. — F.H.N.]

The confession is in the Commission by a necessary inference. The Commission requires the BAPTISM OF THOSE TAUGHT AND MADE BELIEVERS, and the teacher cannot merely look upon a man and by the seeing of the eye discern whether or not he has been taught — is a disciple or learner — and whether or not he has reached the point where he really believes in Christ. Christ said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). How may we know when one is thus ready for baptism? Again, Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15-16). How may we know when one is thus a believer and when he should be baptized, unless he confesses his faith? I cannot look at a man and know whether or not he is a believer.

The apostles preached the gospel of the Great Commission, and they preached the confession. Paul says, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; THAT IS, THE WORD OF FAITH WHICH WE PREACH: THAT IF THOU SHALT CONFESS WITH THY MOUTH THE LORD JESUS, AND SHALT BELIEVE IN THINE HEART THAT GOD HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. For with the heart man believeth UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS; and with the MOUTH CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION" (Rom. 10:8-10). Please note that the confession was a part of the word of faith which the apostles preached, and that it is a condition of salvation, the same as the faith confessed. This proves our point that the confession is taught by a necessary inference in the Great Commission. Paul says Timothy did "confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses" (I Tim. 6:12).

WHAT IS THIS CONFESSION?

1. IT IS A CONFESION OF FAITH IN THE MOST IMPORTANT TRUTH IN THE WHOLE REALM OF TRUTH.

It is to confess that one believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God with all his

heart. When Philip preached Jesus unto the Eunuch and they came unto a certain water, the Eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. AND HE ANSWERED AND SAID, I BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD. 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. 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" (Acts 8:36-39).

It is to confess the very foundation truth of Christianity. When Jesus asked Peter and the apostles who He was, "Simon Peter answered and said, THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD" (Mt. 16:16-18). Referring to this great confession, and its wonder-working truth, which Peter had just confessed, Jesus said, "UPON THIS ROCK I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:15-18). If Jesus is indeed "THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD" it should be our all-consuming purpose in life to obey and follow him; for nothing else matters much. If the church is indeed built on the truth that Jesus Christ is the "Son of the living God," and if this is indeed "the ROCK-BED truth of all truth", it is fitting that all who would be saved must make a confession of faith in this great universal and saving truth.

If Jesus Christ is "the Son of God" Christianity is the one and only true religion, the church of Christ which he built on this truth is the only true church, and his plan of salvation is the only plan whereby one can be saved. Yes, and He alone has the authority to direct in all phases of human life. He is the only head of his church, and it is to be subject unto him in all things (Eph. 1:20-23; 5:23-24; Matt. 16:18).

2. IT IS TO CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD TO THE GLORY OF GOD, THE FATHER (Phil. 2:5-11).

The word "Lord" means "Ruler". So, to confess that Christ "Is Lord" is to confess that one is accepting him to be the Lord and ruler of his life. This could only be sincerely confessed when preceded by genuine repentance. Only those who are ready to obey him in all things can scripturally confess HIM AS THEIR LORD. He said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk. 6:46). He is the "Author of eternal salvation, unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9).

3. IN MAKING THE GOOD CONFESION ONE IS PUBLICLY PROFESSING THAT HE WILL ACCEPT THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST AND BE GOVERNED THEREBY. He is subscribing to the New Testament as his only religious creed, discipline, manual, articles of religion, rule of faith and practice. It is impossible TO ACCEPT CHRIST AND REJECT WHAT HE SAID and taught. He says, "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" (Jn. 12:48). "Whosoever transgresseth, AND ABIDETH NOT IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, hath not God; but he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ; he hath both the Father and the Son" (II Jn. 9). No one who prefers to belong to a religious SECT is ready to confess Christ as "Lord" before men. Christ is not divided (I Cor. 1:10-13). His church is NOT DENOMINATIONAL, and his New Testament and doctrine are NOT SECTARIAN, NOR DIVISIVE IN NATURE.

4. TO CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD IS TO IMITATE GOD HIMSELF.

At the baptism of Jesus, God confessed in a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:13-17). Again, the Father made this

confession at the transfiguration of Christ (Matt. 17:1-5). There he said, "Hear ye him." Peter, James and John heard this confession of God (Mt. 17:16-18).

5. CHRIST MADE THE GOOD CONFESION WHEN IT COST HIM HIS LIFE AND EVERY DROP OF HIS PRECIOUS BLOOD TO MAKE IT.

When Christ was on trial for his life, and they could find no cause of death in him, the High Priest finally said, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God." He answered, saying "Thou hast said" (Matt. 26:63). They called this blasphemy, and crucified him on that charge. It may cost us much to confess Christ, but we should do it regardless of cost!

6. SOME WHO BELIEVE IN CHRIST ARE ASHAMED AND AFRAID TO CONFESS HIM BEFORE MEN.

"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" (Jn. 12:42-43). Such faith is cowardly and dead, and can not save the soul. When we needed some one to take a stand and go to the old rugged cross and die for us Jesus did not falter, but gave himself freely and gladly to die that we might live. And think how cowardly it is in us to fail to stand for him, when our souls, his Cause, and the salvation of others, are now at stake! Jesus teaches us that one must hold his faith so dear that he will forsake all people and all earthly things, even hate his own life, if need be, or he cannot be his disciple (Lk. 14:26-33). By one's actions in failing to confess Christ he is actually denying Christ before men, so as to be denied by Christ before his Father and the angels (Mt. 10:32-33; Tit. 1:16; Mk. 8:38). The romance of confessing Christ and living for him should be the greatest thrill of a man's life! Like Paul, we should (if need be) count all earthly things as refuse that we may win Christ (Phil. 3:5-11).

7. THE GOOD CONFESION SHOULD BE MADE WITH "THE MOUTH" AND BEFORE MEN.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 10:32-33).

Paul said they preached a confession which was to be made with the mouth, and was a condition of salvation. "IF THOU SHALT CONFESS with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, AND SHALT BELIEVE in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. For with the heart man BELIEVETH UNTO righteousness; and with the mouth CONFESSION IS MADE UNTO SALVATION" (Rom. 10:9-10). Faith, repentance, confession and baptism are the conditions of salvation to alien sinners (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9-10). Surely, no one who loves Jesus and appreciates what He has done for a lost world can fail to see the necessity of confessing Christ before men.

9. WHY NOT MAKE THE GOOD CONFESION NOW, RATHER THAN WAIT TO MAKE IT SOME DAY TO YOUR OWN SHAME AND CONDEMNATION?

A failure to be for Christ is to actually be against him (Mt. 12:30). No man can be neutral in his sight. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given Him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). Those who fail to confess our precious Lord here, will confess him when it is too late at the judgment. "As I live, saith the Lord, EVERY

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter one

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God, and turned away from evil.

— verse 1

The Righteous Suffer, Too

Job 1:1

"Why does this have to happen to me? I'm not a bad guy. I try to do right. What have I done to bring this on? Why couldn't this have happened to somebody else?"

Mountains of questions like these are asked every day. And usually the silence is deafening. Nor do we have all the answers!

These morbid questions come from a widely-accepted doctrine which originated with Satan! It was the devil's philosophy, "Doth Job fear God for naught?" In other words — if Job is righteous, it is to receive good from God. It is his insurance policy. The premiums keep calamity away. At least Satan implied that was the case. And many people still believe it!

But it didn't work that way with Job. He was righteous, all right. God's estimate of him was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." Notice how complete. He was an all around man — "perfect." He was a straight dealer with others — "upright." He was one who "feared God" — deeply religious. He "eschewed evil" — a very moral person. You may be better than your neighbor or some hypocrite in the church, but are you willing to be compared with Job? And remember, that was God's estimate of him. The Lord's estimate is often different from a mother's estimate, or a friend's, or a self-estimate. The Lord knows.

Of course, Job is not the only good man who ever suffered. Joseph spent time in prison, Peter was tempted, Paul was beaten, Jesus was crucified. It seems that all good men have problems, doesn't it?

If righteousness will not immunize one against trouble, what good does it do to do good? It must do a great deal. No one has ever renounced Christianity on his deathbed! Those who have quit trying to act right readily tell you they are no longer happy. The good fruit of Christianity just couldn't be produced on a bad tree.

Maybe some are disappointed when they find that good people have troubles because they misunderstand what a Christian can expect.

1. *He cannot expect freedom from the laws of nature.* Nor would he want to. The laws of nature are for man's good. Fire burns — but it also warms those who are cold, and cooks food, and supplies other necessities. Water drowns — but it also quenches thirst, saves lives, floats ships, and contributes to many other good things. Because one is a Christian does not mean that he will get more rain — nor less — than his infidel neighbor, nor that his oil well will last longer. Things like that are not rewards for righteousness. *But the righteous can expect God's special providence to work for him.* God will not break His laws of nature — but He can manipulate them for the good of His own. But don't forget: only He knows what is ultimately good for His own!

2. *He cannot expect freedom from sickness, disease, or injury.* Christians, like Timothy (I Timothy 5:23), Trophimus (II Timothy 4:20), and Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25), get sick.

The outward man is made so that it will decay (II Corinthians 4:16). The body is destined to die (Hebrews 9:27; Ecclesiastes 12:7). Afflictions must be endured by Christians the same as by non-Christians (I Peter 5:9). *But the righteous can expect peace of mind as he endures these troubles.*

3. *He cannot expect freedom from sorrow.* Like Mary and Martha, he may lose his loved ones (John 11:33). *Persecution will be his lot. Emotional distresses may affect him even more than they do a hard-hearted criminal. But while suffering, he may expect fellowship and encouragement from other good people.* Brethren sympathize. Tears mingle with those of others. Comfort is found in God's word. And with help that, the valley is soon crossed. Yet, Job was denied even this help in his bereavement.

4. *He cannot expect freedom from temptation.* God does not take physical appetites away from His children. After the Israelites had been freed from slavery in Egypt, they still wanted onions and garlic. And after Christians have been liberated from the bondage of sin, their appetite for things of the world is often keen. The old attractions are still there! *But a righteous person may expect God's help as he fights his battles.* He will provide a way of escape (I Corinthians 10:13), an incentive to escape (James 4), a formula for success (Psalm 119:11), and a reward for resisting (James 1:2, 3, 12).

5. *He cannot expect a miraculous solution for all his problems.* Like Paul, he may be "in a strait betwixt two." He may have problems at home, in business, in sickness, in adversity. But due to his manner of life, *he may expect to prevent many problems.* And prevention is better, easier, surer, and safer than cure.

To know what to expect, and to rely heavily upon God's help, arms a righteous person to win his battles against trouble. And if you are ever tempted to think that righteousness immunizes against trouble — remember that the devil started that doctrine!

JOB

Chapter one

Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; and there came a messenger to Job, and said, "The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding beside them; and the Sabe'ans fell upon them, and took them, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The Chaldeans formed three companies, and made a raid upon the camels and took them, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house; and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness, and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

— verses 13-19.

When It Rains, it Pours

Job 1:13-19

Calamity comes in clusters! How often have you seen bad news follow bad news! Husband loses his job. Wife gets sick. One of the relatives dies. One of the children gets in trouble. Crops rained out. The roof starts leaking. All that within a few days! It is more than just that "it seems that way." Most of life comes in cycles. And there is often truth in the old adage, "When it rains, it pours." Shakespeare must have been thinking of this

when he said, "When sorrow come, they come not single soies, but in by talions."

Job knew about this, too. A messenger came announcing that his oxen and asses had been stolen by Sabeans who killed the servants which were tending them. Hardly had that message come until there came another. This time he heard that his sheep had been destroyed and the shepherds slain. While this messenger yet spoke, another came saying the Chaldeans had made off with the camels and had also slain the servants watching them. Bankrupt in one day! Three different and separate tragedies wiped him out! And while he had all that to worry about, the worst was yet to come. Hardly was he in the mood to bear it. A messenger sadly announced that while his sons and daughters were all together feasting, a "tornado" had destroyed them all! How could he take it!

If Job could survive such a series of bad messages (and the messages to him were tersely given — nothing was done to cushion the shock), surely we can endure our problems, even though they do come in clusters. Ours are lesser than his! A more careful study of Job's immediate reaction will clue us in as to how he succeeded. If we can get the help we need to cushion us during the day of adjustments, we can make it! We note three things about his reactions.

1. *He worshipped!* (1:20). Isn't it odd that tragedy causes some who normally worship to cease to do so. Is there something wrong with their worship that it won't work in time of trouble? Not so with Job. He arose, "rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped." The circumstances may be different now, but to worship strengthens one in time of need! Never forget that God does not allow more to befall us than we can bear. The more we suffer, the more we can call on Him for strength. Martin Luther worded it well when he wrote,

*A mighty fortree is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.*

If ever there is a time one ought to draw close to God and worship reverently, it is in time of distress. The more the problems, the more help is available — if one seeks it. It is ever impressive to see a newly-bereaved family arrive at worship services, sit together, and drink at the fountain of divine help to sustain them in their time of grief. After the initial days of grief, a period of adjustment can only be effected properly by regular and consistent worship. Job teaches us this!

2. *He expressed strong faith.* Instead of charging God foolishly and blaming Him for all his troubles, he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." In other words, God knew best, and whatever He decided would be all right with Job. His faith made him know that God would do right. After all, if we knew as much as God, we would be Gods. Faith in Him and His power and goodness and wisdom will cause us to submit to His decisions. This is strangely different from the whimpering chant of so many who suffer fewer troubles: "Why did God do this to me?" Job thought God "took away." (It was really the devil who took these things from Job — God did it only in the sense that he allowed it to be done.) But he also gave God credit for "giving." If we are tempted to complain of God's taking away, why do we not also give Him credit for giving us those things that He takes away? Whatever our treasures are, we are stewards over them for only a little while. And when it is all over, we, too, should be able to say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

*Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!*

—Whittier

(Continued on page 4)

What If You Were The Person In The Pew?

(Continued from page 1)

an effort to learn your name, never spoke to you, never encouraged you in the right, nor reproved you when wrong? Would you want to be kept in the dark about major decisions made relative to the church and its program of work? Would you want an eldership that practiced partiality, or sought to treat all alike to the very best of their ability? Is not the answer an obvious one? Would you want an eldership over you that catered only to those who had money, and left unattended those who were poor in this world's goods but possessed real Christian character? Would you want an eldership over you that practiced discipline toward some of the members who were less prominent, but refused to touch top, bottom, side, or edge of a similar case when moneyed people were guilty for fear that the weekly contribution might take a disastrous dip? Would you want an eldership that made a decision on Sunday that was based on truth and right, but by Wednesday night had been pressured to rescind it by a politically-oriented group within the church who were the real rulers of congregational scenes but remained in the background? (That has been done more than once you know!!) Would you not want an eldership that took seriously its work and worked sincerely at making the church what God has designed it to be?

CONCLUSION

Elders and preachers, let us remember the fundamental facets of the Golden Rule in the respective overseeing of those in the pew and the proclaimed messages sent their way from the pulpit. Let us ever remember that people in the pews have feelings just as preachers and elders do. Let us give them the truth from the pulpit and do it in love. Let elders give the kind of oversight they richly deserve, and which God demands they have.

Confession Before Baptism

(Continued from page 2)

KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL CONFESS TO GOD" (Rom. 14:11). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: **IF WE DENY HIM, he also will deny us**" (II Tim. 2:12).

10. WE SHOULD GLADLY CONFESS HIM NOW SO WE MAY MEET HIM WITH JOY WITH HE COMES.

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth **SHALL WAIL BECAUSE OF HIM.** Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7). Don't fail to take your stand with Jesus, now! Tomorrow might be too late. **TODAY if you will hear his voice, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEART** (Heb. 3:7, 8).

"Yet Trouble Came"

Continued from Page 3

3. *He guarded carefully against sin.* "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." The devil tries to break us down. If bringing one bad message after another can wear us thin and cause us to turn against God, Satan wins another victory. Stubbornness becomes a virtue when one decides that regardless of his troubles, he will not yield to temptation, and then stands by such a decision. If one will develop that "I'll be true, come what may" attitude, he'll weather the storms and live to see a long number of good days, too.

You see, sunshine as well as rain comes in clusters.

(To be continued)

The Time To Pray

G. K. WALLACE
(Via Gospel Advocate)

WHEN IS THE TIME?? Paul instructs us to "pray without ceasing." (I Thess. 5:17.) He also says, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:5.) Prayer brings us into communion with God. God will hear and answer our prayers according to His will. Prayer cultivates a sense of dependence upon God; and if we really fear God, we will pray. It encourages us to trust his sacred promises. Prayer gives us peace in committing all of our ways unto God's way. True prayer brings us into submission to the divine will, and the highest goal of our prayer is to subdue all of our rebellious impulses, and to pray: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26:39). We need to cultivate a reverence for God that will lead us day by day to read his word with earnest desire to conform to all his requirements, and to pray without ceasing.

In studying the life of Jesus, we find an example of prayer in all that he did. When he was baptized, he prayed (Luke 3:21.) Each and every divine ordinance should be accompanied with prayer. Jesus prayed when he entered his ministry, and he prayed when he closed his ministry (Luke 23:46.) On the mount of transfiguration, Jesus prayed (Luke 9:29), and also in the hour of his deepest sorrow (Luke 22:41.) When Jesus selected his apostles, he prayed for them (Luke 6:12), and he prayed for those who rejected and crucified him (Luke 23:24). The Lord prayed before Peter confessed him, and when Peter denied him (Luke 9:18, 22, 32.) We are instructed to pray without ceasing; but it is not enough to simply bow our heads and ask the Lord to bless everyone, and at the same time refuse to do what we know should be done.

*I knelt to pray when day was done,
And prayed, "O Lord, bless every one;
Lift from their heart the pain:
And let the sick be well again."*

*But when I awoke at day,
I carelessly went on my way.
The whole day long I did not try
To wipe a tear from any eye.*

*I did not try to share the load
Of any brother on the road.
I did not even go to see
The sick man just next door to me.*

*Yet once again, when day was done,
I prayed, "O Lord, bless everyone."
but as I prayed — into my ear
There came a voice that whispered clear:*

*"Pause hypocrite, before you pray;
Whom have you tried to bless today?
God's sweetest blessing always go
By hands that serve him here below."*

On Rushing Through Worship

In several business meetings I have listened to varied suggestions on how the worship should be shortened — use more trays, omit a song, cut the sermon, etc. In all this thinking there seems to be the underlying premise that a shorter service is a better service, that efficiency means more than effectiveness. Are we rushing through our worship so that we may hasten to feed the poor, to preach to our neighbor, to lift up the heathen? NO!! We rush that we may get to a tasty sumptuous meal, or so that we can watch our favorite television program, or take a nap, or read the newspaper, or play golf, or go on an outing. If none of these attract us, we may rush because we are nervous and are in the habit of doing

everything in a hurry. We sing "Take TIME to be Holy," but we don't have time to mediate, to pause, to listen to the WORD in a relaxed atmosphere. There is pressure by the more worldly members to "pay our respects" to God in the smallest amount of time possible. Movies and television programs are getting longer, but periods of worship are being compressed. WHY? Is it because we are so spiritual that we don't need more time to become holy? Or is it a lack of appetite for spiritual food? Do we hunger and thirst after righteousness, or do we fret when the Lord's Supper takes more time than a newscast?

What About Christmas?

GUS NICHOLS

*Jesus was born, but we don't know when;
But this is true of thousands of men.
We don't have dates of apostle's birth,
Nor when the Herods came upon earth.*

*Adam came thousands of years B.C.
Jesus was born about one A.D.
Christ so affected nations of earth
That all time centers around His birth.*

*The change was made after His earth life,
When He had so changed a world of strife.
He was NUMBER ONE, with flag unfurled:
The most popular man in all the world.*

*Now We can't date things without His name,
All of which confirm His scriptural claim
That He came down from heaven above,
To save this old world through love.*

*This is "nineteen hundred and seventy five,"
The date proves Christ was raised - is alive -
In a certain year of our dear Lord,
And all this according to His word.*

*We don't know the very day of His birth;
But we know He came from heaven to earth,
And that He ascended up above,
And is coming back some day in love.*

*We're now living in a sinful world,
With the banner of Christ unfurled.
He has "all power" from God above,
Rules over us with a rod in love.*

*The world knows not the day of His birth,
But their "Christmas" shows His fame on earth.
However, the day that God doth seek
Is "Lord's Day" — First day of every week.*

*Christ rose from the dead on that day
That's what the Bible has to say.
"The Lord's Supper's" for the day of week
When the church meets, His favor to seek.*

*Paul arrived in Troas on Monday;
The church met for worship on Sunday;
Assembled "the first day of the week",
To break bread and God's blessings to seek.*

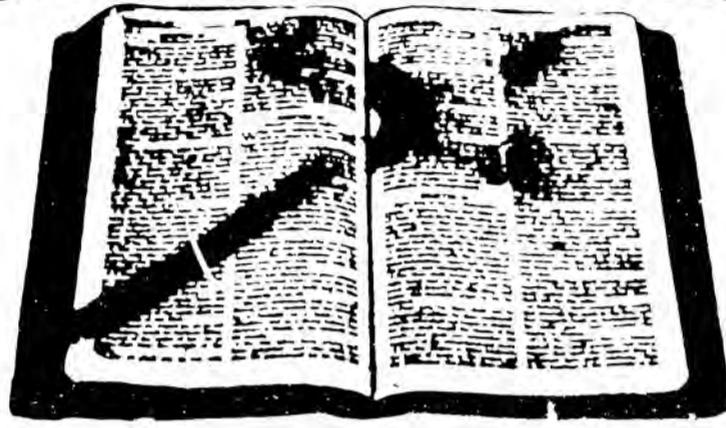
*The world got up Christmas, its own day,
To honour the Lord in its own way.
The world's interested only in His birth,
And the time that Jesus came to earth.*

*Christ wants us to remember His death,
All through our lives unto our dying breath.
Although I am not a "one cupper",
That day we should eat "The Lord's Supper."*

*This demands of us the Christian life,
The family led by husband and wife;
To worship God through Jesus the Christ,
Who died for us — was sacrificed.*

*But the greatest day of His whole life,
Was not His birth in a world of strife;
But was when He was raised from the dead,
The first day of the week, as God said!*

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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He Walked Upon The Mountains

Marvelous events of the Bible are frequently associated with majestic mountains. Noah's ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat (Gen. 8:4). The Decalogue was given from the summit of Sinai (Ex. 20). The mighty Moses breathed his final breath upon the peak of Pisgah (Deut. 34). Elijah met the proponents of Baalism



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

upon the rugged beauties of Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18). The Mighty Prophet from Nazareth proclaimed the great sermon of Matthew 5, 6 and 7 upon the majestic mount possibly near the Sea of Galilee. Even earlier than this our blessed Lord had been encouraged by Satan to fall before him and do him worship. This was upon an exceedingly high mountain (Matt. 4:8-10). Upon a high mountain (possibly Mt. Hermon) our lovely Lord was transfigured before the "Inner Three" (Matt. 17). The hill of Golgotha or the mount of Calvary was the place of his crucifixion (Matt. 15:22; Luke 23:33). It was upon a Galilean mountain that Jesus gave the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20). From the Mount of Olives he ascended back to the Palace of the Universe in Acts 1. By way of prophecy it was stated that the Lord's church would be established in the top of the mountains and its eloquent exaltation would ascend majestically above the hills (Isa. 2:1-3). Acts 2 is the fulfillment of this precious promise, this powerful prophecy. Mountains therefore have an interesting and intimate connection with Bible events and Biblical personalities.

Just as mountains rise in splendor and majesty above the valleys, so the lives of a select few rise in splendor and majesty above the valleys where the multitudes congregate and live. It is no overstatement of fact to portray the late and lamented Gus Nichols as a majestic man who thrillingly treaded the mountains of spiritual greatness, of real eminence. We choose eight mountains which contained the useful presence of the noble Nichols as he tabernacled here for more than eighty-three years. This writer is among the great number who looked up to this marvelous man as he walked among the majestic

mountains of Christian greatness.

THE MOUNTAIN OF POWERFUL PREACHING

Brother Nichols was a man of manifold talents. He could do and did so many things well. He will be remembered for the books he authored, the hundreds of articles he penned, the personal and church related troubles he solved, the great family he led into vast areas of Christian fruitfulness and the numerous ones he befriended. But primarily and pre-eminently he was a preacher. He adorned the pulpit as a beautiful garment adorns a lovely Christian lady or a new suit adorns a handsome man. He fit the pulpit with dignity and delightful decorum. He was a Bible preacher. His sermons were saturated with Scripture. He preached Christ and him crucified. It is doubtful if any of his peers preached more sermons during the years from 1917 till 1975 than did Brother Gus Nichols. The history of the church during the twentieth century cannot be written with a scholarly completion without telling the story of Brother Gus Nichols and his work as a great preacher. He helped raise gospel preaching in this century to an exalted height. What a preacher he was in every sense of the term!

THE MOUNTAIN OF STEADFAST STUDY

A devoted and dedicated life of steadfast study of the Sacred Scriptures paved the way for the great pulpiteer that Brother Nichols became. From the very beginning of his life as a preacher in 1917 his faithful and godly companion freely took much of the family responsibility upon herself in order that he might be free to study. For about sixty years he studied about five hours per day. Truth to him was the pearl of great price. In the Bible he found an inexhaustible ocean filled with the precious water of abundant life. From the time the spiritual dye was cast he never knew a day but what he panted after that life giving water. He was a man OF the Book. He lived BY the Book. He pointed thousands of others to the beauties of the Book. He well earned the delightful designation that multitudes of brethren lovingly conferred upon him, "The Walking Bible." In him the Bible was personified; Christianity was eloquently exhibited in his patient pilgrimage through this life.

THE MOUNTAIN OF SAINTLY SERVICE

A number of men go through life as servants but theirs is a service of a secular nature. Brother Nichols was a beautiful and benevolent man who served God, his family and his fellowman. The service he rendered so

freely and sacrificially was performed as a saint of the most high God. He and Sister Nichols spent a lifetime helping others. They fed the hungry, clothed the naked, took in the unfortunate, trained the young, consoled the sad and encouraged the despondent. Any benevolence done to the outward man was performed to open the door toward the rendering of a spiritual service. Jesus taught that the greatest will be servants. Brother Nichols was a man who served God and others before he slept the sleep of the sainted dead. Only eternity will reveal the vast number of spiritual services he rendered. He was a spiritual multimillionaire in the good works laid to his abounding account. One of his great sermons through the years was on true riches (Luke 16:11). He was rich in the true sense of the term.

THE MOUNTAIN OF COURAGEOUS CONTROVERSY

"Soldiers of Christ, Arise!" found an eloquent exhibition and a positive personification in the courageous life of the noble Nichols. He was a militant warrior for right and truth. Like a massive mountain the winds of error could not sway him from his posture of sobriety, righteousness and godliness. He met many of the formidable foes of denominational error. Each one of them knew he had met a powerful man upon the polemic platform of honorable controversy. He was a successful debater himself and taught others to be of similar caliber. He feared no man because he went forth with the Bible in his hand and truth upon his heart. Victory for truth — not self — was the only honorable reward he coveted in these verbal conflicts with the proponents of error. Brother Nichols knew how to battle for truth without becoming an aimless agitator. A valiant warrior in controversy he was; an agitator he was NOT. His opponents respected him. People loved him who differed with him religiously.

THE MOUNTAIN OF FAMILY FAITHFULNESS

Brother Nichols did some of his greatest work in the fervency of the family framework. He and Sister Nichols have produced one of the great families in the entire history of Christianity. The many in the family who preach, the women in the family who are married to preachers and the devotion to Christ that permeates the Nichols' family are some of the most refreshing portraits of current homelife in an era that has majored in broken marriages, broken homes, broken lives and handicapped children. Christ reproduced in the family framework was the godly goal of

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WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
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A Tribute to My Grandfather

GUS NICHOLS ("NICK") HAMILTON

G. Campbell Morgan's biographer said of him, "He lived with a Bible in his hand and his face toward a better world." I don't know about G. Campbell Morgan, but I like to think that describes my grandfather. I know I'm not impartial, but I really believe he left this world a better place than he found it.

I had grown especially close to Granddad in recent years. As a young boy we lived over 1,000 miles from him and really didn't see him much. But after I decided as a teenager to preach, I would go and spent a part of my summer each year studying with him. Those days are worth far more to me than all my years of formal education combined. His instructions to me were so simple. "Nick," he would say, "preach the word. Don't preach about it. PEACH IT!" "Preach it" he did — nearly sixty years. Countless hundreds he converted. Scores more he counselled. Now all eternity will feel the effects of his life.

If you are unable to tell, I am very proud to have been his grandson. Even more, I proudly wear his name.

Surely heaven is home. Now someone I love dearly has gone there. That's how I feel at this very moment. We haven't LOST Granddad — we know just where he is! He is, for he was, in Christ.

— White Rock Church, Dallas

A WORD ABOUT GUS NICHOLS
Hudson Nichols - Nov. 12, 1975

We know not when our dad will depart,
But we believe he has done his part
To be a Christian and keep a pure heart,
To walk in the light and not the dark.

"In ADAM all die", says the book of God.
for we are human and made of the sod.
Death is a friend — no enemy in the lurch,
For those who are faithful to the church.

Mom's been wonderful by the side of Gus
With the eight children and friends 'round us,
Bearing much heartache and many a sigh;
The end is nearing when he must die.

In sickness and health, she's stood by her man
As they walked through the years, hand in hand.

Life's so brief - she can't keep him, but she can

With him live in the great better land.

The eight children, much sacrifice have made,
But freely they received and they gave
Of the love received from the one now grave;
For he taught how to live and behave.

The friends of Gus Nichols have been so great,
The family states they appreciate
The food, prayers, and cards of encouragement;
For words can't express the help they lent.

So when the time comes for our dad to leave,
When the "grim reaper" his soul to cleave,
Know one and all that it is for the best.
He'll go home to God, from his labor rest.

*He died four days later. Now read the following:

GUS NICHOLS IS GONE

Today Gus Nichols departed this life
Into a land that is free from strife.
He's gone to a land of endless day
Where all tears are wiped away.

In '75, the 16th of November,
A day that we'll all fondly remember,
Sunday afternoon about three o'clock
On his door, the "grim reaper" did knock.

He's gone into a land of pure delight
Beause he prepared with all his might
To be with his Father forever more;
Now he's passed through eternity's door.

He leaves behind Matilda, his good wife,
Who's been by his side most of his life.
The eight children whom she has borne
And all of them alive on this morn.

All of the grandchildren, he leaves behind
Who'll follow in death, in the course of time,
And their children who are all just great,
All of his kin he did appreciate.

Saints and sinners he surely did love
And tried to prepare them to live above.
And a great number of them he did reach
As sermon after sermon he did preach.

God's been good to this great man,
As he prepared for the eternal land.
By all he was held in high esteem
Because on God he truly did lean.

Mom with Dad for years did prepare
To be with Christ, or meet Him in the air.
Dad went first as they prayed and planned
To live in Heaven — a better land.

Many hearts have truly been sad
As they heard news of the death of Dad.
And we know that his face will be missed,
As he now lives in the land of bliss.

As we return from the "Silent City"
Do not look upon us with pity.
"Blessed are the dead" who in Christ do die!
They're home with God never to say goodbye.

(Written by Hudson Nichols November 16, 1975)

A Real Look At Real Life

C. Myron Keith
Franklin, Tenn.

INTRODUCTION:

James asked the question, "What is your life?" (Jas. 4:13-17.) He wanted us to take a good look, to evaluate, to weigh and to come up with the right answer. How few of us have come up with that answer.

At the very outset James seems to be attempting to destroy the thought of making plans for the future. He would say "go to now, ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go

into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain; whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow." James 4:13, 14. We will all admit that no one knows what will be on the tomorrow but why should this prevent us from making plans. In fact, we all have plans for tomorrow, next week, and next year. But a life that has no included God is not real living.

"The Jews were the great traders of the ancient world; and in many ways the ancient world gave them every opportunity to practice their commercial abilities. This was an age of the founding of a city; and often when cities were founded, and when the founders were looking for citizens to occupy them, citizenship was offered freely to the Jews, for where the Jews came there came money and trade. So the picture is the picture of the man looking at a map. He points at a certain spot on it and says, 'Here is a new city where there are great trade chances. I'll go there; and I'll build in on the ground floor; and I'll trade for a year or so; and I'll make my fortune and come back rich.' James' answer is that no man has the right to make constant and confident plans for the future for no man knows what even a day may bring forth. Man may propose, but it is God who disposes. For the future is in the hands of God." The letters of James and Peter — William Barkley.

Life is no idle dream although it is filled with many dreams. Life is a solemn reality and it should be filled with purpose and meaning. It should be filled with God. James gave answer "It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (James 4:14.)

They could not see life as an intangible, such as a vapor; neither have we been able to see it that way. James was simply indicating the brevity of life. People today who are fortunate seem to think that life is too brief; But those who have been unfortunate, think life is too long.

The real answer to life — the real explanation of the vapor — is to be found in the God who controls it. "For that ye ought to say, I the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." God has set more boundaries than simply those of the sea. He has provided greater heights than those of the mountain. It is up to God whether we will have the opportunities, or not. It is up to the individual man how he handles his opportunities.

What a horrible mistake we make when we think God is not involved in the opportunities of life! To boast without giving God credit is evil. "But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicings is evil" (Vs. 17.)

Let us take a real look at real life as defined in God's Bible.

What Is Real Life?

Real life is knowing that we are in the hands of God. Christ never made any important decision or faced any major event without prayer. He recognized and depended upon God. In the choosing of his disciples, and in facing the day of his crucifixion. As a Christian, you must recognize that God is the potter and you are the clay (Jer. 18:6.) You must let God form your life, develop your thinking, create within you the right spirit.

Real Life Is Facing Up to One's Abilities

Joshua commanded Israel, "Choose you this day whom ye shall serve" (Josh. 24:15.) It is hard to believe that they spent so many years in the wilderness wandering, and in conquering the land of Caanan, yet still had not come to a decision regarding whom they would serve! We have people like that today who have glanced through the Bible, and have attended many religious services, yet have not decided whom they will serve! Real life is facing that decision successfully.

Real life is facing the responsibilities that come as a result of decisions we have made. For example, when we decide to marry there will be many responsibilities place upon us as partners in marriage, and as parents to our

Continued on Page 4

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter three

After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job said:

"Let the day perish wherein I was born,
and the night which said,
'A man-child is conceived.'

Let that day be darkness!

May God above not seek it,
or light shine upon it.

Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.

Let clouds dwell upon it;
let the blackness of the day terrify it."

— verses 1-5.

WHEN DAYS ARE DREARY

Job 3:1-5

Got problems? Nothing going right? Hardships stacking up? Life hardly seems worth living? Don't feel individual about that. To some degree all have days like that. All have experiences which produce depression. Heartache is a common lot of man.

If ever a man had cause of complain, it was Job. At least, most of us, if we were in his position, would think ever had it so good. He had oxen and asses and sheep and camels in abundance. A fine family, many friends, a good reputation were his. But that was yesterday! Stripped of wealth and health, he sat in an ash pile and scraped his sores with a piece of broken pottery. He had sores — probably running sores — all over his body. The pain was excruciating. His breath was foul (17:1). His flesh was "clothed with worms and clods of dust" (17:5). His children were all dead! (What did you say your problem is?) When his friends first came, he was so sick they did not even recognize him. When they finally did, they tore their clothes and threw dust on their heads. For seven days they did not speak. In distress and misery Job broke the silence. He cursed the day of his birth. He despised life. He wished he had never been born. He thought the grave was better than the cradle.

Job had something to be bitter about! If there is any comfort in our knowing "it could be worse," we can get it from looking at him.

But there is not a great deal of pleasure in knowing that some man who lived several thousand years ago had a harder time than we are having! What about us? How can we overcome?

Whether one's problem is simply the "Monday blas," or a major catastrophe, or something somewhere inbetween, he wants brighter days again. And his problem sometimes darkens his way so that he cannot see how to go. Consider three things:

1. *Dreary days are temporary.* The sunshine has always returned after the clouds. Morning has always followed evening. Following personal tragedy, a maid was going about her chores singing. When asked how she managed to sing on such a day, she replied, "I was thinking about my favorite verse in the Bible."

"And what is your favorite verse?"

"It is the one that says, 'It is the one that says, 'It came to pass.'"

Trying further to identify the magic passage, she was asked, "It came to pass? What do you mean about that's being your favorite verse?"

"Well, it's like this: If the Bible say it came to stay, I'd really be in trouble. But if the Bible say it came to pass, it'll be all right

tomorrow."

2. *Loads do not have to be carried all at the same time.* Remember the story of the grandfather clock that decided to stop running when it heard someone say that in 90 years it would tick 2,838,240,000 times? It only started again on the suggestion that it would have to tick only one tick at a time! Many a mountain of stove wood has been moved by small boys — one stick at a time. And so it is with burdens. Someone has well said, "God gives us strength to bear our present burden, but he never calculated we would carry over yesterday's grief and borrow on tomorrow's worry." One can stand anything for one day! But failure comes by trying to carry today's load and tomorrow's load together. Bear today's burden today. Let tomorrow take care of itself. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

3. *There is Someone aware of today's problems.* He knows all about it. A Father who loves us is concerned. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 19:29-31). And this One who cares is able to help. He invites you to hand Him your problems. "Casting all your care upon Him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7).

*Does Jesus care when my heart is pained
Too deeply for mirth or song;*

*As the burden press, and the cares distress,
O yes, He cares, I know he cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;*

*When the days are weary, the long nights
dreary,*

I know my Savior cares.

— Graeff

JOB

Chapter two

So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and afflicted Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

— verses 7,8.

Chapter thirty

*"The night racks my bones,
and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest.
With violence it seizes my garment;
it binds me about like the collar of my
tunic.*

*God has cast me into the mire,
and I have become like dust and ashes."*

— verses 17-19.

PAIN: A PARADOX

Job 2:7, 8; 30:17-19

If you ever had a boil, you wished it were somewhere else. (You probably wished it were on somebody else!) It doesn't matter what part of the anatomy it festers — it seems as though it could not be in a worse place! It hurts! Imagine having boils from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head. That is what happened to Job! One can find all kinds of "guesstimates" as to the medical diagnosis of Job's troubles. Some think he had one disease, some another. It really doesn't make much difference what the doctors would call it. He hurt! He hurt all over! The King James translation which says "boils" is as good as any. Nothing could hurt much worse.

He had pain, and pain is never pleasant. The world is saturated with pain today. Hospitals are full and overflowing and new ones are being built every day. Invalids live on almost every block. Painful diseases such as arthritis take their toll. Painkillers are best sellers. The groans of physical suffering are loud enough to shock the dead.

As bad as pain is, did it ever occur to you that it is also a blessing? What if one could feel no pain? Think of the dangers involved. Step on a nail — never feel it. Get a hand caught in a motor and torn off — never know it. Back into a red hot stove — not aware of it. Pain is a warning signal, alerting the brain of dangers, and saving many a life.

'In Pembury, Kent, England, there is a boy

who cannot feel pain. His malady is termed by medical science as 'ganglio-neuropathy.' Something is wrong with the ganglia (nerve centers), which transmit the sensation of pain to the brain. As a little boy, he was scarred from head to feet from injuries he never felt. At the age of nine months he almost completely gouged out one of his eyes, yet felt no pain at all. Physicians were amazed to discover he needed no anesthetic.

"When he was two, he was found kneeling on the open door of a hot electric over with his hand and knee cooking — yet he felt no pain. The final sentence in the feature article which I read stated that the boy's father realized that life has played a cruel trick on his son 'by denying him the gift of pain.' Never before had I realized what a precious gift 'pain' is. Thank od, as normal human beings, we can feel pain."

Of course, knowing this does not make pain pleasant. Pain is a kind of paradox. It makes us miserable, yet we are thankful for it. We don't like it, but it serves a purpose. We want to get rid of it, yet we want it when we need it. We fight it, yet thank God for it.

Not only this, but pain profits in that it has a chastening element in it. When Elihu spoke to Job, he was not altogether wrong in picturing God as sending pain to chasten. "He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain; so that his life abhorreth breath...." (33:19, 20).

How many people have you known who were intimately acquainted with pain, and as a result, they had developed the spirit you would like to have? It wasn't easy! "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11). Some virtues can be developed only by going through the fires of pain, suffering, temptation, and other such unpleasant experiences. It is hard for gold to be purified without going through the fire, or for us to become toughened and strong without the chastening effect of pain.

Sometimes, fortunately, pain can be controlled medically. Yet there are pains which medicine cannot reach. What then?

1. *Try prayer.* For some reason, it doesn't hurt quite so bad when you pray. When one reaches his limit, God is there to take over. Pain is like temptation in that God does not suffer us to receive more than we can endure. He steps in to help. It becomes a little easier when we know we do not have to bear the burden alone.

*In seasons of distresses and grief
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare.
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.*

— W. W. Walford

2. *Determine to make it work for you.* Instead of growing bitter or calloused, use it to grow patient and strong. Meet the challenge!

3. *Let it be an added incentive to move to that place where "there is pain no more"* (Revelation 21:4). There, pain will not be needed, nor experienced.

But as for now, while we endure pain, let us thank God for it!

1 "Crowning Fifty Years" A.C.C. Lectures, 1969, Page 289, Trine Starnes.

To Be Continued

For All To Think About

Two Christian wives sat mending their husband's pants. One of them said to the other: "My dear John! He is so discouraged in his church work! He said the other day he felt like quitting! Nothing goes right for him."

The other replied: "Why, my husband was saying just the opposite! He is so enthusiastic and happy! It seems like the Lord is closer to him than ever before!"

A hushed silence fell as they continued to mend the trousers — one patching the KNEES, and other the SEAT!

— Bethel Bulletin, Athens, Ala.

He Walked Upon The Mountains

(Continued from page 1)

Brother and Sister Nichols. A great and godly family rises up as a thrilling testimonial to the peaks of success they reached in this worthwhile endeavor. Hudson, his youngest son, said of his father many years ago, "If there are only two men in heaven, I believe my father will be one of them." What a beautiful tribute to lay at the feet of one's father.

THE MOUNTAIN OF PROLIFIC PENMANSHIP

Brother Nichols wielded a powerful pen. This is seen in the books he capably authored. It is seen in the Query Department for the GOSPEL ADVOCATE that he edited for many years. He served as a distinguished staff member of the "Old Reliable" for a number of years. It is seen in the hundreds of great editorials he wrote for WORDS OF TRUTH. He was a Biblical penman. His articles, like his stately sermons, were book, chapter and verse productions. Scriptural logic flowed freely and gracefully as his pen touched the great themes of the Bible. His writings on Generic and Specific Authority were masterpieces of keen Scriptural analysis. What a great loss it would have been to all of us if he had never treaded the mountain of religious journalism. His writings will live on and on. His pen was sharp and decisive for truth; it was deadly and destructive against any and all wrong and isms.

THE MOUNTAIN OF HEAVENLY HOPE

Brother Nichols was a man with a mission. He was a stranger and pilgrim on earth. This world was not the real home he sought. It was simply the realm of a temporary sojourn, the place for his preparation for eternity. He was a man with heaven on his mind. This writer knows of no one who wanted to go to heaven any more deeply than did the Sage of Jasper. His sermons on heaven would bring freely flowing tears to his eyes and also to the eyes of the avid hearers. He spoke about heaven as one who stood upon its threshold. In full emulation of what Christ spoke in John 14:1-3 the noble Nichols believed in Jehovah God, in Christ and in the heavenly hereafter. These were the intense imperatives of his fervent faith.

THE MOUNTAIN OF SCRIPTURAL SIMILITUDES

A similitude is a likeness or a comparison. Brother Nichols loved the Bible so deeply and lived so closely with its great characters that he became like them in his life. Like Abel he being dead yet speaketh. Like Enoch and Noah he walked with God. Like Abraham he taught his family to keep the commandments of the Lord. Like the Father of the Faithful he looked for a city "which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Like Joseph he was a person of moral purity. Like Moses he was a powerful leader of men. Like Samuel he taught us what we should know and never ceased to pray for Jehovah's people. Like Joshua he was a conqueror and one who determined that he and his family would serve the Lord. Like the youthful David he sought to be a man after God's own heart. Like Isaiah he was stately as a man, as Jehovah's servant. Like Jeremiah he was sensitive of soul. Like Nehemiah he was a builder of walls — walls to keep truth in and error out. Like John the Baptist he was a great preacher and baptized multitudes. The number immersed by him stood in excess of 12,000. Like Jesus he loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Like the blessed Lord whom he loved so deeply and served so faithfully, his meat was to do God's will. Like Peter he preached Christ. Like Paul he preached the whole counsel of God. Like the great apostle to the Gentiles he sought to know nothing save Christ and him crucified. Like the apostle John he was surely a modern disciple whom Jesus loved. Like Timothy was charged to do,

Brother Nichols preached the word in season and out of season. Like Paul summed up his life in the old Mamertine Prison in Rome. Brother Nichols could sum up his life and say he too had fought the good fight, he had kept the faith and he had finished the course. Like the Bible he loved, lived, preached and defended, the force of his life was for the good and in absolute opposition to the wrong.

CONCLUSION

We cannot and would not bring him back though we miss him so much. If we are obedient to the faith till the end as we believe he was, then the separation from him and our other Christian loved ones is short and temporary. We look forward to clasping his hand on the shores of eternity where the redeemed will never know separation again.

Thank God Brother Nichols lived. Both a prince and a great man has left our midst. What a priceless heritage he left us. What a noble imprint he left upon the mountains he treaded. Let us take the torch of truth he bequeathed us and never let it touch ground until we too pass from earthly scenes. That would be his wish for us; it should be our holy resolve.

When the noble Nichols departed from this life he left a vast lonesome place across the land.

A Real Look At Real Life

(Continued from page 2)

children. Too many have not faced these responsibilities successfully.

Real life is building unselfishly for the Master. "The rule that governs my life is this: anything that dims my vision of Christ, or takes away my taste for Bible study, or cramps my prayer, or makes Christian work difficult, is wrong for me; and I must, as a Christian, turn away from it" — J. Wilburn Chapman.

"He that finds his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:39.)

Real life is preparing for eternity. Jesus wanted us to fully understand that "straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14.) Real life is lived in the straight and narrow way.

Mistakes people Make About Real Life

Accumulating wealth, the cash register of our mind says, I will build greater barns. The real mistake is in leaving God out: "Thou fool; this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou has provided?" (Luke 12:20.) Man makes a mistake when he lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God (VS. 21.) Real life is only that which you can take with you after death.

Fun and games. How often do we hear the expression regarding a fishing trip, or a sports game, or a vacation, as, "Now, that's real living!" A person whose life is built upon pleasure is dead while he lives (I Tim. 5:6.) The apostle Paul warned Timothy of those who would be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:4.)

The dread of death. If you have lived right, death should not be dreaded any more than one's own bed.

Observations About Life

The Bible describes life as being brief. David said to Jonathan, "Truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death" (I Sam. 20:3.) The Psalmist said, "Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am" (Psalm 39:4.) Moses' request is still appropriate in our fast time: "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12.)

"My friend, you make very free with your days; pray, how many do you expect to have? What is your rental as regards the total

harvest of days which this life is likely to yield? Let us consider" (De Quincey.) Then follows his arithmetic, which I give without his language. Seventy years of life yield 25, 550 days. Remember, now, that twenty years have gone before beginning — before having attained any skill or system, or any definite purpose in the distribution of time. Deduction No. 1. for twenty years before beginning, 7,300 days; remainder, 18,250 days. Out of this remainder you have to deduct one third at a blow for one item: sleep! Deduction No. 2, 6,080 days, leaving remainder No. 2, 12,170 days. Once more De Quincey says, on account of illness, recreation, and the serious occupations spread over the surface of life, it will be little enough to deduct another third. (In the case of the minister it will be more, rather than less; for, as I understand him, the time occupied in public speaking comes in here — but call it one-third.) Deduction No. 3, 4,060 days, leaves remainder No. 3, 8,110 days. Finally, he says for the single item which the Roman armies grouped under the phrase "corpus curare," (Attendance upon the animal necessities) — eating, drinking, washing, bathing and exercise — deduct the smallest proper amount from the last remainder of 8,110 days, and you will have less than 4,000 days in a long life left for the direct development of all that is most august in the nature of man. After that comes the night, when no man can work. four thousand days — one solid mass of time. AMOUNTING TO ELEVEN AND A HALF CONTINUOUS YEARS.

This, brethren, is your intellectual and spiritual working life today. Does it look small? It is priceless. Its value is incomputable! To what could I compare it? To the sparkling crown jewels in the Tower of London? To the glittering treasures of the Saxon Green Vault? To the massive jewelry of the walls, even of the Apocalyptic City? They cannot represent its value! Nothing can so well picture its worth as the Master's own parable of the Pounds. This is the glorious inheritance which, in the name of that Master, I commit to your hands to-day, with his own great charge, "Occupy till I come."

Many intended to live one life, but lived another. (1) Felix intended to become a disciple; He trembled at the preaching of Paul (Acts 24:25) and indicated that he would call him back at a convenient season. (2) Ananias and saphira were potentially important parts of the Jewish church, but they turned out to be liars against the Holy Spirit (Acts 5.) (3) Judas began as one of the respected apostles, but he became a thief, then a traitor, and finally took his own life (Matt. 10:4; Jn. 12:6; 13:18:26; Mt. 27:3-5.) (4) What kind of life did you intend to live? Have you lived it?

The future is not solely in the hands of man. No man can be so arrogant as to claim that he has the power over any future date.

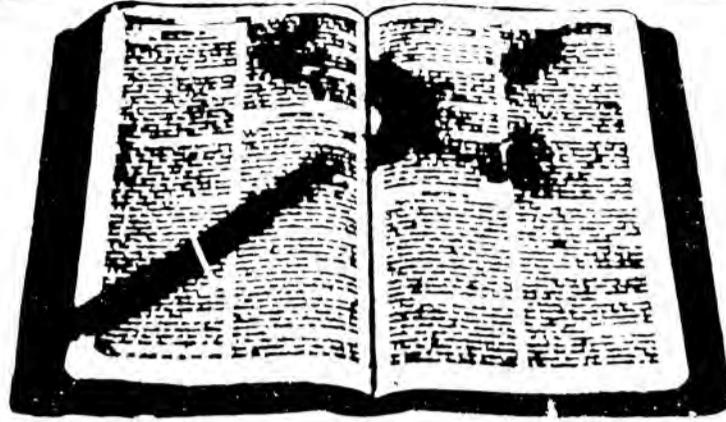
Conclusion

Live every day as if it were your last day. If today WERE your last day, HOW would you live it?

We look too long at the by-products of life, and do not really concentrate on life itself. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the LIFE" (Jn. 14:6.) We need to look more at Jesus Christ our Savior (Heb. 12:2), and less time at things. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15.) May God grant each of us his mercy to become a part of the abundant life (Jn. 10:10).

If radio's slim fingers can pluck a melody
from the night
And toss it over continent or sea;
If the petal white notes of a violin
can be blown across a mountain or city
dim;
If songs like crimson roses are pulled from
the thin blue air
Why should mortals wonder that God
hears prayer?

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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What Can We Know?

One of the most dangerous and subtle attacks against the authority of scripture is the contention that we cannot "know" with any degree of certainty the contents of the sacred writings. The theory is built upon the assumption that because we are finite creatures, we cannot be absolutely certain about anything. Apparently it has never dawned upon these modern agnostics, that they are in violation of their own theory. They have affirmed one thing as absolutely knowable, namely, that it is impossible to know anything for sure. Therefore the conjecture crumbles under the weight of their own inconsistency.

Jesus assured his disciples, "ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). While no man knows the truth exhaustively, we nevertheless can know enough of the truth to be "made free." The theory that asserts the impossibility of knowledge in religious matters must place the blame either with God, or man. Either God could not, or would not, communicate to man in a manner so as to produce knowledge; or, man does not have the ability to understand divinely-revealed truth. Both reason and scripture prove both assumptions to be unwarranted. It is unreasonable to claim that an omnipotent, omniscient God could not communicate, or that he would not avail himself of the means to communicate, to man. It is unscriptural to assert, in the face of what Jesus said (Jn. 8:32), that man lacks the ability to understand divine truth. It follows, therefore, that it is entirely possible for man to know the truth, and to know that he knows it.

Thus far we have been discussing knowledge of the truth in general. Now we will consider specifically what a Christian may know as a child of the Most High. A close analysis of First John reveals the recurring phrase — "I know," or "We know." As a matter of fact, the verb "To know" is found (in its various forms) about thirty-five times. Scholars have pointed out that perhaps John uses the term ironically against the Gnostics. Since the Gnostics claimed superior knowledge, John shows what every Christian



LARRY CHOUINARD

can know most assuredly as a child of God.

The following are some of the specifics that a Christian can know: We can know GOD (I Jn. 2:3). The Greek word translated "know" is the present indicative active of GINOSKO. The word means, to "acquire knowledge, become acquainted with; hence to come or get to know, learn or perceive." The knowledge referred to is not an intuitive knowledge, but knowledge gained through effort. Not only is the fact stated that we know God, but an objective criterion is given as our proof of our knowledge of Him. "And hereby we know that we know him IF WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS." (Literally "Keep on keeping his commandment.") While the Christian cannot know God exhaustively, he nevertheless can know the creator as evidenced by his faithfulness unto Him. God has revealed himself through a verbal revelation (I Cor. 2:11-13). Knowledge of the revelation fused with faithful obedience produces knowledge of God, and of our Lord Jesus (II Peter 1:2-4). Feelings, experiences, and subjective factors can never form an adequate basis to validate our knowledge of God. God's perfect revelation of Himself, the word of Truth, must be our final appeal in establishing our knowledge of God. Merely verbalizing our knowledge of Him, separate and apart from obedience, makes one a liar (v-4). Yes, God is knowable, having revealed Himself unto man through the inspired scriptures (II Cor. 2:18).

SON OF GOD (I Jn. 5:20). "And we KNOW that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding . . ." The verb "is come" carries the force of the perfect, implying a "settled state" (Literally "has been given to us"). Credible testimony supplied the early Christians with the knowledge they needed to be assured of the historical reality of the incarnation. John, an eyewitness, informed those who had not seen, that the Son of God has been manifested in the flesh. It is a legitimate source of knowledge to accept the testimony of those who are qualified to speak. It is a mistaken concept to assume that accurate knowledge can only come through our sense experience. As a matter of fact, Christians have the perfect means of obtaining accurate information. Since the author of the Bible is both omniscient and omnipotent, it follows that his revelation to man must be perfect (Psa. 19:7). When one attacks the integrity of Scripture, he is in reality calling into question the omniscience and omnipotence of God. Either God does not "know all" (hence errors are possible; or, God is not all-powerful, thus it is impossible for him to

author a perfect book. Whatever horn of the dilemma the critic takes he faces insurmountable difficulties. The Biblical testimony concerning Jesus Christ provides accurate information; hence we may confidently affirm, "truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

JUSTIFICATION (I Jn. 3:14). "We know that we have passed out of death unto life, because we love the brethren . . ." The phrase translated, "we have passed" is from the root word "METABAINO," meaning literally, "to take steps over." The perfect tense signifying a "settled state." Since "life" is a synecdoche for salvation or justification, we may translate this verse, "We know that we have taken steps over, and so now remain in a state of justification as evidenced by our love for the brethren." Not only can the Christian know the fact of his justification in the past; his present condition can be equally ascertained. In a POSITIVE sense Christians are to walk in harmony with the word (I Jn. 2:5; 3:24); and love one another (I Jn. 3:14). NEGATIVELY, he is to abstain from a habitual life of sin (I Jn. 5:18). To violate any of these admonitions produces grounds for a break in fellowship with both God and the church. God did not leave the important subject of justification in the realm of uncertainty.

The double-talk of liberalism only clouds up the issue of fellowship, while inspiration makes it crystal clear. The Apostle Paul had no problem in determining who was a Christian. That Apostle affirms that deliverance can be pin-pointed to one's obedience to "that form of teaching" (Rom. 6:17-18). Obedience to "that form of teaching" is the line of demarcation between the church and the world. The "teaching" is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (I Cor. 15:1-4). The "form" of this teaching is obeyed in baptism (Rom. 6:3-4). It follows that one need not live a life of doubts and uncertainty regarding our condition before God. We can point out the precise time of our cleansing, and our present condition can be equally determined (II Jn. 9; I Jn. 1:9; 2:5; 3:24; 4:8). With this objective standard it can be ascertained who is in a state of justification, and therefore who is enjoying the blessings of fellowship with God and his church.

SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND ERROR: (I Jn. 4:6). John declares we can "know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." Once again the Greek word translated "know" implies

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WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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10 Things You Can Do To Help Improve Our Bible Classes

GUS NICHOLS "NICK" HAMILTON

1. Pray for your teacher.
2. Attend every class — determine not to miss a single time this year.
3. Invite your friends to come with you.
4. Every week, visit with someone who missed, and encourage them to come back.
5. Prepare your lesson before you enter class.
6. Participate in class discussions.
7. Tell your teacher how much you appreciate all the effort he gives to the class.
8. Be involved in class fellowships.
9. Try to be present several minutes early so you can have your Bible opened and be settled and ready when class begins.
10. Consider Bible Class to be among the most important things you do each week.

—White Rock Church, Dallas

A Classic Example Of A Disgruntled Brother

STEVE WILLIAMS

In the August, 1975, issue of INTEGRITY there appeared a short note from one criticizing a church in Florida. He claimed that he received a very cold reception when he visited there wearing bluejeans and work boots. The next week, to prove a point with a friend, he returned, wearing a \$235 suit borrowed from a friend. He claims he received a very warm reception and was even asked to help at the Lord's table.

I read this and believed it to be the truth, thinking how terrible it was that we are often conscious of worldly goods in our judgment of each other. This violates Jas. 2:1-4, 9. I then forgot about the article for several weeks. In the October, 1975, issue of INTEGRITY there appeared a letter from the preacher of the criticized church. Suddenly we saw the other

side of the story. We learn the man received a cold reception that first Sunday because of his attitude, and because of other uncontrollable circumstances. One family who had been there for ten years was leaving, and many people were saying "goodbye". Also, several members had to leave quickly for graduation services at the local schools. More important, the critical brother sat near the back, left very quickly, and sat on his motorcycle awaiting everyone to run to him with open arms. Was he being hostile on purpose to prove a point? I wonder. That would violate Phil. 2:3, 14.

The next Sunday he was received more warmly. Why not? He arrived very early, stood at the door and greeted people as they came into the building. (I do not think it is judging his motives without some basis of fact to say that he was trying to prove a point. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20, 16). His actions revealed what his attitude really was.) He was acting like typical disgruntled brothers! They are going to be displeased no matter what you do. (We have enough problems in the church, enough weaknesses among members, enough lukewarmness, without someone ARRANGING circumstances so that they can have a reason to criticize.)

This reminds me of one young man who was often causing trouble and contention within a certain church. He was finally challenged concerning his views and his actions. He became more and more hostile until finally he quit coming to any of the services except on Wednesday nights. Then his true attitude became more visible. He did not go to the devotional part of the service in the auditorium, but went upstairs to the classroom where he could upset a group of young adults, and cause trouble.

Another young man became disgruntled with a certain church, was relieved of his duties there, and was given three months' salary (a more than fair arrangement). He stayed in the church-owned property more than three months, but did not attend its Sunday services. He visited elsewhere to observe the programs of other churches; but on Wednesday night he always returned, signed a visitor's card, and went to the young adult class where he and his companions had a "gripe" session about the elders, the preacher, the members, et. al.

It is hard to deal with such persons. They are going to be unhappy and find something wrong, no matter what you do. They are going to prove (?) their point, pressing the issue as much as they can. If they finally leave, shaking the dust off their feet, they will feel like martyrs, like they have been severely mistreated. (They usually caused most of the problems and forced issues that could have been avoided!) Members of the church are not going to be perfect, nor always do things the way we want them done. So let us try to be more patient with one another. Do not go around with a chip on your shoulder, waiting for someone to knock it off!

God Is Listening

EDSEL BURLESON

Henry Van Dyke once said, "There are two good rules which ought to be written on every heart:

1. Never believe anything bad about anybody unless you positively know it is true.
2. Never tell even that, unless you feel it is absolutely necessary, and remember that God is listening while you tell it!

One of the greatest problems many people have is recognizing the power of the tongue. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5, 6.) One has become mature when keeping a secret gives him more satisfaction than passing it along.

Someone has placed gossips into three

different groups: the vest-button group (always popping off); the vacuum cleaner group (always picking up dirt); the lime group (they rub it in)!

Be very careful about encouraging gossips. They will talk about you, to "When a little bird tells you something, don't repeat it until you find out whether or not the little bird is a cuckoo." "A lot of this world's trouble is caused by combining a narrow mind with a wide mouth." Indeed, God is listening!

The World's Great Need

VIRGIL BRADFORD

Someone has wisely observed: "Our wants are many; our needs are few." We are all wont to think that our needs are greater than they really are. The Lord Jesus knew this and said, "Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:31-33). The apostle Paul wrote, "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (I Tim. 6:6).

WHAT ARE NOT THE GREATEST

The whole world seems to be avidly seeking money, secular education, scientific knowledge, improvement of health and general living conditions, plus a nice Social Security payment, along with all pleasures and luxuries that the world has to offer. No one will deny that these things are to be desired within reason! But let it be remembered that money may be a blessing or a curse. Secular education might easily be turned to the seeming advantage of the crook and criminal. Scientific knowledge has the world jittery by the development of bombs, aircraft, and implements of warfare so horrible as to defy man's imagination. Good health is surely desirable; but remember Helen Keller, Franklin D. Roosevelt and many others who have turned afflictions to power sources that might never have otherwise been tapped. And what about our Social Security system? From all indications it is in serious trouble, and we dare not lean too heavily upon the "broken reed."

THE ANSWER IS C-H-R-I-S-T

We have never known any person who was sorry that he had put on Christ, accepting him as Saviour and Lord; as Prophet, Priest and King; as the great Teacher come from God, and the Living Bread that came down from heaven. Think what our governments would be if headed and directed by men who loved the Lord and esteemed His word and treasured it more than daily food and drink (Job 23:12). Consider the church, even that which was purchased by His own precious blood. How many who really recognize Christ as the HEAD of the church would refuse to speak to a brother? Or, would want to leave the worship of the Lord for worldly pleasures? Or, would make excuses for not studying the word of God? and not make sincere effort to lead souls to Christ?

Furthermore, in business, honesty would prevail. In school, atheism would disappear. Broken homes and broken hearts resulting from greed, hatred, and neglect would be no more. Christ would indeed be in you and me the hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

SOME SPECIFIC NEEDS

Our need for Christ — and none can have the Son without having the Father also — our need for Christ, then, in things that have to do with the saving of our souls, far outweighs the material needs of men. We must be saved from the LOVE AND PRACTICE OF SIN. In a large measure we must do this for ourselves. Undoubtedly the influences of the goodness of God through the Scriptures must be present in

(Continued on page 4)

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter seven

"Has not man a hard service upon earth,
and are not his days like the days of a
hireling?"

Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like a hireling who looks for his wages,
so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.
When I lie down I say, "When shall I arise?"
But the night is long.
and I am full of tossing till the dawn."

— verses 1-4.

MONTHS OF EMPTINESS

Job 7:1-4

"Will it never end? I could have stood it for awhile, but it seems like it will go on, and on, and on, and on — forever." That plaintive cry comes from hearts plagued with problems which seem eternal. It isn't difficult for one to be "worn thin" by timeless troubles. Even light loads grow heavy when they never can be set down. Minor irritations grow into major annoyances. "A constant dripping wears away the stone."

Job endured prolonged agony. His troubles were magnified by the thought that they might never end. At night time a servant could rest. A hireling would receive wages. And Job reasoned that man's life ought to be like that. But for months he had endured awful agony. He could foresee no relief on the morrow. No respite. No pay-day. His nights were wearisome — "full of tossing to and fro unto the dawning of the day." And his days were "spent without hope." (v. 7). Day after day, night after night, he suffered.

This is strangely descriptive of the feeling of many who suffer today. Some have been invalids for years. Some have never seen a well day, or a moment without pain. Yet, somehow, they survive. And some do more than merely survive — they conquer. They learn to live with their affliction. They make the most of their limited opportunities. They learn to smile.

"More skillful in self-knowledge, even more pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence also, more alive to tenderness."

— Wordsworth

One has not visited the afflicted very often unless he has had the experience of going to cheer up another only to be cheered up himself! He goes to speak a word of comfort — but receives more comfort than he gives! To spread a ray of sunshine, only to be flooded by sunshine himself! Perchance he goes into a room which has been home to an invalid for years. But there is no drabness there. He sees a smiling face instead of a crippled body. He hears a song instead of a complaint. He feels as though he is in the presence of a victorious warrior. He knows he is in the presence of one who has learned how to live!

"For he who much has suffered, much will know."

— Homer

If one who suffers for a long time indulges in self-pity, or yearns for the attention of others, he will have a difficult time enduring prolonged problems. Success for one who is destined to bear continued handicaps comes from the same formula as does success for one without such handicaps: *lose self in service to others.* Forget self while maintaining an

interest in others! Try to make others happy instead of looking to others to make you happy! Get interested in someone else! "But you have never suffered as long and as much as I have." Job did.

A genuine interest in others will set off a chain reaction. It will make others glad they noticed! And that will make them want to come more often. And the more they come, the more they will enjoy coming. And the more they enjoy it, the more often they will return. And when they return, the brighter will be the day of the shut-in. And the easier life will be. Finally, such a one will look upon his troubles as "light affliction, which is but for a moment." He will be looking for that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17). And, he will learn to appreciate the promise made through the apostle, "But the God of all grace....after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:10).

And empty months will be filled.

JOB

Chapter seventeen

"My spirit is broken, my days are extinct,
the grave is ready for me."

— verse 1.

THE GRAVE IS READY FOR ME

Job 17:1

"The reports are not good. All we can do is to keep you as easy as possible. You may expect to live not more than six months. If there are any developments that we hear about which might help you, we'll keep in touch." Tragic words! Yet, they have been heard often in this day of advanced medical technology when doctors often can foresee death for their patients. When one is informed that his disease is terminal, that only a few precious months or days are left, then life takes on altogether new meaning. Everything seems changed. And if there is ever a time when one needs help, it is then.

Evidently Job knew this problem. He said, "My days are extinct, the grave is ready for me" (17:1). No doctor had pronounced the sentence, but he felt the decay in his body. There was evidence on every hand. No one in his condition could last very long! We marvel that his "death sentence" did not seem to be the greatest of his troubles. He even longed for death. He said his "soul chooseth....death rather than life" (7:15). And yet, he didn't want to die! But with us it may be that to know death is just around the corner is the worst thing that could happen.

If a doctor were to tell us we could expect to live only for awhile, we would consider that the worst news of all. And yet, the healthy physician who makes the prognosis may not live to finish treating the case. The preacher who comes to comfort may die first. The family who is crushed by the news may not be at the funeral! Or, like Job, there may be more time left here than is anticipated. Even though he thought he was soon to die, he got well. And he is not the last to live through a crisis. But regardless of the time, death is sure. "It is appointed unto man once to die," is a statement we would know to be true regardless of where we read it. It is the universal experience of man. So, to hear this crushing message should not be so surprising. After all, death is not a matter of "IF," but "WHEN."

"But I'm dying so young!" is the plaintive cry of many. Again, youth is a relative thing, the same as time is. In this jet age one can experience more, go more, see more, and really live more in a year than his forefathers could in three score years and ten. Ours is a young people's world. Some of the greatest contributions have been made by the young. Thomas Jefferson was only thirty-three when he drafted the Declaration of Independence. Benjamin Franklin was twenty-six when he wrote Poor Richard's Almanac. Bryant wrote Thanatopsis when he was eighteen. McCormick was twenty-three when he

invented the reaper and Newton was twenty-four when he formulated the statement of the law of gravitation. One young man died at the age of thirty-three, having accomplished more in the matter of reforms for good, and having been of greater service to humanity, than any other person who ever lived, regardless of age: Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Or if when in older years one hearts his physician say, "You have only a little while left," the news is just as hard to take. This experience is like many other things — there is no time or place but that we wish it were different. There is just no way it can be pleasant. To most people is seems there is no time when it can be welcomed.

Perhaps one never knows how he will take such a message until he receives it; but no doubt he would want to make the most of those precious days he had left. *And he would want to make preparation for the great move.* Would it not be wise to spend some time in learning about the country to which he is going? To begin to view death as simply the change of his address? To spend some time in joyful anticipation? There can be real joy in anticipation. Before one builds a new home, to put his dreams on paper is exciting. Vacations are sometimes as pleasant in planning as in going. One of the thrills of education is the joyful anticipation of an interesting profession. And there is no reason why one can't enjoy heaven before he even gets there!

Benjamin Franklin had the right idea, and he expressed it well when he wrote his own epitaph:

The Body
of

Benjamin Franklin, Printer

[Like the cover of an old book,

Its contents torn out,

And stripped of its lettering and gilding,]

Lies here food for worms.

Yet the work itself shall not be lost,

For it will [as he believes] appear once

more

In a new

And beautiful Edition

Corrected and amended

By

The Author

(To Be Continued)

Beware of Idolatry

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

In the last verse of his first epistle, John says: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I John 5:21). Paul warns us that idolaters "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

An idol is "anything that absorbs the soul's attention and claims uppermost affection in the heart" (James Burton Coffman). William Jennings Bryan's list of false gods includes gold, fashion, fame, ease, intellect, travel, war, passion, chance and drink (THE FIRST COMMANDMENT, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1917, pp. 12-26).

The following statement of Augustine is inscribed on the tomb of William Rockefeller in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Tarrytown, New York: "Our souls, O God, were made for thee; and never shall they rest until they rest in God."

One has well said: "If we want to have one world, the only way to begin is by the recognition of our dependence upon the one God. All other possible objects of ultimate loyalty are fictitious. A deep sense of the priority of the first commandment would change all men fortunate enough to share it . . . It is the first stone in the foundation upon which we must try to rebuild man's shattered house."

What Can We Know?

(Continued from page 1)

knowledge gained through effort. Apostolic authority is the standard for determining the "spirit of truth and the spirit of error." "He that knoweth God heareth us" (Literally "keeps on obeying Apostolic admonitions"). On the other hand, "he who is not of God, heareth us not." The church has the responsibility to "mark them that cause divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine (truth) which ye learned." (Rom. 16:17-18). This admonition would be nonsense if it were impossible to distinguish truth from error. Furthermore, the Father expects us to use his word as a test or standard to prove that which is true (II Jn. 9-10). Truth CANNOT be established through subjective factors, but only by an appeal unto God's objective revelation. That is precisely the manner we "prove the spirits, whether they are of God" (I Jn. 4:1). If the Bible is not our standard to prove that which is right, then we have no way of knowing whether everything from Watchtowerism to Pentecostalism is from God or man. Paul warned the Ephesians not to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). Such an admonition would be impossible to obey, if truth cannot be discerned from error. Since our entire salvation rests upon our being in the truth, one can certainly determine if he be in the truth.

The redeemed child of God need not live a life of uncertainty and doubt. We may know the Lord God, and be certain of our relationship with Him. Arming ourselves with the "sword of the spirit" (Eph. 6:17), we are assured of victory over the spirit of falsehood. Implied in Jesus' promise (Jn. 8:32) not only is the guarantee of enough knowledge to be MADE free, but also enough to STAY free from the bondage of sin. Yes, the scriptures furnish "unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3, II Tim. 3:15-17). — West Walker Church, Rt. 2, Hwy. 78, Carbon Hill, Al. 35549.

The World's Great Need

(Continued from page 2)

us to that end. Through the grace of God in Christ many have been led to genuine repentance and obedience to the gospel. Others have merely made an outward show of repentance of a worldly sort, leaving them unsaved (Cf. 2 Cor. 7:10). Consider then: "The opening of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple" (Ps. 119:130).

However, cessation from a sinful, profligate life does not save from the pollution and guilt of sin. Repentance is not enough to save until our faith leads us to obey all God's word. All sorts of pollution are getting a lot of attention in our time: water, air, oceans, and streams. But what about the soul polluted and made foul by sin? "What can wash away my sin?" The answer: NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS! There is power in the blood! We are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold — but with precious blood — the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ (I Pet. 1:18-19). The guilt of sin is removed; we are saved from GUILT, and brought to the power of the blood in obeying the commandments of the Lord (I Pet. 1:22-23). This is accomplished through grace when we "obey from the heart that form of teaching whereunto we were delivered" (Rom. 6:16-18).

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL

When we were, by faith, baptized into Christ the guilt and burden of sin were removed forever. God has promised, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:8-12). You never need be baptized a second time if you were buried with Christ according to the

commandment, and raised to walk in newness of life (Mk. 16:16; Ac. 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Eph. 4:5). A Christian who sins and is forgiven never has to, nor should he, ask a second time to be forgiven for the same sin. He is walking in the light when he so repents and "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth (is cleansing) us from ALL SIN" (I Jn. 1:7). Thus does Christ deliver us from the PUNISHMENT of sin. "Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin (a sin offering) on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). The power of sin is to destroy; the power of Christ is far superior, for, "He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw nigh unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

Let us strive daily to make Peter's words our words: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God" (Jn. 6:68-69).

P. O. Box 477, Franklin, Tenn. 37064

Writing Their Practice Into The Bible

By RAY HAWK

In the past few years we have seen the Bible market flooded with new translation; some of them have merit. For years the denominations have taught false doctrine, but found it impossible to prove these teachings in public discussions. In recent years however, they have produced translation (?) which put doctrines of men into the text (?) of the New Testament. The false doctrine of "faith only" showed up in the text of *Good News For Modern Man* and the *Living Bible*.

Since 1970, Pentecostal churches have flourished due to many denominations' going more and more liberal. People were looking for something that offered them spiritual excitement. Pentecostalism seemed to have the answer with its promise of "POWER" and "FEELINGS." One Pentecostal church in advertises, "A Religion You Can Feel!" Hence, Pentecostal churches are growing. However, many have not been in that religion long enough for the "new" to wear off, hence do not see it for what it is, a religion of emotionalism, and a rejection of the final authority of Christ in the Scriptures (II Tim. 3:16-17).

Pentecostals make outrageous claims they could never prove. They have worked their system out over the years so that they control the situations if at all possible, and never demonstrate when there is a possibility that they may be exposed.

If Pentecostal practice of today were transferred to the Bible, the New Testament would have to be rewritten. What Pentecostals do, and what the New Testament records, are two different things. I want us to transfer their modern practices to Acts 13:6-12 and see how that passage would have to be rewritten to support present day practices:

ACTS 13:6-12 ACCORDING TO PENTECOSTALS

6. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

7. Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.

10. And said, of full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11. And now, behold, the hand of the Lord would be upon you if He wanted to, and if you aren't careful the Lord might strike you blind,

so you will not see the sun for a season. Elymas laughed at Paul and said, Where is your power? Why do you come to me with claims and testimony, but no power? Paul cried, I have power Elymas, at least God does! but for some reason He doesn't want me using it. But you better quit withstanding Barnabas and me! You might get struck blind!

12. Then the deputy, when he saw nothing was done, continued following Elymas, being astonished at the empty claims of Paul and Barnabas.

Now that is how Acts 13:6-12 should read if Paul could do not more than Pentecostals today! They claim they can do all manner of things in their church buildings! But they have no power to demonstrate. All they have are empty claims and testimonies! The Lord worked with the apostles, and confirmed their word with signs (Mk. 16:20). The gospel they preached needs new revelation, nor any new confirmation (Heb. 2:3-4).

We love the souls of Pentecostals, but we hope the day will come when they will open their eyes to the truth and be saved.

Why Does This Article Seem So Ridiculous?

"Hello....Yes...Oh, you're Johnny's teacher. I've been meaning to call you....No, he isn't planning to be in school this year. You see, he has so much work to do at the church — church school lessons, church services, yout activities and such to take up his time; then there are daily devotions at home and other interests, so that there isn't any time left for school.

"Well, yes, I know that school is important, and I know that you are doing a fine job with the kids in this community — and I've been intending to write a letter of appreciation to the school. I surely would hate to live in a place where there were no schools.

"To tell you the truth, Johnny didn't like school too well last year. Besides all those examinations, having to bring a report card home showing his progress was embarrassing to him. He suffered some psychological effects because so many girls were attending school, he thought it was 'sissy' to go. So he decided he would not attend school this year.

"Am I going to make him go? Of course, I'm not! I knew a family once that made their child go, and he wound up hating school. I don't think his educational growth will be harmed. I will use my influence to get him to attend football games, plays, etc. When hunting season is over, his father will be able to take him. I really think the old methods of education are out of date anyway.

"Yes, if he were to decide that he wanted to return to school, it would be all right with me. I just want to make sure the decision is his."

— Author Unknown

Christianity Like Eye Glasses

JACKIE W. FOX

The eminent scientist, Albert Einstein, is said to have gone to a restaurant without his glasses. After several unsuccessful attempts to read the menu, he asked the waiter to read it for him. After a moment of fumbling with the card, the waiter replied: "Ah'm ignorant, too, Boss."

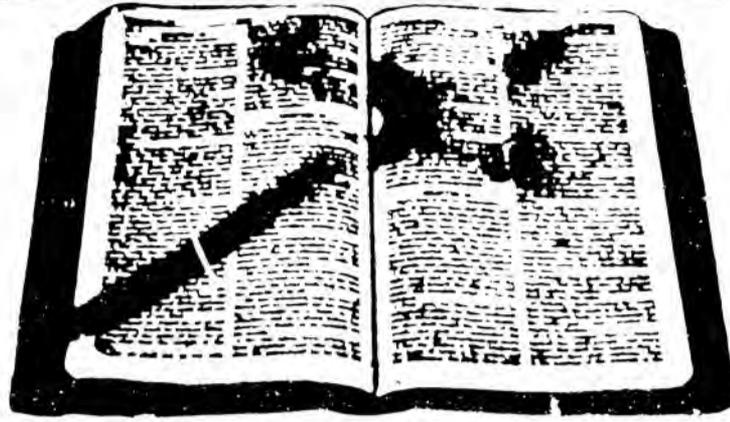
Christian living is like unto a pair of glasses: It is impossible to clearly appreciate the blessings of righteous living unless one is living righteously. Those who have been baptized merely to have 'fire insurance,' have missed the whole point of Christianity. The real joy of being a Christian is the daily walk with Jesus in study, prayer, and by imitation of His ways. Occasional, spasmodic interest misses the point. We must DAILY take up our cross and follow Jesus if we would know the joy of discipleship (Lk. 9:23; I Jn. 1:7).

—via Austinville Messenger, Decatur, Ala.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

Brother Wayne Jackson of Stockton, California, one of our most faithful preachers, a gifted writer and a frequent contributor to WORDS OF TRUTH, has suggested this line of thought for this series of articles. I propose to honor this good request from brother Jackson with some five articles for WORDS OF TRUTH.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I found it to be a very interesting topic for examination, and feel that each reader of this great weekly will do the same.

SOME INTRODUCTORY REFLECTIONS

This series of five articles will attempt to set forth quite briefly what false teachers do with some of the numbers found in the Bible. In fact, as we begin this mutual study together, the thought occurs to me that nothing in the Bible is safe and intact from the unholy hands of false teachers — those who would mutilate the message of the Bible.

The names and personalities of the Bible have not been safe in the hands of false teachers. Biblical enemies have suggested that Abraham never lived, and that Moses is just a legendary character who never wrote that first syllable of Sacred Scripture! Yet Jesus said in regard to Abraham, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:56, 58). How could Abraham have been born, and been the father of a mighty people, if he never existed? Relative to Moses, our Lord stated in John 3:14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; . . ." In John 5:45-47 the Bible says, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" How could a non-entity have lifted up the serpent in the wilderness? How could a non-entity have written of Jesus?

There have been those who denied the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth. Yet those who do this, cannot sign a check and date it, without setting forth the tremendous thought that some 1,976 years ago an event

happened that has become the very standard of date-determination. Were the writer an atheist, it would bother him no end every time it became essential to write down the current date to carry on daily business! Imagine being an atheist, and having to acknowledge Christ's influence on date-determinations every time one wrote a check with a date on it!

The Bible, to a great degree, is composed of facts, commandments, promises and warnings. Everyone of these vital ingredients of Sacred Scripture has been subject to abuse and misrepresentation on the part of the enemies of the Lord's Book. Does any reader of these lines know of a single doctrine in the Bible but what false teachers have dealt deceitfully with it? The writer knows of none. Look at what false teachers have done with the creation account in Genesis 1 and 2! Look at what they have done with the miracles of the Old Testament such as the crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus 14, the fire and brimstone which were rained upon the sinful cities of the Jordan Plain in Genesis 19, the story of Jonah and the great fish in the book of Jonah, etc. Look at what they have done with the virgin birth of our Lord in the predictive message of Isaiah 7:14 and the strikingly precise fulfillment in Matthew 1 and 2. Look at what they have done in the rejection of the miracles of our Lord during his personal ministry from the turning of water into wine to his own glorious resurrection. Look at what they have done with all the miracles performed by the hands of the apostles and those upon whom they imposed hands in the infant period of Christianity. Look at what they have done with the great doctrinal matters written by inspired men. There is not that first one left intact by the vicious hands of false teachers.

False teachers have done the same with many of the numbers found in the Bible. This has been especially true in regard to the numbers which are mentioned in Genesis 1 and Genesis 5. Genesis 1 deals with the period of the creation. Genesis 5 deals with the years lived by certain of the patriarchs. Genesis 1 talks about days; Genesis 5 talks about years. The proponents of evolution, especially theistic evolution, have not been content at all with what Moses wrote about the six "days" of creative activity in Genesis 1. The avowed modernists have not been satisfied with what Moses wrote about the lives of longevity in Genesis 5.

FALSE TEACHERS AND THE WORD "DAY" IN GENESIS 1

In Genesis 1 Moses described the activities of Jehovah God in the week of creation as he intelligently prepared for the coming of plant

life, animal life and human life. Isaiah teaches that Jehovah God "formed it (the earth) to be inhabited" (Isa. 45:18). Therefore it does not seem reasonable at all that he would have created it billions and billions of years before he peopled it with any form of life, as theistic evolution foolishly contends and ardently advocates.

Moses tells us what Jehovah God did on each of these "six days". On day number one he made light. On the second day he made the firmament with a division of the waters above the firmament, from the waters below the firmament. On day number three God caused the dry land to appear, brought the waters together into one place, and made plant life. On day number four the God of creation made the sun to rule the day, the moon to rule the night, and placed the stars into their respective orbits. On the fifth day he made life for the air and life for the waters. On the sixth day he made the land animals, man, and woman. Moses described each of these as occurring on a certain "day".

But theistic evolutionists are not content with leaving these as "days". They are determined to harmonize (?) godless evolution with the creation account in Genesis 1. In order to do such they have to make each of the "days" in Genesis 1 equal to a long eon of time, to a long geological period that may encompass millions of years. They claim "day" in Genesis 1 does not mean "day."

But we have a question for the people who tamper with Genesis 1. If Moses had meant for us to understand each period as a "twenty-four hour day," just what better term could he have used for "day" than "day?" Who will answer? Who CAN answer? Such sophistry as this reminds me of those who say Jesus did not mean "water" in John 3:5 when he said "water". Well, if the Lord had intended us to understand him as meaning "water", what better term for "water" could he have used than "water?"

The word for "day" in Genesis 1 comes from the Hebrew term YOM. It is true that on occasion in the Bible this term may refer to a longer period than a twenty-four hour day. The term YOM occurs some 1,480 times in the Hebrew Bible. Hebrew scholarship says that "it is rendered 'day' 1,181 times." The other 300 times the word is used to carry the meaning of longer periods than a twenty-four hour "day". Therefore 80 per cent of its usage in the Hebrew Scriptures has it in reference to an ordinary, solar (or twenty-four hour) day. This shows, quite conclusively, that the predominant meaning of YOM in the

Continued on Page 4

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Flavil H. Nichols
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FROM
THE EDITOR

Gus Nichols

Loved The Brotherhood

R. W. GRAY

Even though he was unaware of the measure of his own greatness, tributes to the beloved Gus Nichols will be as numerous as will be witnessed in our brotherhood for a long time. His deeds of kindness were too numerous, his words of counsel were given too freely, his help in finding solutions to difficult problems too often sought, and his accomplishments for good too well known to permit anything less than the eulogies reserved for the great among us.

It will not be our purpose here to repeat what so many know regarding brother Nichols' accomplishments. It will be the design of this article to summarize some of the thoughts that flooded the minds of so many of us as we viewed the remains of our departed brother.

"The Lord's church has travelled some rugged paths, brother, while your stabilizing influence tempered an otherwise explosive and destructive situation. Your respect for us taught us to love and respect one another, even as our Lord said we must. Our moments of discouragement were buoyed in remembering your faithful life. You provided us a living example of the truths we embraced, allowing us to see what a Christ-saturated life really means. Our hearts are broken, brother, as we must say 'farewell' for now; but our gratitude for all you have meant to us will not end in your going to be with our Lord. Remembering your goodness, we will strive to be more like Jesus. We are extremely proud you have been our older brother in the truest sense of that term."

REFLECTIONS

Many are the obstacles we have faced in striving for that brotherly kindness that must characterize the church of Christ. Party spirits often grow out of jealousies and factional rivalries. Caustic remarks punctuate exchanges between brethren, inflicting wounds that are slow to heal. In the midst of it all we are inclined to inquire, "where is that

unfeigned love of the brethren unto which we were born?" (I Pet. 1:22-23.)

Observing the vast audience that attended brother Nichols' funeral, and in listening to the eloquent words of brethren who knew him best, a partial answer to the foregoing question was observed. Hearts of our brethren do beat as one, throb as one, rejoice as one. The love of Christ does constrain us to love our faithful brethren.

When brother Nichols died, something died in each of us. We shared our brother while he lived, and we share equally the sorrow that came at his passing. The tie that binds our hearts in Christian love was drawn tighter, as indeed it does each time we say farewell to one we mutually love.

Yes, many are the contributions made by our brother who was a legend in his own time; but of them all, none means more than his ability to allow us to grasp and appreciate the value of all our brethren. We are made to understand that "great lamentation" made for Stephen when brethren carried his battered body to its final resting place. (Acts 7.) And as we suffer the loss of one faithful brother we are keenly aware of the fact that real grief would be ours in viewing the remains of hundreds, yea thousands, of our faithful and beloved brethren. Let brotherly love continue.

Abortion

JUANITA HIGGINBOTHAM McDANIEL
Registered Nurse

I have read so many articles in different "Dear Editor" columns in which many people favor the passage of an abortion law, a bill to legalize abortions, until it nauseates me. There already is too much murder in this country! We certainly do not need it LEGALIZED! . . . And the passage of an abortion bill would be LEGALIZED MURDER! . . . NOTHING ELSE CAN BE MADE OF IT! One woman wrote "that a legalized abortion bill was well past due . . . a pregnancy of three months has not yet formed into a growing child . . . but only a group of cells which later would form an embryo and then a child." I would like to point out some facts — not for argument, but because I know they are true — medical facts, to those who believe like that woman. I shall briefly outline the different stages of pregnancy, along with the creation of the human by God, and the development and growth of the unborn during pregnancy.

FIRST, A WOMAN IS PREGNANT 10 LUNAR MONTHS, OR 9 MONTHS IN OUR WAY OF COUNTING IT!

FACTS: THE TERM "EMBRYO" IS USED WHILE THE NEW INDIVIDUAL IS IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF LIFE. AN INDIVIDUAL IS A PERSON, WHETHER AN EMBRYO, OR AN ADULT! This "embryo" is in the first three months of "life," and NOT A LIFE TO BE FORMED LATER! IT WAS FORMED AT CONCEPTION! THIS IS LIFE!!! When the male and female sex cell fuse together THEN — NOT LATER — A NEW BEING (HUMAN) IS CREATED! LIFE!!!

THE TERM "FETUS" IS USED TO DESIGNATE A NEW INDIVIDUAL from the end of the third month of growth and development of the unborn, until it is born into the world. THIS IS LIFE! Anything "dead" does not grow and develop!

The human being with all his (or her) adaptation, complex organization, and marvelous powers, is the development of the newborn, created by GOD. God made each part of the human body to function in its intended way, the way in which God created it

to function. Reproduction is one of the many functions of such creation. Both adult and child are products of the fusion of two sex cells, the male generative sex cell (spermatozoid) and the female sex cell, known as the ovum (meaning egg), both being reproductive, therefore containing life. "Reproduce" MEANS TO CAUSE TO LIVE; therefore life BEGINS AT CONCEPTION (not "to be formed later"). When God created the human being, He said, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Then Jesus said, "Do not kill" (Mk. 10:19). I would not want to be in the shoes of one who passes an abortion law, or even a doctor who would perform an abortion!

Here briefly are the different stages of pregnancy and development of the unborn child:

1. At the end of the 4th week (or the 1st Lunar month) the embryo yolk sack is prominent, the heart is a pulsating, bulgy-like, tube. LIFE IS THERE!

2. At the end of the 8th week (or 2nd Lunar month) the embryo is 1/4 inches long, the eyes, nose, liver are formed and the legs and arms are bud-like processes. THIS IS LIFE!

3. At the end of the 12th week (or 3rd Lunar month) the unborn life is referred to as a "fetus" from the 3rd month until birth. It is 3 1/2 inches long and weighs 2/3 of an ounce. The navel cord is well developed, the intestines contain bile, and the sex is determinable. THIS IS LIFE! (Please keep in mind the statement quoted from the woman who at this very point states, "just a group of cells . . . to form a child later.")

4. At the end of the 16th week (or the 4th Lunar month) the fetal heart and the fetal active movements are distinct and can be heard with a stethoscope. Meconium is present. (Meconium is the dark-green substance found in the large intestine of the unborn, and is evacuated during the first few days after the child is born. Mothers never see this, unless of course they have their babies at home, because the nurses take care of the baby during this period in the nursery.) THIS IS LIFE!

5. At the end of the 20th week (or the 5th Lunar month) the nails and hair are indicated. THIS IS LIFE!

6. At the end of the 24th week (or the 6th Lunar month) the fetus weighs 1 1/4 pounds, the body is better proportioned, but still lean, and the eye lids are separated. THIS IS LIFE!

7. At the end of the 28th week (or the 7th Lunar month) the fetus weighs 2 1/2 pounds, the skin is red and fuzzy, the eyes are open, the cry is weak and "gruntying." THIS IS LIFE!

8. At the end of the 32nd week (or the 8th Lunar month) the fetus weighs from 3 1/4 to 4 pounds, the body is less lean, the skin less red, the bones are firmer. The cry is stronger. THIS IS LIFE!

9. At the end of the 36th week (or the 9th Lunar month) the fetus weighs 5 1/2 pounds, the body is more rounded with fat, the nails are at the tips of the fingers, all vital organs are developed. THIS IS LIFE!

10. At the end of the 40th week (or 10th Lunar month — or perhaps you say, the 9th month) . . . the infant weighs 7 1/2 pounds, more or less. (DIABETICS: MOTHERS WITH DIABETES USUALLY HAVE VERY LARGE BABIES!!!) At this stage the fetus — individual — is full term and ready to enter into his (or her) new world . . . among some heartless people . . . some who want a law passed to MURDER HIM OR HER . . . before he (or she) ever sees the outside world . . . sometimes born to parents who do not want the child. GOD FORBID!!!! THIS IS LIFE! AND IT WAS LIFE FROM THE TIME OF CONCEPTION! THIS IS THE WAY GOD INTENDED IT! MAN CANNOT CHANGE THE LAWS OF GOD . . . WITHOUT GETTING INTO ETERNAL TROUBLE!

Rte. 2 Box 172,
Cowpens, South Carolina 29330
(former resident of Cordova,
Walker County, Ala.)

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter two

Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God, and die." But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

— verses 9-10

WHEN THERE IS NO HELP AT HOME

Job 2:9, 10

If Satan were trying to hurt Job all he could, then why wasn't Mrs. Job visiting the children the day they were all killed? If Job had lost his wife, too, would that not have been the worst blow that he could have received? A man can stand almost anything on the outside, so long as he has a haven, a home, where he can go and shut the world out - if a sympathetic and understanding wife is there.

Perhaps Satan pulled his meanest trick when he spared Job's wife - and then led her to discourage him! Her suggestion was so subtle that some scholars today think she was trying to help him, some think she was trying to get rid of him; some think she was good, some think she was mean. I don't know about that. But this I do know - she discouraged. Discouragement in the world can be bad, in business it can be costly, but in the home it is disastrous! Job needed a wife to pray with him, to dress his wounds, to console him - but instead, he had one who said: "Why don't you curse God and die?" The most we can say for her was that she struck the hardest blow of all by her discouraging remark.

This matter of "no help at home" is a two-way street. Not only are some men denied encouragement by a good wife, but some women have to travel their road alone, too. Some mothers have no help from the fathers in rearing their children. No help from their husbands in making decisions to guide the home. No help from the head of the house in spiritual things. No help from their companions in times of distress and trouble. And some good women not only have to carry their share of the load, and the husband's share, but they have to carry both shares - and the husband, too! Perhaps it would be easier if (as it would have been for Job) he were not even in the picture.

When one is faced with that problem, Job can be an encouragement. Remember that he had financial reverses second to none, was bereaved over the loss of all his children, was hopelessly and painfully sick, and his companion said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." How did he handle a situation like that?

1. He didn't give up. Do you suppose he was tempted to throw in the towel and quit? Not Job. He may have entertained the thought, but not likely. Some unknown writer has blessed the world with a familiar poem which encourages the fainthearted. The first stanza goes like this:

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high
And you want to smile but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't you quit.

2. He didn't curse God. His wife suggested that he do so, but he thought her suggestion classified her as one of the foolish women! One of the oddest traits of human nature is the one which says that when things go wrong, God is to be blamed, and that he thus becomes the object of one's contempt. It really doesn't matter what the problem is. "If God let it happen, let us get our vengeance by blaming Him!" is the way the philosophy goes. That is foolish, isn't it? "Somebody makes me mad - I'll quit the church and cease to worship God!" "Sickness comes - I'll deliver Him an ultimatum and if He doesn't come across, I'll get even by cursing Him!" "If He doesn't get me out of this tight, I'll have nothing else to do with Him!" How foolish! How foolish! How foolish! Job refused to deal in any such trade.

3. He recognized that good comes from God, and was willing to give him credit for it. And why not? Instead of blaming God for all our problems, why not be quick to praise him for all our blessings? Instead of boycotting Him when we think He has troubled us, why not cleave to Him in appreciation of all the good that he has done for us?

4. He corrected his wife. And he did it from the viewpoint of trying to help her. He simply showed her where she was wrong. One can almost see the tenderness in his words. Isn't that a fine example of rebuke when rebuke is needed?

5. "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." No idle word, no false charge, no bitter accusation, no denial of faith came from his lips. And when one can control his words, he can control his spirit. Job's true greatness shines!

No one ever had to bear greater discouragement than Job. His reaction to it, however, inspires us to be strong when things go wrong even if we have to travel the thorny path alone.

JOB

Chapter six

"He who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

My brethren are treacherous as a torrent-bed,
as freshets that pass away,
which are dark with ice,
and where the snow hides itself.

In time of heat they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from their place."

— verses 14-17.

"Such you have now become to me;
you see my calamity, and are afraid."

— verse 21.

FRIENDS SHOULD SHOW PITY

JOB 6:14-17, 21

There comes a time when every man needs a friend. And how valuable a true friend then is!

Job knew such a time! How well he knew it! His calamity, if it could have been weighed, would have been heavier than the sand of the sea (6:3). He exclaimed: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (6:4). If ever a man needed a friend, it was one in that predicament.

His prayer was: "Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!" (6:8, 9). He would have joined with the dying Christian in saying to his soul:

Vital spark of heav'nly flame!
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying.

— Pope

Yes, he needed a friend, and his friends came! They started well. The compliments paid Job were true, and no doubt were sincerely given. Notice them, as related in 4:3-5: "Behold, thou hast instructed many and

thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was failing, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees....BUT." And Eiphaz was not the last to say, "He is a good man....but!" That ruins it! It means that there is something bad which nullifies the good. Regardless of how good they intended it, this sudden outburst of criticism on the part of his friends pierced Job's heart as deeply as any other thing that was done during his trials.

"He is a good man....but!" Can anything be colder than that? Evidently it chilled Job. He described his friends as water which is "blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: what time they wax warm, they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place. The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish."

Their response was hardly what he expected. His trust in them had led him to expect comfort from them. His reaction voiced what many have since felt: "To him that is afflicted pity should he shown from his friends...my brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook" (6:14, 15). And: "Ye dig a pit for your friend" (6:27). Thus, added to all his other troubles is the disappointment in those whom he had considered to be friends.

Is there any greater disappointment than for a friend to let you down? Any deeper hurt than to be betrayed by one whom you trusted? And, such an experience as Job's usually comes at a time when one is suffering other troubles. Troubles often separate fair-weather friends from real friends. But regardless of the other troubles, a friend's insult can be the unkindest of them all.

To understand that "friends" are not always friendly, and that there will be disappointments in people, does not make it easy to experience such times as Job had, but it is a realistic approach to life. There is no balm to eliminate altogether such a hurt. One has to bear it. But if we can learn from others, we can learn to be real friends to those in need. We cannot control the actions of others, but we can control our own. Hence, let each of us be determined that he will never let another down - that he will be a friend, regardless." Such determination will enable one to "show pity to him who is afflicted." And this consideration will become a boomerang. To have a friend, be one!

From a source unknown to this writer comes an illustration of what it means to be a friend:

Two boys in the last war were devoted pals and friends. After a bitter battle one day, one of the boys found that his buddy was missing and knew that he was somewhere out there in No-man's-land. He asked for permission to go out after his friend but the commander said it was of no use for no one was alive out there after the withering fire of many hours. After great insistence, he was finally given permission to go. Some time later he came back with the limp body of his friend over his shoulder. The commander said, "Did not I tell you it was no use to go?" to which the boy replied with radiance in his eyes, "But it was. I got there in time to hear him whisper, 'I knew you'd come.'"

[To Be Continued]

Home Devotions

FRANK MATHERLEY, JR.

False doctrine can truly come as wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15), and transform itself as ministers of light (2 Cor. 11:13-15). One of the ways this is being done today is in the guise of "home devotions." The term and thought itself sounds good; and Christians DO need to study the Bible as much as possible, but this can also be a wolf in sheep's clothing. Paul told the Ephesians that he had taught them publicly and from house to house (Acts 20:20). The practice of meeting in homes is therefore scriptural, as well as educational.

(Continued on page 4)

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(Continued from page 1)

Sacred Scriptures refers to a twenty-four hour "day".

But this is not the full strength of the argument in favor of the fact that "day" in Genesis 1 means "day". Uniformly in the Scriptures when a numerical adjective is attached to the word YOM, then it means an ordinary "day". And in each of these six days in Genesis 1 there is the numerical adjective (first, second, third, fourth, etc.) attached! To take the position that each of these "days" refers to a long geological period, will place one into all sorts of difficulties. Each of these "days" was composed of an evening (a dark portion) and a morning (a light portion). Does this then mean that each of these "days" had so many millions of years in total darkness, and so many millions of years in total light? If so, how did the formed life survive in all the lengthy period of total darkness void of all life-giving light? If there are perhaps hundreds of millions of years from the time plant life was made on "day" number three, to the making of insects three "days" later, then how did this plant life survive until the coming of insect life millions of years later? Remember that much plant life depends upon the pollination process for its continuation! Genesis 1 sets forth the idea of instantaneous creation (not of a long-drawn-out process that covered hundreds of millions of years) in what Moses described as "six days" (Ex. 31:16) of divine activity.

What about Adam's age at death? If each "day" represents literally millions of years, then let us keep in mind that he was made on "day" number six, lived through "day" number seven and well into the period subsequent to the seventh "day." According to the theistic evolutionary theory of folly, Adam would have been millions of years of age at his death. Yet the Bible states, "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died" (Gen. 5:5). Adam's death is a clear and thorough refutation of all this theistic evolutionary foolishness! Those who believe the Bible have no business at all flirting around with theistic evolution, or making efforts in compromising with its Satanic propaganda!

What about Israel's work week as given by Moses in Exodus 20? They were to work six "days," and rest one "day," the seventh day, just as Jehovah God had worked six "days" in the week of creative activity, and then rested from his creative work on "day" number seven. There is neither sense nor sanity in Moses' language in Exodus 20 unless the "days" of Genesis 1 were regular, ordinary, twenty-four hour "days." If no one had ever thought of seeking to harmonize godless evolution with creation in Genesis 1, this ridiculous theory would never have been concocted, let alone given serious consideration by so many in our day.

FALSE TEACHERS AND THE WORD "YEARS" IN GENESIS 5

Modernists are just as deadly and destructive when they come to Genesis 5 as are the theistic evolutionists in dealing with "days" in Genesis 1. In Genesis 5 Moses told of those who lived to be men of great longevity. Their ages at death range from 969 years to 777. Most of them lived well beyond the ninth century mark. A number of years ago this writer was teaching a Bible class in the Tennessee School of Religion at the University of Tennessee at Martin for University credit. We were studying the book of Genesis. A young modernist in the class actually suggested that the word "years" in Genesis 5 did not mean "years" at all. He affirmed that it meant something like months. Hence, if one divided Methuselah's age of 969 at death by about 12, the number of months in

a year, then this man would have died in an age length comparable to our life-span today. This would have made him die at about the age of 80 or 81. This the youthful and arrogant modernist thought he could accept without too much difficulty! In answer, I showed the class that if Moses used the term "years" this way throughout the book of Genesis, then some of these men had children while in their late infancy or very early childhood! Abraham, BY THIS THEORY, was barely seven years old when Ishmael was born! Sarah was not quite eight when she gave birth to Isaac, and Abraham had just turned eight a little while before. Yet they supposedly were well beyond the age of having children! Such a ridiculous theory as this would have made Joseph a mere baby of about two years of age or less when Potiphar's wife sought to entice him into committing fornication with her!! Such would have placed Joseph on the Governor's throne when he was of the tender age of two-and-one-half years of age. Such would have made Jacob a grandfather many times over before he even reached his teen-age years! In fact, by this theory Jacob never reached the teen-age years for he would have died at the old age of 12!! By this theory Joseph was not even a teen-ager at the time of his death, yet he had ruled in Egypt for decades! Lest anyone think there might be different Hebrew words for "years" in Genesis, we remind the reader that Moses used SHANAH for "years" throughout Genesis 5 and the remainder of the book.

There are but two of the ways false teachers have dealt with Biblical numbers. Moses did not please the evolutionists in Genesis 1 with his employment of the word "day." He did not please the modernists in Genesis 5 with the word "years." Neither can we stay with the Sacred Scriptures and please such false teachers.

Annual

"Voice of Freedom" Breakfast

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

For a number of years it has been this writer's pleasure to arrange a VOICE OF FREEDOM Breakfast during the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship. Arrangements have been finalized through proper college channels and the College Cafeteria for us to have this breakfast on Wednesday morning, February 4, 1976, at 6:30 a.m. The breakfast will last for one hour. Those who come will go through the Cafeteria line, get their breakfast and come immediately to the Blue Room. The cost of the meal will be \$1.35 plus tax.

Speakers for this year will be P. D. Wilmeth, Editor of the VOICE OF FREEDOM; William Woodson, Chairman of the Bible Department at Freed-Hardeman and Lectureship Director; and Rubel Shelly, teacher of Bible at the college. Last year Guy N. Woods, Franklin Camp, E. Claude Gardner, and Thomas H. Holland spoke to an enthusiastic group of VOICE OF FREEDOM supporters. More subscriptions were secured for the paper last year at this breakfast than at any of the breakfasts of the past.

Every person who is interested in the work that the VOICE OF FREEDOM is doing is encouraged to come. We anticipate another banner breakfast-meeting in behalf of a truly great and continuously needed paper — VOICE OF FREEDOM. We are deeply delighted this year that the great and faithful and faithful Editor of VOICE OF FREEDOM, P. D. Wilmeth, will be present to speak.

Many will read this who will not be able to come. Here is a way you can help the paper: Subscribe for yourself. The cost is only \$4.00 per year for an individual subscription. Even better, get up a club of subscribers. At least

five or more costs only \$3.00 per year per subscription. Still better than either of the other plans, see if the congregation where you attend will buy a bundle of 25, 50, 100 (or more) each month for the membership and to pass out to thought-leaders of your community! The bundle rates (for 10 or more) will cost only 15c per copy. The address is: The Freedom Press, Inc., P. O. Box 24836, Dallas, Texas 75224.

Home Devotions

(Continued from page 3)

However, that which often is being practiced today is not scriptural.

Early Christians met in their homes for fellowship (Acts 2:46) and for study (Acts 20:20). That which was taught in the homes was the same thing which was being taught publicly. Acts 2:42 shows that the early church practiced "the apostles' doctrine." The teaching Paul did was the same wherever he may have taught. A great deal of what is being taught privately in homes today is not that which is being taught publicly. Those who would "revive" the church or make it more "spiritual," teach doctrines privately which would be stopped were they taught publicly. Until they can safely do so publicly, their doctrines are taught privately.

The Bible teaches that elders are to oversee the flock (Acts 20:28-30), because false teachers would try to destroy the church. This is part of their work as elders. Those who teach their false doctrines in their "private devotions" do not hold their devotions under the oversight of the elders. Many times the elders are not informed as to when these "devotions" are being held. Often the elders have no idea what is being taught, or practiced. They sometimes assume that what is being taught is correct. They do not wish to condemn Bible study. Bible study is not wrong; but false teaching is! Elders need to realize that whatever the spiritual welfare of their members is concern and under their oversight.

Another point deserving consideration is the purpose of such meetings. Not only is it a time when false teaching can be done, it also can be a means of division in the congregation. Those who meet for the devotions are often made to feel that they are the only ones who are interested in serving God — that ordinary services are not "spiritual" enough — and that those who oppose their false teachings and practices are "tradition bound." They accuse others of "persecuting" them for trying to serve God. Faithful brethren are then made to appear as destroyers of the church. The Bible teaches that there will be those who cause division, and teaches that they are to be marked (Rom. 16:17).

Home devotions can be a wonderful way for Christians to grow spiritually, as well as grow closer in fellowship. Let us make sure they are being used for this purpose, rather than for the furthering of false teachings.

—Hartsville, Tenn.

YOU CAN'T FOOL GOD

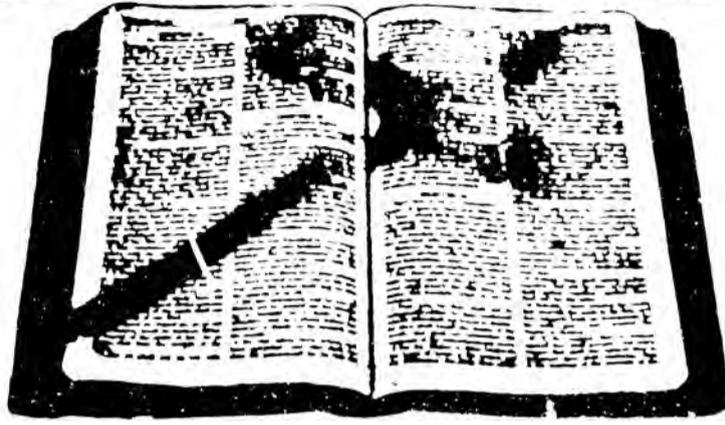
You can fool the helpless public,
You can be a subtle fraud,
You can hide your little meanness,
But you can't fool God.

You can advertise your virtues,
You can self-achievement laud,
You can load yourself with riches,
But you can't fool God.

You can criticize the Bible,
You can be a selfish clod,
You can lie, swear, drink and gamble,
But you can't fool God.

You can magnify your talent,
You can hear the world applaud,
You can boast yourself somebody,
But you can't fool God.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

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How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

While speaking on a California lecture-ship in Visalia the writer made mention of what false teachers do with some of the numbers of the Bible. Brother Wayne Jackson, a frequent contributor to the WORDS OF TRUTH, was in the audience and requested a further development of this line of thought. Through the pages of WORDS OF TRUTH this writer is able to honor Brother



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Jackson's request. In the first article on this theme we showed how theistic evolutionists deal with the Mosaic use of the word "day" (YOM in the Hebrew) in Genesis 1. They mutilate it without mercy. They tamper with it in the absence of all love and respect for truth. Then we showed how the modernists treat the Mosaic word "years" in Genesis 5. They want to shorten it considerably. False teachers of our day want to lengthen greatly the word "day" in Genesis 1 and shorten considerably the word "years" in Genesis 5.

AN ALLEGED CONTRADICTION BETWEEN A MOSAIC NUMBER AND A PAULINE NUMBER

Years ago a religious leader in the northeastern section of our land shook the faith of some when he announced that he had discovered a contradiction between a number Moses gave in Numbers 25:9 and a number Paul gave in Corinthians 10:8. The passage by Moses reads this way, "And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand." The Pauline passage says, "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand." According to the religious leader who thought he had discovered a real problem in the Bible, Moses gave the number at 24,000; Paul gave the number at 23,000. He declared there is a difference of a whole thousand in the numbers as given by Paul and Moses! According to his judgment both Moses and Paul could not be right, since they differed by a whole 1,000. One young man listened to this preacher and became quite alarmed. He called his mother in the South; she in turn made a call to this writer seeking some help. Rather quickly and promptly it was pointed out that Moses evidently gave the entire number that fell in the plague, whereas

Paul certainly gave the number who fell "in one day", for he said he did. Moses was right in giving the whole as being 24,000. Paul was correct in giving the number who FELL IN ONE DAY as being 23,000. Instead of being a contradiction, the two passages are in beautiful harmony. A number of reputable books that deal with alleged contradictions (such as the good one by brother George W. DeHoff) would have suggested this very manner of harmonizing the two passages, if the northeastern preacher had done a little digging. (Adam Clarke also offers a very plausible explanation of the difference between Moses and Paul on this point.) This religious leader was too quick in looking for something contradictory in Jehovah's Book. It really was not a credit to his own assumed Bible scholarship that he failed to solve with apparent ease his own dilemma about these two verses.

We need to be very cautious about accepting at face value all or any of the alleged contradictions that modernistic and liberalistic leaders by the masses IMAGINE they have detected in the Good Book. When a man imagines he has found two verses in the Bible that contradict each other, one of the following would be true. (1) The man does not understand the first verse. (2) The man does not understand the second verse under examination. (3) The man may not understand either of the two verses. But it is a foregone conclusion that if he understands both verses, there will be NO contradiction. The Bible does not contradict itself! The Bible is truth. Truth does not contradict itself. Quite to the contrary, it runs in parallel lines.

Those who are always coming up with contradictions(?) they imagine and allege to have found within the Bible, are saying far more about themselves than they are about the Book of Jehovah God. As we read the Heavenly Book, we should ever remember that it is not the BIBLE which is on trial; WE are the ones, as it were, who are on trial!

Reader friend, do not allow some zealous modernist or thoroughgoing liberal in religious thinking to shake your faith in Biblical declarations. If he comes forth with something you cannot answer, be assured of the fact that his argument is not unanswerable in the least. Go to some veteran student of the Bible and seek out his counsel. It might be just as easy to answer as the alleged problem was between a number projected by Moses in Numbers 25:9 and that set forth by Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:8. The lamented Keeble used this sentiment so frequently and forcefully in his unique style of preaching efficiency, "The

Bible is right!" Brother Keeble was right — so right — when he said that. The Bible is right, whether we are speaking of Bible facts, Bible commandments, Bible promises, Bible warnings, Bible stories, or — as in this series — Bible numbers.

ANOTHER MODERNISTIC ATTACK ON OLD TESTAMENT NUMBERS

But the foregoing is not the only attack that militant modernism has made upon numbers as found in the book that is called Numbers. The very name of this fourth book of the Pentateuch written by Moses seemingly was drawn from Jehovah's injunction that Moses number the people which he and Aaron had led from Egyptian bondage. He and Aaron performed this numbering process faithfully in the first chapter of the fourth book of the Bible. The first numbering of the males twenty years old and above stood at 603,550. Thirty-eight years later a SECOND numbering which occurred on the plains of Moab revealed the number of males twenty and above as being 601,730. This was a slight diminishing from the first numbering. By the time the women, children, and the Levites (who were numbered separately) were included along with these fighting men, the entire nation of redeemed Israelites perhaps numbered some two-to-three millions.

Malicious modernism and its false teachers do not believe these numbers were accurate at all. Now these false teachers are some thirty-five centuries removed from those counting scenes in the wilderness and upon the Moabite plains. Moses and Aaron were eyewitnesses of what was done in Numbers 1. They executed the counting! They KNEW first-hand how many were there, for they were present for the mathematical calculations. They did not count eyes either; they counted noses, as it were!! Inspiration is never given to exaggeration. Yet these modernists today seemingly THINK they know far more about these numbers in Numbers than Moses and Aaron KNEW were in the company redeemed from Egyptian tyranny.

The extremely liberal and blasphemous contention has been made in our day that the numbers as given in the book of Numbers are greatly exaggerated. Modernism says this on at least three grounds. (1) They deny that Israel could have multiplied this rapidly from Joseph's day to Moses' day. (2) They say one man — Moses — could not have controlled such a vast multitude for so long a period of time. (3) They deny that the wilderness could have produced sufficient food upon which two or three millions could have subsisted forty

Continued on Page 4

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Flavil H. Nichols
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Lessons From The Seven Churches of Asia

The book of Revelation has largely been regarded as unintelligible, and for that reason it has often been abandoned by the general reader. Because of the conflicting opinions about the meaning of the book, many have despaired of ever securing an accurate interpretation. Groups and individuals have discovered that they can "prove" anything by manipulating the symbols contained in the book. For this reason, many have centered upon Revelation as a basis for wild and strange methods of interpretation. Such a policy ignores one of the basic principles of interpretation: "The obscure passage should be interpreted in the light of the clear passage." Hence any interpretation of the book which conflicts with other passages must necessarily be false. In fact, it can be safely affirmed that any doctrine built entirely upon the book of Revelation, unsupported by other passages in the New Testament, must be unhesitatingly rejected. The first step toward an understanding of this book is an understanding of the background which prompted the message. The book of Revelation was addressed to Christians of Asia Minor (Rev. 1:4). Therefore the book must be interpreted in a way which would have been meaningful and helpful to those Christians who first received the message. This is not to say that Revelation contains no message for the twentieth-century church. The principles taught in the book are as universal and perennial as the Lord's church.

Some sixty years after the birth of the church, our Lord authored a critical analysis of the conditions of the church. Chapters two and three contain Jesus' penetrating inspection of the Asian churches. Probably the seven were chosen because they represented all the other churches as well. The conditions reflected in these churches are those which have



LARRY CHOUINARD

characterized the church in every age, including the twentieth century. Because of the universal application of these letters valuable lessons can be gleaned for the twentieth century church.

1. OMNISCIENCE OF JESUS: "I KNOW" (Rev. 2:2, 9, 13, 19: 3:1, 3, 8, 15). With a casual reading of the letters, we are impressed with the repetition of the phrase, "I know". The omniscience of Jesus is expressed in no uncertain terms. No church is too remote, or too small, before the penetrating eye of the Lord. The heart and soul of every congregation is "laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). Though Sardis had a "name" (Rev. 3:1), the Lord revealed their true character as "dead". A pretense of dedication and sacrifice may earn the praise of the brotherhood, but "the Lord seeth not as man seeth" (I Sam. 16:7). The all-seeing eye of the Saviour extends unto the individual. With reference of Sardis the Lord said, "But thou has a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:4). Does not this sound like many a twentieth-century congregation? Usually a congregation has a small nucleus which "have not defiled their garments". The Lord knows who they are. The backbiting, unfaithful, lukewarm, indifferent, pew-warming members only delude themselves if they think they can hide among the numbers. These lifeless members need to be purged from the church, lest they infect the whole body (I Cor. 5:6-7).

2. PURITY OF DOCTRINE: (Rev. 2:14-16; 2:20-21). The church at Thyatira, and at Pergamum, would suffer the wrath of the Lord unless they repent, and deal hastily with the false teachers in their midst. The church, under the pretense of tolerance, allowed dangerous heretics to continue to teach their damnable doctrines. False doctrine must be challenged and refuted, or we become partakers of evil works (II Jn. 9-11). When it comes to false doctrine, one cannot be passive. Open refutation is the only course to pursue to be approved in the Lord's sight. We have too many today who are content to stand on the side-lines while destructive doctrines run rampant throughout the church. So long as false teachers remained unmolested in the congregations of Thyatira and Pergamum, the words of Jesus continued as an abiding threat: "But I have a few things against thee..." Do we think that we shall escape the same condemnation if we practice the sins of Thyatira and Pergamum?

3. SOCIAL PRESSURES: False teachers sought to get the church to yield to the social pressures of the day. Both "eating things sacrificed to idols," and "fornication", were socially acceptable in the first century. Those false teachers who encouraged such practices were in reality urging the church to conform to the standard of the world, and to stop being different. They argued the way of conformity and compromise. The Lord calls upon Christians to make a stand, and to hold fast till he comes.

Pressures of the world probably have never been so intense as they are in the twentieth century. The anger of Christ is against those who teach others to sin. To sin oneself is forgiveable; but to teach another to sin is to become liable to the wrath of God. Yet many, either by example or precept, teach conformity to the social standard. Preachers and teachers need to cry out against the vices of society such as immorality, immodesty, and drunkenness. If we remain silent, shall the Lord approve? Too many preachers have bowed the knee to social pressure and have never uttered a word against the sins of the flesh. Preachers and teachers will not only be held accountable for what they do teach, but also for what they fail to teach (James. 3:1).

4. ATTITUDES. The church at Ephesus is one that was characterized by purity of doctrine. Their love for truth was evident as they tried "them that call themselves

apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false" (Rev. 2:2). Yet, the Lord pinpointed their fault as forsaking their first love (Rev. 2:4). It cannot be certain whether Jesus has reference to their love for one another, or their love for the Lord. Probably both are involved, because one cannot leave his love for one without involving the other. So the problem at Ephesus is "heart" trouble. Notice the sobering threat of the Lord: "Remember therefore whence thou art fallen and repent...else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent..." (Rev. 2:5). The seriousness of this admonition takes on force when we realize that the "candlestick" was the church itself (Rev. 1:20). Hence what the Lord threatened was the removal of the church from the favor of heaven. It would become nothing more than a dead organization, fit only for destruction along with all man-made sects. Because of a lack of love this congregation would cease being the church of the Lord. How many congregations, though they have the proper name, worship, plan of salvation, and organization, have forfeited their right to be called the church of Christ? Let us never think that zeal for the law can cover up a lack of love and compassion for souls!

The church at laodicea also needed "open heart surgery". They had fallen into a state of indifference, thinking themselves to be self-sufficient. They city was well known for its wealth, clothing, industry, and eyesalve. However, spiritually speaking, they were poor, naked, and blind (Rev. 2:14-19). Indifference will kill a congregation. The church at Laodicea had been sapped of all spiritual zeal. It is important to notice that not a word was said about their being doctrinally unsound. Perhaps they were characterized by an outward conformity to the gospel. But their external keeping of the law did not have the corresponding inward attitude of zeal and dedication. How many congregations are just going through the motions of Christianity? We desperately need a restoration of first century zeal and compassion for the lost. There is much work to be done, so let none of us think that the restoration of New Testament Christianity is a finished task.

Many more lessons may be gleaned from a study of the seven churches of Asia Minor. We make a fatal mistake when we measure the success of a congregation by wealth, reputation, doctrinal purity, numbers. True spiritual strength is a combination of many factors which work together to make a church approved in the Lord's sight. A healthy congregation begins with each individual taking on the responsibility of developing a well-balanced Christian life.

How Were Believers Baptized?

HOYT BAILEY

WHAT WERE THE ELEMENTS THAT CONSTITUTED BAPTISM? The Scripture says, "Much water" (Jno. 3:23); "Coming to the water" (Acts 8:36); "Going down into the water" (Acts 8:38); "Buried in baptism" (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12); "Planted together in the likeness of Christ's death" (Rom. 6:5); "Bodies washed" (Heb. 10:22) "Born of water" (Jno. 3:5); "Resurrected" (Rom. 6:5); "Coming up out of the water" (Acts 8:39). No hypothesis can be true that does not account for all the facts in the case.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON BAPTISM. In studying the New Testament on the subject of baptism, we see that baptism was preceded by teaching. Faith precedes baptism, while salvation comes after baptism (Mk. 16:16.) Repentance comes before baptism, but remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit are received after baptism (Acts 2:38). All who believed repented and confessed Christ, were baptized. Baptism was

(Continued on Page 4)

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter two

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to condole with him and comfort him. And when they saw him from afar, they did not recognize him; and they raised their voices and wept; and they rent their robes and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

— verses 11-13.

VISITORS MAY COMPLICATE MATTERS

Job 2:11-13

In the hallway of a busy hospital hangs a crudely drawn cartoon of a distressed patient, with the bed-sheet half wrapped around him, standing at the nurses' desk asking, "Where can I go until my company leaves?" Inside the patient's door, the hilarity of a picnic is evidenced by a room full of visitors. More truth than poetry!

In the vestibule of another hospital hangs a large sign which reads: "Never utter a discouraging word while you are in this hospital. Keep the hindering, sad looks for other places. If you can't smile, don't go in." These messages from the inside reveal what many patients have learned the hard way. Visitors may complicate matters.

That being the case: poor Job! His friends got together and decided they ought to go see Job, to mourn with him, and to comfort him. So far, so good! That was a worthy intention. But they didn't come with a smile! Before they got to where Job was, "they lifted up their voice, and wept." They tore their clothes; they threw dust on their heads. And then they sat down and for seven days they didn't say a word. That was a poor start on a task to comfort someone, wasn't it? But it was better than they did when they finally spoke. Silence can be bitter. But talk can be more so. In fact, it is good never to break silence unless you can improve on it.

Eliphaz spoke first. He was rather gentle. But he passed some broad hints that Job must be a terrible sinner. His theory of retribution could only mean that Job had sinned personally, else he would not be suffering. After Job's reply, Bildad spoke. He was harsh, even rude. His accusations were more direct. Of course, Job replied to that. And then Zophar made matters worse. He was not only harsh and rude but also cruel. He was ugly with it. He called Job a man full of talk, accused him of lying (11:2, 3), and he thought he should receive worse than he had: "Knoweth therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth" (11:6). No wonder Job responded: "No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you" (12:2).

But let us not be too hard on these friends. They meant well when they came. In fact, they came with a noble purpose. They really intended to comfort Job. It was what they did not know that caused the trouble. After all, they had not read the first two chapters of the book of Job! And they did not know that their traditional idea of retribution was all wrong. The righteous can suffer the same as the

wicked. Had they known that, they would have performed better in the presence of Job.

Tragically, there are still some with good intentions who visit the sick and the troubled, who make matters worse rather than better. Consider these suggestions as to how to be helpful in a time of need:

1. *Be tender.* The progressive crudeness of Job's comforters needs never to be repeated. When one suffers, he needs his friends to put themselves in his place and to be understanding of his needs. Thomas Gray worded it well when he said:

*To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.*

2. *Be brief.* How long did Job's friends stay? Too long! According to a custom of the east, they stayed the seven days usually spent in mourning. (Was that an assumption that he was as good as dead? But silently they sat. None ever stays seven days in this hurried age — it just seems like seven days to the patient! And then there was that prolonged argument! Perhaps Job needed comforters to come and comfort him over the discomforts brought by his comforters!

3. *Be optimistic.* The proverbial: "Oh, I'm sorry. My uncle had that disease and he died," is not uncommon in the sick room. Unnecessary worry, even fear, may be generated by a pessimist who really intends to comfort. A good attitude on the part of the patient can assist the physician in treating him. Don't complicate matters by taking a gloomy atmosphere into the sick room!

4. *Be realistic.* In a truly grave situation, to be flippant and light-hearted is not optimism. It is foolishness. A word of concern, an expression of genuine interest, a prayer for strength, a pleasant and tender smile, will help. A loud laugh, a "so-what" attitude, an implication that the matter is not serious, will disgust.

*That, under thee, we may possess
Man's strength to comfort man's distress.*

— Kipling

5. *Be cheerful.* Reserve your tears for more private times. Just remember: "If you can't smile, don't go in."

JOB

Chapter four

"Think now, who that was innocent ever perished?

Or where were the upright cut off?

As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same.

By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are consumed."

— verses 7-9.

WHO EVER PERISHED, BEING INNOCENT?

Job 4:7-9

It seems that there are some things that man has always believed. Of course, that doesn't make them right! And one of those things is the idea that righteousness always brings material prosperity, and sin always brings personal suffering in this life. Evidently that doctrine was started by Satan. He asked God, "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (1:9-11). Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar were disciples of that doctrine. Eliphaz worded it well when he asked, "Who ever perished, being innocent?"

That theory is embedded in human tradition. Job's comforters but echoed the doctrine at length. Not only was it they who refused to believe anything else, but Job also subscribed to it — and became confused. His personal experience did not fit this theology. He knew he had done nothing to deserve what he got! Yet there he was — tears, sores, and all. He now begins to realize that tradition

with examples of calamities well known to his audience and inquired if those who suffered were sinners "above all," only to reply, "I tell you, nay...." (Luke 13:1-5). Even the barbarians who met Paul's shipwrecked company believed this theory of retribution. They thought that when Paul escaped the sea, only to be bitten by a poisonous snake, surely the gods were catching up with him (Acts 28:1-4). No wonder they were stunned when Paul did not fall down dead! The disciples of Jesus also believed this theory, and inquired of Jesus concerning the man born blind, "Who did sin, this man or his parents?" (John 9:2). That did pose quite a problem, didn't it? So you see, those who believe it today are not by themselves.

And like some now, Eliphaz, in his zeal for his doctrine, tried to prove it by reasoning. He thought himself a fine logician. He would have made a good debater. But, like some who appeal to logic now, he had an error in some of his syllogisms. His argument, in substance, ran like this: God is just and pure in all He does, even in sending afflictions — but to bring suffering without a cause is not just — therefore, Job must have been guilty because he did suffer. His restricted view of the causes of suffering made his entire theory wrong.

Too, Eliphaz appealed to the law of seed-time and harvest in his reasoning. "They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same" (4:8). It is true that a harvest proves what seed has been sown, but he overlooked the fact that another may have sown seed in Job's field! His reasoning just did not take into account all the facts. He could have learned from one of his own statements: "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward" (5:6, 7). Sometimes there simply is no "why" to be found for some particular case of suffering.

In Job's day it may have been different, but now there is no excuse for one's believing Satan's theory of retribution. Many, like Job, have had personal experiences which disprove it. The New Testament makes it plain that suffering cannot always be traced to personal sin. Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay...." (Luke 13: 3, 5). The blood of the martyrs testifies to the falsity of the doctrine. And if those who suffer are always guilty of personal sin, then try to account for the crucifixion of the Master.

If suffering is not from personal sin, then what does cause it? Just as there are hundreds of causes for headaches, and they may be symptoms of various troubles, so is suffering a complicated subject. There are many causes, and maybe even combinations of causes. Some do suffer because of their own sins. But some suffer because of the sins of others. Some suffer because of the sins of others. Some suffer because we live in a world of law and order — laws of nature which cannot be broken without consequences. Some suffer because of ignorance. Some bring it on themselves. But whatever the cause, it isn't a simple subject.

Here is a needed warning sign: Don't assume that just because not all suffering is retribution for sin, that none of it is! *Some do suffer because of sins they have committed.* Some sin brings on physical disease, mental anguish, emotional distress, even death. So, don't assume that just because Job was innocent, all who suffer have not sinned. There may be a connection between personal sin and suffering, but not necessarily so.

In this light, we can answer the question Eliphaz asked Job, "Who ever perished, being innocent?" A lot of people have!

(To be Continued)

SUBSCRIBE TO
WORDS OF TRUTH

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(Continued from page 1)

years. One modernist in his book of religious infidelity as touching the Pentateuch deals with what he feels is a very troublesome problem in this manner. He suggests that the term "thousands" in the book of Numbers really does not mean "thousands." Instead, he says, it refers to a "group" or "family." Hence the 46,500 of Reuben, for instance, would be simply forty-six families or groups with a total of 500 or less. This modernist allows ten men to a family. By such wholesale reductions among all the twelve tribes he narrows the 603,550 to about 5,550 men twenty and above and thinks Moses could have managed this many, and that the Sinaitic Peninsula would have supported this many for the four decades Israel wandered there. In fact this great reduction subtracts Moses' burdensome tasks to such a considerable degree as to make plausible to modernists in our time this Old Testament narrative. This is a good case of "natural religion" in action. Modernism does not believe in a religion of the supernatural, or of the miraculous.

Such modernistic mutilating of the numbers given in the Bible also solves(?) a real problem modernism professes to see in the Good Book. This problem is how Israel grew so rapidly from Jacob's small family who went down into Egypt, into the great nation that Moses led out. By all this reduction of troublesome numbers, modernism thinks the nation could have multiplied at this greatly-adjusted rate. But modernists leave out some important considerations. They ignore the fact that Jehovah blessed them with this rapid multiplication of descendants. They ignore the fact that Moses was truly a great leader, the likes of which the world had never seen up to that time. They ignore the fact that Jehovah God greatly aided him in his weighty role of leadership. Moses was not alone in this weighty role. They ignore the fact that God fed Israel with manna for forty years, from the time they left Egypt, until they arrived in the land that flowed with milk and honey. Jehovah, not Sinai, fed Israel in the wilderness!

In the conclusion of this second article, the thought occurs to this writer that Moses and Aaron just maybe knew more of the exact number they were leading through the barren wilderness, than twentieth-century theologians do, who have spent their life majoring in malicious modernism and godless liberalism!

How Were Believers Baptized?

(Continued from Page 2)

the crowning act in primary obedience to the gospel. They did this to be saved from past sins, or to have past sins remitted.

CONSIDER THE SPECIFIC ACTION OF BAPTISM. Romans 6:3-5 tells us that the specific action of baptism is a burial. It is the act which symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Baptism is a burial with Christ, followed by a resurrection from the watery grave. Since baptism is a burial, followed by a resurrection, the action can be no other than immersion. How can one be sure that he is baptized until he has been immersed? Where is Bible proof that one has been freed from his past sins until he has been buried with Christ in baptism? Paul looking back to the action in Romans 6:3-5, says, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

SCRIPTURE REVEALS TRUTH ON

WATER BAPTISM. It is easy for us to see that the Scripture teaches that one is baptized to be saved (Mark 16:15-16); Baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38); baptized to fulfil all righteousness (Matt. 3:15); baptized to wash away sins (Acts 22:16); baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27); baptized into the body, which is the church (I Cor. 12:13), or born of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God (Jno. 3:5; Acts 8:12).

On Judging Preachers

JOHN GIPSON

Judging preachers is a popular pastime. And whereas men are prone to acknowledge inability and limitation in various matters, no one disqualifies himself as a preacher critic.

The drum gives forth a loud noise because it is hollow, and the more empty headed one is, the more authoritatively he speaks about preaching and what it ought to be.

Now to be perfectly frank, it is likely that neither preachers nor sermons are perfect. (Even the best of gardens contain a few weeds). But I can not help but think of what a hay-day these modern day cavillers would have had with the poor apostle Paul. He came to the Corinthians "in weakness and in much fear and trembling" and his "speech" and "message were not in the plausible words of wisdom" (I Cor. 2:3, 4). Someone surely must have suggested tent-making as an alternative to preaching.

I suppose that every preacher worth his salt has some mannerism or peculiarity, even if it is only saying "Jasus." The critics say, "His voice is too low, and/or high; he preachers too much love, or hell; his sermons are too dull, or sensational; etc." In the words of C. H. Spurgeon, "Dear me, if all God's creatures were judged in this way, we should wring the dove's neck for being too tame, shoot the robins for eating spiders, kill the cows for swinging their tails, and the hens for not giving milk." In case you haven't noticed, each preacher is different, and a tiger can't be a dove regardless of how hard he tries. (But that doesn't mean he isn't a good tiger.) C. E. McGaughey and Jimmy Allen are both outstanding evangelists, but they are not anything alike.

I have heard a sermon condemned because of what was not in it. The subject may have been well treated, but because another subject wasn't mentioned, it was a poor sermon. When you sit down to a meal at home, do you complain because every vegetable and every meat in the world are not served at the very same time? Do you find fault with country ham because it isn't round steak? Some sermons are designed to comfort the saints. Shall these be disparaged because they don't convict the sinner? Will you sneer at a Black & Decker power saw because it does a poor job shaving off your whiskers?

I suspect that many judge preachers because deep down they feel that it's extremely easy to preach, and if given half a chance they could do it better. Well....come on in, the water's fine!

Via College Street Messenger,
Waxahachie, Texas

The Leaven Of Liberalism

In an age when preachers are trying to be sensational, instead of spiritual; shocking, instead of scriptural; cute, rather than correct; cleve instead of clear; different, rather than doctrinal; and unusual, in the place of unerring; we truly need to return to the basics of fundamental soundness in the gospel! A double portion of Joshua 1:7, and II Timothy 2:15, would cause us to hold a straight course in the Truth, which alone can make us free from the paralysis of liberalism.

Any honest, careful student of church history shows we are living again the scenes

of apostasy that shattered the restoration movement of the nineteenth century. Attitudes, and probably motives, are virtually parallel to the sad saga of digression that shattered the work of great servants of the lord a century or more ago. The powerful emphasis of "What does the Bible say" is once again being replaced by "Is this acceptable to the people 'round about us?" One can detect an almost worshipful atmosphere at the shrine of higher education on the part of brethren today. And any student of history can tell you the end results of this arrangement! Even among those who must know better comes an appeal for cheap grace, and not the deeply based teaching of the commands of Christ. It would appear that some are wilfully ignorant (II Peter 3:5) as they "wrest the Scriptures" and go about "seeking their own righteousness" (Romans 10:3; II Peter 3:15-16). While they so often speak of liberty and freedom in Christ, they and their devotees become the abject slaves of error (II Peter 2:17-22).

If we will speak only as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11), and contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3), and cease seeking the vain glory of men (I John 2:15-17; Galatians 4:16) the creeping paralysis of liberalism can be halted. We do not need to relax the laws of God (Matthew 5:19 RSV); but we do need to redouble our efforts to obey the commands and to present them clearly, without apology, to the world. It would also be a blessing to the church if preachers everywhere would tell it as it is! We need more fearless teachers and fewer forked tongues! Preach the Word! Amen!

— Johnny Ramsey
— Via College Street Messenger,
Waxahachie, Texas

The Devil's Bible

Many members of the church can quote but few Scriptures, and perhaps some would be hard pressed to quote a single one verbatim. Yet many Christians quote freely from the Devil's Bible, proving that, to some extent at least, they are guided by it. Satan, of course, doesn't have a written Bible, but he does inspire several statements that are used by some rather frequently.

If Satan had a Bible, would not the following statements be in it? By such sentiment as these, he lulls us to sleep and dulls our conscience against the pricks of the sharp, two-edged sword, the Word of God.

INDIFFERENCE 3:4 — "I'm just too tired after working all day to attend the services."

POPULAR 1:10 — "Go ahead. Everyone else is doing it."

COWARDLY 6:9 — "The best thing to do when the church or good Christians are criticized is to keep silent. The critic might get angry with you if you offered a defense."

EXCUSES 1:1 — "I'm afraid to discuss the Bible with others lest I offend them. Anyway, they wouldn't listen."

FOOLISHNESS 19:7 — "I'll try anything once."

DECEIT 8:15 — "It makes no difference what one believes as long as he is sincere."

PRIDE 4:7 — "If someone offends you and hard feelings results, let him come and ask your forgiveness; for after all, it was his mistake."

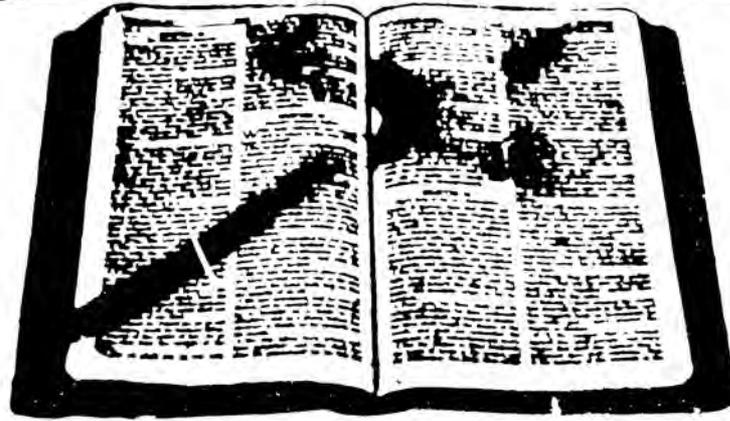
APOSTASY 2:5 — "What difference does it make whether we follow the New Testament pattern or not?"

HYPOCRISY 6:5 — "When we go home from college on weekends, we always go to church so the home folks will think we are faithful when we are away at college."

— Via Fulton Mississippi Bulletin

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(NUMBER 3)



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

This is the continuation of a challenging vein of thought in regard of what false teachers do as touching numbers in the Bible. It has been suggested previously how teachers of falsehood have dealt with some of the numbers in the Old Testament. Now we turn to the New Testament for another instance in which another number in the Bible has been mishandled.

How Long Was Jesus In The Tomb?

What day was Jesus crucified? What day did he arise from the tomb? The Bible is very plain in affirming that he died the day before the sabbath. Mark describes the day of his death: "And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath" (Mk. 15:42.) The day before the sabbath was always Friday. Has there ever been an exception to this general statement or conclusion? If so, when? This writer is well aware of John 19:31, where this particular sabbath is called "a high day." But this was done because this was the sabbath day of the Passover Week, and thus enjoyed special sanctity among the Jews. This "high day" did not refer to some day before the regular seventh-day that week, as some have contended. Mark is equally clear in affirming that the Lord's resurrection from the tomb of the Arimathaeon Senator was "on the first day of the week." This inspired evangelist says in Mark 16:9, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils (demons-ASV)."

Eminent Bible students for many centuries have held the view that Friday was the crucifixion day, and Sunday was the resurrection day. But Jesus affirmed that "as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40), yet four chapters later the Son of God said he would be raised up "the third day" (Matt. 16:21.) A number of teachers in our time have decided that Jesus could not have been crucified on Friday. Hence, they have placed the crucifixion on

Thursday, and some have even placed it on Wednesday. But by not stretch of the imagination is Thursday "the day before the sabbath" (Mk. 15:42.) Some have even decided that Jesus was not raised on Sunday, but on the sabbath (Saturday). While in a recent gospel meeting in Ohio, this writer and a preacher friend spent an afternoon with a lady who maintained that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and raised on Saturday. It was clear that she had been listening to the voice of false teachers (such as the Armstrongs) rather than to the Bible in this matter. To declare that Christ was crucified on Wednesday just magnifies the problem all the more. Quite obviously "the day before the sabbath" could not fall on Wednesday. What is the answer to the problem about the "three days and three nights?"

The Manner Of Bible Counting

Bible time count, in both the Old and the New Testaments, does begin the new day at sunset, or about six o'clock in the afternoon as we count time. This solar or astronomical day is a twenty-four hour period. It is about equally divided into night and day. In John 11:9 Jesus said, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" This would then make twelve hours for the "night" period of the twenty-four-hour day. Thus the "day" part would begin at six in the morning and close at six in the evening. The events of Pentecost in Acts 2 occurred at the "third hour" of the day, or at nine in the morning. This is why in the New Testament we have the four watches (Mk. 6:48) of the night, with three hours allowed for each period. If Christ were literally in the tomb for exactly three full days and three full nights — no less than this and no more than this—then he was there for an exact period of seventy-two hours. Since he was buried late the day of his death, and arose early on the first day of the week, there is no conceivable way he could have been there for just a seventy-two hour period. The Bible does not demand this in the Bible manner of counting time.

Consideration of this problem must be based on JEWISH count of time, not the way WE might count time in the twentieth century. Some eight times in the New Testament Jesus said he would rise ON THE THIRD DAY. Peter (in Acts 10:40) and Paul (in I Corinthians 15:4) affirm that he was raised indeed on "the third day." Cleopas and his unnamed companion in Luke 24 said he was raised on the third day. Since he was raised on the third day (which was Sunday) he

must have been put to death on Friday. To make the crucifixion day Thursday makes Sunday the FOURTH day. To place it on Wednesday, as some prominent preachers in our day teach, would make Sunday the FIFTH day. At least three times in the New Testament the Scriptures teach that Jesus would be raised "in three days". Yet four times in the New Testament it is stated that he would be raised "after" three days. What is the conclusion of this? With overwhelming evidence it can be pointed out that in the Jewish manner of determining time that "after three day", "in three days", "on the third day", and "three days and nights" all mean the same thing." (G. C. Brewer, GOSPEL ADVOCATE, December 6, 1951, pages 774, 775).

That the Hebrew people used these expressions as equivalents in all periods of Bible History is quite evident from several Scriptures taken from different parts of the Bible. In Genesis 42:17-18 we read, "And he put them all together into ward THREE DAYS. And Joseph said unto them THE THIRD DAY, This do, and live; for I fear God:..." In I Kings 12:5, 12 the Bible states, "And he (Rehoboam) said unto them, Depart yet FOR THREE DAYS, then come again to me. And the people departed.... So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam THE THIRD DAY, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again THE THIRD DAY." When Queen Esther was about to go in and plead for the Jews, she requested that all the Jews in Shushan to fast for her and "neither eat nor drink THREE DAYS, NIGHTS OR DAY" (Esther 4:16.) Yet in Esther 5:1 she went into the king's presence "ON THE THIRD DAY." But even more appropriate to the present point under examination is the manner in which the Jewish leadership spoke to Pilate about time count in Matthew 27:63-64. At this point the Bible says, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive. AFTER THREE DAYS I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure UNTIL THE THIRD DAY, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first" (All emphases mine-RRT.) Hence at the very time our Lord was crucified the Jews considered the expressions AFTER THREE DAYS and UNTIL THE THIRD DAY as exact equivalents.

It should also be kept in mind that the
Continued on Page 4

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Some Call It Murder

[Editor's note: The subject of ABORTION is so important that I am giving this fine article Editorial space this week. — FHN.]

RAY DUTTON

"There is little evidence that termination of an infant's life in the first few months following extraction from the womb could be looked upon as murder . . . It would seem . . . to be more 'inhumane' to kill an adult chimpanzee than a newborn baby, since the chimpanzee has greater mental awareness. Murder cannot logically apply to a life form with less mental power than a primate" (Winston L. Duke, "The New Biology," REASON, August, 1972).

How horrible!! you say. Yet, in the eyes of many modern-day intellectuals, it is quite logical.

"The situation of a newborn baby is very different to that of the same baby, even a few weeks later . . . At birth the baby is only a potential human being, and at that point it is surely the humane and sensible thing that the life of any baby with obvious severe defects, whether of body or brain, should be quietly snuffed out by the doctor or midwife" (Miss Barbara Smoker, THE TIMES, Jan. 22, 1973) .

"BLACK MONDAY"

It was this same type of thinking that led the United States Supreme Court to rule on Jan. 22, 1973 ("Black Monday") that it is unconstitutional for any state to make ANY law regarding abortion for the first six months of pregnancy. The Court further decreed that any restrictions imposed by a state, even with respect to the last 10 weeks of pregnancy, must be for the benefit of the mother only. According to the Supreme Court the term "PERSON" as used in the Fourteenth Amendment does not include the unborn" (Roe vs. Wade, p. 43).

It is now, therefore, perfectly legal in ANY state for a mother to have her unborn baby killed at any time during her nine months of pregnancy, provided: (1) the mother wants the baby killed, and (2) her doctor agrees to do the killing.

HOW COULD IT BE?

In the face of more than a MILLION abortions every year here in the United States it seems almost unbelievable that the Lord's church has maintained an almost absolute

silence on the subject. I myself have heard (and preached) more sermons on "Breaking Traffic Laws" than on the "Slaughter of the Unborn Child."

Until recent months my voice was just as silent as the rest. Though I had always considered abortion to be wrong, I didn't consider it a problem serious enough even to preach on it. It took getting slapped in the face with the fact that there have already been more innocent, unborn children killed in this country in the last few years than all of the 6 million Jews killed by Germany during World War II! It took looking at pictures of children killed by abortion — babies which had been cut to pieces by D&C and Suction abortions. It took looking at babies which had been literally burned alive by the caustic chemicals used in Saline abortions, before I finally woke up to what was happening.

When I saw these things I wept, and I asked God to forgive me for my silence. No man who respects life could look at these perfectly-formed children which had been torn apart, or burned alive, or dropped into a waste can to die, and then walk away the same person.

My reason for silence may have been the same as yours, IGNORANCE — ignorance of what abortion is and to what extent it is being performed — possibly, ignorance of the reality that an unborn baby is truly a human being.

IS IT HUMAN?

Without question, human life begins at the moment of conception — the instant when the seed of man and the seed of woman unite. At that moment there enters into existence a completely new and different human being. From that day forward, not one single cell

from the father, or from the mother, will be added to this new being. Only nourishment and time are necessary for this new child to grow into an adult. While in the womb the unborn baby is just as human as he will be at birth. The only changes that will occur will be his change of residency, and how he acquires his food and oxygen.

The Bible clearly teaches that the child in the womb is recognized by God as a BABY, just as much so as the child which has been born. Before Joseph and Mary were married, Mary was found "with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:18). Was this "child" which was in Mary merely "fetal tissue," or a "blob of protoplasm?" It seems almost sacrilegious to ask: "What if Mary had obtained an abortion?" In this case would an abortion have meant simply "terminating a fetus?" Absurd!

In Luke 1:39-44 we read about Mary's coming to her cousin Elizabeth, who was six months pregnant. In verse 41 we are told that "when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the BABE leaped in her womb." In recounting the incident Elizabeth said "the BABE leaped in my womb for joy" (vs. 44). God did not say a "fetus" leaped in her womb; God called it a "BABE." In Luke 2:16 God used this same word, "babe," to describe Jesus as he lay in the manger. "And they came with haste and found Mary, and Joseph, and the "babe" lying in a manger."

If God says that the life in the womb is a "BABE," then to terminate (kill) that life is to "kill a baby." Some call it abortion — SOME CALL IT MURDER!

— Sixth Ave. Church, Jasper, Ala. 35501

Debate Thy Cause



JOHN WADDEY

This proverb is almost a forgotten scripture (Prov. 25:9). There are even some of God's people who lift their voices against debating in the religious realm. They say it is harmful, or a waste of time, to defend and uphold truth, and to expose error in this divinely - prescribed manner. SHAME ON YOU, BRETHREN! Dare you attempt to match your wisdom(?) against that of God? I must remind you of God's words: "My thoughts are not your thoughts . . ." (Isa. 55:8). And again, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (55:9). Who are you to think against, much less open your mouth, or lift your pen, against the infinite wisdom of Jehovah?

To oppose religious debating or refuse to debate on these weak, foolish grounds is but a sign of ignorance or of insolence and disrespect for the Will of God. "You who are spiritual should restore such a one" (Gal. 6:1). Also teach him to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3). To those who thus speak because they are afraid to defend their position, the Holy Spirit has already given sentence: "The fearful . . . shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8).

Are you ignorant brethren, that what we now have — a restored church, primitive worship, and even freedom to worship — are all enjoyed because faithful men, dedicated to God, debated their cause? They rose in the face of the Catholic Church and her Protestant daughters to challenge, debate, and destroy

the shackles these false churches held over the minds of men. Thousands have been won to Christ through controversy. All the while, God's Truth sparkled even more brilliantly, like the proverbial diamond, because of the friction.

In fairness, I must add there are some exceptions. Often these cowardly brethren speak thus until their own little diocese is attacked by some bold sectarian preacher, or perhaps by some hobby-riding brother. Then they frantically call on that "troublemaking, gloryseeking, hateful, hurtful preacher" as they generally call him, to defend and save their damaged cause. Again I say, SHAME ON YOU BRETHREN, if this shoe fits you.

In John chapter eight our Lord engaged the Jews in public debate. He so discomfited His opponents that they took up stones to kill Him. Jesus says, "Follow me." That is, do as He did (Matt. 16:24; I Pet. 2:21). Our adversary, the Devil, would have us NOT follow the Lord. Why then do brethren refuse to debate their cause? Are not they listening to Beelzebub rather than Christ??? Someone is heard to say, "The reason I don't like debates is that they end up in a fight." I challenge the statement. Fighting is the exception, not the rule. Even so, the debate of John 8 ended with the enemies of Truth attempting homicide! Did this make the Son of God wrong in disputing with them?

Consider Elijah as he stood entrenched in an awesome polemic struggle against the prophets of Baal. He questioned the people thusly: "How long go ye limping between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him" (I Kings 18:22).

With these words ringing in our ears, let us resolve to make God's way our way and serve him with all our might. Let us always be ready to defend with skill and courage the church of the Lord, and the sacred doctrine. Let us challenge those who attack those holy precincts, being ready to debate our cause with our neighbor.

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter eight

"Such are the paths of all who forget God;
the hope of the godless man shall perish.
His confidence breaks in sunder,
and his trust is a spider's web.
He leans against his house, but it does not stand;
he lays hold of it, but it does not endure.
He thrives before the sun,
and his shoots spread over his garden.
His roots twine about the stone-heap;
he lives among the rocks.
If he is destroyed from his place,
then it will deny him, saying 'I have never seen you.'
Behold, this is the joy of his way;
and out of the earth others will spring."
— verses 13-19

YOU CAN'T TRUST A SPIDER'S WEB Job 8:13-19

The world-renowned agnostic, Robert Ingersoll, delivered the funeral oration at his brother's grave. Among other things, he said:

For, whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life no matter if its every hour is rich with love and every moment jeweled with a joy, will at its close become a tragedy, as sad, and deep, and dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death....life is the narrow value between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. He who sleeps here, when dying, mistaking the approach of death for the return of health, whispered with his latest breath, 'I am better now.' Let us believe, in spite of doubts and dogmas and tears and fears that these dear words are true of all the countless dead.

That is beautiful oratory! But how empty! How hopeless! How futile! Is desperation like that the only thing that is provided for us in times of trial? When things go wrong, is there no surer way than despair?

Hope (?) like that, was about all Job's comforters could extend to him — not because the Lord had not provided better, nor that they did not believe in better, nor that Job did not desire better, but their theory of retribution made them assume that Job had turned loose of God and that he was being hypocritical in claiming still to trust Him. Had their false assumption been right, then their conclusion would have been correct. Bildad spoke the truth when he said, "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web." That graphically says that if one doesn't have God to depend on there is

nothing else to trust. One might as well put his trust in a spider's web as anything else — unless he trusts in God.

Imagine how vain it would be to put one's trust in a spider's web! Even a spider can't always do that! But would that not be as good as anything? Provided one has turned loose from God, that is. A spider's web! Thin, frail, weak, momentary — but what isn't? He who trusts his money finds it to be just as fleeting. No earthly treasure is permanent. Oil wells go dry. Lands erode. Houses burn down. Businesses go broke. Stocks and bonds become worthless. Education grows obsolete. Time changes everything! But even if that were not the case, death turns earthly treasures over to another. The hand of the miser may clutch his gold, but death loosens the grip!

Job knew what it meant to lose. Family, wealth, and health all went in a flash. But he had something left. He had integrity. He had trust. He had God! What would he have done without Him? He didn't understand Him, nor could he harmonize his troubles with his faith. His theology was proving wrong. But still there was God! And in Him Job trusted. Surely, no human could endure what Job had to endure unless there was some higher power to look to, someone in whom to trust. Never do we feel the need for divine guidance quite so keenly as when we are going through the valleys. Faith not only can move mountains — it can fill valleys as well.

What sustained Job can maintain us in our lesser troubles. When the big storms come, when there are no evident solutions to problems, when there are questions without answers, darkness without light, rain without sunshine, then we are really put to the test. It is then we need help. And if there is no trust in God, what then? Where to? The only answer is "the echo of our wailing cry." That's not for me!

Job did not listen to Bildad. He knew Bildad had made a wrong application. He knew that he had not forgotten God, and that he did not have to trust something like a spider's web. He had a better hope. And he maintained his integrity underneath a mountainous load of trouble. But not all have been so fortunate. Multitudes have turned from Him. And what do they trust when things go wrong? What?....I'd rather be like Job — with both troubles and trust, than with neither!

Vocal "Music", or "Singing"?

RAY HAWK

In the past fifteen to twenty years colleges have sent out their choral groups to advertise the college they represented. Many of the songs used were psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs arranged with humming in the background. Since this was not looked upon as "worship," no one objected seriously to it. If any objection arose, it was not over the humming per se, but over the matter of having a "choral group" perform in the church building. Some felt the present of such a performance would confuse the denominational world as to our stand on choirs and "special music" in worship.

As the years passed and the practice of humming by such groups was accepted, it began creeping into the WORSHIP of the church. To illustrate: the audience might hum in the song, "My God and I." The arrangement may indeed be beautiful; BUT IS IT AUTHORIZED?

Serious students of the Bible recognize that when God specifies a thing, it eliminates other things or kinds. When God specified "gopher" wood (Gen. 6:14), that was the KIND of wood authorized. To use another kind would cause the user to be acting without heaven's sanction and authority.

For years we have argued that two kinds of

music exist, but God has authorized only one kind. That is true; but I am afraid we have not been as precise as we should have been. We were exact enough to show that mechanical instruments of music were not authorized; but by not being exact, we have allowed many brethren to develop the theory that all "vocal music" is authorized in worship. We now see some congregations HUMMING AND SINGING. How long will it before brethren introduced WHISTLING and BACKGROUND "MUSIC" to their vocal renditions? (What is background music? Such things are "sha-da-da-de-dum" and "she-boom-she-boom.")

In Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 two activities are authorized by God in worship to Him. God specifies what KIND of instrument is to be used by the Christian to "make melody." It is not a mechanical instrument. If so, any kind of mechanical instrument could be used. These two passages authorize THE HEART as THE INSTRUMENT for making melody. This is not a mechanical instrument, but rather a SPIRITUAL INSTRUMENT. To use a mechanical instrument is to act without authority. To act without authority is to "go beyond that which is written" and to be guilty of practicing another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9; II John 9).

Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 also involve a second activity. The first we have seen is the spiritual instrument called the heart to make melody, but, Christians are to "make melody" AND do something else. What else? What kind of vocal "Music" does God authorize? A reading of these two passages will show that it is not humming, whistling, or "background music," but rather "singing!" To practice humming, whistling, or "background music," but rather "SINGING!" To practice humming, whistling, or "background music," when "singing" is specifically mentioned, is to act without authority.

If it would be scriptural to hum, whistle, or provide background music with singing when singing is specified, why would it not be scriptural to use mechanical with the spiritual instrument to make melody? When one adds humming, whistling, and "background music" to "singing," he does the same thing others do when they add mechanical instruments to the worship. If not, why not?

CONCLUSION

The New Testament authorizes the Christian to use the spiritual instrument called the heart when he makes melody (Eph. 5:19). The New Testament authorizes the Christian to SING psalms and hymns and spiritual songs when he worships God (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.) To do otherwise is to act without authority.

(To be Continued)

Unsolicited Commendation Of Words Of Truth

JERRY N. CORLEW
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(Continued on Page 4)

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(Continued from page 1)

Jewish people counted a part of a period as the whole period. For instance in Acts 19, according to Luke, Paul was in Ephesus for a period of two years and three months. He taught in the Jewish synagogue for three months and in the school of one Tyrannus for two years. Yet in the very next chapter Paul told the Ephesian elders that he had remained in their city for three years. There is no contradiction. Luke gave the exact time; Paul simply counted that part of the third year as a whole, as Jews frequently did. Now if we employ this same manner of counting time as to how long the Lord was entombed, we will have no problem with the "three days and the three nights," or with the expressions "after three days" and "until the third day." Jesus was buried for a part of the twenty-four hour night-day of Friday (which is ONE day-night). He was buried for all the twenty-four hour day period of Saturday (which is the SECOND day-night). He was buried for a part of the twenty-four night-day of Sunday (which is the THIRD day-night). In full harmony with the Jewish manner of counting time he was in the tomb "three days and three nights", was raised "on the third day" and came forth from the tomb "after the third day."

Conclusion

Let all errors about the time of his burial and the day of his resurrection cease to be propagated. At the same time, as Brother Brewer stated so ably a quarter of a century ago within the pages of the "Old Reliable," "Now count the nights and days, and let all doubts, quibbles and blasphemies cease." Enough said! (NOTE OF APPRECIATION: For many of the ideas set forth in this article the writer is greatly indebted to some fine material by the late G. C. Brewer which appeared in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, December 6, 1951, pages 774-775. His article also appears in the book, G. A. CENTENNIAL VOLUME, edited by Brother Goodpasture and which is still in print. It can be purchased from the GOSPEL ADVOCATE for \$4.50. This great book contains the cream of G. A. writings from 1855 to 1955. This book is a "must" for the well-stocked religious library. The writer has had a copy of it for nearly twenty years. We recommend it without reservation. In this fine book there is a biographical sketch of Brother Gus Nichols, and two of his unusually fine articles which appeared in the G. A. in the early fifties. RRT).

Unsolicited Commendation Of Words Of Truth

(Continued From Page 3)

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Acceptable Unto God

DANNY BEST
Mulga, Alabama

It is the duty of every seeker of God to be acceptable unto him, to prove by God's word what is acceptable in his sight. The apostle Paul wrote, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). This attitude can be seen from the other writings of the apostles (Eph. 5:10; I Tim. 2:3; 5:4; I Pet. 2:5, 20). These verses give the idea of looking to God, seeking after God, and being well pleasing to him.

Strange as it may seem, this attitude is not what is taught in the religious world today. Religious leaders of our day give people the idea that Christ is willing and ready to come into their hearts if they will only "let" him, if they will simply "believe," or "accept Christ" into their hearts. The moment they "believe" in Christ with their hearts, they can rest assured he is there. This is "salvation by faith alone," or "heart-felt salvation." People who profess this type experience give assurance that they are saved (?) by what they "feel" in their heart. On their "experience," which they claim was worked by God, they base their religion. But, if a person says he "accepted Christ" in this manner, does Christ accept him?

People who claim this salvation sometime claim that God has delivered the mighty hammer of Faith on their heart, and thus has eternally secured their submission to him. To try to prove their conversion, they use such scriptures as John 3:16; 3:36; 5:24; Rom. 10:10; Acts 16:31. These verses (and many others) do teach that salvation is "by faith;" but they do NOT teach salvation is by faith "only." These verses do not state all the conditions or terms of salvation.

The teaching of Christ was something new and revolutionary in nature. The main purpose for the miracles performed by Christ was to prove that he is the Christ, and that his teaching is from God. After people believed on Christ they were instructed other things to do. An example of this is the rich young ruler (Lk. 18:18-27). This ruler accepted Jesus as being from God. He asked Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life. Had he not believed in Christ, he would not have asked such a question. Christ instructed him to sell all he had and distribute it unto the poor. The young ruler did not obey Christ, hence he could not receive the promise of eternal life. He recognized Jesus to be the savior, but he would not obey his conditions. He could not be saved

until he did as our Lord instructed. The young ruler was not acceptable unto Christ. (We understand that not all men are told to sell all they have in order to inherit eternal life.)

In this Christian dispensation men are to accept Christ as their "personal savior" in that they should believe that salvation can come only through Christ (Acts 2:21; 16:31). Once people believe on Christ, or accept Christ as Savior, they must do what is further required of them by Christ in order to be saved.

We read "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). This is a statement of fact. If a person, will accept Christ as the savior, and call upon him for salvation, he will be saved. We read further in Acts that the apostle Peter continued to preach unto them Jesus. After these Jews realized that Jesus truly is the Christ, the only Savior, they cried out for the conditions required by Christ; hence they were "calling on the name of the Lord." The conditions given by Peter were: "Repent and be Baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). These were the same instructions Christ gave to his apostles before his ascension (Mark 16:15, 16; Lk. 24:47).

These Jews obeyed Christ, and were accepted by him; because we read that "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved" (v. 47). It is sad that many today cannot (?) understand this! People who claim experimental salvation (salvation by faith alone) cannot comprehend how baptism is part of God's plan. They do not realize that they should accept Christ's will, and not their own feelings and emotions. We read in Heb. 5:9 that Jesus Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." If we repent of our sins and are baptized for the remission of sins, as our Lord has instructed (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16), we can rest assured that we are acceptable unto God. Then the Lord will add us to his Church (Acts 2:47).

So the people who have accepted Christ as their Savior, and are trusting him to save them, are those who respect his word. I command to you these words of him: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

On Judging Preachers

JOHN GIPSON

My best friends are preachers. Some of them I have known all of my life. Others are of more recent vintage. But through the years I have learned that it is dangerous to make any statement which begins, "Preachers are..." Generalization is frequently wrong. And it works that way about preachers, too.

Preachers are people. They are not a third sex, or so "super holy" that their feet never touch the ground. (There may be some like that, but I haven't met them yet). A preacher comes out of the same background you came from, and his experiences have been much like yours. So it's a little hard not to laugh when some member finally walks up and says, "Why, Brother Gipson, you are just like a real person."

Preachers know as much about life as any person you are likely to meet on the street. They do not live a sheltered life. They deal daily with all of the problems common to humanity. They talk to drunkards, homosexuals, murderers, drug addicts, bums, and saints. And after a few years in the

ministry they are not likely to hear anything so new that its going to shock them.

Some preachers are smart and some are not. Some have extremely high I. Q.'s, and others are more or less mediocre. But most of the ones I know love the Lord and want to be of service to their fellowman. (And despite opinions to the contrary, most could make a living in some other field). They are dedicated people and not afraid to work.

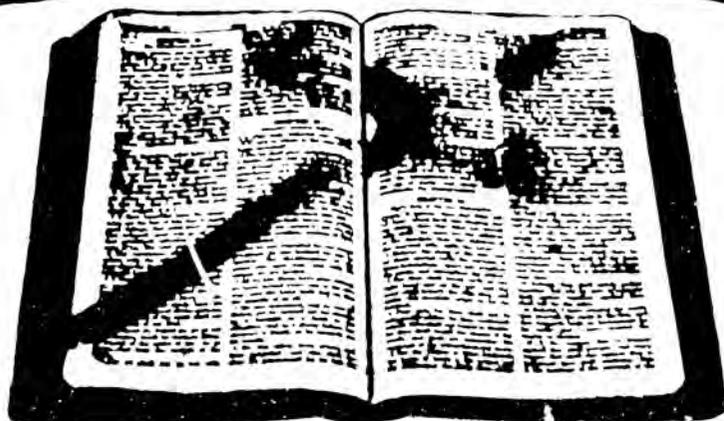
Preachers are the funniest people I know (don't take that in the wrong way). I just wish you could sit in with a group of preachers sometime and listen to their humor. You would hear more good stories than you are likely to come across on the best TV program.

Despite what you might think, most preachers are bashful, sensitive, sincere, genuinely concerned men with a need for encouragement.

Your preacher is not God. He's a fellow pilgrim with you on a road that is often hard to travel.

Via College Street Messenger
Waxahachie, Texas

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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NUMBER 8

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(NUMBER 4)

In these requested studies of "How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers," attention has been focused already upon how the proponents of error have dealt with the word "day" in Genesis 1, the "years" the ancient patriarchs lived in Genesis 5, certain of the numbers in the Mosaic book of Numbers, a statement by Paul in I Corinthians 10:8, and the day of Christ's crucifixion and the day of his resurrection in the New Testament. In the two concluding articles we shall note respectively what is done by false teachers in regard to the word "HOUR" in John 5:28-29, and the word "ONE" in Ephesians 4:4-6.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Premillennialism And The Word "Hour" In John 5:28-29

It is nothing short of phenomenal and amazing just how much elasticity the premillennialists have managed to place in that Biblical description of the time in which all that are in their graves are doing to be raised. The passage reads, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If this statement is true (and it most assuredly is), then premillennialism is false to the very core of its teaching. If the doctrine known as premillennialism is true, then the foregoing statement in John 5:28-29 is false. If this statement in John 5:28-29 is false, then he who uttered it cannot be trusted as to reliability. The matter is just that simple. We want to show you in a crystal-clear way just what the teachers of error do with the Biblical word "hour" in John 5:28-29. They mutilate it beyond all recognition! Here is the manner in which they destroy it.

Premillennialism Will Not Fit John 5:28-29

Premillennialism teaches there will be a thousand-year interval between the resurrection of the good and the resurrection of the evil. They say the "good" will be raised at the beginning of Christ's thousand-year reign.

The "evil" will be raised at the end of this period. Did Jesus teach there would be a thousand-year interval between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the unrighteous? The answer is an emphatic NO! Quite to the contrary, our Lord taught plainly, pointedly and positively that they would come forth WITHIN THE SAME HOUR. There will not be even as much as one year's difference in the time they both come forth from their residing places in Mother Earth. Yet premillennialism has a difference of 1,000 years! This is a case where false teachers deal deceitfully with Biblical numbers. There will not be even as much as a month's difference between the resurrection of the good and the resurrection of the bad. Yet premillennialism has a difference of 12,000 months! How can this be? There will not be even as much as a week's difference between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the unrighteous. Yet premillennialism has a difference of 52,000 weeks! How can this be? There will not be as much as one day's difference between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked. Yet the proponents of premillennialism have a difference of 365,000 days between the resurrection of the good and the resurrection of the bad! How can this be? The Bible teaches there will not be as much difference as one hour between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked. Yet premillennialism has a difference of 8,760,000 hours! Now that is quite a few hours to place into what Jesus called THE HOUR In John 5:28-29. How can all this be? The truth of the matter is that all this cannot be! This is one of the major things wrong with deadly premillennialism. That is exactly why the two systems—premillennialism and Christianity—are totally incompatible. Christianity is not premillennialism; premillennialism is not Christianity. The east and the west are not any more distant from each other than are these two diametrically—opposed movements.

The "Last Day" Passages

The Bible teaches clearly in John's gospel record that the resurrection will occur at "the last day." Jesus said in several passages in John 6, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again AT THE LAST DAY. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up AT THE LAST DAY...No man can come to me,

except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up AT THE LAST DAY...Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up AT THE LAST DAY. (John 6:39-40, 44, 54 All emphases mine-RRT.) In John 11:24, "Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection AT THE LAST DAY." (Emphasis mine-RRT.)

But someone at this point of our study may be thinking, "Well, all these passages about 'the last day' touch the resurrection of the righteous, and say nothing about the resurrection of the ungodly." Well, if the righteous and the wicked are raised in the same "hour," as per Jesus in John 5:28-29, just what "day" will the wicked come forth from their tombs? Is there to be a "day" AFTER "the last day" on which the wicked will be raised? If so, then "the last day" on which the righteous are raised is not really the "last" day after all, is it?

But there is another verse that clinches this matter once and for all. That verse is John 12:48 which states, "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." (Emphasis mine-RRT.) Now, who is spoken of in this passage? The one who rejects Christ and receives not his word. That would be the wicked for a surety. When is he to be judged? At "the last day!" But he cannot be judged until he has been raised. (If so, how?) Therefore the wicked will be raised on "the last day" just as the righteous are to be raised on that "last" day. It is the "last" day for both the wicked and the just. (By the way, the expression the LAST DAY is the same both in the English translation and in the Greek text for John 12:48, as pertaining to the wicked, as it is in John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24, as pertaining to the righteous in their resurrection.) The matter is decisive and definite as far as Bible teaching is concerned. Yet the persistent advocates of premillennialism have an interval between the two resurrections of 1,000 years, 12,000 months, 52,000 weeks, 365,000 days, or 8,760,000 hours! Yet it all occurs, according to Biblical teaching, on "the last day" and within the same "hour!" What a mammoth job of mutilation premillennialism makes of this word "hour" in John 5:28-29. That "hour" just cannot be stretched like they want it stretched! It does not possess that type of

Continued on Page 4

WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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FROM

THE EDITOR

The Christian's Prayer Life

Prayer is vital to the Christian's life (Jas. 1:5-7; 4:1-4, 13-15). It is food for his soul. Without prayer he will surely die spiritually. Let us study prayer from the book of James, our Lord's brother.

1. "If any of you lacketh . . . let him ask of God" (Jas. 1:5).

Verse 5 connects in thought with vs. 2-4 where James pointed out that temptations were intended to prove one's faith and develop patience. One might wonder, "How can I have the wisdom to understand and deal with such temptations? I am not that wise." To this James responds, "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God." To further encourage the Christian to ask God for this, as well as all other needs in life, he hurriedly adds that God gives "generously to all men without making them feel foolish or guilty" (J. B. Phillips).

Experience in dealing with our fellow-man has taught us that many gifts are made undesirable by the way they are given. "There is a kind of giver who gives only with a view to getting more than he has given, who gives only to gratify his vanity and his sense of power by putting the recipient under an obligation which he will never be allowed to forget; who gives and who then continuously casts up the gift that he has given. But God gives with generosity" (Wm. Barclay, THE LETTERS OF JAMES AND PETER, pp. 53-54). The Christian is free to ask for all things he lacks, not just for wisdom, if they are pleasing to God (I John 5:14). The principle would apply to all such things.

Something of the character of God is seen in Jas. 1:5: "let him ask of God who giveth." Literally from the Greek it reads, "THE GIVING GOD." This declares the fact that such is a characteristic of our God. "Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17).

Verse 5 teaches: 1) We are to look to God



JOHN WADDEY

and ask Him for our needs, both spiritual and material; 2) giving is a trait of God's personality; 3) He gives to all His children, regardless of their station in life; 4) He is unsparing, or gives generously; 5) He gives without reproaching or making us feel foolish or guilty.

2. "Ask in faith, nothing doubting" (Jas. 1:6).

Thomas Manton writes, "We must put up no prayer but what we can put up in faith; . . . and faith must not wander out of the limits of the word. If you have a promise, you may be confident that your requests will be heard, though in God's season. You cannot put up a carnal desire in faith . . . where we have a certain promise, we must no way doubt of His will; for the doubt must either proceed from suspicion that this is not the word, or will of God, and that is atheism; or from a jealousy that God will not make good His word, and that is blasphemy; or a fear that He is not able to accomplish His will and that is down-right distrust and unbelief. Therefore, where we have a clear sight of His will in the promise, we may have a confidence towards Him" (I John 5:14. COMMENTARY ON JAMES, p. 48). Again Manton says, ". . . all doubts are but disputes against a promise . . ."

Verse 6 teaches us that God gives rich blessings to those who: 1) ask in prayer; 2) ask of God; 3) pray in faith and confidence; and 4) do not doubt that God can and will answer according to His holy will.

3. "Asking amiss" (Jas. 4:1-4).

"James is . . . setting before his people a basic question . . . whether is your aim in life; to submit to the will of God, or to gratify your own desires for the pleasures of this world? And his warning is that, if pleasure is the policy of life, then nothing but strife and hatred and division can possibly follow." "To obey the will of God is to be essentially selfless."

4. "Ye lust and have not" (Jas. 4:1-4).

"The craving for pleasure in the end shuts the door of prayer. If a man's prayers are simply for the things which will gratify his desires, then his prayers are essentially selfish and therefore, it is not possible for God to answer them, for to answer them would be to do nothing other than to provide the man with ways of sinning. The true end of prayer is to say to God, Thy will be done. The prayer of the man who is pleasure-dominated is: My desires be satisfied . . ." (Barclay, OP. CIT, 118).

Some people fail to reach their desires and goals in life because they ignore God and proudly try to succeed alone. Others fail because they have sinful goals which God forbids. Still others fall short because they pray wrongfully. James stresses the failure of all selfish prayer.

5. There are several other impediments to effectual prayer:

A. God will not do wrong in answer to prayer. We need not ask it.

B. Neither will He change His revealed will to please man.

C. He cannot be expected to violate the laws of nature He has long since established.

D. Doubts in the pray-er's heart impedes prayer (James 1:6).

E. To neglect to work for the fulfillment of your needs will disappoint your prayers. God has ordained that man first do his best before Heaven supplies the rest (Phil. 2:12; II Thess. 3:10).

F. Lack of persistence robs many of heaven's blessings. Jesus says we "ought always to pray and faint not" (Lk. 18:1-8).

G. Wrong-doing limits our prayers. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination" (Prov. 28:9).

H. Mistreatment of one's family causes prayers to be hindered (I Pet. 3:7).

I. Self-righteousness left a religious man with an unanswered prayer (Lk. 18:9-12).

J. Selfishness blocks God from supplying our requests (James 4:3).

K. Insincerity neutralizes prayers. Jesus rebuked the prayer practice of the hypocritical Pharisees (Matt. 6:5-7).

L. Failure to forgive a brother forces God to deny our petitions for forgiveness (Matt. 6:12-15).

M. Factiousness hinders our prayers before God (Matt. 5:23-24).

6. "If the Lord will" (Jas. 4:13-15).

This section deals with the sin of presumption, i.e., acting without taking God into account. ". . . Note that James does not say there is anything wrong about making plans for the future, nor does he denounce business or merchants or even the desire to make money. What He does reprove is such absorption in worldly affairs that one leaves God out." ". . . They live as if time were absolutely theirs, as if destiny were in their hands. Yet James underscores the truth that man proposes, but God disposes" (H. P. Colson, THE PRACTICAL MESSAGE OF JAMES, p. 72).

The Christian's entire life with all its intentions and activities is to be under the guiding principle, "If the Lord will;" how much the more so, his prayer request. The apostle John writes, "This is the boldness which we have toward Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us" (I John 5:14). The will of God is made known to man today through the inspired writings of our Bible (I Cor. 14:37). We are not to seek God's will in the fantasies of emotionalism, mysticism, or seances, such as those who falsely claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. Like the Bereans, we still need to "search the scriptures daily to see if these things ARE so" (Acts 17:11). "We should never make plans, and then ask God to bless them. What we should do is to consult God before making our plans and thus let Him in on the planning. If we allow Him to guide us, we may with confidence ask His blessing on our actions" (Colson, p. 73).

In every prayer there are three parts: 1) the wish, a desire for something; 2) the word, the wish expressed in prayer; 3) the work, which helps to bring the desired results.

God's children should pray without ceasing (I Thess. 5:17). "Daily prayers are the daily visits which change belief that God exists, into belief in God as a loved and trusted friend" (D. J. Campbell). "Prayer is not merely an occasional impulse to which we respond when we are in trouble; prayer is a life attitude" (W. A. Bueller, THE ENCY. OF RELIGIOUS QUOTATIONS, p. 344).

What Does It Mean To Shine For Christ?

Ronald Deaton

In Matthew 5:16 our Lord said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." What does it mean to shine for Christ? Many answers could be given, the ones I have listed below are significant.

1. It means to "deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).

2. It means to "present your body a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

3. It means to WORK "while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn. 9:4).

4. It means to "go YE into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

5. It means to "do good unto ALL MEN, especially unto them who are of the Household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

6. It means to work for the "edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12).

Now, the question comes: are you letting YOUR LIGHT SHINE?

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter twelve

"No doubt you are the people,
and wisdom will die with you.
But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Who does not know such things as these?"

— verses 2, 3.

NO INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Job 12: 2, 3

There are exceptions to all rules —and one problem which Job did not have was an inferiority complex! That is a problem which plagues many timid souls, but not Job! He was so sure of himself that even in the midst of an ocean of troubles, he was able to say to his comforters: "I have understanding as well as you: I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth now such things as these?" (12:3).

It affects some more than others, but most of us have a sense of inferiority that keeps us from accomplishing some things which we are really capable; of doing. This problem is extreme with some; it even becomes a complex. With others, it simply gnaws away and dulls the lustre of life. But like other problems it can be overcome.

Even though Job did not have this complex, others — many others — have. Some have thought that because Sir Walter Scott published his first works of poetry anonymously he did so because of a feeling of inferiority to the popular Byron. And others assume that he changed his field from poetry to that of a novelist at a later date for the same reason. Yet he was one of England's finest poets! Ten of the twelve spies which Moses sent out said of the land they went to see: "Surely it floweth with milk and honey." But they also said: "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we...there we saw the giants...we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Numbers 13:27-33). The one talent man said, "I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth" (Matthew 25:25). We are not alone when we feel inferior, are we?

This feeling of inferiority is probably caused by our seeing others who are masters at demonstrating an air of success. They have the Midas touch in business, they know just what to say socially, they always get the breaks — they wear their success well! (Of course, their own frustrations do not show. If they did, we would cease to envy them.) We compare ourselves with what they appear to be. And we see our own failures. We see our lack of confidence, the uncertainty of our steps. And we begin to falter. We feel inadequate. We get a "grasshopper complex," too.

If we become shy because of comparing ourselves with others, let us quit making the comparisons. Leave the Joneses alone! Their successes do not make us inadequate any more than their failures make us great! It is true that the other fellow may be more able than we. Not everyone has the same number of talents. Our Standard everyone has the same number of talents. Our standard is not what we would do with a million, but what

we are doing with what we've got! We need to learn to say:

*I am only one,
But I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But I can do something
And I will not let what I cannot do
Interfere with what I can do*

— Edward Everett Hale

With that in mind, let us consider three things which will emphasize our dignity and show we are not inferior:

1. *God made us.* And God does not turn out an inferior product. One time one was making an excuse to Charles Spurgeon for his failure to try a certain task on the ground that he was a "nobody." Spurgeon quickly replied, "God Almighty had no time to make nobodies."

2. *God works through us.* The idea of being

in partnership with God is shocking, but true. Antonio Stradivari, the most celebrated of Italian violin makers, had the right idea:

*I say not God Himself can make man's best
Without best men to help Him...*

*'Tis God gives skill,
But not without men's hands; he could not
make*

*Antonio Stradivari's violins
Without Antonio.*

— George Eliot

No wonder he made such violins!

3. *God dwells in us.* And this is the most shocking thought of all. When one becomes His child, He abides within. And surely, if God comes to dwell with us, ours cannot be an inferior house!

(To be continued)

Should Preaching Raise Or Answer Questions?

DUB McCLISH
Granbury, TX

Certainly, I believe that preachers should aim at answering questions in the minds of the listeners. Preachers should strive to stay in touch with the questions people have on their hearts as they come into the assembly, and should seek to provide answers to these questions from the word of God. However, this all assumes that people will always have pertinent questions to ask. Experience shows this to be an invalid assumption. For preachers to tune all of their sermons only to listeners' questions would be to fail them. I opine that many both within and without do not know enough or care enough to ask the right questions, the important questions.

Scripture provides an example. When the people gathered on Pentecost, their original question was not, "What shall we do?" (Ac. 2:37), but "How hear we, every man in our own language?" and "What meaneth this?" (Ac. 2:8, 12). While it is true that Peter answers both of their questions, it is significant that the sermon he preached provoked the crucial question. Before Peter's sermon, it had not entered the minds of these

people to inquire about salvation. After hearing the sermon, they learned what question to ask, they asked it and Peter answered it. Thus, it is the preacher's task to take the religious "curiosity seeker" and provide in him the basic and important questions, and then answer them.

While it is necessary that we try to elicit the proper questions in the minds of others, this is vastly different from the practice of merely raising questions! Some of the preaching and writing that is being done seems to count it a mark of superior intelligence to raise questions that cause doubts in those who hear and that seem to advertise their own unstable convictions. Such a practice is utterly deplorable to true gospel preachers. Surely, it is obvious that any fool can raise questions. Wisdom and truth reside in those who can provide some answers.

My task, then, as I see it, is both to provoke the right questions and provide the right answers. It is not necessarily my obligation to answer only the questions people are asking. In many cases this would be time wasted.

Narrow Way versus Broadway

HOYT BAILEY

THE NARROW WAY is narrow enough to be in Jesus Christ. "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). There is a difference between those in Jesus Christ, the one way, and those who are traveling the many ways of religion. The strait and narrow way is entered through the one door, Jesus Christ (John 10:9), not by the many doors opened by men. Hear Jesus Christ, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9).

JESUS SAID, "... and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Since Christ is the one way to the Father, the "one door" through which people can be saved, the "one shepherd" of His sheep, then, there is no way to the Father but by Christ (John 14:6). There is no name through which one can be saved except the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). There is no worship acceptable to God except that authorized by Jesus Christ (John 4:23-24; Matt. 15:9). What body has the

promise of being saved? Paul tells us that "... Christ is head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body" (Eph. 5:23); but he tells us that the body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23), and there is one body (Eph. 4:4).

THE BROAD WAY invites people to be saved by way of their choice. The broad way urges people to follow the faith of their choice, to worship as they please, or to miss worship as they please, to live as they please, to be mean, dishonest, untrustworthy as they please. Christ does not teach this way of life, nor does Christ promise salvation through the name of one's choice. The broad way urges people to follow the man of their choice, to practice the doctrine of their choice, to be rebellious according to their choice, and to submit to the authority of their choice.

WHERE IN ALL THE NEW TESTAMENT DOES CHRIST TEACH PEOPLE TO DO AS THEY PLEASE? Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(Continued from page 1)

materialistic elasticity!

Conclusion

Jesus declared in John 5:28-29 that "ALL" that are in their tombs or graves shall hear his voice and come forth. But premillennialism does not believe "all" will come forth at the same time. Jesus taught that both good and bad will hear his voice at the same time. It will be even in the same "hour" that both will come forth—the one group to the resurrection of life, and the other group to the resurrection of damnation. If "all" that are in their tombs hear his voice and come forth in the same hour, then how is there going to be a thousand-year interval between the resurrection of the just, and the resurrection of the unjust? This needs an answer from the false teachers who deal deceitfully with such Biblical numbers as the word "hour" in John 5:28-29. This one verse is totally sufficient to refute the whole gamut of the popular and best selling books of the rank premillennialist, Hal Lindsey. How so-called intelligent people can swallow all this rank premillennialism is more than this writer can fathom.

In regard to the teaching of Jesus in John 5:28-29 the absolute truth of the matter is that there will be no interval of this highly fertile premillennial thinking with allusions of imaginary things dancing wildly in their materialistic minds. If John 5:28-29 is so (and it is true without doubt or controversy), then premillennialism is false from center to circumference, from stem to stern. Again, if premillennialism is so, John 5:28-29 and accept premillennialism.

Unfaithfulness

CHARLES WILLIAMS

God calls unfaithfulness in marriage "adultery". Marriage is a total commitment of a man and a woman to each other. A man and a woman in this closest-of-all human relationships in accordance with God's plan "become one flesh." The two make a solemn promise, a life-long commitment to "forsake all others" and cleave to each other as long as they shall live.

But many marriages in America are not honoring the vows made before God and man to remain faithful to one another. The divorce rate is long past epidemic proportions. The family Service Association of America estimates that infidelity is a factor in a major percentage of the divorce cases. One branch office estimated that it was a part of the problem in 90 percent of their cases.

Why? Why the epidemic of infidelity? The basic reason is lack of respect for truth and good. This lack of respect may be attributed to (1) The change (lowering) of moral standards. (2) Working wives who are faced with increased temptation to unfaithfulness. (3) The uprootedness of American families. (4) Sex perversion of every sort depicted via the media. (5) More children growing up in homes where they have seen an infidelity pattern in their parents. (6) Selfishness. A husband and wife who have never learned to give and feel that love is only taking, is headed for trouble. (7) Flight from responsibility.

Christ warned about flirting with temptation and even thinking of illicit sex. "Adulterers shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9).

Lust is Satan's counterfeit of love. Upon the earth there is nothing more beautiful than pure love, and there is nothing more blighting than lust. There is no quicker, shorter way to destruction than the way of unbridled lust, the way of sex abuse. "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4).

Solomon's Reign And Sin

Jerry N. Corlew,
Minister
Church of Christ
Halls, Tenn.

Solomon was one of the younger sons of David. He became the third king of Israel and reigned for forty years. He was the last ruler of the United Kingdom, and he was directly responsible for its division.

It is doubtful that any king ever ascended the throne under more favorable circumstances, or who had brighter prospects for a successful reign than Solomon. He had both the training and the example of his father to aid him, and his attitude was such that Jehovah blessed him beyond any other king, either before or after him.

The activities and reign of Solomon might be summed up by six words which begin with the letter "W".

WISDOM. Solomon is known for his wisdom (I Kings 3:5-15). He prayed: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" (V. 9). God was pleased with Solomon's attitude and his request, so He gave him riches and honor (V. 13), and promised to lengthen his days if he would walk in the ways of Jehovah and keep His statutes. (V. 14).

A familiar example of Solomon's wisdom is seen in his judgment between the two harlots (I Kings 3:16-28). The extent of his wisdom is described, "And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom" (I Kings 4:34). The Queen of Sheba admired Solomon's wisdom as described in her well-known visit (I Kings 10:1-10). Jesus referred to this incident, saying, "The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Matt. 12:42).

WEALTH. God promised Solomon RICHES in addition to wisdom and honor (I Kings 3:13). There was a great amount of wealth throughout the country because of the time of peace and prosperity (I Kings 4:25). Solomon's provisions for one day indicated his great wealth (I Kings 4:22-23). The sacred writer declares that "the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones...." (I Kings 10:27). The gold that came to Solomon in one year "was six hundred three-score and six talents" (I Kings 10:14). His many buildings projects which included the temple (that took seven years to complete) and his own palace (which took thirteen years to finish) are indicative of his opulence (I Kings 6:38; 7:1; Eccl. 2:1ff.)

WRITER. The books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are attributed to Solomon's authorship. It is said that "he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five" (I Kings 4:32). This verse is found in a context that mentions the wisdom of Solomon (v. 34). Also, Solomon's intelligence, his education, and his experiences are evident in these inspired writings. After mentioning many varied pursuits and personal experiences, Solomon came to this conclusion: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). If Solomon had lived up to this principle, he would be a sterling example for us today.

WIVES. It is reported that William Jennings Bryan asked his future father-in-law for the hand of his daughter, and the gentleman replied by quoting Paul: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (I Cor. 7:1). Bryan answered by quoting Solomon: "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord" (Prov.

18:22). Bryan then remarked that Paul was a bachelor, and since Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, that he must have known what he was talking about!

Not only did Solomon have a large number of wives and concubines (I Kings 11:3), he also had 40,000 stalls for his horses and chariots (I Kings 4:26). Brother Foy E. Wallace Jr. exclaims, "It appears that Solomon specialized in horses and wives!" (BOOK OF REVELATION, p. 142).

One of Solomon's first mistakes was in taking a FOREIGN wife (I Kings 3:1). Later we learn, "when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods" (I Kings 11:4). The taking of these foreign wives was in violation of the Law of Moses (cf. Deut. 7:3-4; 17:17).

WORSHIPPER. David solemnly charged his son Solomon (I Kings 2:4), and he warned him by saying, "Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (I Chron. 28:9).

In the beginning of his reign, Solomon's attitude was one of humility (I Kings 3:7). His attitude in the prayer at Gibeon was one of submissiveness and obedience (I Kings 3:5ff.) Isaac Errett wrote, "In the building and dedication of the Temple, Solomon appears in the best religious phase of his character, and his dedicatory prayer (I Kings 8) is one of the loftiest and sublimest on record." (EVENINGS WITH THE BIBLE, Vol. 1, pp. 342-343).

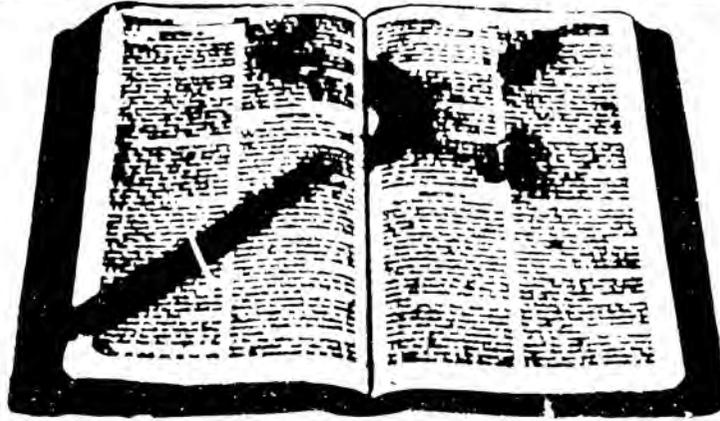
As we have seen, Solomon's heart was turned away from God through the influence of his foreign wives (I Kings 11:1ff.) Thus, we are reminded of the danger of entering into mixed marriages. In fact, in many instances today, Christians who enter into such marriages, instead of converting their companions, are led away from the church. Also, the text is clear that Solomon engaged in the idolatrous worship by going after the various national deities, and building high places or shrines, which remained in the land for several years (II Kings 23:13).

As a result of Solomon's apostasy, God promised that He would rend the kingdom from him and give it to his servant. However, God graciously postponed this division until after Solomon's death, and He allowed one tribe to remain for David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake (I Kings 11:11-13).

It may be noted that there is no evidence that Solomon ever repented, and his later life stands as a WARNING for us today. Thus, we remember Solomon for his WISDOM, his WEALTH, his WRITINGS, his WIVES, and his WORSHIP (which was according to God's will in the beginning); but later, he turned from God, and as a result, his example is a WARNING to us today. Solomon's experiences demonstrate the fact that one may preach to others, and yet lose his own soul! (Cf. I Cor. 9:27).

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

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NUMBER 9

How False Teachers Deal With Biblical Numbers

(NUMBER 4)

This is the fifth and concluding article in an extended series on how certain false teachers deal with Biblical numbers. This series was suggested by Brother Wayne Jackson of Stockton, California, a very close friend and one of the ablest preachers and writers of the day. To date we have noted how proponents of error deal with the word "day" in Genesis 1; how they deal with the word "years" in Genesis 5; their destructive work in the book of NUMBERS; how they deal with the "day" of Christ's death and the day of his resurrection; and what they attempt to do with the word "hour" in John 5. We have one additional Biblical number that will be the gist of this concluding message in this series.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Less than one hope gives us nothing for which to live; more than one hope produces division and confusion. The one Lord gives us unity of authority. Less than the one Lord gives us no supreme authority; more than one Lord would produce chaos and division. The one faith gives us unity of doctrine or unity of teaching. Less than the one faith would not give us anything to teach; more than the one faith produces division and chaos. The one baptism gives us unity of practice. Less than one baptism leaves us out of Christ, unsaved, and thus still in our sins; more than one baptism produces confusion, chaos and division — the very thing we now have in current religious groups. The one God gives unity of worship. Less than one God would leave man in a godless world; more than one God would leave him in a world of "lords many and gods many" (I Cor. 8:5). This too, would result in hopeless confusion and constant division.

Look at what the false teachers have done to these numbers — the united "ones" of the Spirit of God. The infidel would like to turn each of these "ones" into seven "zeroes." The ideal to him would be for there to be no body of Christ, no Spirit, no heavenly hope, no Lord, no faith, no baptism, and surely no God. When he is through with the passage there are seven "zeroes" where Paul gave the seven "ones." Infidelity majors in the subtracting process.

The advocate of human denominationalism also deals deceitfully with the "ones" of this passage. He wants to change the "ones" into a multiplicity. Instead of the "one" body (or the "one" church), he wants many churches, or a multitude of religious bodies. Instead of the "one" Spirit (and the one revelation of the Bible) he wants a number of Holy Spirits and access to any number of revelations — both ancient and modern — within the religious realm. Instead of the "one" hope, he wants a number of hopes — the premillennial hope, the hope that there is no hell, the hope of a renovated earth for his eternal paradise, the hope of universal salvation for all, etc. Instead of the "one" Lord he wants lords many and authorities galore. Instead of the "one" faith, he wants many faiths and (even in specific authority) pleads for "unity in diversity." Doctrine is played down in the name of some type of greatly-abused LOVE and an ever-evasive type of false TOLERATION.

Instead of the "one" baptism he wants a choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion — or perhaps no baptism at all. Instead of the "one" God he would have a multiplicity of gods: feelings, emotions, human creeds, sensual pleasures, strong drink, deadly dope, and the like.

SOME CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Is it any worse to mutilate the word "day" in Genesis 1, than it is to mutilate the word "one" in Ephesians 4? Is it any worse to mutilate the word "years" in Genesis 5, than it is to mutilate the word "one" in Ephesians 4? Is it any worse to mutilate the word "thousands" in the book of Numbers, than it is to mutilate the word "one" in Ephesians 4? Is it any worse to lay claim to a discovered contradiction (?) between Moses and Paul, than it is to mutilate what Paul taught in the "ones" in Ephesians 4? Will anyone say that it is worse to mutilate the day of Christ's crucifixion and the day of his resurrection in order to accommodate Sabbatarian dogma, than it is to mutilate the word one in Ephesians 4? Is it any worse to mutilate the word "hour" in John 5:28-29, than it is to mutilate the word "one" in Ephesians 4?

We call the one who mutilates "day" in Genesis 1 a Theistic Evolutionist. We call the ones who mutilate the word "years" in Genesis 5, and the word "thousands" in the book of Numbers, Modernists. We call those who seek out contradictions in the Bible and try to destroy people's faith in the Bible, Infidels. We call those who are determined to get Jesus crucified early enough so that he could be resurrected on the sabbath day, Sabbatarians. We call those who mutilate the word "hour" in John 5:28-29, Premillennialists. We call those who want to change each "one" of Ephesians 4 INTO A ZERO, Atheists or Unbelievers. Now, what shall we call those who want to change each of the "ones" in Ephesians 4 INTO THE MANY? The writer will allow each reader to furnish the appropriate designation at this point!

Let us remember that the same Holy Spirit who inspired the other parts of the Bible — its facts, commandments, promises, and warnings — also inspired the writing of the numbers that are contained therein. Let us beware of each person who would deal deceitfully with Biblical numbers!

THE NUMBER "ONE" IN THE SEVEN PAULINE UNITIES OF EPHESIANS 4

This vital message of Sacred Scripture states in language that is both simple and yet profound the following words: "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." The inspired Paul employed some thirty-five Greek words to set forth this perfect plan of Christian unity. It has been translated into about forty-one English words in our reliable Bibles such as the King James and the American Standard Versions.

The one body would give us unity of organization. Less than one body gives nothing; more than one body produces just what we now have in the religious world — hopeless division and chaotic conditions. The one Spirit gives us unity of revelation. Less than the one Spirit would give us nothing in the way of revelation; more than one Spirit would produce division. The one hope gives us unity of expectation, anticipation, and aim.

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Elders In Every Church

Paul ordained them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). There were to be elders "in every city" (Tit. 1:5). It is possible for a church to be scripturally unorganized (without elders). Until qualified men are developed in the congregation, the church is scriptural, but not complete. Of course, if bitterness and rancor prevail and division exists, the church is unscripturally unorganized. Every congregation should seek to cultivate, select, and appoint qualified men; in which case the church is scripturally organized.



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

ELDERS DID NOT CEASE WITH APOSTLES

By the end of the miraculous age of the first Century A.D., the specific work of the apostles was completed (Jn. 17:8; 14, 20-21). This was not true of the work of elders. The apostles had to be "witnesses" that Christ is alive after his crucifixion, and could not have successors (Lk. 24:48; Acts 1:8, 22; 10:39-41; 26:16-18). This was not one of the qualifications for elders; therefore elders could have successors. The apostles "bound" and "loosed" the will of Christ for all time to come (Matt. 16:19; Jn. 20:23). This was not true of the work of elders — their responsibilities need to be exercised in every generation. The original apostles "judge" now by their teaching in the written New Testament, and are still on "twelve thrones," judging through their writings (Lk. 22:29-30). But the original elders are not continuing to rule in any congregation on earth. Paul called himself and the others "the last apostles" (I Cor. 4:9, Margin). Subsequent to them, any PRETENDERS would be just that — false apostles! (II Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:2) However, we do not read anywhere of the "last elders."

The work or duties of elders was not finished in the first century. "They watch for

your souls . . ." (Heb. 13:17, 24; I Pet. 5:1-5; Acts 20:28-32). If these functions were ever needed, they are now! This is unlike the work of the apostles!

Near the close of the apostolic age, the apostle Paul wrote two young ministers to appoint elders (I Tim. 3; Tit. 1). No new APOSTLES were then appointed! And it did not require an apostle to appoint elders, for Timothy and Titus could ordain or appoint them (I Tim. 3; Tit. 1). (Please do not confuse the SELECTION with the APPOINTMENT.)

That elders did not cease with the approaching end of the apostolic age is evident also from the following: Ephesus had some elders about A.D. 60 (Acts 20:17). About A.D. 65 Paul left Timothy at Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3), and directed him about A.D. 68 to appoint some (additional) elders (I Tim. 3). This indicates the eldership is intended to be perpetuated.

The fact that at first some elders were miraculously endowed (Jas. 5:13) does not

prove that ALL were. If some apostles laid hands on all elders to miraculously qualify them, why require one selected be "apt to teach" and, "not a novice"??? (I Tim. 3:2, 6; Tit. 1:9) Could not the apostles have given NOVICES, and those NOT apt to teach, spiritual gifts??? This shows such endowments were not necessary to the eldership; therefore, elders did not cease with the ending of the miraculous age. Furthermore, such gifts were not mentioned in the required qualifications.

If all offices which at first were filled by spiritually-endowed men passed away with the apostles, then evangelists and teachers also ceased! For these also are listed among these specially-gifted (Eph. 4:8, 11-16).

The passing of the miraculous age of the church did not do away with the need for proper leadership in the church; therefore, elders did not cease with the apostles (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).

Some Call It Murder

(NUMBER 2)

RAY DUTTON

"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" (Prov. 6:16, 17.)

"Out of sight, out of mind." This old adage is proven true almost every day. It was not until the American people saw pictures of the My Lai massacre that they began to cry out against such atrocities. And until the American people see the horrors of induced abortion they will not cry out against this evil.

When most of us conjure up picture of abortion, we usually think of a doctor removing from a woman some "abnormal tissue" that (if left to grow) would have one day produced a baby. The fallacy of such an unrealistic view of abortion cannot easily be dispelled with mere facts. It takes pictures—pictures which say more in 10 seconds than a trained orator could say in an hour — pictures which shatter our unrealistic mental images, and confront us with the cold, hard reality of modern-day abortions.

Actual pictures of aborted children are so shocking and gruesome that they could not be published in this paper where younger children would be sure to see them. Yet, every adult reading these lines needs to see them. YOU need to see the real world of abortions. YOU need to have your sensibilities shocked by these pictures, because then, just possibly, you could be stirred up enough to cry out against this abomination.

HOW ABORTIONS ARE DONE

There are five methods used in performing induced abortions. They re((1) suction method, (2) D&C, (3) Prostaglandin method, (4) salt-poisoning abortion, (5) hysterotomy, or Caesarean section.

As I write these words there lies in front of me a group of pictures depicting each of these methods. The first picture shows the result of a suction abortion performed on a 10 week old baby. At this age the baby is already so perfectly formed that he even has fingerprints. Pictured is a tiny body that has been ripped to pieces—little arms torn from their sockets, a chest cavity slashed wide open. The child was sucked and scraped from the once-safe haven of his mother's womb. Now he is no more than a mass of blood and tangled limbs.

Another picture before me shows a

perfectly-formed 19-week-old baby that has been killed by Salt Poisoning, the second most common method of abortion. This type of abortion is done by injecting a strong, caustic salt solution into the amniotic fluid surrounding the baby. The baby breathes and swallows it: he is poisoned, struggles, sometimes convulses, and finally dies a horribly-painful death. The following day the mother delivers a dead baby. Babies aborted by this method are usually called "candy-apple babies" because of their bright red color, caused by the salt solution, which literally burns away the child's outer layer of skin.

Before me another picture shows a little 24-week-old baby girl being aborted by hysterotomy. This method of abortion is exactly the same as a Caesarian section—except for one significant point! In a normal Caesarian section the baby is cut loose from his umbilical cord, handed to a nurse who cleans the mucous from his nose and mouth, and then is taken to the special care unit where everything is done to care for the child's life.

However, the little girl in this picture was marked "abortion"; therefore, when the cord was cut the doctor dropped her into a bucket where she was allowed to die! At this age these babies always move their arms and legs, try to breath, and some even cry. One doctor, disturbed by this, simply threw the placenta on top of the baby and smothered him.

MAYBE THERE'S HOPE

Does such a vivid description upset you, horrify you, or make you sick. If so, then thank God; there may still be hope for us!

These unborn children do not have anyone to speak out for them; and THEY cannot speak. If you and I, as Christians, are not willing to defend these helpless, tiny infants, then NO ONE will.

If you would like more information on this subject, you can write your local "Right to Life" group, or write me: Ray Dutton, Sixth Ave. Church of Christ, Jasper, Ala. 35501.

An honest man alters his ideas to fit the truth, a prejudiced man alters the truth to fit his ideas.

* * * * *

We usually admire the other fellow more after we have tried to do his job.

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter ten

"That thou dost seek out my iniquity
and search for my sin,
although thou knowest that I am not guilty,
and there is none to deliver out of thy hand?
Thy hands fashioned and made me;
and now thou dost turn about and destroy
me.

Remember that thou hast made me of clay:
and wilt thou turn me to dust again?
Didst thou not pour me out like milk
and curdle me like cheese?

Thou didst clothe me with skin and flesh,
and knit me together with bones and
sinews.

Thou has granted me life and steadfast love;
and thy care has preserved my spirit.

Yet these things thou didst hide in thy heart;
I know that this was thy purpose.

If I sin, thou dost mark me,
and dost not acquit me of my iniquity.

If I am wicked, woe to me!

If I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head,
for I am filled with disgrace
and look upon my affliction.

And if I lift myself up, thou dost hunt me like
a lion,

and again work wonders against me;
thou dost renew thy witnesses against me,
and increase thy vexation toward me;
thou dost bring fresh hosts against me."

— verses 6-17

QUESTIONS, BUT NO ANSWERS

JOB 10:6-17

Television isn't always truthful. Even the commercials leave the impression that there is a magic cure for what ails you. Acid indigestion can be stopped quick as a fizz, head-aches and tooth decay by brand X. A house-wife can win the neighborhood whitest wash contest — if she uses the right detergent, of course. A certain brand of deodorant will make you popular again; the insect problem can be permanently eliminated with the right spray; and there is a cereal that keeps you vitamin fresh all day. All of this, if you listen to the commercials, that is. There is many a formula for instant happiness. Why be frustrated with all those gadgets!

But life is hardly that simple. The news stories tell of insurmountable problems, and psychiatrists are doing a land-slide business. There are mountains of frustrations, problems — questions without answers! And again, we can turn to Job for an example of one who knew frustration to an extreme degree.

Job knew the despair of confusion. He REALLY Knew it. It was not his sub-conscious playing tricks on him, nor was it mental illness, nor emotional distress. It was real confusion. His accepted religious doctrine of retribution was proving false. He knew that God had been good to him. He knew he had not committed any terrible transgression. Yet all this trouble! What caused it? With all the evidence of God's goodness, and care, and concern, how could this happen to him?

Note some of the paradoxical experiences he prayed about: "Thou knowest that I am not

wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand" (10:7), yet he suffered! "Thou huntest me as a fierce lion: and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me" (10:6). "Thine hands have made me...yet thou dost destroy me" (10:8). Was God good? or bad? just? or unjust? Was Job a saint? or sinner? Why? Oh, why? These were enough questions to make his head whirl, weren't they? There were questions, all right. But no answers. At least no answers that Job knew! And how often are you plagued with similar frustrations?

Into every life there come questions which have no answers. There are problems with no evident solutions. There are times when it seems there is no one to turn to. Why suffering? Why sickness? Why death? Why bereavement? Why crime? Why war? Why hatred? Why failure? Why defeat? Why hardship? Why me? why...? The question, "Why?" echoes through space.

For such a time, consider these suggestions?

1. *Don't always expect an answer.* Some soul-searching questions deal with spiritual things that man is not fully equipped to understand. Too, questions of this type are usually asked by those overwhelmed by distress — an emotion which would blind them to an answer if it were available. Some problems can be understood only after they are passed. And some problems are blessings in disguise — blessings which would be refused if one had the privilege of refusal! Haven't you had some great burden in your past which was transformed into a great blessing? And you would have missed it if you had had a choice! Winston Churchill once said of a trying experience Great Britain had survived: "If England shall last for one

thousand years it will be said, this was her finest hour. We shall draw from the heart of suffering itself the means of inspiration and survival."

2. *It is more important to overcome than to understand.* One's main concern should be to find a victory instead of an explanation. Whatever is the cause, trouble can destroy one's faith and embitter him toward life — if he will allow it to do so. Or, he can be chastened by it, he can be tested and tried, and make it work to develop character. That is not easy, you say! What, that really is worthwhile, is easy? And to grow strong through suffering is really worthwhile. Helen Keller spoke from an experience which dwarfs our troubles when she said, "Although the world is very full of suffering, it is also very full of the overcoming of it."

3. *In times of confusion, exercise patience while God solves the problem.* And don't forget, He does not use the same timetable we do. Nor does He gauge success like we do. Nor happiness. The symbol of Christianity is not a pillow, but a cross. He who sees the end from the beginning allows us to pass through the furnace, as He allowed Job to. But He sees us through! With faith in Him, confusion ceases to be a problem. A long time ago, and in another language, a wise man wrote these lines, translated by Joseph Addison more than two centuries ago, which well describe a man with such faith.

*Should the whole frame of nature round him
break,*

*In ruin and confusion hurled,
He, unconcerned, would hear the mighty
crack,*

*And stand secure amidst a falling world.
(To Be Continued)*

9 Cor. 1:7, 8 And 9 Cor. 13:8-10

RAY HAWK

Recently, in several debates, the Pentecostal representatives have brought up I Cor. 1:7,8 and used it to "prove" (?) that the "perfect" of I Cor. 13:8-10 will take place at the COMING of Jesus Christ and gifts will cease at that time. To my knowledge, only one gospel preacher has made an effort to answer this argument. The argument needs to be met and answered.

I Cor. 1:7, 8 says, "So that ye come behind in no GIFT; WAITING FOR THE COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We are told that the "gifts" experienced by the Corinthians were to last until the COMING of Jesus Christ. Since I Cor. 13:8-10 talks about the "gifts," the perfect will appear when Jesus COMES. Then the "gifts" will cease. Our Pentecostal friends say Jesus has not come yet; therefore the "gifts" are still in operation.

I believe the answer to this is connected with the destruction of Jerusalem! In Matt. 24:1-34 Jesus speaks of that city's destruction, using Old Testament terminology to foretell its end. He talks about his "coming!" Most sectarians think this is his second personal, VISIBLE, coming. However, a careful look at some Old Testament verses (such as Isa. 13:1, 10; 19:1) shows that Jesus was talking about a COMING IN JUDGMENT THROUGH a foreign army. Look at Matt. 10:23. Before the apostles could cover the cities of Israel with the gospel, Jesus would return! How? Visibly? No; but in the same fashion as Jehovah rode into Egypt upon a cloud — to JUDGE that nation by means of a foreign

army. This is the meaning of Matt. 10:23, and several other passages in the New Testament that speak of Jesus' "Coming." Look at Phil. 4:5: "At hand" means nigh, come near, come close, or approaching the time. (Ardnt-Gingrich, p. 212.) The Philippian saints were to look for his coming at any time. His VISIBLE coming? No, but rather that coming Jesus foretold, which took place in A. D. 70. Look also at James 5:7-8. James tells first century saints that Jesus is COMING and that this coming is at hand or nigh! Today, many mistake these verses for the second visible coming of Jesus. To do so is to involve one in difficulties, and (in the case of some), in gross error.

Now let us look at I Cor. 1:7, 8 again. Paul tells them that THEY are WAITING for the COMING of Jesus Christ. Which "coming" were THEY waiting on? Not the second VISIBLE coming; but rather that "coming" which took place in A. D. 70! When that "coming" took place, Jesus' prophecy of Matt. 24:1-34 was fulfilled proving/confirming the Corinthians and other saints as children of God and the church as God's family. In verse 8, the END was the end of the miraculous era, ushering in the "perfect!complete," and bringing the cessation of miraculous gifts. Pentecostals have been right about the gifts ceasing at the "coming" of Jesus; they simply mistook WHICH "coming" Paul was speaking of!

A Christian must get on his knees before he can get on his feet.

We wonder if electronic computers will ever get smart enough to deny that man created them.

Acceptable Sacrifice Of Praise

It is becoming fashionable(?) to hum in connection with the praise worship of the church. But the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips, required in worship involves the utilization of words, an intelligent communication of thought (Heb. 13:15).

Our english Bible says, "speaking to yourselves, ...singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Speaking is from LALEO, and means, according to Robert Young, "to talk, to speak, to tell." Singing is from ADO, and is used in Rev. 5:9, "and they SUNG a new son, SAYING, Thou art worthy, etc." Hence, both singing and speaking, as used in Eph. 5:19, require words that communicate intelligent thought.

We are to "teach and admonish" in our singing (Col. 3:16). Of these words W. E. Vine observes, "The difference between 'admonish' and 'teach' seems to be that, whereas the former has mainly in view the things that are wrong and call for warning, the latter has to do chiefly with the impartation of positive truth,..." In the Greek, then, as in English, "teach" and "admonish" involve audible, intelligent communication.

Paul is even more specific when he writes, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the UNDERSTANDING also." (I Cor. 14:15). As with prayer or sermon, argues Paul, singing must also be a vehicle of communicating intelligent thought. His example of a trumpet giving forth an uncertain sound that would confuse rather than lead, is found within this same context (I Cor. 14:8). There must be no "uncertain sound" in sermon, song, or prayer, according to the Spirit's teaching in First Corinthians fourteen.

The foregoing substantiate the fact that our singing, when done as an act of praise or worship, involves the utilization of words that communicate thought to the hearer. Any kind of music, or so-called singing, that fails in this, falls short of, or is an addition to, the music God sanctions for Christian worship. It follows that any kind of music we may offer in worship that fails to teach, admonish, or communicate spiritual instruction to another, is sinful in the eyes of the Lord. God has specified what he wants and any addition, alteration, or substitution is forbidden.

WHAT ABOUT HUMMING?

Practically every argument leveled against the mechanical instrument in worship may be brought to bear upon the practice of humming. We find neither the word nor its equivalent in the New Testament. The nearest reference to it is an "uncertain sound" forbidden by Paul in Christian assemblies (I Cor. 14:7-21).

Hum is defined: (1) to make a low droning sound, as a bee on the wing. (2) To sing with closed lips, NOT ARTICULATING THE WORDS. (3) To give forth a confused, indistinct sound. (4) A nasal, murmuring sound made to express mental concentration, deliberation, hesitation, etc. (5) To mumble or murmur indistinctly, as from confusion or



R. W. GRAY

embarrassment.

No proper definition of the practice will allow, even in the remotest sense, that humming is the music heaven requires. While a secondary definition is to "sing with the lips closed," it is clearly eliminated when the dictionary adds, "not articulating the words." This is always characteristic of humming. One cannot hum a song and articulate the words at the same time. The singing specified in the New Testament is such singing as requires the articulation of the words of the song, as we have shown. We show ourselves to be highly inconsistent, to say the very least of it, when we renounce the instrument but allow the humming.

It is the "confused, indistinct sound" characteristic of humming (see definition 3) that is specifically forbidden in the assembly in I Cor. 14:7-15.

If your purpose in singing is to teach and admonish me, Brother, then do not hum, grunt, or mumble indistinctly; but speak to me in words I can understand (I Cor. 14:15).

If your purpose in singing is to offer sacrifice of praise to God through our Great High Priest, do not make a "low droning sound, as a bee on the wing, "but offer, as he requires, "the fruit of your lips, giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

Instrumental music is rejected by those who respect the silence and authority of the Bible, for it represents another KIND of music than that required by the Lord. Humming must be rejected by the same believers, and for the very same reason. Do not err, my beloved brethren!

In The Still Of The Night

JOHN GIPSON

"I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee, in the night watches" (Psalms 63:6).

Are you ever troubled by insomnia? You work all day and then worry all night. The bed looks so inviting. With eagerness you snuggle down under the cover, and then it happens...you are as wide awake as an owl. Was it that extra cup of coffee? Well, whatever the cause, you know that it is going to be a long, "wakey" night.

The parade begins. A thousand cares, like wooden soldiers, march one after another before your wakeful eyes.

*Unfinished tasks stare in your face...
Visions of debts dance in your head...
Fear of the future lurks in the shadows...
Broken resolves limp before you...
Unkind remarks linger and leer...
And sleep steals away!*

What can be done? One man told me, "When I can't sleep, I just get up and sit in a chair until I bore myself to death." Another reaches for a bottle of sleeping pills, while a third chooses to toss and turn and count proverbial sheep.

Such wakefulness does not have to be wretched or wasted. The night has its advantages. Free from distractions of the day, it is a perfect season for solemn thought. The telephone dozes off, the children are in bed, and there are no clients upon which to call!

Now is the perfect time to follow a practice which profits: THINK ON GOD! Hear the words of David again, "I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." Of Jesus we read, "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all

night in prayer to God" (Luke 6:12).

God is awake in the still of the night and will be happy to hear from you! You do not have to save all of your worship for Sunday. Make your bed a station of meditation, and your pillow a place of prayer.

Life

Mrs. C. M. Karrh

Life is given by God: "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Life is a mighty gift. We live in no chance world. It has been all thought out. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). It is ours for two purposes — being, and doing. It promotes well being of our neighbors, for "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:29). Life is our opportunity. "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). So precious is life we have only seconds and minutes at a time, we have no promise of tomorrow. We must use our life or lose it. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). "So teach us to number our days, that we may get us a heart of wisdom" (Psa. 90:12). Life is not measured by the number of years we live. We live in deeds, not years, in thought not breath; he who lives most is he who thinks most. Jesus said, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:25). Life is a mirror of just what we are and do. If we give our best to the world the best will come to us.

—FORGIVENESS—

The richer life requires that we be able to admit that we have been wrong. The greatest and best people make mistakes. Moses (Num. 20:10), Peter (Matt. 26:29-75) did. Saul made havoc of the church (Acts 8:3). Forgiveness is a beautiful act, a door open to the abundant life, through which we must pass if we expect to be forgiven. Forgetfulness is one of the characteristics of true forgiveness.

—FRIENDSHIP—

Life has no pleasure nobler than friendship. It is the golden thread that ties the hearts of all the world. Jesus is a friend to all the world. "For what shall a man profit, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (Matt. 16:26). Thinking determines life; silence permits us to think; and as we think, we are. Inner greatness is no more possible without prayer and communion with God, than life without food. The friendships of life show the best portions of a good life are little nameless, un-remembered acts of kindness and of love. If we would have friends we must show ourselves friendly (Prov. 17:17). "A friend loveth at all times; and a brother is born for adversity".

—HAPPINESS—

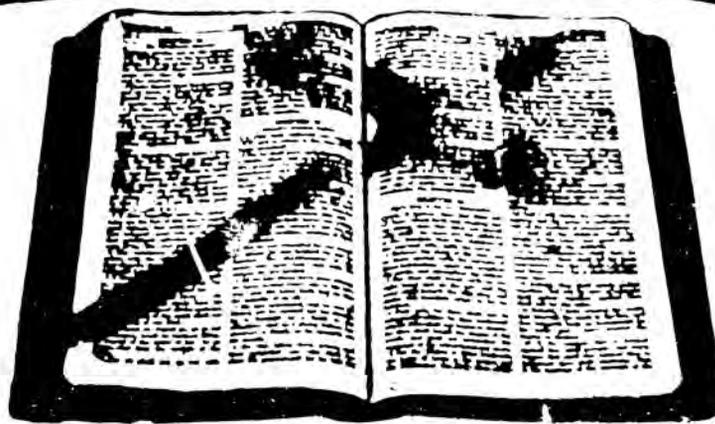
The happiest people in the world are those who are living for others. The secret of a happy life is a life of service for the Master. Don't neglect the little chances you will find along the way. The test of love and happiness is action, what one is willing to do for others. The person who thinks of others, brightens the day with a smile (Psalms 144:15). "Happy is the people that is in such case; yea, happy is the people whose God is Jehovah" (Psa. 144:15). The happiest people are those who work to save souls. "And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (I Jn. 5:11). Are you "in Christ" (Rom. 6:3-4), where you can live this abundant life? (Jn. 10:10).

— Jasper, Ala.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"But speak ye
As
"Grace and truth came
Jn. 1:17
rist"

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"Watch Your Speed, We Are"

The prophets of the Old Testament frequently took objects of nature, garments, or every-day experiences and employed them practically and forcefully in the imparting of timely and needed lessons. Jehovah God often did that in his instruction of his Seers on earth. God employed a rod turned into a serpent in order to teach Moses a needed lesson before he went down to deliver cap-



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

tive Israel from Egyptian tyranny (Ex. 4). In Judges 6 God employed a fleece of wool with dew, and (later) a fleece of wool without dew, in order to teach Gideon that he was truly Heaven's choice to break the yoke of bondage with Midian under which oppressed Israel pined and suffered so grievously. By the heartbreak the sensitive Hosea suffered at the hands of unfaithful Gomer, the great Prophet of the Northern Kingdom was led to see more clearly how Israel's unfaithfulness to her spiritual vows touched the heartstrings of God. In Jonah 4 God taught his wayward prophet who failed to love the souls of the Assyrians in Nineveh a great lesson by allowing a gourd vine to come up to shield him from the burning sun, and then quickly took the protective plant away. Surely the innocent souls of so many in Nineveh meant more to God than that gourd vine should have meant to the stubborn prophet from Palestine (Jon. 4:10-11).

VIVID ILLUSTRATIONS FROM NEW TESTAMENT PREACHERS

John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles frequently did the same in the New Testament. The Harbinger took such common things in his native land as stones that so much abounded, and an axe laid at the root of a tree, to teach the Pharisees and Sadducees some needed lessons when they came to his baptism at Jordan's banks in Matt. 3. Jesus was the Master in this type of object-lesson teaching. He taught daily trust and contentment by referring to the beauty with which God clothes the Lily of the Field, or the continuing care Jehovah gives to the birds

that soar through the heavens. He taught about the great value of the heavenly kingdom by mentioning the hidden treasure in the field, and by the man who was a seeker after goodly pearls. Jesus taught about the growth of the kingdom by the parable of the mustard seed and the great plant that develops therefrom. He taught about the great value Heaven places upon just one soul, by telling of the shepherd who left the ninety-and-nine safe sheep, and sought the one that had wandered. Paul took an altar that had been erected in Athens, Greece, and which he observed while on his second missionary tour, and allowed it to serve as the beginning of a great discourse delivered on Mars' Hill in Acts 17. In both Acts 17 and Titus 1 Paul used sayings of the heathen (or pagan) poets to impart needed lessons to the idolatrous Athenians and the lying Cretians.

We are ever to present the old truths of the Bible whenever we open our mouths to preach or lift our pens to write. But certainly we may seek out new robes in which to clothe these old truths. Such will enrich our lessons, and provide an additional spark of lively interest from both auditors and readers. All of this has been said in order to employ a new "robe" in which to clothe some three or four articles for WORDS OF TRUTH. The main thrust of these lessons will be an encouragement for all of us to watch our lives, because heaven surely is.

A SOBERING EXHORTATION FROM A TRAFFIC SIGN

In the great State of Indiana, and perhaps other states as well, there have been erected a number of signs along some of their Interstate roads which this writer has frequently seen while traveling. These signs depict a helicopter at the top of the sign and a car at the bottom of the sign. In-between the helicopter at the top and the car at the bottom are inscribed five words that are quite potent and sobering to every responsible motorist traveling these roads. These words are, "Watch Your Speed — We Are." This is a pointed reminder to every motorist that his conduct behind the wheel, speed-wise, could well be seen at any time from above. As far as his eye can see down the road, or within his rear view mirror, there may not be a patrol car in sight. (Of course each motorist should stay within the speed limit anyway, regardless of whether he sees any patrol cars or not; yet many only slow down when they think they are being watched.) But the driver cannot survey the above; yet the above may well be

surveying him as he travels along. The signs certainly have the desired effect of making the responsible driver look immediately at his speedometer. Placed along at certain strategic positions they keep the motorist "on his toes" so to speak, and keep his foot from becoming too heavy on the gas pedal.

AN OBVIOUS APPLICATION

Is this not what God's Book tells us as we travel the highway of life? God, in essence, says to everyone of us, "Watch Your Life; Heaven Is." Now it is not humanly possible or financially feasible for a helicopter crew in a State like Indiana to watch every motorist covering a vast network of super highways. Yet God watches the life of every person who currently lives upon the earth. There has never been that first person traveling the highway of life from Adam to everyone currently alive, but that God has known his thoughts, motives, attitudes, language, and daily deeds. In reality life is composed of three primary ingredients. They are: (1) our thoughts including our motives and attitudes; (2) our words including their tone and tenor; and (3) our habits or deeds, including the whys and wherefores. Heaven watches all three of these cardinal aspects of our earthly existence. The Scriptures state, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether" (Ps. 139:1-4).

The New Testament Scriptures provide the same basic sentiments of God's thorough knowledge of all his human creation. The writer of Hebrews states with great clarity, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). As a great Christian hymn has expressed the matter so effectively through the years, "There's an All Seeing eye watching you." The apostle Peter wrote, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Pet. 3:12). In the composition of this article the eyes of the Lord have been upon the writer; in the perusal of this article the eyes of the Lord have been upon you the reader and how you have reacted to it. Are not these sobering thoughts indeed?

WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Christian Colleges And Church Budgets

A perennial question that arises for discussion among God's people is, "Should congregations contribute from their treasuries to the general support of our Christian Colleges?" Although the pros and cons have been expressed before, the author feels it is necessary to present an answer again.



JOHN WADDEY

I speak as one who loves and appreciates our colleges. My children will attend a Christian school. While we encourage loyalty to all faithfully-operated schools, this must never lead us to misuse the Lord's money. Nor should a brother be judged an adversary or an enemy who expresses a negative view of a controversial subject.

The rationale for such a paper is that a quiet campaign is being successfully waged in some areas to convince brethren to put the total college program in their budgets. Perhaps because of excessive and unjustified criticism in the past, an unwritten policy, "Never print anything that questions the practices of our schools," has grown up. But this is not a healthy situation for the schools or the churches. Let brethren calmly discuss this and every other important question in a constructive way, seeking for scriptural answers, and only good will come from it. We will be stronger, and have less conflicts to trouble us.

1. It is not the God-ordained work of the church to provide general education. Our whole work is in the spiritual realm and is summed up in Eph. 4:11-13 as evangelism, benevolence, and edification of the saints.

2. To do so means to divert funds given for these high and holy purposes to such mundane things as athletics, social programs, dramatics, and a host of similar things that

inhere in a college program. We do not condemn these things as such, but only oppose using money given to the Lord's church, to finance them.

3. The church collectively or locally has no voice in the administration of the colleges. They are run by their boards of directors and administrators. Most of our schools have striven to keep their policies in harmony with the wishes of the brotherhood, but not always. I doubt that any college administrators would want to be under a local eldership.

4. It is the duty of parents to educate their children, not the church's duty. If we can shift this duty on to the church, what would stop us from shifting other family responsibilities to the church also?

5. In the past, the Christian schools were deeply involved in the apostasy from the New Testament pattern...Bethany College (Campbell's school) and the College of the Bible at Lexington, Kentucky. I hesitate to see our schools gain the additional power and influence that access to the treasuries of the congregations would give them. This would create even closer ties than now exist; and should the colleges be led into error...those churches with a vested interest might be led to follow their money on into error.

6. Another problem would be the conflict that would arise between the present methods of solicitation and fund raising. No one objects to schools using the many different fund-raising gimmicks they do, since they are private ventures of Christian individuals. On the other hand, if they are the work of the church, and if they are to be supported from the treasuries of the churches, how could we then tolerate fund-raising suppers, marches, sales, etc. It would have to be one or the other.

7. To introduce this into our brotherhood would most surely trigger a fight and a consequent division. This policy herein advocated should keep us from such a trend. Surely the peace and welfare of the church is more important than getting the colleges into the church treasuries. "Whenever an issue is allowed to divide the body of Christ, that issue must be more significant than the division which it causes. Surely nothing in the realm of opinion is vital enough to cause brethren to destroy the unity of Christ's church..." (B. Baxter).

8. N. B. Hardeman is quoted in the Indianapolis Debate as saying that, "Schools are fundamentally human institutions separate and apart from the church. They are not owned and operated by the churches. A school with or without the Bible is a supplement to the home...Put schools where they belong, and the right to maintain them is invulnerable."

9. If Bible colleges are a work of the church, then the church is obligated to support them the same as evangelism and edification. This in itself would be more than most people would want to do, or say. In reality, the Christian colleges are human institutions, auxiliaries to the home, doing their own work in their ownfield; and this work is different from the church and its work.

Conclusion

Let the Christian Colleges do their work, and let the church do hers. Let individual Christians generously support the schools, and let the churches support the evangelism, benevolence, and edification that God ordained. This has worked well for the peace and prosperity of our brotherhood, and of our schools, down through the years. May we not jeopardize a harmonious and well-working relationship by an unwise and questionable attempt to put the colleges into the church budget.

My Tribute To

Brother Mack Epperson

*Brother Epperson has left his house of clay,
Gone to a house not made with hands.
Let us therefore lay his body away,
Till his spirit returns from fairer lands.*

*Here he lived only two score and ten,
The inner man cramped and fettered.
Now that the old house has fallen in,
Brother Epperson has gone to a place far better.*

*He was master of his house of clay,
No fleshly lust hindered his work.
He took time out to study and to pray,
And no hard task did he ever shirk.*

*But he did not live in this clay house alone,
Thousands of others lived in his heart.
Though he has gone to a heavenly home,
From our memory he shall never depart.*

*His life was filled with faith and truth,
His heart was honest and his mind unbaied.*

*We are grateful that at an early age,
He was baptized into the Church of Christ.*

*He was a devoted father and true husband,
Always a faithful and true friend.
A good and grand example to his loved ones,
And was loyal and faithful unto the end.*

*So, let us not sorrow as those without hope,
For to a Christian death is great gain.
Let us not then in despondence grope,
But let us prepare to live together again.*

Levi Jackson Sides, Sr.
November 19, 1975

In Spirit And In Truth

JERRY H. WILSON

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). This answer was given by Jesus in response to the Samaritan woman's question concerning the proper place to worship (Verse 20). This statement points out the two elements necessary for a true restoration of New Testament Christianity.

The first element is a proper spirit. Many denominational people have a good spirit, but do not accept and practice all the truth. Many folk in the Lord's church have neglected the proper spirit in our emphasis upon truth. Many outsiders have searched for the truth; but the harsh, cold attitude of some professed Christians has turned them away from the Lord's church. The proper spirit then is an attitude of love, humility, and compassion. Note these scriptures:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

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

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23).

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vain
(Continued To Page 4)

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter nineteen

"Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not answered;

I call aloud, but there is no justice.
He has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass,
and he has set darkness upon my paths."

— verses 7, 8.

Chapter thirty

"I cry to thee and thou dost not answer me;
I stand, and thou dost not heed me."

— verse 20.

WHEN PRAYERS ARE NOT ANSWERED

Job 19:7, 8; 30:20

When one prays earnestly and fervently and he does not receive what he thinks he wants, it leaves him with a helpless feeling, doesn't it? After all, if one cannot turn to God, to whom can he go? And if God does not hear! But wait a minute — who said God did not hear? Who said there was no answer? Just because we did not get what we asked for does not mean that God did not hear our prayers! Nor that he did not answer.

God has more than one answer to our requests. He may say yes, and he often does. Or he may say, no. And the "no" answer may be the one we need, regardless of immediate passions. Think back. Remember when there was something you just "had to have?" You did not get it, and how grateful you now are that the request was not fulfilled. It may have been a sweetheart you wanted to marry, or a job, or admittance to some school, or some business venture. You did everything you could — and prayed like everything depended on the Lord. But no success. You were despondent for a while, but then things began to take on a different color. Maybe what you received was better, it began to appear. And now, you are so happy it turned out like it did! Perhaps today's request will be like that, too.

Or God said neither "yes" nor "no." He may have delayed His answer until you were better prepared to receive it. But still He answered your prayer! Or He may have given you something different from what you asked, knowing that the substitution would be for your good. Let us be slow to accuse God of neglecting to hear us!

And yet, it sometimes seems that God is not listening! Job expressed the sentiments of many troubled hearts when he said, "Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment" (Job 19:7). And again, "I cry unto thee and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not" (30:20). And from his viewpoint, he was not heard! He knew he had done no great wrong. His friends accused him, but he knew their accusations to be false. He called on God, but did not get the answer he wanted. He was suffering a thousand torments. No relief was in sight. Had God forgotten him? Was there any such thing as moral justice? He knew that God is good. But why all this? The pieces in the puzzle did not fit together. What he did not know was that man has no answers to many of life's problems, but that so long as God is running the universe, everything

eventually will be all right. He was being heard. At the proper time God would reply, and when he did the answers would be right.

When lamenting the lack of an evident answer to some prayer, don't overlook the obvious. We don't always know what to ask for. We don't always know what we need. We don't know what we want! And let us thank God that he has not given us everything we have asked for. The quickest way to ruin a child is to grant his every request. And God has been so good to us that he has spoiled us already! Only when we realize our inabilities as compared to God's majesty can we really trust him to dispense with our prayers as he deems best. It would be wise occasionally to pray, "Father, save us from our own desires." Our thanks to the author, unknown to this writer, for blessing us by wording this idea so beautifully:

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve;
I was made weak,
that I might learn humbly to obey...

I asked for health, that I might do greater things;

I was given infirmity,
that I might do better things...

I asked for riches, that I might be happy;

I was given poverty,
that I might be wise...

I asked for power,

that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness,
that I might feel the need of God...

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life;

I was given life,
that I might enjoy all things...

I got nothing that I asked for —

but everything I had hoped for;

Almost despite myself,
my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, most richly blessed!
(To Be Continued)

Nuggets In John 1:1

The Gospel of John is truly a rich depository of truth. No where is this more evident than in the first sentence of that marvelous narrative. Moreover, a correct view of John's initial statement thoroughly refutes several gross errors. Let us look at it carefully.

IN THE BEGINNING — Reminiscent of Genesis 1:1, the apostle sweeps the mind back to the very beginning of time. The phrase asserts that time, along with the material universe, had a beginning. This, of course, is squarely opposed to the atheistic notion that MATTER is eternal. Both Scriptures and scientific law testify that our universe is growing old and wearing out. (Cf. Heb. 1:10-12). If eternal, it would already have reached a state of deadness. The universe had a beginning; and if a beginning, then a Beginner. All three personalities within the divine Godhead cooperated in that beginning of creation. (Gen. 1:1,2; Psa. 104:30; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16).

WAS THE WORD — The term "Word" as here used denotes a person as evidenced by the use of the personal pronoun "him" in the subsequent statements. The Word was he who "became flesh, and dwelt among" men, i.e., Jesus, the Son of God (Jn. 1:14). That Christ is called the Word is a dramatic emphasis of the fact that God has COMMUNICATED with man. The philosophy of Deism asserts that though there is a super-human force behind the universe, it has no contact with man. Not so! God has spoken through his Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). God, through the person of the incarnate Word, has instructed both by sentence and sample what he wants us to be.

It is further interesting to note that the apostle says "In the beginning the Word WAS....." Significantly, he employs the imperfect tense form of the Greek verb EIMI, meaning "to be, exist." Now the imperfect tense in Greek stresses the concept of continuity in the past, the sense here being, "The Word was always existing." Though the universe had its origin, the divine Word was eternally existing. As a man Jesus "became" (emphasizing point of commencement) "flesh;" but as the pre-incarnate "Word," he always was (Cf. Mic. 5:2). This, of course, thoroughly refutes the "Jehovah's Witness" contention that Christ was originally created



WAYNE JACKSON

by Jehovah.

THE WORD WAS WITH GOD — John's use of the Greek preposition PROS (with) is very important. The word literally means "toward" or "face to face". And it implies at least two things here. First, it shows a distinction between the person called "God" (verse 1a) and the person termed the "Word". The United Pentecostal sect is famous for the doctrine that there is but one personality in the Godhead. But it is absurd to speak of one being "with" himself! In the second place, the preposition as used here affirms that the Word is "toward", facing, i.e., on a plane of equality with God. John thus acknowledges the full deity of our Lord! This is more vividly stressed in the following phrase.

THE WORD WAS GOD — The "Jehovah's Witnesses" are notorious for their mistranslation of this phrase in their ridiculous rendition: "the Word was a god." The assertion is made that since "God" in the first part of the passage is preceded by the article (i. e., "the God"), which is wanting in the latter part of the verse, this suggests that Christ is not deity in the full sense; he is a little god! This is one of the most deceitful and damning mutilations of the Word of God known to this writer! The absence of the article ("the") before "God" in (verse 1b) is perfectly understandable. First, if the sentence said, "the Word was with the God and the Word was the god," it would have identified Christ with the Father and would have made perfect non-sense. Secondly, the absence of the article before "God" in 1b serves to show that it is a part of the predicate: "the Word WAS GOD." And thirdly, the omission of the article reveals that the character or quality of the noun is here being suggested. A very legitimate translation here would be: "the Word was Deity." The full divine nature of Christ is unquestionably taught here. If this verse does not teach that Christ shares the nature of deity equally with the first person of the godhead; if it asserts he is "a god" separate from Jehovah, then the conclusion of polytheism (multiple gods) is inescapable!

If it were not so serious, it would be amusing to note that: (a) The Watchtower Witnesses claim that Jesus was "a god;" that he was created by Jehovah as the first of his creation. (b) Yet, the very passage that they appeal to for their name "Jehovah's Witnesses," plainly says: "I (Jehovah) am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Isa. 43:10).

In conclusion, John 1:1 is breathtaking in its inspired and lofty affirmations; and it is devastating in its rebuttal of error.

Except Ye Be Converted The Doctrine Of Christ

The apostles were doubtless filled with amazement that Jesus talked to them of conversion at a time when their hearts were bent upon becoming great leaders in his kingdom (Matt. 18:1-5). It may very well be that would-be church leaders today stand in need of the same admonition.



R. W. GRAY

It is difficult yet for man to truly fathom the truth that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7b). God proposed to save the world by regenerating individual hearts. The Christian policy is to work from within outwardly, and not from without inwardly.

One of the most challenging issues confronting the church today is the matter of converting, not just convincing, those who enter our midst. It is relatively easy to convince one of his need to be immersed unto the forgiveness of his sins; but it is another thing to convert him to the status that results in his rising from baptism to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:1-7). Far too many have gone into the baptistry dry sinners only to emerge wet sinners. We must know that God does not reckon one as having changed his relationship in baptism unless such obedience is preceded by a revolutionary change within the heart, and is followed by a marked change in conduct (Acts 2:47; Gal. 3:26, 27; Acts 2:38; Lk. 24:44-45; Jn. 3:3-5; Acts 3:19).

The converted heart delights in the truth (I Cor. 13:6). It was said of the first converts to Christ that they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, . . ." (Acts 2:42). The poignant pen of Isaac Errett once wrote, "The field of apostolic Christianity, which to the carnal gaze is but a barren waste, and to the intellectual observer but a curious territory, abounding in fossil remains which might serve to adorn his museum of wonders, becomes to the spiritual man a very paradise of beauty and glory, where, in the bowers of unfading loveliness, on the banks of the river of life, amid celestial harmonies, and fadeless flowers, and deathless song, and the light of an unsetting sun, he can hold fellowship with all that is pure, and regale his spirit with the delectable fruits of the tree of life, and slake his thirst with the waters of salvation." Thus, while it is the nature of the Impure spirit to skulk in darkness, the "pure in heart" rejoice "in the light" of divine truth (I John 1:6, 7).

We read today of brethren who do not believe certain basic doctrines, who scoff at the faithful as legalists, etc. Another strikes out at the restoration principles, labeling them a product of an uncouth frontier culture.

It gets to the source of the problem when we warn that such men are not CONVERTED. When the heart is not in tune with God's revelation, we may be sure it is ruled by the spirit of error. (See I John 4:5, 6.) It is still the case that those converted to the Lord continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching. A longing after righteousness is a fruit of genuine conversion (Matt. 5:6, 8).

John was not so much refusing to baptize folk as he was anxious to impress upon those baptized that they should "bring forth fruit meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8). Repentance

always bears fruit in the life. When no fruit is borne we may know that no repentance is present; and when one has not repented he has not been converted (Acts 3:19). Those who were converted at Ephesus "came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men" (Acts 19:18-19). They were bringing forth fruit meet for repentance.

The fact that our brotherhood has been infiltrated by the unconverted is evidenced by lack of a Christ-like spirit. Jesus said we must "become as little children" (Matt. 18:1-5). The pompous, arrogant, intolerant, unloving spirit of many better fits the description of their father, the devil (John 8:43-45). The discovery of some wrong or error is another in their greatest delight. Like the false religionist of Jesus' day they compass land and sea to make one proselyte; and when he is made, they make him "twofold more the child of hell than themselves" (Matt. 23:15). The converted heart does not compromise truth; but neither does it find unholy glee in "exposing" every mote in a brother's eye.

The Holy Spirit has been careful to identify the fruit of conversion, to mirror the converted heart, and to reveal the true saints of the Lord. "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business, fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which

persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep . . . Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath" (Rom. 12:9-19). If we fail to see ourselves in the foregoing description of a Christian spirit, it is time to re-examine our CONVERSION.

The Spirit does not leave us to wonder regarding the manifestations of a depraved, unconverted heart: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 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 partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:15-17).

In conclusion let us review the language of Matthew 18:1-4: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'" Ah, how we need this lesson in the church today.

We Must Come To Terms With The Desert

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

Dr. James S. Stewart, professor of New Testament, language, literature and theology at the University of Edinburgh, has well said:

"Israel in Canaan had to come to terms with the desert. The desert bordered on Israel's lands, encroached on its fertile fields, marched right up to the roots of Olivet and the very gate of Jerusalem. The desert sent the terrible sirocco blowing from the east, carrying clouds of dust and sand across the sun...It is immensely significant that all the great masters of the spiritual life...warn us repeatedly that we must reckon for the day when helpers fail and comforts flee and God seems to withdraw His face and the wilderness clamps down upon our souls. The Christian must come to terms with the desert."

The history of man very convincingly bears

witness to the truth that, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble" (Job. 14:1); but, as Paul says, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18), for the reason that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17).

In Spirit And In Truth

(Continued From Page 2)

glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. 2:3).

The second element in a true restoration of New Testament Christianity is truth. The Churches of Christ are famous for doctrinal exactness, and have done a most remarkable job of restoring this element to its proper place. Consciousness of doctrinal exactness may lead to self-righteousness with an accompanying neglect of the proper spirit. The Pharisees were guilty in this respect. The apostle Paul stated, "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived in Pharisee" (Acts 26:5). Yet Jesus had the harshest condemnation for the Pharisees (Matt. 23:13-33).

"What is truth?" (John 18:38). This was the question of Pilate as Jesus stood before him for judgment. Jesus previously answered this question while He prayed to the Father for His disciples' welfare: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

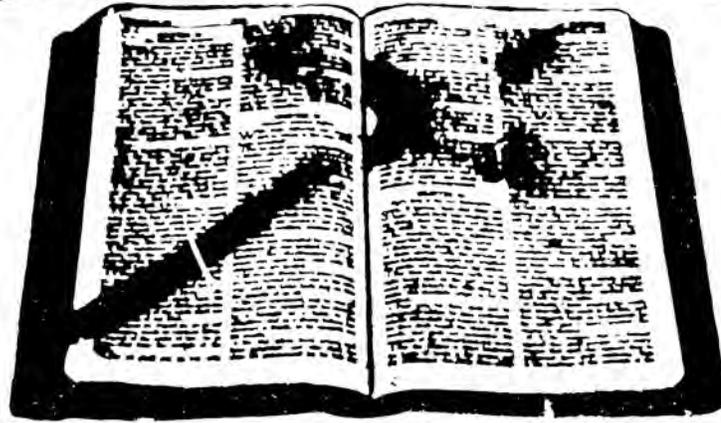
Let us then study the Bible to learn the great truths contained therein. Proper Christian service will only come when we accept and practice everything the New Testament teaches, and reject everything it does not teach. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). Let us contend for a "Thus saith the Lord" in all matters of faith and practice.

Are You?

Are you an active member,
The kind that would be missed?
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?
Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock,
Or do you stay at home
And criticize and knock?
Do you ever go and visit
A member that is sick
Or leave the work for just a few
And talk about the clique?
Come to the meeting often,
And help with hand and heart!
Don't be just a member,
But take an active part.
Think this over, member,
You do know right from wrong;
Are you an active member,
Or do you just belong?

Anonymous

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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Watch Your Heart, Heaven Is

This four-part series is taken from a principle adopted by some of the states in curbing speed and controlling travel techniques. The principle is written on a traffic sign that has a helicopter at the top of the sign, a car at the bottom and the sobering words in-between, "Watch Your speed; We Are. In A far more comprehensive sive sense each of us needs to "Watch our



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Life; Heaven Is." Life is composed of what we think, what we speak and what we do in the way of deeds and daily habits. In this article each of us needs to WATCH OUR THOUGHTS, HEAVEN IS. This includes our attitudes, our motives, our intents, our purposes. These come from the heart of man. This is not the blood-pump of the human body, but is that part of man that thinks, reasons, wills, intends, purposes, loves, hates, etc. Man's heart is composed of his will, his intellect, and his emotions. Jehovah surveys all three of these components of the human heart. This is the real Biblical heart of man, and not the blood pump located in the chest regions of the human frame.

OLD TESTAMENT EMPHASIS UPON THE HEART

The Old Testament Scriptures inform us that God looks at the heart, and what is found therein. Samuel learned well this lesson when he was dispatched to Bethlehem, at Jehovah's command, to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be the next king of the Hebrew nation. The Bible says, "And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:6-7). Again the Bible says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). One of the very weighty reasons why man should keep well his heart is set out in Proverbs 23:7 where the Wisest of the Ages

wrote, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:...." The American Standard Version translates this passage in these words, "For as he thinketh within himself, so is he:...." My reading friends, you and I are not what we think we are, we are what we think!! That is exactly Solomon's appraisal of the matter. The Sweet Singer of Ancient Israel declared in language that is crystal clear, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off" (Ps. 139:1-2). Jehovah God is in heaven and we are upon the earth; but he still understands our thoughts from afar. Do you not find this to be one of the most sobering thoughts that can challenge your mind? This writer surely does. There is not one thought any of us has ever possessed, regardless of how fleeting it was, but that Jehovah knew it, and knew why we had it. Truly such knowledge is too amazing for the human mind to comprehend fully. The Psalmist, declared, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (Ps. 139:6).

THE NEW TESTAMENT EMPHASIS UPON THE HEART

Jesus had much to say about the heart of man, while he was engaged in his personal ministry. The Bible affirms that he knew man, knew what was in man and needed not for any to inform him of human make-up. The Bible says, "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men. And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man (Jn. 2:24-25). This means he knew the hearts of men. He was able, by divine power, to read the hearts of man. This he did when he said to some of his enemies, "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Matt. 9:4). For the word "knowing" in this passage, a number of Greek manuscripts read, "seeing." Jesus knew their thoughts because he SAW their hearts. Jesus knew that man should guard well his heart because it is the mainspring from which flows both one's language and life. In Matthew 12:33-35 the Lord Jesus said, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

Somewhat later Jesus again dealt with the human heart as the mainspring from which comes the various evils that plague humanity. He said, "Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart: and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Matt. 15:16-20).

JUDGMENT PASSAGES EMPHASIZE THE HEART

The Bible teaches that our thoughts, motives, and attitudes will face us in the day of judgment. We may have been able to conceal these from the very people to whom we were closest on earth; but not that first thought, not that first attitude, not that first motive escaped Jehovah's attention and constant coverage. Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, wrote in the concluding verses of the Book of Ecclesiastes, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." "Every hidden thing" surely includes thoughts, motives, and attitudes. Paul makes this conclusively clear in I Corinthians 4:4-5, "For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God". Let it be kept in mind that we will only face in judgment that which has not been forgiven. Every sinful thought, motive, or attitude that has been forgiven, surely will NOT face us in judgment. When Jehovah forgives a sin, that sin is cancelled forever. He will never confront us with it again.

THE SECRET OF POSSESSING A GOOD HEART

What is the secret to the type heart Jehovah God will favor and approve? We do not have to look beyond the Bible to obtain the answer to this important query. Paul supplies it for us: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever

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WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Satan appealed to the lust of the flesh when he urged Jesus to turn stones into bread. He SHOWED Christ all the kingdoms of the world and promised them to him; the lust of the eye. The episode on the pinnacle of the temple was an appeal to the pride of life. Christ met and conquered all of these.

Christ was tempted when he was at his weakest point physically and emotionally after forty days of fasting in the loneliness of the wilderness. We should always remember this, and expect Satan's attempts when we are at a low ebb.

The weapon Christ used to overcome temptation is the same weapon we have today. Each time Satan sought to bring him down, our Lord countered with the Sword of the Spirit . . . the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Each time the enemy's blow was deflected. "It is written" is the most powerful deterrent to sin the world has ever known. May we use this as effectively as did our Savior.

The victory Christ won over temptation will be our victory if we likewise overcome. Satan "left" him. If we resist the Devil he will "flee from" us (Jas. 4:7). Because Jesus overcame, he returned to his Father in glory (John 16:17, 33). If we overcome we will reign with him in glory (Rev. 2:26-27).

THE DIVINE PROMISE

We who are God's children can overcome any evil plot Beelzebub may lay for us, because our Father has promised: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make also a way of escape that ye may be able to endure it" (I Cor. 10:13). Again, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation . . ." (2 Pet. 2:9).

THE HEAVENLY PRESCRIPTION

A dangerous disease demands a powerful medication. The following ingredients, properly blended, and faithfully used, will not only CURE, but will also effectively inoculate the saint against future temptations.

FAITH IN GOD and trust in His promises gives us courage to face temptations and boldly "fight the good fight" (2 Tim. 4:6-8). Knowing our own weakness, and knowing Satan's great power, without strong conviction of God's providential help, we might despair and surrender. "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith . . ." (1 John 5:4).

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD neutralizes most temptations. "To realize God's presence is the one sovereign remedy against temptation" (Finelon). When we walk in the light of God's word, the blood of His Son Jesus forms a protective shield about us, cleansing us from sin (1 John 1:7). As a young man would not dare to speak coarsely in the presence of his beloved mother (much less act so), the Christian who lives daily in the presence of his heavenly Father finds it easy to resist sin.

RECOGNITION OF ONE'S OWN WEAKNESS will help him shun and avoid temptations that could destroy him. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed but he fall" (1 Cor. 10:13). Nothing is more dangerous to a saint than a false sense of security. A foolish man feels that he must "prove himself" by wrestling with every temptation. The Holy Spirit warns, "Flee fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18); "flee youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22); and "flee idolatry" (1 Cor. 6:18). In fact, the wise soul avoids the "very appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22, K.J.V.) His prayer is, "Lead me not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13).

PURPOSE IN YOUR HEART TO BE PURE. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . ." (Dan. 1:8). No man will accomplish much in life who does not plan and purpose his goals. So it is morally and spiritually only those who are determined in

their heart to fight Satan and win, will overcome temptations. "Keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22), should be every disciple's announced goal. "Keep thy heart with all diligence" warned Solomon (Prov. 4:23). When temptation penetrates into the heart, sin will soon follow in the life. "No degree of temptation justifies any degree of sin" (N. P. Williams).

DISCIPLINE is required to be victorious. If we manfully resist the devil, he will flee from us (Jas. 4:7). We must put on the complete Christian armor, stand, and fight (Eph. 6:11, 13). We must be SOBER and WATCHFUL, for our adversary stalks us as a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8). Be ever on guard: "watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation . . ." (Matt. 26:41). Learn to say "No!" It will be of far greater value to you than learning French, or geometry. How can I ask God to deliver me from temptation, when I have not honestly done my best to keep out of it?

THE WORD OF GOD stored up in the heart, ready for instant use, is a powerful weapon to drive away the tempter. The Psalmist writes, "Thy word have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119:11). Jesus drove Satan out of his presence with three swift blows from the Book of God (Matt. 4:4-11). The Christian's only offensive weapon is the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). A Bible ON THE TABLE will not do the job; the truth must be IN THE HEART! An expensive, artistically bound volume is of little value to the soul who knows not how to use it.

BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). In his model prayer, Jesus taught us to pray: "lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13). Sin has little power in a praying heart.

DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED BY GRIEVOUS TEMPTATIONS. Remember, the temptation is not the sin; it is the yielding that defiles us. Temptation is Satan knocking at your door; yielding is opening the door and inviting him in. If God's own Son was attacked by Satan, surely we can expect no less (Matt. 10:24). Satan desired to sift PETER (not Judas) like wheat (Lk. 22:31). If Satan is so determined to harm us, it proves that our life and work are a threat to him. If you do fall in the battle, do not despair: grace and mercy are readily available. Christ's blood is continually available to wash away all confessed sins (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2). Jesus promised to intercede for Peter when he fell (Lk. 22:31); so he "ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. 7:27). Thank God that he doesn't demand sinless perfection from his children!

Saints, be of good cheer! Christ overcame the world, and we through him are "more than conquerors!" (Rom. 8:37).

The Doctrine of Christ

DANNY BEST
Mulga, Ala.

Perhaps all denominations teach some of the Bible; but no human denomination teaches all of the truth. They all have added some human doctrines. Jesus Christ said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). Only the truth will make us free (Jn. 8:32). Adding to God's word is a sin (Rev. 22:18-19).

People should ask themselves: (1) Is the institution of which I am a member found in the sacred writings? or, (2) Did this institution originate with man? (3) Does this organization teach only the word of God? and (4) Does it, and do its members, wear names ordained by the Lord? Each reader should seek the truth (Acts 17:11-12), and test or "prove" what is

(Continued On Page 4)



Meeting Temptation With Christ

Temptation is part and parcel of every Christian's daily life. "There has never been a man so good that he was exempt from trials and temptations." Even our Lord was tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1-11). In fact, he was tempted in all points like as we are — but He did not sin (Heb. 4:15).



JOHN WADDEY

In God's wisdom, He allows us to be tested to see what material our faith is really made of. (See Gen. 22:1.) Although God himself tempts no man to do evil (Jas. 1:13), Satan is always anxious to do his best to pierce our armor and lead us to sin (Job. 1:6-12; 2:1-7). As unpleasant as temptations are, and though no man should seek for them, it is a fact that "where there is no temptation, there can be little claim to virtue" (W. H. Prescott). "Though now for a little while . . . ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the PROOF OF YOUR FAITH, being more precious than gold . . . may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus . . ." (I Pet. 1:6-7). Temptations overcome are like a file that scrapes away the rust from our souls.

CHRIST IS OUR EXAMPLE

The Christian has a mentor who has shown us the proper way to meet and overcome temptations. He left us an example and we should follow steps in this, as in all other matters (I Pet. 2:21).

Christ faced the same tempter. He was "tempted of the devil" (Matt. 4:1). So are we (I Pet. 4:7).

Christ was tempted "in all points like as we are" (Heb. 4:15). Not that he faced every specific test and trial; but he was confronted with every type of temptation.

The same avenues of temptation were used on Christ as are used on us. Our temptations come through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life (I John 2:15),

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter sixteen

"I have heard many such things;
Miserable comforters are you all.
Shall windy words have an end?"

Or what provokes you that you answer?

I also could speak as you do,
If you were in my place:

I could join words together against you,
and shake my head at you.

I could strengthen you with my mouth,
and the solace of my lips would assuage your pain."

- verses 2-5.

Chapter nine

"There is no umpire between us,
who might lay his hand upon us both."
-verse 33.

A CRY FOR UNDERSTANDING Job 16:2-5; 9:33

"But you don't understand!" Sounds familiar, doesn't it? How often we use that statement to cover situations that range from wounded pride to murder. If there is any such thing as a universal cry, it is a cry for understanding. It comes from youth as he pleads with his parents for permission to do the forbidden. From the drop-out generation about society. From labor as it launches a strike against industry, and from industry as it sits at the bargaining table. From the politician retreating from campaign promises. From the Joneses we try to keep up with) as they try to forestall the bill collector. From the church member making excuses for his neglect. From the student pleading for a passing grade. From the criminal begging the jury for his life. And at times from all of us! All of life seems saturated with a plea for understanding.

Job knew the frustrating experience of talking with those who did not understand his plight. To his miserable comforters he said: "I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you. But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief" (16:4, 5). The point of failure seems to be his statement, "If my soul were in your soul's stead." If others could see things as we see them, and understand us as we understand ourselves, how different life would be. But that works the other way as well. If we could put ourselves in another's place, how differently we would react! There is an old Indian proverb which says, "Never criticize another until you have worn his moccasins for two weeks."

"If I were you..." How often has that statement been made to you? Or have you made it to another? No doubt, Job was sincere when he said, "If my soul were in your soul's stead." But he may have been sincerely mistaken. One does not always know what he would do if he were in the other fellow's place! But it is good exercise to try to put ourselves in the other's shoes. When you see a stranger walking down the street, or sitting beside you at church, you never know the load

he is carrying, or the problems he is facing. If you could put "your soul in his soul's stead" you might be a better friend. And if the other fellow could do it, how much more comfort we would receive! But until we are able to do that, and until others are able to do likewise, we'll still cry for understanding.

But is there no help available? Nothing to satisfy that nagging feeling. "No body understands me?" Nothing to justify or excuse my feelings of guilt when I've done the best I can, and still I am criticized? Is there anyone who understands?

In Job's frustration he felt more keenly this matter of no one's being able to understand him than simply that his friends had missed the mark in their accusations. He felt that God did not understand either. He said, "There is no umpire between us, who might lay his hand upon us both" (9:33 RSV). That must have been the empty feeling of many of the patriarchs! God seemed so far removed from them! but there is no need for us to feel that

He is not near. We have an umpire!

In order that man might know that God understands him, He sent his Son to experience life in every way that man does, to know what all our passions and problems are. He possessed every human emotion, was subject to every human pain, felt every human need. He knew intense suffering. He experienced "strong crying and tears." He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). He knows life from the human standpoint. He knows because he traveled man's road. And, of course, he knows God's side, too. He was with the Father in creation. He witnessed man's fall. He is able to know — by experience—both the human and the divine. He can lay his hand upon us both—and that is what Job longed for. That is assurance of understanding! Thank God, we have an umpire! He understands us!

(To Be Continued)

"She Came In Raging Drunk"

STEVE WILLIAMS
Memphis, Tn.

About 11:30 p.m. I had just gone to sleep. I awoke with a start when I heard someone knocking loudly on the back door. The dog started barking as I quickly grabbed the shotgun, for our neighborhood is not the safest one in town. I peered out the door and saw a young man of about 18 years of age standing on our porch. I opened the door just a little and asked what he wanted. He asked if the minister was at home. I assumed he wanted the preacher I worked with, since I was just the associate minister. I told him the preacher lived across town, and then I asked if he needed help.

He asked if I could let him in the church building so he could sleep there for the night. I told him I would get dressed and be out in a moment. Upon talking with the young man further, I found that he was living with his grandmother. He was quick to volunteer identification, to tell me where his grandmother lived, and to tell where he had just started working for the last two weeks after arriving in town.

I then asked him why he left. He said, "She kicked me out of the house." "Why?" I asked. "Because I made a phone call", he replied. He had called his family in Washington and then offered to pay his grandmother for the long distance charge. She immediately ordered him out of the house. He had packed all of his belongings in a duffel bag and walked several blocks to the church building and our house next to the building.

But I still knew there was something missing in his story.

I could still not understand why a grandmother would throw her nice, polite grandson out of the house onto the street after tolerating him for barely two weeks. I am sure there is a lot more involved in the situation than I am aware of, but the whole story fit in when the young man said, "She came in raging drunk . . ." He did not need to say much more, for that explained most of it.

As I talked with the young man, setting him up in the annex to sleep for the night and helping in whatever way I could, I became angry. I became angry because I thought of some "sophisticated" young social climbers who had recently been trying to defend social drinking. When will they learn, "Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly. At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder. Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind utter perverse things" (Prov. 23:31-33).

It is morning now. We fed the young man breakfast and took him to work. We will try to help him find an apartment and get him on his feet. The whole story is a common one that you could repeat in some variation. If we are to judge people by their fruits, let us judge alcohol by its fruits. Let us judge it by the broken homes and broken hearts it has caused. Let us reject it! Keep the church pure from social drinking.

Faith and Works

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

The fact that sinners are saved by grace through faith is one of the great truths of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Peter says: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1, 2).

James sharply and vividly contrasts dead faith with faith which is alive, saying: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (2:24). And, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (2:26).

Peter said to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34, 35). To work righteousness is to obey God's commandments (Psa. 119:172) in the gospel of Christ, which is expressly said to be "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16, 17).

We are saved by "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6), and "this is the love of God that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

Watch Your Heart, Heaven Is

(Continued From Page 1)

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 by any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). The Philippians would not have to look far for an excellent example to imitate or emulate in these crucial matters. Paul says in the very next verse, "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9).

CONCLUSION

My dear reading friends, when we think of that which is sensual, let us not forget that Heaven is watching. When we think of that which is dishonest, let us not forget that Heaven is watching. When we think in terms of harming or hurting someone, Heaven is watching our anger, wrath, and growing malice. When we are thinking of getting even with someone who has done us wrong, Heaven is watching the build-up of this disposition of revenge. When we covet the wrong, Heaven is watching. When we feel envy toward the good that has come to another, or the talents that another has, Heaven is watching.

Let us ever keep a constant guard over our hearts. We need to watch our hearts—because Heaven is! Let us remember again, "You are not what you think you are; you are what you THINK!"

The Doctrine Of Christ

(Continued From Page 2)

acceptable to God (Rom. 12:2).

DOCTRINES OF MEN VS. 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, hath both the Father and the Son. If there comes any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is a partaker of his evil deeds" (2 Jn. 9-11). We must abide in the doctrine of Christ. One who does not, has not God. If he "transgresseth" (ASV: "goeth onward"), or goes beyond, the doctrine of Christ, he still has not God. This should make every member of any human denomination think! For each must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and give account of himself (2 Cor. 5:10).

Some may say, "My denomination is teaching the truth of the gospel." But, does it teach ALL the gospel? — all the truth? — not leaving out any of God's word? Where in the Bible do you read of: "denominations?" "joining a church?" which "denomination" to join? There is no Bible authority for sectarian denominations. On the contrary, the Bible condemns divisions (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Jn. 17:20-21).

ONE DENOMINATION VS. ALL OTHERS

Suppose the apostle John were on earth today: which denomination would he be a member of? If he joined (and I say this with kindness) the Baptist denomination and subscribed to Baptist doctrine, that would constitute a rejection of the Methodist church, Presbyterian church, and all others. (Remember: John wrote 2 Jn. 9-11!) Or, if John joined the Methodist church, with Methodist doctrine, he would thereby reject the Baptist, Presbyterian, and all others — for Methodist doctrine is in sharp variance with Baptist doctrine, Presbyterian doctrine, et al.

— Perhaps (?) John would join all denominations! Would he preach one Sunday in the Methodist Church — and teach sprinkling babies — and the next Sunday in the Baptist Church condemn sprinkling for baptism, and preach against infant membership? What a dilemma!

Maybe John the apostle joined NO denomination? But one will say, "You must be a member of some church!" Well, while he was on earth, John was a member of the Lord's church; if he were on earth today, why not let him be a member of the same church of which he was a member in his lifetime? Which one was that? To find out, we go to the Bible, the "doctrine of Christ," about which he wrote (2 Jn. 9-11).

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

First, remember that Christ built his church (Matt. 16:18). It was established in Jerusalem (Lk. 24:46-49) on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:1-5, 47). The government of this church is a kingdom (Matt. 16:19; Col. 1:13-14), with Christ as its king (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18), and with elders overseeing each complete congregation (Acts 14:23; 20:28). This church is the body of Christ, who purchased it with his own blood (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18-20). In the first century, A.D., this church continued in the doctrine of Christ (Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jn. 7:16; 8:28; 12:49-50; 2 Jn. 9-11). Christ called it "my church" (Matt. 16:18), and Paul referred to congregations of it as "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16), "churches of God" (1 Cor. 11:16), and other such designations. Names by which MEMBERS of this church were called include "disciples" (Acts 6:1, 2, 7; 9:10, 25), "brethren" (Acts 10:23; 11:1, 12), "saints" (Acts 26:10; Rom. 1:7), and "Christians" (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).

This is the church of which all the apostles — including John — were members in the first century (1 Cor. 12:28). If they were alive on earth today, they now would be members of this same institution. Each sincere truth seeker should want to be a member of this same church. None should belong to rival institutions started by men. The Bible, our divine guide, records the only way to get to heaven (Jn. 14:6; Matt. 7:13-14). Man should follow Christ, not the ways of men (Matt. 15:9).

The apostle Peter warned us to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:5-11). You cannot afford to take a chance — too much is at stake! (Matt. 16:26). "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" (Jn. 12:42-43). Where do you stand? Are you seeking the praise of God? or of man?

Togetherness Of God's People

HOYT BAILEY

OUR LORD DESIGNED TOGETHERNESS OF HIS PEOPLE. He prayed for the oneness of His people (Jn. 17:20-21). Christ died for the togetherness of Christians (Eph. 2:14-16). Believers are raised up together with Christ, quickened together with Him, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 2:4-7).

HOW ARE CHRISTIANS TO BE TOGETHER? Work together with Christ, because those for Christ are not against Him (Matt. 12:30). Gather together in the name of Christ (Matt. 18:20); Dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1); Knit together in love (Eph. 4:16); We are workers together with God (II Cor. 6:1); We strive together for the faith (Phil. 1:27); Christians are built together (Eph. 2:22); All Christians should agree on the truth (Amos 3:3). The saved are to ascend to heaven

together (I Thess. 4:17).

TOGETHERNESS IS CHRISTIAN UNITY. Man does not make Christian unity, but he helps to promote and keep the togetherness set up by the Lord (Eph. 4:3). God is not a God of disorder, confusion, dis-unity, but of peace (I Cor. 14:33). Christ, the Prince of peace, unites the obedient in one body (Eph. 2:14-16). The Holy Spirit leads to togetherness, unity and peace (Eph. 4:3; Rom. 8:14). The kingdom of God promotes peace and unity (Isa. 2:2-3; Rom. 14:17). Christ's gospel advocates peace (Rom. 10:15; Eph. 6:15). Christians are peace makers, not peace breakers (Matt. 5:9-12). "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19).

THE RIGHT WAY TO HAVE BIBLE PEACE AND TOGETHERNESS. Accept the one true God (Eph. 4:6). Accept Christ's supreme authority, preeminence, one Lord (Eph. 4:5; Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:36). Follow the teaching of one Spirit (Eph. 4:4). Unite in the one faith (Eph. 4:5; Phil. 1:27; Jude 3). Penitent believers must put Christ on in baptism (Gal. 3:27), for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), or to be saved (Mark 16:15-16). The one body is the church, but there is but one body. all Christians are together in the one body, the church (Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:14-16; 3:5; 5:23). Christians have the one hope by acting together in accord with God's will (Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46).

Let's Support Gospel Meetings

TOM CHILDERS

Before I moved to Vernon, Ala., the elders requested that my family and I visit the congregation during a gospel meeting with Brother Guy N. Woods. We were delighted to go for the week, visit with the brethren, and sit at the feet of Brother Woods.

There were many impressions for good during the week. A very obvious one was the way faithful brethren from neighboring congregations supported the gospel meeting. During the night services (with the exception of Wednesday night) we had an average of 75 visitors from surrounding congregations, with an average of eight preachers each night.

Why is it that brethren, who should be interested in preaching the gospel around the world, will not even drive across town to hold up the hands of faithful brethren in a gospel meeting?

I have long had a practice of attending at least one service of any gospel meeting in our area. I encourage the brethren to do the same. Last year, I heard 75 sermons. Preachers and elders should set the proper example in supporting, gospel meetings, and the members should do likewise.

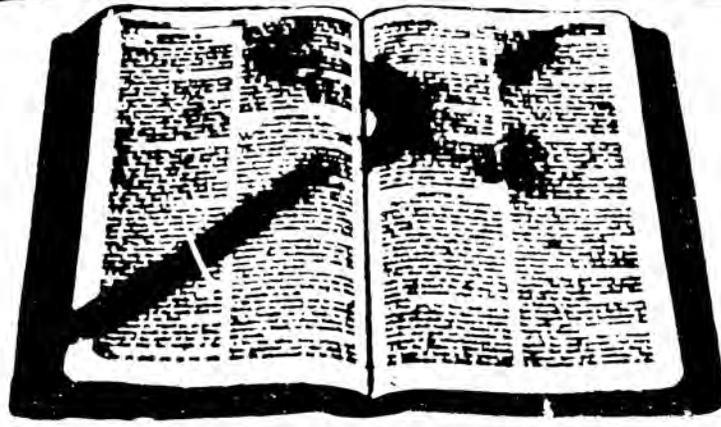
Thank God for faithful brethren in Lamar County and the surrounding area, and all brethren everywhere who believe in supporting by their presence gospel meetings!

Let Us Walk With God

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

We should pray to God for wisdom (Jas. 1:5, 6) to serve him as he deserves; to give without reservation; to fight without heeding the wounds; to toil without seeking rest; and to labor without asking for any reward except that of knowing that we have done the will of God.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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What I Owe Our Gospel Meeting

In the spring, summer, and fall months many congregations will exert special efforts to win the lost by the medium of gospel meetings. In this article we share some thoughts that will aid congregations to have more effective meetings.

When a congregation schedules a gospel meeting it imposes an obligation of opportunity, and a debt of dedication, upon every member of the entire congregation. People of honesty and integrity always possess a zealous willingness to pay their debts. We should be most willing to learn what we owe our next meeting. If it is in the very near future, we should begin immediately to make faithful payments on that debt, and continue from now on. When that meeting is concluded we should begin to make preparation for the next one that is scheduled.

TOP PRIORITY

I owe this coming gospel meeting MY TOP PRIORITY. It concerns the work of the Lord. In fact it is the work of the Lord. This gospel meeting will be a supreme effort to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified (I Cor. 2:2). This gospel effort will seek to put the Great Commission into greater effect in our lives (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49). The Great Commission contains five great M's. (1) It was given by the MASTER of men. (2) It involves MOVEMENT on the part of the disciples who receive it each generation to preach the good news of salvation to a lost and wrecked world. (3) It involves a MESSAGE — the only message that leads to salvation and the only additional message that results in the retention of this salvation. We must keep stressing and restressing the fact that this message of Christian growth and development is the ONLY truth we have to keep us saved. (4) The Great Commission involves MOTION. There is motion on the part of those who receive the message of saving truth and thus come into a royal relationship with the Sacred Three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It involves continued motion as we grow in grace and knowledge and seek to get closer and closer to heaven every day we live (II Pet. 3:18; Col. 3:1-4). (5)



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

In the fifth place the Great Commission involves MAJESTY. The Master who gave it is MAJESTIC. Its comprehension is MAJESTIC. Its plan of salvation is MAJESTIC. Its simplicity is MAJESTIC. Its age-lasting nature is MAJESTIC. Richly contained therein is the Majesty of our executing God's mission of mercy to lost humanity to save the wrecked world from the eternal consequences of damnable sin. Obedience to this Great Commission upon our part produces in us the Majesty of joy, love, contentment, praise, and real meaning for life in this complex, mixed-up world! In view of these sobering statements, exactly what other task or duty could take greater priority than a coming gospel meeting? Remember: God is looking at your mind as you form the answer!

PRIORITY OF MY FAITHFUL PRESENCE

I surely owe this gospel meeting the PRIORITY OF MY FAITHFUL PRESENCE. Hebrews 10:25 forbids my forsaking any of the assemblies of the saints. The passage says, "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." If each service of this coming gospel meeting constitutes an assembly of the saints, then my duty is clear and decisive. Is this gospel meeting a good work? Realistic truth constrains that an affirmative answer be given. But James says, (Jas. 4:17). "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Is it good to attend faithfully a gospel meeting conducted by your congregation? Surely you will say, yes. Then to miss deliberately any of its services is sin, Sin, SIN. If not, WHY NOT? God has commanded that we preach the gospel. That is what a gospel meeting is all about—preaching the gospel. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). John says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). Love for God, truth, and the souls of humanity will surely produce ample motivation for faithful attendance at EVERY service. Haphazard attendance surely cannot be equated with giving this gospel meeting TOP PRIORITY.

PRIORITY OF MY PRAYERS

I owe this coming gospel meeting the PRIORITY OF MY DAILY PRAYERS. The early church continued steadfastly in their prayers (Acts 2:42). They were taught to pray

for each other (I Tim. 2:1-2). They prayed for their preachers, their brethren, and the lost (Eph. 6:18-20; Rom. 10:1-3). I owe this coming gospel meeting my sincere prayers for the visiting evangelist. I can pray for his safety in coming, while here, and in returning home again. I can pray for his health while with us. I can pray for his family while he is here helping us. They are denied of his presence all the time he will be with us. I can pray that he will preach the gospel exactly as God would have him to do. I owe him an expression of appreciation when he helps me with the presentation of needed truth. Too many times we are slack in conveying such. I owe the song director my prayers as he leads the singing. I owe the local preacher and the eldership my prayers in their behalf. I owe the entire congregation my prayers as we work together with the Lord for this gospel effort. I owe those who are lost my prayers for their salvation, a salvation that can come ONLY through their obedience to the soul saving gospel. Prayerless people cannot aid in having great gospel meetings. Prayer must be of TOP PRIORITY if this coming gospel meeting is to be what it should be.

PRIORITY OF MY PARTICIPATION

I surely owe this coming gospel meeting the PRIORITY OF MY PARTICIPATION. I cannot participate unless I come; therefore my coming is absolutely IMPERATIVE. I cannot participate until I am here; therefore I must be prompt at all services. I cannot participate in the singing unless I sing, therefore I must sing enthusiastically. I cannot participate in the prayers unless I make the prayers my prayers; and this too is very important. I cannot participate in the sermons unless I listen both reverently and carefully. Would it not be fine indeed if every member who came would seek to be the very best listener in the entire assembly each service? I Corinthians 15:58 should be the daily goal of every member during this coming gospel meeting. The passage states, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

PRIORITY OF PRACTICING WHAT I LEARN

I surely owe this coming gospel meeting the PRIORITY OF PRACTICING WHAT I LEARN DURING THE WEEK. The acid test of any sermon is seen in our placement of its

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Some Call It Murder

(No. 3)

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

RAY DUTTON

"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges 5:23).

Every day right here in the United States of America the lives of 4,000 innocent children are destroyed by abortion. Every year a million and a half unborn babies are killed! Their only crime is that they LIVE — and their mothers and fathers want them killed.

In the last few years while we have slept, more than six million babies have been slaughtered by doctors using some of the most gruesome methods of destruction imaginable!

WE MUST NOT — WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS MASSACRE TO CONTINUE. We must do more than just sit idly by and shake our heads. (Read again Judges 5:23.)

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Since my first two articles on abortion appeared in "Words of Truth", we have received letters and phone calls from many places asking what can be done to put a stop to this slaughter? There are many things that we can do, and the following are some of them:

(1) EDUCATE YOURSELF

First, you need to learn all you can about what is happening in the United States with regard to abortion. You need to clearly understand what abortions really are. No compassionate human being (Christian, or not) can possibly remain quiet once he learns about the horrible things being done to these tiny babies.

There are many excellent sources of information. The "HANDBOOK ON ABORTION", by Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Wilke, is one of the best books available on abortion. It is thoroughly documented, and can be obtained for \$1.50 (postage paid) from the Hayes Publishing Company, 6304 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45224. Other good books are: "ABORTION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE", by Hilgers and Horan; \$1.95; Minnesota Citizens

Concerned For Life, 4803 Nicollett Ave., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409; "INDUCED ABORTION", by Thomas W. Hilgers; \$1.50; also from Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life; and "THE MERCY KILLERS", by Dr. Paul Marx, \$1.00; from Right to Life, 2550 Via Tejon, Palos Verdes Estates, California 90274.

(2) INFORM OTHERS

This inhumane destruction of millions of babies will never stop until the general public cries out in MORAL OUTRAGE against this inhumanity. Fellow Minister, it will not be sufficient just to preach a lesson on it to your local congregation. We must inform every conscientious citizen about the TRUTH concerning abortion.

Preachers, elders, and other church leaders must take every opportunity to speak out against abortion at civic clubs, P.T.A. meetings, High Schools, etc.

Elders need to pass resolutions like the one passed by the Elders of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper. They resolved to do everything within their power to educate the people of this country on this subject, and they have spent several hundreds of dollars in the last few months doing just that.

Congregations should purchase thousands of copies of the brochures "LIFE OR DEATH", "THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

HAS RULED IT'S LEGAL TO KILL A BABY", and "DID YOU KNOW" — all of which can be purchased from the Hayes Publishing Company whose address was given earlier in this article. The Sixth Avenue congregation has purchased and distributed almost 3,000 in the last two months.

(3) WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMEN

Make a personal promise to God that you will write one letter every week to your Senators, Representatives, newspaper, radio, and T.V. stations, until a constitutional amendment is passed giving every person — young or old, born or unborn, healthy or sick, sane or insane — the right to life.

(4) ACT NOW!!

Tomorrow will not be soon enough! You must begin today. Before this day will be over, some 4,000 innocent babies will have been killed! That many will continue to be killed daily until YOU and I do something about it.

Remember!! "The Only Thing Necessary For the Triumph Of Evil, Is For Good Men To Do Nothing." — Edmund Burke

If you would like more information on this subject, I will be glad to send you what we have available: Ray Dutton, Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Ave., Jasper, Ala. 35501.

Mrs. Lucilar Bailey Goes Home

Mrs. Lucilar Bailey was born Dec. 5, 1883, and died Jan. 31, 1976. She was the wife of the former Griffin J. Bailey who preceded her in death by fourteen years. Surviving of the nine children are Mrs. Dollie Logan, Mrs. Wm. J. Lockler, Harvey, Hoyt (who preaches the gospel and writes often for Words of Truth), and Hoyce. There are twenty-eight grandchildren, fifty-two great-grandchildren and eleven great-great-grandchildren. One sister: Mrs. Dollie Engle.

Mrs. Bailey was converted to Christ about the early nineteen-twenties. Though she left most of her relatives in denominationalism, never did she waver from the truth. Her loyalty and faithful attendance at the Whitehouse church of Christ (Marion County, Ala) impressed many people for good. Many non-members as well as members mentioned time and again (during her stay in the hospital, and afterwards) having seen her and her family walk during the thirties to Bible classes and worship services in all kinds of

weather every Sunday — a distance of four miles each way! She continued in faithful attendance through the last Sunday she was home from the hospital. The late A. C. Dreaden often referred to her in his sermons as an example of loyalty.

Mrs. Bailey found many good things in people, and she did good things for non-members as well as for members of the church. She built lasting friendships with good people. She mentioned having been friends with a certain person for seventy-five years.

She read the Bible regularly and the GOSPEL ADVOCATE for years, and she enjoyed constantly going to hear faithful preaching of the gospel. She delighted in encouraging young men to preach the gospel. She requested that Hubert (Stubby) George (one whom she encouraged) conduct her funeral service. He was assisted in the service at the Whitehouse church of Christ, Feb. 2, 1976, by Jerry Manasco and Frank Farris.

Thoughts On The Lord's Supper

DUB McCLISH

The Lord's Supper is at the same time the most simple, and the most sublime, memorial ever erected. This is because it came from the Lord himself and not from man: "This do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:24). This is also true because it memorializes the most important thing that will ever happen in all of history — the sin-sacrifice of the perfect lamb of God (Lk. 22:19-20). Moreover, it is prospective as well as retrospective in its purpose; as we partake each Lord's day, we proclaim the promise of his coming (I Cor. 11:26). These things being true, it follows that we should approach the Lord's Supper with absolute reverence and appreciation. To do any less is to "be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (I Cor. 11:27).

As we think about the Lord's Supper, we need to remember that it is the Lord's (that is, Christ's) Supper. Those who lead prayers at the table should especially remember this. Often, the prayer before the bread or the fruit of the vine goes something like this: "Our Father, we thank thee that we can gather around THY table and commemorate THY suffering on Calvary." Sometimes a brother

thanks the Father that his (the Father's) blood was shed for us. It is not my intention to be hypercritical, but to help us to be more Biblical. God's word makes a very clear distinction between Christ (the Son) and God the Father. We need to keep this distinction as clear as the Bible keeps it. As we prepare to take of the Sacred Supper, let us remember it is the FATHER we are addressing in prayer, thanking him for what the SON did on the cross for us. The Lord's Supper was instituted by CHRIST, commemorates the body and blood of CHRIST and proclaims the return of CHRIST.

May we also be reminded that the proximity of passing the collection plate to passing the bread and the wine does not make the collection a part of the Lord's Supper. Yet some brethren indicate a failure to keep this distinction clear. Sometimes the prayer before the collection is like this: "Now, as we enter into this part of the Lord's Supper....". The timing of the collection is for expediency — the men are already up there. As with every part of our worship, may we partake of the Lord's Supper "in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:24).

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter thirty

"But now they make sport of me,
men who are younger than I,
whose fathers I would have disdained
to set with the dogs of my flock."

— Verse 1.

"Among the bushes they bray;
under the nettles they huddle together.
A senseless, a disreputable brood,
they have been whipped out of the land.

"And now I have become their song,
I am a byword to them.
They abhor me, they keep aloof from me;
they do not hesitate to spit at the sight of me."

— verses 7-10.

THEY SPIT IN MY FACE

Job 30:7-10, v. 1

In October of 1746, the Earl of Chesterfield wrote his son: "An injury is much sooner forgotten than an insult." That statement was not a new truth when he made it, nor is it outdated now. Most of us had rather be injured than insulted, any time!

*Of all the griefs that harass the distressed,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.*

— Samuel Johnson

Very few possess the magnanimous spirit of Abraham Lincoln. It is reported that when one told him that one of his cabinet members had called him a fool, he replied, "If Stanton says I am a fool, I had better look into the matter, for he is a wise man." No doubt that worked better than had he reacted the normal way by letting the remark trigger a desire for retaliation.

There is something about insults that makes one want to repay with insults — and to give good measure by bigger insults! That sets off a chain reaction. And bitterness and resentment follow.

Job had been a respected citizen of his community. Men had honored him in various ways. While things were going well with Job, there was a class of ruffians in the community who evidently kept their distance from the respected citizens. They were the kind of men whom Job would not have wanted to associate with his dogs! (30:1). But after Job's trouble, their children turned on Job and made him the laughing stock of their gang. He described them as "among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together. They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth." And he told of their insults: "Now am I their song, yea, I am their byword. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face." When Satan tried Job, He didn't leave anything out, did he? Imagine that scene. Job in all his affliction, and a gang of hoodlums like that making him their joke! Such a time to be insulted! And of all people to have to take insults from! And the kind of

insults which their crudeness produced! They spat in his face! Job surely experienced the bitterness of being another's "song and byword" as much as anyone could.

When insults come your way, consider Job whose experience must have crushed his sensitive soul, and then remember these "don'ts."

1. *Don't try to get even.* To spit back renders one about the same kind of fellow as the one who started the insults. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth usually leaves one blind and toothless. You have to get into the gutter fight. In a fight with a skunk, you might win the fight, but you will smell something awful. It is better to ignore scornful remarks than to retaliate. You will notice that even Job did not engage in retaliation.

2. *Don't harbor ill will.* If insults come from sources like those which Job experienced, it

isn't worth the effort it would take to carry a grudge. If it comes from a friend, it is worth the effort to return good for evil and reclaim the friend. Too, harboring bad feelings toward others will poison one's own personality rather than hurting the others! Many a person has hurt himself worse than someone else has hurt him as he attempted to "get even."

3. *Don't indulge in self pity.* Self pity hurts no one except him who engages in it. But it can be a bitter dose for him!

4. *Don't stop doing right.* That way you will be able to live with yourself, even though you are the object of another's ridicule. Let God be your public opinion.

Chances are you'll never be plagued with insults like Job was, but when the lesser irritations come along, use these "don'ts" and win the battle!

(To Be Continued)

"Preacheritis"

TOM CHILDERS

I feel very close to the preachers who have touched my life; to the preachers I heard in services at Ripley, Mississippi — Clyde Miller, Allen Dixon, Cecil May Jr., James Allen and Malcom George; to Clyde Miller who baptized me into Christ in 1955; to Malcom George who spoke words of comfort at the funeral of our two-day-old son in 1965; to Gene White and Robert Taylor Jr. who spoke comforting words at the death of my mother in 1970. I am sure that each of you feels very close to the preachers who have touched your life.

While this is natural, therein lies a danger. Sadly, some feel that preachers are perfect, and they should be followed and defended, regardless of what they teach or how they live. This idolization we sometime call "preacheritis". The Bible recognizes this problem and warns of its dangers.

Peter was an apostle and an elder. He wrote two books of the New Testament. While his preaching epistles inspired and free of human error, his life was not (Gal. 2:11-14). Paul said he "was to be blamed," he was "carried away with dissimulation," and he did not walk "uprightly according to the truth of the gospel." Were there any who had "preacheritis" in Peter's day? Indeed there were. Galatians 2:13 shows that Barnabas followed Peter. We still have some modern "Barnabases" who follow preachers regardless of what they teach or how they live.

At Corinth, some followed the preachers who baptized them (I Cor. 1:12-13). Paul said he was thankful that he baptized only a few at

Corinth...not because the gospel does not include baptism, or is unimportant (as many anti-baptism preachers teach); but because the ones he would have baptized may have followed him, and not Christ. Some of the ones Paul did baptize were probably the very ones who were saying, "I am of Paul" (I Cor. 1:12).

Does it strike you as being significant that the first problem Paul deals with in I Corinthians is the wrong view toward preachers? One of the main causes of the many problems which plagued the Corinthian church had its tap-root in the sin of "preacheritis". Preachers usually get blamed for any trouble that arises in a congregation, when the real cause may be undue alligance given to a preacher.

All who have a touch of "preacheritis" should consider the following verses which we have underscored for emphasis. "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; ARE YE NOT CARNAL? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" (I Cor. 3:4-5). "Let no man glory IN MEN" (I Cor. 4:6).

Let us all honor, respect, listen to, and hold up the hands of every gospel preacher who preaches the truth in love and tries to practice what he preaches. If we are ever faced with a choice to make between the truth and a preacher in error, let us without hesitation chose the former. Anything less is definitely PREACHERITIS!

The Back Seat Grabber

BOBBY NORRIS

We are commanded not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). And we are thankful for every single person who attends each worship service of the church. But I wonder why some have the habit of crowding in on the back seats when there are plenty down front? It is no sin to sit on the back seat. But when a person habitually sits on the back seat when there are plenty of vacant seats down front, he is telling a lot about his attitude toward Christian worship. For one thing, he shows that he is not very interested in worshipping God. We must worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). But how can a person worship God acceptably when he chooses (as it were) to "sit in the seat of the scornful" (Psa. 1:1), which often is characterized by laughing, whispering, and note-passing? He also shows

his selfishness. Jesus said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). Would you want someone to grab the back seat if you really needed to sit there? A mother with a small baby may NEED to sit on the back seat, so she can get to the nursery as quickly as possible. A person who is about sick may need to sit on the back seat, in case he has to rush out. But how can those who really need to take the back seat, do so when the back seats have all been occupied?

It is difficult to convert a back-seat grabber. The following illustration shows that he is willing to suffer long and go to any length to

(Continued On Page 4)

What I Owe Our Gospel Meeting

(Continued From Page 1)

precious principles into immediate practice and urgent action. Truths will be taught and lessons will be learned from this meeting that will require a lifetime to be lived out by each of us.

CONCLUSION

Let us give this coming gospel meeting TOP PRIORITY. Is not this the place Jehovah God would have us give it? If not, where would he have us place it in our system of PRIORITIES? What would happen in 1976 if every member of every congregation were to give top billing to the next scheduled gospel meeting? Every one of us will face in judgment exactly how we treat our next gospel meeting. How do you plan to treat the next one where you attend?

The Back Seat Grabber

(Continued From Page 3)

get, and keep, his prized seat.

A certain church member always sat on the back seat. When someone asked him why, he said, "Because this is the most comfortable seat in the house."

One day three boys entered the church building, piled newspapers and songbooks on the back pew and started a fire. A man who lived near the building wondered what was going on when he saw the boys running from the building. When he saw smoke coming from inside, he quickly called another neighbor, and they rushed in and put out the fire. Fortunately, the damage had been confined to the back pew. It was badly burnt, but could be used if given a good coat of paint. A little later, some of the brethren came and painted the charred back pew. Though very rough and lumpy to sit in, it was still a very sturdy pew. The paint was dry by Sunday.

The back seat brother came in Sunday morning and sat alone on the rough painted pew. Someone asked him why he didn't move up to a more comfortable seat. He said, "This pew just fits my curves now. I still say it is the most comfortable pew in the house." And he was right. He would have been so uncomfortable on any other pew that he would hardly have been able to stand it. Expecting to see an unconverted man near the front of the building is like expecting to find fish swimming in a boiling hot-water spring.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev. 3:19).

Where Is The punctuation?

The following articles were written by F. W. Emmons in 1873. As you read the articles, please note that each one is just exactly the same, word for word, yet note how different the meaning set forth by differences in punctuation. Much in life depends on where we put the emphasis or punctuation.

THE GOOD MAN

"He is an old and experienced man. In vice and wickedness he is never found. Opposing the works of iniquity he takes delight. In the downfall of his neighbor he never rejoices. In the prosperity of any of his fellow-creatures he is ready to assist. In destroying the peace of society he takes no pleasure. In serving the Lord he is uncommonly diligent. In sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances he takes no pride. In laboring to promote the cause of Christianity he has not been negligent. In endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers he makes no exertions. To

subdue his passions he strives hard. To build up Satan's kingdom he lends no aid. To the support of the gospel among the heathen he contributes largely. To the evil adversary he pays no attention. To good advice he gives great heed. To the devil he will never go. To heaven he must go where he will receive the just recompense of his reward."

THE EVIL MAN

"He is an old and experienced man in vice and wickedness. He is never found opposing the works of iniquity. He takes delight in the downfall of his neighbor. He never rejoices in the prosperity of any of his fellow-creatures. He is always ready tossed in destroying the

peace of society. He takes no pleasure in serving the Lord. He is uncommonly diligent in sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances. He takes no pride in laboring to promote the cause of Christianity. He has not been negligent in endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers. He makes no exertions to subdue his passions. He strives hard to build up Satan's kingdom. He lends no aid to support the gospel among the heathen. He contributes largely to the evil adversary. He pays no attention to good advice. He gives great heed to the devil. He will never go to heaven. He must go where he will receive the just recompense of his reward."

Brown Commended by McInteer

JIM BILL McINTEER

Seven and a half years ago, Paul Brown and his marvelous family came to West End, Paul serving as Educational Director and Emma teaching in the Kindergarten program. During that period of time, both Larry and Linda, their son and daughter, have been baptized into Christ and as their parents before them been a great credit to the cause of our Lord. Monday, January 5, Paul announced to the elders of West End his resignation and his acceptance of the invitation of Vultee Church to serve as their minister to Adults. As he stated, "I am not leaving because I want to leave something; rather, I am going because they have something I want."

Long before Paul Brown came to West End, he was my personal ambition to have as a co-laborer. If choices were exclusively mine, I'd personally want Paul Brown on a staff with me as long as I have any ability to preach with any congregation anywhere. He was my choice of yesterday, my choice now or tomorrow. He's a great man with a tremendous family. I personally shall miss him as with few men whom I've had the joy of association. His family has been a delight—always a blessing, never a hint of embarrassment or apology. We have served together as part of your staff without so much as one cross word. And to live with me day after day and do that requires a man of unusual patience!

Paul Brown's leaving is altogether self-initiated. Vultee is building a high rise apartment complex for the elderly on their own property, they are developing a bigger

team concept in staff and Paul joins one of the finest ones of this city. His talented addition, however, will not be one whit behind the "chiefest of them." The program they have in mind for the Browns has a minimum of 5 years to make it even begin to work — (and by that time I'll be ready for one of those apartments for the elderly—you may want to get your application in now with mine—Hmmm!)

In all seriousness, it's a great opportunity. In all truth, they have chosen a magnificent man. In all honesty, we have suffered a heavy loss—but the cause of our Lord hasn't, as a multi-talented man and his family accept a new challenge that will cast a long shadow for good over the work of our Lord in this area.

Our thanks to the Paul Browns for deeply appreciated service, heartfelt love, and holy examples of righteousness fulfilled in our midst for almost a decade—may God bless them and Vultee in the development of the thrilling program they are initiating and Paul's move to them by early March, God willing. I believe I speak the universal sentiment of elders, deacons, staff and membership when I say to the Browns we genuinely love you and are eternally grateful for the blessed contributions you've made to our lives.

P. S. If you want to know why I think Paul is such a marvelous Christian he had a great daddy, has a marvelous mother and a devoted and devoted brother—all who love each other earnestly—this no doubt has a powerful influence for good.

The Possibility of Apostasy

G. F. RAINES

The point of many solemn warnings to children of God in the Holy Bible is that our matchless privilege of participating in eternal life is dependent on our continuing to abide in Jesus Christ in whom that life is available. If we fail to abide in Christ, our participation in the life that is in him ceases. We experience that life only as we remain in Christ, "who is our life" (Col. 3:4).

The Book of God, both the Old Testament and the New, contains many warnings against failing to abide in fellowship with God and the fearful and eternal consequences thereof.

In I Chronicles 28:9, your Bible plainly says: "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (cf. 2 Chron. 15:2).

Our Lord Jesus Christ informs us that only those who have been born again are in his kingdom (John 3:1-5) and that, "The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41, 42).

The Corinthians were "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:1, 2); but Paul warned them, saying: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, writing to "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (3:1), admonished them, saying: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (3:12). Obviously, only those who have fellowship with God can depart from God, and a person who has departed from God is assuredly lost, although he was saved while he had fellowship with God.

Jesus warned the lethargic Laodiceans, saying: "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

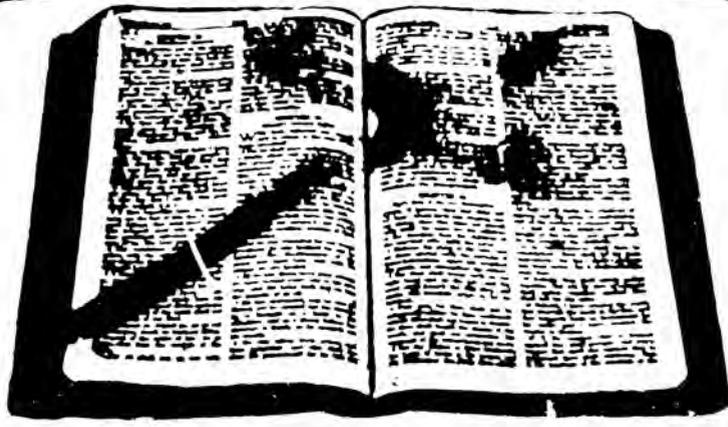
I earnestly entreat you to think seriously about these solemn warnings and "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (II Pet. 1:10).

In Hebrews 10:30, 31, the word of God unequivocally says: "The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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Modern Versions: Their New Nomenclature

During 1973-75 this writer went into a dozen different states and lectured on the dangers we currently face from the modern versions of the Bible. In nearly every place these lessons have been delivered, we have had a number of brethren tell us something like the following: "One of the reasons I am opposed to the new versions is because they do not even sound like the Bible." There is a very valid foundation for their making statements like the foregoing. These new versions are NOT the Bible. When a book is NOT the Bible it will be impossible for it to contain a Biblical "ring." The sound will be anything but Biblical! This short article will contain a few quotations to substantiate our accusation against them — the accusation of introducing a totally new nomenclature or phraseology.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

FROM THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE
In I Timothy 6:3-5 the NEB says, "This is what you are going to teach and preach. If anyone is teaching otherwise, and will not give his mind to wholesome precepts — I mean those of our Lord Jesus Christ — and to good religious teaching, I call him a POMPOUS IGNORAMUS. He is MORBIDLY keen on mere verbal questions and quibbles, which give rise to jealousy, quarrelling, slander, base suspicions, and endless wrangles: all typical of men who have let their reasoning powers become ATROPHIED and have lost grip of the truth." For I Corinthians 16:8 the NEB says, "But I shall remain at Ephesus until WHITSUNTIDE, for a great opportunity has opened for effective work, and there is much opposition." Did someone say the new Bibles are so much simpler to understand? How many people will associate WHITSUNTIDE as being Pentecost — which is what the Greek text demands, and which can be found in our reliable Bibles?

FROM TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION
For Acts 20:7 the TEV says, "On SATURDAY EVENING we gathered together for the FELLOWSHIP MEAL. Paul spoke to the people, and kept on speaking until midnight, since he was going to leave the next day." There is no Lord's Day assembly nor is

there an observance of the Lord's Supper in this passage. No wonder the Bible "ring" is conspicuously absent from the TEV. For Acts 21:9 the TEV says, "He had four unmarried daughters who PREACHED God's word." No wonder there is such a clamoring for women to ascend to the pulpit. The new Bibles are even fostering such falsehood. There is no Biblical "ring" in such statements as this. For Acts 8:20 the TEV has, "May you and your money GO TO HELL, for thinking that you can buy God's gift with money." The Greek word GEHENNA is not even used in the book of Acts, let alone in Acts 8:20. Such is the language of the gutter. Yet many of our brethren have passed out the TEV as though it were candy being given to a child. How naive can people be where souls are involved!! For Galatians 1:22 the TEV has, "All this time the members of the CHRISTIAN CHURCHES in Judea did not know me personally." The church belongs to Christ; it does not belong to Christians. Christians compose it; but no reliable Bible ever called the Lord's church the 'Christian church'. But Mr. Bratcher is not very careful or reverent when it comes to names in the Bible.

FROM THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED
Now we note a few from the LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED which is a total misnomer, title for this book. Seemingly, a title should indicate what is on the inside; but in this case the title is a totally misleading one. This perverted product is not living; it is not the Bible; it is not even accurate as a paraphrase in many of its renderings. In I Kings 20:11 the LBP says, "The king of Israel retorted, 'Don't COUNT YOUR CHICKENS before they HATCH.'" Such dignity of language! In I Samuel 25:17 the LBP says, "You'd better think fast, for there is going to be trouble for our master and his whole family — he's such a STUBBORN LOUT that no one can even talk to him!" The language in I Samuel 20:30 from Saul to Jonathan is so crude, coarse, and vulgar that we will not dare put it into print. It is no wonder that the Baptists have attacked it as being a vulgar Bible. But while they are attacking it for the sake of vulgarity some of our brethren were buying, relishing and defending the LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED. Shame!! Shame!!! In Psalm 8:4 the LBP says, "I cannot understand how you can bother with MERE PUNY man, to pay any attention to him!" What an attitude to project into the dignity with which God has treated his human creation. For Acts 4:36 the LBP says, "For instance, there was Joseph (the

one the apostles nicknamed 'BARNY THE PREACHER'!) Does anyone really think this is serious and dignified translation??

In Acts 23:3 the LBP says, "Paul said to him, 'God shall slap you, you WHITE-WASHED PIGPEN. What kind of judge are you to break the law yourself by ordering me struck like that?'" Does a passage like this really need comment? In II Corinthians 8:11 the LBP says, "Having STARTED THE BALL ROLLING so enthusiastically, you should carry this project through to completion just as gladly, giving whatever you can out of whatever you have. Let your enthusiastic idea at the start be equalled by your realistic action now." Quite frankly we wonder about anybody who likes this type of "ball rolling" translation of what is supposed to be God's Book of dignity. In II Corinthians 12:16 the LBP says, "Some of you are saying, 'It's true that his visits didn't seem to cost us anything, but HE IS A SNEAKY FELLOW, THAT PAUL, and he fooled us. As sure as anything he must have made money from us some way.'" Mr. Kenneth Taylor is as poor with his journalism as he is with his translation. He is anything but competent in his attempts to write! In Galatians 1:10 the LBP said, "You can see that I am not trying to please you by SWEET TALK and flattery; no, I am trying to please God. If I were still trying to please men I could not be Christ's servant." If Brother Paul could come back and peruse the LBP, he would not recognize the epistles he penned in the first century! Again in Romans 16:16 the LBP records the perverted statement, "Shake hands warmly with each other. All the churches here send you their greetings." In this rendering he acts the dual role of commentator and perverter. He is poor as a Bible commentator; he is proficient however in the work of perversion. Do you see any "churches of Christ" in his rendering of Romans 16:16? If so, where? The "of Christ" is definitely in the Greek text. Kenneth Taylor just did not pay any attention to the Greek text. He has this trouble both with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and with the Greek text of the New Testament in hundreds of places. In I Timothy 4:6 the LBP says, "If you explain this to others you will be doing your duty as a WORTHY PASTOR who is fed by faith and by the true teaching you have followed." There is absolutely no basis at all for this rendering from the Greek text. We already have a world full of people (including many members of the Lord's church!) who do

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WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Purposes of Restoration

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

Churches of Christ in America today are heirs of a distinct movement that sprang up on this continent at the turn of the nineteenth century. Noble men and women dedicated their lives to the goal of restoring in their day the original Christianity of the first century. They sensed the futility of attempting to reform the existing denominations. They con-



JOHN WADDEY

cluded that the only practical way to have pure Christianity was to bypass all the existing bodies, and begin with the New Testament as their sole guide and blueprint.

REASONS AND MOTIVES

No doubt each man who contributed to this movement had many reasons for his efforts. It is also most likely that none of the leaders ever wrote down for posterity ALL of their motives. Yet we can glean some important goals that were shared by all the great restoration pioneers. For the sake of our readers who do not yet share our faith, we would hasten to add that the Restoration movement of the nineteenth century was not an organized movement with a governing body over it. Not even a single individual can be looked upon as the leader or spokesman. That very first generation saw a number of talented men in widely scattered parts of the land, with distinctly different religious backgrounds, launch their own attempt to recover pure Christianity. This was done without an organized, coordinated effort. It is a fascinating study to trace the growth of this restoration movement and to read of the struggles to arrive at that pure religion of the

first century.

1. The restorers wanted to overcome the problem of religious division that plagued believers in Christ. They felt unity could be realized only in Christ and upon the basis of His New Covenant. All saints should speak the same thing, and be of the same mind and judgment (I Cor. 1:10).

2. They wanted to restore the original simplicity and purity of worship of the Lord's Church. The centuries had produced numbers of additions and subtractions to the true worship of God outlined in the New Testament. The Lord's Supper needed to be restored to its proper place as the center of Lord's Day worship. Every saint deserved the privilege to eat the bread and drink the fruit of the vine upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The accumulation of such unscriptural items as incense, candles, holy water, images, crucifixes, and prayer beads needed to be swept away.

3. They sought to discover and proclaim again the gospel plan of salvation first spoken by the Lord, and then by his holy apostles (Heb. 2:3). Knowing that sinners could not be saved by faith only (Jas. 2:24), or by works done in his own righteousness (Tit. 3:5), they sought and found that way revealed by Christ. The New Testament posited salvation upon faith in Christ, repentance of sin, confession of faith, and immersion in water (Mk. 16:16; Rom. 19:9, 10; Acts 2:38).

4. They desired to restore the local congregation of Christians to its rightful place. Each community of saints should be self-governing under Christ and his inspired word. Christ knew nothing of popes or patriarchs dominating his people. Elders, not preachers, were to rule the congregation (Acts 20:17, 28-31). Associations, conventions, synods, conferences, and councils to govern the churches were all the creations of man, and needed to be eliminated.

5. They longed to exalt the Bible to its

proper place as the final and complete authority in Christianity. They had seen the damage done by the creeds of the human churches. They rejected the traditions of men (Matt. 15:6-9). Their plea was "back to the Bible." It was "to the law and to the testimony" for them (Isa. 8:20). They wanted to find, and abide in, the doctrine of Christ (II John 9).

6. They yearned to rid the world of sectarian names in religion and to restore the name of Christ to its honored place. They were not ashamed to be merely "Christians" (I Pet. 4:16). Since the church is Christ's by right of purchase, why not call it "the church of Christ" even as did Paul? (Rom. 16:16) Of course they objected not to any other Biblical name for saints or congregations.

7. They felt an obligation to rid Christianity of all those corruptions and errors that had crept in over the centuries, whether in faith or in practice, whether large or small. They were convinced that this could only be accomplished by a rejection of all the denominations of men, and by a complete return to the divine blueprint laid out in God's word (II Tim. 1:13; Heb. 8:5).

That first generation of men succeeded admirably in their efforts. Across the land a mighty wave of God-fearing people joined hands in the effort. We would not be so bold as to claim that we have perfectly reproduced the total program of Christ today. But I hasten to affirm that those of your neighbors known as the "churches of Christ" are diligently striving after that goal. Every saint in every generation must in his own life dedicate himself to that noble effort—i.e., to be nothing more nor less than the kind of Christian as were Peter, James, John, Paul, and a myriad of others about whom we read in the New Testament. Will you not join with us in this honorable pursuit?

One's Feelings No Proof He Is A Christian

BASIL OVERTON

The way one feels does not determine that he is a Christian. Just because one is religious does not prove he is a Christian. Our feelings can deceive us. The people who crucified Christ were religious. Many religious people through the ages have persecuted the Lord's church. An emotional upsurge and a "religious experience" are not proof that one is a Christian. The heart of man is "deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9). The way that one can know he is a Christian is the same way that he can know that Christ is the Saviour. We know that Christ is the Saviour by the instruction and information that we find in the Bible. We know in the same way that we are Christians. When we do the same things the people of the Bible text did to become Christians, then (and only then) we will know that we are Christians.

One certainly feels good if he has the assurance of God's word that he has obeyed the Lord. Certainly, nothing could make one feel better! But even one's feelings then are no proof that he is a Christian; but the proof is God's word. The fact that one has obeyed the gospel of Christ is the proof that one is a Christian (I Pet. 4:17)! Many think they are Christians who say they "got saved" by faith only, and experienced an emotional upsurge; and they say after they were saved they were baptized into some human denomination. One cannot be saved before being baptized into Christ (Mk. 16:16; Rom. 6:3-4). The baptism Christ commands will not put one into a

denomination; it will put one into his body (I Cor. 12:13), which is his church (Eph. 1:22-23). In the Bible, believers were commanded to be baptized in order to be saved (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). In order to reach the precious blood of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Jn. 19:31-34). They were not told to be baptized because they were already saved (Acts 22:16). One's feelings come as a result of what he believes; and what one believes comes as a result of what he hears (Rom. 10:13-17). One might hear false doctrine, and believe it, and feel just as good as the one who hears, believes, and obeys the truth. Have you obeyed the truth? (I Pet. 1:22).

—from "Seven Score Short Sermons"

Think

A little boy once asked his dad what a "Christian" is. The dad replied that a Christian is a person who loves and obeys God. He loves his friends and neighbors and expresses his appreciation for other Christians. He loves even his enemies, and prays for them that they might be blessed. He prays often, and blesses God's holy name in reverent worship. He is kind, considerate, gentle, courteous in his speech, and in his selfless attitude. He lives a life that is pure and holy and is a Christlike through and through.

The little boy thought for a moment, and then asked: "Daddy, have I ever seen one?"

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter twenty-two

"Is not your wickedness great?

There is no end to your iniquities.

*For you have exacted pledges of your brothers
for nothing,*

and stripped the naked of their clothing.

*You have given no water to the weary to
drink,*

*and you have withheld bread from the
hungry.*

The man with power possessed the land,

and the favored man dwelt in it.

You have sent widows away empty,

*and the arms of the fatherless were
crushed.*

Therefore snares are round about you,

and sudden terror overwhelms you;

*your light is darkened, so that you cannot see,
and a flood of water covers you."*

—verses 5-11.

IT'S NOT SO!

Job 25:5-11

"The report is false! I didn't do it! I'm not guilty! Why would anybody say anything like that about me? How in the world could anything like that ever get started?" Statements of defense like these often indicate deep trouble and vexing problems. False reports can be murderous. Slander is one of Satan's worst traits.

"Tis slander,

*Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose
tongue*

*Outvenoms all the worms of Nile, whose
breath*

*Rides on the posting winds and doth belie
All corners of the world: kings, queens, and
states,*

*Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave
This viperous slander enters.*

— Shakespeare

A heart could scarcely be broken any more painfully than when the wound is made by sharp words, false words, accusing words. This is a problem that has broken the spirit of some who have been able to stand up under other hardships. It encourages one to become bitter and resentful, thus, tempting him to sin against himself. It puts one under suspicion. It thrusts him into the defensive. It tears the heart out!

Of course, to be slandered does not mean that one is not innocent. To accuse does not establish guilt. Everyone's believing the report would not make it so! Public opinion is a powerful force, but it is not necessarily right. To be innocent, however, will not keep one from suffering from a slanderous report, but it will eliminate pains of conscience — and that helps immeasurably!

To add to Job's other problems, he was falsely accused. And, as usual, he had to endure this problem to an extreme degree. His accusers said of him that his wickedness was great and his iniquities infinite! They accused him of taking a pledge from his brother for nought, of stripping the naked of their clothing, of not giving water to the thirsty, of withholding food from the hungry, of sending the widows away empty, and of

breaking the arms of the fatherless (22:5-9). And this was said to the man whom God had judged to be "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." If such accusations were made of a man who was that good, can we who are not so good expect to fare any better?

Other great men also have endured such mistreatment. In fact, great men are noticed more in such fashion. "The taller the trees, the greater the winds by which they are tried." Joseph was imprisoned because of false accusations made by Potiphar's wife, David knew "fear on every side" because of the slander of his enemies, Naboth died because of Jezebel's false witnesses, and the apostle Paul was called a pestilent fellow and accused of profaning the temple, and Jesus was condemned to death for blasphemy! But he pronounced a blessing on those who endured wrongfully. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and

shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5, 11, 12).

Perhaps Nehemiah gives the best example of how to deal with such experiences. He had gone back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city. Enemies tried to stop his work. At first they ridiculed him. Then they tried to stop him by force. Their next effort was to compromise. When all that failed, they started a slanderous report (Nehemiah 6:6). Nehemiah did three things: (1) He denied the report. "There are no such things done as thou sayest." (2) He gave the source of the slander. "Thou feignest them out of thine own heart." (3) He prayed. "Now, therefore, O God, strengthen my hands" (Nehemiah 6:8-10). Can you think of a better way to handle such problems?

(To Be Continued)

The Fruit Of The Spirit



R. W. GRAY

Having enumerated a list of despicable things manifested in the life of one who yields to the sensual appetites of the flesh — things that degrade, defile and destroy both body and soul — Paul turns to the positive fruits produced in the life of one who is led by the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: . . ." (Gal. 5:22-23).

If we would prove ourselves whether we be in the faith, if we would know that Christ is in us, if we would determine that we are the true sons of God, being led by His Spirit, we must understand and apply the list of wonderful fruit against which there is no law. A clearer definition than is generally perceived needs to be set out in regard to each attribute and attitude selected by the inspired writer as evidences of the presence of the Spirit. In the series that follows we will attempt to cast some light upon these wonderful attributes, providing a better view of their incandescence than is immediately apparent.

LOVE

Students of the New Testament are not surprised to find LOVE heading the list. From "agape," it denotes "affection, good-will, benevolence" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 4). The fulfillment of the law is in one word, even in this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Gal. 5:14). Love, above all else, is the identifying mark of New Testament Christianity. The Lord said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). We betray a serious lack of that quality recognized by all as a Christ-like spirit when love is not expressed in word and in deed toward all men, and especially toward those of the household of faith.

Of AGAPE Thayer observes: "Of the love of men to men; especially of that love of Christians toward Christians which is enjoined and prompted by their religion, whether the love be viewed in the soul or as expressed: Mt. 24:12; I Cor. 13:1-4; 14:1-2; II Cor. 2:4; Gal. 5:6; I Jn. 4:7; Rev. 2:4, etc." It is used as well of the love of men toward God, the love of God toward men, God's love toward Christ,

and of Christ's love toward men.

A fruit of the Spirit, LOVE springs from a sincere heart and reveals itself in selfless service (I Pet. 1:22; I Jn. 3:18). Yea, "and hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him" (I Jn. 3:19). AGAPE cannot remain obscure. It must show itself in action. It is, therefore, one of the most distinguishable fruits of the Spirit (Jn. 3:16; I Jn. 3:16, 17). The characteristics are easily identified: "Love suffereth long, and is kind." Love envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up (I Cor. 13:4). One bearing this fruit is not easily provoked, does not behave unseemly, does not seek his own, but rather the good of others (I Cor. 13:5; 10:24). Love finds it difficult to believe an evil report against the object loved. Truth, not false reports, is love's delight (I Cor. 13:6). Love worketh no ill to his neighbor (Rom. 13:10). Such affection and good will, expressing themselves in sacrificial acts of benevolence, will never be viewed as feigned, but will be universally viewed as the essence of the Christian religion. Every act of worship, and every service rendered to man, must be prompted by love. Actions springing from other motives are empty and worthless (I Cor. 13:1-3; Gal. 5:6).

James contrasts a worldly, selfish attitude with this fruit of the Spirit when he writes: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish . . . 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 partiality, and without hypocrisy" (Jas. 3:14-17).

Love is, without doubt, that crowning grace, that bond of perfectness, that fulfilling virtue, that enduring quality of character, that makes all we do worth the effort (I Pet. 5:7; Col. 3:14; Rom. 13:10; I Cor. 13:13). If we do not find it present in our lives, the remaining fruits of the Spirit are meaningless. In its absence there can be no "joy and peace." We will present a summary definition of these latter fruits in a future article.

WHAT IS CHARITY?

It's silence when your words would hurt,
It's patience when your neighbor's curt,
It's deafness when the scandal flows,
It's thoughtfulness for another's woes,
It's promptness when stern duty calls,
It's courage when misfortune falls.

Modern Versions: Their New Nomenclature

(Continued From Page 1)

not know the difference between a "pastor" and a gospel "preacher"?? and this will only compound the confusion. Evidently Mr. Taylor did not know the difference, else he would have come forth with no such mistranslation as this. It totally lacks warrant from the Greek text and support from any of the reliable Bibles. (Does not every reader understand why this writer wishes the translator of the LBP had a different name other than TAYLOR?)

FROM THE COTTON PATCH VERSION

Just a few brief samples from THE COTTON PATCH VERSION. Here is Clarence Jordan's new list of names for the apostles in Luke 6:14-16, "They were: Simon (whom he also called ROCK) and his brother ANDY; JIM and JACK, and PHIL and BARTH, and MATT and TOM, and JIM ALPHAEUS, and SIMON the REBEL, and JUDAS JAMESON, and JUDAS ISCARIOT — who turned him in." The traitor's name was the only one which he did not mutilate in some way. We wonder if there is any significance in this! In Acts 2:36 the CPV has this to say, "The BOSS said to my BOSS, Be my right hand man while I put even your opponents under your control. Therefore let all AMERICA know beyond any doubt that God has made this same Jesus, whom you LYNCHED, both PRESIDENT and leader." We wonder how long it will be before people will be referring to God as "BOSS" in their prayer language. The prayer could then be addressed to BIG BOSS and could be closed in the name of LITTLE BOSS! Or again how long will it be before some will address God as FIRST PRESIDENT and close in the name of the SECOND PRESIDENT? The "you" and "your" innovation in prayers has not reached its full end yet! Let each reader keep in mind that the reliable Bibles still retain the "thee," "thou," "thine" and "thy" in their prayer language. But again: in Acts 2:38 the CPV says, "Rock said to them, RESHAPE your lives, and let each of you be INITIATED into the family of Jesus Christ so your sins can be dealt with; and you will receive the free gift of the Holy Spirit." How is that for a "dry-cleaning" version of Acts 2:38? The passage is as void of water as are the sands of the Sahara, and that is the way many people like Acts 2:38! Verse 41 of Acts 2 has the CPV saying, "So those who accepted his explanation were INITIATED, SWELLING the membership to about three thousand." (All emphases in this article have been mine—RRT.)

CONCLUSION

Have we not sustained our case that the new Bibles, so-called, have introduced a totally new nomenclature or new vocabulary to those who peruse such perverted products? Wisdom suggests LEAVE THEM ALONE!!

A Voice From The Past

JERRY H. WILSON

Several years ago, D. T. R. McLean, a Congregational minister, was converted from that denomination to the distinctive plea of the Restoration movement. The Congregational Church has always been known as an extremely liberal denomination and has gone through a series of merges with other liberal protestant groups to be now called the United Church of Christ. The following are six reasons why Mr. McLean gave for becoming a

New Testament Christian:

(1) The recognition of Scripture as the final authority in matters of faith and conduct. If answered in the Word of God, any question is settled. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17).

(2) The confession of faith that needs no revision and exalts Christ. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him...That thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:16 - 8).

(3) A definite way of becoming a Christian, and continuing as a Christian. "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...They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:39, 41-42).

(4) The weekly observance of the Lord's Supper which should and can keep us close to Christ and to the facts of His atonement and the second coming. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on he morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26).

(5) The emphasis on evangelism in extending the invitation to come to Christ, following every sermon. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16).

(6) The basis of unity made clear in Scripture. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21).

Brethren, we have too much to offer the world to start compromising and lose our distinctiveness! Let us sing out the message of salvation as never before. Remember, "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls (Jer. 6:16).

The Church Of Christ

WE COME to you with no denominational plea, but only in the name of Christ, desiring to help you in finding the true way of life, and hoping to be of service to you in every righteous way.

WE BELIEVE the Bible is the inspired word of God. See II Timothy 3:16, 17. The Bible does not merely contain our teaching; it alone is our teaching.

WE PREACH the New Testament way of salvation for the alien sinner.

Faith in Christ — John 3:16; Mark 16:16;

Repentance in the name of Christ — Acts 2:39; 17:30;

Confession of Faith in Christ — Romans

10:8-10; Matt. 10:32, 33; and

Baptism in the name of Christ — Acts 2:39; Roman 6:3, 4; Galatians 3:26, 27.

WE PLEAD for the New Testament Church which is made up of the saved — Acts 2:47 — is the body of Christ — Colossians 1:17—and is the house, or of Christ — Colossians 1:17—and is the house, or family of God—1 Timothy 3:15.

Obedying the Gospel makes one a Christian, and, at the same time a member of the body of Christ which is the Church of Christ — I Corinthians 12:27. All of God's children MUST be in his family, which is the church.

WE ENDEAVOR to worship "in spirit and in truth" — John 4:24 — sincerely, reverently, and scripturally. To change the worship as outlined in the New Testament is to destroy its simplicity and its value before God.

WE PRAY for the unity of believers in Christ, for so did he in John 17:20, 21. Paul urges Christians to be "of the same mind," and set forth the only basis for unity, in Ephesians 4:1-6.

WE REFUSE to sectarianize ourselves by wearing human names. We are simply humble Christians, as those in Acts 11:26 and I Peter 4:16, members of the Church of Christ — see Matthew 16:18 and Romans 16:16 — which he purchased with his own blood. See Acts 20:28.

WE INVITE YOU to come and study the Word of God with us. You can be just a Christian.

"Foot-In-Mouth" Predicament

STEVEN CLARK GOAD

How many times have you said something you wish you hadn't? O, the pain! Then after it is said, it is next to impossible to recall the rhetoric. An attorney was pleading the case of his farmer client who had lost a shipment of 24 pigs. He was prosecuting the trucking company that had lost the animals. The lawyer wanted to impress the jury with the magnitude of the loss, so he said, "Twenty-four pigs, Gentlemen! Twenty-four! Twice the number in the jury box!" Oops! Too late! The damage was done. The lawyer had offered his case at the altar of words.

A child of God lives with the same possibilities every day. He never really knows when he might say the wrong thing to the wrong person. But he does have one advantage in his favor. God's child has no ulterior motives behind his conversation with mankind. His approach to life's various matters will be forthright and predictable. One objective which he will have is his manner of communicating with others is the ever present possibility of being able to share the greatest news in the world — Jesus Christ.

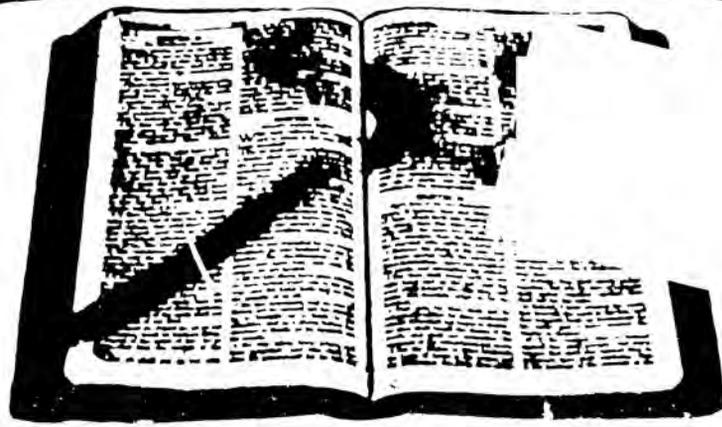
As long as human language exists, there will be those who misunderstand. But as long as God's child is around, he will know what he is saying. God's formula for intercommunication without worry or fear of being taken out of context is that we continue "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15).

Avoiding bad situations cannot be done unless we have some special gift of prediction. The uncomfortable encounters will be with us as long as there are people on earth. Speak gently. Speak kindly. Speak when the need arises, even if what you say might be controversial. Still, this doesn't necessarily guarantee that we will never be misquoted or taken out of context, but it is a sure-fire way of not regretting what we do say. — 1232 Mosswood Court, Jeffersonville, Indiana 47130.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



words of truth"
:25
? by Jesus Christ"
17

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Watch Your Deeds, Heaven Is

In previous studies we have suggested that we need to watch both our hearts and tongues, because heaven surely is. In addition to our thoughts and speech we also need to WATCH OUR DEEDS; HEAVEN IS. This would include our habits, our daily deeds, our works either for the Lord or against his cause, what we wear in public, where we go, with whom we go, the friendships we form, the recreation we choose, etc.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT SAYS

There is no way of man that escapes the ALL-SEEING EYE of Jehovah God. The Sweet Singer of Israel surveyed this same sentiment and expressed words that are weighty indeed with wisdom and saturated with sobriety. He wrote in Psalm 139: "Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, And art acquainted with all my ways . . . Thou hast beset me behind and before, And laid thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high; I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whether shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, And thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness hideth not from thee, But the night shineth as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (Psalm 139:3, 5-12). Solomon said it this way in the book of Proverbs: "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings" (Prov. 5:21).

THE TEACHING OF THE JUDGMENT DAY PASSAGES

The Judgment Day passages in the Bible make crystal clear the fact that God is watching the lives and deeds of everyone of us, and that they are being registered in his book of infallible and unfailing memory. The evil deeds which are never forgiven by merits of Christ's blood, will face us in that day of sobering trial and pondering examination. Solomon expressed the matter this way in the

closing verses of the book of Ecclesiastes: "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. 12:13-14). Somewhat earlier Solomon had said to the youth of his day and those who would read his inspired words in subsequent times, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment" (Eccles. 11:9). In his great message on Mars' Hill in Athens, Paul declared: "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). In Romans 14:10, 12 Paul wrote so tersely, ". . . for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God . . . So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God." To the Corinthians Paul wrote, "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God and I hope that we are made manifest also in your conscience" (II Cor. 5:10-11). In the great judgment scene in Revelation 20 the apostle of Patmos wrote, "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

Our deeds include whether we do the will of the Heavenly Father or not. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, made it amply clear that only those who do his Father's will have heaven in their future. Let us read reverently what he said in Matthew 7:21-23: "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 who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The sacred scribe of Hebrews reminds each of his readers that obedience is an imperative to those who want to go to heaven. He wrote in Hebrews 5:8-9, ". . . though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." The final beatitude of the Bible projects the importance of doing Jehovah's will. John wrote 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."

We need to watch our daily deeds; Heaven is! We need to watch our habits; Heaven is! We need to watch where we go; Heaven does! We need to watch the selection of friends; Heaven is! We need to watch what we wear in public places; Heaven is! We need to watch how we employ our time; Heaven does! Let us not forget that we will one day appear before the Great Judge of the quick and dead, and then will give account of our deeds in the body. Every sinful deed on our record which has not been forgiven by the merits of Christ's blood, will face us in that day of final reckoning. What a sobering realization this is to every responsible mind.

CONCLUSION

There was once a little boy who was taken by his father as he was about to steal corn from another's field. When he arrived at the field the father looked to the north, to the south, to the east, and to the west. He saw no one. He began to pluck the ears of corn and put them into the sack. The little boy said, "Daddy, you forgot to look one direction." The father was quickly startled and thought perhaps the boy had seen someone he had

(Continued on Page 4)

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Flavil H. Nichols
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FROM
THE EDITOR

Purposes Of Restoration

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

Churches of Christ in America today are heirs of a distinct movement that sprang up on this continent at the turn of the nineteenth century. Noble men and women dedicated their lives to the goal of restoring in their day the original Christianity of the first century. They sensed the futility of attempting to reform the existing denominations. They concluded that the only practical way to have pure Christianity was to bypass all the existing bodies and begin from "scratch" with the New Testament as their sole guide and blueprint.

REASONS AND MOTIVES

No doubt each man who contributed to this movement had many reasons for his efforts. It is also most likely that none of the leaders ever wrote down for posterity ALL of their motives. Yet we can glean some all-important goals that were shared by all the great restoration pioneers. For the sake of our readers who do not yet share our faith, we would hasten to add that the Restoration movement of the nineteenth century was not an organized movement with a governing body over it. Not even a single individual can be looked upon as THE leader or spokesman. That very first generation saw a number of talented men in widely-scattered parts of the land, with distinctly-different religious backgrounds, launch their own attempt to recover pure Christianity. This was done without an organized, coordinated effort. It is fascinating to trace the growth of this restoration movement and to read of the struggles to arrive at that pure religion of the



JOHN WADDEY

first century.

1. The restorers wanted to overcome the problem of religious divisions that plagued the believers in Christ. They felt unity could only be realized in Christ and upon the basis of His New Covenant. All saints should speak the same thing, and be of the same mind and judgment. I Cor. 1:10.

2. They wanted to restore the original simplicity and purity of worship of the Lord's Church. The centuries had produced numerous additions and subtractions to the true worship of God outlined in the New Testament. The Lord's Supper needed to be restored to its proper place in the Lord's Day worship. Every saint deserved the privilege to eat the bread and drink the fruit of the vine upon the first day of the week Acts 20:7. The accumulation of such unscriptural items as incense, candles, holy water, images, crucifixes, and prayer beads needed to be swept away.

3. They sought to discover and proclaim again the gospel plan of salvation first spoken by the Lord and then by his holy apostles Heb. 2:3. Knowing that sinners could not be saved by faith only (Jas. 2:24), or by works done in their own righteousness (Tit. 3:5), they sought and found that way revealed by Christ. The New Testament posited salvation upon faith in Christ, repentance of sin, confession of faith, and immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ Mk. 16:16; Rom. 10:9, 10; Acts 2:38.

4. They desired to restore the local congregation of Christians to its rightful place. Each community of saints should be self-governing under Christ and his inspired word. Christ knew nothing of popes or patriarchs dominating his people. Elders (not preachers) were to rule the congregation Acts 20:17, 28-31. Associations, conventions, synods, conferences, and councils to govern the churches were all the creations of man, and needed to be eliminated.

5. They longed to exalt the Bible to its proper place as the final and complete authority in Christianity. They had seen the damage done by the human creeds of the churches. They rejected the traditions of men Matt. 15:6-9. Their plea was "back to the Bible." It was "to the law and to the testimony" for them. Is. 8:20. They wanted to find, and abide in, the doctrine of Christ - II John 9.

6. They yearned to rid the world of sectarian names in religion and to restore the name of Christ to its honored place. They were not ashamed to be merely "Christians" - I Pet. 4:16. Since the church is Christ's by right of purchase, why not call it "the church of Christ" even as did Paul? Rom. 16:16. Of course they objected not to any other BIBLICAL name for saints or congregations.

7. They felt an obligation to rid "Christianity" of all those corruptions and errors that had crept in over the centuries, whether in faith or in practice, whether large or small. They were convinced that this could only be accomplished by a rejection of all the denominations of men, and by a complete return to the divine blueprint laid out in God's word - II Tim. 1:13; Heb. 8:5.

That first generation of men succeeded admirably in their efforts. Across the land a mighty wave of God-fearing people joined hands in the effort. We would not be so bold as to claim that we have perfectly reproduced the total program of Christ today. But I hasten to affirm that those of your neighbors known as "the churches of Christ" are diligently striving after that goal. Every saint in every generation must in his own life dedicate himself to that noble effort - i.e., to be nothing more, nor less, than the kind of Christian as were Peter, James, John, Paul,

and a myriad of others we read of in the New Testament. Will you not join with us in this honorable pursuit?

Evolution Or Creation??

STEVE WILLIAMS

A keen, young university student was about to accept evolution. He wrote to an older friend concerning his beliefs. The reply of the older friend has many excellent thoughts in it. First he reminded the young student of the serious implications of evolution.

If, as you say, you are really serious about becoming an evolutionist, you should know at the outset that you are immediately going to have to make some pretty drastic changes, changes not only in the way you think and reason, but in the way you speak as well. Some words must be dropped from your vocabulary once and for all, for no good evolutionist would be caught dead with them on his lips.

First, you must forever blank out the thought of God, lest by a slip you should speak of Him as a reality. Evolutionists recoil at the thought...consequently, when speaking of life, our world, or the universe about us, you must never use the term "creation." Creation infers (implies) a Creator. As an evolutionist, you must never concede this.

Likewise, you must exercise extreme caution in how you use the word "design." It is, of course, acceptable when used in connection with something man-made, but never, never speak of "design" anywhere on any level in connection with creation, for to do so infers (implies) a Designer....

"Purpose" is another richly-meaningful word when used in relation to life. But as an evolutionist, forget it! It is inconceivable that man's existence has any meaning whatsoever if man himself happens to be an accidental confluence of atoms. Any evolutionist who uses this word in relation to life, exposes irrational inconsistency. (BIBLE SCIENCE NEWSLETTER, 13 (Dec., 1975), p. 1.)

The writer went on to note that the young student must strip his vocabulary of its most exalted concepts if he consistently accepts evolution. This reveals just one of the many serious implications of evolution.

(To be continued)

Minute Meditation

LEON SANDERSON

A talkative worker spent most of his time bemoaning the fact that fortune seemed to smile on everybody but him. When another employee with less seniority was promoted, he complained: "It's the same old story. The other guys get all the breaks. When is MY ship going to come in?"

"Perhaps," suggested a fellow-worker, "it will when you learn that steam has replaced wind."

Someone remarked "Talk is cheap," meaning that it is relatively easy to say something without acting upon it.

One of the characteristics of our age seems to be a hesitancy to put our money, energy, time or talents where our mouth is. We may refer to this as a lack of commitment.

However, the Bible puts the emphasis on doing. "Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

As this day progresses for you, place your emphasis on action. At the end of the way it's not what you've just thought about that counts but what you've done.

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter forty-two

"I know that thou canst do all things,
and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted.
'Who is this that hides counsel without
knowledge?'

Therefore I have uttered what I did not
understand,

things too wonderful for me, which I did not
know.

'Hear, and I will speak;
I will question you, and you declare to me.'
I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees thee;
therefore I despise myself,
and repent in dust and ashes."

— verses 2-6.

I SAID TOO MUCH

Job 42:2-6

Hardly had those words been spoken until you could have bitten your tongue — if that would have recalled them. Remember? Who hasn't had an experience like that? Unfortunately, almost everyone knows by experience what it tastes like to get his foot in his mouth. We know the embarrassment that follows or the hurt that can be inflicted, or the self-disgust that comes from words carelessly spoken. And when words are spoken, they cannot be "unspoken." When one says the wrong thing, he may send an apology out to attempt to cover it, but the word itself can never be recalled.

*Boys flying kites may pull in their
white-winged birds;*

*But you can't do this when you are flying
words.*

*Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall
back dead;*

But you can't kill them, once they are said.

— Unknown

And the tragedy of it all is that words improperly spoken have such tremendous power to injure. "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:5, 6). Bad words — ugly words — accusing words — can do so much harm! They can separate friends, embitter the heart, implant hatred, discourage the fainthearted, slander the innocent, destroy confidence, dishonor God, and lower the dignity of man. There is no heartache more severe than that brought on by words which should not be spoken.

A careless word may kindle strife;

A cruel word may wreck a life.

A bitter word may hate instill;

A brutal word may smite and kill.

— Unknown

The wise man of the Old Testament made several piercing statements about this. Consider these: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin" (Proverbs 10:19). "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Proverbs 13:3). "He that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief"

(Proverbs 17:20), and, "A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul" (Proverbs 18:7). David spoke of those "who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words" (Psalm 64:3). But in spite of such warnings, we go on saying things we ought not!

Again, we note that Job knew this problem, too. Under trying circumstances he spoke, first in defense of his own goodness, and then of his bewilderment of what was happening. He said so much that Zophar shouted: "Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?" (11:2). Job puzzled over the moral judgments of God. He wanted to face Him and argue his case. But when he got the opportunity, his whole attitude changed.

Job realized quickly that he had said too much. And he was talking to God when he did it, too! No doubt, he wanted to bite his tongue! But all that he could do was repent and apologize. And he did it well. "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no

thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not...Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (42:2-6).

Most problems, like most diseases, are easier to prevent than to cure. And nowhere is that more applicable than to those problems we bring on ourselves with careless words. Too often the theory, "Think twice before you speak," in practice becomes, "Speak twice before you think." A little prevention, a little care, will go a long way to avoid this problem.

If your lips would keep from slips

Of five things have a care:

*To whom you speak, of whom you speak,
And how, and when, and where.*

— Unknown

But when prevention is passed by, and we find ourselves suffering because of what we have said, follow Job's example by giving a quick and sincere apology, and determine to do better the next time.

(To be continued)

Obscene Music

TOM CHILDERS

Vernon, Ala.

Almost everyone likes some kind of music. Americans spend millions of dollars each year just to listen to music. Each one reading these words probably has at least one radio in your car and one in your home. Everywhere we go we find music. Some go to bed, and wake up, listening to music. We use music in worship to God, and we use it in our every-day lives to help us enjoy life.

While music has its good side, it also has its dangerous side. Why? Because Satan has gone into the music business in a big way. He has added profanity to some of today's music. The hard rock music often is Satan's tool to teach our young people to rebel, to use drugs, and illicit sex. Country music has not been left untouched by the Devil's work either. Too much of it has become nothing more than an open mockery of marriage.

Let us emphasize that we are not opposed to good music. There is nothing sinful about decent music. There are over 500 references to music in the Bible. The New Testament teaches Christians to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 5:13). Not all music is of the Devil. Music that is listened to or played in settings other than worship is not sinful. Some music is good, and carries a message that can benefit all who hear it. Most of us have times in which we need to listen to music and be refreshed (I Samuel 16:23).

Let us also emphasize that we are not opposed to radio stations. Radio is our hobby and we own an amateur radio station. We also use radio in our preaching. During the two years we have been in Vernon, we have preached over 460 fifteen-minute Bible lessons over the local radio station. Radio is an excellent means of carrying out what Jesus taught in Mark 16:15.

Our concern has been over the invasion of profanity that has taken over television and radio. Several weeks ago, we were listening to an FM radio station in Lamar county with our children. The disc jockey announced with excitement the release of a new hit entitled, "That's D——— Good Country Music." The singer of the song repeated the phrase several times. We immediately called the station and told him we did not appreciate the playing of that kind of music. He replied, "Well, it's on the charts." We asked him if that meant he had to play it, and he said, No.

The reply usually is, "Well, you don't have to listen to it if you don't like it; that's what the on-off knob is for." We agree that we should cut off such music but we believe Christians have an obligation to go one step farther. We firmly believe every concerned Christian (not just preachers) should voice a strong disapproval to such profane music. Remember, Christians are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). That means it is our duty to preserve, promote, and encourage righteousness. Since cursing and profanity are sinful, all Christians should stand opposed to it regardless of the source.

Most of you would not tolerate for one minute a visitor in your home who shouted vulgar and profane words. But set the same words to music, and somehow it becomes respectable (?) and proper for young ears to hear!

There is not much chance that Christians can influence the major networks to take profanity off television, because too many people like it. However, if more concerned citizens would rise up and cut off profanity on the local radio stations, then let those in charge know they did not appreciate the kind of music being played, we would not have the present problems. If enough merchants who buy time from the stations would let the proper people know, in no uncertain terms, that they will not tolerate obscene music, we might just see a change in the kind of music played.

A disc jockey some time ago said he played a song that he felt was obscene. He just knew he would hear angry replies; but he said, "Not one called to object!"

Music can be a blessing; it can be a curse. We, the listening public, determine which kind we get. Silence is a vote for the devil's kind of music. "Everybody is talking about it, but nobody's doing anything about it" describes not only the weather, but the action of far too many Christians.

It is not so much what you say,
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use
As the tones you use to convey it.
For words come from the mind,
And grow by study and art;
But tones leap from the inner self
And reveal the state of the heart.

Watch Your Deeds, Heaven Is

(Continued From Page 1)

missed. He quickly demanded which direction of the little fellow. The little fellow said, "Daddy, you forgot to look UP!" The boy had more moral integrity than did the father. The boy had an awareness of Jehovah's All-Seeing Eye that the father had ignored. The boy was wise; the father had been foolish. The father could be taught though by the sensitive soul of his son. He immediately poured out all the corn upon the ground and went home with his wise son and an empty sack. Does not the Bible talk of the fact that "a little child shall lead them?" This little child had changed a beastly form of flagrant dishonesty into responsible manhood, and that is a thought emphasized in Isaiah 11.

Beloved readers, let us watch our heart; Heaven is! Let us watch our lips; Heaven is! Let us watch our deeds; Heaven is! No thought, no word, and no deed escape the ever-watchful attention of Jehovah God. He possesses the ALL SEEING EYE (Heb. 4:13).

Is Smoking A Sin?

CECIL MAY JR

Recently in reciting a list of "sins," I included "smoking" in the list. Not surprisingly, questions were raised: Is smoking a "sin?" Should we preach against it?

I have some good friends, devoted Christians, who answer, "No!" One said to me several years ago, "I believe the Lord knew how to spell TOBACCO." He meant, of course, that had the Lord intended to prohibit smoking cigarettes he could have specifically prohibited it. But that does not necessarily follow. The Lord no doubt also knew how to spell MARIJUANA and AMPHETAMINE (even though I did not; I had to look them up!), and HEROIN; but these words do not appear in the Bible. No specific prohibition of their use or misuse is to be found. Yet I know of few if any who do not recognize their illegal use, or abuse, to be sin. I do not intend by that to suggest that smoking cigarettes is the same as the abuse of hard drugs; but I am suggesting that a thing does not have to be condemned by a specific Biblical prohibition for it to be sin. Some things are condemned by Biblical principles.

Are there, then, any such principles that condemn smoking? I believe there are at least two.

In answer to a broad statement made by certain members of the Corinthian Church, namely, "All things are lawful unto me," Paul accepted the statement with limitations (See I Cor. 6:12-22; 10:23). One of his limitations was: "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." That which enslaves, which conquers a man's spirit and will, is to be avoided. Does smoking do that? Ask the constant smoker!

Secondly, the evidence that smoking is harmful to health and body, and increases dramatically the incidence of heart disease and various forms of cancer, has mounted steadily over the years to the point that it is now incontrovertible. No respectable authority seriously questions it. Even cigarette companies have had to admit it on their packages and in their advertising. Certainly since our bodies are temples of God's Spirit (I Cor. 6:19-20), they should not be unnecessarily harmed. As our body is to be offered in living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1), the whole concept of Christian stewardship

would mitigate against any abuse of the body.

Defenders of smoking answer this by pointing to other practices they suggest are also harmful: drinking coffee, drinking Cokes, overeating, cyclamates, red food dye, and hundreds of other things in common use are also linked to cancer, they remind us. Of course, two wrongs do not make a right. If those things are wrong, that does not make smoking right. However, some of the things mentioned have just not been nearly so thoroughly demonstrated to be harmful as has smoking tobacco. I drink coffee. But if there is ever even one-tenth as much evidence against coffee as there now is against cigarettes, will quit coffee with hardly a regret. I promise that.

Overeating, on the other hand, probably is as harmful, or nearly so, as smoking. There is indeed something incongruous about a 280 pound preacher with a plate piled high with fried food, potatoes and gravy, rolls, butter, and pie, talking about the sin of smoking. But I emphasize again, his wrong does not make smoking right.

I appeal to smokers: For Christ's sake, for your health's sake, for your children's sake, for the church's sake; quit!

Women's Liberation Gone To Seed!

RAY HAWK

In the past few years we have heard about women's liberation. Some of the tenets advocated by women are valid, and should have been recognized and practiced many, many years ago. On the other hand, some of the practices followed by the liberation movement are downright ridiculous.

Some elements of women's lib want to remove all words or phrases that elevate man. They feel this is a threat and an abuse of their rights. Therefore, policemen are now referred to as police persons; salesman is salesperson; chairman is chairperson; and on and on it goes, weaving its silly web wherever the English language does not suit them.

It seems that these extremists among the women want to erase the male element from our language. They should go to the logical conclusion of their practice! The word "woman" has MAN in it; therefore, libbers ought to push Congress and the country to change that to WOPERSON! Of course, even that will not do, if one is to be consistent. The word "person" that is now being attached to words, replacing the expression "man," ends with the word, "son." PerSON! A son is of the male species! Therefore, the word "person" should be changed to perDAUGHTER! Now, when we come back to the word "woman," it would have to be changed to woperdaughter!

Yes, in some cases, the women libbers have taken this liberation bit too far! It has gone to seed!

Uncommon Courtesy

DUB McCLISH

Courtesy and kindness ought to "become natural" to a Christian. Rudeness, insensitivity, sharp and cutting words, are no part of the refined behavior that should characterize the elect. Such traits have caused countless doors to be forever slammed shut against the gospel. These ill manners are born and bred in utter selfishness, and in failure consider the possibility that fellow-beings might have feelings. Those who boast, "I always say what I think and everyone knows it," ought to be sentenced to a year's confinement with none but their own kind. Then maybe—just maybe—they would

awaken to their ugliness. If these boors could hear what others think of their total insensitivity to their neighbors' feelings, they would surely be ashamed. For myself, when I run across those who must spill every thought they ever have (usually with the volume wide-open), I avoid them. Generally, they can hardly ever be helped, because they already know all there is to know!

While this utterly childish disposition may be found in all ages of people, it seems to be most common among those who are older. It appears that some reason that length of years gives them the right to run everybody's business, be downright discourteous, and regular grouches! Not only have the unsaved been repelled by such rudeness, many a church has been divided because some loud-mouth sounded off and wounded someone's soul.

"People shouldn't be so sensitive," you say. Perhaps not. But—no "perhaps" about it—people should not be so ill-mannered and thoughtless of others! Red the American Standard Version: "Love suffereth long, and is kind" (I Cor. 13:4); "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another," "Be not wise in your own conceits" (Rom. 12:10, 16); "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering" (Co. 3:12); "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law" (Ga. 5:22-23). There is no place on earth where kindness, gratitude, thoughtfulness of others and courtesy are unwelcome. How beautiful the life adorned with such increasingly rare jewels!

Faith And Works

G. F. RAINES

The fact that people are saved by grace through faith is one of the fundamental truths of the gospel of Christ (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Paul says: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1, 2).

James vividly contrasts faith which is alive with faith which is dead, saying: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only....For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:24, 26).

Peter said to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, "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).

We are saved by "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6), and "this is the love of God that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

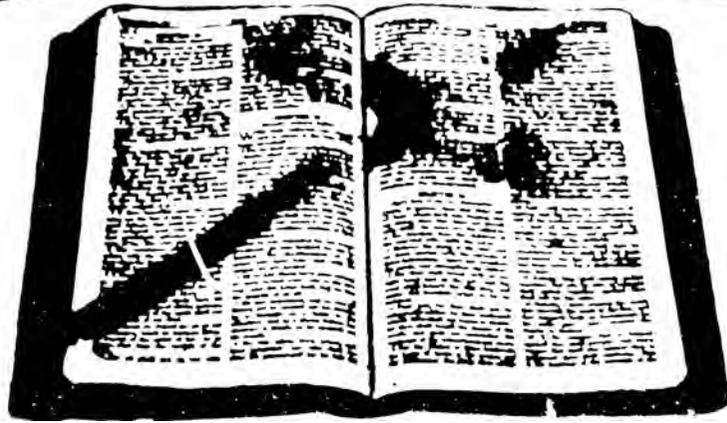
If you want to know what one must do to be saved by faith, please read Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:39; II Pet. 1:5-11; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10.

"Plastic surgery has done much to improve the human nose, but so far has failed to keep it out of other people's business."

* * * * *

A man is no bigger than the way he treats the least of his fellows.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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The New Bibles And Their Perversion Of Isaiah 7:14

It is the writer's confirmed conviction and just judgment that one of the most notable perversions found within any of the new Bibles occurs in the rendering of Isaiah 7:14 as given by the Revised Standard Version. The passage, as rendered in the RSV, reads: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign, Behold a YOUNG WOMAN shall conceive and



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The New English Bible also uses the term "YOUNG WOMAN" in its rendering of Isaiah 7:14. Thus our remarks will be directed against both of these dangerous versions. What we say in regard to these two will apply also to all the other modern speech translations which commit the same grievous folly with this verse.

THE "ALMAH" OF ISAIAH 7:14

"Young woman" in these renderings (RSV and NEB) is translated from the Hebrew term ALMAH. Both the King James and the American Standard translate the passage "virgin", which is eminently correct. A "young woman's" being with child would not constitute a "sign" of a coming miraculous event. If so, what would it be? Such has been happening since the beginning of time. But a "virgin's" being with child would be a remarkable "sign." Only ONE TIME in the history of humanity has a "virgin" conceived and brought forth a child whose name was to be Immanuel. That was in the case of Mary, the Galilean virgin, and the Babe of Bethlehem, as recorded in Luke 2 and Matthew 2. Upon this coming event Isaiah's prophetic eye was most assuredly cast when he penned Isaiah 7:14. Upon that very prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 the angel's eye was firmly fixed when he was dispatched from heaven to earth to allay Joseph's fears of taking Mary to wife due to her totally-unexpected and deeply-perplexing pregnancy during the period of their espousal and before they came together as husband and wife (Matt. 1:18-25). Upon that very prophecy the inspired eye of Matthew was royally riveted when he wrote: "Now all this

was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:22-23).

SOME QUESTIONS FOR THE DUAL FULFILLMENT ADVOCATES

For those who contend that Isaiah 7:14 was fulfilled both in Isaiah's day as well as in the coming of the Babe of Bethlehem we have some questions. We believe these questions need answers from the proponents of this dual fulfillment theory — and that it is the kindest thing it can be called.

What was the name of the virgin that so conceived and brought forth a son in Isaiah's day without the aid of any man? What was the name of the child that was virgin-born in eighth century B.C. Judah? Was he really God with us in human flesh? If so, there have been two Incarnations — one eight centuries B.C., and the one of the Christ in the days of the Roman Kings. Were they two different Immanuels? Or the one Immanuel that appeared in human flesh at two different periods? Did Deity reside in human flesh in eighth century Judah, and again in what we know as the first century of this era? Did both occasions then constitute the fullness of time? Was there an atonement made by the virgin-born Immanuel of 800 B.C.? If so, why was there an additional one needed eight centuries later? If not, what was the purpose of the virgin-born Immanuel in eighth century Judah?

It will not do to contend that the one spoken of and fulfilled in eighth century Judah was a virgin when Isaiah gave the message but was not a virgin when the conception occurred and the birth took place. That would not be either a virgin conception of a child and certainly not a virgin birth! It will not do to say that the child that was born in eighth century Judah was just a man and not the real Immanuel — not really Deity clothed in human flesh.

Beloved readers, do you not agree that these questions are vital and germane to the issue at hand? Do you not agree that they desperately need some answers from those who have long contended for both a near and a distant fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14?

This writer would like to go on public record again and within the pages of WORDS OF TRUTH as denying that Isaiah 7:14 had a fulfillment in the days of eighth century Judah. We fully and firmly believe there has

been only one virgin to conceive while she was a virgin, and give birth as a virgin, to one virgin-born son. This has long been the position of the greatest preachers and teachers of the Bible among us. The doctrine is not necessarily so because they taught it; the doctrine is true because the Bible teaches it; and they taught the truth relative to the matter. That virgin's name was Mary of Nazareth in Galilee (Luke 1). The virgin-born son was Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:22-23).

We do not envy the task of those who try to come up with the virgin, and virgin-born son, in Isaiah's day. We have long requested their names; and to this time no one has supplied us with the virgin mother and virgin son of eighth century Judah. In fact, leave out Mary of Nazareth, and virgin-mother is a biological contradiction of terms. There has been but one mother who was a virgin at the time she gave birth to a child. Baseless assumptions will not answer the extended challenge; documented Scriptural proof is what is demanded. Surely the scholars who take this double fulfillment theory seriously will not have their long-prized scholarship (????) forsake them at this needed point!! How strange and humiliating that would be for the so-called scholarly sages of this theory. This writer has extended this challenge in public before, and in print. To date it has not been seriously answered.

HOW SHOULD "ALMAH" BE DEFINED AND TRANSLATED?

This is a vital, fundamental question in any detailed analysis of Isaiah 7:14. Young (in his Analytical Concordance) says the term meant "Concealment, unmarried female." Thus she was one who was unmarried; one who had never been known by a man; one whose body had been concealed from all men. In a very timely and exceedingly scholarly article for the "Old Reliable" which was entitled, "The Virgin Birth," Brother Guy N. Woods wrote so ably, "Moreover, that the Hebrew word ALMAH signifies only an unmarried woman, and a true virgin, is clear from an induction of its entire biblical usage. Psalm 68:25 (damsel); Exodus 2:8 (maid); Proverbs 30:19 (maid); Genesis 24:43 (virgin); Song of Solomon 1:3 (virgins); 6:8 (virgins); Isaiah 7:14 (virgin). A careful analysis of these passages — all of the instances in which the word ALMAH (translated virgin in Isaiah 7:14) appears — reveals that the term is never

(Continued on Page 4)

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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FROM
THE EDITOR

More Regarding Acceptable Praise

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

In a previous article in WORDS OF TRUTH this writer noted that singing, not playing a mechanical instrument, nor making unintelligent sounds as in humming, is the kind of music required in Christian worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). A well-written article by Ray Hawk exposed the folly of substituting either humming, whistling, or an "um-bah, bah," as so-called "background music" for the singing done by others.



R. W. GRAY

We must remember, however, that certain positive things are required in offering the sacrifice of praise in song. The inspired writer said, "singing, making melody in your heart unto the Lord." It is the soul filled with the Spirit by the word of God that dwells richly within, that produces the music that flows from the lips, going outward to fellow worshippers and upward to God. (See Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15.) This is the music heaven requires.

A rote-like recitation of words, even when expressed with a melodic voice, is not the music sanctioned by the Lord. The would-be worshipper who recites words without intending an admonition to fellow Christians, or who has no thought of offering sacrifice of praise to Almighty God, is not offering the spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (I Pet. 2:5).

The Bible does not teach that we are to simply "listen to singing," but that each must be a participant in the singing done. Listening, though bringing certain admoni-

tions, is only a half of that required. Nor have we offered an acceptable sacrifice of praise by simply "thinking about the sentiment of the song" sung by others.

May it be noted that we are discussing the music offered by saints in a Christian assembly, not the private devotions of the heart that may, and often does, characterize a Christian in his daily life. Reflection in silence upon many spiritual truths is acceptable in private devotion and communion (Psa. 1:1-2). Silent prayer has its place in the heart (Psa. 19:14). In this manner, therefore, we may sometime meditate upon the words of a meaningful Christian hymn, psalm, or spiritual song. But in the assembly we are to "speak" words that convey intelligent thought, whether it be in sermon, in the leading of the prayers, or in the songs that we sing (I Cor. 14:15).

It is expected, yea it is required, that those who lead the prayers in the assembly speak in an audible fashion that permits others to answer with an "Amen!" (I Cor. 14:16). Paul

said the man who cannot speak in the tongue of his audience must remain silent in the church (I Cor. 14:23). And it is just as imperative that those who sing make every effort to see that their message is conveyed to others. In this way only do we "edify" others (I Cor. 14:3-5, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16). Instances of "round" singing that occurs because of carelessness or indifference should be eliminated from our assemblies. Those who lead us should insist that we speak our words together so as to be understood. Good singing is far from the BEST argument to be made against the mechanical instrument, but it can be an effective one. Let us learn to SING and to make melody in OUR HEARTS unto the Lord. Let us give conscious effort to the matter of TEACHING and ADMONISHING one another in songs, hymns, and spiritual songs. It is not enough that we look at the negative side of the music question; we must become enthusiastically involved in the positive aspects of the God-honored science of singing.

Horoscopes And Other Nonsense

RUBEL SHELLY

The present revival of interest in the occult is a testimony to the spiritual bankruptcy of mankind. William Blatty's novel THE EXORCIST has been on the best-seller list for 52 weeks. The 1968 movie ROSEMARY'S BABY has spawned a whole series of occult successors. Astrology, crystal-gazing, fortune-telling, palmistry and divination are reaching epidemic proportions. Horoscopes are published daily in an astonishing number of newspapers. All kinds of people will talk seriously about their signs in the Zodiac. TIME magazine says of this wave of occultism: "Yet for all its trivial manifestations in tea-leaf readings and ritual geegaws, for all the outright nuts and charlatans it attracts, occultism cannot be dismissed as mere fakery or faddishness. Clearly, it is born of a religious impulse and in many cases it becomes in effect a substitute faith" (June 19, 1972, p. 65).

The teaching of the Word of God is quite clear with regard to such things. Sorcery was a sin for which persons were put to death under the Law of Moses (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 20:27). Of the person who put confidence in astrologers and fortune tellers, God said, "If a person turns to mediums and wizards . . . I will set my face against that person" (Lev. 20:6). When the Israelites went into the Promised Land and dispossessed the heathen and superstitious people who had dwelled there previously, God warned them against taking up their evils with regard to the "reading of the stars," etc. "For these nations, which you are about to dispossess,

give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has now allowed you to do so" (Deut. 18:14).

Astrology, with its presupposition of the influence of heavenly bodies on human affairs, is altogether antagonistic to Christian faith in a personal God who created and controls the universe by the word of his power. Occultism is a denial of the providence of God in the affairs of men. It is a form of idolatry in that it replaces the worship of the Creator with the worship of things which have been created.

A fact pointed up to the Christian by the present interest in occultism is the felt need of men in our generation to believe that there is a world beyond the one in which we live, and that there is some sort of spiritual help available to us as we live out our lives upon the earth. But the satisfaction for such a need cannot come through astrology and witchcraft. The satisfaction of man's real and deep spiritual longings is found only in the knowledge of the true God of the Bible and his will for our lives!

Yes, a spirit world does exist. It is just as real as this material world with which we are familiar. A battle is taking place between the forces of God and Satan which involves those who live in both the seen and unseen worlds (Cf. Eph. 6:12). The souls of men are at stake in this conflict. All the trappings of occultism are instruments of Satan to destroy faith in the true God, and must therefore be opposed by Christians. We have all we need through the Bible, prayer, and divine providence!

Beatitudes Of A Leader

Blessed is the leader who has not sought the high places, but who has been into service because of his ability and willingness to serve.

Blessed is the leader who knows where he is going, why he is going, and how to get there.

Blessed is the leader who knows how to lead without being dictatorial; true leaders are humble.

Blessed is the leader who seeks for the best

for those he serves.

Blessed is the leader who marches with the group, interprets correctly the signs on the pathway that leads to success.

Blessed is the leader who has his head in the clouds, and his feet on the ground.

Blessed is the leader who considers leadership an opportunity for service.

—Selected

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter nine

*"My days are swifter than a runner;
they flee away, they see no good.
They go by like skiffs of reed,
like an eagle swooping on the prey."*

— verses 25, 26.

TIME IS SWIFT Job 9:25, 26

It's gone! And where did it go? Twelve more pages of the calendar have been ripped off. And now it is time for a new calendar. Wasn't it only last week that we got the old one? Could the New Year's baby already be old and bearded and carrying a sickle? It must be, because those days are carefully "X'd" off the old pages!

And while the years have rolled by, indelible changes have been made. For millions, these flying pages of the calendar mean that children have grown up and left home, the old house needs repairing, younger and more energetic people are getting the attention, memories take more time, and the liniment bottle has to be kept closer at hand. And it all happened so quickly! Job was not old in years, but he knew this feeling, too. He expressed it beautifully: "Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey." Quite descriptive for a day before electricity, jets, atomic power, and space travel, isn't it? We know how he felt, for time flies for us, too.

It hasn't always been that way. Do you remember childhood? It was so long between Christmases. It seemed as though that magic sixteenth birthday would never arrive. School must have been a life-long career — at least it seemed that way. It is hard to believe that a year then was the same length as a year now!

When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept;

When as a youth I laughed and talked, time walked;

When I became a full-grown man, time ran;

When older still I daily grew, time flew;

Soon I shall find in traveling on, time gone.

— Unknown

Soon, it will all be over. Did you ever consider some of the descriptions of the brevity of life given in the Bible, the book of life? From the words of Job alone we find these: swifter than a weaver's shuttle . . . as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away . . . swifter than a post . . . as the swift ships . . . as the eagle that hasteth to the prey . . . my days are few . . . of few days and full of trouble . . . like a flower, and is cut down . . . as a shadow, and continueth not.

Time, instead of being a blessing, is often a problem. It seems that there is not enough of it. The rhythm of life is hurry, hurry, hurry. Even in childhood we remember two dreaded daily dictums involving time: "It is time to go to bed," and, "It is time to get up." Instead of adulthood's relieving the time-shortage, it became more acute. Pressures sometimes suggest we are about to be crucified on a clock. How often we catch ourselves making the statement, "Now, if I had the time . . ." Like the old philosopher, "The hurrier I go, the behinder I get." Job summed it up well

when he said of his days, "They flee away."

If time were flying to one who was suffering like Job was, how fast it must be to those who are contented! To some, this is a frightening thought. But it need not be. We must learn to use time while we have it — to live in the present instead of the past or the future. It was a lady past fourscore years of age who expressed her philosophy of life in these words: "Yesterday is a cancelled check. Tomorrow is a promissory note. Today is cash." Time is a common blessing — all have exactly the same amount every day. It must be spent. Unlike money, it cannot be hoarded for future use. Unlike health, friends, reputation, or money, if it is lost it can never be regained. If it isn't used it is worthless. Who wants to be like Methusaleh? He lived 969 years, and all we know about him is that he died!

Will Rogers was asked if he had only

forty-eight hours to live, how would he spend them. As quick as a flash he replied, "One at a time." Likewise, Chief Justice Oliver W. Holmes, at age ninety, was asked how he would spend his life if he had it to live over. His reply: "One day at a time." These great men had learned what all need to know — take time as it comes and use it. This "one day at a time" philosophy can sober the alcoholic, build a strong character, and move mountains. Try it!

This inscription was found on an ancient sun-dial:

"Time WAS is past - thou canst it not recall.

Time IS thou hast — employ thy portion small.

Time FUTURE is not, and may never be.

Time PRESENT is the only time for thee!"

(To be continued)

America Celebrates A Bicentennial!

GLANN LEE

1976 is the two hundredth birthday of America, and America is celebrating! Instead of celebrating, it would be good if America could go down on her knees and acknowledge the sins of her people which are so many. History will probably record the facts of the fastest ascent to greatness of any country ever to enjoy that attainment; and it will also be forced to record the facts of the fastest descent into the abyss of sin.

"America became great because America was good" is a judgment that has been expressed many times by many people. Our country was founded by people who loved the Bible, loved God, and desired religious freedom. Those same people would be appalled today if they could see America as she is at the present time.

Paul wrote: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving as being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13). It would be difficult to present a truer picture of America at the present.

Our crime rate goes up so fast that yesterday's figures on murder, rape, robbery, theft, embezzlement and political degeneracy are completely obsolete today. More and more there is the appeal to legalize sinful and criminal activities.

The drinking of alcoholic beverages has become so prevalent in our society that even

the very young are described as "alcoholics." And little or nothing is done to control the traffic in alcohol.

The "gay" people do not want to be condemned as homosexuals which they are; nor do they want to be accused of sodomy which is the sin that is condemned over and over in the Bible. It is doubtful that a parade of such people would have ever entered the minds of people who established our country two hundred years ago. And yet, such a parade has been held in Dallas; a parade in which men and women deliberately flaunted their sinfulness. According to a news story, the prostitutes of Boston desire to be given a status in society. They have formed a union similar to that of the prostitutes of San Francisco. Their aim is to give their profession "respectability." And with the activities of some men in high positions in government, they may attain their objective. The "National Organization of Women," has already gone on record of desiring to assist the homosexuals of our country; do you suppose they will also get behind this effort of the prostitutes of Boston?

Yes, America is celebrating when she ought to be wearing sack-cloth and ashes. As America grows weaker and weaker through degeneracy and utter sinfulness, she draws closer to the time when she will join the other nations on the scrap pile of failure.

There Is One Who Cares

*When the days are dark and dreary,
And our eyes are made to weep.
When our anguished hearts inside us,
Cry, oh Lord, give sweet relief.*

*We should never feel down hearted,
For we know there's one who cares.
For he understands each heartache,
And our burdens he does share.*

*Jesus sees our tears of sorrow,
The heart that's broken too.
He understands; he is concerned.
He will make the way for you.*

Though your heart is torn within you,

*And you seek for sweetest peace.
Cast your cares upon the Master,
Lay your burdens at his feet.*

*You have had your cup of sorrow,
You have had your cup of woe.
Look up, there's a brighter tomorrow,
There's a land where we can go,
Where there's no more saddened hearts,
No more parting, no good-byes.
God will wipe the tears from our eyes.*

— Selected

(Submitted by Mrs. Raymond (Elner) Blackwell in memory of her husband who died May 8, 1969.)

The New Bibles And Their Perversion Of Isaiah 7:14

(Continued From Page 1)

applied to a married woman, never designates a non-virgin, never alludes to an impure woman" (GOSPEL ADVOCATE, Vol. CXV, Number 8, February 22, 1973). How then must ALMAH be translated? Precisely as the one hundred forty-eight translators of the King James Version and the American Standard Version rendered it in 1611 and 1901 respectively — "VIRGIN!" The RSV put "virgin" in the margin, but preferred "young woman" for the actual text. Is there a significance? Indeed there is! That they felt little or no compunction to translate ALMAH consistently as "young woman" (or "young women" if the plural be demanded) is seen in the fact that in its other occurrences they used "young woman" only once. This was in Genesis 24:43, and they had already designated Rebekah as a maiden, a virgin, or one not known by a man, in Genesis 24:16 which is a translation of the Hebrew word BETHULAH.

This rendering of "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14 by the RSV and the NEB does not state whether the feminine object of the prophecy is married or unmarried, pure or impure, a virgin or a non-virgin. Not so with the "virgin" rendering. Married women, unmarried women, pure women and impure women have all given birth to children. Only one "virgin" (Mary of Nazareth) has given birth to one virgin-born son (Jesus Christ). The angel in Matthew 1:22-23 makes it decisively definite and crystal clear that Isaiah 7:14 is surely Messianic in its nature and finds its ONE and ONLY fulfillment in the virgin birth of our blessed Lord, the Babe of Bethlehem. The erudite Woods again states so ably, "Matthew's unequivocal assertion that the birth of Jesus to Mary, 'the virgin,' fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah, (a) establishes the Messianic character of Isaiah 7:14; (b) identifies the "virgin" of the passage with the virgin Mary; and (c) proves that any translation of Isaiah 7:14, which renders the Hebrew word ALMAH, by words indicating anything less than virginal character (as do most of the so-called Modern Speech Translations), is wrong, and propagates grievous and dangerous error" (Ibid., p. 118). Amen and Amen!!

Exclusive Rights To A Sermon

TOM CHILDERS

"You were preaching straight at me this morning" can sometimes be interpreted to mean: "You know I was guilty of what you were preaching about and you have a grudge toward me and you are picking on me and just trying to embarrass me; you should not have preached that from the pulpit; you should have come to me first and we could have talked about it." Such people are selfish, and feel they have exclusive rights to anything the preacher discusses of which they are guilty.

Such people fail to recognize that a preacher is preaching to all who hear. It is true that some may need to hear the sermon more than others; but the fact remains that any sermon is designed for all who hear. If the preacher's sermon is on Honesty, and there is a person in

the audience who is dishonest, that does not mean the sermon is preached for his benefit ALONE; for honest people need to be reminded of the rewards of being honest. Sermons are designed not only to rebuke the guilty, but also to prevent the act of such a sin in the future by the innocent.

A person who imagines a preacher is preaching to him and him alone, fails to see that any sermon on any subject is for ALL who hear. A sermon on the eldership is not just for the elders; a sermon on deacons is not just to the deacons; a sermon on rearing children is not just to parents; a sermon on the dangers of smoking is not just to those who smoke; a sermon on the sin of slander is not just to the slanderers. All need to listen to every sermon, regardless of the subject.

People who think the preacher is picking on JUST them and them alone, fails to recognize that a preacher's work is to preach the whole truth — regardless of whether he knows of specific sins, or not. Just because the preacher preaches on the sin of covetousness does not mean he has a certain person in mind.

A preacher cannot preach the Bible if he

refrains from preaching on subjects of which he knows some in the congregation are guilty. If this policy were followed in most congregations, then the preacher would not have anything he could preach!

It is the work of a preacher to preach what people need to hear. It is not his work to find out how many are guilty of adultery before he can preach on the subject. "But doesn't the Bible teach you must go to a person first?" Matthew 18:15 is not discussing the work of a preacher. It is discussing how to take care of a personal offense. Peter in Acts 2 told the Jews they were guilty of killing Jesus. It would have been impossible for Peter to first talk with each of them individually.

The person who says, "You are picking on me," is attempting to justify himself without repenting. Suppose the preacher does preach a sermon exclusively toward a busybody in the church. Does that mean the busybody is forgiven? or excused? The truth is the truth, regardless of whom the preacher does, or does not, have in mind.

If you feel this article was written EXCLUSIVELY to you — You are wrong again. It was written to all our readers.

The Hot/Cold Syndrome

DUB McCLISH

An eight-year-old had been pestering his father for a watch. Finally, his father ordered him to say no more about it, for he was tired of it. At the supper table, each member of the family always recited a verse of scripture, of their own choosing. The little boy quoted Mark 13:37: "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." He made his point — and got his watch.

Persistence, perseverance is among those commendable human traits that remain forever in short supply. There is hardly any limit to what one can accomplish if he perseveres in a pre-determined course. One may be of mediocre education, or average intellect, and yet accomplish many times more than the "more advantaged" individual, simply by sticking to the job till it is finished.

I once visited a lady with several small children because the family reportedly needed some help to buy groceries. She told me that her husband was an excellent professional photographer and could earn a better-than-average income if he would stay with his profession. But, as she put it, "He approaches life like it was a thirty-day leave." I thought

that description characterizes the way some in the Lord's family approach his work. Perhaps the best way to describe their spiritual "condition" is to call it the "hot/cold syndrome." The religion of such can be measured in "spells." There will be a "spell" where they won't miss a Bible class or worship meeting for two months; but then they'll lie out for three months. Start a new program of work, and they may be the first to volunteer. For the first few weeks they are "on fire"; but soon the fire goes out. What began as exciting work has turned into dutiful drudgery, and they make up excuses to drop out. The work falters or even fails.

Beloved, the one guiding principle of God's judgment of us is our FAITHFULNESS. Here is a trail required of all, and it is attainable by all! The most common meaning of the word "patience" in our New Testament is endurance, continuance, steadfastness. Thus, we are urged to "... run with PATIENCE the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). My brothers and sisters, let us make steadfastness our badge, dependability our trademark!

My Child Likes Bible School

"My child likes to go to Bible School. Here are some of the reasons why:"

1. I try to be constructive. A negative attitude only complicates matters and hardly ever helps.

2. I try to be enthusiastic about the class, the teacher, the lesson, the other children, and in preparing for the Lord's day. Kindly, but firmly, ignore any negative expression by the child.

3. I try to prepare through the week for the class. I do not rush, scold, or nag on Sunday morning.

4. I try to help the child participate in the class. Let him take a Bible story book or picture to the teacher. Participation increases interest.

5. I try to take one or more of his neighborhood friends with him to the class. Helping someone else to attend adds importance to the event.

6. I try to expand our activities at home. Repeating Bible stories or incidents as have opportunity. Familiarity with Bible materials

helps the child to respond.

7. I try to help my child through prayer. I pray with him about his class, teacher, and friends. We all need to pray about the teaching of God's word.

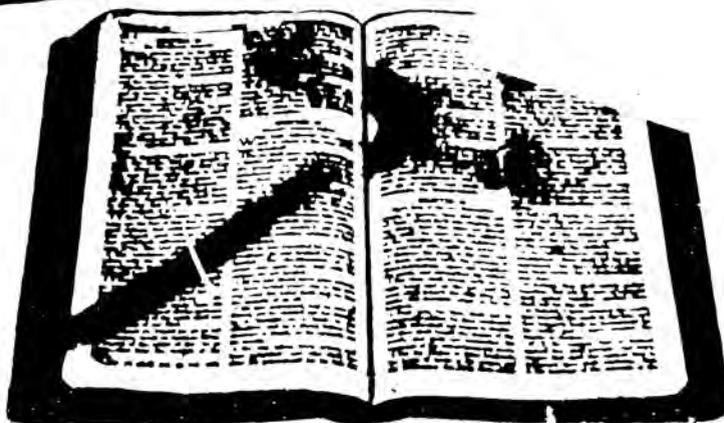
8. I offer to help the teacher in every possible way. Regardless of the teacher's weakness I never criticize him before the child.

9. I try to help my child to prepare his Bible school lesson for the following Sunday. I read aloud to him every day. This will help him to establish the habit of daily Bible reading.

Parents, our teachers work hard that their lessons will be suitable for your children. Many hours are spent studying, preparing and gathering of materials so that the lessons will be beneficial. It hurts them when children come to class unprepared and uninterested in the lessons. The above suggestions are valid. They will help our teachers to do a better job. Furthermore, you and your children will profit from prior preparation.

— Dick Boyd

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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The New Bibles And Their Perversion Of Isaiah 7:14

In a previous lesson on this timely and fundamental topic, attention was pointed to how some of the new Bibles pervert Isaiah 7:14. This perversion occurs in the Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible, to name two guilty of this translational deviation. They change the word VIRGIN, as it appears so correctly and accurately in the King James Version



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

and the American Standard Version, to YOUNG WOMAN. We raised a number of questions for those who contend that Isaiah 7:14 has had a dual fulfillment — one in eighth century Judah, and one in the time of Mary and Jesus. Then we raised and answered the question how ALMAH, the Hebrew word for virgin in Isaiah 7:14, should be defined and translated. We continue with this same vein of thought in concluding this two-part series.

WE STAND IN EXALTED COMPANY

In our unequivocal contention that ALMAH should be translated "virgin" we stand in some exalted company. But some reader may be ready to ask, Just who says the Hebrew word ALMAH should be translated "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14? just who composes this exalted company? Here is the caliber of the company! Here is the complexion of the witnesses that ALMAH should be translated virgin! In fact, there are in excess of two hundred witnesses to support the basic contention of this two-part series in the WORDS OF TRUTH.

It is commonly believed there were about seventy-two Greek and Hebrew scholars who produced the Septuagint Version from the Hebrew into Greek, some two or three centuries before the birth of Christianity on the earth.

They said the term should be translated "virgin".

There were forty-seven men who translated the King James Version in 1611. I have in my possession the names and academic backgrounds of all these forty-seven scholars of seventeenth century England. These forty-seven said it should be translated "virgin". This brings the number to at least one hundred nineteen.

Then add the one hundred and one American Standard translators in 1901. They also went on record as saying ALMAH should be translated "virgin". So there we have at least two hundred twenty — a fairly impressive number to compose this exalted company of men with whom we stand with becoming pride (the good kind of pride-not the sinful type.)

But there are three more mighty witnesses which we now bring before you, our esteemed readers. Number one of these three is MATTHEW, who wrote: He wrote in this passage, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:22-23). Matthew therefore went on record in what now is the first book placed in the New Testament. In its opening chapter he affirmed that ALMAH in Isaiah 7:14 should be translated "virgin". So there we have an apostle's taking the very same position that this whole article has supported and which undergirded Brother Guy N. Woods' great article in the "Old Reliable" in February of 1973. The company in which we find ourselves grows brighter all the time! Beloved reader, do you not agree? Is this not where you stand? I it is not, this is where YOU SHOULD STAND!

But let us remember that Matthew wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So the HOLY SPIRIT is our next witness of greatness! The Holy Spirit in Matthew 1:22-23 gave his own interpretation of the word he prompted Isaiah to use in Isaiah 7:14. The ALMAH of the Old Testament passage in Isaiah 7:14 is the PARTHENOS, the purest of all Greek words for "virgin", in Matthew 1:22-23.

But we suggested a third mighty witness who took this view. That witness would be God Almighty himself. Let us remember that the Holy Spirit was not an originator of truth, but a revealer of truth. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (Jn. 16:13-14). What the Holy Spirit would say originated with the Father and the Son. But remember also that the Son taught only that which came from the mind of

the Father. Jesus affirmed about the origin of his message: "My doctrine is not mine, but HIS THAT SENT ME. If any man will do HIS WILL, he shall know of the doctrine, whether IT BE OF GOD, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn. 7:16-17). Again the Lord declared in the gospel record written by that disciple whom he loved, "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. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: WHATSOEVER I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn. 12:49-50.) It was Jehovah God therefore who prompted the writing of the "virgin" prophecy in Isaiah 7:14. It was Jehovah God who had the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 written into Matthew 1:22-23. Therefore God Almighty is on record as teaching that the ALMAH of the Old Testament passage of Isaiah 7:14 is the "virgin" (PARTHENOS) of Matthew 1:22-23.

Discard the two hundred twenty human witnesses, if you will, and we still have (1) an apostle, (2) the Holy Spirit and (3) Jehovah God himself in affirmation that ALMAH should be translated "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14. That is precisely where we stand today, the perverted new Bibles to the contrary notwithstanding. That is precisely where the WORDS OF TRUTH, its founding editor, Brother Gus Nichols, and its current editor, Brother Flavil Nichols, stand unflinchingly today. That is where many of us intend to be standing when death strikes or Christ comes, whichever one may occur first.

CONCLUSION

Now who says it should be translated as "young woman"? A group of modern-day so-called translators who are out to rob our beloved Bibles of the virgin birth doctrine! The entire Christian world should rise up in one strongly-united and deeply-solid block of courageous confrontation, and say with a loud, world-shaking cry that they are not going to succeed in their modernistic endeavors, in their liberalistic devices!

This writer is deeply ashamed of any of our preachers and professors who have joined this motley crew to mutilate Isaiah 7:14. Brethren, it is much later in these momentous matters than many imagine it is. Are you concerned with what the RSV, NEB, and other perverted Bibles have done to Isaiah 7:14? If so, are you still doing your Bible study from such? If so, WHY?

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Fruit Of The Spirit

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

The fruit of the spirit in our lives is set out in contrast with those attitudes and actions that spring from yielding to the appetites of the flesh (Gal. 5:16, 25). We are told that if we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). We are truly free from the law when led by the Spirit. (Gal. 5:18).



R. W. GRAY

This is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" that has made us "free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). It is not enough that we simply refrain from fleshly desires that destroy our bodies and our souls. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:13, 14). The positive fruits of the Spirit are present and discernible in the lives of all true sons of God.

We need to define the fruits of the Spirit as clearly as we seek to identify the works of the flesh, as our salvation in the end will depend upon the manifestation of these spiritual qualities. We are reminded that Paul said, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance:...." (Gal. 5:22, 23). In this article we come to examine the second virtue described as a fruit of the Spirit.

JOY

Appearing at least fifty times in the New Testament, "chara" (joy) actually means "delight and gladness." All endeavors of his

people are aimed at receiving at last that great "joy of the Lord" (Matt. 25:21). But there is in us a realization of a portion of that "joy of the Lord" even in this life. So real is this joy that Peter described it as a "joy unspeakable and fully of glory" (I Pet. 1:8). This joy springs from faith, and is maintained by the increase of the knowledge of God. Paul wrote, "And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith" (Phil. 1:25). And again, "That ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God: strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1:10,11).

When gloom and dissatisfaction permeate our lives through doubt and ignorance, there is no room for joy in our souls. One of the most attractive things we may manifest by way of letting our lights shine before men, is the joy unspeakable and full of glory that floods the soul truly surrendered to Christ. It was difficult for his followers to comprehend the joy that comes when true contentment is present. He rebuked them for their lack of faith in Divine Providence saying, "...if God so clothe the grass of the field,....shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:30). With all needs supplied, according to his riches in glory, Christians have no occasion to be filled with fear and discontentment. Absence of joy in the heart and life is evidence of a lack of faith in his promises. Hence, this becomes a matter of

serious consequences. The "fearful and unbelieving" are among those who will be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Rev. 21:8).

The joy experienced by true believers in Christ is not a condition enjoyed by the fruit bearer alone. It is not a selfish fruit. Those possessing this fruit of the Spirit radiate joy, making glad those who are down-trodden, bewildered and discouraged. It is not enough that we feel joyous, or that we "rejoice in the Lord;" but we must be ambassadors of good will, inviting all to be of "good cheer." It is sometimes, said of some, "I dread to see him coming." In such instances, we may be sure that the professed Christian under discussion has not produced that fruit of the Spirit called "joy". Do our brethren, our families, our neighbors, and working companions, enjoy our company because of the joy we share with them? or do they shun us because of the gloom and despair emanating from a sour disposition? When Phillip preached Christ in Samaria there was "great joy" in that city (Acts 8:8). Good tidings of "great joy" were announced by the angels at Jesus's birth (Lk. 2:10). That joy finds its way into every life where Christ is enthroned.

*"Come, ye that loved the Lord,
And let your joys be known..."*

Let those refuse to sing

Who never knew our God;

But children of the heavenly king,

May speak their joys abroad."

Issac Watts

Fear

JIMMY WOOD

We are living in a "fear-ridden age." People today are afraid to live, and afraid to die. Christian teachers need to speak out on the subject of FEAR, and try to quiet the fears of the disturbed world.

The English spelling of the Greek word for fear is PHOBOS. Many of our English words are derived from this word. Originally it meant fright, that which is caused by being scared, then that which causes flight. God's word has a great deal to say upon the subject. There is a sense in which fear is a good thing. The Psalmist wrote, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (111:10). We teach our children to fear certain things for their protection. God teaches us to fear Satan and sin, that we might escape them (I Peter 5:8). On the other hand, fear is a dangerous thing when it is overdone.

We can overcome fear by accepting the comforting presence of our God. A parent can help his child to overcome fear by holding his hand in the darkness, by being with him when thunder and lightning has scared him. Our children used to come get in bed with us when

they were frightened by a storm. Our Heavenly Father wants us to feel that He is always with us, and will help us in all kinds of trouble. The assurance of Romans 8:35-39 is given that our fears might be dispelled: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We can overcome fear by recognizing that nothing is going to happen to us, at any time, that we can't handle. God will, with the temptation, provide the way of escape (I Corinthians 10:13). Tomorrow need hold no fear for the Christian because God will be there to help, and our faith will sustain us. We can't know what is going to happen, but we can know that sin, Satan, and evil will never conquer God.

Do Not Be Anxious

G. F. RAINES

Jesus says: "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day" (Matt. 6:34).

George A. Buttrick, Editor-in-chief of The Interpreter's Bible, says concerning anxiety: "It may paralyze both judgment and action. The worrier is thus a menace to himself and a pest to his neighbors."

Jesus, offering the cure for anxiety, said: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

This passage teaches that the will of God must be in the heart of our lives rather than on the fringes; that it must be focal instead of

marginal! If the will of God is truly focal in your life, you love God wholeheartedly and obey God implicitly and unreservedly (Matt. 22:37-39; Matt. 7:21).

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4). "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

Origin (Origines Adamantius), a famous Christian scholar and teacher 185-254 AD), said: "Seek the great things, and the little things will be added to you; and seek the heavenly things and the earthly things will be added to you."

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter twenty-nine

And Job again took up his discourse, and said:

"Oh, that I were as in the months of old,
as in the days when God watched over me;
when his lamp shone upon my head,
and by his light I walked through darkness;
as I was in my autumn days,
when the friendship of God was upon my tent;
when the Almighty was yet with me,
when my children were about me;
when my step were washed with milk,
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!"

— Verses 1-6.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS JOB 29:1-6

Surely no one ever expressed a desire for the good old days with more emotion than Job did. And no one ever had a right to long for the past more than he did, because no one ever had a sharper contrast between "then and now" than he. Feelings of nostalgia can be most disheartening, but especially is that so when one has really gone downhill. Listen to his pathetic wish: "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me...as I was in the days of my youth...when my children were about me...when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil" (29:2-6).

Not only did he think of the pleasantries of yesterday, but of his position as well. "The young men saw me and hid themselves; and the aged arose and stood up. The princes refrained talking...the nobles held their peace..." (29:7-11). And his station in life was not without merit. He had been a good man, a real blessing. Note: "I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help...I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy...I put on righteousness...I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor..." (29:12-25). To be good, honored, respected, and rich does make for pleasant memories, doesn't it? But he had gone from the height to the depth. No wonder he cried out for the good old days.

With most of us, however, these feelings of nostalgia are misguided. In some respects, the good old days were not so good. We have forgotten some of the hardships, some of the heartaches, some of the defeats of those old days. We remember, in reminiscing, the good, while we tend to forget the bad. Some wit aptly stated it like this: "The man who remembers with delight the chocolate pie grandma used to make has forgotten the indigestion that grandpa used to have." It is enjoyable to visit in memory those days, but to relive them would be a disappointing experience. Solomon said, "Say not thou, what is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this" (Ecclesiastes 7:10).

Not only have times changed, but we have changed, too! What we used to like we no longer care for. What once was enjoyed, now is only tolerated. And what we once dreaded

may now be a pleasurable experience. Even appetite is like that. Remember how terrible turnip greens used to taste? Or when spinach was punishment? Or when a hot dog was a real treat? It may be different now! C. E. McCartney told of an engineer he met on a train once. This engineer wanted to go back to his old boyhood home where he remembered a beautiful apple orchard. In that orchard was a certain tree which bore the sweetest apples in the country. How he enjoyed those mouth-watering memories! One summer he took a vacation and went back. He found the orchard and the certain tree in the orchard — just where he remembered it. But what a disappointment! He said, "The old farm was there; the orchard was there; the trees were there; the apple was there; but the boy was not." We may remember yesterday, but we can't relive it! Circumstances are different. The boy is a man now!

Isn't it strange that so many want to be a different age than their birth date would indicate? A twelve year old wants to skip the teens and be an instant adult — but at thirty would like to be eighteen again? A man of forty wants to be sixty-five so he can retire — but at fifty he wants to be thirty so that he

could do things differently next time! Every age is a wonderful age. We just need to learn to fit into it and enjoy it to the fullest! That will eliminate the wasted energy of pining for the good old days and the stupidity of wishing our lives away while waiting for the magic tomorrow. Today is the greatest day of all. Let's be glad we are alive today. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).

Still, it is natural that we dream of the good old days. Even though we do not have the cause that Job did (and he really longed for relief rather than to relive those days), we still would like to turn the calendar back.

Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight,

Make me a child again, just for tonight!

— Allen

But inasmuch as that is impossible, and inasmuch as times, people, and circumstances all change, how can we keep from becoming homesick for yesterday? How can we prevent that's becoming a problem to us? We simply have to learn to adjust, to accept inevitable changes, to make the most of present situations, to live in the present, and to prepare for the future.

(To be continued)

Modesty

RAY HAWK

Here in Florida, the winter seems to be over with the coming of warmer weather. Already women may be seen in public places wearing shorts and summer attire. Even in February, beachwear is displayed prominently in major stores in Pensacola. The only thing that seems to cause people to wear modest apparel in winter is comfort, not conviction!

I sometimes wonder what will be gained by preaching on the above subject? Those who want to be immodest will tune God out and justify(?) their immodesty by finding someone in a more deplorable state of undress than themselves, then gleefully point out, "See, I'm more modest than she is!" Others are indifferent, and only wear "something", no matter how dreadfully small, brief, or thin it may be, due to some public conscience still left that will not allow them to go completely nude! A few, who do notice what you are saying, will turn away, thinking how antiquated you are for still preaching on such "trivial!"

I must continue to preach on it, because it is Biblical I Tim. 2:9, 10! The gospel is still God's power to save Rom. 1:16, 17. True, many reject God's counsel, as did the Jews, Luke 7:30; but those who will hear and obey can be saved (Heb. 5:9).

Too often, when we approach this subject, we have dealt primarily with inches, hemlines, and brevity, rather than with ATTITUDE. If a person's attitude is right, his dress will not be wrong. If he is right on the inside, he will be dressed right on the outside. An immodestly dressed body simply indicates an immodest mind! Prov. 23:7.

When Paul addressed himself to this subject, the Spirit had him to pen, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel... (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Tim. 2:9, 10.) I have purposely left out part of the quotation to focus on the part we sometimes overlook. What makes a woman really attractive? Most worldly men would say, "Her body!" God did make a woman's body beautiful, if viewed in the proper context. If a man marries a woman for her physical attraction only, he will no longer find her desirable when that attraction disappears

due to the aging process. What thinking woman would want to be desired, however, only because she has an attractive body? A woman who has true character of spirit is much more desirable by thinking me, because she is attractive to them, even though her physical features do not win any beauty contests.

When Paul penned this statement in Timothy, he told women to adorn godliness with good works. Peter, by the inspiration of the same Spirit, said, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning...but let it be the hidden man of the heart..." (I Pet. 3:3, 4). God is saying, Let woman adorn herself inwardly, and she will be beautiful, not only in the sight of men, but (more important), also in God's sight. A woman may be physically attractive, but have a terrible personality. Who would want to marry a physically attractive woman whose character is described in the following words: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house" (Prov. 21:9; Cf. Prov. 21:19; 25:24). Someone has stated, "Beauty is skin deep; ugly is to the bone. Beauty fades away; but ugly just hangs on." It is far better to be married to a woman whose beauty is more than skin deep!

Actually, the Lord tells all saints to clothe themselves properly in His sight. In Rom. 13:12, 14 Paul states, "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us PUT ON the armor of light...but PUT YE ON the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof." Peter commands, "Be clothed with humility" (I Pet. 5:5). In Eph. 4:24 Paul states, "And that ye PUT ON the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Afterward, in Eph. 6:10-17 he gives us the clothing every Christian soldier should wear to combat Satan and defend the truth with! (Also cf. Col. 3:12, 13).

If a person obeys the gospel, he puts on God's clothing and will not be improperly attired physically. When a person claims to be a Christian, but continues to wear the apparel that attracts the lust of the world, that individual shows that he is not modest in body of spirit!

Transcendental Meditation

The influence of Eastern mysticism has produced a massive migration to the disciplines of the Orient. Every segment of our Western Culture has felt the impact of the assault from the East. With glowing promises and clever sell-tactics, pious, flower-fondling Gurus capture the minds of many young people. One of the more popular movements attracting both young and old is transcendental meditation, or (TM).



LARRY CHOUNARD

The announced leader of TM is Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. "Maha" means great, and "rishi" means sage, seer or saint. "Mahesh" is the family name, and "Yogi" means an expert in Yoga. Yoga is defined as "the Hindu system of physical and mental control to obtain a state of well-being through union with the Absolute." The system popularized by Maharishi is derived from Old Hindu scriptures and methods to attain (?) unity with the Divine. It is called "transcendental" because it purports to take the meditator beyond reality and ordinary experience into a "unity with impersonal consciousness."

The movement has become highly structured and organized for the propagation of the tents of TM philosophy. Several branches have appeared, cleverly disguising themselves from any religious terminology. In America, the TM discipline has been presented under the name "Science of Creative Intelligence." (SCI) Classes are now being offered in the public schools of Illinois, Ohio and Connecticut. The movement presently boasts of over 100,000 meditators and 4,500 teachers. It has grown into a big business, charging from \$35 to \$75 fees to acquire(?) the blessings of psychological health. The tremendous success of the movement has obviously inspired the Guru — because now he has set a daring goal of one TM instructor for every 1000 Americans.

TM is presented as just a mental technique for improving psychological performance. The instructor stresses to initiates that TM is neither a philosophy nor a religion. This psychiatric-therapy-approach conceals the basic Hindu interpretation attached to meditation. It claims to be a scientific technique to eliminate stress, nervous disease, and depression; and in its place supply peace of mind, personality fulfillment, a new depth of physical health and love life. TM has moved into public respectability on the claim that it is a purely scientific mental technique, and not a religion nor a philosophy. No doubt many people begin TM without understanding the Hindu philosophy and religion behind it; but that heathen philosophy governs the methods nevertheless.

From the beginning to the end TM, embraces the philosophy of the Hindu scriptures. In the initial ceremony a disciple must pay homage to Maharishi's departed master GURU DEV, by offering flowers and fresh fruit on an altar before his picture. The teacher then sings a song of thanksgiving and praise to the entire line of Hindu masters. At the conclusion of the song, the teacher then selects the pupil's mantra to be used in meditation. The mantra is an apparently

meaningless sound, such as OM, for the purpose of centering your thoughts until all thoughts eventually cease. What they fail to tell you is, that according to Hindu tradition the mantra was employed to invoke Hindu deities. In the Hindu religion there are millions of gods, both good and bad; and any of these may be invoked by the appropriate mantra. Douglas Shah in his book *THE MEDITATORS* suggests the "gospel" of TM hinges on three basic assumptions about reality and value:

(1) The ultimate unity of all things, i.e., that all is one;

(2) That the nature of the ultimate Being or unity is impersonal consciousness; and

(3) That man's purpose is to raise his consciousness to the level of Being by means of meditation.

Obviously these pre-suppositions stem not from behavioral scientific research, but some directly from the Hindu scriptures. According to TM philosophy the experience of meditation unites one with some kind of cosmic consciousness. The tracing of a thought until its subtlest state is experienced, produces a state of consciousness where one is united with the absolute. Of course, the Hindu concept of the Absolute is an impersonal pantheistic flux-and-flow consciousness, called Brahman.

The claims of TM to be a scientific approach to psychological health have been the bait to ensnare the unsuspecting. Dr. Leon Otis and his associates at the Stanford Research Institute determined that while TM might benefit some, for most it was a sheer "waste of time." It was also experimentally demonstrated at the Institute that plain, "taking it easy" and resting for twenty minutes a day could furnish the same results without any use of the mantra. Furthermore there seems to be absolutely no evidence that other forms of meditation will not yield comparable results. In addition the Institute concluded that the constant application of Maharishi's

formula will result in the distortion of reality along with the loss of individual identity.

In view of the obvious Hindu religious implications of TM, and the plain contradictions of the teachings of the Bible, what ought the Christian response be? First, Christians need to be aware of the dangers of embracing the TM philosophy to any degree. Second, we need to present the Christian faith in glowing antithesis to the mysticism of the East. The Bible presents a personal God who loves us and manifested that love in time and space by sending His Son to die for us. No amount of meditation or asceticism can atone for our sins. Man is lost, yet each individual is important in the sight of God because he is made in His image (Gen. 1:26-27).

TM can never solve the deep spiritual and social problems confronting man. It does nothing about going to the root of the problem; instead it is an escape mechanism, like a spiritual tranquilizer, offering temporary relief.

Christianity is not based on fleeting experiences, but upon the reality of Jesus Christ. When placed beside the wisdom of the world, the beauty of God's revelation glows brighter with every new day.

Finally, Christians need to demonstrate in their lives that every good blessing attained through TM is ours in Jesus Christ. The Apostle listed the wonderful benefits of being led by God's Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23).

The tantalizing glamor and appeal of TM indicates that many are searching for real values of life. The Bible meets and answers the needs of those seeking the solution to meaningful questions. Let us demonstrate to the world that "all spiritual blessings are in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

In Christ

J. C. CHOATE

Paul declares that salvation is in Christ: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is IN CHRIST JESUS with eternal glory" (II Tim. 2:10).

He writes the Corinthians: "Therefore if any man be IN CHRIST, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

But how does one enter Christ? Paul tells how: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3). Again he says, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ, Jesus. For as many of you as have been BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST JESUS have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27).

Can one have salvation outside of Christ?

Can one be a new creature without entering Christ? Can one become a child of God before entering Christ? Can one receive the benefits of the death of Christ without being baptized? Can one enter Christ in some other way apart from Baptism? Evidently not. If so, where does Paul, or any other New Testament writer, say so?

Once one enters Christ, in addition to the salvation he receives, Paul says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN CHRIST..." (Eph. 1:3). After all of this, for what else can one ask? Truly, being "in Christ" means everything.

ARE YOU IN CHRIST?

Wooden-Leg Religion

WILLIAM E. YOUNG

An interesting quip started me thinking about the reality and usefulness of personal religion.

"Too many people have a religion that is just like a wooden leg. There is neither warmth nor life in it. And although it helps them to hobble along through life, it never becomes a part of them. They have to strap it on every morning."

This describes the lifeless, insincere, and halting effect portrayed by some people suffering from a personality-deficient mal-religion. Jesus used another symbol to teach the same principle when he likened worthless religion to savorless salt:

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt

have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

Christ desires for us to know the difference between the preservative power of consistent godly living, and the perishable waste of such living which no longer contains the tang or savor of personal conviction.

An excellent place for me to begin restoring a warmth to the Lord's living religion is with me. It might be disappointing and surprising to know just how influentially dead I am! May God help each of us to rededicate our purposes to Christ and the religion He powerfully directs.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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What The F-HC Lectureships Have Meant To Me

The fortieth annual lectureship at Freed-Hardeman College was held February 2-6, 1976, and drew record crowds to the Henderson, Tennessee, campus. College officials estimated that some six thousand people attended the 1976 lectures as a cumulative total. The lectures begin each year with Chapel on Monday and close with the Chapel service on Friday. The lectures are



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

always held the first full week in February.

These lectures began in 1937. They have continued to grow from year to year and from decade to decade. It has been my pleasure and privilege to attend eighteen of the forty and the last fifteen consecutively. In this article I want to share with you some of my sentiments toward these lectures.

APPRECIATION FOR GREAT PREACHING

Most of my life has been spent in preaching the gospel. I love to preach. I love to listen to powerful preaching. I love to be in the presence of faithful proclaimers of the gospel. The F-HC lectures are always characterized by preaching at its finest. The kind of preaching that has been done at the annual lectures by such men as B. C. Goodpasture, the late and lovely Gus Nichols, Guy N. Woods, G. K. Wallace, Franklin Camp, Roy Deaver, Thomas B. Warren, Alan Highers, Garland Elkins, Andrew Connally, E. R. Harper, Tom Holland and a host too large to mention is Bible preaching at its very best. Book, chapter and verse, a constant appeal to Biblical authority and the straightforward approach have been mainstays in the type of preaching done there. This is the kind of preaching that launched the mighty Restoration movement. It is the type of preaching that brought the church to us. It is the type of preaching that makes crystal clear the distinctive posture between truth and error. It is that type of preaching which will deal courageously with the crucial issues before the church today whether they be liberalism, the menace of perverted Bibles, skeptical philosophy, denominationalism, secularism, materialism, the occult movement or the inroads currently made by a great wave of impurity that seeks to engulf the Lord's

people. Great preaching and F-HC lectureships are synonymous. May they ever be.

APPRECIATION FOR GREAT SINGING

Singing has been a part of each of the three great Bible ages. Various passages in the book of Revelation thrillingly inform us that singing will not end at the judgment scenes. Singing will be a foremost activity among the redeemed in the Heavenly Hereafter. One of the major contrasts between heaven and hell is the singing that will characterize the former and the total lack of it characterizing the eternally damned. Weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth will be heard in the fiery halls of hell. Nobody, we suppose, ever thought of writing a song entitled, "When All Of Satan's Singers Get Home To Tell." But that sentiment toward heaven has been sung frequently by those with Heavenly Hope.

The F-HC lectureships are always characterized by great singing. Singing, when done well, is beautiful among the faithful few. But when thousands of the faithful join in spiritual songs, with all four parts well represented, the singing becomes marvelous, majestic and deeply moving in its noble nature. I like the idea that each session is begun with a song. Great song directors, great songs and great congregational singing add a dynamic dimension to the F-HC lectures. Great singing and F-HC Lectureships are synonymous. May they ever be.

APPRECIATION FOR GREAT PRAYERS

Jehovah's people are a prayer-minded people. We know that prayer is a duty; but faithful saints have a far higher concept of it than that. We view prayer as a priceless and precious privilege. While false teachers talk about communicating with God by such devilish devices as so-called ESP (extrasensory perception), Christians know that prayer is the approved way (the only approved manner) of communicating from earth to Heaven on High. God communicates to us only through the Bible as his inspired medium in reaching and influencing the human mind with heavenly truths. While skeptical people view prayer as only a psychological device to get something off one's chest, Christians know that more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams possible. Prayer still moves the hand of Him that moves the Universe.

Great prayers are in the foreground of F-HC Lectures. I like the idea that every session is begun with a prayer. Many of the sessions also end with a prayer. One can feel and know that those who lead these prayers are not

strangers to the regular hours of prayer in their daily lives. They have firsthand experience with the sweet hour of prayer. The late, lamented and deeply beloved Gus Nichols, long time editor of WORDS OF TRUTH, not only did some of the very greatest of PREACHING heard on these lectures, but the prayers he frequently led were marvelous models of faith, hope and love. Brother Nichols prayed as great and godly men must have prayed in Bible times. He prayed as one who knew both the Book and the Heavenly Author of the Book. He prayed as an humble child who loved the Father with fervency of faith, holiness of heart, sincerity of soul, majesty of mind and strength of spirit. How sorely the noble Nichols was missed at this lectureship. Yet the Nichols' hour each morning at 7:30 was filled so capably with the splendid preaching of three of his sons — Flavil, Hardeman and Hudson — and a son-in-law, A. J. Kerr. The torch of truth bequeathed them by Brother Nichols is in safe and capable hands.

Some of the greatest prayers prayed this side of heaven are heard during the F-HC Lectureship week. Great prayers and F-HC Lectureships are synonymous. May they ever be.

APPRECIATION FOR GREAT FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is participation and a joint sharing. One of the treasured blessings of these great lectureships is the renewing of old acquaintances and the formation of new friendships. The greetings are genuine; the handshakes are warm and friendly. "How is the church getting along where you work?" or "How is your work coming?" are frequently-asked questions. They manifest eloquently Peter's concept that we "Love the brotherhood" (I Pet. 2:17). This week offers an unusually fine opportunity for brethren to become better acquainted with the Lord's work in other places. The wider our horizon is, the deeper should be our determination to aid the Cause wherever we can. Surely the fellowship enjoyed during the lectureship week is but a foretaste, faint though it may be, of that far greater and sweeter fellowship in heaven at last with God, Christ, the Spirit, angels and all the redeemed. Fervent fellowship and F-HC Lectureships are synonymous. May they ever be.

APPRECIATION FOR
PROMOTION OF GOOD WORKS
Paul told the Ephesians that we have been

(Continued on page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Fruit Of The Spirit

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

Man's salvation in the end does not depend solely upon his having crucified the desires of the flesh, but also upon his ability to replace these destructive things with the productive fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:19-23). It is not enough that we cease to do evil, we must learn to do well (Isa. 1:16, 17). Having listed some seventeen works of the flesh from which we must refrain, Paul lists nine specific fruits of the Spirit which we are to produce; positive qualities that replace the dissipating acts of sin and immorality; beautiful qualities that replace the repulsive and ugly; manifestations of freedom's fruit that replace the manifestations of the fruits of slavery.



R. W. GRAY

In a previous article we have looked in on the fruits of "love" and "joy" characteristic of all who are truly born anew (John 3:1-5).

PEACE

It seems the obvious and natural thing to list "peace" as a quality that grows out of LOVE and JOY (Gal. 5:22-23). From "eirene," the term is used variously in the New Testament. It describes the harmonious relationships between men and nations (Rom. 14:19; Lk. 14:32). It denotes order in the state, freedom from molestation, the orderliness as opposed to confusion affected by God's direction in the churches (Acts 24:2; Lk. 11:21; I Cor. 14:33). Perhaps it's most important usage, so far as our eternal good is concerned, is that harmony or peace that is said to exist between man and God as a consequence of the

gospel's call (Acts 10:36; Eph. 2:17).

Peace, the quietness of spirit that comes from a knowledge of God through Christ, manifests itself in seeking to be at peace with all men (Rom. 12:18). When God's people possess this quality of soul, they find little difficulty in being at peace among themselves (I Thess. 5:13). But when there is no peace with God, there is no peace in the soul (I Pet. 3:21). If there is no peace in the soul there is no seeking after the peace that should characterize our relationships with one another. We must remember that the wisdom that is from above is first pure, "then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated..." (James 3:17). The impure heart, the heart filled with rancor and bitterness, knows no peace.

Jesus speaks of the positive, constructive fruit of this desirable quality when he said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9). It was the opposite of this spirit about which the wise sage speaks when he says, "Six things doth the Lord hate; yea seven are on abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running into mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and HE THAT SOWETH DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN" (Prov. 6:16-19).

We are told that peace is of greater consequence than the imposition of one's own opinion in areas of indifference. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but

righteousness, PEACE, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). It is in view of the danger of destroying a weaker brother when confusion reigns, that we are to "follow after those things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19).

This desirable quality is akin to that meek and "quiet spirit" which is in the sight of God of great price. A deep, settled peace in the heart that springs from a knowledge that all things work together for good to them who are the called according to God's purpose is one of the most attractive features of Christianity. Observing the serenity of spirit God's people display under deep trial has caused some to be won without the word, as in the case of the Godly wife (I Pet. 3:1-5).

"Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin:

*The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.
Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round:*

*On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found
Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away:*

*In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.
Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown:*

*Jesus we know, and he is on the throne.
It is enough; earth's struggles soon shall cease,*

And Jesus call us to heav'n's perfect peace."

E. H. Bickersteth

How The Liberals Won The Battle

James DeForest Murch in his book, **CHRISTIANS ONLY, A HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT**, has made an invaluable contribution to the brotherhood of Churches of Christ. In his 15th and 16th chapters, he plots the course of the Liberal take-over of Protestantism and the Disciples of Christ movement. Surely we can profit by this historical study as we confront a growing liberal trend among us. The careful reader will note some painful similarities in Murch's analysis and in our state of affairs today. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

First, dealing with Protestantism in general, and her losing battle with Liberalism, he notes:

THE GREAT DENIAL

"Abandoned to the new culture were the inspiration of the Scripture, the unique deity of Christ, the miracles, the atonement for sin, the bodily resurrection, the individual resurrection of the saints, the second coming of Christ unto final judgment, heaven, hell, and every vestige of the supernatural elements of the Christian faith" (p. 224).

A few among us have already espoused these infidelic principles in part! Unbelief being a growing cancerous thing, some of them will no doubt go all the way.

THE CHURCH REVAMPED

"The church became, for liberals, merely a fraternal society with certain social benefits. It was no longer the assembly of called out people who were saved by grace through faith in Christ, the organism of which He is the

head, and which enjoys union with Him.

Liberals saw the church as a movement which in every age becomes the vanguard for the social and spiritual development of mankind. Biblical Christianity was utterly repudiated by the liberals . . ." (p. 225).

Those who ridicule and berate the church, who would turn us away from the proclamation of the gospel to "social involvement" are already feeding upon this bitterness.

TRUTH BECOMES RELATIVE

God-centered education was exchanged for a man-centered process. God's will was no longer the basic norm. Man's mind became the measure of all things. The moral and spiritual ultimates, even truth itself, were scrapped for relative values. Human social welfare became a matter of primary concern (p. 226).

COLLEGES THE SPAWNING GROUND

"In the atmosphere of the colleges and universities and their associated theological seminaries, the new intellectual movement found its most effective breeding ground . . ." (p. 227). Our schools cannot tolerate such false brethren for a single moment. All the liberal professor asked for is a stand-off, or compromise. They work like leaven. The battle is never over. Eternal vigilance will be required.

HOW THE COLLEGES WERE CAPTURED

"Theological liberals first attacked strategic chairs of religion and the well-endowed seminaries of the leading Protestant denominations" (p. 227).

SOUND TEACHERS DISCREDITED

"Bible-believing professors were discredited by a well-directed propaganda which made them appear as naive, obscurantist, unscholarly, and reactionary" (p. 227).

FALSE PLEDGES OF LOYALTY

"In many instances liberals falsely

(Continued on page 4)



JOHN WADDEY

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter eighteen

"His memory perishes from the earth,
and he has no name in the street."

— verse 17.

GONE — AND FORGOTTEN

JOB 18:17

It must be a revolting idea to some people that the time is coming when they will not only be gone, but also forgotten. If the world continues to stand, the day will come when each one of us will be totally unknown — when there will not be a person on earth who has ever even heard our name! That is a rather chilling thought, isn't it?

Bildad took advantage of Job by reminding him of this at a time when it was difficult for Job to hear it. He was listing some of the harvests of the wicked — implying, of course, that Job was one who was reaping them. And he included: "His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street" (18:17). He was right in saying this about the wicked, for they will be forgotten! But he was wrong in assuming that this was true only of the wicked. The righteous will be forgotten, too. That is, their "remembrance shall perish from the earth." And of course he was wrong in making the application to Job. He did not know that Job would be immortalized on the pages of God's book which will live forever.

No, we don't want to be forgotten. We erect marble monuments at the graves of our loved ones. And how mistaken we are when we stamp on them, "Gone, but not forgotten!" That is true only for a little while! Eventually even that marble shaft will go back to dust! We must hear the testimony of David, who in despair cried: "I am forgotten, as a dead man" (Psalm 31:12). And also hear his illustrious son, Solomon: "For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever; seeing that which now is in the day to come shall all be forgotten" (Ecclesiastes 2:16).

At the death of another, our sense of charity takes over, and we begin to remember only the good. It was an interesting observation someone made when he said: "If you want to find out how bad you are, run for office; if you want to find out how good you are, die." Our society deems it inappropriate to say bad things about the dead. On those marble monuments, we engrave sweet epitaphs. A casual stroll through an average cemetery leaves one wondering where all the bad people are buried! Monuments are erected because of the good men do, never to commemorate their failures! And we want others to treat us as well! We want our good remembered, too. Contrary to this, Shakespeare made Mark Anthony, in his oration over the body of the assassinated Caesar, to say:

*The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones.*

But be it good or evil, life is short! And with the passing years all things are changed and

all men are eventually forgotten.

In regard to being totally forgotten, even Bildad realized one thing which is often overlooked. He knew that this is true only insofar as this earth is concerned. He said the memory would perish "from the earth" and they would have no name "in the street." He was not dealing with the next life. And evidently, Job realized this too, for a little earlier he had said, "My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." Solomon assured the people of his generation, "God shall bring

every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

That being the case, why should we worry if we are forgotten on this earth? Why be concerned over that which is so temporary? Why be insulted over our insignificance? We do need to be aware of this situation, and use it as an incentive to live in view of the judgment and for the hereafter! But so far as being remembered here — we couldn't care less!

(To be continued)

What Must I Know To Be Saved?

VIRGIL BRADFORD

Many sermons have been preached on What Must I Do To Be Saved, and such should continue, but too little emphasis has been given to "what I must know" in order to be saved. We are not here considering babies and other irresponsible persons; they are neither lost, nor saved — but are SAFE. We are thinking therefore of responsible persons who are in a lost condition and do not know it.

"It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God" (Jn. 6:45). One prophecy of this is in Isaiah 2:2-3: "He shall teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." It will not be surprising then that the whole Christian system depends on teaching, which also receives much emphasis in the Great Commission (Read Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:46-47).

Any untaught non-Christian person is a sinner. He must recognize this fact, or there would be no reason whatsoever for him to do anything or inquire what to do. Not all sinners are necessarily criminals, but all sinners are transgressors of God's law, God's will (I Jn. 3:4). This points primarily to sins of commission. But, "to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). So we see that either to do contrary to God's will or to neglect one's duty, is sin. Among responsible men and women there are no exceptions to this, as we learn from I Kings 8:46; Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:23, and many other Scriptures. Have you learned that you are a sinner before God?

Next, one must learn that he cannot by himself and of himself save himself. "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). Many by his own wisdom cannot save himself (I Cor. 1:21). A miserable, groping jailer once asked, realizing some great need, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And in response Paul and Silas taught him the word of the Lord, the gospel.

Again, as a sinner understands that he is such, and that he has not the power to be his own saviour, he MUST KNOW THE TRUTH. Religious error, human creeds, and all that is foreign to, and out of harmony with, TRUTH have no power to save a soul. Jesus says, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32). "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36). From Paul: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

One now knows, having been taught, by the Bible he is a sinner, that he can't save himself by his own powers, but that TRUTH can make him free. The truth of Christ Jesus is the gospel. This gospel tells us that God loves each one. "For God so loved the world" (including us all) "that he gave his only begotten Son" — that we may have eternal

life (Jn. 3:16). God does not save us apart from Christ. Christ Jesus is Immanuel, God with us (Matt. 1:23). The truth is that God became man to save man. The eternal Word loved us, and still does; and he showed forth the same by giving himself for our sins (Tit. 2:11-14). God "made him to become sin" (a sin offering) on our behalf (II Cor. 5:21). Furthermore, the eternal good tidings bring to us the truth that Christ not only suffered and died, but he rose again from the tomb to reign over the kingdom of God as our ruler, prophet, priest, and redeemer (II Cor. 5:14-15). Let no man think that he can have God the Father without God the Son; it must be both, or neither one (I Jn. 2:22-23). These great facts of the gospel we must KNOW, AND BELIEVE, AND ACT UPON, in order to be saved from sin. The Spirit of God has revealed these things to us as TRUTH.

Finally, one must know that salvation comes only in and through Christ. And he must yield, he must bow, in humble submission to the sovereign Divine will. Christ has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). His marvelous miracles attest to the truth that he is indeed the Son of God (Jn. 3:1-2), and that there is salvation in none other (Rom. 1:4; Act. 4:12). (Read also John 20:30-31). Not only is Christ the reigning King; he will come again to "judge the world in righteousness" by that grand authority given to him of the Father (Act. 17:31).

Receiving these truths, faith is created in one's heart. The goodness of God thus revealed leads him to repentance. He stands convinced of the truth, and learns from God; Holy word that BY FAITH he must be baptized INTO CHRIST for the forgiveness of all his sins (Act. 2:38; Col. 2:12). One cannot know less, and be saved. This makes him a Christian only — and so it does for all who obey him. For "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

No Fourth

Years ago Senator Vardeman of Mississippi rented a farm to a man for one-fourth of the crop. Harvest time came and went, and the Senator did not receive his share of the harvest. Curious as to why the man failed to contact him, he went to the Delta to visit his farm. He asked the farmer about the "fourth" of the crop that he should have received months before. "Well," the farmer began, "on that plot of ground I rented from you, we just made THREE bales of cotton. There just WAS NOT ANY 'FOURTH' TO GIVE YOU."

Maybe that's the way it is with some Christians(?) and their Lord. They receive daily from Him and have abundance for themselves; but when the time comes to return a portion to Him, THERE JUST ISN'T ANY FOURTH, OR TENTH — OR ANYTHING. Think about it!

— Basil Overton

What The F-HC Lectureships

Have Meant To Me

(Continued from page 1)

created (spiritually) in Christ for the purpose of performing good works (Eph. 2:10). He informed Titus that the faithful maintenance of good works constituted both a good and profitable endeavor and fortified one against being unfruitful (Titl. 3:8, 14). The F-HC Lectureships provide unusually excellent opportunities to learn of works being done in needed areas, both in evangelism and benevolence, and which are deserving of helping hands. Mission work has been enhanced year after year at these lectures. So has benevolent work. So has the work of keeping the saved saved. These lectures provide opportunities for preachers and elders to become acquainted and to be of mutual aid to each other in the discharge of their respective works. The F-HC Lectureships provide an intense impetus toward good works. The promotion of good works and F-HC Lectureships are synonymous. May they ever be.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The F-HC lectureship is not a law-making body for the Lord's church. It is not a conference to enact legislation for Christians. It is not a religious synod to make and suspend rules and regulations. It is a well-planned session for study, meditation, spiritual refreshment, fervent fellowship, the promotion of the worthwhile, etc.

Thousands of us look to this annual lectureship every February for a week of good things. We are appreciative to Brethren Gardner, Woodson, the lectureship committee, the speakers and all others who make it possible. We want the school to keep on with these great lectureships. We want the college and these lectureships to be on the cutting edge of sound doctrine — ALL of sound doctrine.

There is no place for any of our Christian Schools to forsake sound doctrine either in their lectureships or in the teaching they do throughout the year. Our schools have a sacred trust. That trust is twofold. It is composed of truth and souls. Truth must be the curriculum; well-grounded souls must be the reaped fruits from year to year. The day that any of our Christian Colleges or Schools of Preaching allows its students to complete its program knowing more about any book than THE BOOK, then that school has forsaken its beginning moorings of real Christian Education. Let all of our educational institutions take note at this crucial point.

The closer that Freed-Hardeman Lectureships remain to the old paths and the deeper its commitment to reproduce Christ in its students from year to year, the greater will be its usefulness and the deeper will be our continued support of her.

During the entire seventies the lectures have been available in book form. This year of 1976 is no exception. The book has some 400 pages plus and contains biographical sketches and messages of the participating speakers. Readers of the WORDS OF TRUTH who may not know this yet, will be pleased to learn that the 1976 lectureship book was dedicated to the late and lamented Brother Gus Nichols. The first copy of this book received by the college was presented one morning in chapel to Sister Gus Nichols. The dedication of the book to him was so appropriate. Through the years Brother Nichols and F-HC Lectureships have been so intimately connected. The absence of the "Walking Bible" this year was so conspicuous. His picture and a tribute to him are found in the front of the 1976 Lectureship

volume. How fitting! How appropriate this was! The book sells for \$8.00. It can be ordered from the Freed-Hardeman Bookstore, Henderson, Tennessee 38340 or the Gospel Advocate, P. O. Box 150, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Why not order your copy right now? Why not place a copy also in your church library?

The next lectureship will be the first full week in February of 1977. At that time the college expects to be in its new Auditorium

which is under current construction and will seat 2,800. If you have not already done so, why not send a contribution to Brother Gardner today and earmark it for the new Auditorium? If you have already given, why not give again? Your contribution can be a "building block" toward the completion of this greatly-needed Auditorium.

We look forward to a bigger and better lectureship in 1977.

How The Liberals Won The Battle

(Continued From Page 2)

represented themselves to be evangelical, accepting under oath, evangelical confessions of faith with mental reservations, using orthodox words to convey liberal thought, and moving with caution until circumstances afforded safe opportunity to take an open stand for the new doctrines."

USE OF COMPROMISE TO CONTROL SCHOOLS

"Often they used so-called 'inclusivist' strategy, persuading orthodox institutions to admit liberals to their faculties on the ground that the principle of academic freedom required presentation of all viewpoints. When liberals attained majority status they set up new standards and by various devices eliminated all Bible-believing professors. Once firmly entrenched in the institutions that trained the leadership of the churches, they next directed their strategies to obtain control of important boards and commissions and finally the administrative machinery of whole denominations" (p. 227).

Bible chairs, campus programs and Christian Colleges are prime targets. We cannot turn our heads for a moment. It is not impossible that a liberal take-over can be effected in some, or all, of these!

CONTROL MISSIONS TO DESTROY THEM

"The strange new liberal gospel gradually found its way into the field of Christian missions. . . . Liberals were not interested in carrying out the imperative of the great commission, but they were vitally concerned with control of machinery that would give them world influence and an opportunity to remake the international social order" (p. 228).

"Liberalism came into the missionary picture as a parasite, living on the boards, institutions, and missions built up by evangelicals, and undermining the Scriptural beliefs and practices that have made Christian missions a vital force in the world. Liberals denied that men are lost without Christ in the full New Testament sense" (p. 228).

Let no one think that because we have no missionary society, such cannot happen to us. Already a handful of liberal men have surfaced on foreign soil. Thank God for sound elders who cut them off immediately. May this policy of firmness prevail. Some mission emphasis programs have turned out to be liberal emphasis programs.

THE "METHODIST" STRATEGY

"The Methodist Episcopal church . . . is a perfect example in liberal achievement with respect to control of the denominational apparatus. A small group of liberals met in Boston early in the 1900's and agreed to work together in liberalizing the church. A four-point program was adopted: 1) place a rationalist in every chair of English Bible in the various church colleges, 2) liberalize the Book Concern, 3) liberalize the church rituals and the Discipline, 4) liberalize the approved course of study for the training of the ministry." Strongly evangelical, Bishop Thomas B. Neeley said of this program . . . "the method is not that of a frontal or open attack but of the sapper and the miner."

The strategy was overwhelmingly success-

ful. In a generation the denomination was firmly in the control of the liberals. Every Methodist College and University was in their hands (p. 229-230). Have we such an element? The sappers and the miners have already begun their work.

INTELLECTUAL PRIDE PAVED THE WAY

"Educated people began to demand that religion put off the crudities of an earlier day and put on the garments of refinement and culture" (p. 232).

NAIVE CONSERVATIVES WERE OUT-NUMBERED

"Naive evangelicals hoped the liberalism was only a passing fad soon to be absorbed in the approach of some new millennium, while liberals, biding their time, traded concessions in theology for concessions in social ethics and action, and negotiated a strangle hold on the Council's commissions and administrative machinery" (p. 233).

We cannot afford naivety. Too many brethren just cannot believe that this could happen to us. God forbid that we capitulate without a battle.

ARROGANCE AND NAME CALLING, LIBERAL WEAPONS

"They sneered at those who refused to admit the validity of destructive criticism and who clung to the Scriptures, calling them 'bibliolators' and repudiators of 'true revelation'" (p. 235).

One need only read MISSION, INTEGRITY and Gary Freeman's works to see "a live demonstration of the above strategy."

AN APPEAL

The same evil force of liberalism that attacked Protestantism 75 years ago is now raising its ugly head among us. Let us profit by their mistakes. The most important things in the world are at stake: the faith once for all delivered; the church for which Jesus died; the souls of millions, ours included. May every elder, preacher, editor, publisher, and college administrator take heed and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered, Jude 3.

The Best Translation

There is a story about four preachers who were discussing the merits of the various translations of the Bible. One liked the King James Version best because of its simple, beautiful English.

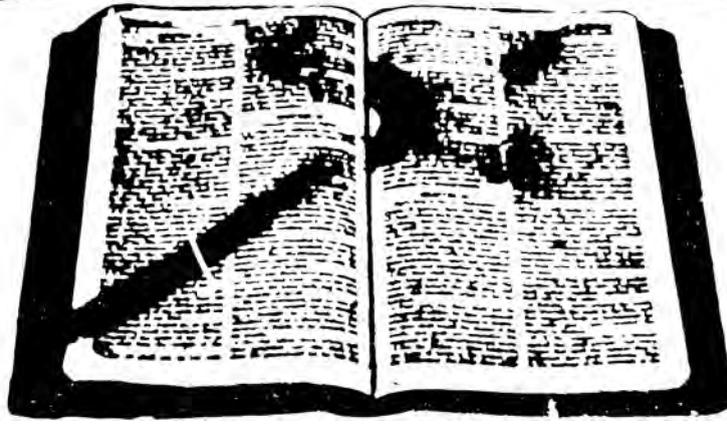
Another liked the American Standard Version best because it is more literal, and comes nearer the original Hebrew and Greek.

Still another liked Mofatt's translation best, because of its up-to-date vocabulary.

The fourth minister was silent. Asked to express his opinion, he replied, "I like my mother's translation the best." The others expressed surprise: They did not know his mother had translated the Bible. "Yes, she did," he replied, "She translated it into life — and it was the most convincing translation I ever saw."

— Selected

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

FRIDAY, APRIL 16, 1976

NUMBER 18

"The Christian Family Magazine"

The year 1975 witnessed the birth of a new religious publication among churches of Christ. THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MAGAZINE made its journalistic debut in June of 1975. It is a monthly magazine containing some thirty-two pages. Its primary design is to promote "Christianity within the home." This is an eminently worthy aim especially in view of



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

what many secular magazines intend to do toward destroying homes and wrecking marriages. THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MAGAZINE is edited by J. J. Turner whose articles have appeared for years in many of our leading publications. Brother Turner has an effective and fruitful pen. The publisher of THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MAGAZINE is W. C. Johnson. Both of these talented and dedicated brethren are associated with the White's Ferry Road School of Preaching at West Monroe, Louisiana. Lowell Brown, a former script writer for World Radio, is the Associate Editor. The magazine is under excellent editorship. The articles are practical, penetrating and provocative of serious thought. Here is a good magazine that is put out because it has something worthwhile to say. And what it says is said well. There is good balance to the paper. The outlay is arranged with attraction and skill. A variety of material is presented. Everyone in the family framework will find an area of special interest in each issue. The art work, under M. T. Matthews, adds considerably to the overall effectiveness of the magazine. Overall it has an eye-catching, pleasing appearance. Much work goes into the planning and producing of each issue.

ARTICLES AND WRITERS OF FIRST ISSUE

The initial issue, June, 1975, had such articles as "Family Breakdown," "The Purposes Of The Home," "The Christian Woman And Modesty," "Developing Spirituality In The Home," "You Only Go Around Once," "Picking A Mate," "Sanctity Of The Home," "The Christian And Recreation," "Literature In The Home," "Hospitality," "No-Fault Divorce," "Vacation Time," "Jolly Bible Time," and "Truth

For Today" — a daily devotional guide for each day of the month. This writer and his family have used a number of these short devotional messages in our family worship period each night before retiring. In addition there was a religious crossword puzzle, a book review, and a page entitled "potpourri." Penning articles in the initial issue of this new publication were J. J. Turner, Batsell Barrett Baxter, Harold Taylor, Carla Owen, Rubel Shelly, Ron Brotherton, Frank Cox, Guy N. Woods, Jim Moran, Drue Wright, Larry West, Wayne Jackson, and this writer.

THE IMPERATIVE NEED FOR THIS PUBLICATION

With a million divorces recorded in our nation during 1975, that is an average of over 2,600 daily, we surely need to be doing all we can to save the home. There is a very radical yet highly popular life-style emerging among the young in ever-increasing numbers — living together without benefit of "a piece of paper and a preacher." Mate-swapping is on the increase. Both pre-marital and extra-marital sex are widely accepted as norms of behavior. Hasty marriages, marred marriages, and broken marriages dot the home-scenes throughout the land during the sensual seventies. Millions of homes are nothing but filling stations. An occasional meal and a few hours of sleep are the only uses made of many homes today. Multitudes of people in our loose and lax times feel that home is a place to go only as a last resort — when everything else is closed.

A real recognition of these mounting problems, and a desire to present the Christian home as the solution, prompted these brethren to launch this exciting and challenging journalistic endeavor. Christians everywhere should be willing to join hands with Brethren Turner, Johnson and Brown and help them write "success" over this venture of faith. THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY MAGAZINE can be a powerful force in helping to solve some of the Herculean problems faced by the disintegrating framework of the American family. The magazine has been well received in the few months it has been in existence. Already in excess of three thousand have subscribed, and this is good. But the publication can do good only in proportion to the number of people who take it, read it, and will profit therefrom. The magazine is worthy of a vast reading audience. This writer commends it to all our wonderfully-fine reading family of WORDS OF TRUTH. It is our sincere hope that many of you will subscribe. Subscriptions are \$7.00 for one year or \$12.00 for two years. The address is 1211 Arkansas Road, West Monroe, Louisiana 71291. Why not subscribe today?

CONCLUSION

We extend a journalistic good wish to these brethren in West Monroe. Their interest in the establishment of solid Christian homes, and in the preservation of the family framework, is worthy of continued commendation and generous support.

The Importance Of Well Doing?

G. F. RAINES

Booker T. Washington, a former slave and one of the greatest of all Negro educators, wrote: "Nothing ever comes to one, that is worth having, except as a result of hard work" (*Up From Slavery*, A. L. Burt Co., New York, 1901, p. 188).

It has been well said that, "If all the good intentions in the world were put end to end, they would still get us nowhere. But if they were put to work, they would save the world."

Someone has stated that much of the trouble in the world is produced by those who do not produce anything else. Another philosopher sagely observed that if it took an effort to get from today to tomorrow some people would still be in yesterday.

According to Sir Philip Sidney, "Doing good is the only certainly happy action of a man's life."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, "who went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), expressly said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Paul says: "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:9, 10).

Chalmers wrote: "Thousands of men breathe, move, and live; pass off the stage of life and are heard of no more. Why? They did not a particle of good in the world; none were blest by them, none could point to them as the instrument of their redemption; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday. Will you thus live and die, O man immortal? Live for something."

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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Is It Wrong To Eat Meat?

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

Seventh Day Adventists teach their members that they should not eat meat. Some go so far as to say that the eating of flesh is sinful. Although the foundation of this Adventist practice is an alleged vision of their prophetess founder, Mrs. Ellen G. White, they try to find Biblical approval for it. (See Ellen G. White, *Selections From The Testimonies*, Book 3, p. 549; Book 1, pp. 203-207, 1936).



JOHN WADDEY

ARGUMENTS FOR A VEGETARIAN LIFE

1. Vegetarians argue that when God first created man He gave him a diet of herbs, Gen. 1:30. This we would not dispute; yet in Gen. 9:3-4, God said to Noah and his family (the entire human race), "Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you, as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." This plainly declares that God himself has given man permission to eat flesh with His approval. The one restriction being that it be properly killed and bled.

2. Some even go so far as to say it is wrong even to kill an animal. They cite the law, "Thou shalt not kill" (Deut. 5:17). They grossly misapply this prohibition which refers only to the killing of man made in God's image (See Gen. 9:6). It cannot be wrong to kill beasts for needful purposes because God ordered them slain for sacrifices (Lev. 1:4-5). Furthermore, He ordained that "the flesh of his peace offerings shall be eaten on the day of his oblation..." (Lev. 7:15). When God created man he said, "...let them have dominion over the fish of the seas, and over

the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26). Man is thus authorized to use the lower creatures of earth for his needs. Of course, we would not justify the wanton, wasteful destruction of God's creatures. We only have them as a stewardship (Ps. 50:10-11). If the vegetarian were truly consistent in this interpretation of "thou shalt not kill," he could not kill a rat, a fly, or a cockroach! Of course, some of the Hindoos of India are that conscientious, although their reasons are different.

3. Vegetarians are in an awkward position to explain Christ's preparing fish for his disciples to eat, and telling them to "break their fast" (John 21:9, 12). Did Christ sin? The Bible says, No! (I Pet. 2:21). Then it cannot be wrong to eat the flesh of fish.

They point out that when God led Israel through the wilderness, He fed them manna, a vegetable product. But they do not usually mention that he also gave them quail meat in large quantity (Num. 11:31-32). Also, they were given definite permission as to which meats they could eat with heaven's blessings (Lev. 11:2-6).

4. Again, they cite the prohibitions against eating "unclean" meats in Lev. 11:28. They then jump to the unwarranted conclusion that ALL meat is forbidden. This is to ignore the permission God granted for them to eat CLEAN meats, such as beef and mutton. The unclean meats which were forbidden to the Jews were primarily scavengers and predators which in those days would have been more likely to harm one's health because of lack of sanitation and facilities for keeping meat. Also, those food laws were like the ones forbidding the sowing of different crops in one field, which were positive, divine laws designed to test the loyalty of the people toward God, Lev. 19:19.

5. Vegetarians have no right even to forbid us to eat animals that were unclean under Moses' law. In Peter's vision on the flat roof of Simon's house he saw all manner of unclean creatures let down from heaven. He heard a voice saying, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." This he refused to do because of his Jewish background and training. Then he was told, "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common" (Acts 10:9-15). We readily grant that the vision was teaching about far more than meat; but it did not teach error about meat! Thus Paul, after showing that Christ had removed the old Mosaic law, wrote, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a feast day...or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16-17).

6. To make abstinence from meat a matter of religion is a sign of apostasy. Paul warns that when men fall away from the faith, they would forbid to marry and command "to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth" (I Tim. 4:1-3). Notice that: a) it is the doctrine of demons (devils) to so teach; b) that God created meats to be received by man; c) those who believe and know the truth can and will receive them; conversely, those who do not believe and know not the truth will not; d) every creature of God is good and is not to be rejected, I Tim. 4:4; e) meat is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, I Tim. 4:5.

7. To make one's diet a mark of religion is "will worship" of no spiritual value since it is the precept and doctrine of men, Col. 2:20-23.

8. No one has to eat meat to please God, who has left diet up to each person's own preference in this Christian age. "One man hath faith to eat all things; but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at

naught him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth" (Rom. 14:2-3). The important thing in Paul's thinking was not what you eat, but how you love and respect your Christian brother. Eating meat should never be a test of fellowship. "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his own Lord he standeth or falleth" (Rom. 14:4).

9. We must respect our conscience. "Happy is he that judgeth (condemns) not himself in that which he approveth. But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because, he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:21-23). God never wants us to violate our conscience. We may educate it, but not ignore it!

10. We must respect the conscience of a weak brother. "Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for the man who eateth with offence. It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth" (Rom. 14:20-21). On a slightly different problem, Paul wrote, "Wherefore if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore..." (I Cor. 8:13).

11. Our only restrictions on eating flesh are stated in Acts 15:28-29: "...that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled..." With these things duly observed, one may eat any animal flesh so long as it is received with thanksgiving and prayer and used in moderation (II Pet. 1:6), remembering that law of kindness toward a weak brother.

If Adventists or any others wish to be vegetarians, that is their privilege. But let them not seek to declare their practice a law of God and bind it upon others. We appreciate the great contributions Adventists have made to the science of nutrition and the development of new foods, such as soybean products. Yet our appreciation must not keep us from opposing the false teaching and practice that they set forth in the name of God. In the matter of meats and many others, they teach the doctrines of demons (I Tim. 4:1-5).

There Are Helpers

JOHN H. ALLEY

A lad was peddling post cards at ten cents each. "And what are you doing to do with the money?", a kindly gentlemen asked.

"I'm raising a million dollars for the famine relief," the boy answered gravely.

The gentleman laughed. "A million dollars," he cried! "Do you expect to raise it all yourself?"

"No sir," the boy said earnestly. "There is another little boy helping me."

No one engaged in a worthy work is ever all alone. Elijah pessimistically viewed his homeland and concluded that all Israel had bowed the knee to Baal, and that he alone was left to serve the Lord. But such gloom was not justified. It never is! There were yet ten thousand who were not misled by the deceptions of a false worship.

In your individual service to God do you every imagine that no one else is doing as much as you are? Do you sometimes feel that others are not as sincere, not as wise, in devotion to duty as you are? Then think again! There are others helping.

The fact that God is always helping is a source of quiet reassurance to every Christian. GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE US ABLE!! "And God is able to make all grace abound toward

(continued on page 4)

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter nineteen

"He has put my brethren far from me,
and my acquaintances are wholly estranged
from me.

My kinsfolks and my close friends have
failed me;

the guests in my house have forgotten
me;

my maidservants count me as a stranger;

I have become an alien in their eyes.

I call to my servant, but he gives me no
answer;

I must beseech him with my mouth.

I am repulsive to my wife,

loathsome to the sons of my own mother.

Even young children despise me;

when I rise they talk against me.

All my intimate friends abhor me,
and those whom I loved have turned
against me."

— verses 13-19

ALONE! ALONE! ALL, ALL ALONE!

JOB 19:13-19

The computer which records the estimated population of the world has now passed the three billion figure, and there is more loneliness than at any other time in human history. We are told that the world's loneliest people live in the heart of the biggest cities. So, it must be that loneliness often comes from within. At least there are people everywhere! And loneliness can be found everywhere that people are. Notice some of the causes of it:

1. *Even success can bring loneliness.* An election launches one into political victory and his high office isolates him from his friends. Wealth separates a rich man from his fellows. Business tycoons are often lonely for companionship. Outstanding popularity is a paradox — it takes close friends to obtain it; and then it creates a distance which is hard to span.

2. *Righteousness sometimes produces loneliness.* One becomes righteous, then finds his friends growing distant. New companionships have to be formed as his new values place him at enmity with the world. Moses' desire to do right caused him to walk a lonely pathway. He separated himself from the Egyptians, his brethren were tempted to shun him, the Israelites were rebellious. He named his first son Gershom because, "I have been a stranger in a strange land." He died without "the voice of a friend or the touch of a brother's hand."

3. *Timidity usually causes loneliness.* Most lonely people are simply timid. They want to get to know others, to make friends, but they hesitate to take the initiative. Very few really want to be loners.

4. *Perhaps the death of loved ones brings the greatest loneliness of all.* Chairs in the family circle are left empty — and that means that hearts are emptier still. Death invades a home and leaves a widow to fight the battle of loneliness. Old age means that old friends have departed and sometimes there are no

new friends to fill the vacuum.

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?

What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?

To view each loved one blotted from life's page

And be alone on earth, as I am now.

— Byron

There can be plague in loneliness!

And Job knew it well. Look at his list of those whom he felt would no longer associate with him:

— brethren, "Far from me."

— acquaintances, "estranged from me."

— kinsfolk, "failed me."

— Close friends, "failed me."

— guests in my house, "forgotten me."

— maidservants, "count me as a stranger."

— servant, "he gives me no answer."

— wife, "I am repulsive to."

— sons of my own mother, "loathsome to."

— young children, "despise me."

— intimate friends, "abhorred me."

— those whom I love, "turned against me."

— [from Job 19:13-19, RSV]

Victory is possible. There are some things that can be done to fill the void.

1. *Make friends.* Friendships seldom come easy, and close human relationships have to be built. Each man has to make his own friends. That is something another cannot do for him. "The man who spends his life

building walls instead of bridges has no right to complain if he is lonely." (Proverbs 18:24). The friendship vitamin is "B". To be friendly with others will cause others to be friendly, too. Such will make acquaintances out of strangers, and friends out of acquaintances. There is good advice in the old adage: "Be friendly with the folks you know. If it were not for them, you would be a total stranger."

2. *Draw nigh to God.* When bereavement or calamity plunges one into a time of adjustments — a time when old companionships end and new associations have to be formed, there will be days when he will feel like no one cares. Let us adapt the words of Coleridge:

So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

He then can bridge the valley of loneliness only by drawing close to God who is always close at hand. He is our "very present help in time of trouble." We can be like David who said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me." Or like Isaiah who heard the sweet promise: "For I, the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, for I will help thee." Or, like Paul: "No man stood with me, but all men forsook me...notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." After all, did he not promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!"

(To be continued)

The Ungrateful Beggar

J. C. CHOATE

The story is told of a traveler in India who, as he was walking along, came to a jungle area. On spotting a nice shade tree, he decided to lie down to rest for awhile. A beggar came along and asked this traveler for some help. Having seven coins tied up in a handkerchief, he had pity on the beggar, unwrapped the coins, and gave him six of them. All agree that the traveler was more than kind in giving away six of the coins, and keeping only one for himself. Surely he was thinking more of this poor man's needs than of his own. But this is not the end of the story: The beggar went a distance and waited for the traveler to go to sleep. Then he slipped back and took the seventh coin. We would cry out our disapproval of the beggar's actions. Instead of being thankful for the six coins he received, he was not satisfied until he had taken the seventh one also. How terrible! "How sad," we would say, "that anyone could be so ungrateful!" Surely we would not be able to find a kind word to say about the beggar in this case.

While condemning the beggar for being such an ingrate, are we not like him in the things we do? God has been so good and gracious to us! He has given us six days a week to work and to take care of all our needs (Eph. 4:28). Surely this ought to be enough. As for Himself, he has kept back only one day (Rev. 1:10). This is the day that He has set aside for us to worship Him (Acts 20:7). But what do we do? We take that day also as a work day, a day to visit, a day of recreation, or a day to do whatever WE want to do. Often we do not even give a part of it to Him. We don't even take the time to worship. After the Lord has done so much for us, it is hard to believe that we would do him this way; but some do,

nevertheless. If He were asking for six days and giving us only one, such actions might be a little more understandable (?); but this is not the case. How long will we conduct ourselves in such a disgraceful manner?

But that is not all! Our Father gives us all the things that we have (James 1:17). He blesses us spiritually, but He also blesses us materially (Eph. 1:3; Matt. 6). We don't deserve so much, but He continues to shower His blessings upon us anyway. Now what does He ask in return? Ninety percent of what we earn? Fifty percent? Twenty percent? He doesn't even state ten percent. Rather, he leaves it up to us to decide what we will give Him. The only guideline He has, is that we should give "as we have been prospered," as we have "purposed" in our hearts, and that it should be done "cheerfully" (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7). But what do we do in response to this? We not only keep our part, but the Lord's part also! We use it all on ourselves — and then offer excuses to the Lord that we would give something to Him, but it is all used up! Then if that were not enough, we go on and ask the Lord to continue to bless us — and actually expect Him to do so! If this is not mockery, then what would be? How ungrateful can people be?

May God help us to realize that we re-enact the story of the traveler and the beggar again and again. We can see the beggar's sin; we need now to see ours. Surely we can do better than this. Let's allow this story to give us determination to do better. We can and we must if we are going to be the kind of people God wants us to be. Let's be grateful for what has been given to us, and not rob our Father of that which belongs to Him.

There Are Helpers

(Continued From Page 2)

you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (II Cor. 9:8) God is ever present. This injects an immeasurable fortitude into the Christian's walk of life.

"WE are labourers....."

"We are labourers TOGETHER....."

"We are labourers together WITH GOD...." I Cor. 3:9.

"Except The Lord Build The House"

JOHN L. WHEELER

The Psalmists said, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1). The entire Psalm elaborates on this point. There are four areas discussed, showing that in order for each to be successful, the Lord must be the builder. His plans must be followed. His instructions must be heeded.

It is obvious that the first area is the religious, in that any religious house must be built by the Lord. There are today many religious bodies with which the Lord had nothing to do. He built one church, and that is his (Matt. 16:18). Full and complete instructions are given for building congregations of people belonging to the Lord all over the world. God is building today his house through those who teach his word, and insist upon strict obedience to that pure word.

The second area discussed in this Psalm is the civil! "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." No amount of military preparedness or strength will substitute for moral and spiritual strength. When a nation has lost its honor, integrity, and concern for justice and right, it is only a matter of time until it falls. Our own nation became great because of the basic principles of integrity, honor, justice and right, with respect for God. These principles are being eroded day by day. We must turn around if we are to survive. Unless we build upon the Lord's principles for civil government, it is vain.

The third area discussed is economic! "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sparrows." No amount of hard work and sacrifice will build a business, like sound business principles. There are not enough hours in the day and night to beat the basic principle, that there has to be a balance between what goes out with what comes in. No nation, nor people can long spend more than is earned without disaster. We are heading rapidly in that direction.

The fourth area in which it is necessary for the Lord's instructions to be followed is the home. God taught a respect for marriage and for children. "Children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth" (Psa. 127:3, 4). The figure of the arrow shows the opportunity and responsibility parents have with their children. How can they turn out right without direction? Just as the arrow must be aimed, and force put behind it, just so in the training of children: there must be the right aim. Point your children in the right direction and put some force behind them, and they will succeed to your credit and to the glory of God. The last verse shows the blessings to the parent who uses his opportunity well.

He's Good In The Pulpit But Not Strong On Visiting

(THE VISITOR, adapted by them from an article by Chas. E. Geiser)

The other day I visited a brother in Christ in the hospital from a neighboring congregation. In our conversation I mentioned that the brethren in that community had a very fine gospel preacher. His return statement is the title of this article.

It still may be that members of churches of Christ retain the "pastor" concept of a Gospel preacher and what constitutes the primary obligation of an evangelist. Most denominations and express constantly their condolences to the elderly in their homes. Thus the gospel preacher becomes burdened with this idea of evangelism among the members with whom he works.

The Bible teaches that not only preachers, but elders, deacons, Bible class teachers, members, all, are to be involved in encouraging others (Gal. 6:10; Mt. 25:31-46, James 1:27). Visiting a shut-in can mean so much to them. It can cheer and lift their day so much. But it is a fact that some preachers have confessed that their sermons were "suffering" and that their Bible classes were "shallow" because they were caught up in a constant and consistent visitation program of

their own which deprived them of sufficient study to proclaim the gospel as it should be proclaimed.

The gospel preacher has a grave responsibility, and that is to teach and preach the Word of God publicly and privately (I Tim. 4:2). He has at least two sermons a week, two Bible classes, maybe radio, television, funerals, ladies' Bible class, etc., etc. (And I guess no one can really know what preaching is all about until he has experienced it first-hand).

Most preachers have been to college and earned one or two degrees, but no one learns all there is to know in higher education. So the preacher becomes a "professional student." In other words the good Gospel preacher is a studying Gospel preacher. One cannot preach what he does not know!

If your preacher is "good in the pulpit," maybe you ought to appreciate it. The really good gospel preacher today is on the wane. He may not visit like you would like (but then who does it like we'd like?), but he is a gospel preacher first and foremost. Call him. He'll always be glad to help you; but be cautious of your expectations of him. He is a human being, too!

The New "Ism"

ROGER E. DICKSON

Pagan is a term which for the last two thousand years has been applied to any peoples or cultures which are non-Christian. First applied to the Greeks, Romans and other pre-Christ civilizations, it later was tagged to any who did not accept Christian principles.

Pagans were those who hovered in the darkness of unbelief in Christ and those who based faith on irrationality. Superstition, idolatry and animistic spiritism were practices of ancient pagans. Their world view was based upon inherited traditions and superstitions. Their religion was a religion of nature. Man, his fears and his wants, became the subject of religious practice.

Today, man is smart. He has placed a man on the moon. He has transplanted hearts. He has split the atom. He can make cars. He can build supersonic airplanes. Science has become his god, organic evolution his philosophy of life, and satisfaction of self his goal in life. Yes, men are "too intelligent" to be pagans today, so it is claimed.

In a world of machines, scientism, and reason, something has gone wrong. Many people today have not found in science the answers to questions concerning being and destiny and origin. These educated wonderers have begun a search for being in other areas. They reject Christianity as being a myth. Christianity takes too much faith for these who have been nurtured in the empirical pits of scientism.

So, what is this generation, conceived in an age of scientism, doing? They search for meaning, not in science or Christianity — which many foolishly believe are contradictory and antagonistic to one another — but in humanism, in hedonism, and in existentialism.

This is the new ism — NEOPAGANISM. You don't have to believe in God to be a neopagan. You don't have to believe in the Bible to be a neopagan. And, — well — you don't have to be anything religiously to be a neopagan.

Neopaganism thrives in a society which claims to be "too educated" to believe in spirits and gods, and too frustrated with

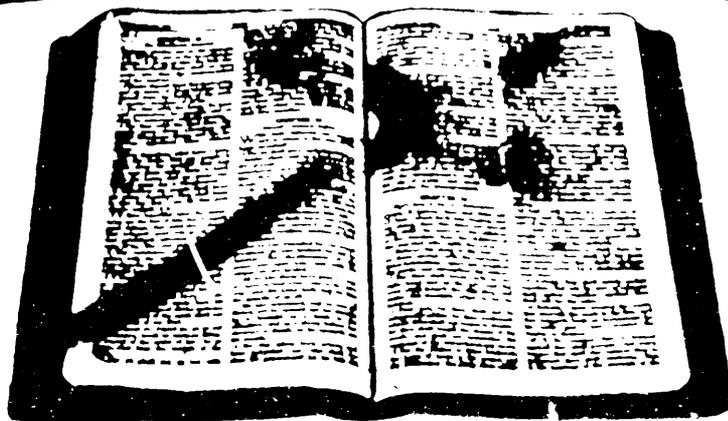
science to trust in it. Somewhere marooned between religion and materialistic rationalism they attempt to construct a philosophy of life that gives some meaning to existence. Generally, the world view of a neopagan is centered in man. It has to be, for that's all he has left. His mind thinks about what one can do in this present life, for when we die (he supposes) our existence ceases.

The neopagan is a good social worker; that is his satisfaction for being. He's a good doctor, a good dentist, and a good scientist. But he is "too smart" to believe in religion. That's all superstition. Just be a good man, a credit to society. You don't have to believe in God, Christ or the Bible. One can exist without religion. That is the philosophy of the neopagan.

Paganism is still with us. And it presents no little task to the Christian. Never before has the Christian had to deal with such an educated prospect. But, Christianity has the answers for the neopaganist. Christianity is reasonable, scientific — true science does not contradict the Bible — and it has the time-tested truths man needs to satisfy his sense of being. Men cannot exist without God and religion. And Jesus knew this when He invited all men, even the neopaganist, to "come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:28-30). — Caixa Postal 30.217, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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Was John The Baptist The Reincarnation of Elijah?

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

Several questions regarding reincarnation were sent by a reader of WORDS OF TRUTH. Here is the portion of the letter containing his questions:

Why have those who claim to 'speak where the Bible speaks' been so silent on reincarnation?

1. Malachi 4:5 closes O. T. with prophecy of Elijah's reincarnation.
2. Matt. 16:14 reveals reincarnation of Elijah and others was 'expected'.
3. Matt. 11:13, 14 that John the Baptist is the reincarnation of Elijah is clearly 'revealed' by Christ.
4. Matt. 17:12 the reincarnation of Elijah 'declared' by Christ.
5. Matt. 17:13 that John is Elijah reincarnated was 'understood' by disciples who had just witnessed his transfiguration.

Are the above scriptures 'specific' authority for the N. T. church to believe and accept reincarnation?

Is the mystery involved and the traditional neglect of the subject by or (sic) brethren justification for either rejecting or ignoring these clear statements?

Is there any basis for artfully dodging these scriptures other than that the religions of the east have taught this doctrine for thousands of years?

Should we reject the Bible account of the birth of Christ because the wise men of the east were the first group to locate, recognize, honor and worship Christ?

Do you know of any translation of the scriptures that will justify any conclusion from above scriptures other than that the reincarnation of Elijah was 'prophecied', (sic) 'expected', 'revealed', 'declared', AND 'understood'?

Should we reject the virgin birth or ignore it because it is Catholic doctrine?

The times of this ignorance God no longer winks at — how long shall we?

NOT SILENT ON THE SUBJECT

This writer has not been silent on the subject of reincarnation. At the invitation of Brother V. E. Howard this writer recently wrote an extended series of scripts for The International Gospel Hour on the Occult movement. A total of 135 pages of script material was written on the gross errors of the

Occult doctrines. The subject of reincarnation was dealt with in detail in that series, occupying 36 of the 135 pages. "Reincarnation" was thoroughly refuted by an array of Scriptural arguments from both the Old and New Testaments. We plan to run this material relative to reincarnation during 1975 in WORDS OF TRUTH.

"Reincarnation" is an ancient error that is witnessing a colossal comeback in our time. It will make inroads among the Lord's people just as other facets of the Occult movement have done, unless we do a great deal of teaching to counteract it. The foregoing letter is an indication of its growing impact to sway human thinking.

WHAT ABOUT ELIJAH AND JOHN THE BAPTIST?

The querist seemingly thinks that a concrete case for reincarnation exists because of certain statements made relative to Elijah and John the Baptist. We could not disagree more strongly!

In the first place, reincarnation or the transmigration of souls, is not Biblical language. The passages he cites do not use the word "reincarnation." They do not use the expression "transmigration of souls." The querist has read too much Oriental superstition into these passages of Sacred Scripture relative to Elijah and John the Baptist.

In the second place, he has evidently forgotten an Old Testament prophecy which speaks of Jesus Christ as being "my servant David" (Ezek. 34:23-24). Prophecy indicates in Isaiah 55:3 that under Christianity people were to be given the "sure mercies of David." Here the Messiah to come is called "David." The fulfillment of this is referred to in Acts 13:34. Because the Messiah is called "David," does the querist think Christ was simply the "reincarnation" of DAVID? If he does, was David also Deity? The contentions of the querist relative to Elijah and John will get him into trouble with David and Christ.

In the third place, the querist has omitted any reference at all to some fundamental Scriptures. Gabriel the angel told Zacharias in the temple that John would go forth "in the spirit and power of Elias (Elijah)" (Lk. 1:17). This did not mean John would be the REINCARNATED form of Elijah. It but meant he would be LIKE Elijah in character, appearance and approach. W. E. Vine, the great Greek scholar, says "in the spirit of"

means in character. Thayer says on this point that it means "the disposition or influence which fills and governs the soul of any one; the efficient source of any power, affection, emotion, desire, etc." Furthermore, he says, "in the same spirit with which Elijah was filled of old" (GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON, p. 523). For the word "power" in Luke 1:17 Mr. Thayer says, "inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth" (Ibid., p. 159). Then he cites Luke 1:17 as a passage employing "power" in this fashion. John would be a reformer as was Elijah. He would be bold and courageous as Elijah was. He would reprove those in high places as Elijah did. He would seek to turn an apostate nation back to God as Elijah did. He would be a man SIMILAR TO Elijah. But that is a far cry from their being the same personality!

Our querist evidently forgot John 1:21. There John the Baptist was asked very plainly, "Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I AM NOT" (ASV). John's answer was a decisive one, and it forever refutes the baseless notion that he was Elijah in REINCARNATED or TRANSMIGRATORY form. If John told the truth in John 1:21 (and he ASSUREDLY DID!) then he was NOT Elijah in reincarnated form! To say he was, will make John a liar! If not, why not?

Again, Jesus said that John had no peer among them born of women (Matt. 11:11). How could this statement be true if John (as ELIJAH) had been here in Ahab's day? If Elijah and John were one and the same, how could the one be greater than the other?

The Bible teaches that each person will give account of the deeds done in the BODY (2 Cor. 5:10). "Body" mind you, not "BODIES!" But in John's case, if this is reincarnation, he will have to give account for the deeds done in at least TWO bodies. And if reincarnation occurred ONCE, how can the querist be sure that Elijah and John have not been here in many other forms?

If reincarnation is true for Elijah and John, it could be true for all others. If true for all others, then no one could ever be sure that he had made proper preparation — for his next (?) earthly pilgrimage might just undo all of the preparation of a previous existence!

Perhaps the querist has not realized what a "Pandora's box" he has opened by his

Continued on page 41

WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

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How Much Do You Love The Church

[This article is being run as this week's Editorial. — Editor.]

J. C. Choate

Do you love the Lord's church? How much do you love it? What are you doing to prove your love for it? It is easy to say that you love, but it is another thing to mean it and to show it.

The church has been talked about so much and defended so often that it is possible that many of its members have magnified it, idolized it, and glorified it to the extent that it has taken on a meaning it was never intended to have. In other words, there is the actual living church of reality, and then there is the church that is preached and that (in the minds of some people) may be on a different plane than God intended.

The real church is made up of people, the followers of Christ, the saved (I Cor. 12:20). Its members are not perfect. They make mistakes. They therefore need help. They need love, encouragement, and guidance. The church that is preached is perfect, a united body, comprising all the attributes that would cause people to want to be part of it.

How much do we love the church that is made up of those who have obeyed Christ? Don't we talk about one another? Have problems in getting along with each other? And talk about "kicking" some out of the church? Is that love? Who would want to be part of such a group? But we are always preaching how wonderful the Lord's church is, telling why it is so much better than all human denominations. We tell the world that we love the church and that they should love it too. We say all ought to put it and its welfare first.

Aren't we hypocritical? Haven't we created another church, a fictional church, an imaginary church? I really believe that there are some who truly love the church that is set forth in the Bible, and they would do anything and everything in their power to plant it throughout the world. But many of these same

people have little love for the living church, the one that is composed of imperfect humans. To them there is a difference between the one on paper and the one in human form. Such a difference shouldn't be there, but it is; and that a great distinction is made between the two can be readily seen.

There is but one true church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23). We read about it in the scriptures, but it literally exists too (I Cor. 12:27). It is both divine and human (Acts 2:47). The divine side is of the Lord, and presents his pattern for the church (Matt. 16:18-19). The human side consists of its members (I Cor. 12:12). This church represents Christ on the earth (Col. 1:18). His name is glorified by it (Eph. 3:21). Christians should love the one who built the church, and they should also love those who are members of it (I Pet. 2:17; I John

4:21).

When we go to tell people about the church of the Bible we should sincerely tell them what it is, why they should be members of it, and what it is like to be a part of it. We should love them to this extent and we should continue to love them once they become obedient to the Lord. If we do not love the Lord's people we do not really love him who died for the church (Acts 20:28). One cannot successfully love the truth that produces the church and not love the church itself.

If you really love the church you will love its members. If you genuinely love it, you will not just preach this doctrine of love, but you will live a life of love too. Only then can it be said that you love the church in the truest sense of the word.

Observations and Recommendations

Regarding Church Discipline

God has appointed a method of discipline for the church to save erring members from damnation, and to preserve the spiritual body from disintegration and loss of public reputation (Compare 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; I Cor. 5; Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17-18; Tit. 3:10). When elders lead the church to faithfully administer this discipline, one of two responses may be



JOHN WADDEY

seen in the subjects of the discipline. They may realize their sin and sincerely repent; or they may refuse to repent and resort to any number of schemes to escape the force of the action. Herewith are some observations and recommendations to a CONGREGATION where a case of discipline is in progress.

1. Sometimes those who are disciplined seek to recruit a following of sympathizers, rather than repent. Do not encourage such; it will make you a partaker in their sins (2 John 11).

2. They may launch a vicious attack against the character of the elders and/or preacher, or whoever actively participates in the administering of their discipline. Do not lend your ears to attempts to discredit the leaders of the congregation by such who have been disciplined. They think this will offset or undo their discipline. The leadership is not on trial; rather, the impenitent brother is being dealt with according to God's will. Also, Paul admonishes, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses" (I Tim. 5:19). Remember: you are not obligated to listen to such charges, whether in person or by phone. The faithful Christian will politely refuse to give the party even a moment of attention if such is attempted.

3. Do not allow the person who has been disciplined to entice you to ignore the regulations of disfellowship. Some may make special efforts to force their fellowship upon you. God instructs, "with such a one, no, not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). Have nothing to do with him socially until he repents.

4. Sometimes the disfellowshipped seek to weaken the impact of the discipline by trying to force a "compromise" deal upon the elders. This cannot be allowed. Jesus said that sinners must repent or perish (Lk. 13:3).

5. Sometimes the withdrawn-from brother

or sister seeks to intimidate the congregation and its leaders by threats of trouble, disruptions, or other pressures that might be applied, thinking to make them back down. Such sinners have been known to even threaten lawsuits, or violence. Still, we must obey God, regardless of the "consequences" sinners might threaten (Acts 5:29, 40-42).

6. The impenitent often will point out the failures or problems of other Christians, suggesting that they have been unfairly treated. Do not allow this to side-track your judgment. Remember two wrongs can never make a right. Granted, others may have their problems, yet have an humble, penitent attitude, and want to do better. The person disciplined not only sinned, but refused to repent when shown his wrongs, and then exhibited a rebellious attitude toward the church, its elders and the scriptures.

7. Sometimes the ones disciplined will demonstrate an extra-sweet and smooth disposition, and seek to leave the impression that they are really the good, innocent members, and the elders and congregation are persecuting them. (See Rom. 16:17-18.) In reality they are attempting to deceive those who do not realize their true motives, and thus use them for personal advantage.

8. Do not allow yourself to be the "crack in the walls" of the congregation into which the rebellious brother might drive a wedge of discord. A shrewd person will manipulate a brother or sister for his own selfish purposes to escape the force of discipline.

9. If any charges are made, or questions are raised, that you do not know how to answer, do not seek to argue the point with the erring brother. Rather, get in touch with your elders, and they will gladly discuss and answer these matters for you.

10. Demonstrate your loyalty and support to the Lord, the Scriptures, the church, and your elders by cooperating FULLY in the implementation of God's ordained discipline for His kingdom. Only good will come when God's people faithfully practice Christian discipline. Erring Christians will be salvaged if there is in their souls any "desire to be saved."

Remember: discipline is an act of the church, and is only effective when the congregation as a whole cooperates with the elders in the action. We count not the sinful brothers or sisters as enemies, but as erring Christians who have stubbornly refused to repent. It is because we love their souls that we enforce God's discipline (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15). It is administered with the sincere prayer that their souls will be saved in the day of the Lord (I Cor. 5:5). — Karns, Tenn.

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter twenty-six

"Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways;
and how small a whisper do we hear of
him!"

But the thunder of his power who can
understand?"

— verse 14.

GOD'S WHISPERS

Job 26:14

During all Job's trials, he never forgot the power of God. He sometimes stumbled over his ideas of God's moral judgments because he did not see the harmony between God's goodness and the suffering of the innocent. But he recognized God's power. And he described it beautifully.

No more graphic picture of power has ever been penned than the words of Job as he speaks of the majesty of the Almighty in Job 26:5-14. The friends had finished their arguments. Job had responded. The mystery was as great as ever. What more could be said?

Here are some of the ways he described Him:

1. "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering." That is an all-seeing eye! It can pierce the place of "outer darkness." Nothing is hidden from Him.

2. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." That's power! His mighty hand formed the universe and placed the earth in orbit. He is the maker of the law of gravity, and his project still functions perfectly, even to the split second. The very universe declares His power!

3. "He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them." His is the power to hold up thousands and thousands of tons of water (in the form of vapor) in the air without the "clouds being rent under them," and then cause it to come down one drop at a time. Man can do nothing but stand amazed and marvel.

4. "He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it." God has the power to hide from man all that He does not wish him to see. He has the ultimate power over man's accomplishments. He may even cover His own throne from man's sight.

5. "He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end." Consider a giant ball flying through space. Two thirds of its surface is water! Look out over the horizon and see day fade into night, and this mighty force continues on its way! And marvel at God's power!

6. "The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof." The mighty force underneath the earth's surface that causes the rocks to quake and mountains to fall bespeaks God's presence and power there, too.

7. "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens." And the Psalmist said, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). To behold the starry beauty of the heavens at night, or the great painted western

sky in the evening, or the northern lights in the winter, or the clear sky after a storm, should convince even the most skeptical of God's existence and power.

When we consider these evidences of His mighty power, we stand in awe. It is beyond our comprehension. And we surely are not prepared for Job's comparison. He says: "Lo, these are but the outskirts of his ways." If these evidences are only the outskirts, the fringe areas, how powerful he must be!

Job and David use the same figure of speech. David said: "There is no speech, nor

are there words; their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:3 RSV). Job concluded: "How small a whisper do we hear of him!" These mighty manifestations are but a whisper can operate the universe, our troubles could not be a big problem to Him! We need faith to allow Him to see us through to victory!

*Vain is all human help for me;
I dare not trust an earthly prop!
My sole reliance is on thee;
Thou art my hope!*

— Elliot

(To be continued)

The Heaven of Liberalism

Johnny Ramsey

In an age when preachers are trying to be sensational, instead of spiritual; shocking, instead of scriptural; cute, rather than correct; clever, instead of clear; different, rather than doctrinal; and unusual, in the place of unerring; we truly need to return to the basics of fundamental soundness in the gospel! A double portion of Joshua 1:7, and II Tim. 2:15, would cause us to hold a straight course in the Truth, which alone can make us free from the paralysis of liberalism.

Any honest, careful student of church history knows we are living again the scenes of apostasy that shattered the restoration movement of the nineteenth century. Attitudes, and probably motives, are virtually parallel to the sad age of digression that shattered the work of great servants of the Lord a century or more ago. The powerful emphasis of "What does the Bible say" is once again being replaced by "Is this acceptable to the people 'round about us?" One can detect an almost worshipful atmosphere at the shrine of higher education on the part of brethren today. And any student of history can tell you the end results

of this arrangement! Even among those who must know better comes an appeal for cheap grace, and not the deeply-based teaching of the commands of Christ. It would appear that some ARE WILFULLY IGNORANT (II Pet. 3:5) as they "wrest the Scriptures" and go about "seeking their own righteousness" (Romans 10:3; II Pet. 3:15-16). While they so often speak of liberty and freedom in Christ, they and their devotees become the object slaves of error (II Pet. 2:17-22).

If we will speak only as the oracles of God (I Pet. 4:11), and contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3), and cease seeking the vain-glory of men (I John 2:15-17; Galatians 4:16), the creeping paralysis of liberalism can be halted. We do not need to break the laws of God (Matt. 5:10); but we do need to redouble our efforts to obey the commands and to present them clearly, without apology, to the world. It would also be a blessing to the church if preachers everywhere would tell it as it is! We need more fearless teachers and fewer forked tongues! Preach the Word! Amen!

The Holy Spirit

HOYT BAILEY

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit was given to Christ without measure (Jno. 3:34; Col. 1:19). The Holy Spirit is given to men by measure. There are diversities of gifts, differences of administration and diversities of operations, but the same Spirit (I Cor. 12:4-6).

There are three degrees or manifestations of the Holy Spirit. (1) Baptismal (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4); (2) Laying on of hands of an apostle (Acts 8:17); (3) Gift to every Christian (Acts 2:38; 5:32; Gal. 4:6). All degrees are called "gifts" (Acts 11:17; Rom. 1:11; Acts 2:38).

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: There are only two cases of this manifestation in the New Testament. The twelve apostles and Paul received the Holy Spirit baptism, so the 120 disciples did not receive the Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 1:1-5, 26; 2:1-4).

The house of Cornelius received Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 10:44-48). The Apostle Peter said, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 11:15-16).

The Holy Spirit baptism upon the house of Cornelius was to convince the Jews that the Gentiles were accepted. "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? 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 11:17-18).

The baptismal degree gave the apostles power to perform all manner of miracles, putting members to death as well as healing the sick and raising the dead (Acts 5:1-16; 9:36-42; 20:8-10). Jews from fifteen or more nations heard the Apostles speak in their own tongue or language (Acts 2:4-12). These were signs of an Apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). The Apostles could put people to death as well as raise them from the dead (Acts 5:1-11; 9:36-42; 20:8-10).

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Was John The Baptist The Reincarnation of Elijah?

(Continued From Page 1)

reincarnation theory on Elijah and John the Baptist. The writer trusts that this article will help him to close this box once and for all. It needs to be closed promptly.

HIS OTHER QUESTIONS ANSWERED

His listed questions by no means constitute either specific or generic authority for the New Testament church to believe and accept reincarnation. The doctrine of reincarnation is not so! We are not ignoring or rejecting his listed SCRIPTURES by totally rejecting REINCARNATION. He has assumed as true what these Scriptures do NOT teach and what he has utterly failed to prove that they do teach. In logic this is called "begging the question." We do not dodge artfully these SCRIPTURES when we reject in totality the error of REINCARNATION.

The question about the birth of Christ and the wise men who came to worship him is not apropos at all to this discussion. The truth of the matter is, the wise men from the east were

not the first group to honor the Babe of Bethlehem. The Judaeen shepherds had that honor. They came much earlier than did the wise men. The BIBLE teaches the birth of Christ; that is why we accept it. Our acceptance is on what the BIBLE teaches, and not upon the actions of the wise men. The Bible does NOT teach reincarnation; that is why we reject it. The question about the wise men and reincarnation is wholly irrelevant and totally immaterial to the basic issue he has propounded — namely the validity of reincarnation. We honor the Christ not because the wise men honored him, but because he is God's Son.

I know of no reliable translation that teaches the reincarnation of Elijah and John, nor of the "others" he mentioned in his queries. We make no efforts at all to defend what unreliable versions teach and we are not saying whether any of them do or do not teach reincarnation. If they do teach it, such is

another weighty reason why they should be rejected.

The virgin birth is Bible doctrine (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25). Where did this querist get the idea that it is "Catholic doctrine?" It is NOT a Catholic concocted doctrine. We accept it because we read it in the Bible — not in the works of Catholic authorities. In fact we reject much of Catholic teaching about the Virgin Mary.

The "times of this ignorance" of Acts 17:30 did not have that first single, solitary connection with the folly of any facet, nor the total system, of reincarnation — except that it and all-isms be rejected!

Reincarnation is anti-Biblical. The true Christian can have NOTHING to do with it, except expose and refute it. It is one of the many Oriental errors seeking to gain credence among the superstitions of the age. We humbly and sincerely beg the querist to forsake it in totality.

A Few Thoughts Of Giving

Jerri Manasco

There is no "taxation" system in the New Testament church. Such a device would fall far short of God's wise scheme for His church. New Testament giving is based on certain noble principles that have no equal. At the root of these is an appeal to Christ's sacrifice for us. Paul wrote, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). This wonderful verse emphasizes how Christ forsook the glorious heavenly state to take on humanity, to live among men, to die a terrible death for our sakes (Heb. 2:17, 18; Phil. 2:5-8).

At the very foundation of Christ's sacrifice is that most lasting of all virtues: LOVE. It was self-less love that motivated Christ to give His own body as a sacrifice that we might enjoy the gift of eternal life (II Cor. 9:15; Rom. 6:23). If the Christian would be like Christ, then the Christian must demonstrate a similar love. John asks, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him HOW DWELLETH THE LOVE OF GOD IN HIM?" (I Jn. 3:17). Surely, one who has an unselfish love will not be blind to the needs of others; neither will he deny the supreme importance of supporting the Lord's work with all that he possibly can.

The loveless heart, on the other hand, is a selfish heart, and cannot be touched with the spiritual and physical needs of others. How miserable is that man who simply WILL NOT see the crying needs of wandering souls!

The key to selfless giving is self denial. In fact, this is the first demand Christ makes of those who would be His followers (Matt. 16:24). It is at this point that a certain young ruler failed the test. Jesus told the young man, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk. 10:21). Please note, however, that Jesus was not merely asking the young man to give up his possessions; The Lord was demanding that this young man first give to himself. Until a person forsakes his selfish covetousness he is not likely to be a very dependable contributor to the Lord's cause. The Bible describes the covetous man as an idolator

(Col. 3:5). And idolaters are not much disposed to serve the Lord Jesus.

The true spirit of giving is well illustrated by the churches of Macedonia. Concerning them Paul writes, "And this they did, not as we hoped, but FIRST GAVE THEIR OWN SELVES TO THE LORD, and unto us by the will of God" (II Cor. 8:5). These brethren went far beyond the call of duty!!! They exceeded Paul's highest expectation of them, giving liberally out of their deep poverty (verse 2). When this spirit characterizes our giving, then there will be almost no stopping-place in what we will do.

One thing that troubles some people about their giving is the fear that what little they can give is not worth the greater amount the SOMEONE ELSE may be able to give. But we should emphasize that God expects us to give only as WE have prospered (I Cor. 16:2); He is not an unjust God who will demand more than we are able to do. Take comfort in the fact that God does not compare one man's giving with another. "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Cor. 8:12). On one occasion Jesus

watched rich men cast great sums into the treasury. Then a poor widow put in a small, hardly-noticeable amount. Yet of her offering Jesus said, "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For they of their abundance have cast in unto the offering of God: but she of her penury ("want", ASV) hath cast in all the living that she had" (Lk. 21:2, 3). Of course, Jesus is not teaching that if a person puts in as little as possible he will be blessed. The lesson is that if this poor widow put in all her living, HOW MUCH GREATER IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE OF US WHO ARE MORE RICHLY BLESSED FINANCIALLY! How we need to give out of the abundance of a gracious heart!

Let us be more earnest in our giving. There is so much work to do, and the burden of that work is upon the shoulders of godly brethren who are willing to freely and liberally contribute to it. Remember the words of the Lord: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). And, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...." (Matt. 6:20).

Why Christians Give Properly

Bill Carpenter

Proper giving indicates some things about the givers:

1. **THEY HAVE FAITH IN GOD.** Faith is shown by works (James 2:18), not by profession. What a person does reveals what he believes.

2. **THEY ARE INTERESTED IN THE LOCAL CHURCH** (Rom. 16:16). Money is required to do the things the church needs to do. A liberal contribution will greatly enlarge the opportunities for service.

3. **THEY ARE WILLING TO COOPERATE** (Acts 2:42). Christians are to work together. One person's contribution may not be much, but by combining it with others', the sum grows.

4. **THEY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT** (II Cor. 8:1-5). We are what we have been taught. One

is a liberal, cheerful giver because of his teaching, not by accident.

5. **THEY DESIRE TO OBEY GOD.** God's law teaches giving (II Cor. 9:7). To obey God's law a Christian gives of his money.

6. **THEY DO NOT LOVE MONEY.** The covetous cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10). The love of money can be the root of all evil (I Tim. 6:10). A Christian avoids the snare of the love of money.

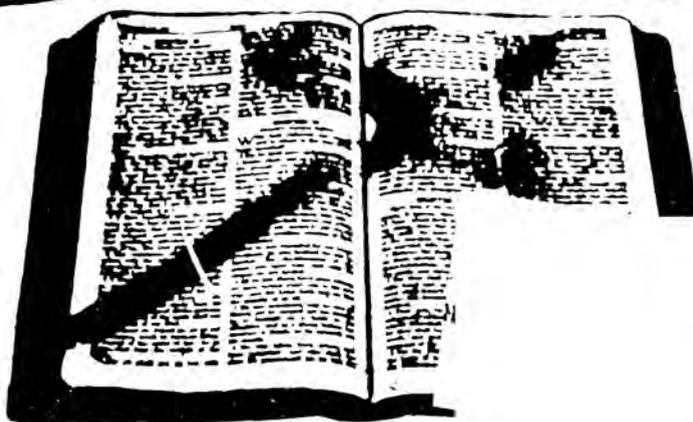
7. **THEY ARE WISE INVESTORS.** Money invested in some way. Money given for God is "laying up treasure in heaven" (Matt. 6:19-20).

*What I saved I lost.
What I spent I Used.
What I gave I have.*

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

"I came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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The RSV and Mark 16:9-20

Mark 16:9-20 in the King James Version says, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils (demons-ASV). And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they, had heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, believed



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils (demons-ASV); they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

The High-Handed Mishandling Of This Passage By The RSV

These last dozen verses of Mark 16 have long been a thorn in the side of those who reject baptism as a stated stipulation for attaining the remission of sins, or salvation. With crystal clear simplicity Mark 16:16 teaches that belief and baptism are both essentials or imperatives if one is to achieve the happy estate of salvation. This passage has also been a thorn to those who reject modern miraculous manifestations as set forth in Mark 16:17-18 and which occurred early in

the Christian movement to confirm the word (V. 20). But modernists do not believe there were any miracles performed, neither by the apostles nor by those upon they laid hands in the first century. Therefore, modernism is interested in getting rid of the very promise of these signs of confirmation. Hence, by removing this portion of Sacred Scripture, modernistic translators can inflict a deadly blow toward one of the great passages in the Bible dealing with baptism, and another deadly blow at the promise of miraculous manifestations of the Spirit in confirmation of the gospel. This would produce quite a motivation for the ones who disliked baptism as an essential for salvation and who denied the presence of miracles in the first century.

When the RSV translators initially came to this precious and weighty passage of SACRED SCRIPTURE they relegated it to footnote or

marginal status. A copy of this initial edition in which they did this lies open before the writer as this article is penned. By so doing they left out some 163 Greek words, if the writer's count is correct, of Mark's gospel account where they omitted words in certain verses. As an attempted justification for this initial relegation, they said the longer ending of Mark 16 is not present in the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus (Greek manuscripts dating back to the fourth century), not found in the best of the old Latin manuscripts, and that Eusebius and Jerome rejected it as a genuine passage thus claiming it was spurious. They also say this section used seventeen new words.

In Defense Of The Genuineness Of The Passage

In answer to their high-handed mishandling initially of this passage consider the following. There are other portions of the Scriptures which are not found in both of these two fourth - century manuscripts. These include sections such as are found in Ephesians, Hebrews and Revelation. Yet the RSV did not relegate these sections to footnote status nor to the margin. Why this inconsistency? In fact, in one of these manuscripts, the Vaticanus, there are several chapters missing from Hebrews and entire books such as 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Revelation. Yet they did not omit these longer sections! WHY? The longer ending of Mark 16 is found in MANY ancient manuscripts including the Alexandrian. Irenaeus and Tatian, who both lived in the second century, cited the passage as belonging to Mark's gospel record. Irenaeus says, "But Mark in the end of his gospel, says, And the Lord Jesus, after that he had spoken to them, was received up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God." Irenaeus of course was much closer in age to apostolic times than were either Eusebius or Jerome.

In high favor of the Marcan authorship of these dozen verses is the total improbability, yea even the total impossibility, that an inspired man of God would have closed an entire book so abruptly and with the words of Mark 16:8, "for they were afraid." That leaves his record hanging in the air and is something that would be far beneath any literary writer of ability who is uninspired. Surely such would not have been done by the inspiration of that inerrant Spirit of truth - the Holy Spirit. Matthew did not end his gospel

Duncan Comes To Jasper



BOBBY DUNCAN

Brother Bobby Duncan will begin work with the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, Jasper, Alabama, May 2, 1976.

Bob and Lois Ann have two children, Jill (11) and Tim (4). They come to us from the Adamsville Church of Christ where they have been for some seventeen years.

Brother Duncan is known as a Bible Scholar and great Gospel Preacher. We feel very fortunate to obtain a preacher with his talents and abilities, and look forward to his work with us.

Brother Duncan will begin as Editor of WORDS OF TRUTH in May. Flavil Nichols has been invited to be Associate Editor. These two brethren, along with our fine staff of writers, present a great team for WORDS OF TRUTH.

We all are looking forward to greater works for the Church of Christ, and plan to move on to greater things.

Our prayer is that God's Will will be done.
Elders, Sixth Avenue Church
Jasper, Alabama

(Continued on page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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Flavil H. Nichols
Editor

Rt. 1, Box 1412 Sumiton, Al. 35148

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Message From The Editor

WORDS OF TRUTH began in the mind of Gus Nichols, and he was its original Editor. To avoid responsibility for printing, address changes, and subscriptions, yet have the efficiently cared for, he entered into an agreement with THE NORTHWEST ALABAMIAN whereby that newspaper office would own, print, and mail the religious journal. Dad would be the Editor, and the paper would (like every aspect of his life) be under the supervision of the Elders of the Sixth Avenue Church, in Jasper. This is in harmony with Acts 20:28 and I Pet. 5:1-5.

Soon after I became minister of the East Walker church at Sumiton, my father asked me to serve as Associate Editor of WORDS OF TRUTH. Last August when he was stricken, I (with the approval of the Sixth Avenue Eldership) became Acting Editor, and (upon his death), actual Editor.

I have unusually strong ties of love, respect, and undying gratitude to the great Sixth Avenue church, and to its Eldership. Their faithfulness to Christ and loyalty to his will are an outstanding example for the whole brotherhood. Their loving care of, and respect for our parents (Mother as well as Dad) will long linger in the hearts of all the Nichols family! Not only are they our warm personal friends; they are doubly dear, for they are "beloved in the Lord" (Rom. 16:8).

With the beginning of his labors at Sixth Avenue (as announced elsewhere in this issue), Bro. Bobby Duncan becomes "Editor" of this journal. Both he, and the Sixth Avenue Elders, have asked me to remain on the staff as "Associate Editor," which I have agreed to do.

In behalf of the continuing spread of "Truth," I solicit your help in enlarging the circulation of this journal, WORDS OF TRUTH! Urge your congregation to Subscribe, either on the church plan, or individually. See the masthead for subscription rates. Please do NOT send subscriptions to me, nor to Bro. Duncan at the Sixth Avenue Church; rather, mail them directly to: WORDS OF TRUTH, P. O. Box 430, Haleyville, Ala. 35565.

The Fruit of the Spirit

When Paul introduced the works of the flesh in his Galatian letter he said, "Now the works of the flesh ARE MANIFEST . . ." (Gal. 5:19). As he proceeds to enumerate fruits of the Spirit in verses 22 and 23 he is suggesting, in effect, "the fruit of the Spirit IS MANIFEST." These are fruits men are able to discern within their own lives and souls;

qualities of the heart that show themselves in overt acts, and by attitudes reflected. These qualities are not easily feigned, but may be detected by those who observe our daily demeanor. As with false teachers, so it is with every life, "by their fruits they will be known" (Matt. 7:16). We are examining these beautiful fruits one at a time, though they must all be present in us in good quantity, blending together to make us complete in him.

LONG-SUFFERING

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, LONGSUFFERING, . . ." (Gal. 5:16). In long-suffering we have the idea of forbearance and patience. It is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or punish; the opposite of anger, it is associated with mercy. As an opposite of despondency it is associated with hope.

It is relatively easy to examine ourselves in regard to longsuffering. It is a manifestation of the Spirit's fruit primarily related to our relationship with others, even though it may be indicated in a patient waiting upon God and his deliverance from trial. The antithesis of longsuffering is a tendency to strike back at those who injure us, to retaliate when falsely accused, or to fear dire consequences despite God's promise to cause all things to work toward our ultimate good. With little introspection we may detect either the presence or absence of this admirable trait.

In daily contact with brethren, family members, or our fellow man, there is a real need for demonstration of this fine quality. Paul states that he could be identified as a true minister of God by his "purity, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, etc." (2 Cor. 6:4-6). If ever we are to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace we must learn through "meekness and longsuffering" to "forebear one another in love" (Eph. 4:1-3).

Even our disposition toward a brother or sister overtaken in a fault (whether it be a fault of character, or a point of doctrinal error) should be one of tenderness and patience (Gal. 6:1; Jude 22, 23; Col. 3:12, 13; 2 Tim. 4:2). Harshness toward those who are weak in the faith, and especially those who are yet babes, has been the cause of many going farther into error and sin; whereas a spirit of longsuffering has been the means of rescuing many a misguided but honest soul to the truth.

God's longsuffering (MAKROTHUMIA, in the Greek text of Gal. 5:22) was the means of saving eight precious souls from the flood waters (I Pet. 3:20). The antitype of their salvation is that "baptism doth also now save us" in Jesus Christ (I Pet. 3:21). Hence, but for God's longsuffering we would be without remedy or aid in view of the day of his wrath (Rom. 2:4; I Pet. 3:20-21; 2 Pet. 3:9, 10). We



R. W. GRAY

need to develop a disposition of patience toward those in the world whose minds have been corrupted by false teaching, knowing that the "god of this world" exercises a power that is not easy to overcome (2 Cor. 4:3-7). Flaring tempers are an evidence of carnality in the soul, and will inevitably drive a wedge between the would-be Christian teacher and the prospect he hopes to lead to a knowledge of the truth.

The same term is employed by James who wrote, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of PATIENCE. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the PATIENCE of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:10-11). In a time of extreme emergency Jesus admonished his disciples, "In your patience possess your souls" (Lk. 21:19). Hence, longsuffering, waiting on the Lord, is a means of self-preservation physically, emotionally and spiritually. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psa. 27:14). There is little doubt that God's people are in need of more patience, a greater endurance level. The extent of our patience and longsuffering reveals the level of spirituality to which we have attained.

Eternal Life Insurance

G. F. RAINES

Although the odds are 150 to 1 that there will be no fire in your home this year, you are probably one of the millions of American people who have purchased fire insurance for protection against financial losses resulting from fire.

The odds are 280 to 1 that your car will not be stolen this year, but you probably have theft insurance.

The odds are 6.5 to 1 (if you are over 25) that you will not die before the age of 70, but you probably have life insurance to partly replace the income that would be lost by your family in case you should die prematurely.

The day approaches in which you must die, and on the day of the resurrection you must "stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14:12). Are you ready for death and the judgment?

Eternal life insurance has been made available by the grace of God and the blood of Jesus Christ to all who believe and obey the gospel of Christ, "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16).

Jesus, being "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9), says:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

If you want to know what you must do to obtain eternal life insurance in Christ Jesus, please read mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; II Pet. 1:5-11).

Correction

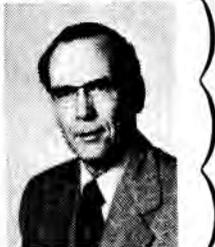
"The article, America Celebrates A Bicentennial!" in the March 26th issue of WORDS OF TRUTH, page 3, which bears my name, was not written by me. I do not know its author. The article was carried in the Hoover church bulletin, but not under my name...."

Sincerely, Glann M. Lee

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job

By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter thirty-five

"But none says, 'Where is God my Maker, who gives songs in the night?'"

— verse 10.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT JOB 35:10

When Elihu, the angry young man, took over the conversation with Job, the picture changed somewhat. He realized the failure of the three to solve the problem. He wanted to speak his piece. He thought he had a solution. And his ideas were different! He was not so harsh, not so cruel, with his explanation. Yet, he failed to explain good things. And he came near an accurate picture of the real meaning in human suffering in a casual statement: "Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?" (35:10).

Songs in the night! That does open new areas of thought, doesn't it? When there is no way to lay the burdens down, is there some way to be happy while carrying them? When problems have to be faced, and suffering has to be endured, can we find such meaning to life, and such faith in God, as to be able to adjust to them and still be happy? Can we find some song to sing in the night of despair, pain, bereavement, loneliness, frustration, slander, ridicule, hopelessness, or rejection? Is there some way to be happy in such times? Nights like these can get mighty dark! It can seem as though the dawn will never come! Those who should help us through the night may be adding to the burden. We call on God, and feel as though He did not hear. But there is a way to sing! A way to be happy even in the darkest night!

It is easy to miss this truth because it is easy to be blinded to the things that bring happiness. The rat-race to obtain "things" ends in a blind alley. "Things" may be obtained, all right, but one may possess them and still be miserable — or he may not possess them and be sublimely happy. If that isn't right, then explain the misery in some mansions and the joy among some who are poor. Of course, some of the "haves" are happy, and some of the "have nots" are unhappy, too. The only conclusion is that "things" have but very little to do with real happiness.

And troubles don't prevent happiness! If they did, then why all the sunshine radiated by some who are so gravely handicapped? And why the despair in the lives of some who have good health, good jobs, good friends, good homes — who have "everything?" Oh, yes, some who have problems are miserable, and some who have none are happy. Hence, troubles have very little to do with whether one is happy, or not!

Elihu hit a good note when he said, "God giveth songs in the night." Despite our troubles, God can give songs of peace, contentment, assurance, and faith to help us. He can give us a good conscience, peace of mind, and help to adjust to whatever life may demand. If we go into partnership with Him, we will have a victorious adventure. If, like Job, we try to find a cut-and-dried answer to

all our problems — one that will fit into a pre-conceived mold of human theology — we will have the same frustration. But if we realize there are no answers to some questions, and attempt to adjust to whatever is around us, we will be able to find help. Remember, it is God who gives songs in the night!

*When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,*

'It is well, it is well with my soul.'

— Spafford

Trust in God is the important thing. Rely upon divine theology. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that

love God" (Romans 8:28). Instead of searching for the "why" of suffering, give God a chance to work it out. He doesn't always view the days as we do. He is not limited as we are.

*Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.*

— Unknown

And far more important than "why?" is the disposition we make of the bitter experiences that come our way. "Now that this problem is mine, how can I help to make it work for my good?" is a better attitude than "Why did this have to happen to me?"

(To be continued)

The Bible and Flying Saucers

In recent times a few radical sensationalists have contended that centuries ago earth was visited by space beings from distant planets. It is alleged that evidence for such a notion is not only to be found in the archaeological records and monuments of antiquity, but that the Bible also contains allusions to such. For instance, in his best-selling book **CHARIOTS OF THE GODS?** (and the subsequent movie of the same title), Swiss author Erich von Daniken contends that Ezekiel, chapter one, is a Biblical description of flying saucers visiting earth from outer space. However, careful study of Ezekiel 1 not only thoroughly refutes von Daniken's absurd theory, it also reveals how very little regard he has for Jehovah and His Word.

EZEKIEL'S VISION

The prophet Ezekiel was one of the captives of the Babylonian conquest in 606 B.C. As the book opens, it is the thirtieth year (probably the thirtieth year of his own life) and he is in Babylon by the river Chebar when the "heavens were opened" and, the prophet declares, "I saw visions of God." As the dramatic visions began to unfold, Ezekiel saw the likeness of four living creatures. They were similar in appearance to men except they had four faces: one like a man, one like a lion, one like an ox, and one like an eagle (10). They had hands like men but feet as calves (7, 8), and each creature had four wings, two of which covered the body (11), and two of which stretched upward supporting "the likeness of a firmament" (22, 23). Their appearance also was like burning coals of fire and their movements appeared as flashes of lightning (13, 14). Beneath these four living creatures were four wheels. Each wheel was fashioned as "a wheel within a wheel" and it could move in four directions without turning. Moreover, the rims of the wheels were "full of eyes" (15-18). Above all of this was a throne upon which sat one who had the "appearance of a man" and who was surrounded by a fiery and glorious brightness (26-28). Overpowered by the spectacle, Ezekiel fell upon his face.

THE MEANING OF THE VISION

Before discussing the actual elements of these scenes, several preliminary observations are in order. (a) Rather than relating to mysterious outer space UFO's, these visions were breath-taking glimpses of the glory of

Almighty God. Indeed, verses 1 and 28 stand like guardian sentinels at the beginning and end of the chapter to prevent fanatical speculation as to the meaning of the narrative. In the first verse the prophet says: "I saw visions of God," and in the final verse he concludes: "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah." (b) These scenes are identified as "visions." This Biblical term may refer occasionally to purely oral revelations (Hab. 2:2, 3), or to the written record of a divine revelation (Nah. 1:1), or, as in this instance, to a miraculous audio-visual phenomenon through which divine truth is communicated. (Compare the account of the transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-9.) Visions were frequently connected with the revelation of God in olden times. "Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known unto him in a vision . . ." (Num. 12:6; Cf. Heb. 1:1.). (c) The narrative is highly SYMBOLIC as evidenced by the repeated use of "appearance" (14 times) and "likeness" (10 times). (d) Finally, it should be noted that this vision of Deity — similar to Isaiah's (6:1-8), and also to the apostle John's (Rev. 1:9-20), was doubtless to prepare the prophet for the great truths about to be revealed to him (Cf. 2:2ff.).

THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES — The four living creatures are not "space people" from some remote planet; rather, they are plainly identified as heavenly CHERUBIM! Note Ezekiel's own explanation: "And the cherubim mounted up: this is the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar" (10:15; 20). Cherubim were an order of angelic beings in Jehovah's service. For example, they were used by the Lord to guard the entrance to Eden after Adam and Eve's transgression (Gen. 3:24). Cherubim figures were mounted on opposite ends of the mercy seat atop the Ark of the Covenant within the most holy place of the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:22). In Ezekiel's vision, each cherub had four faces: man, lion, ox, and eagle. Jewish tradition interpreted this as follows: "Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds; the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among the wild beasts; and all of them have received dominion, and greatness has been given them, yet they are stationed below the chariot of the Holy One" (Midrash Rabbah SHEMOTH, § 23, on Ex. 15:1). This is doubtless a symbolic representation of **JEHOVAH'S SUPREMACY AND SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ENTIRE CREATION!** There is not the remotest connection with space-men!

THE WHEELS — The wheels, each characterized as a "wheel within a wheel,"

(Continued on page 4)



WAYNE JACKSON

The RSU and Mark 16:9-20

(Continued from page 1)

record this abruptly. The inspired Matthew closed with the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. When he finished, nothing was hanging in the air. Luke did not conclude his gospel record this way and leave matters hanging in the air. Luke closes his gospel record with the Lord's ascension from a place near Bethany and the disciples' return to Jerusalem where in the temple they were continually praising and blessing God. John did not end his gospel record and leave the matter hanging up in the air with an incomplete thought in half-way development, as they have Mark's doing in Mark 16:8. John closes with an explanation of why he could not record everything Jesus did. Why think Mark under the inspiration of the same Spirit WOULD NOT DO what the same Spirit had the other three to do in sublime perfection? In our judgment, this is one of the strongest reasons for accepting the genuineness of this precious and priceless passage of Scripture.

Brother B. C. Goodpasture said it so well in a fine, scholarly editorial in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE about the RSV when he said the RSV's handling of Mark 16:9-20 "is certainly high-handed" (GOSPEL ADVOCATE, October 19, 1972, p. 658). We fully concur with the erudite editor of the "Old Reliable." This writer is happy to serve on the staff of the Advocate and write under the direction of like Brother Goodpasture who is not afraid to stand up and be counted in crucial matters like this.

Some of us are not about to forget the high-handed way in which they dealt with Mark 16:9-20. In the concluding portion of this material on Mark 16:9-20 the writer has a letter from Brother Thomas B. Warren about Mark 16:9-20 that we want to share with you. Brother Warren has given his permission for this letter and its highly-interesting contents to be shared. It provides a little-known insight into some of the men who worked on the RSV and especially as it pertained to this passage of Sacred Scripture.

(To Be Continued)

The Bible and Flying Saucers

(Continued from page 3)

have been absurdly identified as flying saucers! But they were nothing of the kind. The truth is, the cherubim — with under-girding wheels — represented a heavenly CHARIOT upon which was the throne of Jehovah God (Cf. I Chron. 28:18 where the cherubim are described as the Lord's "chariot."). The wheels are simply a component of the chariot vision. The chariot could move along the earth by its wheels, or be borne aloft by the cherubim wings (21), thus showing that Jehovah is "the God of heaven and the God of the earth" (Gen. 24:3). The "wheel within a wheel" conveys the picture of two wheels blended together at right angles thus enabling the chariot to move in all four directions without turning. The Almighty is present throughout the entire universe! "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah" (Jer. 23:24). It is further important to note that these multi-directional wheels are "full of eyes round about" (18), emphasizing the ever-watchfulness of our all-seeing Creator. "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil

and the good" (Prov. 15:3).

THE THRONE — Above the cherubim, and supported by their wings, was an awesome, crystal-like "firmament"; beyond this was the "likeness of a throne" (22, 23, 26). Upon the throne was "a likeness as the appearance of a man" bathed in a brilliance "as it were glowing metal" and over Him a rainbow-like hue of brightness. The identity of this Personage is not a matter of speculation. "This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah" (28).

Pleading With People

J. C. CHOATE

Why should we have to beg and plead with people to accept the truth? This seems unreasonable; yet, we do. And it is as though we are their enemies when we do. People don't want to leave what they already have, even for the truth. They seem to be satisfied, and to resent being bothered. This is heart-breaking.

We ask people to read and study their own Bible to see what it teaches. We ask them to investigate what we say by comparing it with the scriptures. We encourage them to become members of Christ's church. We plead with them to wear the name of Christ. We urge them to go to God's word for all that they say and do in religion. But what kind of response do we get? People want to know why we are against the other churches? They look upon us as being the ones who are teaching error. Isn't this strange? We only try to get them to go to God's word, to accept Christ's church, his name, etc., and yet we are branded as enemies of Christ. It is truly hard to understand.

If we were trying to get people to accept our word over God's word, if we were urging them to become members of some church that is not found in the Bible, if we were introducing a man-made name to them, etc., then we could understand this kind of reaction. But when we are pleading with them to turn away from error to follow the truth only, and then get this kind of response, I find it hard to understand. We would be more successful in converting (?) people if we taught error! This seems to be more in line with their thinking.

Ingredients of God's Grace

Dub McClish

In the New Testament the "grace of God" refers to the unearned and unearnable favor God has extended to men. In the classical Greek literature this grace was extended only to friends. In the New Testament a new dimension is added: God extended it to his enemies. A fine study on the subject is found in Titus 2:11-14. The passage says the "grace of God has appeared." It is now revealed through the work of Christ and the declarations of his word. "God's grace has appeared unto "all men" in that it embraces all people POTENTIALLY. In reality it blesses only those who accept it on God's own terms. What are the ingredients of God's grace toward us?

SALVATION (v. 11). A planet of rebellious creatures stood under condemnation of an all-righteous creator. The guiltless judge stepped from the bench and said, "I will take their place and die in their stead" (V. 14). Since he has died for us, we do not have to die. Divine justice has been satisfied, and by the death of Christ we have life (Rom. 5:18). This salvation is not imputed indiscriminately,

CONCLUSION

The Bible is its own best commentary. And this chapter is clearly a marvelous portrayal of the majesty of Almighty Jehovah. How our hearts leap as we, through the inspired pen of Ezekiel, are permitted to view such glorious scenes. Let us, therefore, exalt and serve well our great God. Conversely, the cheap and utterly disgusting association of these heavenly phenomena with "flying saucers" and the like — and all for the sake of filthy lucre — cannot but be the result of perverted and wretched souls!

The majority of the people who pretend to be following the Bible are so grounded in denominational error, that ERROR has become the TRUTH to them, and the TRUTH has become ERROR! It doesn't mean anything to them that we are urging them to go to the Bible to see for themselves what it teaches. They think they already have the truth, and so our suggestion is meaningless to them. They have heard of the church of Christ so few times, they think of it as being some new church that is presented to them in contrast to the churches that they have been familiar with all of their lives. The name Christian is not new to them since they all claim to be Christians in spite of their denominational name and titles. And on and on it goes.

What can we do to jar such people loose and to get them to see what we are talking about? The only solution seems to be that we just continue to preach to them. Eventually it will begin to get through to them, provided we haven't given up on them or they haven't refused to continue their study with us.

It is almost unbelievable that you would have to beg and plead with people to accept the truth, but you do. This is how mixed up the world is. That is how much influence the devil has had, even on religious people. It is therefore becomes hard work to deal with people of this nature. On the other hand, it is a real pleasure to come across someone occasionally who wants the truth, is teachable, can think and reason for himself, and ends up obeying the truth. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had more people like this?

but is for those who obey Christ (Heb. 5:9).

INSTRUCTION (V. 12). Grace includes responsibility as well as privilege: we must hear God's instruction. Some things are absolutely forbidden if we would continue in grace. There is also a certain way we must live "in this present world." To ignore God's instruction is to forfeit his grace.

ANTICIPATION (V. 13). By God's grace we have many spiritual blessings presently, but our ultimate hope rests in anticipation of the Lord's coming when He will gather us home with all of the redeemed. Let us live in more consciousness of that coming!

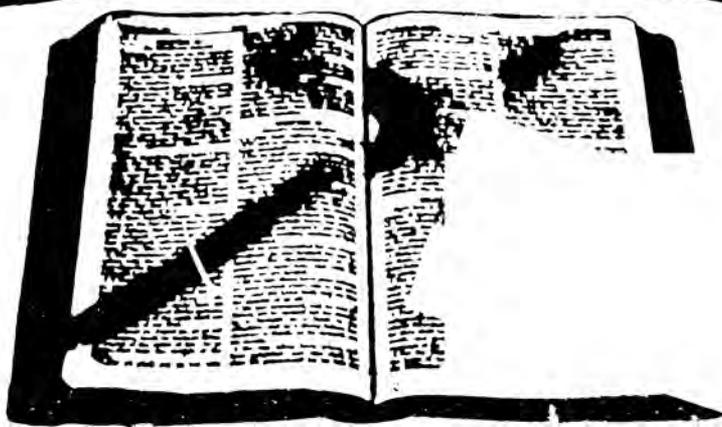
POSSESSION (v. 14). He redeemed us by giving himself for us. He freed us from sin's slavery to live for himself. In our redemption we were purified of all iniquity and made his possession. Zeal for good works is a necessary ingredient of living in his favor (cf. Ep. 2:8-10). We deny and forfeit God's grace when we have no energy for serving God!

God has spread his table of Grace; but man must come and eat (Mk. 16:15-16).

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

It came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

VOLUME 12

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"Questions and Answers Open Forum"

An anxiously-awaited book, **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FREED-HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES**, by Brother Guy N. Woods, is now off the press. Since the initial announcement that this book was in the planning stages and would soon be forthcoming, thousands have awaited its literary fruition with intense interest



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

and ardent anticipation. This writer received his copy of this classic work one week ago, and the perusal of each page has been pleasant and profitable. There is not the least hesitation in affirming this to be one of the greatest books since the last syllable of the Bible was concluded. Many great books, articles, tracts and quarterly writings have come from the prolific pen of the valiant and versatile Woods. We believe this to be the cream of the crop of his great writings, the climax of a great career of religious penmanship to date. Brother Woods may write a better book in the future than this one before his powerful and penetrating pen is retired; but this writer hardly sees how, in view of the greatness of his latest literary product.

THE PENMAN

The active author of this scholarly work is Guy N. Woods. His name has been a household term of deep Christian affection throughout the brotherhood for many years. As a preacher, teacher, debater, Defender of the Faith, writer, counselor, promoter of good works, loyal friend, and Christian gentleman he has employed his manifold talents in such selfless fashion as to endear himself to an appreciative brotherhood. His work load has been such through the years that most men long ago would have folded underneath its enormous weight and ever-growing demands. Yet such is the strict discipline of this amazing man, this phenomenal person, that he can do more than a combination of average men could accomplish. Brother Boles often reflected about the princely N. B. Hardeman, "He is no ordinary man"; the same sentiment can be stated about Brother Hardeman's prizo

student, the eminent Guy N. Woods.

Brother Woods is amazingly prompt in his correspondence. He is always prepared, whether it be for the composition of a needed article, tract or book, readiness for a debate, alertness for a sermon on a controversial theme in a gospel meeting, or the masterful manner in which he conducts with consummate skill the Open Forum annually at the F-HC Lectures. Two great virtues meet and merge magnificently in the inimitable Woods. He is gentle as a lamb in a conversational atmosphere and yet bold as a lion when proclaiming the word or meeting an able foe upon the polemic platform.

Brother Woods was born in Vardeman, Mississippi, on September 26, 1908. He grew to maturity around Holladay, Tennessee. He was baptized in 1926 by J. W. Grant. He preached his first sermon a short time later. He is a distinguished Alumnus of Freed-Hardeman College and has frequently spoken of the great debt he owes the school and such men as N. B. Hardeman, L. L. Brigance, C. P. Roland, D. D. Woody and others under whom he studied while there. He is licensed to practice law but has never engaged in actual practice.

During the 1930's and early 40's he was successful in local work. For nearly a third of a century he has been engaged constantly in gospel meeting work. He keeps some 200 meetings scheduled ahead. These meetings year by year take him from coast to coast and from the Great Lakes to the sunny-swept shores of the Gulf. He has had more debates than any other living person either in, or out of, the church. Formidable have been many of his polemic foes, and decisive have been the victories he has won for the truths of Spiritual Zion. He has been a staff writer for the **GOSPEL ADVOCATE** for a third of a century. During most of these years he has authored the constantly-growing and ever popular **Adult Quarterly**. For many years he has conducted the ever-growing and deeply popular **Open Forum** at the F-HC Lectureships each February. In this responsible role he is in a class that has no peer. He fits this important post with superb satisfaction and becoming honor.

THE PRODUCT

As indicated in the title, this book contains the Questions and Answers of the Open Forum which he deems to have been most important, and that will continue to be timely. The questions selected are of wide and varied

interest. The answers are true to the Book and are undergirded with a ripeness of Scriptural wisdom that is truly refreshing. The answers are detailed. They represent scholarship of the Bible at its very finest. Brother Woods has the rare quality of making every word count. This he does in his speaking, his debating and in his writings. This great book is an eloquent exhibition of this obvious fact.

The book is excellently and attractively bound. The paper is of very good quality. The print makes for easy reading. The book is composed of 381 pages. Some books are too far apart from cover to cover. It is our judgment that this book is the very opposite. It is too short from cover to cover. This reviewer wishes Brother Woods could have gone on and on with his unique way of shedding light on the golden gems of God's word.

This book contains in the front a Table of Contents, a picture of Brother Woods and his Foreword, a picture of Brother Hardeman and the Hardeman Home, a well-written Biographical Sketch of Brother Woods by President Gardner, and a statement of thanks to Brother William Woodson for his invaluable aid in bringing out this volume. At the end of the scholarly work there is a very thorough index consisting of subjects, persons and Bible Verses treated, and the pages where such can be located. This adds immeasurably to the overall value of the volume. It will enable the student to locate with considerable ease and speed any desired information the book contains. William Woodson, Charles Pledge, Lois Rhodes and Martha Weaver deserve credit for the time-consuming and exacting work in this added feature of the great book.

Some 350 pages of the book are devoted to the Questions and Answers. Each page is full of weighty wisdom. Thrilling truths and intense insights leap at the reader from page to page. Each page read will whet the spiritual appetite for the subsequent page. Each well-answered question builds anticipation for the next question and its able answer. In the first part of the work, Brother Woods deals with the exegesis of many difficult passages of Scripture. The many passages he covers in the First Corinthian epistle is one of the richest sections of the entire volume, in this reviewer's judgment. A wide variety of questions dealing with particular subjects is

(Continued on page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama
FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Summit, Alabama
RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Message From The Editor



BOBBY DUNCAN

Writing this our first editorial for WORDS OF TRUTH is a humbling experience, and one which we shall not soon forget. Since its very beginning this paper has been mailed each week into our home. We love and appreciate it because of the great good which it has accomplished in the lives of thousands who read it, and because of the instruction we personally have received therefrom.

When the opportunity came for us to move to Jasper and work with the Sixth Avenue church we were reluctant to accept the invitation. But, like other Christians, we had regularly prayed that our God would help us to become more useful in His service. Becoming editor of a brotherhood periodical with such a grand past, and prospects of such a bright future, seemed to be an opportunity to be more useful. And while we are keenly aware of our own inabilities, and are sure there are many others who could do a better job, we are also confident that our God and our brethren will help us to maintain WORDS OF TRUTH as a great power for good in the world.

In this great undertaking, as in others here at Sixth Avenue, we realize that we are not brother Gus Nichols. We consider it an honor, however, to work in the shadow of the memory of such a truly great man. WORDS OF TRUTH is what it is today because of him more than any other one person or thing in this world. We pledge to our readers that we will, to the best of our ability, maintain the very kind of paper which brother Nichols made WORDS OF TRUTH, and which God would have us maintain.

In behalf of everyone connected with WORDS OF TRUTH we express our sincere

gratitude to brother Flavil Nichols for stepping into the gap created when his father became ill last August. For these many months he has edited the paper, and has done such an admirable job. We are delighted that he has consented to serve now as associate editor of the paper. His counsel will be invaluable, and the rich articles from his pen will add much to the good to be accomplished by WORDS OF TRUTH.

We appreciate also those who have contributed articles for publication, whether one time or on a regular basis. We would remind you that without these articles there could be no WORDS OF TRUTH. We solicit your continued help in this important area of our work.

It is in order that this our first editorial state clearly what our editorial policy shall be. There is no better way to do this than by reproducing an article which appeared in the very first issue of WORDS OF TRUTH, dated December 6, 1963. The article was written by brother Gus Nichols, and is reproduced here in its entirety, except the last three paragraphs, which told about subscriptions, mailing schedules, etc.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Gus Nichols

This being the first issue of "WORDS OF TRUTH", it is thought good to say a few words about the policy by which our new paper is to be moulded and fashioned. Just as congregations are determined to know what kind of preachers they invite to preach in their meetings they have right to know what kind of paper or literature they bring into the congregation for reading and study.

The following shall be the policy by which "WORDS OF TRUTH" is to be governed. Every writer should keep this policy in view in all his writings for the paper, so as to make his teaching and writing conform to this policy.

1. We want the truth, and nothing but the truth, taught in the paper. We want to make it true to its name "WORDS OF TRUTH" (Acts 26:25). We have no confidence nor respect for error and false teaching. Only the truth can make men free and build up the church (Jn. 8:32, Acts 20:32). We love people and shall always strive to please men in all things so long as no truth is to be compromised (I Cor. 10:33).

We could not ignore any truth to please men and be servants of Christ (Gal. 1:10). We claim no infallibility of our own, but we do believe that the Bible is the infallible word of God (II Tim. 3:15-17). We propose to be governed by the word of God in all matters of faith. This was the basis of unity taught by the apostles and agreed upon by the pioneers of the restoration movement (Jude 3; I Cor. 16:13; II Cor. 13:5-6; Heb. 12:2; Phil. 1:27).

In matters of opinion, or of expediency, where God has left things to human judgment, we propose to leave men free to exercise their liberty of choice. Where God left something loosed, we shall not either bind it, or submit to any human law binding it. Neither shall we loose what God has bound (Mat. 16:19). We believe the word of God is all the religious guide needed in matters of faith. We propose nothing as terms of unity and fellowship other than faith in Christ and loving obedience to him in all things (Heb. 5:8-9). However, this includes much more than many have ever comprehended it to embrace.

2. It shall be the policy of "WORDS OF TRUTH" to present a well-balanced type of teaching, the subject matter to be determined by the need of our times and of any demanding occasion and circumstance. We want the reading of the paper to contribute to a well informed, happy and united membership in any church into which it is

permitted to come.

3. We shall encourage our local preachers and others to write for "WORDS OF TRUTH." This will in itself be good training for them, and make the paper interesting to the friends of these writers. Mature Christians are quick to be patient with beginners and to rejoice in their visible progress. The crying need of the Church is for an efficient leadership, and this can not be had without the training of experience and work. Of course, we solicit good, strong articles from brethren everywhere who are loyal to the truth, both in teaching and practice.

4. It shall be our guiding purpose to make "WORDS OF TRUTH" conform to the principles of good journalism. Therefore, we shall strive to be courteous and kind in dealing with sin and sinners, as well as in our discussion of all matters where prejudice and tempers may be involved. But this does not mean that the truth will be watered down and made ineffective. We realize the fact that the truth in its own right and power is often blunt and painful as well as sharper than any two-edged sword. But we do not wish to get between the truth and the people and hinder its work of conversion and transformation by detracting from its power (Acts 14:1).

5. In our dealings with others, and in matters of controversy, we shall strive to be governed by the "Golden Rule" to treat others as we would like to be treated (Mat. 7:12). If our teaching of the truth provokes controversy, and the need arises for our defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:17). We shall continue in its defense long enough to get the job done, and then return to the main line of teaching the truth in a positive sort of way.

6. We shall ever keep in mind the only scriptural objective in publishing such a paper, and that is, to do all the good possible, and no harm whatsoever. We shall strive to make the paper a real blessing to all who may read it. We actually believe it will build up the members of the church so that they will give more, pray more, and live more nearly like Jesus lived, and if it does this, it will more than pay for itself, even in dollars and cents. The teaching program of the Lord for his church is the greatest program in the world (Mat. 28:19-20) Mk. 16:15; I Tim. 3:15). The farmer who is too stingy to plant enough seed will pay dearly for his lack of vision and unwillingness to invest. He must sow bountifully in order to reap bountifully. Brethren will do more, live right and do better when they are taught better. To this end we launch our paper in earnest, fervent prayer and solicit your confidence, your influence and support.

Isn't It Strange....

THAT some who claim to have open minds do not have them open wide enough for all truth?

THAT some people are more careful about the deed to their houses than they are about the security of their souls?

THAT little things which keep one from worship on Sunday do not keep him away from work on Monday?

THAT many men who will not obey the gospel themselves want their children and wives to be Christians?

THAT men who will not attend services of the church would refuse to live in a country where the church did not exist?

THAT Men will live unprepared to die and meet God, when they know that they must do so, and that the end of time may come any minute?

THAT many confess that when they were young their parents took them to worship and they are thankful for it, yet to their own children they are not being faithful to take them to church services?

"Yet Trouble Came"

Comforting Meditations
From The Book Of Job
By W. T. Hamilton



JOB

Chapter forty-two

And the Lord restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends; and the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and ate bread with him in his house; and they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; and each of them gave them a piece of money and a ring of gold. And the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first Jemimah; and the name of the second Keziah; and the name of the third Keren-happuch. And in all the land there were no women so fair as Job's daughters; and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. And Job died, an old man, and full of days.

— verses 10-17.

ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL
Job 42:10-17

One afternoon a preacher was making some calls, and he went by the home of a lady who had been widowed a few months earlier. He found her crying. She had had a difficult time adjusting. She was trying to pass away the hours by doing a beautiful piece of embroidery. After exchanging a few words of greeting, the preacher picked up the needle work, deliberately turned the wrong side up, and remarked: "This is the ugliest piece of embroidery I have ever seen. Look how those threads are knotted and tied. They go every direction."

That brought an immediate response: "You have it wrong side up! If you will turn it over you will see that it is beautiful!"

Turning it over and seeing the beauty of her handwork, he commented: "That's like you! God is weaving the threads of this life into a beautiful tapestry for eternity. You are only seeing the wrong side. When you get over there, you will be able to see the beauty of God's work and understand the reasons for days like this."

And so it is! We are prone to judge everything by today's standards. It is hard for us "on the underside" to view the beauty of God's work because we do not see all the design. It is hard to relate today's experience with the total picture. A partial view is usually a distorted view, and a partial view is all we can see with our limited vision.

*Not till each loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God reveal the pattern
And explain the reason why
The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
For the pattern which He planned.*

— Unknown

Job was unable to see God's plan for him.

He was blinded by pain, discouragement, frustration, and hopelessness. His mistaken view of retribution blinded him still more. His friends didn't help any. He didn't know that God was permitting Satan to afflict him for a purpose. He had no idea that his troubles would be such an inspiration to every generation that would follow him. The things that he didn't know, and that which he couldn't see, had him thoroughly confused. All he could see was that "man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (14:1).

Too, Job did not know just how well everything was going to turn out! But as the story closes, we see a wonderful and encouraging final chapter. "The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before...then came there unto him all his brethren...and comforted him...so the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters...after this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

Let's not be Pollyannaish in our study of this inspirational man. The lesson is not that we will have all our possessions doubled, nor that we will live an hundred and forty years longer! But the promise is that if we remain faithful, everything will eventually be all right with us, too. Even in this life we have hope. Dark days pass away. The sun returns after the rain falls. But even if our days here remain cloudy and death comes during the storm, there is an eternal sunshine for those who believe in Christ and obey His commandments and live for Him (John 3:16; Matthew 7:21; Mark 16:15, 16; Revelation

2:10). The God who rules all has the power to make all things work together for the good of those who love him and who are called according to his purpose. But only He knows what is for our ultimate good. So it takes complete trust in Him and total confidence in His concern for us to be able to bear whatever burdens may come our way. "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). The God whom Job served is our God, too. And He who ruled over Job's affairs and brought order out of the chaos of his life can do as much for us.

James summed it up well when he said, "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). *That is the message of the book of Job.*

Such assurance can give us the courage to face today and the hope of a better tomorrow, and the anticipation of an hereafter of joy.

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

— II Corinthians 4:16 to 5:1

"Yet trouble came" (Job 3:26) — but God was there — and truly, all is well that ends well!

"Better Churches"

R. C. BATES

It is nothing nowadays to pick up a paper, see over T.V. or hear over the radio about a prison riot taking place somewhere.

During a prison riot recently some person jokingly stated, "We'll never have a decent prison as long as we keep sending criminals there." Not too long ago, a southern governor was explaining the problems of rehabilitating prisoners in defense of a prison reform bill. On national television he was asked, "Why are you not rehabilitating more criminals?" And to this his reply was simple, "We can't do a better job until we get a better grade of convict."

I know that this seems absurd and preposterous when you are thinking about criminals but let's make the application to the title of our article anyway . . .

If we are ever going to have 'better churches' we must have better CONVERTS not convicts. Cheap grace will bring many to church but it will never make them disciples. There are thousands who have espoused Christianity, but only a few have taken on true discipleship. Bonhoeffer said: Christianity without discipleship is Christianity without Christ." But Christ puts it even plainer as he said, "Except a man deny himself, daily, and follow after me he CANNOT be my disciple" (Matt. 16:24 and Luke 14:26).

How can we have better churches? The simple answer is we must have BETTER CONVERTS. Dead wood is weighty, a hinderance to church growth and a fire hazard. No tree bears much fruit when failed to be looked after and the dead, rotten limbs pruned off and done away with . . .

Churches that expect to grow and be fruitful

(better, mind you) will have to do the same painful task. Only when this is done and proper discipleship is preached, taught and lived will we have better converts and better churches. In so many places the church is nothing more than a social club where people gather to discuss social events and just pass the time of day whenever they don't have anything else better to do. FAITHFULNESS is a dirty word and is to never be discussed, mentioned, or even hinted at. But Christianity without a cross is Christianity without disciples.

Faithfulness is love put into action. There is no way around it and going to heaven in the end.

There is more to accepting Christ than "getting baptized." The cost of following Christ is measured in terms of "total surrender" to Him as Lord of our lives. Peter said it this way, "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as LORD" (I Pet. 3:15).

Many desire a savior but not a Lord. In other words they want what He has to offer without paying the price. They are happy with the removal of sin by the blood of Christ. They are pleased with the anticipation of eternal life, but the Lordship of Christ is forbidden territory. They feel as if "I'll fly the plan and you stand by in case something comes up I cannot handle then I'll let you fly it."

How sad it is that we have not stood beneath the cross of Jesus and been transformed into that beautiful and wonderful image of our Lord.

The choice is clear: Disciples are going to have to be converts sincerely or disaster stalks the church.

"Questions and Answers Open Forum"

(Continued from page 1)

next. Amidst these answers will be found many additional expositions of Sacred Scripture. As an exegete, Brother Woods ranks as one of the greatest Bible scholars since the days of Inspiration. This reviewer has found this entire volume the kind of book he is eager to pick up and read, and I find it difficult to put it down when perusal has begun. Interest in it is of such absorbing nature that consciousness of passing time is ignored. The book will be a classic in our brotherhood indefinitely. It will be timely on and on.

THE POTENTIAL

In his many years of conducting the Open Forum, brother Woods has been able to touch directly the lives of numerous gospel preachers and thousands of students and other brethren who heard him gladly. Yet the wide circulation of this book will enable him to reach additional thousands who (for one cause or another) could not attend the annual lectureships and experience firsthand the very fruitful and ever popular Open Forum. The book can be read, and will profit multitudes, years after the sagacious Woods has gone on to his well-earned rest. There is really no current way to fathom the full potential of a book whose time has come, and which will continue to be timely from generation to generation. Here is a book that should never be allowed to go out of print. Its potential will be in direct proportion to its circulation. We wish for it the widest sort of circulation. We sincerely hope its sales will soar and soar. The more the better!

THE PURPOSE

In the bringing out of this book Brother Woods is meeting a quartet of purposes. (1) It enables him to meet the frequent requests that he place the very vital material of the Open Forum into the permanency of writing. (2) It enables him to provide a way for the recently-acquired N. B. Hardeman property by F-HC to be paid for by the school. Proceeds of this book will be used to pay for this property. (3) It enables him to pay a special gratitude to N. B. Hardeman and Freed-Hardeman College for all the man and the school have meant to him. (4) It enables him to extend the weight and worth of the Open Forum into the hands of multiplied thousands now and toward generations yet unborn. Such selfless purposes on the part of the inimitable Woods make the book that much more meaningful and valuable. What a definite debt we all owe to brother Guy N. Woods. Surely each of us believes in paying his debts!

OUR PART

Brother Woods has done his part with scholarly satisfaction and with amazing accuracy. Brother Woodson has done his part well. So has the college. Now we have a part to play. That part is in the personal purchase, the patient and pleasant perusal and the precious profit accruing from the book. That part is in encouraging its purchase, perusal and profiting on the part of many, many others.

The book sells for \$10.00. It can be purchased only from Freed-Hardeman College. The college hopes to realize about 50 per cent of this amount, according to an estimate by Brother Woodson, for retiring the indebtedness on the Hardeman home property. The other 50 per cent will take care of publishing costs. By the purchase of this book you can say "Thanks" to Brother Woods, pay a special act of gratitude to the incomparable N. B. Hardeman, aid greatly the

school he helped found in 1908, and have in your possession a truly great book. Ten thousand were printed in the first edition. Let's help sell the entire first printing before 1976 is gone. There are enough readers of WORDS OF TRUTH to do this ourselves. Order your copy today! Encourage at least five others also to purchase a copy! This reviewer is currently in a gospel meeting at Covington, Tennessee, as these lines are written. We were singing the praises of this book to one of the elders there during the first part of the meeting. We learned brother Jim Edmonds had already bought five of these books, one for himself and four for others in whom he is interested. Two thousand more like him and the first edition would soon be a sell-out. His action is most commendable.

CONCLUSION

Unless it could be replaced this writer would not sell this scholarly work for any amount of money. It means far more than silver or gold. In fact this book abounds in riches. It is rich in the silver of salvation and in the gold of the gospel. This writer is happy, very happy, to commend this valiant volume without reservation.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: We have obtained permission from Brother Woods and Freed-Hardeman College to reproduce articles from this book in a Question and Answer section of WORDS OF TRUTH. This series will begin with the next issue.]

Free Advice

STEVE CLARK GOAD

Once a good lady volunteered some advice about how I might better my preaching. This particular lady rarely attends assembly periods. But realizing that I need all the help I can get, I listened to her very intently. She made it very clear that (in her opinion) preaching on soul-winning over and over again is not what the church needs. She also asserted that making people uncomfortable by preaching "too hard" will drive them away. I listened, and filed the information away in my mind for future reference.

Quite frankly, I agree that making people uncomfortable should not be the standard by which a preacher establishes his topics. But one remedy for those who feel uneasy because of God's word, is for them to repent and change their lives to conform to the teaching of the Bible (Acts 3:19).

Really, should a man who has decided to devote his life to proclaiming God's word change the content of his sermons to please the oft-offended members who will not change? Shall those who refuse to be soul-winners silence the preacher who has a passion for souls? Or, shall he continue to proclaim the word of life, and hope that lives will be amended, and that renewal will take place in many lukewarm churches? "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16).

Agreed, being uncomfortable when attending worship is not an easy thing to experience week after week; but neither is the thought of God's wrath because of the intimidation by members who do not plan to change their lives to conform to Christ's standards. I'd rather move every six months, and preach the truth boldly, than remain fifty years in one location and speak smooth things to the itching ears of a few disgruntled

members (II Tim. 4:1-8).

Sacrificial giving, zeal, evangelism, moral excellence, study, and virtuous living have never been topics to satisfy the ears of pretenders. Let a man preach these, and the "free advice" will soon begin to make its rounds. Elders, if you have men who preach the truth without fear or favor, don't silence them because of brickbats from the peanut galleries of inactive members. "We preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect" (Col. 1:28). Have you a man who is peaching the truth in love? (Eph. 4:15). If so, keep him, love him, provide for him — and watch him work himself to death.

Jesus, Or Abel????

Steve Williams

The writer of Hebrews tells us that the blood of Jesus ".....speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel" (Heb. 12:24). We all know from Gen. 4 that Cain murdered his brother Abel. God then asked Cain, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" (Gen. 4:10). Revenge, or at least justice, was demanded. This is very similar to the souls of Christian martyrs who cried out, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?" (Rev. 6:9-10).

These attitudes are not specifically condemned. In fact they fit in well with: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom. 12:19).

But the more "noble" and "gracious" attitude is shown by the life of Jesus. As they nailed him to the cross, he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). In this way the blood of Jesus is to be preferred over that of Abel. The blood of Jesus seeks not vengeance, but our forgiveness, that we might have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).

The Dreamers

Lurana W. Sheldon

*They dream by day, they dream by night,
And strange their dreams appear.
To them the whole broad world is bright
And all is beauty here.
They read on fancy's glowing wall
Their dearest wishes writ.
But do they labor? Not at all—
They simply sit and sit.*

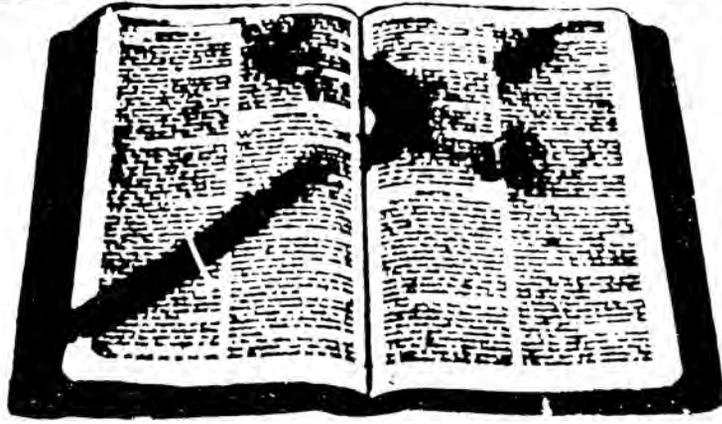
*And dream by day and dream by night
Of things that they will do
When all their wonders come to light
And all their dreams come true.
They see beyond the flimsy screen
Of present need, a crown —
But do they grace the present scene?
Not much! They just sit down.*

*And dream by night and dream by day
Of things they can attain;
And, oh! the wondrous things they say,
And say and say again!
They see success at every gate
And cures for human ills—
But do they labor while they wait?
Not much! We pay their bills.*

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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"I Will Ask You A Question"

FRANKLIN CAMP

The title of this article is a statement made by Christ. The chief priest and scribes had come to Christ and asked him a question. Their question was "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" (Matt. 21:23). People often asked Christ questions and he answered many of them. But in this instance instead of answering their question he asked them a question. Let us profit from Christ's method.

Christ and the work he was doing were being attacked by his enemies. Instead of answering their question and defending his work — which he could have done — he switched from the defense to the offense. He placed his enemies in the position of defending their position. Instead of allowing his enemies to weaken his position by loaded questions and pressing him, he pressed them with a question of his own. This method of Christ exposed his enemies much more than arguments he might have made in his own defense. Let us try it on some of the enemies of truth today.

The infidel and the agnostic are continually asking questions about God. I think I can answer their questions, but I am going to follow Christ, and say, "I will ask you a question." Will you explain the mystery that surrounds the world without God? If the world evolved from matter, will you please explain how it finally evolved into life? If life evolved from matter it was by chance, and not by law. This is self evident. But even the infidel must admit that the material universe is now governed by law. Will he explain how chance produced law? Life had a beginning. It came from some source, and was produced by some process. The same process that first produced life, if still operating, will still do the same thing. If the supply of life in its original source was not exhausted, and the method by which it was produced still operated, we would have it that way today, unless that method has been suspended. One of the other of these principles will have to be true. If life came from matter, its source is not exhausted. If it came by chance, how did the method of chance come to be suspended? If you say natural law caused it to be suspended, then explain how chance produced natural law. If life came from matter, we need an explanation of why it ceased, as well as how it happened in the first place.

If man evolved from a monkey, why and

how did the process cease? We still have monkeys. Have you seen any monkeys evolving into men? If the theory of evolution is true, why did not all monkeys become men? Why are there still monkeys in the world? Explain why the process that produced one man from a monkey did not make all monkeys men. If one monkey could evolve into a man then all monkeys could, unless the process that produced it ceased. Has that process ceased and if so explain how it stopped.

If evolution is true, why did it stop with men? Why have men not evolved into angels? If evolution is true, which eliminates God, then why is it that men go downward instead of upward, in the degree that they get away from God and the Bible? If evolution is true, is

it a universal principle? If it is not then why is it not? If it is universal then explain how some countries and nations have evolved faster than others. I suppose the infidel would admit that civilization has reached a higher stage in some countries than others. Will they explain this by the theory of evolution. Why did evolution work faster in some countries than others? Does chance work better in some places than others? If so, I ask how and why it does? If evolution is true, will someone point out its benefits? What contribution has it made to a world in need?

I have spent a good deal of time in answering questions, now I would like to receive some answers.

The Ecumenical Movement

G. F. Raines

During the past several years I have read a great deal about the "ecumenical movement." Much that I have read has been childishly naive and utterly unrealistic.

Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed for unity (John 17:20, 21), and the apostle Paul admonishes us to endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). But there is a vast difference between scriptural unity and the union that so many people are striving for today.

To bring about the unity of all sincere worshippers of God, we must reject everything as being a part of the worship and service of God that rests upon opinions, wisdom, and authority of men and observe only what is authorized by Christ and the inspired apostles in the New Testament.

Jesus says that those who worship according to the commandments of men worship in vain (Mark 7:7), and that unauthorized traditions make void the commandments of God (Matt. 15:6). He also warns us that, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

Paul, not willing that our faith should "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Cor. 2:5), says:

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition

of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17).

To do all in the name of Christ is to do everything by his authority. We have a complete record of all that Christ has authority. We have a complete record of all that Christ has authorized us to do in the gospel (New Testament). By "the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue," in the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3).

The apostle John says:

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19).

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Mightily Grew The Word



BOBBY DUNCAN

"So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed" (Acts 19:20). This is an interesting statement. The meaning is that more and more people were converted by the preaching of the word, and that the word of God gained more and more influence in the lives of those who became Christians. This is, of course,

what we mean when we talk about the growth of the church both numerically and spiritually. Needless to say, this is the kind of situation every true Christian desires, and it is the aim of every faithful congregation.

But this development at Ephesus did not just happen. The advert SO introducing the statement show there were definite reasons for it. Such is always the case. When the church grows numerically and spiritually, there are reasons for it. It is not accidental. And when the church does not grow, there are reasons for this as well.

What caused the word of God to grow and prevail mightily at Ephesus? What accounted for the fact that the church grew both numerically and spiritually? We need to know, for the same thing that caused the church at Ephesus to grow will cause the church to grow in our cities and towns. An examination of the text in its context will furnish answers to these questions.

In the first place, the difference between the religion of Christ and other religions was made clear. Certain Jews, who were exorcists, had attempted to cast out evil spirits by saying: "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth" (v. 13). They obviously thought these words constituted some magical formula by which evil spirits were dispelled. But the man possessed of the evil spirit attacked and overcame them. This incident pointed up the

difference between the religion of the Lord and the incantations of the Ephesian exorcists. "And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified" (v. 17).

Some look upon the church of Christ as a denomination among denominations. Such is a misconception. That the Lord's church is made up of all the various denominations is an idea nowhere taught in the Bible. In Corinth, where religious division was prevalent, it was possible for one group to exist as nothing more or less than the church of Christ, without being a part of the sectarian world (I Cor. 1:10-13). The fact that human denominations are all around us does not mean that it is impossible for the church of Christ to exist without being a human denomination.

Paul, by inspiration, condemned religious division at Corinth. "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Cor. 1:13). The only real difference between the division at Corinth and denominationalism today is the fact that those in the various sects at Corinth had obeyed the gospel, and really were a part of the Lord's church (I Cor. 1:2; 12:13). But denominational churches today are filled with people who have not obeyed the gospel, for their preachers do not preach the gospel.

The distinction between the church of Christ and denominations must be clearly made if the word of God is to grow and prevail. The only way this can be done is by preaching the word (II Tim. 4:2). Godly living is necessary, but being morally good and doing benevolent deeds does not prove one's religion to be scriptural. We are deceiving ourselves if we think we can build up the church without teaching clearly the difference between the religious of men and the religion of our Lord.

In the second place, members of the church confessed and forsook their sinful practices. "And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds" (v. 18). From this it seems that some in the church had been secretly practicing exorcism. But this incident caused them to renounce such a foolish course. Consequently, the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. One of the greatest reasons for a lack of growth in the church is sin in the lives of church members. A congregation filled with impenitent sinners cannot prosper. Those who are guilty of sin, and who will not repent are a detriment to the welfare of the congregation. Some become

alarmed when there is a clear and firm condemnation of sin from the pulpit. They are afraid some will quit the church. But it would be better for them to quit the church than to remain attached, but impenitent.

The Ephesians took drastic action in connection with their separation from sin. "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver" (v. 19). At great cost and personal sacrifice they did away with the tools of their sin. It is estimated that "fifty thousand pieces of silver" would be between eight and ten thousand dollars. No price was too great for them to pay that they might please the Lord.

It might be good for us to go through our homes and gather up some things that hinder our faithfulness, and put them in the fire. Doubtless many of us would be better off if we purged our respective homes of the various tools of sin — in some cases, innocent pastimes that are allowed to hinder our faithfulness to the Lord. Regardless of the personal cost to us, we should completely sever ourselves from anything that jeopardizes our chances of going to heaven, or that hinders the welfare of the church.

Such a burning as took place at Ephesus would naturally make an impression for good on the entire community. These Christians wanted the entire community to know they had changed their lives, so that their influence could be what it should be. With them it was a matter of influence. When members of the church are guilty of public sin, their influence is damaged. In order to heal their influence it is necessary, not only that they repent, but that it be generally known that they have repented. Mathew 18:15-17 clearly implies that the confession of sin must be as public as the knowledge of the sin itself. To make a private confession of a public sin is not sufficient. Think of the good influence of such a public display of repentance as that at Ephesus. No doubt, it strengthened their influence in the community.

No wonder the inspired historian was able to say: "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." Under these same circumstances it will grow and prevail in the twentieth century. Each of us should strongly desire that our lives be such as will cause the word of God to grow and prevail mightily.

"My Rights"

JIMMY WOOD

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes handed down this decision many years ago. The decision was brought on by a policeman who had been fired from the force for political campaigning. The policeman had claimed that the city government had infringed on his rights to political expression. "The petitioner," said Holmes, "may have the constitutional right to talk politics, but he does not have the constitutional right to be a policeman." I am glad that recent decisions of the supreme court have expressed this same basic idea. One of the more recent decisions is that a citizen has the constitutional right to let his hair grow until it drags the ground, but he does not have the right to be employed as a policeman or fireman while engaged in that hobby.

There are few commitments that a person makes that he does not give up some rights when he makes that commitment. When one commits himself to Jesus Christ he gives up many personal rights that he would otherwise

have. In recent years, we have heard people speak out against the right of elders to discipline members of the church because such was a violation of the liberty that we have in Christ Jesus. Those who claim such would permit almost every sin and heretical doctrine under this guise. If the elders withdraw from a person for teaching error, they are accused of being dictators, etc. Many timid elderships have refused to exercise any discipline because of these complaints.

If you want to be a member of the Lord's church, you must give up your "right" of independent action, and submit to the authority of God's elders (Hebrews 13:17). You have no "right" to set your own moral standards, or to determine what you are going to believe and practice. God has already set the standards, and He has authorized the elders to enforce them. Let's have the same respect for the word of God that Mr. Holmes states we should have for the constitution of the United States of America.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Give a lexical and grammatical exegesis of Gen. 1:1."

"In the beginning God *created*..." (Gen. 1:1).

The verb "created," from the Hebrew word *bara* is, in the original text, third person singular, literally, "he created." While the substantive, *God* is, as we have seen in earlier articles, plural in form [*Elohim*], thus suggesting more than one personality in the godhead, hinting here, in the first verse of Scripture, at the doctrine of "the trinity," to guard against the conclusion of a diversity in deity, and a plurality of divine natures, the verb is singular in number. (The agreement of a verb in number with its substantive, characteristic of English, does not obtain in Hebrew.)

The verb *bara* (created) occurs about fifty times in the ancient text; it is never used with the accusative of material; and, it is always affirmed of God, and never of men.

It appears in Gen. 1:22, in a reference to the origin of animal life.

It appears in Gen. 1:27, in a reference to the origin of man.

It is used in Gen. 1:1, to designate the bringing into existence of matter independent of means or previously existing material.

Though other forms of this word are used in the Scriptures in the sense of *fashioning* or *forming* from existing materials, this word is not.

It is the only word in the Hebrew language which might properly be used to describe the exercise of creative powers involving the production of matter and of life where such are simply spoken into existence.

Jewish scholars, presumed to know their language, assert that such is its meaning.

The Hebrew writer declared, by inspiration, that such is its significance. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands..." "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen *were not made of things which do appear*" (Heb. 1:10; 11:3). Here, in this great New Testament affirmation, is a clear and concise commentary on what was done; and, we may assume that the Holy Spirit, in Gen. 1:1, used a word entirely adequate to describe it!

Thus, the *etymology* of the verb created, its *usage* in the Sacred Writings, and the *testimony* of inspiration combine to establish the fact that, in the original creation, "the heavens and the earth" were spoken into existence by divine fiat and in true creative fashion.

In the Hebrew sentence of Gen. 1:1, there is an untranslatable particle, *ETH*, occurring twice, and preceding the words, the "heavens" and the "earth." It is the sign of the accusative, and is composed of the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. From this fact Hebraists believe that it designates, in this instance, the whole of the matter considered, *the sun and the substance*. Thus, God created the sum and substance of the heavens and the earth, that is, the whole of them.

The word translated "heaven" in A. V. in the text, is plural, embracing the whole of the

regions around the earth, because the Hebrews conceived, by inspiration, of more than one heaven, the context determining which it is. There is, for example, the area immediately out from the earth, were the birds fly. We often read of the "fowls of the heaven." (See Gen. 1:20). Beyond this is the vast firmament of the stars and other heavenly bodies (Psalm 108:4). And the place of the presence of the Lord whence he shall return to the earth at the last day (Acts 1:11). There, the angels dwell; and there, at the consummation of the present age, the faithful shall be carried to live in his presence forevermore.

As the word "heaven," in the text under study, embraces the whole of the are out from the earth, so the word "earth" here includes all not embraced in both. Man is not a fowl, under necessity of occupying atmospheric regions; neither is he a mole or rodent destined to live *in* the earth. His habitat is *on* the earth, and *in* the air about him; and, it is for this reason that his future abode is described, by Peter the apostle, as the "new

heaven and earth" wherein righteousness dwells (II Pet. 3:13).

We thus learn that (1) the earth is not eternal but sprang into existence, "in the beginning" by divine order, being framed "by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3). (2) In the original creation described in Gen. 1:1, the material universe came into existence through creative action, and was not formed from existing substances. (3) The world thus created is an orderly one, being controlled by law, thus evidencing the fact that it was crated by a rational, sensible and wise Being. That creation included all of the visible and invisible universe. (4) The immensity, the complexity of this vast universe, simply stagger the imagination, and emphasize the limitless, inexhaustible power, goodness and wisdom characteristic of him who created it. As men probe its vast spaces, and prepare for interplanetary travel, they will see more and more of the handiwork of the great God of the universe.

(To be Continued)

Letter To Shut-Ins

By GUS NICHOLS

[The following was written by brother Nichols in 1966. We plan to reprint many of his articles on the pages of WORDS OF TRUTH].

Knowing that you are shut in by infirmity and unable to be with us in the regular work and worship of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, we want to you know that we have a deep and abiding interest in your physical and spiritual welfare. The Bible teaches us that when one member suffers that all the other members of the body suffer with it (I Cor. 12).

It might help to remember that we, here at Sixth Ave. Church of Christ, think of you and remember you in our prayers. And don't forget that there is often a blessing and a ministry in suffering and afflictions, provided that we have the faith to discover and see good in it.

David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word" (Psa. 119:67). Again he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psa. 119:71). One old song said, "There is a glory side to the cloud we fear: for the Lord himself, the Unseen, is near. To the trusting soul, will his grace appear: there is a glory side to the cloud." The airplane which soars high enough finds the sun is always shining above the clouds, except at night.

And even in our darkest hours in life, it helps for us to remember the Lord is with us (Mat. 28:19-20). He has promised never to leave nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5-6). Therefore, God does not want us to be afraid of some imaginary fear or evil just around the corner. He says, "Be not afraid of sudden fear" (Prov. 3:25).

We should not fear affliction. Paul says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17). Again, he says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

It helps us if we accept our misfortunes as chastening from the Lord, intended to make us better, and purify our faith and character as gold is purified in the fire (I Pet. 1:7-8). God's chastening is for our good (Heb. 12:5-13). Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28). Peter exhorts us to cast all our cares and anxieties upon God for he takes care of us (I

Pet. 5:7).

Even death cannot harm the faithful child of God. David said, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (Psa. 23:4). Even sickness and death cannot separate us from God's love for us (Rom. 8:35-39). Whether we live or die we belong to the Lord, if we are faithful Christians (Rom. 14:8). This is why Paul could say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Even death means no loss to us. It is only crossing over the river into a land fairer than day. It is like the soldier's going home when the war is over. There we shall live and love forever (Rev. 21:4).

Let us then be cheerful, even when afflicted, and remember that it is as holy to rejoice and be glad as it is to weep. It is as holy to laugh as to cry. There is more wisdom in staring at the roses than at the thorns on the bush. It is more holy to stare at the stars than to stare in a mud-hole.

There is enough bad in the world, enough sin and sickness, sufferings and trouble, to take up every waking minute of our thoughts, and that is enough to ruin any one (Phil. 4:8). On the other hand, there is enough good in the world to take up all our time in meditation upon it. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

We are all just what our thoughts made us. And we are what we are today because we were what we were yesterday. Every day tends to help to make, or break us, one or the other. But nothing can crush or really harm those who believe in Christ and follow him.

So, while you are shut in from the world, count your blessings, and count on us at Sixth Avenue church any time you may need us, and may God bless and keep you, and make your stay inside to be brief and profitable in some way or other, and may your shut-in experience be a rich and blessed one, despite the unpleasantness and restraints imposed upon you thereby.

Flattery is the art of telling another person exactly what he thinks of himself.

The man who holds the ladder firm at the bottom is about as important as the man at the top.

How To Deal With Liberals

Many elders, preachers and brethren seem unsure as to how to deal with liberal false teachers that are surfacing in congregations across the land. This lack of knowledge leads to indecisiveness that allows the error to flourish while leadership stewers over the problem. Herewith are offered a few recommendations based upon scriptural premises, observation and experience.



JOHN WADDEY

1. We must deal with liberals in love, for Jesus said "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44). With Paul I tell you "that they are enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18). The church has no greater enemy than the false teacher who seeks to corrupt and change the doctrine of Christ.
2. We must use GREAT CAUTION in dealing with liberals for they are a generation of vipers even as were the Pharisees of Jesus' day (Matt. 23:33). Vipers are deadly if not properly handled. False teachers who seek to hide among us, knowing full well that they do not share the faith of Jesus, are as dangerous as the poisonous serpent.
3. In dealing with liberals, we must use the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17) on them, for it is the one weapon they cannot face or overcome. They fear its cutting edge. Their work is successful only when knowledge of the Word is scarce.
4. We need to deal with them swiftly, for their teaching spreads quietly and quickly like leaven in dough. Left alone, it will soon infect our entire congregation (I Cor. 5:4-7). "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees . . ." and the liberals. See Matt. 16:6.
5. There can be no compromise when dealing with liberal teachers. The truth of the gospel cannot have detente with the error of false doctrine and unbelief. Paul asks, "For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? . . . or what portion have a believer with an unbeliever?" The obvious answer is none at all. Then he concludes with the exhortation, "Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord . . ." (II Cor. 6:14-17).
6. Liberals should be dealt with by rejecting them, for they are factious people whose work will cause division within a congregation. The Holy Spirit says, "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned" (Tit. 3:10-11).
7. We should deal with them by withdrawing our fellowship from them, because they are out of step, having broken rank with the army of Christ. This is the meaning of walking disorderly in II Thess. 3:6-7. An army cannot tolerate the disorderly soldier, nor can the church.
8. They must be dealt with publicly, for we are instructed to "mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned . . ." (Rom. 16:17). If we only

privately rebuke them or dismiss the liberal preacher, he will simply sneak away to infiltrate some other unsuspecting congregation. When a brother espouses some "other gospel" than the one gospel of Christ, every Christian in the country deserves to know about it.

9. Deal with the liberal brother in absolute fairness. Often a true liberal escapes conviction because those brethren who thought to expose him were discredited by their unethical handling of matters.
10. Be sure to deal in facts and documentation in confronting a liberal. He will surely accuse you of misrepresentation, and will deny your charges (even if he knows full-well he is guilty), unless you can pin him down with facts.
11. In dealing with a liberal, be sure to have a tape recorder, or two or more witnesses, so there will be no future question as to the correct representation of what was actually said (Matt. 18:16). Anyone who has dealt with such problems will

immediately recognize this need. The favorite liberal dodge is, "You misunderstood me," or, "you misrepresented me." Do not allow this to happen.

12. When questions of liberalism arise, deal with each person involved as an individual. Do not lump all of them together, because some may be salvageable. Is this not what Jude means? "And on some have mercy, who are in doubt, and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).
11. By all means, deal with liberalism before it becomes a local issue. Indoctrinate, vaccinate and immunize the congregation before the plague appears. Prevention is always better than cure.

The greatest danger is not to deal with liberalism at all. Brethren, it will not go away by ignoring it. Let all of God's spiritual leaders deal with this evil bitter weed of heresy as the Lord directs.

Denominationalism

DON McWHORTER
Fayette, Ala.

When we speak of "denominationalism" we speak of the many schemes, systems, organizations and bodies composing twentieth-century religion. Many appraisals are made of this system, but most of these miss the real point. Surely much in the way of good is accomplished by these religious bodies, and the people who make them up receive certain benefits for their labors and sacrifices in them. On these premises denominationalism is adjudged a beneficial thing and God is thanked for it.

However, many other matters must be considered before a proper judgment can be made. The most important of these is what denominationalism does to Christ. When seen in this light, denominationalism takes on a whole new dimension. What does denominationalism do to Christ?

(1) IT MOCKS MY LORD'S PRAYER FOR UNITY. In John 17:20-23 Jesus prays for the unity of all believers on the basis of the unity of God the Father, and Christ the Son. In this matter pseudo-unity will not suffice. Paul tells the Corinthians that unity means we all "speak the same thing," that there be "no divisions" among us, and that we all be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Does that sound or look like denominationalism? Jesus' prayer for unity was in order that "the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The high price of skepticism and unbelief in today's world is the result of denominationalism! Paul classifies religious division as a work of the flesh (I Cor. 3:3), and not as a "good" thing. This unity for which the Lord prayed is given a practical plan for its accomplishment in one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God (Eph. 4:1-6).

(2) IT KEEPS MANY PEOPLE FROM OBEYING HIS GOSPEL. The gospel of Christ is the only power to save the souls of men (Rom. 1:16). This gospel must be obeyed (2 Thess. 1:7-9). When denominationalism espouses and proclaims the doctrine of "faith only," nullifying the necessity of obedience to the gospel, it nullifies (?) the very thing Christ died to accomplish. Matt. 7:21-24, Luke 6:46, Heb. 5:8, 9 and a multitude of other passages stress the importance of our obedience to Jesus' commands.

(3) IT OBSCURES THE GLORY OF HIS CHURCH. God intended that the Christian age glorify Christ through the church (Eph. 3:21, 22). Denominationalism obscures the

glory of the Lord's name with its multitude of man-made names, and obscures the glory of the organization of the Lord's church with its numerous organizations. There is no way to glorify Jesus in denominationalism; it belittles him.

(4) IT ROBS GOD OF THE WORSHIP HE DESERVES. God has always told men how to worship him. And he has always expected that worship to be rendered wholeheartedly in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24). Denominational worship, with all the trappings of paganism and human traditions, is outside the realm of truth.

The Four Freedoms Abused

J. T. MARLIN

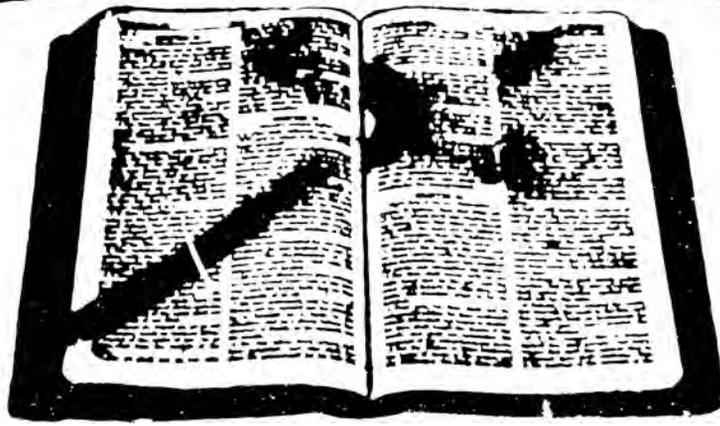
We have "FREEDOM FROM WANT," and use it to eat "junk, drink liquor and beer, and walk around half-clothed (or less)." We are a part of an affluent society; we are rich by worldly standards, pleasure mad, our stomachs lavishly fed, and slow to learn that "man does not live by bread alone" (Mat. 4:4).

We have "FREEDOM OF SPEECH," and use it to curse, lie, back-bite, tell filthy jokes, to protest against law and order in the land, speak disparagingly against civil government ordained by God (Rom. 13:1-7), to cry out for "Civil Rights," and ignore "Human Rights," and give "lip service only" to the living God of the Universe.

We have "FREEDOM OF THE PRESS," and use it to print filthy magazines, obscene literature, horror and moronic "comic books," atheism, infidelity, communism and anti-American books, to conduct, "gossip columns" about someone's fifth wife and husband separating in Hollywood, and the vicious sex crimes being committed (Gal. 5:19-21).

We have "FREEDOM OF RELIGION," and use it mostly as a freedom FROM Religion. We make a feeble effort to practice James 1:27. We "forsake the assembly" for our own pleasure. We withhold from the Lord by refusing to "give as we have prospered" (I Cor. 16:2). We use Sunday evening for relaxation and pleasure, and Wednesday evening for television (Heb. 10:25). Some will fight in wars for "freedom of worship," and refuse to worship when they return home.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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The Gospel Or Gimmicks

By DAN JENKINS

The influence of the advertising industry has not passed the church by. In many areas an understanding of the approaches of this vast industry has aided the church in its growth and its presentation of the gospel to the world. However there is a grave danger that measuring success by the numbers "changed" will cause us to lose sight of the real appeal of the gospel.

To fully appreciate what our God would have us to be we should notice just how much He longs for the world to be saved. Our God is one who delights in forgiveness (Micah 7:18); who delays the judgment of the world in order to give men more time to repent. He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9). He desires "all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4). If one would see the greatness of His longing for men to be reconciled to Him, let him look on Golgotha to a suffering Son, hanging there to draw all men to the Father. God's desire for the world to be saved is so much greater than ours!

God desires for all men to be saved but the "end does not justify the means" being advocated by many today. I am appalled at what is being advocated and practiced by some today in order to increase the audiences in worship. If *numbers* is what we desire then all we have to do is turn to "Fifth Avenue tactics" and we can get that. Why not buy full page ads in newspapers that next Sunday our preacher will preach to the audience who will assemble outside the building while he sits on the church's steeple. Then the next week stretch a cable from the steeple to the road and have him walk the tight-rope while preaching, and with proper advertising watch the attendance grow from week to week. Perhaps within weeks the Civic Auditorium could be rented and a city wide "Tightrope Gospel Meeting" should have the crowds flocking to the meeting. Brethren, the end does not justify the means!

The first century-world was ripe for the carnival atmosphere approach in "reaching souls." Fill the arena with the gladiators, bring on the clowns, offer free prizes and the crowds would assemble. This is what appeals to the carnal man. Offer him enough of this and make proper use of modern advertising tactics and you can be sure you'll have your crowd. Now after he is assembled "sneak" some of the gospel into his heart and perhaps

you'll "win his soul." Remove the gladiators, the clowns, the gimmicks and see what will remain. Remove the chance of future carnivals and see what will happen to those who now scurry about with superficial interest. Let another group offer more unique "carnivals" and see what will happen.

It was to such a carnally minded world that God sent His only son. He came, not with "form nor comeliness nor beauty that we should desire Him," but "lowly, riding upon an ass." When men gathered about Him in hope of getting more loaves and fishes, He offered not more, but a stern rebuke (John 6:26). He came to draw men unto the Father, but not on *their* terms nor using their methods. He had the power to "out-carnival" all that Rome and the pagan world could offer, but such was not His way.

From eternity God had worked to get all things ready to send His son. He devised just the exact time and the exact manner to bring it about. In an obscure village, in a stable, Emmanuel came. His childhood and early adult life is hidden from us, his appeal was not to be an image devised by shrewd advertisers, but the appeal planned by Jehovah from all eternity. Study His life and see the appeal of the gospel.

Look at the early church and see inspired men and the approach they used in bringing men to Christ. Carnal men could have been caused to follow by using gimmicks but look carefully and see what was done. A suffering Saviour, giving His life to ransom others is the message presented. Let men turn away, let them flock to the world, and the message remains the same. Look at the method used. Let the Jews require a sign, let the Greeks demand wisdom, but the church still preached a crucified Christ. Let the world call it all foolishness, but both the message and the preaching of it were a part of His eternal plan. The method was not gimmicks, but the preaching of the gospel.

Note carefully the words of Paul, "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom....that your faith should stand in the wisdom of men." His preaching of Christ crucified in Corinth brought great opposition. Yet neither he, Silas nor Timothy thought about trying to attract the world with gimmicks; if the cross could not win them then nothing else would be used. For eighteen months he labored in that great city, there was much opposition yet the

message and the method remained the same. Men were to be won by the preaching of the cross, the uplifted Christ was the drawing card and nothing else would be substituted. With the power of an apostle, Paul could have created such a "carnival" atmosphere that all of Greece would have rallied around him; large crowds could have been gathered by appealing to the worldly minded in using "Fifth Avenue tactics;" but men are to be won not by gimmicks, but by the gospel.

The Father, the Son, the holy apostles and prophets, the early church all longed for the salvation of the world. Nothing could bring greater joy than for all the first century world to be gathered unto Him. Yet their longing for the salvation of men did not cause them to lay aside the plan devised before the world began. All men need to be won, but the only way such can be done is for men to be attracted and transformed by the appeal of the cross. Promotions, prizes, games and carnivals were at their disposal yet were spurned, and the preaching of the cross was used. This is God's plan, and those today who try to win the world-those who try to build "great churches"-around other methods have departed from God's eternal plan. His plan is the preaching of the gospel not the use of gimmicks. His plan transforms the eternal spirits of men. The other attracts worldly men.

Preach Doctrine

G. F. RAINES

Many preachers have fallen into the fallacy of preaching little sick homilies without teaching anything vital. They are afraid that they will be accused of preaching doctrine if they unequivocally preach what God requires people to do to be saved.

Many years ago, Phillips Brooks said: "The truth is, no preaching ever had any strong power that was not the preaching of doctrine. The preachers that have moved and held men have always preached doctrine... Preach doctrine, preach all the doctrine that you know, and learn forever more and more; but preach it always, not that men may believe it, but that men may be saved by believing it."

The peerless apostle Paul, knowing that "the gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16), said to the elders

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Respect For The Bible



BOBBY DUNCAN

Contrary to the thinking of most, practically all the questions underlying present-day denominationalism are questions of authority, and not of interpretation. For example, both Catholic and Protestant scholars are in agreement that baptism, in the New Testament, is the immersion of the candidate in water. Consultation of a reliable encyclopedia

will reveal that an edict of Pope Stephen II first permitted substitution of pouring. This edict was ratified by the Council of Ravenna in 1311. Most Catholic priests will readily admit that baptism was immersion at first, but the change came by the authority of the Pope, and that the Pope had the right to make such a change, being the vicegerent of Christ. So, the action of baptism is a matter of authority. If the Pope is accepted as an authority, then baptism may be sprinkling or pouring. If the New Testament is accepted as the sole authority, then baptism is a burial in water (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).

Protestants, on the other hand, might reject the authority of the Pope and still accept sprinkling or pouring. Is it a matter of authority with them? Indeed, it is! Reputable scholars agree that, in the New Testament, baptism is immersion. But so-called "sanctified common sense" justifies sprinkling or pouring on the ground that "so long as the spirit of the act is right, the form is a matter of secondary importance." It is still a matter of authority. If one's authority is the New Testament, then baptism is immersion. But if "sanctified common sense" is one's authority, then he will accept sprinkling or pouring. This illustrates clearly that it is the question of authority, not of interpretation, which is the most far reaching question facing

the religious world.

In discussing the difference between the church of Christ and churches established by men, we should emphasize this point. The real and basic difference is not a difference concerning baptism, the frequency of the Lord's supper, church organization, or instrumental music. The difference is a difference in attitude toward the Bible. A proper respect toward the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice would go a long way toward solving the differences in the religious world.

It is logical, therefore, to say that every false religion and doctrine thrives in proportion to the extent that respect for the New Testament is destroyed. How could Roman Catholicism exist if Church Tradition, Papal edicts, and special revelations were not considered authoritative? Catholicism waxes in proportion to the amount of respect these are given. It wanes when the authority of these is denied, and the New Testament is respected as the only authority in Christianity.

Mormonism cannot survive by upholding the Bible as God's only revelation to man. To the extent that the writings of Joseph Smith are given credence, Mormonism waxes. To the extent the Bible is exalted, Mormonism must wane. Similar statements could be made concerning Russellism, Christian Scientism,

Adventism, et al.

But are the more common Protestant denominations very much different? What if they ceased substituting their "sanctified common sense" for the teaching of the Bible? What if they should quit interpreting their moods, feelings, and urges as promptings from the Holy Spirit? What if they should allow the New Testament to become the only source of faith and practice? How long would they last as denominations? Even the superabundance of new "translations" would not be necessary were it not for the fact that some are unhappy with God's word exactly as it is.

All this being true, it is not surprising that some, even among us, like to ridicule what they call our "legalism" — the disposition to insist that we respect the authority of the Bible. But if one is bent on endorsing and having fellowship with error, he must, like every other false religionist, diminish the importance of the Bible. No wonder some have received direct leadings of the Spirit!

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16,17).

American Standard Version (1901)

A Recommend Version

BERT THOMPSON, Ph.D.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible was published in 1611. For more than two centuries, the KJV remained THE Bible of the English-speaking people. During this period, however, many valuable ancient documents, not available to former translators, were discovered. Also, biblical scholarship had advanced greatly. Hence, the feeling was wide-spread that a need existed for a revision of the KJV. The beginning of this revision originated with the Convocation of Canterbury of the Church of England in the year 1870, when a committee of 16 members was appointed with power to to add to its numbers. By this committee invitations to join it were issued to the outstanding Hebrew and Greek scholars of England, irrespective of religious affiliation, and eventually two Companies were formed, one for the O.T. and one for the N.T., consisting of 27 members each.¹

In addition, the churches of America were also invited to cooperate, and this they did by forming two Companies corresponding to the British, with due provision for the mutual comparison of results and suggestions.² Under the general presidency of Dr. Philip Schaff, an O.T. Company of 15 members was formed, with Dr. W. H. Green as Chairman. A N.T. Company of 16 members (including Dr. Schaff) with Dr. T. D. Woolsey as Chairman, was also appointed.³ Thus, by October, 1872 four committees (i.e.: "Companies") had been appointed and had begun work, both in England and America, to revise the KJV. The English Committees included such notables as Davidson, Plumptre, Sayce, Alford, Ellicott, Hort, Lightfoot, Milligan, Moulton, Scrivener, and Westcott. The American Committees had such men as Green, Strong, Abbott, Hackett, Hodge, Schaff, Thayer, and Woolsey, among others.⁴ The four committees included approximately 100 of the finest scholars England and America had to offer.

The N.T. of the ENGLISH Revised Version

(E RV, product of the English companies) appeared in May, 1881. The work on it occupied the Company for about 40 days of each year, for a period of 10 whole years. The O.T. of the ERV appeared four years later, in May, 1885. The O.T. revision occupied the Company for 792 days in a period of 14 years.⁵ Upon completion of the N.T. in 1881, both the Chicago TRIBUNE and the Chicago TIMES printed the N.T. in its entirety in their May 22, 1881 editions. Part of the N.T. (Matthew through Romans) was telegraphed from New York to Chicago, composing the longest telegraphic message ever sent — 118,000 words.⁶

As soon as the English Revised Version was completed, the English Companies disbanded, and their work (as far as they were concerned) stood as final. However, the American Companies resolved to continue their organization. They were pledged not to issue or endorse any new revision within fourteen years after the publication of the ERV. And so, it was not until 1900 that the American Revised Version (ARV, product of the American companies) of the N.T. was published. The whole Bible was published the following year, in 1901.⁷ The American Revised Version is now known as the American Standard Version.

It may be questioned whether the differences between the ERV and the ARV (ASV) are great enough to justify the existence of two standard versions in the same language. But, accepting the ASV as an accomplished fact, and acknowledging a few demerits that it may be thought to have in comparison with the ERV, these demerits are altogether outweighed by the superiorities.⁸ How, then, does the ASV differ from the English Revised Version?

According to the Preface of the 1901 ASV N.T., "the two most obvious departures of this edition from that of 1881 consist in the addition of references to parallel and

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"How long were the 'days' of Gen. 1?"

The allegation is not infrequently made by those who affect to believe the evolutionary theories and the Genesis account of creation that the two may be harmonized with the assumption that the "days" of the Mosaic record were, in reality, long geological ages, and not ordinary days of twenty-four hours each. Liberal theologians have long advocated this view; and, we have been saddened lately to note the disposition on the part of some among us to give credence to this modernistic speculation.

It is very true that the Hebrew *yom*, translated "day" has the same ambiguity as our English word *day* (the day of adversity, the day of prosperity, etc.), and the question is not one which may be settled either way by etymology. Other considerations however, do settle the question and establish clearly the fact that the "six days" of Gen. 1 were simply days, days of twenty-four hours each, days in the usual and ordinary import of the term. Those who accept the premise that God did not need ages in which to accomplish the work designated as having been done within that period are under no necessity of assuming that long geological ages were involved, and the following considerations require that the usual and ordinary meaning of the word *day* be assigned.

(1) The day-age theory is a consequence of the evolutionary theory. But for that speculative view such a hypothesis would never have been advanced. The theory itself is patently opposed to other affirmations of the sacred writings; why, then, should we concede that there is merit to its imaginations in this area? Conservative Geologists (E. G., George McReady Price), have long since shown, in the most convincing fashion, that the "onion-skin" hypothesis and the geologic time-table based thereon are fanciful and false; we ought not, therefore, to give credence to its suppositions in an area where it is obviously in conflict with *inspiration*. It is not possible to force the Mosaic account of creation into conformity with the evolutionary hypothesis. Life, according to that theory, *began in the water*; life, according to the Holy Spirit, *began on the land*! Which shall we believe?

The "days" of Gen. 1, are divided into light and darkness, exactly as is characteristic of the day known to us. "And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day (Gen. 1:4, 5). This simple and sublime statement is decisive of the matter. Of what was the first day composed? Evening and morning. Into what was it divided? Light and darkness. The Hebrew text is even more emphatic. The translation, "And the evening and the morning were the first day," is, literally, "And evening was, and day was, day one." The two periods — evening and morning — made one day. The Jewish mode of reckoning the day was from sunset to sunset; i.e., evening and morning, the two periods combining to make *one day*. If to this the objection is offered that the sun did not shine on the earth until the fourth day, it should be remembered that it is the function

of the heavenly bodies to *mark* the days, not *make* them! It is night when no moon appears; and the day is the same whether the sun is seen or not.

Botany, the field of plant-life, came into existence on the third day. Those who allege that the days of Gen. 1, may have been long geological ages, must accept the absurd hypothesis that plant-life survived in periods of total darkness through half of each geologic age, running into millions of years! Jehovah finished his labors at the end of the sixth day, and on the seventh rested. The narrative provides no basis for the assumption that the day he rested differed in any fashion from those which preceded it. It evidently was marked out and its length determined in the same manner as the others. If it was not a day of twenty-four hours, it sustains no resemblance to the sabbath which was given to the Israelites. Moreover, there is no indication that we are now out of the seventh geologic age if the evolutionary theory is true, in which case God is *still resting*. Yet, Jesus declared that he came to do the work of his Father! (John 9:3, 4.)

Granted that the Hebrew *yom* translated "day," is ambiguous, being rendered, in the sacred writings, by such terms as now, the

present, this day, for ever, etc. yet *when preceded by a numeral* it is not possible to use it other than in a literal sense. Such usage is common in the Old Testament. We read of the second day, the seventh day, the seventeenth day, the thirty-second day, always in a literal sense. In Ex. 20, we are informed that "in *six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them, is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:10).

Adam, the first man, was created in the *sixth* day, lived in Eden through the *seventh* day, and into at least a portion of the *eighth* day. If these days were geologic periods of *millions* of years in length, we have the interesting situation of Adam having lived in a portion of *one* age, through the whole of *another* age, and into at least a part of a third age, in which case he was many millions of years old when he finally died! Such a view of course is absurd; and so are the premises which would necessitate it. We agree wholeheartedly with the scholarly Hebraist Kalisch, when he said, "It is philologically impossible to understand the word 'day' in this section, in any other sense than as a period of 24 hours."

The Blessed Giver



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

The apostle of love, John, brought his gospel record to a conclusion by suggesting the impossibility of recording all that the ever busy Master had done while engaged in his fruitful ministry. The apostle wrote, "This is the disciple which testified of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen" (John 21:24-25). If true of his marvelous deeds, how true also of the majestic words that graced the lips of the Lord during the one third of a century that he pitched his tent on earth. All that Jesus did and said could not be compressed within the limited scope of some 89 chapters and some 3,779 verses composing the records of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

In his moving message to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, the apostle Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, lifted one of the many precious gems spoken by the Saviour — but left unrecorded by the four gospel writers — and preserved it for the benefit of all future Christians. The entire verse reads: "In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). How greatly indebted we are to the Spirit through Paul for the preservation of this gem of benevolent brightness. Had it been allowed to fade into obscurity we would have been the decisive losers all the way around. Let us now inquire as to why the blessing abides the giver and not just the receiver.

A QUARTET OF REASONS

(1) "It is more blessed to give than to receive" because the Bible so teaches. If no other reason could be found, this would make

it sufficiently safe for ardent acceptance. Whatever the Bible enjoins we know that the wisdom of the infinite Jehovah is back of such requirements. God both blesses and receives honor from his creation. He has been blessing by giving far longer than we have been so engaged. He has been receiving homage from his grateful creation far longer than all of us have been on the receiving end of any blessing. Therefore he knows far more about whether the giver or the receiver is blessed more abundantly than do we. He has spoken with a degree of finality relative to this matter. Any time we perform an action because the Bible commands such, that is the highest sort of motivation at our disposal. What the Bible commands is what Jehovah commands, for the Bible is his word to mankind.

(2) The thrilling translation of this priceless principle makes us more and more like Jesus. His whole sojourn on our mundane sphere of human action was built around the very philosophy stated in this text of truth. He would not turn stones into bread at the bidding of sly Satan for his own hunger in Matthew 4. Yet he was quick to multiply the seven loaves and a few little fishes into sufficient quantity to feed 4,000 men who had only been with him three days (Matt. 15:32-39). A forty day fast is far greater than being without food just on the third day! The Son of God refused to cast himself from the temple, testing angelic protection and its promised power to keep him from harm (Matt. 4:5-7). Yet this same Divine Personality was quick to go to the distressed disciples fighting the stormy battle on the turbulent Sea of Galilee (Matt. 14:22-33). Jesus came not to be served but to serve others (Matt. 20:28). In this passage the Serving Saviour declared: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." His life was filled with a constant ministry of both physical and spiritual benevolence. Acts 10:38 has been described as the shortest and best biography of our lovely Lord. The beloved physician Luke quotes Peter in his dynamic discourse to the household of Cornelius as saying, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of

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American Standard Version (1901) A Recommend Version

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illustrative Biblical passages, and of running headings to indicate the contents of the pages."⁹ Some changes have been made in shortening the titles of N.T. books. The printing of poetical passages in poetical form has been carried through more consistently in the ASV than in the ERV. The paragraphs have been altered in some cases and (especially in the O.T.) shortened. The punctuation has been simplified, especially by the more frequent use of the semi-colon. The removal of obsolete words ("magnificent," "neerings", etc.) has been affected fairly thoroughly; obsolete constructions ("jealous over," etc.) have been modernized, particularly by the use of "who" or "that" (instead of "which") for persons, and "its" (instead of "his") for things. In the O.T. "Jehovah" has been introduced systematically for the proper Hebrew word, as has "Sheol" ("Hades" in the N.T.). In the N.T., the substitution of "Holy Spirit" for "Holy Ghost" was completed throughout, "demons" substituted for "devils," "Teacher" for "Master," and "try" for "tempt" when there is no direct reference to wrongdoing.¹⁰

The acceptance of the American Standard Version of 1901 casts no reflection and is no diminution of the King James Version.¹¹ The King James Version of the Bible was the translation that gave us the Restoration Movement. The few inaccuracies in translation and obsolete words are not of any great importance, but they were well taken care of in the American Standard Version of 1901.¹² Philip Schaff, president of the American Revision Committee, says: "Upon examination, however, the importance of the alterations falls far below their number. They do not unsettle a single article of the Christian faith, or precept of Christian duty. They will hardly be observed by the majority of readers. Very few affect the sense materially" — all of which means that there are NO ERRORS IN TEACHING AND DOCTRINE!¹³

The American Standard Version of 1901 made no claim of being a "new version."¹⁴ The aim of the translating committees, as stated in their Prefaces to the O.T. and N.T., was to eliminate archaisms.¹⁵ Two quotes from the Preface to the 1901 O.T. edition and the Preface to the 1901 N.T. edition will substantiate this claim: "We are not insensible to the justly lauded beauty and vigor of the style of the Authorized Version, nor do we forget that it has been no part of our task to modernize the diction of the Bible. But we are also aware that the rhetorical force and the antique flavor which we desire to retain do not consist in sporadic instances of uncouth, unidiomatic, or obscure phraseology. While we freely admit that the English of the Scriptures can, as a whole, hardly be improved, yet it would be extravagant to hold that it cannot be bettered in any of its details."¹⁶ The second quote: "But in making these and other slight changes, the American editors have not forgotten that they were dealing with a venerable monument of English usage, and have been careful not to obliterate the traces of its historic origin and descent."¹⁷

It was the declared policy of the revisers to retain the reading appearing in the King James Version except where faithfulness to the original demanded a change. Extensive study was given to both Hebrew and Greek texts.¹⁸ The scholars of the American Standard Version all committed themselves to removing only archaisms not in familiar use.¹⁹ The INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA states: "The ARV

contains the best results of the scholarship of the Victorian age, and cannot fail to be regarded as of the greatest utility to the reader and student . . ."²⁰

There are basically two approaches to translating the Bible. One "aims at conveying the sense in free and idiomatic English WITHOUT MUCH REGARD FOR THE EXACT WORDING OF THE ORIGINAL." The second approach attempts to translate "the words and nuances of the original as literally as possible, provided that no actual violence is done to English usage." This latter aim was the intention of the English-American Revisers.²¹ These men hoped to bring the "plain reader more closely into contact with the exact thought of the sacred writers" than any version had previously done, according to the Preface to the 1901 N.T. ASV.²²

It is remarkable that this should be one of the very criticisms leveled at the American Standard Version. Luther A. Weigle of the Yale Divinity School (and chairman of the Revised Standard Version translating committee, 1946-52), criticized the scholars of the English-American Revised Versions as follows:

"The revisers' ideal of 'faithfulness' in translation was a meticulous word-for-word reproduction of the Greek text in English words, using the same English word whenever possible, leaving no Greek word without translation into a corresponding English word, following the order of the Greek words rather than the order natural to English, and attempting to translate the articles and tenses with a precision alien to English idiom. The result is that the Revised Version (ASV) is distinctly 'translation English.'"²³

In spite of his criticism, Weigle still admits, "It (i.e.: the ASV) still meets the needs of those who desire a meticulously exact, literal, word-for-word translation of the Hebrew and Greek . . ."²⁴

F. F. Bruce made the following comment about the English-American Revised Versions (ERV/ASV): "It has often been called a schoolmaster's translation, and there is much truth in this. Not that this was a defect in itself; the almost pedantic accuracy and precision which the revisers aimed at makes their work an admirable version for the student . . ."²⁵

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The Blessed Giver

Continued From Page 3

the devil; for God was with him." When they were about to stone him for telling them the truth about his being Deity Jesus said to his enemies in John 10:32: "Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?"

(3) "It is more blessed to give than to receive" because the giver is more independent than the receiver. True manhood or womanhood is robbed if one has to be always on the receiving end and can never perform the far more satisfying role of being a giver. Many who have spent their lives giving find the adjustment exceedingly difficult when their health is gone and they become dependent upon loving hands of merciful relatives to minister to their various needs. They would gladly exchange places and become givers again if only they could. Like Peter's mother-in-law, they would happily arise to the elevated position of ministering again, if restoration of health could only be their prized possession again. The Bible says in Mark 1:29-31: "And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them." This unnamed mother-in-law of the Bible must have been happy indeed to change from being served in illness to being a server while in restored health again. We need to become like her.

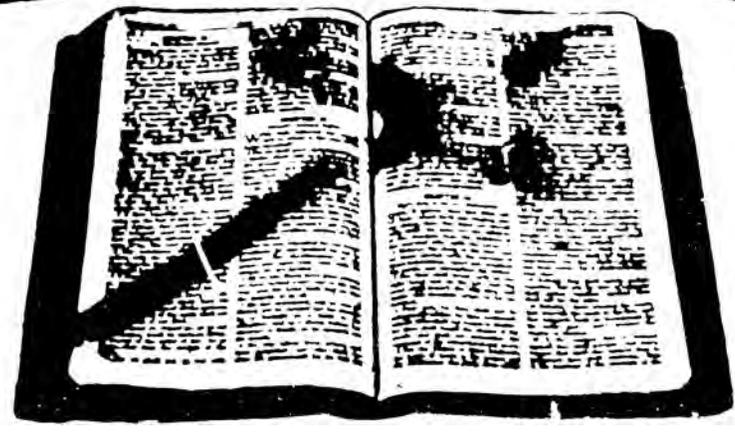
(4) The devout Christian giver receives a twofold blessing in his giving. He receives deep satisfaction for the act now performed, and the well grounded hope of hearing a "well done" by the pleased Master on the resurrection day (Matt. 25:21, 23). Instead of thinking exclusively as to what God and our Christian brethren can do for us, let us lift ourselves to that high and benevolent plateau on which our Saviour served humanity, and ask what we can do for our God, His righteous cause, and our fellowman. Only then will the real meaning of Acts 20:35 be felt in our hearts.

Preach Doctrine

Continued From Page 1

of the church at Ephesus: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26, 27). In his last letter to Timothy, Paul admonished the young evangelist as follows: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2).

WORDS of TRUTH



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

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

The Religion of Excitement, And The Excitement Of Religion

By ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

[The following article was written in 1838. It is just as meaningful today as it was then.]

In the present day we seem to have more of the religion of excitement than we have of the excitement of religion. The ancient and apostolic plan of first enlightening the understanding by declaring and illustrating the testimony of God, seems to be both too rational and slow for the ardent demands of the proselyting spirit of the age. Our Saviour and this Apostles spoke plain good sense to the understandings of men, knowing it to be God's chartered way to the heart. Paul teaching that, "faith came by hearing" — that "hearing came by the word of God" — and that as he "preached so the people believed", was only anxious to declare the whole testimony of God, with its innate and cognate evidences of the divine authenticity. His preaching being first understood and then believed, he knew could not possibly fail to seize the heart with omnipotent power, and turn it to God, and Christ and heaven. Therefore, he never made an effort to excite the feelings of any audience until he had "declared to them the whole counsel of God." He threw no artificial exciting circumstances around them: he never thought of "an anxious seat", nor of "a mourning bench", [NOR DIMMING THE LIGHTS, NOR HOLDING HANDS—Ed.], and never called up convicted and trembling sinners to pray for them. These are all of the greenhouse or hotbed appliances of the present day. Our mushroom Christians sometimes grow to perfection in a night, and wither in a day. They have no root in themselves. They are born in the midst of excitement — they live in the midst of excitement, and soon as it wanes they generally sicken and die. They have no taste for religion that demands both reading and meditation as the food of its devotion, and greatly prefer those feelings which a warm exhorter can produce, to all the moral feelings, and refined and purifying sentiments and sympathies, which the truth believed and read, and pondered in the heart, can awaken within us. They are deluded by the idea that religion is the EFFECT, and not the CAUSE of feeling. Religion, with them, is the fruit of excitement, rather than the root and reason of it. Hence such converts display little or nothing of that constant and powerful excitement to love and to good works, which

so visibly and constantly attended the profession of the faith in the New Testament age. The faith of Christ and the consequent hope and joy which simultaneously arise in the heart of a true convert, like the mainspring of a watch, or the PRIMUM MOBILE of any complicated machinery, set our whole frame in motion, and excite to every praiseworthy deed both towards God and man.

The Christian religion is, indeed, a religion of the purest, noblest, and most refined feelings and excitements of which our fallen

nature is susceptible. It exerts a constant power upon all the affections and moral sensibilities of our hearts; but it is itself the offspring not of fancy, but of faith; not of excitement, but of reason; not of visions, dreams, or extraordinary impulses, but of the testimony of God, developed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit. It is, in one word, the effect of the Christian truth believed, and not the cause of faith: for it is faith, and not feeling, that works by love, that purifies the heart, and that overcomes the world.

Evolution or Creation??

STEVE WILLIAMS

In a letter to a young college student who was about to accept evolution, the older friend continued by pointing out that one must accept either evolution or creation; you cannot accept both. Genesis 1 is full of one word: "God." The evolutionist, however, begins his reasoning on the foolish assumption that there is no God (Ps. 14:1; 53:1).

After pointing this out, the older friend did a bit of reminiscing:

Your remarks take me back to the time when I stood in the very spot where you now stand. I, too, had instructors who were aggressive proponents of evolution. I, like you, had great respect for my professors. Of some I actually stood in awe. I thought they were such brilliant men: But looking back, I can see how one-sided were their arguments. Although posing as scientists, their minds were closed. Nor did they endeavor to encourage us to investigate, to think, to

reason, to weigh evidence. It was not a case of their giving poor consideration to the other side of the issue; they would not even admit there is another side. Their ideas were presented in sealed capsules, and we were expected to swallow them whole. In the true sense of the word, they were not scientists at all; they were propagandists, nothing more.

And what happened if one of the students would balk at their line, or try to bring up certain arguments to refute their claims? Making him a laughing stock by casting him in the role of a superstitious ignoramus or a religious fanatic was the professor's stock-in-trade: [*Bible-Science Newsletters*, 13 [Dec., 1975], p. 1].

What he says may not be true of all proponents of evolution, but it is certainly true of many of them.

To Be Concluded)

The Law of God

G. F. RAINES

"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. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa. 1:1, 2).

You must meditate in the law of God "that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh. 1:8).

The following passages plainly teach that knowledge is utterly valueless to those who do

not obey God's will:

"Let us hear the conclusion to the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. 12:13).

"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" (Matt. 7:21).

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM

THE EDITOR

"Hast Thou Found Me, O Mine Enemy?"



BOBBY DUNCAN

The above words were spoken by Ahab, wicked king of Israel, to Elijah, the prophet of God (I Kings 21:20). Through conspiracy and murder Jezebel had obtained for Ahab the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite (I Kings 21:1-16). Ahab had gone down to possess the vineyard, and the Lord had sent Elijah to rebuke him and to

pronounce judgment upon him because of his wickedness.

Ahab considered Elijah his number one enemy because Elijah had done all within his power to turn Ahab away from his ungodliness. The infamous Jezebel, whose very name is synonymous with evil, had influenced her husband greatly against Elijah and for wickedness. What Ahab failed to realize is that had he listened to Elijah, instead of Jezebel, from the beginning things would have been different with him, and his name would not today be a hiss and a by-word. What a tragedy that the very man whose warnings and admonitions could have meant so much to the king of Israel was considered to be the king's worst enemy!

But this is not the only case on record of one who was hated for trying to change the course of those bent on sin and rebellion. In the very next chapter of First Kings we find Ahab and the king of Judah deliberating whether to do battle against the Syrians in Ramoth-gilead. Four hundred false prophets had said: "Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king" (I Kings 22:6). But the king of Judah was not impressed. He inquired if there were not a genuine prophet of the Lord who could be consulted in reference to this matter. The king of Israel informed him that there was, indeed, a prophet of whom they could

inquire. "But," he added, "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (v. 8). Now, it is not difficult to determine why a true prophet never prophesied any good concerning the king of Israel. Just how much good could a person say about Ahab and tell the truth? But Micaiah was hated by Ahab, not for any evil which he had done him, but because Micaiah had warned Ahab time and again against his wickedness.

Naaman was angry with Elisha for telling him how to be cured of his leprosy (II Kings 5:11). The Galatians made Paul their enemy, because he told them the truth (Gal. 4:16). And the Son of God was hated and crucified by those whom He came to save.

One of the tragedies of our time is the failure on the part of some to discern friend and foe. Like Ahab of old we often classify as enemies those who see flaws in our lives and would turn us away from evil. Naturally we like to think that all is well with us, and it is unpleasant to learn otherwise. But one who honestly calls our attention to some flaw in our life should not be considered an enemy for so doing, any more than a doctor would be considered an enemy for telling us we had some ailment that needed treatment. On the other hand, one who sought to minimize the importance of some damnable flaw in our life should not be considered a friend, any more than a doctor would be considered a friend who sought to minimize the danger of a deadly disease.

In the church those who faithfully preach the truth, renouncing sin and error, often are considered enemies to those they are trying to help. If one preaches against the sin of drunkenness he becomes enemy to the drunkard. If he preaches against adultery he

is enemy to the adulterer. He is the enemy to those who wear immodest clothing if he preaches against such. He becomes the enemy of those who are guilty of teaching false doctrine or engaging in unscriptural religious practices if he preaches the truth in reference to these matters.

We would not want to leave the impression that such is always the case, for it is not. There are many, like Nineveh of old, who appreciate a warning of impending destruction, and who will genuinely repent and seek to conform every aspect of their lives to the will of God. To these the one sounding the warning is a friend.

In these perilous times we desperately need to know who our friends really are. Our friends are not necessarily those who tell us what we enjoy hearing. Neither is one necessarily an enemy if he tells us things that are unpleasant to hear. Those who constantly compliment us are not necessarily our friends. Neither is one an enemy simply because he criticizes us.

Those who allow us to go on and on in sin without any effort to restrain us are not our friends. And those who do try to restrain us are not our enemies. We may call them "watchdogs, witch hunters, snake killers," or some other catchy name to show our contempt for them and their efforts. But we should call them our friends, for this is what they really are if they have our interest and the interest of God's kingdom at heart.

While we abhor the disposition to be critical or to find fault, we are thankful for those who are concerned enough about the purity of the church to sacrifice personal popularity if necessary to call attention to activities which will lead ultimately to the destruction of precious souls.

American Standard Version (1901) A Recommend Version

THE 1901 ASV IS PROBABLY THE MOST ACCURATE WORD-FOR-WORD TRANSLATION EVER MADE.²⁶ Indeed, it is sometimes called "slavishly accurate." Whatever that means, the fact that the ASV is a superior product is beyond any question.²⁷ Jacob I. Mombert has summarized well some of the considerations involved. First, the Greek used in the translation was the purest available then, "based on the authority of documentary evidence without deference to any printed text of modern times; which imports that only the most ancient and authentic manuscripts, versions, and patristic quotations were received, and diligently compared by competent experts, and their united testimony required for the adoption of any, even the minutest, integral portion of the sacred volume." Secondly, "ITS TRANSLATION IS A MARVEL FOR FIDELITY, ACCURACY, ELEGANCE, PURITY OF IDIOM, AND HARMONY OF EXPRESSION" (emphasis mine, BT).²⁸

There is another important point that should be taken into consideration at this point. Bible translation is serious business, and the souls of mankind depend on it.²⁹ While it is theoretically possible for a scholar to translate faithfully even though he is a liberal, it must be candidly admitted that the translator who labors under the conviction that he is dealing with GOD'S WORDS, will handle the text with infinitely greater care, and thus produce a better version, than the man who thinks he is working with the words of uninspired men. In contrast to many of the versions of recent years, most of the men who worked on the E-ARV were theologically conservative.³⁰ The liberal element was in the minority, hence "the radical trend in the American Standard

Version shows itself mainly in the footnotes" and not in the text.³¹

If any competent scholar wants to make a correct and accurate translation of any of all of the Bible, no Christian will object. We rejoice that God's word is translated, read, and circulated. We DO OBJECT to efforts to change God's word!³² The American Standard Version is far superior in the matter of accurate, consistent rendering of the Biblical text.³³ or the careful student of the Scriptures, it still occupies a most important place among the many translations available today.³⁴ Admittedly, it is quite literal. It is not written in as graceful and flowing style as

Continued on Page 4

Correction

A CORRECTION: In the April 30, 1976, issue of WORDS OF TRUTH there appeared an article from my pen entitled THE RSV AND MARK 16:9-20. At the bottom of the left hand column and the top of the second column there appeared this statement, "This passage has also been a thorn to those who reject modern miraculous manifestations as set forth in Mark 16:16-17 and which occurred early in the Christian movement to confirm the word (V. 20)." The word MODERN should NOT have appeared in this statement. The context of the paragraph bears out the thought that these miracles were only performed during the first century for the confirmation of the gospel, yet some may have thought I was advocating miracles today. It may have been my fault; it may have been another's. But the mistake is now corrected. I am happy to make it. — Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is the significance of the name Methuselah? Did he really live nearly a thousand years on the earth? In what way is he associated with the flood?"

Methuselah fell short of living in the earth one thousand years by only thirty-one years. This remarkable character, the son of Enoch, lived two hundred forty-three years with Adam and six hundred years with Noah, thus embracing the whole period from Adam to Noah. Though he is chiefly distinguished for the fact that he lived longer than any other, there are numerous other considerations which make him an interesting and exciting character (Gen. 6:21-27). His father Enoch is said to have "walked with God," and to have been translated that he should not "see death" (Heb. 11:5). He became the father of Lamech when he was one hundred eighty-seven years old; he was the grandfather of Noah, and he died in the nine hundred sixty-ninth year of his life.

The etymology of the name *Methuselah* is in doubt. Many Hebraists think it signifies "man of the dart or missile;" others, that it is compounded from two Hebrew words, *methu* and *shalach*, "he dieth," and "sendeth out," whence they infer that it means, in effect, *he dieth when the flood comes!* It is a fact easily determined by the genealogical tables of Gen. 5, that Methuselah died the year the flood came, whether from drowning in the flood, or from natural causes before the waters came, we cannot know. This consideration doubtless influences those scholars who see in the name the prediction of the flood. If this is the correct view, Enoch was possessed of knowledge of the eventual destruction of the world nearly a thousand years before it occurred, and Jehovah suffered the race to continue throughout the lifetime of the man who lived upon the earth longer than any other, as a token of his patience and longsuffering, with sinful man.

Whether these implications are inherent in the name *Methuselah* or not, this characteristic of Jehovah is evident again and again in the sacred writings. Before the destruction of wicked peoples, God has always exhausted every reasonable resource to bring them to repentance. Gracious intimations of deliverance and clear warnings of impending doom are always given in abundance to enable all who will to flee the wrath to come. For example, four hundred years before the destruction of the Amorites, in the covenant which Jehovah made with Abraham, he said, "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full," (Gen. 15:15, 16). Actually, for about four and one half centuries God waited. For nearly half of a millennium he stayed his hand of judgement to give the idolatrous Amorites space for repentance. He would not destroy them, not would he allow his people to seize their lands until their guilt had become so grave that it was imperative they be destroyed. What a marvelous manifestation that is of God's patience with people!

Though Methuselah lived through more years upon the earth than any other, he was by no means unique in possessing a lengthy life-span. Noah lived for nine hundred fifty

years, Adam nine hundred and thirty years, and Jared nine hundred and sixty-two. Others, listed in the tables of Gen. 5, also lived for hundreds of years. This remarkable fact has not escaped the attention of liberal theologians who ever seek to remove from the scriptures anything which differ from the ordinary and they have advanced various hypotheses in an attempt to assign to these men current life-spans.

They have surmised that the years must have been in length no more than a month—at least, much shorter than our year. In which case, some of these men were begetting children at the age of five years or so! This effort well illustrates Mark Twain's observation that "it is strange what people can believe just so it is not in the Bible!" No such conclusion is possible. For example, in the record of the flood, the *tenth* month is mentioned; sixty-one days are referred to afterwards, *before* the beginning of the next year, thus indicating that the year is comparable to ours. (2) The allegation that the names represent tribes rather than individuals fails from the fact the age of the father is given at the time of the begetting, as if in anticipation of this effort of infidelity! (3)

Futile also is the attempt to make the tables merely representative of numerous omitted lengths in the chain of succession. Each generation, the names of father and son, and the age of the father are duly chronicled, evidencing the fact that it was the intent of the writer to provide a detailed and *consecutive* account of the generations from Adam to Noah.

How may this longevity of people before the flood be explained? We should remember that man was created to live forever in the primeval Garden of Paradise. Among the trees of that blissful Eden was the Tree of Life whose fruit provided for perpetual existence. When Adam and Eve, because of their sin, were driven from the garden and forbidden to return, they were excluded from that which would allow them to live forever. However, the perfect physical bodies which God made for them endured for centuries and the span of human existence decreased in length as the weakening effects of sin through many generations took its toll. The comparatively brief span of our earthly existence can be accounted for on the ground that the race itself through long practice of sin has impaired those once wonderfully perfect bodies.

The RSU and Mark 16:9-20 (No. 2)



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

When the RSV translators came initially to this previous passage of Sacred Scripture they relegated it to footnote status and thus denied it a place in the text of Mark's closing chapter. In support of the high-handed manner in which they dealt with this passage, they said it was lacking in both the Codex Sinaiticus and Code Vaticanus, not found in the best of the old Latin manuscripts, that Eusebius and Jerome rejected it, and that seventeen new words are used in this section not to be found from Mark 1:1 to Mark 16:8. In our previous article we dealt with the argument drawn from the manuscripts.

The testimony of Eusebius and Jerome is certainly not decisive in this matter. Eusebius and Jerome were not inspired instruments to determine what went into the Biblical text and what was to be omitted. A number of the so-called church "fathers" who lived much closer to the apostolic age than either of these two did, said this passage belongs to Mark's gospel record.

WHAT ABOUT THE NEW WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS?

Among those who deny this passage a place in Mark's gospel record are those who advance the argument that within these twelve verses are to be found seventeen new words or expressions not found elsewhere in Mark's book. It is difficult for this writer to imagine so-called intelligent men to take seriously this argument. More than one hundred years ago a Bible scholar by the name of John A. Broadus decided to show the utter folly of this objection to the genuineness of Mark 16:9-20. He took the twelve verses right before the disputed passage, Mark 15:44-Mark 16:8 and showed that these twelve verses have exactly the same number of new words in them not found from Mark 1:1 to Mark 15:43! More than one hundred years ago the brilliant J. W. McGarvey wrote,

"Applying to another passage the method adopted by Prof. Broadus, I have myself examined the last twelve verses of Luke's narrative and found there NINE words which are not elsewhere used in his narrative, and among them are four which are not elsewhere found in the New Testament; yet none of our critics have thought it worth while to mention this fact, if they have noticed it, much less have they raised a doubt in regard to the genuineness of this passage. Doubtless many other examples of the kind could be found in the New Testament; but these are amply sufficient to show that the argument which we are considering is but a shallow sophism." (COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW AND MARK, p. 380). Of course there has been no determined case to discredit the last twelve verses of Luke because Luke did not say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It is the writer's firm conviction that if there had been no allusion to baptism, and no allusion to miracles of confirmation in the first century, that Mark 16:9-20 would have escaped any kind of critical omission from the Sacred Text of the Gospel Record of Mark. Now who wishes to deny it? and upon what basis will the objection rest?

Did the writers of the New Testament bind themselves to certain use of words? and promise they would employ no new words when a new subject arose for discussion? No! Let us keep in mind that in these verses Mark is discussing the post-resurrection appearances of our Lord. Mark had discussed none of this in the first 666 verses of his book. The discussion of a new topic demanded new words or expressions. Not in the least do they favor the non-Markan style of this last section. The same type of faulty reasoning about unusual style has been used to discredit the Pauline authority of 1 and 2 Timothy, and John's authorship of the book of Revelation. Such is hardly worthy of any kind of scholarship, let alone Biblical scholarship! We are a people devoted to the Book, and all such sophistry as this should be recognized for what it is—extremely faulty logic.

McGARVEY'S CONCLUSIONS

More than one century ago the brilliant J. W. McGarvey presented an able defense of the passage's genuineness — that is — that

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Continued From Page 3

Mark penned it. This able defense was presented at the close of his scholarly work entitled a COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW AND MARK. His conclusion was, "Our final conclusion is, that the passage in question is authentic in all its details, and that there is no reason to doubt that it was written by the same hand which indited the preceding parts of this narrative. The objections which have been raised against it are better calculated to shake our confidence in Biblical Criticism than in the genuineness of this inestimable portion of the word of God. (Ibid., p. 382). The LONDON TIMES called McGarvey the ripest student and scholar of the English Bible of any man of his era. McGarvey died in 1911 or 35 years before the New Testament portion of the RSV made its debut in 1946 with its footnote version of Mark 16:9-20. Had this brilliant Biblical scholar been around when the RSV first appeared with its footnote version of Mark 16:9-20 conspicuously exhibited, it would have been interesting indeed to have read what the mighty mind of the magnificent McGarvey would no doubt have written in a total rejection of such flagrant dishonesty in translational action.

A LETTER FROM

BROTHER THOMAS B. WARREN

In a church bulletin, THE RIPLEY REMINDER, on July 4, 1974, this writer presented in briefer detail this material about Mark 16:9-20. In less than a week's time Brother Thomas B. Warren, a real Bible scholar in his own right, wrote a letter of commendation toward that bulletin article. He has agreed that the writer might share the contents of that letter. His entire letter (except the salutation, and personal greetings at the end) is given:

"This letter is to commend you for your article, 'The RSV and Mark 16:9-20; in the July 4 issue of THE RIPLEY REMINDER. In my view the initial relegation of Mark 16:9-20 to the status of a footnote by the RSV was a serious error, and I appreciate your giving attention to the matter. Young preachers especially, and other preachers as well, need to study this material.

"I wonder if you have seen a small booklet which I wrote on this particular topic a number of years ago? This booklet was written in preparation for meeting Dr. L. S. Ballard in debate. Much of the material which is in that booklet is found also in the WARREN-BALLARD DEBATE. I sent this material to some of the men who worked on the committee (sic) for the RSV and asked them to refute it if they had the material to do so. None of them found occasion to reply, although such men reply almost immediately to various questions one may ask."

In the early days of the RSV they went to great expense to demote the King James Version and to promote the RSV. It seems strange indeed that they never replied to Brother Warren's material if they had the ammunition to refute his cogent logic and scholarly booklet. Was this intellectually honest to ignore this challenge and never seek to answer it by any type of reply? This writer thinks he knows why they ignored Brother Warren's letter. They were caught in a glaring error, and knew it. If not, why did they do an "about face" on this passage in later editions of the RSV? Time and time again this writer has been told by the supporters of the new Bibles that linguistic scholarship and the presence of greater manuscript authority enable current translators of the Bible to turn out much more reliable works than the translators of the KJV and the old ASV did

365 and 75 years ago respectively. Wonder what happened to this "greatly-improved linguistic scholarship" and the "availability of better manuscripts" when the RSV came to Mark 16:9-20? When men are intellectually dishonest, as the RSV manifestly was with the initial treatment of Mark 16:9-20, linguistic scholarship and the availability of more manuscripts are frequently ignored. Intellectual honesty is of imperative priority in the great and far-reaching work of Biblical translation.

CONCLUSION

It is our confirmed conviction that to relegate Mark 16:9-20 to a footnote, or marginal status, is a perversion of one of the great passages of Biblical teaching. We cannot help but feel that theological bias, and not a faithful consideration of all evidences of this passage's genuineness, swayed their translational posture at this vital point. We

American Standard Version (1901) A Recommended Version

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some others. But IT IS FAITHFUL TO THE TEXT, and such accuracy is important. If one knows what the inspired writer said, he may then set himself to the understanding of what he meant. But if the translator tells one what he thinks the writer meant, that one may never come to know what was actually said. 36

Several "strengths" of the American Standard Version are well worth discussing. First, the American Standard Version places IN ITALICS all words in the text which were not in the original manuscripts. Second, one of the great improvements of the ASV over the KJV is its treatment of the word "hell". In the KJV three Greek words (HADES, GEHENNA, TARTARUS) are all rendered by the single term "hell," thus making certain passages totally incomprehensible to the casual reader. For example, in Acts 2:27 (KJV) Christ is represented as being in "hell" after His death. Such, of course, was not the case. The ASV thus transliterates the Greek word "hades." The Greek word "gehenna" is rendered as "hell." "Tartarus" is also translated as "hell" (II Peter 2:4), but a footnote in the ASV clarifies the matter completely. Third, the revisers meant (on purpose) to produce an exact word-for-word translation, to stay as close as possible to the original Greek or Hebrew. Staying close to the original languages makes it somewhat more difficult to read, but assures us of a closer approach to God's words than other types of translations. The ASV may take a little longer to read than other versions, but IT IS MORE ACCURATE! 37

Critics of the American Standard Version suggest that it is at fault because it is "too literal." They claim that a word-for-word translation is not the best, but instead an "idea-for-idea" translation is best. They further claim that even much of the ASV wording is archaic (e.g.: "thee" instead of "you"). In addition, claims are made that a "newer" translation is needed because of the new-found information since 1901 concerning manuscripts, texts, archaeology, biblical geography, etc.

In answer to these claims, one may say that the ASV is indeed literal, and is indeed a "word-for-word" translation. This is as it was intended! A word-for-word translation is always possible: an "idea-for-idea" translation is not always possible. 38 And it is easier to concede to a few "archaic" terms (thee and thou) than it is to concede to error. (Editor's note: THEE and THOU are "archaic" only in familiar speech. In poetic or religious forms they are very proper. See WEBSTER'S NEW TWENTIETH CENTURY DICTIONARY.) Truly, the study of Biblical materials since

are well aware that later copies of the RSV have made a concession here by simply noting that a textual problem exists; but this only magnifies their INITIAL mishandling of the passage. It simply means they were glaringly wrong at first, and is another concrete example of their abounding inconsistency. And this, beloved readers, is what some would have us give up our reliable Bibles for! Here is one person who is not about to trade a good one for a bad one. Some of us are not about to forget the high-handed manner in which the RSV initially treated that precious passage, Mark 16:9-20. Translators do not have the God-given right to become modern Jehoiaquims, and remove portions of God's will! That is what the RSV did initially to Mark 16:9-20! No wonder the erudite Goodpasture referred to this as high-handed action! That is our sentiment precisely!

1901 has contributed much to the understanding of certain passages. If the new versions had been made according to the principles that applied when the ASV was first made, such versions would be welcomed. 39 But until such a volume comes from the press, we can still take up this (American Standard) translation in full assurance that we hold in our hands the Word of God in our own language, to speak to our minds and to our hearts. This Book quite clearly points out to us the way that leads to God. 40

The American Standard Version IS a literal, word-for-word translation of the Bible. And although it is conceded that no translation of the Bible is perfect, the ASV is perhaps the most accurate of all the versions now available, containing no doctrinal errors.

In spite of the rash of modern-day translations, this writer believes that the American Standard Version is still the best translation for the studious person who reads only English, and who wishes to be as close as possible to what the Holy Spirit actually inspired men of God to write.

NOTE: The reader is urged to note the difference between the American Standard Version [1901] and the "New" American Standard Version. THEY ARE NOT THE SAME. The ASV 1901 is recommended.

26. Wallace. OP CIT. p xv (Introduction).

27. IBID.

28. Mombert, J. I. IN: SCHAFF-HERZOG ENCYCLOPEDIA of Religious Knowledge. Funk and Wagnalls Company. New York, New York. 1894. Vol. II, p. 738.

29. Wallace. OP CIT. p xxvi (Author's Preface).

30. Jackson. OP CIT.

31. Foster, R. C. THE BATTLE OF THE VERSIONS. Cincinnati Bible Seminary. Cincinnati, Ohio. n.d. p. 7.

32. Wallace. OP CIT. p xviii (Author's Preface).

33. Tesh. OP CIT.

34. IBID. p 95.

35. IBID. p 95-96.

36. IBID. p 96.

37. Wilcox, Warren. "American Standard Version." IN: THE STAR: VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE — THEIR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES. Star Bible and Tract Corporation. Fort Worth, Texas. n.d. p. 6.

38. Wallace. OP CIT. p xxvi (Author's Preface).

39. Tesh. OP CIT. p 96.

40. IBID.

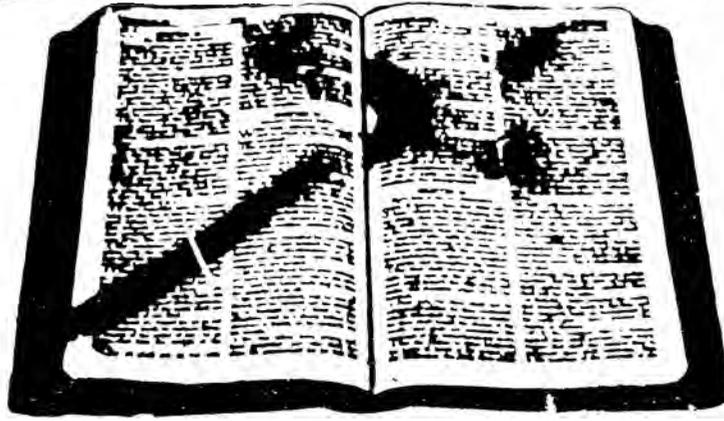
The Law of God

Continued From Page 1

not in him" (I John 2:4).

The commandments of God through which he has expressed his will to the people of this dispensation are in the gospel of Christ, which is expressly said to be "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). If you want to know what you must do to be saved, please read Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; II Pet. 1:5-11; Rev. 2:10.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

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

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Trusting In God

GUS NICHOLS

[Just when the following was written we do not know, nor do we know of its being printed before now.]

To trust in God is to confide in him and to rely upon Him. It is to obey God and swing out upon his promises, risking one's everlasting all, for time and eternity, upon the word of God. God is worthy of our supreme love and confidence. It is more certain that He will keep his promises than it is that the sun will rise tomorrow! "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men" (Psa. 31:19).

TRUST IN GOD'S EXISTENCE

Trusting in God involves the unwavering faith that God does exist, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6). God existed before all things, and He is the creator of the universe (Gen. 1:1). We can not think so far back into the past but that God was in existence. Something always has been, or there could never have been anything. Something can not come from nothing. A great big nothing could not have produced the universe, and man (Gen. 1:1; 2:7). Like a watch, man did not just happen. The blind forces of nature, guided by no intelligence, did not produce us. Like a house, man was designed and made. No house ever came into existence by accident and chance. The blind forces of nature, as in a cyclone, or an earthquake, may DESTROY all the houses in a city; but such freaks and forces never BUILT a house! "Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4). As the house proclaims its builder, the universe and man proclaim the existence of a Wise and Almighty God. When God created this earth He flung it into limitless space to orbit the Sun (Job. 26:7). Here we are away up - somewhere - with the stars millions of miles beneath, above, and all around us! God is holding up all things by the word of his power (Heb. 1:1-3). God is able to bless us and help us far beyond our wildest imaginations, or all that we can ask or think (Eph. 3:20). God made the mind of man. Our spirits came from God (Eccl. 12:7; Acts 17:28-29; Heb. 12:9). The body, with its nerve system more marvelous than the electrical system of any city, was designed and made by

Almighty God! The eyes, ears, lungs and digestive system came from God. You have all to gain, both now and forever by trusting in God. The atheist has all to lose, and nothing to gain in being an unbeliever.

TRUST IN GOD FOR TEMPORAL BLESSINGS

If we love God and put his kingdom first in our hearts and lives, he has promised to supply all our actual needs in this life (Mat. 6:24-34; Lk. 12:6-7, 22-31; Phil. 4:19; Heb. 13:5-6). "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content," (I Tim. 6:7-8). Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11). Those who fail to learn this lesson are sure to be consumed by worry and nervous tension which causes 50 percent of all our diseases.

TRUST IN GOD REGARDING TRAGEDIES

Many live in constant dread of some awful tragedy which they imagine is just around the corner. Some trouble and misfortunes are sure to come to all mankind, sooner or later, but God has promised to make all things work together for good to those who "love God" (Rom. 8:28). God says, "Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5-6). Trust in God when persecuted and at all times. Don't be distracted because of things around you. Trust God, lie down and sleep like a baby. "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh" (Prov. 3:25).

TRUST IN GOD IN ILLNESS

Sooner or later we may be ill and as Christians we should manifest the right attitude toward illnesses. It is the very height of folly to fight against God and be upset because of such things. It is foolish to be unhappy about things over which we have no control. Worry can keep you from sleeping well, keep you so nervous you can't properly digest your food, and can hinder your recovery. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word" (Psa. 119:67). This is the testimony of countless thousands who have properly been exercised by serious illness. Again, David

said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psa. 119:71). Man is in great danger of being ruined by pride, and is prone to forget God, if he prospers too much, and is never ill, etc.

Few people can humble themselves — most of us have to be brought low by the chastening hand of a loving God (Heb. 12:3-11). God will make our afflictions light and to work for us an eternal weight of glory (II Cor. 4:16-18).

TRUST — DON'T WORRY ABOUT DEATH

Nothing — not even death — can really harm the faithful, trusting, child of God. Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain...having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:20-23). "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8). On the cross, Christ said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46). Those at the cross said, "He trusted in God" (Mat. 27:43). Christ said, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Mat. 10:28). Such scriptures enable the believer to say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psa. 23:4).

TRUST GOD FOR PEACE AND HAPPINESS

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). Confide in God, rely upon him. "Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Isa. 26:4). Trust God to hear and answer your prayers (Mat. 7:7-11; Jas. 5:16-18). Trust Him to give the answer that is best. Don't wait for God to speak directly to you, saying he has heard your prayer; but trust His promise and believe he has always heard you, and that he will always hear and answer your requests, because you love him and keep his commandments (I Jn. 3:22). Trust in God.

Sunday night is a part of the first day of the week, the Lord's day. (I Cor. 16:2. Rev. 1:10.)

The New Testament Christians assembled upon the first day of the week, or on Sunday night to break bread, or eat the Lord's supper. (Acts 20:7; 2:42; I Cor. 11.)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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The Authority Of Elders



BOBBY DUNCAN

We have before us two different articles, by two different authors, in two different brotherhood publication of recent date. Both articles deal with the authority of the eldership, and both at least question whether an eldership has any authority at all. One author says: "...we take issue with what many call the 'qualifications' of elders." He then says that if a

man possess the qualities described in First Timothy and Titus he "exercises an 'authority' born of WHAT he is instead of WHO he is, whether selected or not." Later in the same article the author said: "It is our opinion that the 23rd Psalm may come nearer providing the qualities of an elder than does Paul."

The second author said: "One should not assume that 'by virtue of his appointment,' the elder or bishop 'has been given a special power to exercise authority.'" He said further: "There is no evidence from the New Testament that (elders) made important decisions apart from the whole congregation."

We are certainly aware of cases in which those in the eldership have has a warped conception of their authority. No doubt, authority has been abused by some. But is it true that an eldership actually has no authority to make decisions for the congregation?

If we did not have a Bible we would know that someone has to have authority to make final decisions in matters of judgment for a local church. But we do have a Bible, and the Bible is clear in showing that elders do have this authority. We are not discussing whether they have a right to be dictators, such as Hitler or others. But do they have a right, as

an eldership, to make decisions for and in behalf of the congregation, and to expect the members of the congregation to comply with their decisions?

In Acts 20:28 elders are referred to as OVERSEERS (BISHOPS ASV). Thayer defines the Greek word so translated to mean: "one charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly..." How could an eldership see that things done by others are done rightly if it had no authority to make decisions?

In the same passage the word which is translated FEED is defined by Thayer to mean: "to rule, govern." The same word is used of Christ in Matt. 2:6, and is contxt of acts 20:28. There is a warning that wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock. Suppose the wolves came in. What could elders do, if they had no authority?

I Timothy 3:1 speaks of a man's desiring the office of a bishop. One author has said: "If and elder is a man who is functioning as a leader, he would not be empowered to do one thing after his appointment that he could not have done before." If this were the case, why would a man desire the office? This passage show that a man is not functioning as a **bishop** in a scriptural sense before his appointment. Acts 14:23 shows that men were ordained to the eldership. The American Standard Version says they were APPOINTED.

In I Tim. 5:17 Paul speaks of "elders that rule well." It is suggested by some that the word RULE does not mean that the eldership has authority. But look at the same word in I Tim 3:4,5. Does the word carry with it the idea of authority in connection with rearing children?

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). Is the inspired writer here commanding that we obey those who have not the authority to command? the word OBEY is translate here from the same Greek word found in James 3:3. "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may OBEY us...."

We are aware that elders are told to be examples to the flock (I Pet. 5:1-4). But does this fact preclude the eldership's having any authority? If so, then Christ can have no authority, for He is said to be our example (I Pet. 2:21). Matthew 28:18 tells us that Christ was given all authority, both in heaven and on earth.

An attack against the authority of the eldership is an attack against God's arrangement. Those guilty of such attacks should be taught the truth. If they persist in their error and false teaching, they should be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17).

I Have An Understanding

By NORMAN W. PARRISH

I don't attend all the classes and worship services of the church because I have an UNDERSTAND.

The language may be slightly different at times and in your locale but it is still the same old tired excuse making process in different robes.

The individual or family or even a group in the membership offers this excuse in many ways, shades and colors.

A mate says, "I'll be baptized but I will not attend all the services." This statement is made first to a husband or wife and perhaps a teenager. It is also made to elders, preachers, personal workers or Bible class teachers.

Sometimes members come from "Afar off" or another area congregation to place membership because they are unhappy or have been unfaithful and pressure was put on them to be faithful, so they left. Now that they are honoring you with their occasional presence and state, "We are placing membership but we will not attend the Wednesday night service because we live 10-15-20 miles away, and Sunday services is all we can afford to attend." If you or someone else cares calls their attention to their irregular attendance, they excuse this conduct by saying, "We have an UNDERSTANDING."

Or some may place membership and say, "My job keeps me away from part of the services and I don't want the wife and babies to drive at night, so we are not to be questioned about our attendance, because we have an UNDERSTANDING."

Another may say, "I'll come on Sunday morning but that's all, because I play golf or fish on Sunday afternoon and Wednesday. Wednesday is my day off at the store." They don't want to be asked about their faithfulness, or they will leave you and take their contribution somewhere where they can be appreciated because, after all, don't they have an UNDERSTANDING!

How did all this happen?

Many a parent with tears in his eyes has said, "Brother Parrish, I would give anything if my children who have left the Church would

just attend Sunday mornings."

Many a man or woman has said to me, "I think my mate is going to come back to the Church by attending on Sunday morning only. I sure hope no one says anything to hurt his feelings and cause him to stop after all my work to get him back. And, staying with him at all other times."

I do know that happens and often. I do know such UNDERSTANDING with someone that made unfaithfulness acceptable because, after all, isn't it better to have 100 members attending at least one service than to have 50 members attending all the services?

Some may say, "I made a BARGAIN just to attend part time, or I made a DEAL just to attend part time, or the brethren KNOW and UNDERSTAND."

Where does a new convert LEARN to be unfaithful in attendance after a week, month, or a year? He learns if from the members who fail to attend all the services and have this mysterious UNDERSTANDING and approval of the brethren.

Brethren have stressed taking the Lord's Supper on Sunday morning until we are teaching that this is more important than any worship service and, therefore, all other times are unimportant.

If you have used some excuse that would seem foolish if you ask God's approval for the same, if you would be honest you would give up such an excuse. Our faithfulness is important and our influence is causing others to be faithful or unfaithful.

Did Jesus in Matthew 6:33 say seek pleasure, T.V., rest and a thousand other things first, or the Kingdom first?

We must approve of unfaithfulness because it is popular and acceptable to many. We must encourage all to be faithful.

Sunday night is a good time to show our faith in God. (Jas. 2:14-26.)

Sunday night is a good time to show our love for Christ and his church. (I Cor. 16:22; Eph. 5:25.)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"God said to Moses, 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt.' (Ex. 7:3.) Why did God do this? In view of this, why did God instruct Moses to demand that Pharaoh release the children of Israel from bondage having hardened the king's heart against this? It is said in Ex. 8:15, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. If God did it, why is Pharaoh said to have done it? Please harmonize these statements."

Truth, any truth, all truth, being a part of a harmonious whole, is never in conflict with itself. Thus, when we are confronted with an instance where it appears that a clash between truth and justice occurs, it is no more than simple justice to conclude that the difficulty is only apparent and that it may be resolved by a careful study of the terms used and of the circumstances attending the matter involved. In view of the fact that the uniform teaching of the scriptures leads to the conclusion that God would never prompt a person to violate his teaching and then punish him for so doing, it must follow that there is an explanation which is consistent with God's dealings with man, and at the same time exhibits the truth of the statements made.

Moses, the agent of Jehovah, was sent to

king Pharaoh with the demand that the people of Israel be permitted to leave the land of Egypt and to go into the wilderness to worship Him. Ample evidence was provided the monarch of the genuineness of Moses' mission, and of the exercise of God's power in his behalf. This ought to have softened the king's heart inasmuch as it brought clearly before him the will of God in the matter. It should be remembered that Pharaoh hardened his heart after he witnessed divine manifestations of God's displeasure; and, when the plagues were for the time suspended he still exhibited a hard heart. This suspension did not influence him and he still refused to comply with the will of God and suffer the enslaved people to go. Pharaoh thus hardened his own heart against the wishes of Jehovah.

But, why is it said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? Not infrequently, in the scriptures, God is said to do what he allows, permits, or suffers others to do. On occasion when the people of Israel turned away from him to the idolatrous deities of the nations around them, God is said to have given them the desires of their heart — "statutes that were not good," and "ordinances wherein they ought not to live" (Ezek. 20:25). He suffered them to have the natural consequences of their demands.

Verbs in the Hiphil conjugation in Hebrew often signify to allow or suffer as well as to cause, and thus all that is meant is that God permitted the king to acquire a disposition in keeping with his stubborn will and nature. The demand which God made on the monarch led to the hardness of heart which he exhibited; and though God set in motion the events which led to this situation, the fault was entirely Pharaoh's.

members be able to recognize the difference between the unsubstantiated assertions which they make and those made by some heretic? The fact is they will not know the difference.

Faithful men who have fallen prey to this type of preaching do not realize that they are preparing their congregations to be led into error by some false prophet who will "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18).

"I CHARGE THEE THEREFORE....

...before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:1-4).

Fornication and Licentiousness

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

Fornication and other forms of licentiousness have been engaged in throughout the history of mankind.

According to Henry H. Halley, Ishtar, the moon-goddess of Ur of the Chaldees, "was the deification of the sex passion; her worship required licentiousness; sacred prostitution in connection with her sanctuaries was a universal custom among the women of Babylonia."

The so-called "new morality" is in reality a reversion to the heathenism of the dim, gray morning of time.

According to Moulton and Milligan, fornication is "unlawful sexual intercourse generally."

The Bible says: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9, 10; see also verses 18-20; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5, 6; Rev. 21:8).

Are Hypocrites In The Church of Christ?

In Gal. 2:13 we read about Peter and others being involved in dissimulation. The Greek word here is upokrisis. It means hypocrisy. Peter, Barnabas, and other saints were involved in hypocrisy!

In Rom. 12:9 Paul says, "Let love be without hypocrisy." Apparently some were guilty of hypocritical love.

Hypocrisy is sinful. In fact, Paul withstood Peter to his face over Peter's condition, Gal. 2:11. Peter repented. How many people today will use PETER'S hypocrisy to keep them out of the church of Christ? None! Why do people find someone in the church of Christ who is a hypocrite and use him as their "reason" for staying out of the church of Christ? They do so for an excuse! They give one reason for staying out but really stay out for some other. Isn't that hypocrisy?

If a hypocrite threw you a line to save you

Continued on Page 4

"Let God Speak"

By RAY DUTTON

During the two years I was privileged to spend with brother Gus Nichols before his death, many times I heard him cry over the growing practice among many of our preachers to "lecture" rather than "preach the word." His complaint was that ever increasing numbers of our preachers are refraining from reading and quoting the Scriptures and from giving book, chapter, and verse for statements they make.

On one occasion brother Nichols and I attended a funeral service where the preacher spoke some twenty minutes, and in that time never quoted or read from even ONE verse of the "holy scriptures" (II Tim. 3:15). Later, as we discussed this matter, brother Nichols commented: "He talked and talked and talked, but he never let the Lord get a word in edgewise!"

THE CONSEQUENCES

Whatever the reasons behind this trend away from reading and quoting the Scriptures in sermons, I sincerely believe the consequences of such will be tragic.

The Lord instructs preachers to "preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2), and "if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). I seriously doubt that a person can stand in the pulpit and merely "allude" to a few Bible principles, yet never quote or read or give the reference for one verse, and that be called "gospel preaching."

In the second place, what about the spiritual needs of those who have to endure these "lectures"? The Bible teaches Christians to "desire the sincere milk of the WORD, that ye may GROW THEREBY" (I Pet. 2:2). When Paul delivered his farewell address to the Ephesian elders he realized that spiritual edification came from reading, studying, and

practicing God's word. Thus he said, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the WORD OF HIS GRACE, which is able to BUILD YOU UP, and to GIVE YOU AN INHERITANCE among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). He knew that "sweet sayings" and "pious platitudes" would not take the place of the WORD of God's grace. But because many of our preachers don't realize this, their members are starving to death for true spiritual food.

Another serious consequence of this trend is the growing tendency among our members to believe the power to save is in "POWERFUL PREACHERS" instead of the "POWERFUL GOSPEL" (Rom. 1:16). It is already obvious that many elderships are choosing their evangelists on the basis of "CHARISMA" rather than "CHARACTER".

The apostle Paul was convinced that people needed converting to the "person on the CROSS" rather than the "person in the PULPIT." Thus he wrote to the Corinthians: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with EXCELLENCY OF SPEECH or of WISDOM, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:1, 2).

One last obvious consequence of such "scriptureless" preaching is, and will be, the apostasy of thousands of Christians deceived into believing the unproved and unsubstantiated assertions of heretics posing as "ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:14, 15). Now I am aware that many of our preachers who have fallen into this practice are unquestionably sound themselves, but how long will their members remain sound under such preaching? How will their

First Commandment

"Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, 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" (Matt. 22:25-38).



R. W. GRAY

Love is the appealing characteristic of the Christian religion. A great preacher summed it up when he said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal...and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (I Cor. 13:1-3). Without love, therefore, the oration is ineffective and the death of the martyr unavailing.

Miracles attended the preaching of the apostles in the first century. These, doubtless, had a profound effect upon the masses (Heb. 2:1-4). But a noted historian records that it was the love manifested toward one another that was the real drawing power in Christianity. Jesus, knowing the drawing power of love, gave His disciples a key, the real secret to successful discipleship and stewardship in His kingdom: "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). Why, brethren, do we fail to point up this identifying characteristic of the New Testament Church in our lectures on the subject? Is it that we doubt the Lord's wisdom in the matter, or is it that we are ashamed to call attention to it for fear of losing the advantages gained by other arguments which are truly descriptive of the 20th Century Church of Christ?

God is to be the first object of our love. It is inherently right He should have first place in our affections, and He demands it un-compromisingly. Obedience is a joy rather than a servile duty to the man who loves His Lord. When we love God with our feeling, our thinking, and our physical powers, we will obey Him. Failure to obey His commandments evidences a lack of love. Our Saviour said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). And John adds, "For this IS THE LOVE OF GOD, that we keep His commandments" (I John 5:3). Mushy sentimentality may exist apart from obedience, but true love always responds to heaven's command (John 14:23).

Faith's obedience is profitless unless it is prompted by love. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

The Romans had put sin to death, had buried the old man in the waters of baptism, and were walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:1-4). Their obedience to the "form of doctrine delivered them" had made them free, argues Paul in verses 16 and 17 of the same chapter. But we look again to see the motivation behind their action: "...but ye have obeyed FROM THE HEART that form of doctrine...." (Rom. 6:17b). Loving God from the heart, then, is the motivation behind genuine repentance and obedience. To

impenitent Jews Paul put the question: "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God LEADETH THEE to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4).

Loving God involves more than mere performance of duty. It involves the whole heart, affection, will and purpose. All duty comes as a matter of course to him who has obeyed the first and great commandment. Unless we learn this, impress it upon the minds of all, make it a part of ourselves, we will continue to treat the symptoms only as we urge upon one another the need for faithfulness (I Cor. 15:58). The real problem behind every brotherhood problem is lack of genuine love for God that manifests itself in a lack of demonstration of the same toward one another (Matt. 22:39, 40).

Man cannot love a God he does not know. And we cannot know God apart from His revelation of Himself. Men are to be "taught of God" that they may "be drawn" unto Him (John 6:44, 45). In preaching the gospel, God's only power to move men to saving faith (Romans 1:16), let us remember to dwell at length upon the aspect of the "gospel" that makes it attractive and appealing. Jesus said it like this: "And I, if I be lifter up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). Then John comments in the following verse: "This He said, signifying what death He should die." Men will not love God because He first loved them unless they understand the depth of His love for them. Preaching duty only will not reveal that love. A central design of the divine plan is that men KNOW the God they serve (Heb. 8:10-12). Advocates of the "Man, not the plan" fallacy missed the whole idea behind the "plan." It is

the very design of the "plan" that men learn to love and serve the "Man." When the "plan" is not preached it is impossible for men to love the Man (Rom. 1:15, 16, 17). It is true that the WHOLE plan, not simply the commands to be obeyed, must be followed. Hearing and following the plan will bring about the love that is demanded, and reveals to the heart the "truth that makes us free" (John 8:31, 32).

"As every Lord giveth a certain livery to his servants, love is the very livery of Christ. Our Saviour who is the Lord above all lords, would have His servants known by their badge, which is love."

Hugh Latimer

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love".

I John 4:8

"The love of God is the ultimate reality, the deepest and strongest force in the universe; and it is revealed to the man who resolutely girds himself to the conflict."

David Smith

"Humble love, and not proud science, keeps the door of heaven."

Owen D. Young

We learn to cease the striving after wind, vexation of spirit is replaced by a true sense of our purpose in life, and all vanity ends only after we have found the true solution to life's purpose as discovered by the wise preacher many centuries ago. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. 12:13).

Days

John Ussery Jr.

The word "DAY" means many things to many people. Have you ever stopped to consider the Bible's uses of the word "day"?

God created the earth in six DAYS and rested on the seventh (Gen. 1:1; Gen. 2:2). Under the Law of Moses, God set aside the Sabbath DAY as Holy (Exod. 20:8). Jesus came forth from the grave on the first DAY of the week (Matt. 28:1-6; Mk. 16:1-6; Lk. 24:1-10; Jn. 20:1-19). The Saints assemble on the Lord's DAY to partake of the Lord's Supper (Rev. 1:10; I Cor. 11, 12; Acts 20:7). Saints are to exhort one another, and especially as we see "the DAY" approaching (Heb. 10:25). There is a DAY in which Jesus is coming again (I Thess. 5:2; II Pet. 3:10; Mk. 13:32). A DAY is coming when all that are in the graves shall come forth (Jn. 6:40-44). A DAY has been appointed in which the world will be judged according to righteousness

(Rom. 2:16; II Pet. 3:7).

Our lives may be summed up in terms of DAYS. "The DAYS of our years are three-score years and ten" (Psa. 90:10). We have a birthDAY, a graduation DAY, a wedding DAY. We speak of doing things toDAY, tomorrow, or perhaps some future DAY. All of us live for some DAY. Some live from DAY to DAY, or maybe just for toDAY without any thought for the future. Some live for the DAY they can get a better job, or the DAY the last installment on a contract is paid. Still others live for the DAY they can retire. Unfortunately however, most people aren't living for the most important, and either the happiest or the saddest DAY they will ever experience — THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION DAY!!! For what DAY are you living?????

Are Hypocrites In The Church of Christ?

Continued From Page 3

from falling to your death, would you refuse it because he was a hypocrite? NO! Why refuse to enter the body/church of Christ then? To be IN Christ is to be in his body or church, Eph. 1:22, 23. To be IN Christ is to be saved, 2 Tim. 2:10. To be IN Christ is to be a new creature, 2 Cor. 5:17. Why refuse to be immersed into Christ (his body) just because there are some who act as Peter did? I think I

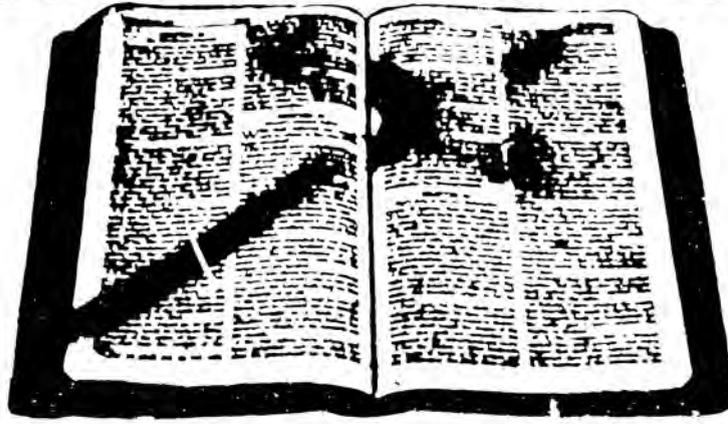
would rather rub shoulders with a hypocrite in church, than to rub shoulders with him in hell!

Hypocrites in the church? Yes, there have been, and I suppose there will be; but my salvation does not rest upon the hypocrite, but rather upon Jesus. Therefore, I am in his church that I might be saved by him!

Investigate the church of Christ today.

— Beacon, Bellview Church, Pensacola, Fla.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

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

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God's Universal Law of Dis-Use

BERT THOMPSON

How many of us have ever seen a house, which once was attractive, become an eyesore once its occupants moved out and no one else moved in? How many of us have seen perfectly good automobiles stand idle in a neighbor's driveway or yard and eventually rust and deteriorate? Who among us has seen a swing set in someone's back yard, once a thrill to a youngster's heart, become a rusted, unpainted heap of metal through lack of use? And what about refrigerators, clothes dryers, washing machines, lawn mowers, and the hoards of other appliances we rely on—once useful items to busy people, now fallen into a state of disrepair through lack of continual use? America's thousands of junk yards are filled with just that — junk, caused in many cases not by OVERuse, but instead by neglectful DIS-use!

It is a universal, recognized law of God that items not used fall into an eventual state of disrepair, decay, and deterioration. Perhaps it could be called the "universal law of dis-use." And there can be no doubt that this universal law can apply to human beings as well. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that such a law has its basis in the Scriptures.

Although the phrase, "universal law of dis-use" is not to be found in the Scriptures PER SE, its ramifications are present. Consider, if you will, the scriptural application of this law of God. The twenty-second chapter of II Kings tells two stories — one of the physical results of God's law of dis-use, and a second concerning the spiritual results. The temple in Jerusalem had fallen into a state of decay and disrepair through lack of use. Manasseh, Hezekiah's son, had undone all the good his father had managed to do, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord (II Kings 21:2). Amon, Manasseh's son, followed in his father's footsteps, and he, too, did evil in the Lord's sight (II Kings 21:20). Manasseh and Amon both forsook God's commands. The temple in Jerusalem, through continual dis-use, fell into ill-repair and decay. Fortunately, God raised up Amon's son, Josiah, to be a king better than any before or after him (II Kings 23:25), even though he was only eight years old when he took the throne (II Kings 22:1).

At the ripe old age of eighteen, Josiah ordered the temple put back into a state of good repair. Josiah sent Shaphan to the high priest Hilkiah with orders to use whatever money necessary to repair God's

temple. As Hilkiah went about carrying out the young king's orders, we remember those immortal words which illustrate the second story about God's law of dis-use: "I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah" (II Kings 22:8). Truly, Hilkiah had found the book of the law! And because it had not been used for so many years by so many kings, God's people had fallen into a state of spiritual decay, deterioration, and ill-repair. Josiah himself recognized this immediately upon reading the book of the law, and he tore his clothes from his body in sorrow and humiliation (II Kings 22:11).

So many of the books in the Old Testament relay to us similar spiritual messages. Ezra, in approximately 457 B.C., gathered the Jews together in the open square in front of the house of God and spoke to them the word of God during a blinding rain (Ezra 10:9-15) to turn them from their evil practices, one of which was marriage to non-Jews. Ezekiel, in approximately 592 B.C., spoke a similar message to God's people, pleading with them to turn from their evil ways. They would not, and because of dis-use of God's law, in 586 B.C., just six years later, Nebuchadrezzar carried these same Jews off into Babylonian captivity.

The importance of the scriptural examples lies not just in the physical aspects of God's law of dis-use, but especially in the spiritual aspects of the law. True, our houses and our other material goods will decay and rot through continual dis-use. Even our own bodies will deteriorate through lack of use. But, what is worse, our spiritual well-being is subject to God's law of dis-use, just as the Jews' spiritual well-being had fallen into a state of decay and disrepair during the days of Josiah.

We are not good stewards of our material possessions if we allow them, through disuse, to deteriorate and decay. But even more important, we are not proper stewards of something which is much more valuable — our soul — if we allow it to be lost eternally! God's law of dis-use held true in regard to both the physical and spiritual realms in Josiah's day. The same unchanging law still holds true today. It is still just as binding as it was those many years ago. The Old Law, with its many examples, was given to us as a tutor (or schoolmaster; Galatians 3:24). We do poorly if we fail to learn the lessons it holds. One such lesson which we may glean from this

marvelous tutor is God's law of dis-use!

The Master cursed a fig tree and it immediately withered (Matthew 21:19) because it bore no fruit. It was useless, and therefore received a curse. The Master later made a promise which rivals this curse to the fig tree. He spoke, in spiritual terms, of people (Matthew 25:41-46) who, through complacency and neglect, idealize God's law of dis-use. And their reward — eternal punishment!

God's law of dis-use works. It is true and real. Unused houses decay, unused automobiles rust, unused appliances fall into disrepair, unused talents elude us ever more easily as time goes on, and souls unused in the work of the Lord become the devil's catch! There's a point, past which it is too late to correct the situation. That point, spiritually speaking, is death. Jesus Himself expressed the fact that a man who dies in his sins is lost (John 8:21-24). But God is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9). If a man repents and confesses his sins, God is faithful to forgive him (Acts 17:30; James 5:16; I John 1:9). If a man follows God's word faithfully, he will never see death (John 8:51).

God's law of dis-use is not for Christians. Christians are to be busy with the work of the Lord. It has been truly said that an idle mind is the workshop of the devil. But Christians, not yielding to the law of dis-use, instead overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). A man busy doing God's word and obeying God's commandments has no need to worry about the universal law of dis-use affecting his spiritual life. Jesus came that we might have life, and that more abundantly (John 10:10). The abundant life does not include dis-use!

By Gus Nichols

Sunday night is a good time to show my love for my family, by taking them with me to the church services. (Josh. 24:15.)

Sunday night is a good time to bring friends with you to the services of the church, and thus to help build up the attendance and interest in spiritual matters. (Isa. 2:2-3.)

Sunday night is a good time to use your car for transporting others to and from the services of the church, if they have no conveyance. (Mt. 7:12.)

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Drinking



BOBBY DUNCAN

This discussion has to do, not with drunkenness, but with drinking. Most church going people are agreed that drunkenness is a sin. But the idea is becoming more and more prevalent that there is nothing wrong in the "moderate" consumption of alcoholic beverages. It is this idea we are examining here.

In the discussion of the subject on these

pages we have made a genuine effort to refrain from expressing our opinions. Rather we have confined our remarks to the statement of facts which can be investigated by those interested in so doing. We have, of course, drawn some logical conclusions from these facts.

THE WORD WINE

In a study of the Bible it is important that we understand that some words do not have the same meaning in the Bible which we understand them to mean in modern usage. Therefore it is necessary to ascertain the precise idea a word would convey to those people to whom it was originally written, and apply that same sense to the word in our interpretation of the Bible. Several words serve to illustrate this principle. The word *conversation* in the Authorized Version means 'deportment' or 'general behavior' (Gal. 1:13; I Tim. 4:12; I Pet. 3:1). Its usual meaning in modern speech is 'a talking together.' The word *hate* is generally understood to mean to detest, loathe, abominate.' But Jesus said a man must *hate* his father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, and his own life also (Luke 14:26). It is obvious that Jesus is saying merely that these must not be chosen instead of Him. So in cases where a choice is

made, that one not chosen is said to be *hated* (Cf. also Gen. 29:30, 31 and Rom. 9:13). The word *baptize* in the Bible never means 'to sprinkle or pour water' upon one.

When we think of *wine* we think of the alcoholic beverage by that name sold in liquor stores. In the Bible, however, the word *wine* is used to refer to the juice of the grape in any form, whether fermented, freshly pressed, or still in the grape. Sometimes it is possible to determine from the context the precise meaning of the word. For example, in the following three passages it is quite obvious that the word *wine* refers to an alcoholic beverage: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). "Look not thou upon the *wine* when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again" (Prov. 23:31-35). "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till *wine* inflame them" (Isa. 5:11).

On the other hand it is just as obvious that the same word, *wine*, in Isa. 16:10 refers to fresh grape juice: "And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting; the treaders shall tread out no *wine* in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease."

In still another passage we have a reference to *wine* which is still in the grapes: "Thus saith the Lord, As the new *wine* if found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all" (Isa. 65:8).

These passages serve to illustrate the fact that the word *wine* is used to refer to the juice of the grape, in whatever form it may be found. While these passages are quite clear as to the respective meanings of the word *wine*, it is not always possible to determine which of these specific meanings would be applicable to a passage. In such cases, the careful Bible student will not press one definition to the exclusion of others.

It is true that there are several Hebrew and Greek words that are translated *wine* in the Bible. However a thorough examination of their usage reveals little, if anything at all, that would be helpful in this study. It is worthy of observation that the Bible nowhere uses the expression *grape juice*, or *juice of the grape*. The word *juice* itself is used only one time in the Bible (S. of S. 8:2), and here the reference obviously is not to grape juice. Instead of *grape juice*, the word *wine* is used.

STRONG DRINK

Like the word *wine*, the term *strong drink* needs to be defined as to its meaning in the Bible. The priests under the law were not allowed to drink wine nor *strong drink* during their period of service, upon punishment of death (Lev. 10:9). Proverbs 20:1 tells us that "*strong drink is raging.*" And the father of John the Baptist was told: "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor *strong drink*...." (Luke 1:15).

Just how strong was strong? There is nothing to indicate there was anything in Bible times to be compared to the ninety proof liquors of our day. Natural fermentation of pure grape juice produces a maximum of alcohol between thirteen and fourteen per cent alcohol, regardless of how long it is allowed to age. There is nothing to indicate that people of ancient times knew how to increase this percentage by any great amount. References to *strong drink* in the Bible would be to beverages that were relatively weak according to modern standards. Yet many warnings were given against the use of such (Prov. 10:1; 23:29-32; Isa. 5:11).

If the strongest of the strong was of this nature, then it is obvious that the *wine* quite commonly drunk in Bible times was a much weaker beverage, including fresh grape juice. Whatever amounts of alcohol it may have contained was through natural fermentation because of the lack of pasteurization and refrigeration. And there is good evidence to indicate that even this was often mixed with water before it was drunk (McClintock and Strong. *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*. Vol. X, P. 1015).

In view of these facts, the sincere student of the Bible will not cite examples of *wine* drinking in the Bible to prove that it is in harmony with the Scriptures for saints to drink the alcoholic beverages of our day.

(More next week).

Which — Doctrine or Opinion?

MICHAEL D. STONE

In the June 1, 1976, issue of the Firm Foundation, Jim Reynolds writes an article entitled "A Plea for Sound Doctrine". Contained within that article is the following statement, "There isn't one among us who can unfailingly draw a line between doctrine and opinion." My purpose in this writing is to challenge that statement.

I personally know of many informed Christians who can unfailingly draw the line between doctrine and opinion. I know of countless faithful preachers who can draw a line between doctrine and opinion. For many years, men like Guy N. Woods, B. C. Goodpasture, Thomas Warren, William Woodson, the late Gus Nichols and a host of others have been drawing the line between

doctrine and opinion. This writer does not have a Ph.D., however, I can unfailingly draw a line between doctrine and opinion.

We are to abide in the doctrine of Christ (II John 9). If we cannot be sure of the line between doctrine and opinion, how can we be sure we're abiding in the doctrine? The fact of the matter is, we can be sure. How can we make our calling and election sure if we cannot unfailingly draw the line between doctrine and opinion? (II Peter 1:10). Doctrine, not opinion, is the basis of fellowship. Because brother Reynolds may have trouble distinguishing between the two, he needs to be careful lest he fellowship opinion. Or would it make any difference to him?

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"The Adventists assert that the Decalogue is a perfect moral code? Is this correct?"

It is significant that men are prone to accept assumptions without proof, and thenceforth to rely on such as proper premises from which to reach conclusions they deem to be entirely proper and grounded in the truth.

The opinion widely prevails, in religious circles of our day, that the decalogue—the ten commandments—contain a *perfect moral code*. It is not unusual for men to say, "If I live according to the ten commandments, I shall certainly reach heaven." These views are common to the denominational world; and, among Sabbatarians, particularly, the assumption obtains that the laws which Moses, amid the spectacular displays of Sinai, received on tables of stone from the hand of God, include all laws and regulations essential to man in every age and type of society.

The thoughtful person will eschew such fetish worship as is characteristic of such people, and avoid the error of applying to the whole what was intended only for a part, and of extending to all time what was specifically declared to be limited and temporal. It is apparent to anyone who *thinks*, that the decalogue is far short of a perfect moral code, and was never designed to serve as such. It will be observed that the five commands which were given for the purpose of regulating human beings in their relationships with each other are all negative in nature, and begin, "Thou shalt not..." (1) "Thou shalt not kill;" (2) "thou shalt not commit adultery;" (3) thou shalt not steal;" (4) "thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor;" (5) "thou shalt not covet..." (Ex. 20:13-17).

It is forbidden to *kill*. Suppose, however, one beat his neighbor *half to death*, which precept, or principle, of the decalogue, would he violate? It forbids one to "bear false witness" *against* his neighbor." Which statement, or statements, of the ten commandments, would one violate were one to lie *in behalf* of his neighbor? The answer to both these questions is, of course, *none*. True it is that it was necessary that such prohibitions be appended, and included, because the ten commandments were not sufficiently comprehensive in their application to meet the needs of humanity in the state of society.

It is noteworthy that the decalogue contains no injunctions prompting to love of one's enemies, or, for that matter, *one's neighbor*; there is nothing bidding one to assist another in want, deprivation, or neglect; and it contains no injunction requiring the assumption of the burdens of others, whether such burdens be physical or spiritual in nature.

Our Lord settled the question once for all the *the two greatest* commandments of the Old testament *are not included* in the decalogue at all! "But the Pharisees, when they heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, gathered themselves together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, trying him: Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is

this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments the whole law hangeth, and the prophets" (Matt. 22:34-40). This forevermore establishes the relative inferiority of that brief code which God gave to Moses from the heights of Sinai, the design of which was not to supply Israel with a perfect moral code, but to make sin "exceedingly sinful" (Rom. 7:13). That is, to sharpen the peoples' concept of sin, by impressing the law of God upon them in brief, outline form, and so giving them a greater awareness of sin.

The proclamation of these matters in the wilderness at Sinai was, by no means, their original presentation to the people. It was as wrong to kill, to steal, to covet, before, as after Sinai. With the exception of the sole positive commandment, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8), these principles had governed the human family from the earliest times. Indeed, it is not possible to live in a state of society without them; and, had not God given them, man would have, of necessity, legislated regarding such. Laws respecting the sanctity of human life, of private property, of marriage and the home, are required in the relationships which characterize mankind. The moral principles which govern us have always been true, obligatory, and necessary, and issue from the nature of the case in which we find ourselves. It is for this reason that notwithstanding the fact that the *ten commandment law* was

abolished at the cross, and so ceased to serve as the constitution of the Lord's people, the *nine moral commands* of the law are embraced and included in the law of God applicable to us today. Only one of the commands — the sole positive command of the decalogue, not partaking of moral characteristics, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy," — was omitted from the new covenant.

Those who allege that the decalogue is yet binding, concede that what they style the "ceremonial law" has been abolished. The thoughtful reader will discover that this law reached a higher standard, and required a worthier manner of life in human dignity and decency than would have been reached by sole adherence to the ten commandment law, as distinguished from the other legislation of the Old Testament. Yet, it was far short of the high moral tone, and exalted manner of life which is possible to those who follow the behests of the Spirit as taught by Christ, the apostles, and sacred writers of the New Testament. Here, alone, and far removed in the area of human conduct, from every effort advanced by man to rise to higher and more worthy plateaus of life, *is the only perfect moral code* — the only system ever devised which can, and does, lift man from the mire of depravity and set him in the way which leads to heaven. It is the New Testament.

(To be Continued)

"Be Not Deceived: God Is Not Mocked" (Gal. 6:7)

(AUTHOR UNKNOWN)

Few scriptures are better known than the one quoted above, yet we do not always see the obvious truths in many very familiar passages. The subject under discussion in the context of this verse is moral living. Apparently there were some who desired, like Balaam (Numbers 12:1-10) to live according to the flesh, and die the death of the righteous. If we would reap the harvest of the righteous, we must plant the crop of the righteous.

This principle of seed-time and harvest is true in all phases of life. A boy planning a career as a gospel preacher primarily does not go to school to study law. If one wants to become a doctor he must study the things that one needs to know to become a doctor. This principle holds true with regard to seeking eternal life. Those who are making no preparation for a life in heaven, cannot expect — by any law — scripture, or reason — to inherit eternal life.

We may apply this same principle to business. No one may expect his "ship to come in" until first he has sent his ship out! We would have many successes in business if WISHING would make a success. Too many want the rewards of hard labor but are unwilling to do the labor themselves. There are few failures among those who really work for success. Very seldom does a child fail in school who has really put in labor to study. Few businesses have ever failed when all persons concerned worked! No church to my knowledge has ever failed to grow when the members work. Many students, businesses, and churches fail when the majority stand by and just WISH that success would come — but wait for others to do the WORK. How about you?

The New Testament is complete in describing the kind of life that God wants. It is true beyond any shadow of a doubt that we can no more reap what we do NOT SOW than that we can escape reaping what we DO SOW!

This verse of Scripture sets forth a dual truth: (1) THAT EVERY MAN MUST REAP WHAT HE SOWS, (2) And, that NO MAN CAN REAP WHAT HE DOES NOT SOW! We are the children of God, not because of just the desire to be children of God, but because we have become obedient to the law of God which makes us children of God. We are redeemed because we have come in contact with the redeeming blood of Christ. We are a peculiar people unto the Lord because we dare to be different from the rest of the world. We are God's workmanship in CHRIST because we were "baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6:3-4), and we work FOR CHRIST. These are just simple matters. WE MUST REAP WHAT WE SOW, but WE CANNOT REAP WHAT WE DO NOT SOW!

Now we are aware that it is possible to sow seeds of carelessness, indifference, and to let opportunities slip by that should have been used for something better. Even so, this is still a form of sowing — and it must be followed by a period of reaping! Many parents are going to reap a bitter harvest in the lives of their children for a failure to sow positive seeds of good deeds, right habits, good training and a proper discipline in their lives.

Frequently when a home has been brought low because of some evil that some member of the family has done, a mother or father will be heard to say: "What have I done that I should deserve all this?" Perhaps nothing — yet, your doing NOTHING may cause some very grievous heartaches and disappointments. The Lord is holding each of us responsible for the things that we can do, and if we don't do them, our harvest will be accordingly. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You will never know how much it means and is worth to serve the Lord until it is too late to change. So, live in His service by faith. Begin right now.

Looking Unto Jesus

The writer of Hebrews recognized the power of example as an incentive to better living on the part of those who would follow. The eleventh chapter of this great book contains an impressive list of heroes of faith who through fidelity to the cause had gained victory and the approbation of God. He refers to them in a favorable way in chapter twelve, referring to them as witnesses who compass us about, beckoning us on to the crown of life. (Heb. 12:1).



R. W. GRAY

As worthy as some may be, however, in receiving the right to speak, even in death, from a life altogether worthy of imitation, they must not, and indeed cannot, stand in the place of Jesus as our pace-setter. He alone is the perfect example, and we are to look unto him "the author and perfecter of our faith"

(Heb. 11:4, 12:2).

If we look too long to men, though they be righteous men, we will find their weaknesses, failures, shortcomings and imperfections. All that is worthy of imitation in men are those attributes they have as followers of Jesus Christ; hence, Paul exhorted, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1).

Jesus alone possesses a name that is above all names (Phil. 2:5-11), and he has left us an example that we should follow in his steps (I Pet. 2:21). Our prayers are effective only when offered in his name (Col. 3:17). Spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God when offered through Christ, our high priest (Heb. 13:15; I Pet. 2:15). The church is the greatest institution on earth because of Christ, it's head (Eph. 1:19-23). God is glorified in the church "by Christ Jesus" (Eph. 3:21).

Looking unto men we may become discouraged. A life of growth may come to an abrupt end when the object of our admiration proves to be a bit more "human" than we had thought. Brethren may help and strengthen us, but we must not make the mistake of putting our "trust" in them.

It is a strange reaction, to say the least of it, that disappointment in brethren is frequently the cause(?) of our failure in loyalty to Christ. There is something grossly unfair and illogical

about it all. With Polycarp we can say of Christ, "He has never wronged me," nor has he forsaken us (Heb. 13:5). Why does this occur? It is the result of trusting more in men than is warranted, while we look too infrequently unto Jesus. Men may cause us to have a serious grievance against them. But not so with our Saviour. There is never cause for disappointment when our eyes are fixed on him.

*"Under his wings I am safely abiding;
Though the night deepens and
tempests are wild,*

*Still I can trust him: I know he will keep me;
He has redeemed me and I am his child.*

Under his wings, what a refuge in sorrow!

How the heart yearningly turns to his rest!

Often when earth has no balm for my healing,

There I find comfort, and there I am blest.

Under his wings, O what precious enjoyment!

There will I hide till life's trials are o'er;

Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me;

Resting in Jesus I am safe evermore.

Under his wings, under his wings,

Who from his love can sever?

Under his wings my soul shall abide,

Safely abide forever."

— W. O. Cushing

"The Golden Rule"

By Gus Nichols

Don't do unto others all that you could.

But be sure that you treat them as
you should.

As you would like for men to do to you.

Be sure to treat them in like manner,
too.

Would you want men to shoot you down
as a lark?

Or, want some one to stab you in the
dark?

Would you want your name slandered in
attack?

And all facts misrepresented to your
back?

Of course, you're not crazy — you are no
fool —

You want others to follow the
golden rule.

You want them always to do unto you.

As they'd wish you to do unto them,
too.

We must also deal with Jesus, you
know:

So, what kind of rule toward Him
do we show?

Do we treat Jesus as we'd be treated?

If we were He, would we like to

be defeated?

The golden rule puts us in others' place.

Makes us their problems and
burdens to face.

Makes us to say, "If we were in His
stead.

What would we want done by
people? or said?"

If I were Jesus, I'd want my word
read,

And want men to obey all that I
said.

I'd want all mankind the Scriptures to
search,

And to be faithful members of my
church.

I'd not want people for whom I had
died,

In some denominations to be tied,

Nor to remain lost in sin and in guilt,

But be faithful in the church Jesus
built.

If I had built a church and were its
head,

I'd want it organized as I had said.

Of divisions and sects I'd be afraid:

I'd want all to be one as Jesus
prayed.

We Christians treat Christ as we'd be
treated.

We therefore don't want his church
defeated.

We do unto Christ as we'd have him do.

And as He'd have us do unto him,
too.

Many practice the golden rule toward
men.

But they treat Jesus worse than
those in sin.

Let's promise Jesus that here in his
school,

We will live toward him by the
Golden Rule.

This will help us to live right toward
others:

Treat all men as if they were our
brothers.

And see that our lives are controlled by
love:

And that we are fitted for that home
above.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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"The Christian and Modest Apparel"

[Another article from the mighty pen of brother Nichols. Just when it was written, or the occasion of its writing we do not know. But the article is timely. — Editor]

GUS NICHOLS

Liberalism is creeping into the church, as I pointed out in a recent article. Men are apologizing for the truth, and not a few are camouflaging and hiding it under doubleness of speech and verbosity. Some whitewash the sins of today with ambiguity, leaving the reader to guess where the writer stands. For a writer to discuss a Bible subject in such a way as to be on both sides of an issue concerning which the Bible speaks, is nothing less than trifling with the truth. It is a form of liberalism now working its way into the church of our Lord.

Under the topic of "THE CHRISTIAN AND MODEST APPAREL", a fine gospel preacher recently said some things in his church bulletin which need some corrections, and some further "observations."

1. He says: "Periodically there is concern over the clothing styles of our changing world." It is true that we live in a "changing world," but if God has spoken on the subject of the "APPAREL" for Christians, we should make no apology for "our changing world." When God has spoken specifically concerning any subject, and to the extent that he was specific, we have an unchanging religion in a "CHANGING WORLD" (Gal. 1:6-10). We are commanded: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:1-2). And James says one is to "keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27). Paul says we are to deny "ungodliness and worldly lust," and "live soberly, and righteously and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:11-12). James also says: "Ye adulterers, and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). "Our changing world" should, therefore, have nothing to do with the Christian's apparel IN ANY MANNER THAT WOULD AFFECT CHRISTIAN MORALS.

The sinner who invented the style of the mini skirts tells us in vulgar terms that she did it to increase sex appeal and lust. We can know men and things by their fruits (Mt. 7). The fruits of the mini skirts have been adultery, rape and the general lowering of the morals of this nation. God says we are to have

"our senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:12-14). God pronounced his "woe" upon those who scramble good and evil (Isa. 5:20). Solomon, upon becoming King of Israel, prayed God for an "understanding heart" that he might "discern between good and bad" (I Kings 3:9). Becoming a real Christian and prayerful study of the Bible give one the ability to know what is good, and what is bad, even in the realm of generic authority.

2. Our beloved brother further says: "Often Christians become alarmed at what they believe to be immodesty in the dress of other Christians." Why say, "in what they BELIEVE to be immodesty"? Such watering down of the truth is a form of liberalism which is being applied to the whole revelation of God's word. Why not simply say: "We, as Christians are alarmed at the immodesty of some members of the church," and, like Paul, do not "shun to declare the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:20-27)?

3. Our young brother (beloved indeed) further says: "In this article I would like to make several observations which I believe will be helpful to both the viewed and the viewer." It is here admitted that this modern nudity will be "viewed", and I may add that it will be "viewed" by all well-informed and devout Christians in total disgust and pity; but by all weak, red-blooded men they will be "viewed" with evil thoughts, which are condemned (Col. 3:5; Mt. 9 and Mk. 2). Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it was said, by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28). If the woman so dresses as to cause the man to think evil thoughts then she is an accomplice in his sin.

Sin, sexual temptation and lust are the same now as at the creation of man, when Adam and Eve made themselves "aprons" (with which God was not well pleased), for God made them "coats of skin" (Gen. 3:7, 21). Of course, this means nothing to one who is ready to apologize for "our changing world". Our beloved brother referred to the "brief loin cloth of some African tribes" which makes us think of Adam and Eve, and their "aprons" (Gen. 3:7). But God made them "coats" (Gen. 3:21). God did not want Adam and Eve to show their legs, even to one another, in their daily "apparel", and that before there were any other people yet in the

world (Gen. 3 and 4).

David "saw a woman washing herself, and the woman was very beautiful" (II Sam. 12:2-25). David sent for her and a child was born out of wedlock, and awful sins were committed. There was tremendous power in a look, and the woman was equally guilty of all these sins.

But remember, David was not naturally a bad man, yet seeing, he then sinned.

4. Our good brother says: "Perhaps the plainest passage on this problem is I Tim. 2:8 — 'In like manner also, that women adorn themselves with modest apparel . . .'" He says: There can be no misunderstanding as to the emphasis of the preceding command. Women (and men) are not to be immodest in their dress. Now the problem is this — What constitutes immodesty? This question is not as easily dismissed as some would suppose. For example, what would be considered modest by anyone's standard in our day, would have been extremely immodest when Paul wrote his letter to Timothy. And even now, what may be modest in some parts of the world — such as the brief loin cloth of some African tribes — may be immodest in other parts of the world. So, what might be appropriate in one place might not be appropriate in another place. Honesty demands this conclusion, else we must revert to the long flowing robes and veils of Christ's day."

The issue is not what would be considered modest NOW, but what would have been understood by the language when Paul used the word? What if all were to begin to contend that total nudism is modest?

Our brother says: "What would be considered modest by anyone's standard in our day, would have been extremely immodest when Paul wrote his letter to Timothy." Well, beloved, the word "modest" should mean now to us only what it meant when addressed unto Timothy, just as "SHAMEFACEDNESS" and "SOBRIETY" should mean now what these words meant then. We have no divine right to give New Testament words a modern meaning. Words should mean to us exactly what they meant in the Bible. Anything else is liberalism. It is an effort to change the meaning of the word of God and to make it mean whatever the people want it to mean. Modest in I Tim. 2:8-9 is from the Greek word "Kosmos" and means, "in an orderly manner, decently, modestly, neatly" (Greek-English Lexicon). Again, "Well

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM THE EDITOR

Drinking

(NO. 2)



BOBBY DUNCAN

In our last issue we showed that the word WINE is used in the Bible to refer to the juice of the grape in any form. Therefore to cite passages showing the propriety of drinking wine does not prove it is right to drink alcoholic beverages. (See last week's editorial.) In connection with the idea that Christians can consume alcoholic beverages in

“moderate” amounts, we present these additional considerations.

WINE INSTEAD OF WATER

It is sometimes suggested that in Bible lands, wine was and is used for drinking instead of water. The only argument this writer has seen in support of this idea is that travellers in Bible lands today are warned of the dangers of drinking water in certain places. Having travelled in the Bible lands in 1971, this writer can testify to the truthfulness of this. However the natives themselves drink the water without any fear of harm whatsoever. For example, our guide suggested that we not drink any water in the city of Nazareth. But he explained that he himself would drink the water, as all the natives do.

The idea that wine was substituted for water is without any foundation at all in Scripture. Numerous passages from Genesis to Revelation disprove this theory. When Abraham sent away Hagar and Ishmael, it was a bottle filled with water — not wine — that he gave to them (Gen. 21:14-19). Water for drinking was one of the main concerns of the Israelites in the wilderness. And when God performed miracles to slake their thirst, they were given water — not wine — to drink (Ex. 15, 17; Num. 20). The incident of Jesus

and the woman of Samaria (Jno. 4) shows that water was used for drinking; and in the same chapter Jesus talks about “living water” — not “living wine.” And as God’s revelation to man is coming to a close, Jesus invites all who are athirst to take of the “water of life” (Rev. 22:17).

It is true that Paul told Timothy: “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities” (I Tim. 5:23). This passage is sometimes used to support the idea that wine was commonly drunk instead of water. But careful examination and reflection will suggest to the honest reader the very opposite. Please observe: (1) that Timothy must have been a total abstainer, else this apostolic admonition would have been unnecessary, (2) that he was told to use a little wine, (3) that the clause drink no longer water is elliptical, meaning that he was not to drink only water, else a little wine would not be sufficient, (4) that a little wine was prescribed for a physical ailment, and (5) that the word wine used here is not defined by the context, and could refer to the juice of the grape in any form. There is actually nothing in this passage to support the cause of the social drinker.

WATER TO WINE

It is argued by some that Jesus endorsed social drinking by turning water to wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee (Jno. 2:1-11). But be it remembered that the word wine in the Bible does not convey the same idea that it conveys in our common usage. By the example of our Lord one might prove that it is in order to drink what the Lord gave them to drink on that occasion. But no man should use this incident to justify his drinking wine unless he can prove that the wine he proposes to drink is just like that from the waterpots in Cana of Galilee. The fact that it is described as “good wine” has led some to believe it was of very high alcoholic content. Albert Barnes, however, in his commentary, gives good evidence to support the idea that the ancients judged wine to be good according to its freshness and mildness, rather than its vintage and strength. Pliny, Plutarch, and Horace are cited as examples showing that the best wine was that which was harmless; the most useful wine was that which had little strength; and that a good wine was one that was destitute of spirit. It seems highly probable, then, that the wine Jesus made on this occasion had all the characteristics of fresh grape juice, for without benefit of modern means of preservation, that would have been the rarest form of wine.

CHURCH IN INFANCY

What if it could be proved — and it cannot be — that some in the infant church drank “moderate” amounts of strong alcoholic beverages. Would this prove that such is in harmony with the will of God? If so, then it can be proved that slavery is in harmony with the will of God. The owning of slaves was practiced by some of the saints (the Book of

Philemon). The apostle Paul regulated the relationship between servant and master. Yet most Bible students today are in agreement that the owning of slaves is not in harmony with the will of God. When the revelation of God was completed, the infant church grew to maturity (I Cor. 13:9-13), and these situations were corrected.

MODERN KNOWLEDGE

If the Bible said not one word about drinking or drunkenness specifically, those who are familiar with the effects of alcohol would still know that it is not in harmony with the will of God for a Christian to drink alcoholic beverages in any amounts. Consider the following facts, and decide in your own heart if such is not the case:

Drinking, even small amounts, will hamper one’s coordination and slow down his thinking. Assume two men are equally matched in a checker game or tennis match. Give one of them just one beer, and the other will easily win. Or, what is more important, put an expert driver behind the wheel of an automobile. According to tests made in the driving laboratory of the Allstate Motor Club, this expert driver becomes quite incompetent after “moderate” drinking. Can a Christian afford to put himself in such a predicament?

“Moderate” drinking will hinder one’s judgment and tend to remove his inhibitions. In other words, the fear of sin is lessened by just one drink. Those drinking, even small amounts, are preparing themselves to yield to temptation they otherwise would easily resist. Can a Christian do this?

Drinking, even in “moderate” amounts, destroys one’s health. According to an article in Reader’s Digest (June 1970), any amount of alcohol taken into the bloodstream permanently destroys a certain number of brain cells. Can a Christian drink, knowing this?

Statistics reveal the fact that one of nine people who drink are either alcoholics or problem drinkers. With that kind of odds, can a Christian afford to take a chance? Even if he escapes becoming an alcoholic or problem drinker himself, the odds are great that his example would cause someone else to drink who might become an alcoholic. Certainly the influence of Christians should be for good, and never for evil (Matt. 5:13-16).

CONCLUSION

We believe the things presented in this article are enough to persuade any honest truth seeker that drinking alcoholic beverages in any amounts is not pleasing to God. If, on the other hand, a person is more interested in proving himself right than in learning the truth, the things presented here will not be beneficial.

We have reached a sad state of affairs in the church when those who uphold one of the greatest and ugliest evils in the history of the world are allowed to take leading parts in directing our worship of the infinitely pure and altogether just God.

Christian Masculinity

G. F. Raines

Paul says: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong” (1Cor. 16:13). Roderick C. Meredith said, “God created man in His image. He intended that men be real men. He intended that they learn to exemplify the traits of strength, dominance, decisiveness and leadership.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not the anemic, effeminate-looking person that is pictured in the minds of many people today. He was strong, courageous and determined (John 2:13-22).

God rebuked the effeminate Jews through the prophet Isaiah, saying: “As for my

people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths” (Isa. 3:12).

Goethe observed: “One cannot always be a hero, but one can always be a man.” And James A. Garfield said: “I mean to make myself a man, and if I succeed in that, I shall succeed in everything else.”

A real man is one who fulfills his whole duty. Solomon wrote: “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecc. 12:13). “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (Prov. 8:13).

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Did the 'witch of Endor' actually call up Samuel, from the dead, or did she deceive Saul by trickery?" (I Sam. 28:1-25).

Neither. Yet, Samuel undoubtedly came forth from the spirit world, and conversed with Saul on that occasion. Saul, king of Israel, out of favor with God and man, having forsaken God and having been by him forsaken, seeks help from a source he earlier would have regarded with the greatest contempt: a woman with a "a familiar spirit,"—a witch. The depths of his despair are indicated in the fact that by his own direction many who practiced the art of witchcraft and similar deceptive matters had

been put to death, because of their evil influence over the people; and now, with no one on earth to turn to, he remembers the godly Samuel whose wisdom he had disregarded in life, and longs for advice from him! And, to obtain it, he seeks assistance from a witch. What amazing irony there is in this. He who had expelled all he could find from the land, or caused them to be killed, now consults one of them for help he could get neither from God nor man. Moreover, there is also strange irony in the fact that he longs for one more chance to listen to the words of his friend and advisor of happier days. How often, in life, is this situation found. It is truly one of the tragedies of life that the advice and counsel of the good and great is valued by many often when it is no longer available.

The woman did her usual incantation, common to such seances, and Samuel appeared. That it was a real appearance and not an apparition accomplished by trickery, by the woman, is clear from the fact that she had not expected Samuel to appear, and she was therefore wholly unprepared for what occurred. *it is clear from the narrative, that*

Saul had more faith in her ability to call up Samuel than she did! Samuel actually appeared; this appearance was neither by the powers of the woman nor the agency of the devil; it was a real occurrence designed to rebuke both the woman and Saul.

Positive and irresistible proof of the genuineness of the miracle, for such it was, is to be seen in the message which Samuel delivered to Saul on the occasion: "Jehovah will deliver Israel also with thee into the hand of the Philistines; and tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me..." (I Sam. 28:19). In addition to chronicling the loss of the kingdom to Saul, Samuel made two predictions: (1) the Philistines would triumph in battle over Israel; (2) Saul and his sons would die on the morrow following this interview. These details neither the woman, neither Satan, nor his agents, could have known, and must therefore have been delivered by inspiration. Thus Samuel did actually come up before king Saul, not by witchery, but by divine interposition, and the count may therefore be regarded as an actual description of what occurred on that day.

(To be continued)

What Is Conversion?

By Ray Hawk

The word conversion is found in the New Testament under the three Greek words, *epistrepho*, translated "convert," "converted," "converteth," "turn," "turned," or "Turning"; *strepho*, meaning the same thing as *epistrepho*, and *epistrophe*, translated "conversion."

The Lord and Paul quote from Isaiah 6:9, 10 in Matt. 13:14,15; Mark 4:12; John 12:40 and Acts 28:25-27.

"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias [Isaiah], 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 hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them" [Matt. 13:14,15].

There are some who will never understand nor perceive the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the words of Isaiah, as quoted by Paul, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel...Lord who hath believed our report?" (Rom. 10:16). Since they will not obey, they cannot be converted!

In Matt. 18:3 Jesus says: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." In the parallel passage of Mark 10:15 we read: "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The Bible has always been its own best interpreter. One passage interprets and defines another passage. Such is the case here. In Matt. 18:1 the disciples had asked the question: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus is showing them they must turn their attitude from that of pride to humility, as a little child. In the context of Mark 9:33-37 he shows that one becomes great by serving others.

In Luke 22:32 Jesus said he was praying for Peter that his faith would not fail, "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Why? He recognized he had done what he said he would not do and what the Lord said he would do. But he repented and turned from his cowardly state. After this, Peter strengthened his brethren and became one of the leading

apostles.

In Acts 3:19 we find; "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*" Acts 3:19 is parallel with Acts 2:38. God often puts parallels to confound and destroy false doctrine. Some will accept one passage because they think it says what they believe, but reject another because they dislike the way it is stated. What many fail to realize is that God has said the same thing in these parallel passages, just using different phrases.

Acts 2:38—*Repent...be baptized...for [eis] remission of sins.*

Acts 3:19—*Repent...be converted...that [eis] sins may be blotted out.*

One may see that in Act 3:19 the word converted is used, whereas in Acts 2:38 the word is baptized is employed. In baptism the old man of sin is destroyed and one is raised a new creature or man (Rom. 6:3-7; Col. 3:1,9,10). One turns from the old life to the new life in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17).

We have seen that the words of *epistrepho* and *strepho* are translated "Convert" or "turn". The Greek word *epistrophe* is translated "conversion" in Acts 15:3 and refers to Paul's ministry among the Gentiles

and their turning from idols to serve God.

WHAT IS CONVERSION?

Conversion is turning from sin to Jesus Christ. We can see from such passages as Acts 3:19; 26:20; and 11:21 what conversion is *not!* Conversion is not repentance, although repentance plays a part in one's being converted or turned to God. Notice Acts 3:19 and 26:20. "*Repent AND be converted,*" "*repent AND turn to God.*" In addition to repenting, one must be converted or turn to God. In Acts 11:21 we find believing is not conversion, although one must believe in order to turn to God. "*And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, AND turned unto the Lord.*" Notice, they believed *and* in addition to believing turned to the Lord. One may believe in the Lord, as did the chief rulers, but not be converted (John 12:42, 43). One may repent of his sins, as did Judas, but not be converted (Matt. 27:3, 4).

The alien sinner is not converted until he believes (Mark 16:16), repents (Acts 2:28), confesses the name of Christ, (Rom. 10:9, 10), and is converted/baptized that, his sins may be blotted out/remitted (Acts 3:19). This is New Testament conversion (Acts 2:36-41, 47).

Salty Speech

WAYNE JACKSON

We usually think of "salty speech" as something to be avoided, yet, Paul exhorts, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man (Col. 4:6). We are to let no "corrupt communication proceed out of" our mouths (Eph. 4:25). Jesus warns us that by our words we may be either justified or condemned (Mat. 12:37).

Often, Christians who would not think of swearing by the profane use of such words as God, Lord, damn, hell, etc., will use euphemistic forms of these words to accentuate their sentences. More often than not, this is not deliberate, but merely an unawareness of the significance of the terms we use. Do you know what you are saying when you use the following expressions? Gee (Jesus); Gosh (God); Golly (God); By Jove (by

Jehovah); Darn (damn); Heck (hell); Gad (God); Egad (ah God).

The Christian should never use these expressions to re-enforce his speech. We cringe when we hear the children of God use such expressions as, "Lordy mercy," "Well, Jes-uss Christ," "Gee whiz," "Oh heck," etc. This is totally unbecoming to those who fear God and desire to keep his commandments; it is a direct violation of Jas. 5:12.

Admittedly, the tongue is a very hard member of the body to control (Jas. 3:8). But the man who professes to be religious and does not attempt to bridle his tongue, is practicing a vain religion (Jas. 1:26). Let us all endeavor to watch our language more closely. May our speech be such as edifies and causes no dishonor to God nor stumbling to man.

"The Christian and Modest Apparel"

ordered; well arranged; showing ourselves orderly . . . becoming, regular, modest, sober, temperate, moderate, respectable, courteous, dignity, modesty, moderation, decorum, grace, comeliness" (GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON, Pickering, Page 767).

5. Our dear brother says, "I am not promoting the wearing of shorter skirts." No, but he is in a way apologizing for the skirts AS THEY ARE. Again he says: "I do contend that the fore-going observation should cause us to think before delivering a hasty and perhaps uncharitable judgment." But brother, it is not "hasty" nor "uncharitable" to condemn, with Paul, immodesty in apparel for women or men. Again he says: "You see, it takes more than a change in style to create immodesty." No representative gospel preacher ever contended that a mere "change in style" is immodesty. But any sort of change in style WHICH LEAVES ONE'S BODY IMPROPERLY CLOTHED IN PUBLIC IS A SIN!

6. Our dear brother thinks we should go to those who improperly dress and try to correct them personally and privately, if we believe them to be in sin, and not publicly. He tried to prove this by Matt. 18:15-18, which has reference to a personal offense. Improper

dress is no more a PERSONAL OFFENSE than is any other public sin. Furthermore, those who sin are to be reproved, rebuked, and that before all that others may fear (I Tim. 5:20; II Tim. 4:1-3). Also there is such a thing as giving offense unto 'the church' (I Cor. 10:32). Really, all immodesty should be an offense to the church, for the whole church should be against such.

I want to say if we have to take in all that different people indorse as being modesty, then we must consult the leaders of the nudist camp. I heard one of them say on TV that it is a sin to wear clothes, for such trying to hide the body, is hypocrisy. He said to be honest is to get rid of all clothing and go like the lower animals. But he should know that God gave such animals hair for a covering, or clothing. God did not mean for man to be unclothed, nor improperly attired (Gen. 3:7, 21).

God was so careful that the legs, and body be not visible in worship that he would not allow the priests to go upon the altar by steps, that their "nakedness be not discovered thereon" (Ex. 20:26). This was when they wore proper clothing, too.

Some time ago we read of a ship's being hi-jacked on the sea. Women were in the swimming pool in their modern bathing suits.

But as soon as the report reached them that wicked men had taken the ship over, those women rushed to their rooms and put on their most "modest" clothing. Why? They knew they would be much safer from sexual attack if they were properly clothed. And they were not molested. Hundreds of thousands of women have been attacked, or molested, or lead into adultery simply because they were not modestly dressed. In order to be safe from such evils, and restrained from sin, women should be careful not to expose their bodies to the gaze of men and boys. Vashti, the queen of the king of the Medes and Persians refused to come before men who demanded "that she show her beauty. Yes, she lost her Queenship, but God has preserved her good name to this day (Esther 1).

Our brother finally warned our ladies not to be too daring, "TOO SOON," and to exercise common sense and not go overboard either way. Measured by the Bible standard, many of the ladies HAVE ALREADY GONE TOO FAR in the wrong direction to please the Lord. And some of them should make a confession of their sin to the church and seek God's forgiveness of their sins.

Can You Imagine?

W. T. HAMILTON

TIME: 61 A.D. PLACE: Rome. OCCASION: Demas had just returned from Jerusalem where he has attended a meeting in which many notable brethren in the church had spoken.

DEMAS. "Timothy, I wish you could have been there. It was like fresh breezes blowing. Every speaker presented his views and it was different from what we usually hear. Those fellows were not tradition-bound! And by hearing them, we can understand each other better, and love each other more."

TIMOTHY. "You mean the heretics spoke?"

DEMAS. "Oh, come off it, Tim. They have

as much right to be heard as we do. You should have heard Hymenaeus and Philetus discuss the resurrection. You know, they have something there. I never before thought about the resurrection being in the past."

TIMOTHY. "But Paul says they are dangerous teachers."

DEMAS. "But, Timothy, if we don't hear them, how will we know they are wrong? Anyway, if you had been there you would have received some new insights about these questions. Paul is getting cynical in his old age. And you should have heard Alexander. He isn't even a professional preacher. I didn't know a coppersmith could make such a

speech. He has the kindest disposition I've ever seen! He loves everybody."

TIMOTHY. "Isn't he the fellow who gave Paul so much trouble?"

DEMAS. "Yeah, they had some differences, but if you heard him you would know there is another side to that."

TIMOTHY. "Demas, I think we ought to mark those brethren and avoid them."

DEMAS. "Tim, I'm surprised at you. If you do that you will never save them. Anyway, don't you believe in academic freedom?"

CONCLUSION: Two years later. 2 Timothy 4:10 — "Demas hath forsaken me."

With Friend Like These

John Waddey

"With friends like these, who needs enemies?" When a nation is blessed with a succession leadership such as some we have had in recent years, we need not worry about Russia, China or any international conspiracy destroying us. Such leaders are killings us day by day, rotting the moral heart out of our nation. With fornication, drunkenness, lying dishonesty, misuse of public money, bribery, and who knows what other vices currently practiced by key national leaders, it is only a matter of time before the great house of government gives way to the termites' damage and collapses in a dusty heap.

These ancient evils have proven their destructive power. In 750 B. C., Hosea the Prophet said to the decadent nation of northern Israel: "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding" (4:11). He continues: "...for the men themselves go apart with harlots and...with prostitutes: and the people that doth not understand SHALL BE OVERTHROWN" (4:14). "...her RULERS DEARLY LOVE SHAME" (4:18).

To the ruling king he warned: "O house of

the king, for UNTO YOU PERTAINETH THE JUDGMENT..." (5:1). He continues by noting that "They commit falsehood, and the thief entereth in, and the troop of robbers ravageth without and they consider not in their hearts that I (God) remember all their wickedness; now have their own doings beset them about..." (7:1-2).

The end result of their course is seen in the following: "They sow to the wind, and they

"Some Christians are puffed up about their own humility."

"There are no traffic jams on the strait and narrow way."

"Great men never feel great; small men never feel small."

"Don't live it up if you can't live it down."

"You're never going to get anywhere if you think you're already there."

shall reap the whirlwind..." (8:7). Israel is swallowed up, now are they among the nations as a vessel wherein none delighteth. (All national respect was gone. J. W.) For they are gone up to Assyria..." into captivity (8:8-9).

May God deliver us from morally corrupt government officials and raise up a new generation of morally upright men to lead our nation, while there is yet time.

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WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"Speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

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

VOLUME 12

FRIDAY JUNE 25, 1976

NUMBER 28

"Who Concerning The Truth Have Erred"

II TIM. 2:18 reads:
"Who concerning the
truth have erred,
saying that the resur-
rection is past al-
ready; and overthrow
the faith of some."

"The truth" means
that which is true in
any matter under
consideration. When
"the truth" is spoken
on some subject,
there is no room for
disputation.

It is no mark of
conceit to declare:
"This is the truth of
the question." While
it is true that we must constantly search the
Scriptures, there is no indication that "the
truth" is so mystical and elusive that we must
never say of any subject: "I have the truth on
that." Where, in the Bible is the suggestion
that we must be ambiguous about the facts
that affect forever the destiny of soul and
body?

THE HEART OF CONVICTION IS
KNOWLEDGE. While one may be
sensationalized or emotionalized into some
action, he is short of genuine conviction if his
action is not based on definite knowledge.
Therefore, one should approach the Bible with
the belief that he can "know" in the fullest
sense the facts that he learns. One must
approach teaching and preaching with the
attitude that he can impart to his listeners
"the truth." Our preaching must contain "the
truth," and we must impress our auditors in
unequivocal terms that it is the truth.

"THE TRUTH" IS THE TRUTH ON ANY
MATTER, THOUGH IT MAY APPEAR TO
US INCONSEQUENTIAL. We may categorize
facts into practical and theoretical, or weighty
and light, or "worth arguing about" and
"hardly worth mention." However, the Bible
knows no distinction, and when it declares the
truth on a subject there is no license granted
to disdain this truth, though we may think it
irrelevant.

Notice the reading in II Tim. 2:18. The
apostle speaks boldly of "the truth." He does
not say, "I think this is the truth," or "It is
the truth as I see it." Had Paul felt this way
about truth, he could not have plainly declared
that some "have erred." He certainly would



Kenneth Randolph

not have named any of those who erred, as he
did in vs. 17: "of whom is Hymenaeus and
Philetus." One who wavers about a positive
knowledge of the truth will say that it is
unChristian to say one has erred. He will
suggest that we are all weak and that
everyone is in error somewhere. But Paul did
not deal in generalities, nor did he imply that
he or anyone else was perfect when he made
his accusation. Paul was dealing with a
specific truth. We need to deal with ourselves
and every other person in specific truths.
Man's sinfulness does not affect God's
truthfulness. A truth is no less a truth though
all men fall short of it.

Paul said that some have erred about the
truth of the resurrection. Is it not strange that
the apostle would deal so strongly about a
subject that many would call strictly
"theoretical" or "philosophical"? The
resurrection of all mankind is an event that
will take place at the end of time. Why should
Paul be so concerned about what is so far
distant, seemingly, and does not appear
relevant in our world? Would it not be better
for Paul to be writing about the sad plight of
his Roman world rather than exposing some of
his brethren who have differed with him on

the resurrection? After all, will what you
believe about it affect it? So some would
reason today.

TRUTH IS NEVER TO BE CLASSED AS
IRRELEVANT OR IMPRACTICAL. In the first
place, who are we to judge what is important
or unimportant about truths that originate in
the divine counsels of the Godhead? Secondly,
our attitude toward the truth about such a
subject as the resurrection reveals our basic
attitude toward all truth. Thirdly, there is
always the great danger of "overthrowing the
faith of some" (vs. 18). It was only a logical
step for some to take to reason that if there
was to be no general resurrection then there is
equal reason to believe that Christ was not
raised (I Cor. 15:12-20). Any truth of God that
we disdain may prove to be a stumblingblock
to someone who hears us.

Let us take heart to study the so-called
"irrelevant" and "other-worldly" truths of
the resurrection, the coming of Christ, the
judgment, Heaven and Hell. Let us preach the
truth on every subject. The preacher can make
no greater appeal than to the truth of the
Bible; his devotion to truth is the measure of
his devotion to God.

Anthropologists Refute Mormon Claims

EDITED BY WINDELL H. GANN

The Book of Mormon claims to be a book
inspired by God — a book God wants us to
add to the Bible. We propose to prove that the
Book of Mormon is a fraud.

The most basic historical claim contained in
the Book of Mormon is the assertion that
modern American Indians can trace their
origin to the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and
Manasseh. All true Hebrew people were, and
are, members of the Caucasoid race.
Therefore, the Book of Mormon claims that
Indians are Caucasoids. We shall prove that
this claim is false.

Anthropology is the study of racial
differences among human beings. Each race
of man has some very unique characteristics
which can be seen in the formation of the
skeleton, the texture and color of the skin, and
the growth and character of hair. Anthro-
pologists have examined Indians and
compared them to the basic races of man.
What is their conclusion? Indians are not

Caucasoids, they are Mongoloids! This verdict
applies to Indians of both North and South
America.

Mormons claim that all modern Indians are
the descendants of an evil tribe of Indians.
They insist that the Book of Mormon itself
explains why these Indians do not resemble
Caucasoids. In 600 B. C. God tried to get the
evil tribe of Indians to repent but they
refused. God then punished them for their
unyielding evil by changing the color of their
skin and the form of their bodies (I Nephi
12:23 and 2 Nephi 5:21-22). So an act of God
has made these Jews appear to be
Mongoloids.

There are two flaws in this Mormon
doctrine. First, the same explanation in the
Book of Mormon goes on to promise the
Indians that if they will repent their bodies
will be changed back to their original
Caucasoid form (2 Nephi 30:5, 6). Mormons

(Continued On Page 4)

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM

THE EDITOR

What Is Worship?

Across the top of page is the expression "Christian Worship Is a Life Style." Then a list of passages follows. The passages deal with Christian living, and point out that when we do the things God would have us do we glorify Him. The statement is then made: "The above list is in addition to what we normally consider as the 'five acts of worship.'"



BOBBY DUNCAN

This mimeographed sheet was given me by an area preacher who contends that a Christian worships God twenty-four hours a day, regardless of what he may be doing. He is on record as saying that there is no different between fishing and eating the Lord's supper, except that they are done for different purposes.

One of the dangers of this position is in the fact that its logical conclusion would be that there is no prescribed formula for worshipping God. Already this brother seeks to defend the idea that a congregation could leave off its singing, giving, and Bible study on the Lord's day and still worship scripturally.

Is it true that whatever we do as Christians is worship? The idea is nowhere taught in the Bible. It is certainly true that no segment of our lives should exhibit any attitude or disposition of irreverence or disrespect. But the word *worship* is not used in the Bible to refer to an attitude or a disposition, but rather to specific acts of homage paid. It goes without saying that in order for our worship to be acceptable it must be performed with the proper attitude. But the attitude itself is not worship.

It is a significant fact that in our brother's list of passages which "prove" that "Christian worship is a life style" the word *worship* does not appear. This reminds us of

our denominational friends who quote passage after passage to prove that baptism is not essential, but none of the passages they quote ever mention baptism. The idea advocated is that anything that glorifies the Lord or that can be said to be service to God must be worship. But this is an assumption with no foundation.

When Pharaoh resisted the efforts of Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage it brought glory to God, but we would not say that Pharaoh worshiped God. Three times in the book of Jeremiah (25:9; 27:6; 43:10), Nebuchadnezzar is called God's servant because he would perform the will of God in taking the Jews into captivity. He was a wicked man with no idea of serving the Lord. Would we say that he was a worshiper of God because some of the things he did accomplished the purpose of God?

It is contended that in Romans 12:1 the Greek word which is translated *service* means worship. And since our bodies are presented to God as a living sacrifice, it must follow that we are always worshipping. It is certainly true that our bodies, once presented, always belong to God. But it is the act of presenting our bodies — not the fact that they continue to belong to God — that is called "your reasonable service." The Greek verb (translated *present*) occurs here in its aorist infinitive form. This indicates a one time act as opposed to continuing action. While we continue to belong to God, it is only the specific act of presenting our bodies to Him that is figuratively referred to by the word that is sometimes translated *worship*.

The word rendered *service* in this passage is a noun form of the Greek verb *latreuo* which occurs some twenty-six times in the New Testament. In defining this word, Thayer says: "In the N. T. to render religious service or homage, to worship. . ." There is not an occurrence of the word in the New Testament that will not fit this definition. While it is usually translated *serve* or *service*, the service under consideration involves religious homage, and not just ordinary service. It is a significant fact also that our brother's "proof" passages contain the words *serve*, *service*, and *servant* again and again. But, with the exception of Romans 12:1 — which we have already discussed—these words are not translated from *latreuo*. They are rather from *douluo*, which means "to be a slave, serve, do service..." (Thayer). This word may be used of service of an ordinary nature, and not just of religious service. If the idea or worship is involved in all of these passages, why was not the word *latreuo* used instead of *douluo*?

But the Greek word which is most commonly translated *worship* is neither of the aforementioned. It is rather *proskuneo*, and occurs more than fifty times in the New Testament. It is nearly always translated with the word *worship*, and it refers to the doing of homage—never merely to an attitude.

A second preacher, no longer in our area, has made a sermon outline entitled "Christian Worship—Its Essence." In it he bemoans the fact that "we have equated what goes on in the auditorium from 10:30 to 11:30 on Sunday morning with worship." He then proceeds to try to prove that worship is an attitude, and the things we do "in the auditorium from 10:30 to 11:30 on Sunday" are not the only acts of worship. He raises the question: "Where does the Bible teach that there are only five avenues of worship?" John 4:24 is cited to prove that worship is an attitude—not an act: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Does this passage say that worship is an attitude? No! It points up the necessity of worshipping *with* the proper attitude. It does not say that worship is an attitude. *Worship* refers to the act of doing homage to God. *In*

spirit describes the attitude which must characterize the one doing the worshipping. This passage shows clearly that worship is not an attitude, but rather an act which must be performed with the right attitude to be accepted of God.

A second argument is based on the statement of Paul in Col. 3:5 that covetousness is idolatry. Since covetousness is an *attitude*, and since idolatry is the *worship* of false gods, it therefore follows that *worship* is an *attitude*! Now when a man makes an argument like this to sustain a certain position he is showing the weakness of the position. By the same kind of reasoning we could prove that murder is an attitude. I Jno. 3:15 says: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." Since hatred is an attitude, and since the person who hates his brother is a murderer, it follows that *murder* is an *attitude*.

We agree, of course, that worship must be performed in the proper spirit for it to be acceptable. But in order to see that it is the performance of acts—not the attitude itself—that is called worship, observe the statement of our Lord in Matt. 15:8,9: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Here is worship, but without the right attitude, or even the right doctrine.

Worship is not an attitude. It is the performing of acts of homage. In the case of our worshipping God, there are five acts of worship prescribed in the New Testament. And in response to the question: "Where does the Bible teach that there are only five avenues of worship," we ask, where does it mention a sixth?

The question is asked in the outline: "Is this not something we have believed only because we were so taught?" If such were the case we should be anxious to give it up. But we have been shown absolutely no reason to believe that what we have been taught regarding this matter is not the doctrine of the Bible. But there are some who seem to be determined to forsake any doctrine that is more than thirty years old, despite the fact that it is clearly taught in the Bible. We have just as much right to ask these who are bent on doing things differently: "Is this not something you want to reject only because it was being taught a long time before you appeared on the scene?"

Public Discussion Evolution vs Creation

On October 5 and 7 there will be a debate on evolution at the Concord Pavilion, 2000 Kirker Pass Road, Concord, California. The participants will be John M. Banks, M. A., gospel preacher and professor of anthropology and ancient history, and Lee Armstrong, M.A., professor of anatomy and physiology. The propositions for discussion will be as follows:

The scientific evidence of all that is, is better explained as to origins and developments by evolution than by special creation.

Affirm: Lee Armstrong Deny: John M. Banks.

The scientific evidence of all that is, is better explained as to origin and development by special creation than by evolution. Affirm: John M. Banks - Deny: Lee Armstrong.

The debate is under the direction of the church of Christ at Pleasant Hill, California. Larry Chouinard is the evangelist.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is the meaning of the Lord's statement, 'I came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law?' [Matt. 5:16, 17].

The Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5, 6 and 7, was delivered by our Lord during his famed Galilean ministry. It was designed to set forth, in simple fashion, the basic principles of the kingdom, and to announce the relationship of its subjects to the Jewish law, the prophets and the rabbinical traditions. In it such themes as the purpose and duration of the law, murder, adultery, divorce, swearing, revenge, right attitude toward enemies, and hypocrisy are, in detail, dealt with. Both by positive statement, and by analogy, it is made clear in the sermon that the law which issued from Sinai, was of temporary duration, and that it was to give place to the law of Christ, the first characteristics of which were then being announced.

Lest this teaching should be construed as being in opposition to the law of Moses, the

Lord made clear that his mission into the world was not to *destroy* the law, but to *fulfil* it. To this end he declared, "Think not that I came not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:17-19). To "destroy" the law would be to abrogate it before it had accomplished its purpose; to "fulfil" it was to enable it to achieve the designs for which it was intended. "Today's English Version," the so-called "Good News For Modern Man," makes our Lord affirm, in its rendering, what he actually denied! This contemptible thing (equally objectionable in many other instances in the New Testament), makes him to say: "Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to give them real meaning. Remember this! As long as heaven and earth last, the least point or the smallest detail of the law will not be done away with—not until the end of all things." The "end of all things," is, of course, the termination of the age and the return of Christ. Thus this dangerous document (more than 30,000,000 copies are in circulation, thousands of them in the hands of unsuspecting members of the church), declares that the law, given to the

Israelites at Sinai, remains, and will continue until Christ comes, as the rule of Christian conduct!

This "rendering" does not translate the passage; it seeks to explain it in the light of denominational views of its originator. Jesus did not say that he came to perpetuate the law; he affirmed, instead, his intent to "fulfil" it. To *fulfil* is literally to *fill full*, that is, to discharge its obligation and accomplish its purpose. To make very clear that the law would not be abrogated until it had accomplished the purpose for which it was given, the Lord said, "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." The "jot" (Greek Iota), is the Hebrew Jod, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet; the "tittle," is a horn-like mark or projection used by the scribes to distinguish letters of the Hebrew alphabet very similar to each other. Figuratively used here, of course, our Lord is simply saying that the smallest, the most minute portions of the law would remain fully in force until the time of fulfillment, and accomplishment, of its original design. This design was to bring the Jews of Christ (Gal. 3:24). In view of the fact that no portion of it was to pass until its purpose was achieved, it would follow that when this occurred, *the whole of it passed*. This, the apostle clearly affirms (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7). We are today answerable to God under the law of "the spirit of life" set out in the New Testament — not that given only to the Israelites at Sinai (Deut. 5:2).

(To be continued)

Not For Sale

It shall be my stated purpose to pen four articles on the above quotation. It is entirely fitting and proper that I should do this and do it in WORDS OF TRUTH.

The idea for this series of lessons came from the founder and former editor of WORDS OF TRUTH — brother Gus Nichols. The last time I visited with the noble Nichols was some two or three weeks before he was stricken with the first

of several strokes that ultimately led to his passing. The time of my visit was in late July of 1975. I was in a nearby meeting and drove down one day to spend some time with him. He told me that day of a sermon he had recently preached. In that sermon he had made the statement that if he were offered the whole world in exchange for his relationship with Christ, he would turn it down. A young listener in his audience could scarcely fathom this type of devotion to the Christian religion. Later he talked with brother Nichols and desired to know how he could make such a statement. How did this veteran of the Christian faith know for a certainty that he would surely turn down the whole world for the sake of Christ and the church? In answer brother Nichols told him, "Because my soul is NOT FOR SALE." He reasoned like this, and many of you who read this can hear him saying such: "Even if I had the whole world, I could only use a small portion of it, and that only for a very short time and then would leave it all. I could only eat one meal at the time. I could only drive one car at the time. I



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

could only live in one house at the same time. I could only wear one suit of clothing at the time." It was deeply inspirational on my part to observe a devout Christian like brother Nichols whose soul was not for sale. Most of his eventful and colorful life was spent as a Christian and as a preacher of the sweet story of redeeming love. His preaching was deeply Biblical throughout the years. He believed what he preached and preached what he believed. Seldom does a day go by that I do not use something that I learned at the feet of this great and godly man. Thank God for a man whose soul was not for sale as he lived in our mixed-up world.

SOULS FOR SALE

There are multitudes of people today who do not feel as brother Nichols felt. They have already sold out to Satan. They have sold out for an earthly mess of pottage just as the fleshly-minded Esau did in the ancient past. The Bible says, "And Jacob sold pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day: and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright" (Gen. 25:29-34). The soul of Esau was for sale. He had no deep interest in the Abrahamic promise. Pottage meant more to him than a promise did. The pottage could be eaten NOW; the promise was still out there in the future.

There are those today who have sold out to the Evil One just as Ahab did in ancient Israelite history. In I Kings 21:25-26 the Bible says with pointed plainness, "But there was

none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." Ahab sold out to Satan and Jezebel helped write out the financial contract in the devilish deal. People by the masses in human history have sold their souls to the Devil for a little popularity, a little fleshly indulgence, a little more power, a little more prestige, etc. The Bible is filled with people whose souls were for sale and they found a ready and eager purchaser in the person of the Devil.

But the main gist of this study is not to be on those who sold out but upon those who did NOT sell out to Satan — whose souls were NOT FOR SALE regardless of what price was offered in the temptation to trade.

JOSEPH — "NOT FOR SALE"

The moral purity of the youthful Joseph was not for sale in Potiphar's house in Egypt. His older brethren had gravely mistreated him in Genesis 37 as they sold him into slavery. Under similar conditions some would have given up and decided to do whatever came naturally. But not Joseph! His morals were high in the land of Canaan. They would be just as high in the foreign land of Egypt. Changing locations and crossing national boundaries did not change his brand of moral purity. In Genesis 39 we read that Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's. In this home he behaved himself wisely and soon was given a great deal of responsibility. His new master recognized in him a man of unusual ability and outstanding dependability. Then came the hour of temptation. In fact it was an extended period of temptations of a fleshly nature. "And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And

(Continued On Page 4)

Anthropologists Refute Mormon Claims

(Continued From Page 1)

have converted many Indians to their religion, but none of those Indians have become Caucasoids! This means the whole explanation is a fraud.

Secondly, paleoanthropologists have found bones of American Indians that predate the time-frame of the Book of Mormon by a thousand years and these bones prove that American Indians have been Mongoloids for longer than the Book of Mormon claims.

A final Mormon defense would be based upon a multi-racial origin theory for the modern Indians. This theory would contend that after 421 A. D. when only the evil Indians were living in America, some Asian Mongoloids sailed to America and settled here. They intermarried with these evil Indians. In the thousand years that followed the racial genes of the Mongoloids slowly replaced the Caucasoid genes of the Indians.

thus, the Indians today resemble the Mongoloids.

For this theory to be proven, however, we would need two types of evidence. First we would need evidence for a multi-racial Indian heritage. Secondly, we would need evidence to establish the fact that at one time Indians were Caucasoids before the onset of racial mixing. Scientists have never found any evidence to support the idea of a multi-racial origin for Indians. All evidence from ancient bones proves that early Indians were Mongoloids, not Caucasoids. There is no evidence for the Mormon multi-racial theory.

According to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., the physical type of the American Indian is Mongoloid, being most closely related to that of the peoples of eastern, central and northeastern Asia. It is believed that the ancestors of the present

Indians came into the New World over a land bridge known to have once existed in the Bering Strait region near Alaska.

Present evidence seems to indicate that the first Caucasoids to reach America from the east were the Norsemen who arrived in the northeastern part of North America around 1000 A. D. There is nothing to show that they reached Mexico or Central America.

Mormon defenses have failed. Scientific evidence absolutely destroys the historical validity of the Book of Mormon. All the facts contradict the most basic historical claim of the Book of Mormon; therefore, the Book of Mormon is a fraud.

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Not For Sale

(Continued From Page 3)

it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house that I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out" (Gen. 39:6-12).

The brief sequel of the narrative was that she lied against Joseph to her husband and accused the innocent Hebrew lad of doing the very thing that she had desired. It led to Joseph's prison experience, but in later years he was fully vindicated when he became Governor of Egypt. It has long been my deep-seated conviction that the door to the Egyptian Governorship was kept open that day in Potiphar's house because Joseph's moral integrity was not for sale. He would not sell his moral birthright for a moment of earthly pleasure, and that is all fornication has ever been — a brief moment of sinful indulgence followed by a lifetime of consequences. Neither all the world nor even a small portion of it was sufficient to prompt Joseph to sell his soul. He left behind within Sacred Scripture a beautiful narrative and an inspirational example of one who was not for sale. One of the main things wrong with the "new morality" or "situation ethics" is that it offers for sale that which no man has an approved right from God to sell in the first place. It can never be right to sell that upon which God has placed the "Not for Sale" sign.

DANIEL AND THE THREE HEBREW CHILDREN — "NOT FOR SALE"

Several centuries later four other Hebrew youths let it be known once and for all that they were likewise not for sale, regardless of what the costs or sacrifices might be. The four were Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Like Joseph they were literally removed from the beloved land of Canaan while but youths. They, too, were placed in a captivity type of environment, just as Joseph

had been more than a thousand years before. Of the resolute Daniel, Inspiration affirms in Daniel 1:8, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself." The remainder of the chapter tells how Daniel and his three Hebrew friends remained true and loyal to their Mosaic rearing.

Daniel three relates how that the Babylonian monarch sought to pressure and even compel the Hebrew children — Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego — to worship the golden idol he had made. They steadfastly and courageously refused to bow before an idol. It meant the burning fiery

furnace for each of them, but they were not about to sell out to an idol. As it turned out, Jehovah God protected them during their burning furnace experience.

Much pressure was brought against the devout Daniel in Daniel 6 when he was quite aged. His enemies sought to get him in trouble with the king if he continued to pray three times per day. But he prayed the same number of times as he did before the devilish decree was signed which forbade such prayers to Jehovah God. It cost him the lion's den, but God protected him just as he earlier had done with the three courageous Hebrew children. The souls of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were not for sale.

The noble Nichols breathed the same spirit as did they. Such men today are few and far between.

The Important Role of Trouble in Life

G. F. RAINES

Trouble is as inevitably a part of human life as eating, sleeping and breathing. "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job. 5:6, 7).

Although, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1), "Trouble is the structural steel that goes into the building of character" (Douglas Meador, Matador, Texas TRIBUNE).

The apostle Paul says:

"And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh steadfastness; and steadfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope" (Rom. 5:3, 4).

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this

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

"For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17).

Anna R. Cole has very beautifully said:

*"The rose is but more perfect
For the thorn upon its stem;
The sky seems but the bluer
For the cloud along its rim;
The rainbow all the fairer
Because it follows rain;
And life is all the richer
With the passing of the pain."*

Some Of This And That

By GUS NICHOLS

It would likely prove our world to be very fickle and unstable, if we could know just how many people have already broken and given up all their "NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS." Yet, there are many who will continue to try to reach the high standard at which they have aimed and purposed

for themselves this year. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself." (Dan 1:8.) Every one must do right "As he purposeth in his heart" (2nd Cor. 9:7.) No one accidentally, and without purpose, changes his whole life for the better, and especially to strictly obey the Lord in all matters.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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Nuggets In John 1:1

The Gospel of John is a truly rich depository of truth, and nowhere is this more evident than in the first sentence of that marvelous narrative. Moreover, a correct view of John's initial statement thoroughly refutes several gross errors.

"IN THE BEGINNING . . ."

Reminiscent of Genesis 1:1, the apostle sweeps the mind back to the very beginning of time. The phrase asserts that time, along with the material universe, had a beginning. This, of course, is squarely opposed to the atheistic notion that matter is eternal. Both scripture and scientific law testify that our universe is growing old and wearing out. (Cf. Heb. 1:10-12). If eternal, it would already have reached a state of deadness. The universe had a beginning; and if a beginning, then a Beginner! All three personalities within the divine Godhead cooperated in that beginning of creation (Gen. 1:1, 2; Psa. 104:30; Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16).

"... WAS THE WORD. . ." The term "Word" here denotes a person as evidenced by the use of the personal pronoun "him" in the subsequent statements. The Word was he who "became flesh, and dwelt among" men, i.e., Jesus, the Son of God (Jn. 1:14). That Christ is called the Word is a dramatic emphasis of the fact that God has *communicated* with man. The philosophy of deism asserts that though there is a super-human force behind the universe, it has no contact with man. Not so! God has spoken through his Son (Heb. 1:1, 2). God, through the person of the incarnate Word, has instructed both by sentence and sample what he wants us to be.

It is further interesting to note that the apostle says "In the beginning the Word *was* . . ." Significantly, he employs the imperfect tense form of the verb *eimi*, meaning "to be, exist." The imperfect tense in Greek stresses the concept of continuity in the past, the sense being here, "The Word *was always existing*." Though the universe had its origin, the divine



WAYNE JACKSON

Word was eternally existing. As a man Jesus "became (emphasizing point of commencement) flesh" (vs. 14), but as the pre-incarnate Word, he always was (Cf. Mic. 5:2). This, of course, thoroughly refutes the "Jehovah's Witness" contention that Christ was originally created by Jehovah.

"THE WORD WAS WITH GOD. . ." John's use of the Greek preposition *pros* (with) is very important. The word literally means "toward" or "face to face." And it implies two things here. First, it shows a distinction between the person called God (1a) and the person termed the Word. The United Pentecostal sect is renewed for the doctrine that there is but one personality in the Godhead. But it is absurd to speak of someone being "with" himself! In the second place, the preposition here affirms that the Word is toward, facing, i.e., on a plane of equality with God. John thus acknowledges the full deity of our Lord! This is vividly expressed again in the following phrase.

"THE WORD WAS GOD. . ." The "Jehovah's Witnesses" are notorious for their mistranslation of the phrase in their ridiculous rendition: "the Word was a god." The assertion is made that since "God" in the first part of the passage is preceded by the article (i.e., "The God"), but wanting in the latter part of the verse, this suggests that Christ is not deity in the full sense; he is a little god! This is truly a deceitful and damning

mutilation of the sacred Scriptures. The absence of the article before "God" in 1b is perfectly understandable. First, if the sentence read, "the Word was the God and the Word was the God," it would have identified Christ with the Father and would have made perfect nonsense. Secondly, the absence of the article before "God" in 1b serves to show that it is a part of the predicate: "the Word *was God*." And thirdly, the omission of the article reveals that the character or quality of the noun is here being stressed. A very legitimate translation here would be: "the Word was Deity." The full divine nature of Christ is unquestionably affirmed. If this verse does not teach that Christ shares the nature of deity equally with the first person of the Godhead; if it asserts he is "a god" with a nature distinct from Jehovah's, then the conclusion of polytheism (multiple gods) is inescapable!

The Watchtower Witnesses are hopelessly inconsistent when they claim that Jesus is "a god" who was created by Jehovah as the first of his creation. The very passage they constantly appeal to as authority for their name, Isaiah 43:10, plainly says: "I (Jehovah) am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."

John 1:1 is thrilling and lofty in its inspired affirmations and it is devastating in its rebuttal of unbelief and religious error.

Christianity: A Reasonable Pursuit

JERRI MANASCO

Man is a reasoning creature. If he were not, he would be no more than a beast of the field. Man was made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26); that is, man received what no other part of creation received. Man was given a mind, intelligence with which to reason. Having been made with such a characteristic, man has been supplied with those things necessary to lead him to a way of joy and peace. God appealed to the Jews with an invitation to "Come now, and let us REASON together" (Isa. 1:18). Paul REASONED with Felix (Acts 24:25). These are clear examples of God's appeal to man through the faculty of

REASON.

Christianity DEMANDS a reasonable approach. The Great Commission implies this. Jesus did not say, "Go into all the world and tell scary and sensational stories." Jesus said, "Go into all the world, and PREACH THE GOSPEL to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15, 16). In these verses is set forth the principle that there is to be the presenting of a sensible message, and that some response will be forthcoming, depending upon the choice of

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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"Bearing Witness"



BOBBY DUNCAN

Those in the denominational world, and some in the church, like to talk about "bearing witness" for Christ. If members of the church would read their Bible to see how the word *witness* is used therein, chances are they would not use the word to refer to their own efforts at teaching the lost about the Lord.

In Acts 1:8 Jesus said: "But ye shall receive power after

that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The Lord was here addressing the apostles—those who had seen Him following His resurrection from the dead. It was to the fact that He had come forth from the dead that they were to bear witness. "Wherefore of these men which have accompanied 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" (Acts 1:21, 22). In order to be a witness of His resurrection, it was necessary for one to have seen Him after He was raised from the dead. Is it in this sense that some today claim to bear witness for Christ?

In Acts 2:32 Peter said: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." Why were the apostles witnesses of the fact that God had raised Jesus from the dead? Was it because someone had told them about his being raised? Would this have made them witnesses? Certainly not! They were witnesses because they had seen the Lord alive after He had been put to death. In Acts 3:15 Peter referred to the "Prince of life, whom God hath

raised from the dead." He then added: "whereof we are witnesses." They were witnesses because they could give first hand testimony to the fact that Jesus had come forth from the dead. The man does not live who can do so today.

In Acts 10:39 the apostle Peter declared: "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree." Why did Peter say that he and others were witnesses of the things Jesus did in Jerusalem and the land of the Jews? Was it because someone had told them about the activities of Jesus? No, indeed! It was because they had seen these activities for themselves.

Now, why would brethren who claim to call Bible things by Bible names ever refer to their activities as "witnessing" or "bearing witness" for Christ? Is it because the denominational folks use the expression, and we just like the sound of it?

Says one: "Anyone can tell what the Lord has done for him. And when he does so, he is bearing witness." But this is not the sense in which the Bible uses the word. Furthermore, unless one had some information other than that which is in the Bible regarding the salvation of the soul, then his testimony would be based solely on what the writers of the Bible have said. This means he would not be witness after all. He would simply be reporting what the witnesses had said.

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that which is in the Bible regarding the salvation of the soul, then his testimony would be based solely on what the writers of the Bible have said. This means he would not be a witness after all. He would simply be reporting what the witnesses had said.

In the denominational world people think they have some direct contact with Christ or the Holy Spirit. They testify concerning their feelings or their experiences. Because of this, they think of themselves as witnesses. They tell of their own experiences, feelings, and urgings.

It is sometimes argued that when one tells what the Bible says, he is bearing witness, because he has seen it with his own eyes. But be it remembered that such an one is merely reporting what the inspired witnesses said. And while he may be a witness to the fact that the Bible says a certain thing, this is neither a scriptural use of the word *witness*, nor is this the sense in which the denominational people use the word. Such a use of the word, while technically permissible, is bound to be misunderstood. Let us illustrate:

The word *baptize* is from a Greek word which sometimes means to be overwhelmed with." One should be overwhelmed with the word of God. But the word of God was given us by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:10, 13; Eph. 3:2-4). Would it, therefore, be permissible to say that one who is overwhelmed by the word of God has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost?

Maybe we shouldn't have used the foregoing illustration. The next thing we know, some of our brethren will be "bearing witness" as to their "receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost."

God and Man

G. F. RAINES

The Holy Bible says: "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:3, 4).

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

1. Man says: "He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized." The word of God says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

2. Man says: "Water has nothing to do with entrance into the kingdom of God." The word of God says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

3. Man says: "Repent for the remission of sins and be baptized because of the remission of sins." The word of God says: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

4. Man says: "Arise, and be baptized, but your sins have already been washed away." The word of God says: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

5. Man says: "Know ye not that so many of us were baptized were already in Jesus Christ by faith only." The word of God says: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3)?

6. Man says: "Baptism doth not now save us." The word of God says: "Baptism doth also now save us" (I Pet. 3:21).

7. Man says: "... wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort" (Methodist Discipline, Art. 9). The word of God says: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24).

8. Man says: "It is impossible to depart from God (fall from grace)." The word of God says: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb. 3:12).

9. Man says: "All sincere worship is acceptable to God." The word of God says: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

10. Man says: "One church is as good as another. Join the church of your choice." The word of God says: "... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, before whom we must stand in the day of Judgment (II Cor. 5:10), unequivocally declares that "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14).

"Great men never feel great; small men never feel small."

"Don't live it up if you can't live it down."

"You're never going to get anywhere if you think you're already there."

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Did David introduce instrumental music into Old Testament worship with divine approval?"

I do not believe that he did. The strains of mechanical music were never heard in the worship of God in Israel for more than *four hundred years* after the law was given on Sinai (Ex. 20:1-17); and the law forbade additions to it as clearly and emphatically as the New Testament prohibits supplements to it. "And now O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you. *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you*" (Deut. 4:1, 2). When, at length, David did introduce instrumental music into the worship of Jehovah, he took full credit for its initial use, thus evidencing no previous participation with such by saying, "...and four thousand praised Jehovah with the instruments which I made, said David, to raise therewith" (I Chron. 23:5). David's origination of this practice is alluded to in a familiar refrain throughout much of the Old Testament.

"David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music...." (I Chron. 15:16). These "instruments of music" were those "which David the king had made to praise the Lord" (II Chron. 7:6). Ezra, the prophet, tells us that "when the builders laid the foundation of" the rebuilt temple, "they set...the Levites...with cymbals to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David, king of Israel" (Ezra 3:10). Nehemiah says it was done "with singing, cymbals, psalteries, and with harps" which he identified as "the musical instruments of David" (Neh. 12:27, 36). Amos pronounced a solemn *woe* on those "that chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves instruments of music like David" (Amos 6:5).

But, did not Hezekiah assert that these instruments were introduced according to the commandment of the Lord" (II Chron. 29:25)? The American Standard translation of this passage reads: "And he set the Levites in the house of Jehovah with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer; for the commandment was of Jehovah by his prophets." We have earlier observed that, again and again, the cymbals, psalteries and harps were said to have been introduced by the commandment of David; and, such is affirmed here. Moreover, it should be observed that two actions are contemplated for which there were two different commandments: (1) the commandment of Jehovah for the installation of the Levites; (2) the commandment of David involving the use of the cymbals, psalteries and musical instruments. Neither here, nor elsewhere, in the sacred writings, is God said to have commanded such activity in his worship. That this exergesis is sound and is based on the Hebrew text, will be seen from the following comment of Adam Clarke the most eminent Hebraist in England in his day: "It was by the hand or commandment of the Lord and his prophets that the Levites should

praise the Lord; for so the Hebrew text may be understood; and it was by the order of David that so many instruments of music should be introduced into the Divine service," (Commentary of II Chronicles, page 690).

The ark of the covenant was moved to the accompaniment of instrumental music (I Chron. 13:7-10; 15:16, 28; 16:1-6). Burnt offerings were also a part of the sacred proceedings, seven bullocks and seven rams being offered (I Chron. 15:26). Moreover, dancing was prominent in the services, David himself participating: "And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out the window, and saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart" (I Chron. 15:29). There is the same justification for dancing in worship as there is for instrumental music in this instance. By what rule of reason or revelation is one justified in citing this in support of the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship while demurring at dancing therein? The truth is, it sanctions neither, being wholly irrelevant to what is acceptable to God in worship in the church today.

It is argued, "The Psalms and, particularly, the one hundred fiftieth, command the use of the psaltery and the harp, the timbrel and the dance, stringed instruments and the pipe, loud and high sounding cymbals." Indeed so; the point in issue is not, Were mechanical instruments of music used in the Old testament period? Of course we have cited abundant evidence. The question is, Were such a part of God's original plan? and, did David introduce them by divine sanction? It will not be questioned that (1) divorce and remarriage were suffered (tolerated) for numerous causes and on various grounds though, "from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 9:3-9; Gen. 1:27); and (2) Israel was allowed to have a king like "the nations

around them," contrary to express will of God, who thereupon *named the kings*, though such was not in harmony with his original plan and purpose (Hosea 13:11). Similarly, for a time, he tolerated its use as he also suffered the practice of plural marriage, concubinage, and other worldly and fleshly practices; but, when the church was established also such were purposely omitted and they are wholly conspicuous by their absence in the church of the New Testament.

But, were it possible to show that mechanical instruments of music had divine sanction in Old Testament worship, it would by no means follow that such is acceptable to the Lord today. If their inclusion by David establishes such sanction (and we have shown such does not follow), their *exclusion* by the Lord and his holy apostles in the New Testament (which makes no mention of them) would evidence the fact that they have been disallowed in Christian worship today. As Clarke correctly points out, "Were it even evident, which it is not, either from this or any other place in the sacred writings, that instruments of music were prescribed by Divine authority *under the law*, could this be adduced with any semblance of reason, that they ought to be used in *Christian* worship? No: the whole spirit, soul, and genius of the Christian religion are against this: and those who know the church of God best, and what constitutes its genuine spiritual state, know that these things have been introduced as a substitute for the life and power of religion! and that where they prevail most, there is the least of the power of Christianity. Away with such portentous baubles from the worship of that infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship him in spirit and in truth, for to such worship are those instruments friendly," (Commentary on II Chronicles, pages 690, 691).

Church Etiquette

ROBERT DAVIDSON

Sometimes the best of intentions can direct us to do things that are not appreciated by others. This is how we feel about the subject for discussion here. It may be your intentions to help, yet often you are not helping, but hindering.

The situation develops sometimes like this: the child in from of you or beside you starts to become restless. You notice the parent having problems keeping him quiet, so you start playing with him to help keep him quiet, so you start playing with him to help keep him quiet. But are you helping or hindering? Could it be that the parent has been trying to train the child to sit and be quiet, and you are just undoing everything she has done? Often this makes the child more difficult to control than ever, because now he knows how to get attention from others. Furthermore, it is distracting to others when another person begins giving his attention to the baby near him. And if it is you, playing with the baby, how can you be concentrating on the worship?

This is not to say that no one except the parent should ever hold a child or attempt to quiet him. But, be very sure you are helping the parent. Get permission before ever offering you help. A parent with several small children may appreciate help, but the responsibility for their conduct and training in worship is still that of the parents, and they may not want help from others.

We all know how cute little children can be in church, and it is tempting sometimes to play with them and encourage their little "antics". The time, however, for this sort of play is AFTER worship, when probably some help in control might be very much appreciated.

Keep in mind that your purpose for assembly is worship and study. Allowing yourself to be side tracked unnecessarily is cheating yourself and God both. Ignoring the playful child may be difficult at first, but soon he will get the point that we have come to worship, not play, and will sit quietly.

Some Of This And That

By GUS NICHOLS

Instead of accepting the word of God in the Bible, which says, "God created the heaven and the earth," (Gen. 1:1), some modernists are saying "The earth rose up out of nothing." This is not science, but foolish and speculative theory. A great big "nothing" which is "NO THING" - which has

no existence, and which could not do anything at all - could not so function and perform, as to design and create the universe and our earth. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Psa. 14:1.)

Christianity: A Reasonable Pursuit

(Continued From Page 1)

the hearer. Thus, there are certain facts to be received and understood. The facts are that people must obey the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:1-6; I Pet. 1:22, 23), and that a failure to do so places a person face to face with certain dreadful consequences (Matt. 10:28; II Thess. 1:7-9). Man's reason accepts or rejects the truth.

It is my personal conviction that some harm has been done by the strictly emotional appeal in preaching. We agree that one's emotions may enter into his response to the gospel. But if we persuade someone to "respond" because he was afraid not to, have we really converted that person? Have we really made him aware of what he was doing when he responded? These questions ought to be considered by anyone who seeks to save souls, including those of us who preach the gospel. Matthew's record of the Great Commission has the following order: teach, baptize, teach (Matt. 28:19, 20). Teaching is an appeal to reason, the imprinting of truths upon and within the heart (Heb. 8:10; Rom. 6:17). Only a person who is intelligently aware of the meaning of his response to the gospel can be said to be obeying the gospel.

The content of sermons recorded in the Book of Acts suggests the reasonable approach made by those men. Peter's Pentecost Sermon was one consisting of quotes from the Old Testament with Peter's inspired comments explaining or expounding those passages (Acts 2). Paul's sermon in Antioch (Acts 13), like Peter's in Jerusalem, was a discourse made up of ordered, reasoned points. Even when preaching to heathen people who knew not the scriptures, Paul approached his messages in a reasonable fashion (Read Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31). It is true that Felix trembled at Paul's preaching (Acts 24:25). But it is to be observed that he trembled, not because of the way Paul preached, but because of WHAT PAUL SAID in his reasoning!

The New Testament epistles are written in order to provide Christians with reasons why they are Christians. John wrote to provide assurance of the Christian's faith (I Jn. 5:13). Peter wrote in order to stamp certain truths and principles upon the minds of Christians (II Pet. 3:1; I Pet. 1:13). Paul admonished Timothy to take heed to the doctrine preached (I Tim. 4:16). These and other verses point us to the importance of making sure that we are

presenting the proper message lest we abuse or pervert God's plan.

Surely someone will object to all that we have proposed in this article with Paul's words: "Knowing therefore the TERROR of the Lord, we persuade men" (II Cor. 5:11). Yes, we must persuade men. But does this mean to replace carefully prepared and scripture-packed sermons with scary stories that have the tendency to scare young children to "come up and be baptized," when they are unaware of what they are doing? Does it mean we should scare people into responding simply because we want to be able to report so many baptisms, and a few restorations? Brethren, how can we successfully fight the errors of Pentecostalism that have crept in to the Lord's church IF WE EMPLOY THE SAME TACTICS THAT ARE USED BY THAT MOVEMENT?? The church of our Lord needs a richer diet of "thus saith the Lord" than it has received in some quarters in recent years. Let us get back to the Bible in our preaching and teaching and quit trying to find sensational ways to compete with denominationalism. The simple gospel is still the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16, 17)!

Love and Hate

The success of the Christian life is determined not only by what one *loves* but also by what one *hates*. It is only a partial view of life or of the human personality to suggest that love is the sole standard by which we may judge actions and govern conduct. God is love, but God is not *only* love. A cursory reading of the Scriptures reveals that hate is a part of the Divine personality.



Kenneth Randolph

The voices of our day would lull us into the view that love toward all things and all schemes is the only right way. This, however, is not even a correct view of love. Love is not fully love unless there is the opposing passion toward what is opposed to the object of love.

The real love toward a child is characterized by an equally strong hatred toward what would harm or be detrimental to the child. Efforts toward "peaceful coexistence" with the rattlesnake or mad-dog in the presence of the child is to raise serious doubts about any real love for the child.

"Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity" was spoken of Christ in Heb. 1:9. It was a characteristic of His Godhood, and one of the reasons given as to why he was "anointed with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Christ has an undying love for all men that caused him to die, and he has an equally strong hatred for what is harmful to all men, that is, iniquity. God hates a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness, and the sower of discord (Prov. 6:1-19). God hates idolatry (Jer. 44:4), religious form without feeling (Amos 5:21), material prosperity that causes trust in riches and unconcern for the needy (Amos

6:8). God hates any false doctrine that would lead his people astray (Rev. 2:6, 15).

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13). David said, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?" In a day when men are openly departing and denouncing the faith, we must ask ourselves: "What do we hate?" Do we hate false doctrine and love truth enough to stand by the Word? Do we love unity and hate division enough to plead for the only real basis for unity, the Word? One good sign found in the church at Ephesus was that they hated a false doctrine which God hated (Rev. 2:6). Hate commended? Yes, if directed at the things that oppose right! The sickly sentimental cry of "love" in the very midst of false teaching is an abomination to God! We should all ask ourselves the question that was asked Jehosphaphat: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" (II Chron. 19:2).

Doctrine of Christ

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

The doctrine (gospel) of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16).

Paul said to Timothy:

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

Someone has well said: "A religion without doctrine, which many desire, is about as helpless as a body without a skeleton to support it."

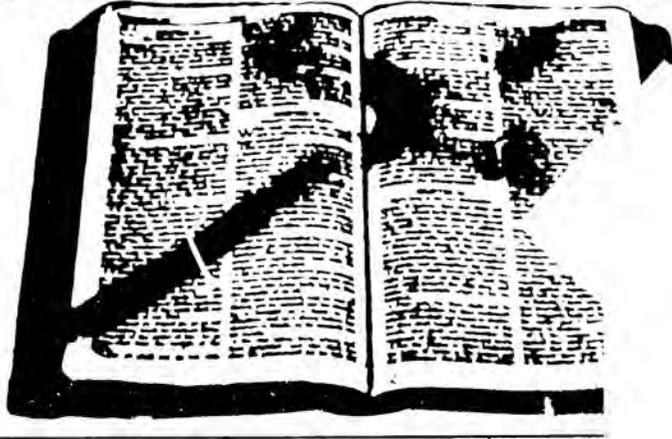
John says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



words of truth"
25
by Jesus Christ"
7

VOLUME 12

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Biblical Geneologies And Human History

Are the Biblical geneologies of any value in determining the length of human history upon the earth? Some contend they are not. It is alleged that there is no necessary conflict between the Old Testament view of man's origin and the modern anthropological theory that human history reaches back several millions of years. One author states: "Any attempt to ascribe a



WAYNE JACKSON

specific or even a general age to either man or the Earth from a Biblical standpoint is a grievous error."¹ (Emphasis mine, W.J.) Again: "The time of man's beginning is not even hinted at in the Bible. There is no possible way of determining when Adam was created."² The same writer then discusses the so-called "geologic time-table" (without any hint that he disagrees with its time scale) which, according to many modern geologists, chronicles the history of earth over a span of some 4.5 to 5 billions of years. He concludes: "If geologists are correct in their dating methods, man is a very recent new-comer to this planet." It might be well to observe that for years anthropologists have asserted that man is approximately 1 million years old; evolutionary scientists, however, are now claiming that man (*homo sapiens*) reaches back two to three millions of years.

The Bible unquestionably teaches that Adam was "the first man" (I Cor. 15:45). Now in Luke 3:23-38, the inspired historian traces the human lineage of Jesus Christ (who lived less than 2,000 years ago) all of the way back to Adam. If it is true that the Bible gives no hint as to when Adam was created, and if it is possible to harmonize the Biblical record with the assertions of anthropology, then it is clear that several million years must be squeezed into the geneological record of Luke's gospel account.

GAPS IN GENELOGIES

Every diligent Bible student is well aware of the fact that the Biblical geneologies do not always necessary reflect strict father-son relationships. There is no question that these lineage records do contain some gaps; but

here is the question: are these gaps sufficiently vast to accommodate millions of years?! Note the following illustrative examples.

(1) In Ezra 7:3, 4, from Zerariah to Amariah involves only four names, while in I Chronicles 6:6-10, from Zerariah to Amariah there is a total of ten names. There is thus a gap of six names in Ezra's list. This gap of a half-dozen generations obviously involves but a few years relatively speaking: certainly not hundreds of thousands of years.

(2) A brief geneology from Levi to Moses mentions only four names (Ex. 6:16-20), while a lineage of the same general time span, from Joseph to Joshua (I Chron. 7:20-27) involves eleven names. There could thus be some seven generations deleted between Kohath and Amram in Exodus, but this gap omits only about three hundred years; not thousands.³

(3) In I Chronicles 26:24, Shebuel, "a ruler over the treasures" during the administration of David, is said to be the "son of Gershom, the son of Moses." The term "son", in one instance here, is used in the sense of *descendant*, for about four hundred years separate Gershom from David's time. Again, though, this has no *geological* time significance whatever.

THE GENELOGIES OF CHRIST

There are two geneologies of Christ in the New Testament, Matthew 1:2-16 and Luke 3:23-38. Matthew's account, designed for the Jews, was intended to establish Christ as a descendant of Abraham and David (1:1), and thus the illustrious *seed* promised of those Old Testament worthies. Matthew's geneology is artistically arranged into three sets of fourteen generations (perhaps to facilitate memorization), hence between Joram and Uzziah (1:8) he omits three names. There may also be other names omitted since Matthew lists fourteen generations between David and the Babylonian Captivity, and fourteen between the Captivity and the birth of Jesus; while in Luke's list these same two spans chronicle twenty or twenty-one generations respectively. Luke's record, written especially for Gentiles to emphasize the Lord's solidarity with mankind, is clearly more exhaustive.

Even though, therefore, there are plainly some gaps in the geneological lists, they are of necessity comparatively minor. *And this can be factually demonstrated!* According to Luke's record, there are fifty-five generations from Abraham to Joseph (the "supposed" father of Jesus).⁴ Now archaeologists have

established that the era between Abraham and Jesus covers, at the most, some two millennia.⁵ Simple mathematics will quickly reveal that fifty-five generations spanning two thousand years allows for an average of only about forty years per generation (including any gaps). There simply cannot, therefore, be any *huge* gaps from Abraham to Jesus.

Furthermore, Luke's list mentions only twenty names from Abraham back to Adam (a number of whom were renowned for their longevity). The historian even includes Cainan between Arphaxad and Shelah (3:35, 36) — a fact not mentioned in the geneologies of the Hebrew OT (though included in the Septuagint). If we grant the possibility of some omissions in this record, why should we assume that a drastically *different type* of geneology is employed from Adam to Abraham, than from Abraham to Jesus? In other words, does it seem like a reasonable approach to the Scriptures to recognize that the slightly more than fifty generations from Abraham to Christ bridge only about two thousand years; and yet, attempt to press near 2,000,000 years into the approximately twenty generations preceding Abraham? If this is the case, then the geneology from Abraham back to Adam is the epitome of irrelevancy, and a rational attempt to interpret the Scriptures is hopeless!

While allowing some elasticity within the Biblical lineages, J. Barton Payne declares that drastic links leave "the Bible's detailed lists of figures as generally pointless and also posits an unusually high proportion of omitted links."⁶ In discussing the purpose of the Bible's geneological records, Dr. John Klotz cautions against trying to construct a strict chronological calendar to determine the *exact* time of creation. He nevertheless concedes: "God apparently did want to show us that the earth is not billions of years old."⁷

In conclusion, let it be emphasized that there is but one motive underlying the attempt to stretch the geneologies back for literally hundreds of thousands of years. And that is to accommodate the geologic-anthropologic time scale so essential for the evolutionary hypothesis. *Time* is desperately needed if evolution occurred; miraculous creation does not need it, and the Bible does not indicate it. Let us, therefore, not be stampeded into accepting compromising and ridiculous views of the Bible simply to facilitate the baseless theories of those who are dead set on being

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Ambassadors



BOBBY DUNCAN

In an earlier article we noted that some refer to themselves as witnesses for Christ, and that this is a misuse of the word WITNESS. The apostles were witnesses, because they had seen the Lord after he was raised from the dead. See our editorial for July 2, 1976.

In the same vein, the word AMBASSADORS is sometimes used erroneously to refer to Christians of modern times. But such a use of the word is not in keeping with the scriptures, nor is it in keeping with the true meaning of the word. Such usage has been borrowed by our brethren from those in the denominational world who have no conception of the peculiar nature of the work of the apostles of our Lord.

Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary defines the word AMBASSADOR as follows: "the highest diplomatic representative that one sovereign power or state sends officially to another." It is in exactly this sense that the apostle Paul uses the word in the following statement: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:20). Lenski, commenting on this passage says: "An ambassador speaks wholly for his ruler, he is his ruler's mouthpiece. He never utters his own thoughts, offers promises, demands, but only those of his ruler. An ambassador's person lends no weight to what he says. They to whom he is sent see and hear in him only the king who sent him."

This is exactly the position of the apostles. Jesus said to them: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall

loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). Whenever the apostles spoke, what they said was not merely the expression of their own thoughts. "If any think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37).

The apostles were well equipped to speak in behalf of Heaven's government. Jesus had promised them: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jno. 16:13). These passages show that an apostle was "the highest diplomatic representative" from Jesus Christ to the people of this earth. The apostles were ambassadors. They could speak officially for heaven. No man living today can claim that right or that office.

An ambassador has credentials to identify him as an ambassador. These credentials the

apostles had. When Paul's apostleship was questioned in Corinth, he pointed to his credentials: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (II Cor. 12:12). Whenever one today claims to be an ambassador, what would he say if asked about his credentials? In 1971 this writer visited Russia. Suppose he had gone to the Prime Minister of Russia and started trying to negotiate terms of a nuclear disarmament, or some other matter of great weight between our governments. Such would have been absolute folly, for he had absolutely no power to speak for our government, and absolutely no credentials.

How can one claim he is an ambassador for Christ, when he has absolutely no right to speak officially for Christ, and possesses absolutely no credentials? We have the right merely to report to a lost and dying world the terms of peace which have been clearly set forth by Heaven's ambassadors, and recorded for all ages to come.

Not For Sale

(NO. 2)

These lessons, four in number, are taken from a statement that brother Gus Nichols made just a few months before his death in November of 1975. He remarked in a sermon that if he were offered the whole world to give up Christ and the church he would not be interested in the proposition at all. When asked later by a young person how he could be so sure what his reaction



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

would be toward such he, announced with a tremendous degree of faith and confidence, "Because my soul is NOT FOR SALE." Those of us who knew him so well and loved him so deeply know that this was the sentiment by which he lived. He was pre-eminently a man of God, and men of God are not for sale to the devil and his disciples. The Bible has much to say in regard to men who were not for sale.

MICAIAH — "NOT FOR SALE"

There was a time in the life of the wicked King Ahab when he was making plans to go into battle with the Syrians over a contested city. When he asked the time serving prophets of his own court if the Lord would prosper him in the forthcoming battle, they answered that he would. They knew which side of their bread was buttered! Ahab had invited the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, to accompany him into this battle with the fierce forces from Syria, a country that lay to their north and somewhat to the east. The king of Judah was not satisfied with what the multitude of the prophets declared relative to the forthcoming battle. Perhaps he sensed something was wrong with their report that was so suspiciously uniform.

The Bible says in I Kings 22:7, "And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him?" Indeed there was and his name was Micaiah. Ahab originally had no desire to call upon this prophet for his prophetic service and he tells why in the following words: "There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so" (I Kings 22:8). At the insistence of Jehoshaphat this very

prophet was summoned. In the summoning process there was much pressure applied to make Micaiah hue the line that had been drawn by the false prophets of the king's court. In fact the Bible tells us in I Kings 22:13: "And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth; let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good." The loyal prophet's courageous reply is given in the very next verse: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." And that, reader friend, is exactly what he did! He told the king what would happen if he went into this battle to gain Ramoth-gilead from the mighty hands of the Syrians. Such led to his being persecuted. But Micaiah was not a time server. He was not one who spoke out of both sides of his mouth. He was not a double-minded man. His soul was not for sale. He could not go along with the crowd of false prophets regardless of the amount of pressure they applied. Reader friend, are you reading reverently? In the day of judgment would you rather be Ahab and his false prophets of Micaiah? Those who sell out to the Devil evidently do not have their eyes on the day of final reckoning, but that day is easy for the wicked to put afar the day when their deeds will be tried and their destiny announced.

JOB — "NOT FOR SALE"

Job is another outstanding man in the Old Testament whose soul was not for sale. When his portrait is first painted within Holy Writ he is a man of sizeable wealth, towering influence and unquestioned integrity. In chapters one and two of the book that bears Job's name, Satan is absolutely convinced that Job served God just for the material benefits he received from Heaven's bounty. We read in Job 1:6-12; "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Explain Ex. 11:1, 2. How do you account for the fact that God instructed Israel 'to borrow' jewels from the Egyptians which they never intended to return? Was this not a deceptive and fraudulent transaction?"

Infidels have often alleged that it was. They have charged that it was "a combination of fraud, deception and theft," and Robert Ingersoll, who acquired widespread notoriety with his lectures, "Mistakes of Moses," often recited the incident and asked, "Honest, now, do you call that a square transaction?"

The passage alluded to reads, in the King James' Translation, "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold." This rendering does not properly reflect the true meaning of the statement. The American Standard Version's rendering more correctly translates it, as follows: "Speak now in the ears of the people, and let them ask every man of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold." The Hebrew word *shaal* does not mean to borrow, in the current meaning of the term, but to ask, request, require. The construction of the Hebrew sentence implies that the Egyptians allowed the people of Israel to ask them for these gifts, i.e., they accepted the request, and granted it. For many centuries it has been the custom, in the East, of soliciting gifts on the eve of departure; and this practice is often mentioned in the Old Testament (Gen. 12:16; 33:10, 11; Judges 3:15-18, etc). It is very obvious, from the context, that Israel made this request of the Egyptians without any intention of returning the valuables, and that the Egyptians understood this. The Jewish historian Josephus understood this to be the nature of the transaction and commented on it, as follows: "They also honored the Hebrews with gifts; some in order to secure their speedy departure, and others on account of neighborly intimacy with them" (Ant. 2:14, 16).

Through the intervention of Jehovah, the Egyptians were made to regard Israel with favor, and to let them have what they asked. Rawlinson, famed for his scholarly studies in ancient lore, gave this excellent analysis of this incident: "Divine justice sees in this a rightful nemesis. Oppressed, wronged, down-trodden, miserably paid for their hard labor during centuries, the Israelites were to obtain at the last something like a compensation for their ill-usage; the riches of Africa were to be showered upon them. Egypt, 'glad for the departing,' was to build them a bridge of gold to expedite their flight, and to despoil herself in order to enrich her slaves, of whom she was, under the circumstances, delighted to be rid."

An induction of passages containing the Hebrew word *shaal*, translated "borrow," in the KJV, but, more correctly, "ask," in the ASV, and most other translations, reflects the true significance of the term: "Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," a descriptive of the extent of Christ's reign (Psalm 2:8). "And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast

not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (I Kings 3:10-12). Quite obviously, in neither passage would the verb "borrow" adequately translate the term rendered *asked*, and such is not its significance in Ex. 11:1, 2.

Josephus relates an interesting incident touching this remarkable occurrence in the experiences of the Israelites in Egypt. He says that when Alexander the Great was in control of the city of Jerusalem, the Egyptians presented a "claim" against the Jews for those "borrowed" jewels; and the Jews offered to settle the matter with them if they would agree to an offset for the years of enforced and unpaid labor!

(To Be Continued)

What Does Jehovah Require Of Thee?

BERT THOMPSON

Inscribed over the door of the main reading room of the Alcove of Religion, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., is the question which serves as the title of this article. The question, as many Bible students will recognize, comes from the book of Micah, chapter 6, verse 8. And as a part of that same inscription in the Library of Congress is Micah's answer to his own question. The whole verse reads like this: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Somewhat ironic, is it not, that the prophet Micah should ask such a question, seeing that the name Micah means "who is like God?" Micah, the man of God who was a native of Judah and who first prophesied the destruction of Judah (3:12), had every right to ask these people, "What doth the Lord require of thee?" By his own admission, he was full of the power of the Holy Spirit of God (3:8). He was a country boy from Moresheth-Gath (25 miles southwest of Jerusalem) whom God raised up out of a corrupt land to try to persuade the people to return to their first love — the Great I AM! He is often called the "prophet of the poor" because he himself was poor, and identified with and had compassion on the poor of Judah. Yet as a prophet of the Almighty God he rained the Lord's words of condemnation down on the idle rich, the corrupt politicians, and the false prophets of Judah. He denounced idolatry, immorality, and ingrained wickedness among God's people. And he carried God's message to Judah that there was still time, hope for the future, if the people would turn from their sin and corruption unto repentance and salvation. So well did Micah carry his message to Judah, and so firm was he in delivering God's offer of hope, that he even went so far as to give Judah a glimpse of the Kingdom to come, the church (4:1-3). Micah even foretold the city in which the Messiah would be born (5:2).

Those of us who live today would do well to remember that the Old Testament is given "for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). The Old Law is our schoolmaster, or tutor (Galatians 3:24). Micah's question, "What doth Jehovah require of thee?" is still very relevant today. So is Micah's answer. While we as Christians no longer must offer burnt offerings or observe the Sabbath, God does, nevertheless, require something of us. Christ made the supreme sacrifice for us (Romans 5:6-7, Philippians 2:5-8). Now it is our turn to make a sacrifice for Him (Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:8).

Micah put it this way: "do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with thy God." That covers the commandments of God in their entirety, does it not? Even today as we live under the New Testament, that sums up man's response to God's free gift of salvation.

1. DO JUSTLY. Paul told the Romans (2:13) that not hearers of the law are just before God, but doers of the law are justified. James reiterated Paul's admonition when he said that "by works a man is justified and not only by faith" (James 2:24). Is this not what Micah said — "DO justly."? Perhaps this is exactly what Paul had in mind in Philippians 2:12 when he told those people to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Micah, Paul, James, and all the other inspired men of God all agree — do justly! This is what God requires of us.

2. LOVE KINDNESS. Micah felt that this was important enough to be considered as a requirement of God. So did Paul. In fact, Paul wrote a whole chapter on it (I Corinthians 13). And Paul even told the Galatian Christians there was "no law against" the fruits of the Spirit, two of which were love and kindness. Jesus Himself instructed us not only to love God (Matthew 22:37) and our neighbor (Matthew 22:38) but also to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). Peter instructed the Christians of his day (and therefore us as well) to add to their virtues, among others, kindness and love (II Peter 1:5-7). Micah's answer of what God requires of us is still in force today. The Lord requires us to love kindness.

3. WALK HUMBLY WITH THY GOD. Jesus stated a religious truth that the greatest in the kingdom of heaven would be the one who was humble (Matthew 23:12). God, it is written, resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6; I Peter 5:5). Perhaps Peter re-stated what Micah meant when Peter said (I Peter 5:6): "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." To be humble is one thing, but to walk with God may be another. For, you see, walking with God requires immense faith. "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7). And this walk with God is a "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). But if we do walk with God, then "we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). Paul even commands us to "walk as children of light . . ." (Ephesians 5:8). Since "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5), and since we are to walk as children of light, then it follows naturally that we are to walk as children of God. The Lord requires us to walk humbly with Him.

Micah, those many years ago, carried an important message to the people of Judah from the mouth of God. Micah asked those sinful people, "What doth Jehovah require of thee?" As if the people could not (or would not!) answer, Micah answered for them. His answer was both fitting, and timely. It was then. It is today. The Lord requires of us that we "do justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with thy God." What could be more straight-forward — or more important? And what could promise a greater reward?

Not For Sale

(Continued from page 2)

substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord."

In the remainder of chapter one Satan did touch Job and touch him with merciless severity. Just as quickly as the morning mist disappears in the presence of the Mighty Monarch of the sky just that quickly were Job's possessions and family tragically removed. Job 1 opens with Job as a full man; the chapter closes with his being an empty man — void of children and his many possessions. Yet he was not going to sell out the cause of Jehovah God. The chapter ends upon this triumphant note of faithful confidence: "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, 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. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job. 1:20-22).

Satan was thwarted in his efforts to move Job from his loyalty to Jehovah. But the Diabolical Deluder had yet another device that he thought surely would snare the just Job into his Satanic service. The Bible says in Job 2:3-6: "And the Lord said unto Satan, 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? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."

Satan did touch the person of Job and he touched him with ascending severity. He smote him with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Even his wife encouraged him to sell out to the Evil One. She said in Job 2:9, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." His instant reply is set forth in the very next verse: "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

Throughout his afflictions we see a man, a real man, whose soul was NOT FOR SALE. The afflicted citizens of Uz said in Job 13:15: "Thou he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him." Before the book closes Job has lost not only his family, his wife's loyalty, his possessions, but also his friends and his influence among his peers. Yet he never sold out to the Diabolical Deluder. He maintained his patience in such marvelous fashion that he is by far the best example in the Old Testament of patience. The inspired James recalled his patient disposition and said this in James 5:10-11: "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

The book of Job ends with his full vindication and the double restoration of all he formerly possessed. The Bible says in Job 42:10-17: "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had

before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third,

Seven Days With W. A. Black

JAMES PILGRIM

W. A. Black, a truly Christian gentleman and long-time defender of the faith, was with the Centre Church of Christ in a series of gospel meetings recently. There were many noteworthy events during the seven days.

Brother Black, now 72 years old, still has a strong voice. His health is remarkable. He is as keen and alert as ever.

It was refreshing to sit at his feet and hear the pure, simple, sound gospel of Christ preached. Brother Black's sermons are still filled with the word of God. He evidently feels that Paul, Peter, James and other inspired men know more about what God requires of us than do the modern day scholars. The people loved that kind of preaching, and many came several nights.

The respect people have for brother Black was heart-warming. This area continues to feel his good influence. Brethren from over fifty miles came. Several people came from over twenty-five miles more than once. There were non-members from the community present for each service, and several most nights. Some came more than one night.

Our young people of their own will sat on the front rows each night. I had forgotten to tell them that there would be a generation gap and a communication problem. They did not discover what I failed to tell them. Rather,

Manifesting The Truth

G. F. RAINES

The apostle Paul says: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:1, 2). There are two ways in which we must manifest the truth: (1) by living in harmony therewith and (2) by teaching it to others.

It is not enough to know and teach the truth. A person who does not live the truth is not fit to teach it. Ezra, the godly scribe, "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10). Jesus, our perfect example, "began both to do and to teach" (Acts 1:1). Paul says: "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preacheest a man should not steal, dost thou steal" (Rom. 2:21)? Jesus says: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

Job is one of the eloquent examples of the Scriptures that some people are just FOR FOR SALE. Truth, to them, is too precious to sell. Honesty, to them, is too valuable to barter away on the blocks of unethical practices. Purity, to them, is much too precious to sell within the marts of immorality. The noble Nichols was truly of this heroic constitution. So should each of us be also. God expects it of us; we should not disappoint him in the least.

they sat, listened attentively, took notes, followed in their Bibles, and some responded to the Lord's invitation. They did not know they could not behave in the auditorium with the adults. Neither did they know that they could not learn. And the preacher was 72.

Some preachers are put out to pasture when they grow older. This may be, in part, their own fault. Some become sour, disgruntled, and lazy as they grow older. Brother Black has not lost his zeal, his humor, and he certainly is not lazy. Given soundness of mind and health until death, brother Black will not be put out to graze.

One highlight of the week was the preacher's association with W. A. Black. At the preacher's request, brother Black shared his knowledge, manifest good judgment, and showed wisdom. These were treats indeed.

Books could be written about the life and work of W. A. Black. Perhaps they should, for his life and work is a rich treasure which all should be able to touch.

May brother Black have many more years to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. May many continue to flock to hear him, and may many preachers be touched by his kind and simple, yet firm and sound preaching. May the future have a mold like W. A. Black into which many may be poured.

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).

John says: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:3, 4). "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

Biblical Genealogies

(Continued From Page 1)

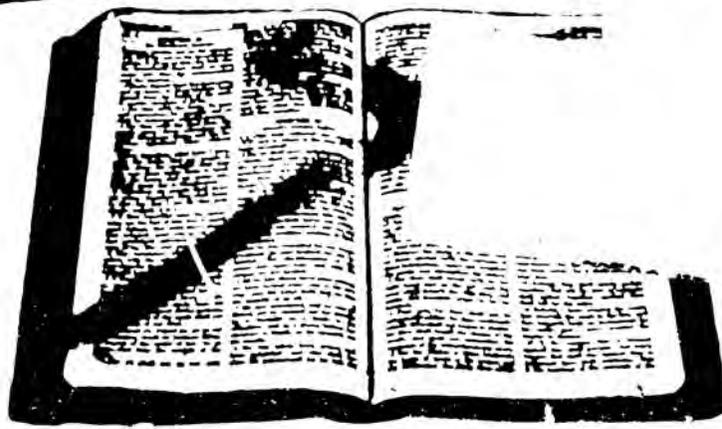
infidels anyway!

- 1 John Clayton, Does God Exist? Course, Lesson 4, p. 3.
- 2 Clayton, Op. Cit., Lesson 8, p. 2.
- 3 C. F. Keil, The Pentateuch, I, argues for two men named Amram in Exodus 6:18-20.
- 4 This is likely the genealogy of Jesus through Mary. Compare Lenski.
- 5 K. A. Kitchen and T. C. Mitchell, The New Bible Dictionary, p. 213.
- 6 J. Barton Payne, The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia, I, p. 831.
- 7 John W. Klotz, Genes, Genesis and Evolution, p. 91.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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A Chapter On Humility

WINFRED CLARK

Many chapters in God's book set out humility, a much needed quality. We noted one recently in the study of Genesis. In chapter 18 humble Abraham reflects this characteristic. Nearly every act on his part cries out with a humble spirit. Observe:

HUMILITY'S SATISFACTION (verse 1). Note that he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. There is no indication here or elsewhere that his life had become frustrated by Lot's choice of the well watered plains. It does not say he sat and brooded over leaving Ur. Neither does it say he sat and envied Lot. When one is as Abraham was, he will be found content. Humility demands such.

HUMILITY LOOKING, RUNNING, BOWING (verse 2). Pride would close the eyes to those who came that way. Pride would shut the door lest some additional request be made. Not so of humility. Here is a man that maintains his independence from the king of Sodom. Yet he will bow before these.

HUMILITY SERVING (verses 3-8). Note carefully his language in verse 3: "My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant." There is nothing presumptuous in Abraham. He does not think it would be an honor to them to be in his tent. He has no such estimate of himself. He feels the reverse would be true; that they would honor him by entering his tent.

He even minimizes what he could do: "Let a LITTLE water be fetched," and "I will fetch a MORSEL of bread." This is the nature of the truly humble person. He always does his best, and yet never thinks he has done enough. Is there any wonder Abraham was the kind of man he was?

Notice that Abraham's service was personal. He took charge to see that all was done that should be. In verse seven it was Abraham going to the herd to take a calf. When all was prepared he stood beside them under the tree. One would not think for a moment that these felt they were intruders.

HUMILITY'S REWARD (verses 9-15). Notice is now given that the promise of a child would be fulfilled. No doubt other things enter in, but surely humility is now to gain more than it gave. It is always true that men get more than they give to God and for His service. The joy of doing what God would have done is a great part of the reward. Peter lent a

boat in Luke five, and got a load of fish. A lad with five loaves and two fishes could get back twelve baskets full.

HUMILITY LEARNING (verses 16-22). There are some things Abraham would learn about God's dealing with sin that pride would never be able to learn, nor accept. The way he learns of Sodom's fate is not by mixing with them, but by being separate. If anyone ever questioned what was being done, Abraham would know. After all, Abraham is going to have a great responsibility, and he should know some things that correspond to that.

HUMILITY, ON ITS KNEES, DRAWS NEAR (verse 23). "And Abraham drew near." What else would you expect him to do? There is a burden he must bear, and where better can one go with his cares and concerns? We sing: "Nearer, My God to Thee," but how much better it would be if we did as did Abraham!

HUMILITY'S ESTIMATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS (verse 23). Abraham knew the righteous were valuable in God's sight. He also knows there is a great difference between the righteous and the wicked. Brethren, that clear line of distinction is blurred in the minds of so many now. Seven times the word RIGHTEOUS is used in verses 23-28. This is the important thing. These are the people who are of great value. Notice that Abraham does not ask that the city be spared for the sake of fifty rich men, nor for the sake of fifty men who planned to become righteous. He would not insult God by ignoring righteous principles. Just remember that humility places a premium on the righteous.

HUMILITY'S ESTIMATE OF GOD (verse 25). Note: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" There is no question in the mind of this great and good man. From humility's position, he looks up to the Judge of ALL the earth. He realizes ALL is under God's control, that ALL are answerable to Him, that ALL are examined by Him, and that ALL are to be treated right by Him.

Note carefully, now: Abraham appeals for God's mercy, but does not ignore God's stand for what is right. He does not ask God to lower the standard of right. He knew that God knew what was right, and that He would do just that.

HUMILITY'S ESTIMATE OF HIMSELF (verse 27). "And Abraham answered and

said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." In verses 17-19 we find God's estimate of Abraham. In God's sight, Abraham was a great man. In his own sight before God, Abraham is of the elements that are mortal. His limitations are clearly seen by himself. He has no idle dream that he can overpower God. He can come in a humble fashion, and ask.

How we need this lesson. We are, as he was, dust and ashes. But we are, as God's children, given the right to pray. If we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, we neutralize this.

The study of humility in this chapter is not exhausted in this article by any means. But we conclude our remarks here by observing that humility will not insult God's mercy or righteousness. Abraham did not request that Sodom be spared for less than ten righteous. He came from fifty to ten, and so did God. Humility bows its head in humble submission, and says a city deserves destruction, if God cannot find righteous people therein. This is humility, saying, "Not my will, but thine be done."

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Imparting Spiritual Gifts

During the infancy of the church, miraculous powers were necessary in order that the will of God might be revealed and confirmed. Once the matter of revelation was completed, and once that revelation had been sufficiently confirmed, there would be no further need for miraculous powers. This is precisely what the apostle Paul had in mind in I Corinthians 13:8-10. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." A careful study of the method by which these miraculous powers were obtained will confirm their temporary nature and make it plain that they are not available to Christians in modern times.



BOBBY DUNCAN

After the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2), only those upon whom the apostles laid their hands were miraculously endowed, the household of Cornelius being the exception. Why there was an exception in the case of Cornelius we will notice later in this article. Paul, of course, being an apostle "born out of due time" (I Cor. 15:8), received the Holy Spirit as did the other apostles.

As evidence that miraculous gifts were given only through laying on of the apostles' hands, observe the following: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that

Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:14-18). This passage makes it plain that the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost could not be given to the Samaritans except by the agency of the apostles. Philip, the evangelist, was miraculously endowed (Acts 8:5-7,13), but he was not an apostle. While he himself could perform miracles, he had not the power to enable others to do so. Peter and John were dispatched from Jerusalem to accomplish that which Philip could not accomplish, i.e., the imparting of spiritual gifts to the people of Samaria.

Simon saw that it was "through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given." It was not through laying on of the hands of Philip; and neither was it separate and apart from the laying on of hands. But it was through "laying on of the apostles' hands." Now, if the Holy Spirit can be received in some way other than through laying on of the apostles' hands, why was it necessary for the apostles to go to Samaria, and what is the meaning of these verses?

Paul wrote to the brethren at Rome: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1:11). No apostle was at Rome when Paul wrote, and probably none had been there. The church was in need of additional spiritual gifts. The gifts which they had (12:6) must have been given certain ones when they were in contact with some apostle at some other place. In chapter sixteen it is quite obvious that some at Rome had been acquainted with Paul at other places. Also there had been present on Pentecost some "strangers of Rome" (Acts 2:10). But Paul wanted to go to Rome that he might impart other spiritual gifts to the saints there. If miraculous powers of the Spirit can be received independently of an apostle, why did Paul make this statement.

Unlike the church at Rome, the church at Corinth had an abundance of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 1:7). This fact Paul uses as proof of the genuineness of his apostleship. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong" (II Cor. 12:12,13). Some at Corinth had questioned Paul's apostleship. His reply is that the "signs of an apostle were wrought among" them. This could not refer to the mere performing of miracles, for many others were given this power. What were the "signs of an apostle"? The imparting of spiritual gifts through the laying on of hands identified one as an apostle. When Paul pointed to the church at Corinth as proof of his apostleship, the Judaizing teachers who were challenging him had no reply. If miraculous powers can be received in some way other than through the laying on of the apostles' hands, then Paul's argument in defense of his apostleship has no weight, and those who opposed him certainly would have pointed this out to him and the church at Corinth. Paul said the church at Corinth was the "seal" of his apostleship (I Cor. 9:2).

In view of these facts, how do some today claim to be able to perform miracles like we read about in the New Testament? How do some claim to speak with tongues and have

the direct leadings of the Holy Spirit? Has some apostle laid hands on them? The fact that the church at Corinth had these powers proved Paul's apostleship. Whose apostleship is proved by those who claim miraculous powers today?

What about Cornelius, the exception to the rule? Cornelius and his household were the first Gentiles to be converted to Christ. The Jews did not believe that Gentiles had the same access to God as did they. God knew if the first Gentile converts received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the apostles' hands, the Jews would still look upon the Gentiles as second-rate Christians. In order to emphasize that Jews and Gentiles are equal, Cornelius and his household received the baptism of the Holy Ghost like the apostles. A careful reading of Acts ten and eleven will confirm this fact.

Not For Sale

(NO. 3)

A short time before his death the beloved brother Gus Nichols said in a sermon that if he were offered the whole world to give up Christ and the church, he would turn it down. When asked later how he could be so sure that this would be his response his courageous reply was, "Because my soul is NOT FOR SALE." The whole course of his saintly life was built on this very precept. He was a yes man to God only. He was not sinlessly perfect, but perfection was his constant goal. He had a burning desire to do right and to be right. I have never known a better, a more godly man than the late and noble Gus Nichols.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

At this time we wish to continue our meditation upon people in the Bible whose souls were NOT FOR SALE as they passed through early scenes. Previously we have mentioned a number of people from the pages of the Old Testament whose souls were not for sale. They considered the Lord's Cause as too valuable to sell their souls out to the forces of the Evil One.

JOHN THE BAPTIST — "NOT FOR SALE"

John the Baptist is one of the greatest men who ever lived. In fact, our Lord said of him in Matthew 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven shall be greater than he." John was the Holy Harbinger who went before the Mighty Messiah to prepare the way for Him. The soul of the courageous John was never up for sale. The Pharisees and the Sadducees came to his baptism locale in Matthew 3. These two groups wielded much in the way of religious and political power. Yet they did not frighten John in the least. His immediate response to them was: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is The story of Jonah fact or fiction?"

There are at least three prominent views regarding the nature and characteristics of this thrilling Old Testament narrative. (1) The *mythical*, which considers it as fiction, involving an imaginary person and a fictional experience. (2) The *allegorical*, which compares it to Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and sees it as a parable designed to teach a lesson in which Jonah represents Israel, and the fish which swallowed him Israel's captivity. (3) The *historical* which takes it as a true and literal narration of facts which occurred exactly as they are related in the book.

The third of these — the historical concept — is the correct one. Our Lord accepted it as true, and alluded to it on two occasions: (1) "For as Jonah was three days and nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here" (Matt. 12:40, 41). (2) "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonah" (Matt. 16:4).

One who rejects the historical character of the prophecy of Jonah might, with equal reason, reject the testimony of the Lord himself. Indeed, to reject the one, is to reject the other. There is significance in the fact the Lord *twice*, and with much emphasis, attested to the truth of this narrative, thus showing that he anticipated objections to it, and took care to guarantee its authenticity.

Jonah was the son of Amittai, a prophet of Gath-hepher. Inasmuch as Gath-hepher was a district within the tribe of Zebulun (II Kings 14:25), it would appear that Jonah was a prophet assigned to the northern kingdom. He was born near the city of Nazareth, in later years the home of our Lord.

The book of Jonah is the story of Jonah's mission to Nineveh. The design of this mission was to warn the wicked city of impending destruction unless its people turned from their evil ways.

However, but little space is devoted to Nineveh's repentance. It appears to have been the chief purpose of the narrative to rebuke the bigotry and narrowness of Jonah, and to make clear to all that "in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34). It is remarkable that at a time when the spirit of nationalism was at its highest point in the consciousness of the Lord's people — Israel — this book reveals God's tender and compassionate care for all men, and shows that the Israelites, themselves recipients of God's continual mercy, ought to feel deep sympathy and concern for all of their fellow human beings.

That such was the obvious design of the book follows from a review of its details: Jonah, an Israelite, a prophet, is commanded to go to Nineveh, a city of idolatrous Gentiles and one threatening to oppress Israel, and bid them to repent or perish. The mission was a merciful one, and Jonah anticipated that they, to him a hated people, would repent and escape destruction (Jonah 4:2). He had no

heart whatsoever for such a response, and he sought to avoid his responsibility in the matter by taking a ship in the opposite direction. A storm arose, he was thrown into the sea, swallowed by a great fish, imprisoned for three days in its stomach, and then cast out on to the land. These miraculous experiences brought the rebellious prophet to his knees, and to his appointed task. Nineveh heeded his call to repentance, and her people were saved from destruction. The action of Jehovah, in this matter, greatly displeased the prophet, and he sulked like a spoiled child. God, in the kindest and most patient manner showed the prophet how dear to his heart are all human beings, even though they are heathens or Assyrians. This attitude on the part of Jehovah, is further evidenced in the light in which various other Gentiles are incidentally exhibited in the narrative. (1) The heathen sailors (a) in their blind devotions; (b) their efforts to spare the life of Jonah and (c) their grateful offerings. (2) The compassion which Jehovah exhibited for the great city of deluded and ignorant people (Jonah 4:6-11).

Objectionable though Jonah's actions were, in the outset of the story, we should not overlook the fact that he is represented, not as an exceptionally wicked man, but as one who, with all of his prejudices, was pious toward God, and representative of the average Israelite of his day. He was devoted to Jehovah, but he needed, as did all of his fellow-Israelites, a lesson in patient and forgiving mercy toward others. It would appear, in the light of these facts, that the central theme of the book is to exhibit an erroneous view which Jonah held that led him, an otherwise devoted man, to withhold sympathy and compassion for others because they were not of his race.

The book is *about* Jonah, but whether *by* him has long been debated, inasmuch as it nowhere asserts his authorship. It is very probable that Jonah wrote it; such is the traditional view of the matter; he was in possession of all the facts in the case, and there is no good reason to doubt his authorship.

The following excellent analysis of the prophecy of Jonah has been given:

- (1) Disobedience — running *from* God (Chapter 1).
- (2) Prayer — running *to* God (Chapter 2).
- (3) Preaching — running *with* God (Chapter 3).
- (4) Complaints — running *ahead* of God (Chapter 4).

(To Be Continued)

Blaspheming God

"And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall he be put to death" (Lev. 24:16).

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed" (I Tim. 6:1).

As far as the average religionist is

concerned, no personal charge would be as bitterly opposed as that of blaspheming God. Never have I heard a religious person, outside of the Bible, confess to the sin of "blasphemy." Yet, I affirm that the blasphemy of "God and his doctrine" is one of the most prevalent sins in the religious world today.

BLASPHEMY DEFINED

The Greek word for "blasphemy" is "blasphemia" and is defined by Thayer thusly: "a. univ. SLANDER, DETRACTION, SPEECH INJURIOUS TO ANOTHER'S good name . . . b. specifically, IMPIOUS AND REPROACHFUL SPEECH INJURIOUS TO DIVINE MAJESTY."

Therefore, to "blaspheme" the name of God would be to say those things which cast a reflection upon God's nature. To slander God as being untrue as to his revealed nature by accusing Him of lying (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18), of tempting people to sin (James 1:13), of being unjust (I John 1:9), etc. would be "blaspheming the name of God."

THE WORD OF GOD

Of all the slanderous charges that might be made against God, the thing for which he is most abused is His authorship of the Bible. God is being charged as a liar and as either a wicked tyrant or a stupid ignoramus. Thousands of these accusations are being made every day by people who claim to be His followers.

If you doubt that such is the case, consider what is being commonly said about the Bible today: "It is foolish to believe that all religious people can understand the Bible alike." "You can prove anything by the Bible." "The Bible is so hard to understand that no person has the right to be dogmatic about his beliefs." "You can't be ABSOLUTELY SURE about anything the Bible says." "I know a lot of honest, intelligent people who disagree about the Bible. They can't help it that they see it differently."

GOD IS TO BLAME (?)

Though I realize that the ones who make such statements as these would never confess to having "blasphemed" God, such is the case nevertheless. Our world is presently in a state of absolute confusion religiously. "Christendom" (the sum total of all who CLAIM to be in the fellowship of Christ) is divided into more than 300 separate religious groups. Almost all of these different groups exist because they teach and practice doctrines which are rejected by the others.

Knowing that this divided condition is contrary to the desire (Jn. 17:20-23) and the command (I Cor. 1:10) of the Lord, members of these various religious groups are forced to place the blame on either the unwillingness of people to obey the truth or on God's failure to give us a Bible that fallible human beings could understand.

The present wave of "existentialism" (the idea that truth is merely what each individual sees it to be) and "ecumenism" has caused the masses to reject the idea of condemning themselves or their neighbors for this divisive situation. Therefore, the only other logical alternative is to blame it on God. Their argument is this: "If God had either been wise enough or kind enough, He would have given us a Bible that we could understand, and then we wouldn't have this problem of division."

Even if these religious people would shun to make this specific charge, to deny the understandability of the Bible is to do the same thing.

IS GOD A LIAR?

God is the author of the Bible, and he takes full credit for its contents (II Tim. 3:16). Therefore, to slander the Bible as being so confusing that the people for whom it was

(Continued On Page 4)



RAY DUTTON

Not For Sale

(Continued from page 2)

Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 3:7-10). John was NOT FOR SALE in the presence of the august Pharisees and Sadducees.

The courageous harbinger and powerful preacher was not for sale when he appeared before Herod the king and his adulterous wife, Herodias. John viewed with alarm this flagrant case of adultery among the ruling class of the nation. As these lines are written the headlines of our paper reflect immorality in high places on Capitol Hill in Washington. John minced no words as he said to the sinning king: "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6:18). Herodias would have killed the meddling preacher right on the spot if she had been given her preferences. However, it was not long until she had her way and John was beheaded at the request of the heartless Herodias and the shameless Salome. John could have saved literally his head had he been willing to sell out his convictions and just have kept his mouth shut about one of the terrible evils of his day — a king and queen who were living in adultery. The case was a notorious one. John the Baptist is one of the great examples of the New Testament whose soul was not for sale. Had he sold out to the Evil One he would not have been remembered as one of the courageous heroes of the holy faith.

JESUS CHRIST — "NOT FOR SALE"

Jesus Christ was not for sale during the thirty-three years he tabernacled among men. He was not for sale as a young person. His first recorded words as a twelve-year-old lad are set forth in Luke 2:49: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The American Standard at this point says, "... knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" Those who are truly busy with the Father's work while in their youth will not have to worry too much about selling out the Cause of Christ to the enemy. Betwixt twelve and thirty our Lord was not interested in selling out to Satan and sin. The Bible says of these crucial years of his preparation period, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

At the age of thirty our Lord left the rustic scenes of his childhood and young manhood home in Nazareth of Galilee, and journeyed to Jordan where the great preacher was baptizing penitent Jews by the masses. Jesus also demanded baptism, though it was not for the remission of sins, since he had never sinned. The purpose of his baptism was to fulfill all righteousness, as we learn in Matthew 3:13-15. Immediately subsequent to his baptism the newly baptized Galilean had one of His greatest battles — the deadly confrontation with Satan in the Judaeen wilderness. Matthew, Mark and Luke all relate this story. Matthew and Luke do so in far greater detail (Matt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-13).

Satan employed a threefold device to get the Lord to sin (Luke 4:1-13). (1) He appealed to him by the lusts of the flesh (the turning of stones into bread to alleviate his hunger). (2) He appealed to him by the lusts of the eye (offering him all the kingdoms of the world which his eyes could survey.) (3) He appealed to him by the vainglory or the pride of life (casting himself down from the dizzy heights of the temple in order to prompt an immediate applause from the people below). Satan had

used successfully the lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life in the initial encounter with humnity in Eden. He found Eve and later Adam for sale. But in Jesus Christ Satan met a different type of dedicated foe. Jesus Christ was not for sale. He knew there was more to life than bread for the stomach. He knew there was more to life than the immediate applause from an excited populace. He knew there was more to life than bowing before and doing homage to the Evil One. He knew that God's word was too important to sell out to the services of the Satan and the serfdom of sin. He knew that the Father meant too much to him to tempt the Holy One in Heaven. He knew the world, all the world, was not worth the price tag the Devilish Deluder had quoted to him. Had Jesus sold out the the devil that day the road to Calvary would have been closed immediately and permanently. There would have been no redemption for our sins had Jesus been for sale in this unusual and deeply crucial battle. Jesus Christ left us a mighty important lesson in this momentous matter in the Judaeen wilderness. He taught us that we do not have to sell out to the Devil. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet he did not surrender to the forces of Satan) Heb. 4:15; I Pet. 2:22).

Our Lord was not for sale when it came time for us to go to Calvary. In the closing stages of his earthly life, and just before the coming hour of his Passion, the Lord said: "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much will I with you: for the prince of this world cometh, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:29-30). Before Satan can be successful with any person he must find something within that person's heart that will be attracted to his brand of temptations. The Lord announced that Satan would find or discover nothing in him that would correspond to any of the devil's temptations or evil desires. While he stood before the determined members of the Sanhedrin Court just one word of denial that he was the Messiah, the Son of God Jehovah, and liberty would have been his immediately. But Jesus was not for sale. The redemption of the world depended upon his not being for sale while he dwelt on earth. Had he been for sale and sold out to the Cause of Evil, then we today would have been helpless, hapless and hopeless as far as our souls are concerned. His being NOT FOR SALE was the only way the Lord Jesus Christ would be able to save the world.

The NOT FOR SALE Christ needs NOT FOR SALE disciples. In the late and lamented brother Gus Nichols he had one whose soul was NOT FOR SALE. Does he have one in you and me?

Blaspheming God

(Continued From Page 3)

written cannot understand it is to impeach either the wisdom of God or His goodness, and to call Him a liar.

God declares that He is "not the author of confusion" (I Cor. 14:33). However, if the understandability of God's Word is the cause of all our religious confusion, then He lied when He said He was not the author of confusion. Could such a charge be called "blasphemy"?

Also, if the Bible is not understandable, it may be because God is just not smart enough to communicate with His own creation on a level which they can understand? Could such

a charge as this be called "blasphemy"?

If God were wise enough to have given us a Bible we could have understood but chose not to, then several conclusions must follow: 1) He willfully lied when He declared Himself not to be the author of confusion. 2) He lied when He said we could understand it (I Cor. 14:20; Eph. 5:17; 3:3-4). 3) He obviously is wickedly unjust because He demands that those who misunderstand it be "accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9). Could such charges as these be called "blasphemy"?

THE TRUE ALTERNATIVE

If we are not willing to make such blasphemous charges against God, we must place the blame for our present state of religious confusion on the only other alternative — the unwillingness of many people to "believe the truth".

"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 Thess. 2:10-12).

Why I Want To Teach

W.T. HAMILTON

A little boy grows up wrong and hurts the world. The world can't afford to be hurt any more. This is why I want to teach.

The world cries for wisdom and knowledge. Her sore throat yearns for an antidote, the conquering truth. That is why I want to teach.

A little boy ponders in the humble classroom. A little boy absorbs knowledge there and grows fond of it. And then he understands what and why he loves liberty and understanding.

And suddenly he is a little boy no longer. He is a man, and he emerges from the classroom as the moth from the pupa, full, and ripe, and beautiful. He offers himself to the world, behind the shield of truth.

She plucks the fruits from his mind and soul. The cause of liberty is fed; the cause of freedom, the cause of life, of man, of prosperity and nourished by his fruits. The world knows that he lived and kisses his grave. The fruits came from seed that grew in the classroom. This is why I want to teach.

To be a part of the planting, the growing, the harvest! To be myself and gardner! To hold in my heart the love of life and liberty and knowledge and truth! And to have the love of teaching them.

To see the glow of the harvest, and to work that the world might kiss the grave of my own body for the harvest wrought!

This is why I want to teach.

Some Of This And That

By GUS NICHOLS

A man's reputation is what he is thought to be, but his character is what he really is before God and in his sight. Reputation is what a man appears to be in open day light, but his character is what he is in mid-night darkness, and where there is no witness. Reputation is a man's market value, while character is his real worth. Reputation is very important, but character is far more important.

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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Dispensationalism and Zechariah 14

Dispensationalists — those enamored with the notion that Christ will return to the earth to establish a political kingdom over which he will reign for 1,000 years — rely heavily upon Zechariah, chapter 14, as an important Old Testament element of the premillennial scheme. Dispensational writer Hobert E. Freeman characterizes Zechariah 14 as a description of "the destruction of Israel's enemies, salvation of Jerusalem and the millennial reign of the Messiah over all the world from Zion." He further states:



Wayne Jackson

"The prophecy of Zechariah is to the Old Testament what the book of Revelation is to the New. It is the APOCALYPSE of the Old Testament which portrays God's future dealings with His chosen people Israel... The book of Zechariah, especially chapter 14, stands as a continual corrective to all those theories that deny the literal, future restoration of Israel, after a period of chastening, in her own land, over whom the Messiah will reign in Zion." [AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS, Moody Press, 1968, pp. 334, 335].

Dramatically, advocates of dispensational theology allege that Zechariah 14:1-3 contains a description of the approaching "Battle of Armageddon" which will be consummated by the descent of Christ upon the mount of Olives (verse 4) to overthrow his enemies and to commence his millennial reign.

The truth of the matter is, Zechariah 14 has no reference whatever to a millennial reign of Christ upon the earth. The Bible indisputably teaches that the Second Coming of Christ will terminate ALL EARTHLY AFFAIRS (II Peter 3:4, 10), and any view of Zechariah 14, or any other portion of the Scriptures, which conflicts with this clear truth, must be forthrightly rejected.

A Look at Zechariah 14

The prophet Zechariah foretells of a coming "day of Jehovah" when the nations will be

gathered against "Jerusalem" to battle. The horrors of, such a conflict are interrupted when the Lord intervenes and defends the city against the nations. The mount of Olives east of Jerusalem is rent asunder providing a passageway of escape for the faithful. The enemies of God are punished with fearful plagues and henceforth Jerusalem dwells safely, and from year to year the people worship Jehovah who is "King over the whole earth." Concerning this exciting chapter, let us observe the following.

(1) How would one determine that this is a prophecy of an alleged millennial reign of Christ on earth? Did Christ, during his earthly ministry, so interpret it? Did any divinely inspired New Testament writer ever quote Zechariah 14 with a "dispensational" application? Absolutely not! There is not a speck of evidence that would point this prophecy in the direction of premillennialism. If there is, premillennialists are obligated to produce it. Actually, New Testament writers repeatedly stress that the prophetic thrust of the Old Testament was concerning the salvation of grace (I Peter 1:10, 11) which burst into bloom with the dawning of the gospel dispensation. The apostle Peter affirmed that "all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of THESE DAYS" (Acts 3:24). The "these days" were the days of the Christian age. The dispensational view of Zechariah is arbitrary and unwarranted.

(2) A basic problem with premillennialists is their inability to discern the difference between the literal and figurative elements of the Scriptures. Those who fail to note that much of the prophecy of the OT is couched in figurative terminology are destined to fail in their attempts to understand the Bible. In his classic book BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS, Professor Milton Terry wrote: "A thorough interpretation of the prophetic portions of the holy Scripture is largely dependent upon a mastery of the principles and laws figurative language, and of types and symbols" (p. 313). A careful study of Zechariah 14 will clearly indicate that those who attempt to LITERALIZE the message of this chapter, as the premillennialists do, are pursuing a disastrous course of interpretation. Note: (a) If Zechariah 14:4 refers to the literal return of Christ (i.e., the Second Coming) upon the mount of Olives, exactly who is it that will

make that escape flight to the east in the cleft of that mountain? Certainly not the wicked, for the Bible plainly teaches that they will be destroyed when the Lord returns (Matthew 25:31-46; II Thessalonians 1:7-9), and surely not the righteous, for they shall be "caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thessalonians 4:17). And who else, pray tell, is left?! (b) Verse 8 speaks of living waters going forth from Jerusalem in summer and in winter. Since summer and winter will occur only as long as the earth remains (Genesis 8:22), and as the earth will not remain beyond the Coming of Christ (II Peter 3:4, 10), it is obvious that the events of this verse cannot transpire after the literal return of Jesus which supposedly is alluded to in verse 4. (c) Verse 12 tells of Jehovah smiting his enemies and their "flesh" being consumed. Again, this cannot possibly refer to a period after the literal return of Christ; the Coming of Christ will signal THE END. The dead will be raised and the living, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, will be changed from FLESH ("this corruptible" or "this mortal") to incorruption and immortality (I Corinthians 15:23, 24, 51-53).

(3) The premillennial view of Zechariah 14 strikes at the very heart of the abiding nature of Jesus' work at Calvary. Verses 16 and 21 speak of those who go up to observe the feast of tabernacles and who make sacrifice. Again the dispensationalists literalize and assert that Judaism, with all its carnality and animal blood, will be revived in the millennium. Regarding this crude view Roy H. Lanier, Sr., in an excellent article which exposes the utter absurdity of a literal view of Zechariah 14, pointedly asks: "Are these interpreters ready to accept the restoration of the Old Testament feast with its offering of animal sacrifices? During the feast of tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, daily offerings of animals were made by fire, 199 animals of all kinds were offered, 'besides the continual burnt-offering, and the meal offerings thereof, and the drink offerings thereof' (Num. 29:12-38). Among these daily offerings was 'one he-goat for a sin-offering.' Jesus is our sin-offering, and if we go back to offering he-goats for sin-offerings we must reject Jesus as a sufficient offering for our sins" (FIRM FOUNDATION, Oct. 5, 1965, p. 633). The OT law with its rivers of animal

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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The Rich, Young Ruler



We read about him in Matthew 19, Mark 10, and Luke 18. It gives us a good feeling to see this rich, young man, a ruler of the Jews, as he runs to catch the Lord, and as he kneels before Him. The question he asks is simple enough: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17).

BOBBY DUNCAN All eyes are on the Lord as He speaks. But instead of answering the question at once, he asks a question; and couched in that question is a stinging rebuke. "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark 10:18). Jesus is not denying that He is good, nor that He is God. But His question points up the inconsistency of this young man. He, like the other Jews, is not ready to acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Yet he calls Him good. He cannot help feeling the rebuke the Lord has issued. But it is the purpose of the Lord to teach the young man, not to embarrass him. And so He does not pause to force the young man to reply. "Thou knowest the commandments," says He, and then enumerates some of them (Mark 10:19).

It seems that one can detect a hint of pride as the young man says to the Lord: "All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" (Matt. 19:20). Perhaps the Lord has told him what he expects and wants to hear. Perhaps he thinks at this point that he will receive from the Master a word of commendation. But no word of commendation is given, for the Lord sees in this young man a heart that is divided — one that is interested in things temporal.

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him...." (Mark 10:21). Ah, yes, love is all that matters,

or so we are told. But love can be demanding, and so Jesus tells the ruler: "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mark 10:21). The young man is taken by surprise. This is not what he expected, and certainly not what he wanted to hear. Perhaps he had expected a compliment or a commendation from the Lord because of the good life he has lived. But we do not always find in God's word what we want and expect. We can be sure, however, that our Lord never requires anything of us that is not best, though hard it may seem.

Why does the Lord demand that the rich young ruler sell his goods and give to the poor? The answer is in the text: "and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Mark 10:21). The Lord knows his heart, and He knows that so long as he possesses earthly wealth, that wealth will occupy the major portion of his affection. In order that he might set his affection on things above it will be necessary for him to dispose of his earthly treasure. Such is not always the case. Abraham was a rich man (Gen. 13:2), but "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). What if God had told Abraham: "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor"? Even in the far reaches of our imagination we cannot picture Abraham's turning his back upon the Lord that he might grasp his gold. When Abraham offered Isaac, he passed the test that the rich young ruler now fails. He proved that nothing had a firmer grip on his heart than God. The rich young ruler, on the other hand, now shows that his riches have a firmer hold on his affection than the Lord could ever gain.

Our God does not want — simply will not have — disciples like the rich, young ruler. It is not enough that we love the Lord, but we must love Him more than any other person or thing. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that

loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:37-39).

Like so many in our world, the rich, young ruler possesses many admirable qualities, but in none of them is he adequate. He tries to honor the Lord, but falls short of acknowledging Him as the Christ. He kneels before the Lord and bids Him command, but he is willing to obey only to a point. He has lived a good moral life, but he thinks morality alone will suffice. He knows the commandments, but he fails to see himself as having transgressed a single one. He is interested in that which is eternal, but he is much more interested in that which is temporal.

There are many sad scenes in the Bible — Joseph's being sold into Egypt, Moses' not being permitted to cross the Jordan, Jesus beside the tomb of Lazarus, Paul in a Roman prison, not to mention the crucifixion of our Lord. But our sadness is turned to joy when we see Moses on the mount of transfiguration with the Lord, Joseph as governor of Egypt, the coming of Lazarus from the tomb, and the resurrection of our Lord. The saddest stories are those which have sad endings. The last glimpse we have of the rich young ruler is as he sorrowfully turns his back on the worlds only Savior, and sadly goes away. He has now gone to that country where hope is a stranger, and where mercy has never yet been known.

Not a one of us would come to his defense, and say: "He made the right choice." But countless numbers, following in his footsteps, are held in the grip of wealth, prominence, popularity, or something else to the extent they cannot bring themselves to humble submission to the will of Christ. Theirs also is a sad story, for where the rich, young ruler has gone, they will go. Those who are wise will profit from the experience of this foolish young man.

Faithful and Fervent At Fourscore and Eight

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

Upon moving to Lauderdale County, Tennessee, some two years ago it was my pleasure to become acquainted with Sister T.W. Cleek, Sr. of Halls, Tennessee. Sister Taylor and I drove some fourteen miles from our home to hers one Sunday afternoon. She was eighty-six at the time. We were not there long until we saw with easy why she is widely loved and deeply respected by all who know her. The gist of the conversation that afternoon was to our total liking. She talked about Christ, the church, the Bible, the gospel programs she listens to with regularity and the two gospel papers that she takes and reads with spiritual relish — the GOSPEL ADVOCATE and WORDS OF TRUTH. It is indeed appropriate that her picture and this short portrait of her life appear in these two great gospel media of our day.

HER EARLY LIFE,

FAMILY AND WIDOWHOOD

Leliah Ann Brown was born in Crockett County, Tennessee on January 16, 1888. She had three sisters and one brother. She was reared in the Methodist church and remained a Methodist until she was twenty-eight years of age. Her grandfather had served in a leadership capacity in the Methodist church before her.

In 1908 she was married to T.W. Cleek, Sr. She began her study of the Bible and was baptized in 1916 by brother John T. Smith. To her marriage five children were born. All of whom are members of the church. Brother



Sister T. W. Cleek, Sr.

Cleek was a teacher. They lived in a number of places where he taught school. He died in 1944. She has been a widow for thirty-two years. There are a number of lovely likenesses between Anna (Luke 2:36-38) and sister Cleek. (1) The loss of a marital mate at a relatively young age did not lead either to forsake the Lord. (2) Anna was ardent in her affection for the Lord; sister Cleek has been ardent in her affection for the Lord. (3) Anna was fervent in the faith; sister Cleek has been fervent in the faith. (4) Anna lived to be of great age; sister Cleek has lived to be of great age, well beyond

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is 'the baptism of fire'?"

John the Baptist, forerunner of the Christ, said, "I indeed baptize you in 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 in the Holy Spirit and in fire" (Matt. 3:11). See, also Luke 3:16,17. Mark, in his report of these words omits the reference to "fire." It is quite clear, from the contexts in Matthew and Luke, that John referred to two classes of people some of whom were to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and others who were to be baptized "in fire." The pronoun "you", which the harbinger used is not universal; it is not meant that all men were to be baptized either with the Spirit or with fire; it is indefinitely used and signifies that among those whom John addressed were people who would be baptized in the Spirit and others who would be baptized "in fire."

The context also shows that the *fire* alluded to is the instrument of punishment of the wicked at the last day: "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:11,12). The second use of the word *fire* here should be carefully noted. It is obviously an illusion to the "baptism in fire," mentioned in the verse preceding. Moreover, in verse 10, preceding the reference to baptism "in fire," it is said that "every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Thus, the word "fire" occurs three times in three verses in this immediate context. The first and third instances state positively the penal nature of the fire. It is absurd to assume that in the instance between them, he meant something entirely different. Moreover, the character of that which is to be burned (chaff), is put in contrast with that which is to be gathered into the garner, (wheat). Thus, the "fire" that burns the chaff (the disobedient), is the fire of punishment; and this is the "fire" which is referred to as a baptism in verse 11. It figuratively describes the plunging of the wicked into the lake of fire at the last day (Rev. 20:14,15).

(To Be Continued)

Some Of This And That

By GUS NICHOLS

The Christian life is not all negative; much of it is very positive. We can't go to heaven solely because we do not do many immoral things. We must also be positively good — good for something — must do the things which we should do. A factory or any given company in industry does not pay those employed a good salary just to stay out of meanness and crime; but they pay them to roll up their sleeves and work.

While the word "work" is the most unpopular word in the Bible, it is not so with truly converted people. Conversion includes the decision to "go" into the Lord's vineyard and "work." (Mt. 20:1-16.) One of the proofs of genuine conversion is the fact that one wants to work for the Lord who has graciously saved him.



Robert R. Taylor Jr. such his answer was, "Because my soul is NOT FOR SALE." His whole Christian life was a standing testimonial to the truthfulness of that observation. Brother Nichols would not have preached the way he did, lectured the way he did had his soul been for sale. Surely he would not have lived the life of sobriety, righteousness and godliness that he did had his soul been for sale.

PETER AND JOHN — "NOT FOR SALE"

Peter and John in Acts 4 were NOT FOR SALE when they were brought before the high Jewish Court in Jerusalem. The angered Sanhedrin sought to seal the lips of Peter and John in the initial encounter between the Jewish authorities and the apostles. This encounter grew out of the miracle that Peter and John had performed upon the lame man in Acts 3 and upon the fact that they had continued to preach the resurrection of Christ. This greatly upset the unbelieving Sadducees who denied the reality of any and all resurrections. Luke wrote: "What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was done." Peter and John not only told them what they intended to do but kept the full intention of their resolution to preach Christ regardless of the circumstances. In this they did not waver in the least. They accomplished this because their souls were NOT FOR SALE.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES —
"NOT FOR SALE"

Determined members of the Jewish Sanhedrin sought to stay the preaching efforts of all the apostles in Acts 5. Luke states, "And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." Luke, inspired historian of the early church, gave the apostolic response to this unjustified decree from the Jewish Court in Acts 5:29: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." The apostles were not for sale. They had a Commission from the King of kings and

Not For Sale

from the Lord of lords and they were not about to allow fallible human authority to detour them from duty's definite demands. We need many people today with just this type of courage in the Lord's work.

STEPHEN — "NOT FOR SALE"

Stephen was not for sale in Acts 7. He is given his say before the Jewish Sanhedrin. In this sermon he dealt with the history of the Jewish nation. It was fundamentally one of rejection of God's law, God's prophets and ultimately God's Son. In this great sermon we observe Stephen's attitude toward the truth and his auditors. In this great sermon we see the listeners' attitudes toward the truth and the messenger of the truth. The attitude of the courageous evangelist was that of love for truth and real affection for the souls of men. The attitude of the Sanhedrin was one of rejection of truth and hatred toward the one who brought them these truths. Stephen's attitude was right; the Sanhedrin's attitude was sinful to the very core. The chapter ends with their stoning Stephen. He became the first in a long and distinguished line of brave martyrs for the Master. A quickly contrived apology from Stephen as he saw the Court members pick up those deadly stones would have saved his physical life. But Stephen was NOT FOR SALE. Some things are more important than continued life if one has to compromise his Christian convictions to remain alive. Stephen felt this way; so should we.

THE APOSTLES AND ELDERS AT THE
JERUSALEM CONFERENCE —
"NOT FOR SALE"

In Acts 15 and Galatians 2 we read of the Jerusalem Conference. Luke wrote the former account; Paul wrote the latter account. There were pressures brought to bear upon the apostles and elders to give in to the indignant demands of the Judaizing teachers from among the Pharisees. But the apostles and elders were NOT FOR SALE. Paul tells us of their unbending and unflinching attitude toward these demands for compromise in Galatians 2:4-5: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." These courageous defenders of the gospel of Christ knew that there could be only one attitude toward error. That attitude was one of opposition and exposing it with all their might. And that is what they did. Had they been for sale Christianity could have become simply an extension of Judaism — an annex to the Jewish Covenant. The steadfast apostles and elders under the direction of the infallible Holy Spirit were not about to stand by meekly and allow this to take place.

THE APOSTLE PAUL — "NOT FOR SALE"

From the time he became a Christian in Damascus in Syria possibly around the year A.D. 36 or 37 till his death at the hands of Imperial Rome, nearly one third of a century later, this gallant apostle never knew a day when his soul was for sale. Such would have gone against the fundamental fiber of his whole courageous personality. At the end of his third missionary journey he was arrested in the city of Jerusalem. Due to the conspiracy of the forty enraged Jews who said they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul, he was dispatched quickly to Caesarea for safe keeping. There he came in contact with the Roman Governor whose name was Felix. Paul was destined to spend the next two years in

(Continued On Page 4)

Faithful and Feruent At Fourscore and Eight

(Continued from page 2)

the average span of life. (5) In her widowhood Anna did not depart from the temple, the house of Jehovah under Judaism; in her widowhood sister Cleek has not departed from the church, the Lord's house under the Christian Dispensation. (6) Anna was a person of prayer; sister Cleek loves her exalted privilege of being on praying grounds and pleading terms with Heaven's God. (7) Annas was a daily religion; sister Cleek's religion has been daily and still is. She is not a one-day-a-week Christian. (8) Anna was grateful; sister Cleek is a person of abounding gratitude. (9) Anna served God; sister Cleek is a modern servant of the same God, though she lives under a different covenant than did Anna. (10) Anna pointed others to the Christ; sister Cleek has pointed many to the Christ by her faithful teaching and her sterling example of dedicated discipleship. (1) Anna associated redemption with Christ; sister Cleek knows

that only in the Lord can redemption be found. (12) Anna's name is mentioned in the Bible; we believe sister Cleek, by her gospel obedience and a life of fervent faithfulness, has her name written in the Lamb's book of life.

Sister Cleek has been a member of the Halls congregation for nearly one third of a century. She began to attend there in 1944 and remembers when the congregation met in the old grade school building. Before that she attended at Antioch, a rural congregation located in the northern part of Lauderdale County.

Sister Cleek is in failing health physically, but her spiritual constitution is stronger than ever. Her hope in heaven is brighter than ever. Her eyesight is failing; her hearing is nearly gone. In a telephone conversation before the writing of this tribute, she had great difficulty understanding some of the questions I asked her. She says that she hears but little of the sermon but occasionally can catch a part of a Bible quotation. Many would have quit attending long ago under such circumstances. But not sister Cleek. Why does she go? Because that is where her heart is. That is where her supreme interest lies. She told me that she goes also to encourage others. A fellow member at Halls recently said, "If Mrs. Cleek can go, so can I." Would it not be fine indeed if the entire church of the Lord were filled with this type of dedication? But alas, it is not! The ancient Psalmist once said, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved: because they kept not thy word"

(Psalm 119:158). It grieves the saintly soul of sister Cleek to observe those who are not Christians and who should be. It grieves her concerned soul to observe those who ought to be faithful in their attendance and do not go. She recently said, "Many ought to be going to church who do not."

By turning high the volume of her radio she can listen to gospel sermons. Each Lord's Day morning she makes it a point to hear a number of gospel programs. She loves great gospel preaching.

In Proverbs 31:10-12 the inspired poet wrote: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies? The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." The chapter ends with these words: "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates" (Prov. 31:30-31). Those who know sister Leliah Ann Cleek best are ready to say she has been a worthy woman during her long, fruitful and fervent pilgrimage as a Christian. Sister Cleek, we are happy to salute you in WORDS OF TRUTH, a gospel paper subscribed to by the Halls congregation for all its members.

(I am greatly indebted to Jerry Corlew, minister of the Halls church of Christ, Helen Campbell, a daughter, and to brother G.P. Roland of Freed-Hardeman College for invaluable information used in this tribute to sister Cleek. RRT.)

Not For Sale

(Continued From Page 3)

prison at the political capital of Palestine, Caesarea. While imprisoned for this lengthy period, though he was totally innocent, he frequently had the opportunity to be in the presence of the Roman Governor. We read in Acts 24:24-27: "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

Felix's interest in Paul's case was not spiritually oriented; it was financially centered. When he heard Paul speak of bringing alms sufficient to take care of the needs of many poor people in Judaea, he began to sense the dollar marks. At least he could see them with his covetous and greedy eyes. Felix would not release Paul for the sake of justice. But he would have released him for the evil gift of a bribe. But Paul would have detested a bribe giver as much as he would have a bribe receiver. The one is just as essential to this high crime, that has been frequently committed, as is the other. Paul preferred to be in prison with his convictions still intact as to be free with a bribe upon his daily conscience. Paul was NOT FOR SALE. Felix scarcely knew anything about such honesty and integrity. But men like Paul, Peter, John the apostle, John the Baptist, Stephen, the Lord of the first century and men like the late and lamented Gus Nichols of the twentieth century knew what it was to be people who were NOT FOR SALE. Beloved readers, we need people today who are NOT FOR SALE in regard to the pre-eminent and primary issues of the day. People who are NOT FOR SALE are worth their weight in the purest of gold.

I felt like the thousands of readers of this great weekly who knew and loved brother Nichols so sincerely and so deeply would profit by this series of lessons. Let us follow him as he followed the Lord and be people of whom it can be truthfully declared: "NOT FOR SALE."

First Musical Instrument

GUS NICHOLS (NICK) HAMILTON

"The first musical instrument ever played in any church of Disciples of Christ - an antique melodeon which almost caused a rift in the Christian Church ranks when it was introduced at the services of the Midway house of worship almost one hundred fifteen years ago - occupies a position of honor at Midway College today." (Midway Mentor, Midway College, Midway, Kentucky, October, 1975.)

Though the little melodeon has great historical interest, it hardly deserves a "position of honor." Mechanical music was

never a part of spiritual worship of the church of the New Testament. Instrumental music was not introduced into Christianity until seven or eight hundred years after the church began. The apostolic church sang without the instrument. (Cf. Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:19). To add a melodeon, piano, or organ or any mechanical instrument is dangerous and sinful. John records, "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" (2 John 9).

Dispensationalism and Zechariah 14

(Continued from Page 1)

blood was abolished at the cross (Ephesians 2:15, 16), and has hence been "taken" (ERKEN - in the perfect tense, denoting the permanent abolition of the Law of Moses) away for ever (Colossians 2:14). Truly, dispensationalism is a materialistic, Judaistic and infidelic system. (Note: For a more thorough study of the implications of the dispensational theory, see the author's booklet, PREMILLENNIALISM - A System of Infidelity).

CONCLUSION

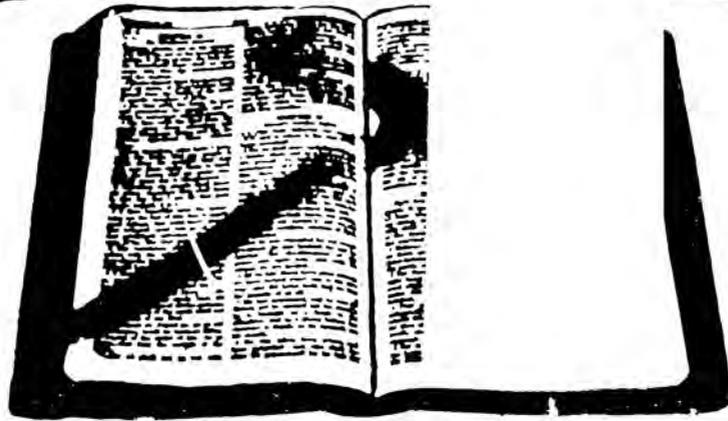
Whatever else the meaning of Zechariah 14 may be, it cannot be harmonized with premillennial theology. Two common views of this remarkable chapter held by non-millennialists are: (a) It is a symbolic prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D., together with the spread of the gospel throughout the Christian age thereafter (G.N.M. Collins, THE NEW BIBLE

COMMENTARY, pp. 761-763; Foy E. Wallace, J., GOD'S PROPHETIC WORD, pp. 246-248; or, (b) It is a figurative description of the history of spiritual "Jerusalem" (i.e., the church) from the time of its commencement throughout the whole of the Messianic era (E. W. Hengstenberg, CHRISTOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, II, pp. 1155-1182; Theo. Letsch, THE MINOR PROPHETS, pp. 493-506). Marten Woudstra notes that though premillennialists attempt to prove their theory by this chapter, "From the mixed character of the imagery employed, referring now to cataclysmic upheavals, now to regular pilgrimages to Jerusalem, it seems to this writer that no such literal interpretation of the passages is intended. The prophecy has in view various aspects of the gospel age with particular emphasis on its conclusion" (THE BIBLICAL EXPOSITOR, II, pp. 377, 378).

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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Erasing The Difference

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

There is a real effort being made by many today to dissolve the distinction between man and woman. The advocates of this movement willfully ignore God's teaching concerning this distinction. Genesis 1:27 reads: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." Genesis 5:2 says: "Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." These verses teach that God made man and woman distinct and separate, and it is his intention that this distinction be maintained.

In truth there was even a difference between the way man was created and the way woman was created. Genesis 2:7 teaches that man was formed from the dust of the earth while woman was formed from man's rib (Genesis 2:21, 22). I Corinthians 11 is only one example of God's continued desire to maintain a sharp distinction between male and female.

Several years ago this distinction began to be dissolved when men began wearing their hairstyles like women, which is a direct violation of I Corinthians 11:14. Soon women began to adopt the hairstyles of men. Then young people began wearing identical apparel, generally a shirt and jeans. This writer many, many times has had difficulty distinguishing between these young men and women when viewing them from behind. More than once we have passed a hitchhiker, who we were convinced was a young woman, only to be surprised by his scraggly beard.

The more ardent exponents of "women's equality" have become so radical in erasing the distinction between men and women that they refer to one another as "persons". For example, instead of saying "chairman" or "chairwoman", they say "chairperson". Many of these people no longer refer to God in the masculine sense, as does the Bible, but use the feminine gender and refer to him as a woman.

Women by the droves are leaving the home and becoming coarse and aggressive. Children are no longer reared by parents, but are reared in day-care centers and by baby-sitters. It is unfortunate that many of our brethren consider this movement to be a minor whim,

when in reality its thrust is far-reaching.

Betty Friedan, a teacher at Yale College, takes delight in teaching a course she calls "The Sex Role Revolution." After explaining why the first feminist movement did not fully succeed, she goes on to make this statement: "The work of the second wave of the contemporary feminist movement is restructuring the institutions of FAMILY, work, professions, economy, CHURCH and state which embody and perpetuate the polarized, unequal masculine and feminine sex roles" (Quoted by Patricia McCormack, THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL, November 10, 1974. Emphasis mine). This is evidence of the intentions of these individuals totally to restructure everything and the end result will be disastrous, indeed.

It is a tragic fact that the Equal Rights

Amendment had been ratified in most states before a significant move was made to stop it. The advocates of these movements are cunning and intelligent in their attack. Unless we do something to stop them, there will be no way to control the far-reaching effects of their seemingly innocent beliefs.

We find ourselves in the unique position of having to convince men to be men, women to be women, mothers to be mothers, homes to be homes. If the entire matter were not so tragic, it would make a good comedy for some aspiring writer. But the crisis before us is not something to laugh at and to pass off lightly. It is a real problem and undermines many things that we as Christians hold sacred.

I-20-25 Union Place
Vicksburg, Mississippi 39180

Faith In God

OTIS GATEWOOD

Faith in God is more than conviction that He exists; it is belief that He is active in my life (Heb. 11:6).

I have never heard His voice orally as did Moses; but God speaks to me more plainly and completely through the written message of His Word than He spake to Moses (Heb. 1:1-2). I know and understand many things Moses never did (1 Pet. 1:9-11).

God has never delivered me from the mouths of lions as He did Daniel, but daily He delivers me from temptations that are far more fierce than the most savage beasts (Matt. 6:9-13).

God has never drowned my enemies as He did Pharaoh in the Red Sea; but error and workers of wickedness are overwhelmed in the truth I preach (2 Tim. 4:2).

I have never seen God's hand write on a wall as did the Babylonian King; but His hand paints every flower and moulds every cloud with such splendor that I know surely that I am weighed in the balances.

God has never tested my faith in Him by commanding me to offer my son as a burnt

sacrifice as He commanded Abraham, but He challenges me to train my children to be living sacrifices in service to Him (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 6:4).

God has never fed me with ravens as He did Elijah; but I feast daily upon the fellowship of His saints and dine at His table of goodness every moment of my life (Matt. 4:4).

He has never promised me possessions of lands as far as I could see in all directions, nor has He said that He would increase my seed as the stars of heaven; but He has promised me an eternal home at His own right hand in a city with streets of gold (Jn. 14:1-3), and those whom I have converted to Him through the preaching of the gospel will yield fruits of righteousness forever (Dan. 12:3).

I count all the wonderful things that He has done for all the great men of the past, and I find that He does all those things for me, and more, through redemption and salvation in Christ, His Son and my Redeemer. Yes, God is living and active today in more ways than I can ever conceive or think.

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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"Reflective Teaching"

We never know what to expect next from our brethren. Their motives usually are good, but their knowledge often seems defective. Every work has its problems, and the solutions are not always simple. But in dealing with problems, care must be taken to "abide in the doctrine of Christ" (II Jno. 9). Otherwise we create more problems.



BOBBY DUNCAN

For example, one particular soul-winning project being conducted by our brethren tries to deal with the problem of baptizing people prematurely. We commend them for their concern in regard to this matter. Some in the past seem to have made an effort to get people into the baptistery without proper teaching. But this problem is one that, like all other problems, should be dealt with in a manner that is in harmony with God's revelation. Certainly it is in order for us to be reasonably sure that the candidate for baptism understand what he is doing, and it is in order for him to "count the cost." But the test (They don't call it a test. They call it "reflective teaching.") conducted by this group goes beyond the bounds of good judgment and Scripture as well.

A statement on the front of the test sheet says: "An experienced teacher not involved in (the previous instruction of the candidate) should conduct Reflective Teaching prior to and at the place of baptism." There follows a form to be filled out stating name, address, how long at present address, age, place of employment, how long at present employment, home phone, marital status, if divorced, how many times and why, names and ages of children at home. The twenty-four

questions that follow are: (1) Please tell something about your past religious life. (2) How are you sure that what you are about to do is the right thing to do? (3) Do you wish to obey from your heart the teachings of Christ? (4) What do you want to do to obey Jesus? (5) How is Jesus to be first (Lord and Master) in your life? (6) Are you to obey any of the ten commandments today? (7) In your own words, what does God want you to do to be saved? (8) Are you a sinner? (9) How do you feel about your past sins? (10) What does repentance mean to you? (11) How are you going to know that you have repented of past sins? (Use one of your past sins). (12) At what point in your obedience will God remove your sins and save you? (13) How many times a year are you going to partake of the Lord's Supper? (14) Where are you going to worship next Sunday? Regularly? (15) Would it be a sin to worship with one of the denominations, forsaking the assembly of the saints? (16) Why would it be a sin to worship with the denominations, including the one of which you have formerly been a member? (17) Would it be sin to add anything to the worship such as organ or piano to singing? (18) Could your former preacher(s) or parents or husband or wife talk you out of obeying Christ and being faithful til death? (19) What would you do if your mate, parents, preachers or anybody forbade or interfered with your worship with the Lord's church? (20) What questions do you have? (21) Is obeying Christ by being baptized for the remission of your sins what you really want to do? Is this your decision? (22) Do you feel that any of your teachers pushed you at an time? (23) How do you plan for your faith to grow after you are born again (become a Christian)? You will still have temptations and problems. (24) Do you feel you should wait or are you ready to become a Christian and live faithful unto death in view of your study of the open Bible?"

One of the workers in this group was asked for the Bible authority for such a questionnaire, and he replied that it was

based on the account of Philip and the eunuch. Such being the case, let us imagine that Philip is working in this modern day program, and he has preached Jesus unto the eunuch. The eunuch says to Philip: "Here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Philip answers: "You wait right here. I will go and get an experienced teacher who has not been involved in teaching you. He will conduct Reflective Teaching, and then you probably may be baptized. It may take a while, since I probably will have to go all the way to Jerusalem. Do you have your fishing tackle?"

Or if Philip were to conduct Reflective Teaching, think how ridiculous some of the questions would be. Can you imagine Philip's asking the eunuch: "How are you sure that what you are about to do is the right thing to do?" What about, "Where are you going to worship next Sunday? Regularly?" Or imagine, if you can, that Philip asks the eunuch: "How are you going to know that you have repented of your past sins? (Use one of your past sins.)" Many of the others would sound just as ridiculous. All of this, of course, would come after the eunuch had filled out the necessary form, supplying information concerning address, employment, age, children, marital status, etc. Brethren, it would be funny if it were not so pathetic.

For many years gospel preachers have proved that Philip was not a preacher in certain denominations by the fact that he baptized the eunuch upon a simple confession of his faith in Christ. I can prove by the fact that the eunuch was not voted upon by the church, that he did not become a member of certain denominations that require candidates to be voted upon; and by the same kind of reasoning I can prove that the eunuch did not become a member of a group that requires the kind of "reflective teaching." If Philip were living today, he would have to change his practice, or else he could not be one of the workers in this particular soul-saving effort.

Discipleship

BYRON NICHOLS

There has always been a problem in the church of apathy, indifference, lethargy, laziness - but actually these terms do not designate the problem, they are the result of the problem. The real problem is a lack of understanding of what is involved in discipleship.

In the Greek the word disciple means literally "a learner." It comes from another word meaning "to learn," indicating thought accompanied by endeavor. Thus, it denotes one who follows someone's teachings. A disciple was not only a pupil, he was an adherent. Disciples are thus spoken of in the New Testament as imitators of their teacher.

I like F.W. Farrar's definition of a disciple. He described the disciple of Christ as "one who believes His doctrine, rests upon His sacrifice, imbibes His spirit, and imitates His example."

With this brief background regarding the word "disciple," let's now look at the terms of discipleship laid down by Jesus Himself. In Matthew 16:24 Jesus said that it is necessary that His disciples deny themselves, take up their own crosses, and follow Him. In Luke 14:26ff Jesus states that one who would be His disciple must hate his own family. "Hate" here has reference to the lack of preference for one thing over another. Jesus then in Luke 14:33 declares that the disciple must forsake or renounce all. These terms of discipleship

are certainly demanding. Apparently discipleship is not to be taken lightly.

Becoming a disciple (or Christian) is one thing; being a disciple is another. In Luke 14:27 we learn that Jesus requires His disciples to follow Him. What is involved in following Jesus?

1. Counting the cost (Luke 14:28-35; II Peter 2:20-22).
2. Sacrifice. Jesus demands first place. In Luke 5:11 they left all. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus says to seek Him first.
3. Following in Christ's footsteps. Being a disciple of Jesus necessitates our following in His footsteps as they lead us to:
 - a. The wilderness of temptation.
 - b. The house of worship.
 - c. Fields of service.
 - d. The mountain of prayer.
 - e. The garden of despair.
 - f. The cross of suffering.
 - g. The valley of death.
 - h. The throne of God. The steps of Jesus don't end in the dark valley, but proceed into Heaven and to the very throne of God (Revelation 3:21).

It is hoped that each one who has committed himself to Christ will take more care to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. True discipleship will change the world.—Route 10, Box 1361, Springfield, Mo. 65803.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please explain Matt. 5:18-19. Is it possible for one to break some of the Lord's commandments, yet be accepted by him?"

At the time our Lord uttered these words the law was yet binding, and would remain so for many months until the tragic event of Calvary; and he proceeded to point out that no one could disregard the law of Moses with impunity. He said, "Whosoever shall therefore break one of these last commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." It would involve error of the gravest sort to suppose from this that Jesus is implying that one may deliberately disregard any of his commandments and enter into the kingdom of heaven. It is important to note that by "these last commandments," he was alluding to the ordinances and obligations of the law of the Old Testament - not those of the New. The Pharisees, whom our Lord had directly in mind here, divided the commandments of God into "lesser" and "greater" ones; and they taught that the "lesser" ones were trivial and insignificant, and thus might be disregarded without danger.

The Greek word translated "break," here signifies the act of *loosing from obligation*. Thus the Saviour was showing that not he, but the Pharisees, were actually the ones who were destroying the law, by declaring the people released from obligation to submit to what they styled the lesser requirements of the law. This disposition to distinguish between the various laws of God was a dangerous one; and those who practiced it under the law of Moses would be disposed to carry this same attitude into the kingdom of Christ, when it was established; and, though they obeyed the gospel, their unworthy attitude toward God's word would render them "least" in the kingdom. On the other hand, those who highly regarded God's law under earlier dispensations, would carry over the same respect for his word into the Christian age, and would thus be regarded as "great" in the kingdom. Men have no right to pass judgment on the relative importance of God's word. Jesus regards as "great in the kingdom," only those who teach that all of his commandments were binding, that all of the New Testament is essential, and that any effort to pass judgment on the merits of God's law is an unworthy one. The theologians of the church of Rome attempt to class sins as venial and mortal; and denominational preachers boldly declare that some of the commandments of Christ may be disregarded with impunity (namely Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 20:7). The test of faith is in our willingness to do *what God has said*; and, the test is vastly more meaningful and significant in so-called unimportant matters than in the "great" ones. In the latter, human judgment enters, and approves; in the former, submission results from the recognition of the authority in the command, uninfluenced by earthly standards. Only that disposition which enables us freely, fully and unreservedly to say: "Speak, Lord; thy servant heareth; command, and he will obey," entitles us to his approval here, eternal life hereafter.

(To Be Continued)

The Many Sides Of Baptism

To many people baptism is seen only as an initiation into the church. Others only know baptism "for remission of sins." The truth is, baptism is much wider in its scope and blessings. It is much like the many facets of a finely cut diamond. Notice just some of the meanings of baptism.

1. Baptism is like a BIRTH. Jesus said in John 3:5: "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." A birth is a "coming forth" into a new relationship. Just as an infant comes forth from his mother into the world of light, so the obedient believer comes out of the waters of baptism a new born babe in Christ (I Pet. 2:2). His Christian life has just begun. This new birth puts him into the kingdom or church of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19). Just as one is born a citizen of the United States of America, so one must be born a citizen of the kingdom of Jesus. Only an immersion in water and a coming forth from the water can adequately depict a birth. This sprinkling or pouring can never do.

It is important to remember when interpreting metaphors and analogies that we never press more than the main point of comparison. Many foolish points have been wrung from this teaching by teachers who did not remember this rule. The water is not our mother, the Holy Spirit is not the sire, nor do you have spiritual life before baptism. The one simple point is, we must come out of the water of baptism into the kingdom, even as the baby comes out of the womb into this life.

2. Baptism is like a BURIAL AND RESURRECTION. Paul writes that sinners must die to sin, then be buried with Christ through baptism into death in order that they might be raised up to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:1-4). The conversion experience simulates the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord. Everyone who is saved demonstrates his faith in the Christ who died and rose for him by his baptism into Christ. It is a proclamation to the world of the crucified Christ as their only hope of pardon.

When seeking to understand such figurative expressions as death, burial and resurrection in salvation, we must never mingle or confuse other figures with these. Great confusion results when one tries to mix the illustrations of the new birth in John 3 with this of Romans 6. Each must be understood and explained separately.

3. Baptism is like the PURIFICATION AND PREPARATION of a bride for her wedding. In Ephesians 5 Paul speaks of the loving relationship of Christ and his church under the figure of a man and his bride. He tells us Christ gave himself up for the church "that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). Among the ancient peoples, great emphasis was placed upon the cleansing and purification of a bride before being presented to her husband. See Esther 2:12-13. So each person who becomes a member of Christ's bride, the church, must be

purified by the washing of water (baptism) and the Word. Should anyone dispute the "washing of water" being baptism, we ask, is there any other use of WATER in the gospel regarding salvation, church membership and Christian worship?

4. Baptism is like the ritual of CIRCUMCISION. Under the Abrahamic covenant no male could be a member of the holy nation unless he had been circumcised. The removal of that tad of flesh from the infant's body identified him as one of God's spiritual sons (Gen. 17:9-14). Today, everyone, male and female, must undergo a circumcision of the heart in order to be a child of God. This Paul explains in Col. 2:11-13: "In whom (Christ) ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ: having been buried with him in baptism . . ." Baptism is similar to the act of circumcision in that God CUTS OFF and removes the old sins of the heart when we are *buried* with Christ. God, not a physician, administers the spiritual surgery when we are baptized to wash away our sins.

5. Baptism is like the PURIFICATION RITES of the Jews. Those living under Moses' law were continually faced with the problem of ceremonial defilement and uncleanness. Touching any dead body or having any running sore or skin disease and a host of other things rendered them impure and disqualified them to enter the worship assembly. A ritual of purification was set forth that included the blood of sacrifice and the washing of the body with water (Lev. 15:13-15). So in this age the unclean sinner comes before God's great priest Jesus, having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and having his body washed with pure water (Heb. 10:19-22). I am confident that this refers to Christian baptism for the only use of WATER in New Testament salvation, church or worship is in baptism (Acts 10:47). When we are washed in the waters of baptism, the blood of our sacrifice, Jesus, is applied to our conscience, giving us a clean and good conscience before God (I Pet. 3:21).

6. Baptism is like GIVING LIFE TO THE DEAD. The sinner is dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), being separated from God by them (Is. 59:1-2). God only can give new life to those dead in sin. It is "not by works done in righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit . . ." (Tit. 3:5-6). To REGENERATE is to make alive again. RENEWAL has the same basic meaning. When does God do this for sinners? When they are "WASHED." But in baptism we wash away our sins (Acts 22:16). So we are made alive from our death in sin by God when we are baptized.

7. Baptism is the entrance initiation into the church of Christ. "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . ." (I Cor. 12:13). But the one body is Christ's church (Col. 1:18). Water baptism puts us into the one true church at the same time we are having our sins forgiven. This is when the Lord adds us to the church (Acts 2:47, K.J.V.).

8. Baptism is a UNION WITH Christ. It puts one into Christ. In it one is clothed with Christ. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." "For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death . . ." (Rom. 6:5). The context

(Continued On Page 4)



JOHN WADDEY

The Many Sides Of Baptism

(Continued From Page 3)

shows this to be in baptism.

9. Baptism is like the FLOOD OF NOAH'S DAY in that it separates the righteous and the wicked. The flood waters destroyed sinners upon the earth at the same time it floated the ark to safety. "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism . . ." (I Pet. 3:21). The water of baptism stands as a distinct line separating the saved and lost. All the saved have experienced baptism. All who have not are yet in their sins.

How beautiful are the many sides of Christian baptism. May we ever respect this holy ordinance of our Lord and unashamedly preach it to every creature, Mk. 16:15-16.

Truth And Falsehood

G. F. RAINES

"Truth and only truth is eternal. It was not born and it cannot die. It may be obscured by the clouds of falsehood, or buried in the debris of brutish ignorance, but it can never be destroyed. It's all that is, or was, or can ever be. It exists in every atom, lives in every flower, and flames every star. When the heavens and earth shall pass away . . ., divine truth will stand unscathed amid the crash of matter and the wreck of worlds" (Wm. Cowper Brann).

"In every religious error which has gained a footing in the world there is some mixture of truth. Absolute error . . . would contradict man's sense of what is just and right too violently; . . . its leaden weight of absurdity would sink it. There must be some fragment of truth attached, in order to make it float; and in nothing has the craft of Satan and of his agents been more conspicuous than in the sagacity with which they mix a maximum of falsehood with a minimum of truth" (L.H. Wiseman).

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12).

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23).

The holy scripture, having been "given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16), "is true from the beginning" (Psa. 119:160), and "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). Jesus says: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:22, 23).

The divine truth which we must know and obey in order to be born again is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul says: "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" (Rom. 1:16). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire

taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9). "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8, 9). "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

The apostle John says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9). "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

If you want to know what you must do to be saved, please read Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Col. 1:13, 14; Rom. 6:3, 4; Tit. 2:11-14; 2 Pet. 1:5-11.

The Lord, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9), says: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12). "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Let us all rejoice exceedingly in the fact that "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

You Can't Argue With God's Word

J.C. CHOATE

So many people want only the portion of God's word that suits their belief, practice, or situation. This leads them to accept part of it and reject the rest. They try to explain, argue, and reason it away. This is an abuse and misuse of holy writ.

We should want the truth and all the truth in any verse of scripture. We should not stop there, however, but go on to accept the truth in all other verses. We should want to know all of the Lord's will for us. We should want to obey the whole truth and teach it to others. Willful ignorance or rejection of any part of God's word will not help us or any one else. Partial truth is not enough.

There are those who teach that all one must do to be saved is to believe. Verses like John 3:16, 36; 5:24; Acts 16:31; et al, are used to support this. In view of what other verses teach, there might be some argument as to whether this is ALL that God requires, but there can be no argument about the necessity of belief or faith itself. We know that these verses definitely teach that one must believe; but these are not the only verses of scripture to be considered when it comes to the salvation of the soul. Perhaps those who use these verses to teach faith only have isolated them. Maybe they have misunderstood and limited the meaning of faith. In so doing they make the Bible teach something that God never intended.

Christ tells us that one must repent or perish (Lk. 13:3). Paul said that God commands all men everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30). There are other verses that teach and emphasize the need of repentance. One might conclude that the most important thing one must do to be saved is to repent of his sins. At the same time, one might argue that

there is more to salvation than this. Regardless, there is one point on which there can be no argument: God requires that one repent of his sins.

There are several verses that stress the necessity of baptism. (Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4). One verse even declares that baptism saves (I Pet. 3:21). Does this mean that baptism ONLY saves? Is not faith necessary? What about repentance? These questions may be brought up and discussed; but there can be no doubt about the necessity of baptism if one is going to accept all of the truth of God's will.

Peter told the people on the day of Pentecost that they should repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38). Though nothing is said about faith, the question that was asked about salvation shows clearly that they believed. But regardless of what points are left out, the question is: What is stated? There can be no discussion on this point. All we can do is to accept it.

Whether we are dealing with the plan of salvation, or some other subject, we ought to approach our study with the attitude that we are going to accept all the truth in every verse and that we are going to accept every command in every statement. Obviously the Lord has not given all the truth in one verse.

Neither has he given all the commands of the gospel in one verse. This means then that we cannot stop with one verse or two on any subject, but we must go on to read and study all of God's word. We must accept all the truth in any given verse, and then go on to the next verse and so on. By so doing we will be able to see all that the Lord requires of us. Only by believing and obeying the WHOLE truth can we be saved. Surely there can be no argument with this. Certainly we should never find ourselves in a situation where we are forced to argue with God's word. Neither should we ever put ourselves in a position where we have to reject any truth in order to stay with some belief we have already accepted. If we do, we will lose every time. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). — C-22 South Extension 2, New Delhi 49, India.

Seven Point Truths

Seven abominations. There are seven things which the Lord hates and which are an abomination in his sight:

1. Haughty eyes.
2. A lying tongue.
3. Hands that shed innocent blood.
4. A heart that deviseth wicked purposes.
5. Feet that are swift in running to mischief.
6. A false witness.
7. One who sows discord among brethren (Prov. 6:16-19).

Seven fundamental unities. Before Christian unity can be attained, all Christians must build upon the seven solid stones:

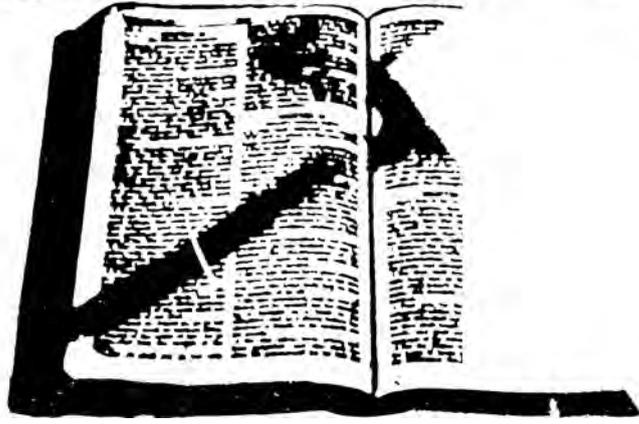
1. One body, which is the church.
2. One Spirit.
3. One Hope.
4. One Lord.
5. One faith.
6. One baptism.
7. One God and Father of all (Eph. 4:3-6).

Seven graces. In order to gain an entrance into the eternal kingdom, a Christian must supply seven graces:

1. In his faith virtue.
2. In his virtue knowledge.
3. In his knowledge self-control.
4. In his self-control patience.
5. In his patience godliness.
6. In his godliness brotherly kindness.
7. In his brotherly kindness love (2 Pet. 1:5-11). — Bulletin, 7th and College, Mayfield, Ky.

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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Who Will Stand For Truth

Who will stand up for God and be counted when He needs men? This question has been asked or could have been asked many times down through the ages. When Israel was up against the Philistines the giant Goliath said, "Give me a man, that we may fight together." Saul and all Israel were dismayed and greatly afraid at these



ARVEL CURTIS

words. But there was one man of God who was not afraid to stand, David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:10,32). Think of the condition of Israel if no man could have been found to stand for God and truth. The influence of the Almighty would have fallen and Israel would have been crushed. David was man enough and courageous enough to stand and help God win His battle that He might not suffer and be disgraced.

God needs men today who will stand up and face the enemy that truth may prevail. He needs men who will gladly defend His blood bought church in spite of the popularity and deceivableness of denominationalism. He needs men who will boldly declare that His church is not a denomination and will fight that it may never become one. The Lord needs preachers and elders who will stand against false doctrine, rebuking those who teach it and discouraging those who flirt with it. False teachers should be marked, avoided, and not encouraged or courted. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17). "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" (2 Jn. 10, 11). Any preacher, elder or church that bids God speed to any false teacher is on the opposite side of God that David was when he stood and said, "Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

God needs preachers and elders today who

will stand up and battle liberalism. Too many had rather have favor of all them than to rebuke any false teacher or doctrine. Men who go over the brotherhood teaching or supporting such doctrine as women or girls leading prayer in the presence of men, direct operation of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, miraculous answer to prayer, the use of instrumental music in worship, should be marked, labeled as liberals and not used by churches faithful to the cause of Christ. Men who teach these doctrines are false teachers and will destroy the church. Those who support such teachers are equally guilty and should be marked as bidding God speed to false teachers. Churches who use such men knowing of their false teaching or influence should be marked that the entire brotherhood may know of their contribution to liberalism and the destruction of the church of Christ which Jesus died for. A church that encourages or supports false teachers or those who lean toward error rather than truth is

asking too much if it expects sound churches to recognize and fellowship it as a contender for the faith.

God needs preachers and elders who are not afraid to furnish information about liberal preachers. Those who have facts on a false teacher and refuse to share them with elders, who are trying to fill their pulpit with sound preachers, by saying we don't want to get involved certainly are not following the advice of Jude 3. Such men have the courage of Saul and Israel who trembled and were afraid rather than that of David who stood up and fought for the God he served.

We in the Lord's church need to realize that we're up against a giant as was David. The giant of liberalism will destroy the church if we do not stand without fear, and stand now. Who will stand for God and truth? Who will stand for error? Who will stand for neither? God needs men who will stand for truth.

—Rt. 1, Florence, Al.

We Believe Too

J.C. CHOATE

We were studying with a young man concerning the plan of salvation. He was under the impression that "faith only" saves, and had already picked out about twenty verses of scripture to support what he thought to be the truth. We assured him that we believe all of these verses and any others he might cite on the subject. We explained again and again that we accept the fact that one must believe in order to be saved, that salvation is by faith (Eph. 2:8-9). At the same time we asked him if he would now accept those verses that teach that one must repent and be baptized in order to be saved? (Acts 2:38).

He said that the verses he had given did not mention baptism. We came back to show that neither did they mention repentance. He quickly responded by saying that repentance was understood. Yes, and the same is true of baptism, we said.

On Mark 16:16 he quickly beat the trail to

the latter part of the verse where "baptism is not mentioned." Then we patiently told him that the first part tells what one must do to be saved, while the last part tells one how to be lost. If one wants to be lost, all he has to do is to refuse to believe; but more is required of those who want to be saved. Christ says that to be saved, one must believe and be baptized. Again: belief (or faith) is required, so there is no disagreement on that; but the question is: Can one be saved on the basis of faith only, without going on to obey the other commands of the Lord? Certainly Mark 16:16 shows that there is more involved than faith only. Actually, if one really "believes" the Lord, he will do what the Lord has said — and this includes repentance and baptism. Read also Acts 2:38.

The question is not, Do we believe? We do. Rather, the question is, will you obey? If you believe, you will (Heb. 5:9; Mt. 7:21).

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Peace Upon Principle



BOBBY DUNCAN

It would be impossible for one to read very much in the Bible without getting the idea that peace is certainly something greatly to be desired. God is called the God of peace (Rom. 15:33), Christ the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:), the gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15), and Christians are taught to follow after the things which make for peace (Rom. 14:19). These are just

a few of the many, many references to peace. It is no wonder that Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Are these and other passages that speak of the value of peace to be understood to mean that peace should be sought and obtained regardless of the price? Certainly not! While the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7) belongs to every Christian regardless of external circumstances, it is not always possible to be at peace with all men while doing the will of God. This is, no doubt, what Jesus meant when he said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). Paul alludes to this fact when he says: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).

Jesus himself was not at peace with those who were enemies to the truth. While He was willing to give His life to save sinners, He had no inclination whatsoever to ignore sin. His compassion for sinners must not be mistaken for an affection toward sin. Some of the most scathing language in all of literature is that

used by our Lord in denouncing the hypocrisy of the religious leaders of his day. And perhaps no man ever had enemies more bitter than those who were responsible for the crucifixion.

The apostles also were at enmity with those who opposed the truth. Paul obviously became the enemy of some merely because he taught them the truth (Gal. 4:16). On one occasion he was accused of being "a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition" (Acts 24:5). Peter and John came into sharp conflict with the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 4,5). And Stephen was stoned to death because of his faithful stand for the truth and his denunciation of error (Acts 7). In fact, the entire church at Jerusalem underwent such severe persecution that its members were scattered throughout Judaea and Samaria (Acts 8(1)).

These facts serve to illustrate that it is not possible always to be at peace with all men. Preaching the truth - even in love - and firmly standing for that which is right will inevitably bring one into conflict with those in error. Two simply cannot walk together except they be agreed (Amos 3:3), and light can have no communion with darkness (II Cor. 6:14).

It goes without saying that the church has its witch hunters and alarmists, who seem to thrive on spreading shocking rumors and exaggerated reports of danger. And there are always those easily frightened by such, and who are likely to anticipate the very worst. This disposition unnecessarily disrupts the tranquility of the church and hinders its efforts to save the world.

But there is another disposition which seems to be permeating the church which is every bit as dangerous - or more so - than that just described. We refer to the fact that some are disposed to fling epithets (witch hunter,

alarmist, etc.) at those who warn against real dangers and who speak out against sin. It is fashionable to denounce nothing save denunciation itself. To speak openly and firmly against anything - especially any practices of brethren - leaves one open to the accusation that he is seeking to "build himself up by tearing his brethren down." Consequently some otherwise faithful brethren become so intimidated that they allow unscriptural doctrines and practices to pass unmentioned except in the broadest and most ambiguous of terms. Their cowardice passes under the guise of love and an inclination of peace.

If we would maintain the purity of the church we dare not forget the fact that love may be fraught with denunciation and peace may be wrought only with conflict. Christ and the apostles knew this, and did not forbear to speak against ungodliness in language painfully plain. Yet if they were on earth today their "approach" would be frowned upon by a large segment of the brotherhood, and some would even brand them as witch hunters and alarmists. While some "garnish the tombs" of Christ and the apostles they ostracize those who would be Christ-like and apostolic in their denunciation of sin.

Certainly all who truly love God love peace. But peace which is maintained by the sacrifice of principle is not the peace of the gospel. God is not the god of that peace. Christ is not the prince of that peace. Those who make such peace are not the peacemakers blessed by Christ. And such peace certainly is not the peace which "passeth all understanding." The only peace which pleases God is that which comes to those who lovingly take their stand upon principles of truth and righteousness.

We Can Just Drift Along!

HARRELL D. DAVIDSON

Reading from the American Standard Version of 1901 we note: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them" (Heb. 2:1). The Authorized version uses the word "slip" where the ASV uses "drift." This is a most interesting statement and indicates some things of which we need reminding.

The book in which this statement occurs is written toward brethren's being steadfast. They were being threatened by judiazing teachers. Their faith was being shaken. They were having difficulty assigning to the proper category their love for the law of Christ or the law of Moses. To prevent them from drifting the statement was made.

We believe that the statement needs making today. Not because of the same conditions, but because the same symptoms exist today and because we are human and we live in a world of temptation. Every person in this world who is a child of God has temptations that come our way every day that we live. We must be on guard so that we will not succumb to slipping away from God.

We need to be aware of drifting because it is so easy. My home community in Bradford, Tennessee has within a few miles of our home place a river. The north fork of the Forked Deer river is rather small but it often floods. It is not uncommon for water to cross highway 45 and even stop traffic. While rabbit hunting one winter we saw a rabbit sitting on a drift just floating down the river. It took no effort to float down the river. All one has to do is sit on a log and go on down stream. We could just drift along. This indicates no direction, no thought and no concern for spiritual things. It certainly takes effort to go upstream. The rabbit would have some work cut out for him if he wanted to go upstream.

Likewise it takes effort to conquer self and sin. It is not easy to live a clean life amid the unclean of this world. It was difficult to be a Daniel in Babylon. It is difficult to be brotherly in an unbrotherly world. To know that we are in the minority is something not easy to cope with. We like to know that we have the majority on our side. All of our life is a struggle as children of God. Great is the reward for faithfulness.

Drifting has some indicators. When a person begins to miss the services of the church he is drifting. When a person begins to forsake his giving to the Lord he is drifting. When we begin to think more of the material things of this world than the spiritual we are drifting. In almost every case, when we start drifting it is hardly perceptible. The modernist did not become one overnight. The liberal did not get up one morning and decide to be a liberal. Though one decided to skip the services of the church on an occasion, he does not see the condition of his soul. In fact, forsaking the assembly is only the result of drifting. The real cause is a lack of love for God. When one begins to drift he has fallen out of love for God and his own soul.

In I Cor. 10:12 the writer says: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "Take heed" indicates that we should listen. We ought to give the more earnest heed, that is, whole heartedly not with indifference but with much attention. The time for us to take heed is at the present time.

Anytime we think that we can just drift along we are in serious trouble. The church cannot grow if we are content with drifting. Remember that going upstream takes effort. A dead church, like a log, can float down the river. It takes life to go up the river.

4207 Adamsville Parkway
Adamsville, Al. 35005

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is meant by the Lord's statement, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged' [Matt. 7:1]?"

It is clear that Jesus did not intend to forbid judgments of all kinds, because he said in John 7:24: "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (1) Judgments issuing from civil courts, when not in violation of God's higher laws, are to be accepted (Rom. 12:1ff). (2) As a tree is known by its fruit (Matt. 3:16-20), so do we judge of the character of men by their conduct (I Cor. 6:2). John, an inspired apostle, judged an evil man in the church, Diotrefes (III John 9); and Paul admonished Titus to "refuse" (margin, avoid), "knowing that such a one. . . sinneth. . ." (Tit. 3:10,11). (3) It is the duty of the church to withdraw from those who "walk disorderly" (II Thess. 3:6-12); and this, of course, requires passing judgment upon the conduct, and disposition, of the person, or persons, involved (Rom. 16:17).

There are occasions when it is necessary, for the good of the brotherhood, to speak out boldly and positively against men and movements, in the church, which threaten its peace and its purity (I Tim. 1:3, 4, 18-20; 6:3-5; II Tim. 2:16-18; 4:14,15). To fail to do this, when the Cause we love is beset by those who would destroy it, is to become derelict in duty and faithless to our trust.

Paul positively declared that we "judge" them that are within - that is, within the church (I Cor. 5:12), an action requiring an appraisal of the character and conduct of those particularly involved. When Jesus said, "Judge not," he forbade unkind, unjustified and improper censure resulting from hasty and superficial investigation, and without regard for the well-being of the person, or persons, criticized. Jesus warned, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you," (Matt. 7:2). People who are kind and forgiving toward others usually experience tolerance from others themselves; those who are harsh, censorious and critical toward others find that others exhibit much the same disposition toward them.

1915 Good Advice Then - Good Advice Now 1976

"Let us, dear brethren, keep the old gospel plow moving, let us plow deep and wide. Don't cut and cover. Plow every inch of the ground, and the church will have fewer unconverted men and women in it."

"Don't try to add men and women to the church. God will do this if the material is right. I fear there are many in the church, so to speak, that God didn't place there. Let us be careful how we build. Let us look more to quality than to quantity. Don't beg people. If once you begin this way, when you have ceased begging they will go pouting."

"Don't try to pull them in; if you do, when you quit pulling, they will backslide. Don't try to fiddle people into the church; if you do, when you quit fiddling, they will fiddle out."

"Just preach the gospel plainly to people and keep right on preaching the gospel. Fill the honest heart full of the truth and such will obey. Dishonest-hearted - people the devil will keep and God can't reach them. Preach the gospel and be happy; never quit."

-Henry Devere, Written in 1915



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

few things were saved. For all practical purposes it was a total loss.

All of the fine library of Jerry went up in the destructive flames. He had spent many years and much money in the purchase of a fine religious library. His books were unusually good books. He had made wise selections through the years. Many of his books are now out of print and will be beyond replacement. Insurance coverage will not be sufficient to replace his valuable library of several hundred choice volumes. There is no way he can replace his sermon outlines and so many years of research notes into various Bible topics. Jerry is a thorough, meticulous student and pursued every study with a desire to know the rich fulness of Biblical truth. He is an avid reader and loved the hours he spent in his library. He felt toward his books like McGarvey did his. Any preacher who loves his books can enter into sympathy with brother

An Appeal of Urgency

On Wednesday night, July 14, 1976, during an electrical storm, the beautiful country home of Jerry and Martha Corlew of Ripley, Tennessee, caught fire and burned to the ground. The Corlews were at Bible Study at Halls where Jerry preaches at the time. They did not know it was afire until they saw the flames as they neared home that stormy night. Only a very

Corlew's great loss.

I feel that many who read this would be willing to send brother Corlew the price of a book. A check for the purchase of one book will be easier to send than would an actual book from your library. This also will avoid a duplication or his receiving a number of the same books. I have already given him some of my books and plan to give him more as well as a personal check with which to buy books. I am allowing him full use of my library until he can replace his own. Brother Corlew will be exceedingly grateful. He is a faithful and able preacher of the gospel. He loves the old paths. He is worthy of our help at this time. He and his family are hard workers. The Corlews have three children. All of them are teen-agers.

At about 11:00 the night the house burned I stood by the side of Jerry and Martha near the burning remains of a once lovely log house which they had worked diligently to restore. It belonged to Martha's ancestors. It was one of the most beautiful homes in Lauderdale County, Tennessee. Martha's furniture, her clothing and so many sentimental keepsakes were right then in burning ashes. The same was true with the belongings of Jerry and the three children. She said with deep emotion, "The thing I hate most is the loss of Jerry's books." Reader friend, does this not tug at your heartstrings? Why not help brother Corlew replace his library? His address is Route 4, Ripley, Tennessee 38063. He will place in the front of each book the name of the person or the congregation who makes the possession of that book possible.

Box 464
Ripley, Tenn. 38063

Criticism

BERT THOMPSON

Who among us has never been criticized? Many of us wish we could lay claim never to having been criticized, but in reality few (if any) of us can. There are, to this writer's knowledge, only two kinds of criticism: CONstructive and DEstructive. It is commonplace for people to talk about each other. And this can be done without gossiping (condemned in both the Old and New Testaments. . . see Leviticus 19:16; Psalms 15:1-3; Proverbs 18:8; I Timothy 5:11; Romans 1:29-30; II Corinthians 12:20; and James 4:11). Many of the things we say about people may be genuinely sincere and complimentary. This is as it should be. Unfortunately, a great deal more of the things we say (and hear) about others is far from complimentary. In fact, it is actually cruel and derogatory. All of us, at one time or another, have been the subject of such criticism. It is not a pleasant experience we wish to repeat.

It is not the purpose of this article to explore constructive criticism. Such criticism, given in love, should be accepted in the same manner. Constructive criticism (by its very nature, intended to build us up) should be welcomed by every Christian. Neither is it the purpose of this article simply to encourage more compliments for those around us (although we all would probably agree such is in order, and badly needed). This article is written to those of our number who constantly employ destructive criticism as a tool to let others know we do not agree with their actions, or to let others know their opinions are not shared by us.

It has been said, "To escape criticism, say nothing, do nothing, be nothing." Such a

description hardly encompasses the Christian life. Progress comes only when action is taken. The old motto, "Consider the truth - he makes progress only when he sticks out his neck" might also be applied to us. Without doing something decisive, it is impossible to move forward. And, as soon as we launch out, we are certain to draw criticism from some quarter. Even Shakespeare, many years ago, recognized this fact. He wrote (and his character Hamlet spoke) these words: "Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny." Even Jesus Christ, the most righteous, purest, finest, and only sinless person who ever lived in this earth was not immune. Some folks (few though they were) applauded His actions while mobs of others criticized Him for those same actions. The Pharisees constantly criticized Him, even though His works were good. Such is often the case in our day and time. Criticism comes from all ranks, whether our works be good or bad.

Destructive criticism has no place among members of the Lord's church. Paul instructed the Thessalonians (I Thessalonians 5:11) to "exhort one another and build each other up. . . ." The Hebrew writer admonishes us as he says, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Hebrews 10:24). There is a vast difference between edifying one another (or provoking one another to good works) and destroying one another through destructive criticism. Christians have no right to use destructive criticism!!

To those of us who are members of Christ's church, may I speak these admonitions
(Continued On Page 4)

Criticism

(Continued From Page 3)

through this brief article. Many of us criticize because of our own evil motives, be they envy, jealousy, covetousness, etc. We seem to feel that we add some "extra stature" to our own lives by besmirching someone else's. How sad a situation this is indeed. How wrong we are in this concept. Many of us criticize others because of our own narrow mindedness. Because a brother or sister's opinion or method of action does not agree with our own, we criticize him instead of re-evaluating our own position. We become, in Paul Bunyan's words, "a man that could look no way but downward with a muck-rake in his hand." Some of us criticize because we know how to do nothing else. It has been said that "rudeness is the weak man's imitation of strength." The same might be said of criticism. Benjamin Disraeli once said, "It is easier to be critical than correct." Zeuxis (400 B.C.) said, "Criticism comes easier than craftsmanship." Brethren, let us resolve to criticize less and edify more, heeding James' advice (James 3:5-6): "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how much wood is kindled by how small a fire! And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell."

To those who are both members and leaders in Christ's church, may I give these admonitions. Destructive criticism from an elder of the church becomes even more powerful because it comes from a man who holds the most important office on earth. Those of us who are Christians are aware of the fact that we are to obey the elders and be in subjection to them (Hebrews 13:17). True Christians are ever aware of this commandment from the pen of the writer of Hebrews. And we do not take it lightly!

Therefore, any criticism from an elder causes us immediately to re-assess our position. But destructive criticism does much damage to a Christian who is trying to live a Christ-like life. Perhaps the advice of Charles Buxton would be useful here: "The rule of carving holds good as to criticism: never cut out with a knife what you can cut with a spoon." One kind word, perhaps in the form of a suggestion, will do much more good in the long run than a bushel of words in the form of destructive criticism. Elders, above all, should not be associated with destructive criticism. Even if a person has a realistic reason for offering criticism, this does not give him the right to express it inappropriately! Destructive criticism, in any form, cannot be appropriately expressed. Elders, please admonish the flock without the use of destructive criticism.

In conclusion, we may examine ourselves to see if we are guilty of destructive criticism. Plutarch once said, "It is a thing of no great difficulty to raise objections against another man's oration - nay, it is a very easy matter; but to produce a better in its place is a work extremely troublesome." Unless our criticism is constructive, we may be assured it is not needed. If we cannot say something helpful, then let us not say anything at all.

One last word, from the pen of Guy N. Woods, to members of the church who are the targets of destructive criticism. "Paul was one of the most criticized men of his day, or any day. Yet he did not suffer himself to be impeded by adverse opinions of others. In spite of abuse and criticism, he went on with his work, assured that he would eventually find triumph. Said he: 'But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. . . He that judgeth me is the Lord'" (I Corinthians 4:3, 4). — 504 Brooks, College Station, Texas 77840.

Bible Arithmetic

JOHN B. TRACY

Mathematics was never my best subject in school. I was not unlike the boy whom the teacher had assigned to work the same arithmetic problem ten times in order to impress upon him the proper way to arrive at the correct answer. The following day he proudly placed the assignment on his teacher's desk and declared, "I worked the problem ten times, just like you said, and here are my TEN DIFFERENT ANSWERS!" Why could he have worked the same mathematical problem ten times and arrived at ten different answers? Simply because he had repeatedly violated various mathematical laws or axioms.

In a similar manner, many denominational preachers are violating basic laws of Bible arithmetic which is resulting in the production of a host of incorrect answers for the religious world. God's word deals in some detail with the basic arithmetic procedures of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Notice some of the laws or axioms of Bible mathematics and how the denominational world is in violation of them.

The Bible says that we cannot ADD to God's word (Prov. 30:6). Yet, many denominations have added their creeds, manuals, and disciplines to the pure seed of the Bible. The result is that, on many doctrinal matters, the religious world provides inaccurate answers based on man-made documents instead of on the word of God. Many religious bodies have, for example,

added the musical instrument in their worship to God. In so doing, they are merely binding, as doctrine, the commandments of men (Matt. 15:9).

Another rule in the mathematics of the Bible is that we cannot SUBTRACT from God's word (Rev. 22:19). Yet, many in the religious world violate this axiom by subtracting baptism from its essential place in the plan of salvation (Mark 16:16). Most religious organizations have provided incorrect answers to the problem of worship by subtracting the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7).

The Bible also has much to say about the scriptural process of MULTIPLICATION. When the gospel of Jesus Christ is fervently taught (Acts 5:42), the result will be the multiplication of disciples (Acts 6:1). The Bible teaches that congregations which are edified will be multiplied (Acts 9:31). Many religious groups, however, seek to multiply through a complex governmental hierarchy which is uncharacteristic of autonomous New Testament congregations.

DIVISION among disciples is a subject of repeated warning in God's word. The Bible tells us, by way of illustration, that a house which is divided against itself cannot stand (Matt. 12:25). Christ prayed for unity among believers and labeled it as evidence of His mission on earth (John 17:20-21). The Ecumenical Movement, however, stresses

union instead of unity in the denominational world by ignoring doctrinal differences for the sake of organizational strength. This answer to division disregards the oneness of the faith which is plainly taught in God's word (Eph. 4:5).

Although Mathematics was never my best subject in school, I can be confident of the answers I give to the problems of religious ADDITION, SUBTRACTION, MULTIPLICATION and DIVISION by respecting the laws and axioms of arithmetic found in God's word. Our plea to the religious world is that it ADD its confidence in the complete authority of God's word by SUBTRACTING man-made dogmas, creeds and disciplines. After all, the New Testament church which was purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28) must continue to MULTIPLY despite modern day religious DIVISION.

1686 Williamson Road
Macon, Georgia 31206

Is The Death Penalty Scriptural?

RAY HAWK

For nine years no one has been hanged, gassed, or electrocuted. Claire Randall, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, says the recent U. S. Supreme Court decision reinstating the death penalty is "a step backward." We believe it is! IT IS A STEP BACK TO GOD'S TEACHING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

In Rom. 13:4, the Lord teaches, "For he (the government) is the MINISTER OF GOD to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the SWORD in vain: for he is the MINISTER OF GOD, a REVENGER to execute WRATH upon him that doeth evil."

The God of Heaven teaches that evil doers need to be punished. It seems liberal churches think more of the evil doer than of those they victimize. They want to take away the SWORD that GOD put into the hands of the government to PUNISH evil doers! They demote God's ministers and leave them defenseless to protect the rights of those that keep the law!

The recent U. S. Supreme Court decision was a step backward — to God's teaching in the New Testament!

—Pensacola, Florida

Some Of This And That

By GUS NICHOLS

A faithful congregation of true Christians has its advantages and its disadvantages. In the sight of God it has all the advantages which are worth while. By its teaching and preaching of the true gospel it will draw to it all those in the community who believe and love the truth, and wish to strictly obey the Lord in all matters of faith and revelation, and it will not appeal unto the rest. Those who cater to the flesh and that which is unscriptural and immoral, will best appeal to the wicked and ungodly. Those who mark down the price, and offer most in fleshly lusts, and sinful pleasures, are sure to have the largest following. Brethren, don't lower the gospel standard of truth so the world can jump into our fellowship. If you compromise the truth so as to catch and bring in those unconverted, they will leave the whole lump and destroy the church from within. Let us do all we can to "convert" all men, then be satisfied with whatever number is converted by the gospel and made new creatures in Christ. (Jn. 3:5; Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 5:17.) Those who lower the Bible standard so the world will come in are sure to be disappointed when they soon see the church going out into the world. (Rom. 12:1-2.)

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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Isaiah 7:14

(Number One)

FRANKLIN CAMP

Isaiah 7:14 has been the source of a great amount of controversy. The R.S.V. translation of the passage has added to the confusion. The King James and the American Standard use the word "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14, while the R.S.V. uses the phrase "a young woman." A vital and important question is, Should the passage read "virgin" or "young woman?" There are some simple considerations that I believe will contribute to one's understanding of this passage and how it should be translated. I do not believe that it is necessary for one to have a knowledge of the original language to be able to arrive at a scriptural conclusion as to whether the passage should read "virgin" or "young woman."

The fact that Matthew states that the virgin birth of Christ fulfills the passage should settle the question. Was Christ born of a virgin? If the answer is yes, then the King James and the American Standard Versions are correct in using the word "virgin." The R.S.V. is wrong in using the phrase "young woman." Thus, the critical problem in Isaiah 7:14 is one's attitude toward inspiration. Whatever other problems there may be in Isaiah 7:14, these problems take a secondary place when the inspiration of both Matthew and Isaiah are accepted. When one accepts the verbal inspiration of the Scripture, then all problem passages will be studied in this light and the only solution to the problem will be such as will harmonize with inspiration. Any explanation of Isaiah 7:14 that conflicts with inspiration and is not in harmony with Matthew's use of the word "virgin," must be rejected by all who accept the integrity and the reliability of the Scriptures.

The inspiration of the Bible and the virgin birth of Christ are two fundamental truths that we dare not tamper with. These truths must be upheld or the entire Bible crumbles. If the Bible is not an inspired revelation from God, it is not worth the paper that it is written on. If Christ was not born of a virgin, there is no gospel of redemption; thus, Isaiah 7:14 becomes a fundamental passage. Any exegesis of the passage that affects inspiration or the virgin birth of Christ must be opposed by those who love and respect the Bible. The controversy over this passage is not "a

tempest in a teapot." it is vital and affects the very foundation of our faith.

I do not mean to say by the things previously mentioned that those who have defended the translation of the R.S.V. reject either inspiration or the virgin birth of Christ. I am saying that they are not conscious of the problems that they are confronted with. I think I know at least a part of the reason that has led some to claim that the translation of the R.S.V. is acceptable, but I believe before our study is finished, I can establish by the Scriptures that this position is untenable and without any justification.

SOME RULES OF BIBLE STUDY

Isaiah 7:14 needs to be studied in the context of the book of Isaiah. Whatever there is in the passage is related to the overall teaching of the entire book. It is my conviction that some who are having problems with Isaiah 7:14 are doing so because they are looking at the verse isolated from the rest of the book. One rule of Bible study is that verses must be considered in the light of the general teaching and theme of the book. Will this rule of Bible study offer any help in the analysis of Isaiah 7:14? I believe that it will and I shall seek to show how the verse is related to the general teaching of the book. I will come back to this particular point later as we look at the book of Isaiah in a general way.

A second rule of Bible study is to ask the question, Who is doing the speaking? In connection with Isaiah 7:14, let us ask this simple question. Who is doing the speaking? The answer is Isaiah. But who is Isaiah? Isaiah is a prophet, but, Who is a prophet? A prophet is one that speaks for God. He is a "forthteller," and included in his "forthtelling" is foretelling. Since Isaiah was a prophet and a prophet spoke for God — "forthtelling" and foretelling — why should one have any difficulty with Isaiah 7:14?

The nature of a work of a prophet was such that one should have no difficulty with Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth of Christ. David prophesied the resurrection of Christ (Psalms 16:10, Acts 2:29-31). Daniel prophesied of the ascension of Christ (Dan. 7:14, Acts 1:9). Why should there be any problem with Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth?

Furthermore, one should remember that what a prophet said was not his word, but the

word of God. Read Isaiah 1:1, Isaiah 2:1, and especially Isaiah 8:3. Did God know that the mother of Jesus would be a virgin? Matthew says that it was "spoken of the Lord by the prophet" (Matt. 1:22). Was Matthew correct when he said that it was spoken by the Lord? If he was correct, then where is the difficulty in Isaiah 7:14?

Is the word "virgin" correct in Matthew 1:23? Even the R.S.V. translates Matthew 1:23 "virgin." If the "virgin" of Matthew 1:23 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, then does it not follow that it is "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14? In view of the unique nature of the virgin birth, there is no way that one can have "virgin" in Matthew 1:23 and "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14. The acceptance of the inspiration of prophecy settles the translation of Isaiah 7:14. The problem of Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 is not with the passages, but with men's attitude toward prophecy and inspiration.

As proof that the problem with Matthew 1:23 and Isaiah 7:14 has to do with one's attitude toward prophecy and inspiration, read the following comments by Barclay on Matthew 1:23:

"This passage tells us how Jesus was born by the action of the Holy Spirit. It tells us of what we call the virgin birth. The virgin birth is a doctrine which presents us with many difficulties, and it is a doctrine which our church does not compel us to accept in the literal and physical sense. This is one of the doctrines on which the church says that we have full liberty to come to our own belief and our own conclusion. At the moment we are concerned only to find what this means for us. If we come to this passage with fresh eyes and if we read it as if we're reading it for the first time, we will find the fact which it stresses as not so much that Jesus was born of a woman who was a virgin as that the birth of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit . . . It is as if these sentences were underlined and printed large. That is what Matthew wishes to say to us in this passage. What then does it mean to say that in the birth of Jesus the Holy Spirit of God was especially operative. Let us leave aside all the doubtful and debatable things and let us here concentrate on that great truth as Matthew would wish us to do. In Jewish

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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The Convenience of Ambiguity

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "But as God is true, our word, toward you was not yea and nay" (II Cor. 1:18). The implication is that some had accused the apostle of talking out of both sides of his mouth in connection with his personal plans and the preaching of the gospel. He called attention to the fact that when he worked

personally among the Corinthians his preaching was not such as might be interpreted to mean both yea and nay at the same time. In the terminology of brother Gus Nichols, Paul did not preach both that Katy did and that Katy didn't. To have done so would have been dishonest.

One of the most dangerous characteristics of the liberal movement among us is its ambiguity — the formulation of statements which could have both a true and a false meaning, or statements which are true per se but imply false conclusions. Such statements allow their authors to teach what is false, and yet in every case be able to show that their statements are absolutely true. They are like the little boy who was selling lemonade on the street corner for ten cents a glass. When it was pointed out to him that his competitor on the next block was selling it for five cents a glass, his reply was: "Yes, but the cat didn't fall into mine." Was he saying that the cat fell into the competitor's lemonade? This is what we would immediately conclude. But if the competitor challenged this report, he could say, "That is not what I said. The statement I made is absolutely true."

If a man who holds views contrary to the



BOBBY DUNCAN

Bible would state these views in unambiguous language it would not be difficult for all to recognize his unsoundness. But when his real position is couched in language that cannot be assigned a specific meaning it is most difficult to know — much less prove — where he stands.

The following paragraphs contain certain quotations that are ambiguous, either in the statements per se, or in the things implied. These quotations are from brotherhood publications. We are not suggesting that in every case the author is unsound. What we are suggesting is that the statements themselves leave room for us to wonder just what idea the author intended to convey.

The following statement is from an article in a magazine that is circulated widely in our brotherhood. "But today it should be more apparent than ever that Christianity cannot be confined to any sect or denomination. The Lord we serve is too big!

"The cause we serve is too great. Let us turn loose of any lesser loyalties and give ourselves without reservation to the one Lord who deserves our supreme loyalty. . ."

While we must agree with the truthfulness of the above, we would raise some questions. Christianity cannot be confined to any sect or denomination, but why use the word confined? Does this not imply that Christianity may be found in the various sects and denominations, but that it also may be found outside them? Suppose one should say that the preaching of the gospel should not be confined to the inside of meetinghouses. Would not this imply that preaching should be done inside meetinghouses, but not only there? Or suppose one should say that our efforts at reaching the lost cannot be confined to the United States if we are to please God. Would this not be a clear implication that we should try to reach the lost of the United States, but not them only?

If one who knows the truth about the church and about sectarianism should approach this author, no doubt this statement would be explained to mean that Christianity cannot be found in any sect or denomination. But to the denominational mind this statement simply says that Christianity, while found in the various sects, also exists in the lives of many who do not belong to any church — the old threadbare denominational idea.

What is meant by the statement: "The Lord we serve is too big"? Does this mean that He is too big to have children in one church only? This is the very kind of reasoning denominational preachers have used for years in arguing that there are Christians in all churches. Is this what the author of this means? Perhaps not. But this is just exactly the interpretation the average denominational person would place on this statement. For the sake of truth it would be much better to say nothing than to make such ambiguous statements as the above.

In one series of television programs produced for the purpose of preaching the gospel, the speaker invites his audience to pause with him for a moment to "allow God's spirit to enter our hearts and minds." This statement, or its equivalent, is found in program after program. In view of the denominational idea that before one can understand the Bible he must have a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on his heart, this statement is sure to be interpreted to mean just that by the majority of denominational people who hear it.

Should the producers of the program be approached about this matter they would show that this is not the idea they intend to convey. It would be pointed out that in the script itself the word "spirit" is not capitalized, showing that the idea under consideration is that we should allow the attitude or disposition of God

to enter our hearts so that we might be more receptive to His truth. But those of the television audience are not shown the script, and when they hear a reference to "God's spirit" they immediately think of the Holy Spirit of God. Such ambiguity on the part of those in such responsible positions seems inexcusable.

Recently a paper published by some brethren contained an outline of a speech on the need for unity in the brotherhood. The author was bemoaning (and rightly so) the divided state of the brotherhood. But in doing so he made the following criticism: "Lines drawn over who is a brother — born again believers being excluded on basis of not agreeing with a certain position advocated by someone or some group." He then added the question: "Does a born-again Christian cease to be a brother because he believes or doesn't believe in. . .?"

Now the clear implication from this statement and this question is that the position one might hold from a doctrinal standpoint should have nothing at all to do with whether or not fellowship is extended him, just so long as he is a brother. And since he does not cease to be a brother, regardless of what position he may take, then the cloak of fellowship should be spread over him. If this is not what was meant by such a statement and such a question, then, pray tell, what is the logic behind the use of such? But we are assured that this is not what the author meant. And we are happy for this assurance. But why say something and publish it throughout the brotherhood when it really is not representative of one's position on a given subject?

Further on in the same outline the author said: "We must have confidence in the truth but must never assume that we cannot be wrong, or that we have an exclusive claim to the truth, or that we have answered all the questions or settled all the difficulties." With this statement we are certainly in agreement. But since it had already been implied in the outline that we should fellowship everybody who is a brother, regardless of his doctrine, and since he had mentioned the names of such men as Yater Tant and Carl Ketcherside; one who knows the score would naturally wonder if he is not moving into the camp with Ketcherside. Was he saying that, since we don't know everything, we just can't be absolutely sure about anything? And since we don't have an exclusive claim to the truth, it just may be that we are wrong and the denominational folks are right?

As before stated, we have been assured that this is not the idea the author intended to convey, and we are glad to learn such. We would feel better about the situation should we see a public declaration to this effect.

In each of the above cases the most natural conclusion would be the erroneous one. This is not to say that the writers referred to above are in error on these points of doctrine. It is to say that we should be extremely careful in choosing our words, especially in matters that are so fundamental and vital as the above mentioned. It could be that these ambiguities would have gone unnoticed a few years ago, before liberalism began to creep into the church. But this liberal movement is just another reason why we should take such care.

We realize also that anyone may be misunderstood — even Christ and the apostles. But when one is so ambiguous in his preaching and writing that the most natural conclusions to be drawn from such are false conclusions, he should not harshly judge his brethren who question his soundness.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6).

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Does Matt. 18:15-17 teach that a brother, who holds to, and has publicly advocated false doctrine, must be personally contacted before it is proper and right to refute his errors publicly?"

No.

It is disturbing that many brethren these days have no hesitancy in taking texts out of their contexts, and using them utterly without regard to the purpose that prompted the statements, thus reaching conclusions wholly foreign to that intended. Such is very obviously the case here.

Even the most casual examination of Matt. 18:15-17, will show that our Lord had under consideration offences of a personal nature, occasions where one brother has suffered injury of one kind or other at the hands of another brother in the congregation, it has not the slightest reference to, nor may it be properly applied, to those instances where erring brethren have propagated false doctrine to the detriment of the Cause of Christ itself: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

(1) The offence involved is a "trespass" (amarteese, sin) by one brother against another brother. (2) The offending brother is to be visited by him whom he has harmed and rebuked (elegdson auton.) It is significant that the Greek word here is not the usual term for rebuke (epitimoo), but one which means to rebuke for the purpose, and in the manner leading to conviction. (3) If this brings the sinning brother to repentance, fellowship is restored and a brother "gained". (4) However, if the brother is stubborn and will not make right his wrong, "one or two" brethren are to be taken along on the assumption that their intervention may bring him to his senses. If this attempt also fails, the issue is to be brought before the church, and the matter publicly considered. And, if this, too, does not influence the brother to confess and correct his wrong-doing, he is to be withdrawn from and thenceforth regarded as a heathen and a publican. Heathens and publicans were looked upon as wicked and corrupt men, out of fellowship with the saints, and under the disapproval of God. Such was this erring and impenitent brother so long as he persisted in his impenitent way.

It is obvious, therefore, that this passage is applicable only to those instances, involving personal offenses, where one brother has sinned against another brother. Often, elsewhere in the New Testament, when brethren were guilty of other types of wrong-doing, vastly different means were followed in dealing with them. Who, for example, could seriously believe that Paul, the apostle, should have contacted the incestuous man of I Cor. 5:1, before penning his instructions to the church regarding its obligations in the matter? Are we to suppose that he was in violation of our Lord's

admonitions in Matt. 18:15-17, when he warned Timothy of Hymenaeus and Philetus because of the errors they were propagating regarding the resurrection (II Tim. 2:15-18)? And, what of his rebuke of Phygellus and Hermogenes who were responsible in turning all of the saints "in Asia," against him? Ought he to have talked with these errorists before making their actions publicly known (II Tim. 1:15)?

It is gross misapprehension of Matt. 18:15-17, to offer it as a rule of procedure in dealing with instances where false doctrine is being advocated to the disruption of the cause and to the destruction of the souls of men; and those who thus do fall into grave sin themselves. The disposition to apologize for, or to protect any one who is teaching error, makes those who do so parties to the effort itself and the Lord will deal with them accordingly at the last day. Paul's admonition to the church in Rome settles the matter for those who truly respect God and his word: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

A Statement About The Bible

Department At

Freed-Hardeman College

WILLIAM WOODSON

Freed-Hardeman College is enjoying a great year in its history. Great opportunities for service to the cause of Christ are before the college. The hopes, dreams, sacrifices, and hard work of hundreds of brethren from the days of A. G. Freed and N. B. Hardeman until the present have made and are making these opportunities possible. The college today deserves, welcomes, and enjoys the confidence and support of brethren everywhere. In view of this, she looks forward with confidence.

In the past six years I have had a full awareness of all matters connected with the Bible department of Freed-Hardeman College and have had a good knowledge of its affairs for more than seventeen years. In this awareness I state the following:

The Bible department and the college unswervingly maintain a firm stand for the truth and a full soundness in the faith. In addition, every teacher in the department and in the college is sound in the faith. A capable and faithful administration maintains the soundness of the college and all departments in the old paths.

In the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, January 8, 1976, Brother E. Claude Gardner stated the policy of the college concerning Bible versions. This statement was:

At Freed-Hardeman College for some time we have had the policy of using for the basic text in the Bible classes the AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION and the KING JAMES VERSION with others being used for comparative study.

This policy is being observed in letter and spirit by all concerned. Reports to the contrary as to soundness, determination to stand for truth, and use of Bible versions are either based on faulty information or a misrepresentation of the case.

Henderson, Tenn. 38340

Read Through The New Testament Each Month

WENDELL WINKLER

We want to encourage as much as we possibly can the reading of the Bible! Accordingly, we are publishing a schedule, which if followed, will take a person through the New Testament once each month. Why not resolve to do this?

- (1) Matthew 1-9
- (2) Matthew 10-17
- (3) Matthew 18-24
- (4) Matthew 25-Mark 4
- (5) Mark 5-10
- (6) Mark 11-16
- (7) Luke 1-6
- (8) Luke 7-11
- (9) Luke 12-18
- (10) Luke 19-24
- (11) John 1-7
- (12) John 8-14
- (13) John 15-21
- (14) Acts 1-7
- (15) Acts 8-14
- (16) Acts 15-20
- (17) Acts 21-28
- (18) Romans 1-6
- (19) Romans 7-16
- (20) I Corinthians 1-9
- (21) I Corinthians 10-16
- (22) II Corinthians
- (23) Galatians, Ephesians
- (24) Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians
- (25) II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy
- (26) Titus, Philemon, Hebrews 1-9
- (27) Hebrews 10-13, James
- (28) I & II Peter, I, II, & III John
- (29) Jude, Revelation 1-11
- (30) Revelation 12-22

The Royal Priesthood

G.F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

Jesus Christ, the "high priest over the house of God" (Heb. 10:21), is the "one mediator between God and men." (1 Tim. 2:5). In the passages in the New Testament in which God's children are referred to as priests, the word is applied to all Christians.

Peter says: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

Please read Revelation 1:5,6; 20:6.

Henry H. Halley says: "The Levitical priesthood was divinely ordained as mediator between God and the Hebrew nation in the ministry of animal sacrifices. Those sacrifices were fulfilled in Christ. Animal sacrifices are no longer necessary. Neither are priests. The arrogant presumption of the Roman priesthood, in inserting itself between God and man, has been the devil's main agency in corrupting Christianity. . ."

Isaiah 7:14

(Continued From Page 1)

thought the Holy Spirit had certain very definite functions. We cannot bring to this passage the Christian idea of the Holy Spirit and all of its fulness because Joseph would know nothing about that. We must interpret in light of the Jewish idea of the Holy Spirit, for it is that idea that Joseph would inevitably bring to this message, for that was all he knew."

It is quite easy to see from Barclay's comments on Matthew 1:23 that his real problem is the rejection of prophecy and inspiration; thus, in order to avoid the difficulty, he seeks to break the force of the statement made by Matthew that the birth of Christ was a virgin birth and that it was in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. He does not relieve himself of the difficulty in the saying that what Matthew stresses is not so much that Jesus was born of a virgin, as that the birth of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit. In what way would the birth of Jesus be the work of the Holy Spirit and be different from other men if it did not involve the virgin birth? Of course, this is not what he believes, but his very attempt to avoid the truth of Matthew 1:23 shows the foolishness of the Modernist's attempt to reject what the Bible teaches in relation to the virgin birth of Christ.

Another question that one needs to ask is, To whom is it spoken? The prophecy was made to the house of David and Ahaz. Syria and Israel were threatening Judah. The kings of Syria and Israel had already selected their own man who would be king of Judah (Isaiah 7:6). God, through Isaiah, told Ahaz that their plan would not succeed (Isaiah 7:7). Then Isaiah said to Ahaz, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (Isaiah 7:9). The prophet was trying to get Ahaz to place his faith in God rather than making alliance with other nations. In order to encourage faith, the prophet told Ahaz to ask for a sign, but Ahaz, in pretending piety, refused to ask for the sign. Then Isaiah gives the prophecy of the virgin birth in 7:14.

(To Be Continued)

959 Alford Ave.
Birmingham, Al. 35226

About Heretics

RAY HAWK

In the June 1976 issue of INTEGRITY, we have the following morsel to fall from the pen of W. Carl Ketcherside, a staff writer of that disenchanted paper.

"The people of God belong to God. They are not pawns of preachers, nor pamperers of presbyters! They are not to be inhibited by institutions nor frightened by factions! It is time to acknowledge openly and frankly that we are not under law but under grace! The love letters of the new covenant scriptures are not a written code. Our pattern is a person. It is not a partisan practice palmed off as the will of God. God's people do not need to be denounced from the pulpit but delivered from it. They need to be freed and not frightened, saved and not scared."

Brother Ketcherside wants members of the church of Christ to stop listening to Bible toting, scripture quoting preachers and give ear instead to him. He wants saints to put down their Bibles and take up INTEGRITY. He preaches "love" that is spelled L-I-E. He graciously garbles "grace" and illustriously ill-defines "law."

Brother Ketcherside believes the Bible is

not a "written code" nor a "pattern theology." Our brother has a way with words! One moment he informs us that this "pattern theology" has ripped us into shreds and then tells us that "the pattern of the scriptures is universally to point to Jesus." If the new covenant is not a written code or pattern on "church practice" how can it be trusted to be a code or pattern on the life of Christ?

Isn't it strange that men like brother Ketcherside try to get us away from the Bible by telling us it causes division, when inspired men indicated that it will bring us together? If the Bible will divide us on the "doctrine" of the church, why would it not also divide us on the "doctrine" of the person Jesus? Ketcherside states that it points us to Jesus, but it will not point us to the church, etc.

When Paul, by inspiration, gave that "written code" to the Corinthians, he told them to be of the same mind and the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). Paul gave teaching (doctrine) throughout this epistle to correct error in that congregation. If brother Ketcherside had been there, he would have ill-advised Paul just to "preach the gospel" and stop giving a code and pattern theology! Brother Ketcherside teaches the old denominational party line: "The man and not the plan." He imitates the sectarian theology of "doctrine is not important, just belief in Christ."

Brother Ketcherside decries the fact that the church has heretics. He would have spoken out against the church in the first century too! It had heretics. It had division. But, Paul did not give the solution to that division which INTEGRITY and Ketcherside give. They tell us to forget the New Testament law and be only under grace. Paul said New Testament grace taught us (Tit. 2:11,12). That teaching (doctrine) is the New Testament law!

Heretics, such as brother Ketcherside and INTEGRITY, will come and go, but the New Testament will remain to be our pattern and code for our conduct in private and public life. To follow its teaching (doctrine) is to follow its author, Jesus Christ!

Does God Ever Brag On You?

J. R. POWELL

Praise, if handed out in the right amount and if not allowed to develop the wrong kind of pride within us, is good for us. We all appreciate commendation. We probably get more of it from our fellow men in this life than we deserve.

Above and beyond that, though, we wonder if God ever brags on us. As you examine your own life and see how you've performed in wearing His Son's name, do you think God ever brags on you? Well, he has bragged on some! For example, we read in Job 1:8 that God bragged to Satan about Job, saying, "... there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." Job so lived before God that God actually bragged on him!

We find another statement of commendation from God in Genesis 18:19, this time about Abraham. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Looking at this verse, we can see these points:

(1) God knew him. God knew him not just in the sense of being acquainted with him, but He knew him inwardly. He knew the man's devotion. He knew the man's motives. He knew the man's whole being was wrapped up

in God's will. The question is: Does God know us in the same manner? Has our past faithfulness been such that God knows us well, and can rest assured that, no matter what the future brings, we'll be true to Him?

(2) God knew Abraham as a man in control of his house. Just as in the New Testament the Lord lays upon the FATHERS the charge to bring up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4) so in this Patriarchal Age the father was in charge. Many might not be true to this charge, but God knew that Abraham would. "He will command his children and his household . . ."

(3) God knew Abraham would not only command, but would set the proper example. "He will command his children and his household AFTER HIM . . ." A picture is worth a thousand words and all had "rather see a sermon than to hear one any day." God knew, inasmuch as Abraham was a man loyal to God, that he would set the example before those around him, and thus, in commanding his children and his household, his own good influence would be there working for him.

(4) God knew that Abraham's way was to keep the Lord's ways and do justice and judgment.

Does God ever brag on You? Can you put your own name in the blank space so that God would be saying, "For I know _____, that he will command his children after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord"?

Columbus, Miss.

Does It Make Any Difference What We Believe?

TOM CHILDERS

Mr. Sam Morris wrote, "The way a Christian lives, what he says, his character, his conduct, or his attitude toward other people, have nothing to do with the salvation of his soul . . . All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform, will NOT MAKE HIS SOUL ONE WHIT SAFER; and all the sins he may commit, from idolatry to murder, will not make his soul in any danger . . . THE WAY A MAN LIVES HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HIS SALVATION." The devil never preached a better sermon.

A preacher in Lamar County said on radio, "Some preachers fool away their time preaching good works for salvation; telling people to live right; the bogeyman is going to get you if you don't pray tonight before you go to bed." He also said, "All the work necessary for my salvation was done by my Savior." Does it matter whether we believe this false doctrine or the hundreds of verses in the Bible that teach the necessity of obedience to salvation? (See Matthew 7:21, Hebrews 5:8-9; Titus 2:11-13 and James 2:14-26.) It makes a great deal of difference what one believes. This preacher that we quoted has a sister in the nursing home in a helpless condition but he has not visited her in over two years! This is the "grace-only" doctrine gone to seed. One thing for sure, he is practicing exactly what he preaches! Sadly, he is not alone in his actions.

In view of this kind of preaching, little wonder that it is so hard to motivate people to become New Testament Christians and to live the Christian life. All their lives they have been taught grace only, faith only and once saved-always saved. They are only practicing what they have been taught. It does matter whether one believes the truth or error.

P. O. Drawer 0
Vernon, Ala. 35592

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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Isaiah 7:14

(No. 2)

FRANKLIN CAMP

[This is the second in a series of four articles on this subject.]

SOME FURTHER

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Question: Is the word "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14 a mistranslation? If the word "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14 is a mistranslation, then both the King James Translation and the American Standard Version have mistranslated the word. Second, may the Hebrew word be translated "virgin"? Is it possible and is it correct to translate the Hebrew word "virgin"? The R.S.V. translators would not deny that the word "almah" may be translated "virgin." The R.S.V. has the word "virgin" in the margin, thus admitting that the Hebrew word could be translated "virgin". The R.S.V. has "virgin" in Matthew 1:23, which is the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.

Why the problem with Isaiah 7:14? It is not because the Hebrew word cannot be translated "virgin," because R.S.V. puts "virgin" in the margin of 7:14 and in the text of Matthew 1:23. The King James and the American Standard Version are not mistranslations. Even the R.S.V. translators would admit that the King James and the American Standard Versions are not mistranslations. It is not because "virgin" does not harmonize with the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. (See Matthew 1:23).

Third, is "virgin" the correct translation of Matthew 1:23? Could Matthew 1:23 be translated by any other word and be correct? "Young woman" certainly will not do in Matthew 1:23. The birth of Christ was unique. It is the only one like it that there has ever been. Since this is the case, the word "virgin" is the only word that can be correctly used in Matthew 1:23. The birth being unique, a word denoting the uniqueness of the birth was needed. The word "virgin" was the only word that could denote the uniqueness of the birth of Christ. The translators of the R.S.V. felt the force of the unique situation in Matthew 1:23 and used the word "virgin."

Now some questions are in order. If the birth of Christ in 1:23 required the R.S.V. translators to use the word "virgin", why did it require the word? Was it because the birth of Christ was unique and the only one of its

kind? If so, then some other questions are in order. Is Matthew 1:23 a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14? Matthew says that it is and evidently the translators of the R.S.V. agree because here is the way the R.S.V. translates Matthew 1:22: "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has spoken by the prophet." In answer to the question as to whether or not Matthew 1:23 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, the R.S.V. translators recognize that it is. If Matthew 1:23 is unique and the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, then it follows that Isaiah 7:14 must be as unique and unusual as Matthew 1:23. Even if some prophecies had a dual fulfillment, Isaiah 7:14 cannot be one of them. A one-time event cannot have a dual fulfillment. The birth of Christ was a one-time event. This being true, it was not possible for there to have been such a birth in the days of Isaiah or Ahaz. If there was a virgin birth in Isaiah's or Ahaz's time, then one would have two virgin births. If there have been two virgin births, then the birth of Christ was not unique and if His birth was not unique, He is not the Son of God.

There is no way that one can defend the Deity and Sonship of Christ except by defending His virgin birth. But no one can defend His virgin birth and Deity while contending that a virgin birth occurred in the days of Isaiah and Ahaz and the one born at that time was not Deity.

If one was born of a virgin in the days of Isaiah and Ahaz, was he also Deity? If yes, then God had two sons and Christ was not the only begotten son of God. On the other hand, if the virgin of Isaiah 7:14 was a virgin who had a child by an earthly father in Isaiah's day, then Christ's father would also have to be an earthly father. This means that those who deny the Deity of Christ are right after all and Joseph was the real father of Jesus.

Was the birth of Christ the only one of its kind? If yes, then there could, under no circumstances, have been a dual fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. The argument of a dual fulfillment is not the answer to any problem that may be in Isaiah 7. Whether brethren want to admit it or not, the dual fulfillment ends up in denying the Deity of Christ. It seems to me that if brethren would just one time stop and recognize the unique nature of the birth of

Christ, that it was a one-time event, they would realize that one cannot have a two-fold fulfillment of a one-time event. I think most would readily admit that the birth of Christ differs from every other birth that has ever been. If this is true, and it is, it must necessarily follow that the prophecy that foretold it cannot, in the nature of the case, have a dual fulfillment. One might as well claim that one is two as to claim that a one-time event occurred twice.

Let me ask again, was the birth of Christ a one-time unique event? Is Isaiah 7:14 a prophecy of this one-time event? If so, that should settle forever how Isaiah 7:14 should be translated. The birth of Christ was a one-time event (Matt. 1:23). The birth of Christ was a virgin birth. Since the birth of Christ was a virgin birth. His birth was a one-time event as there has been only one virgin birth. Isaiah 7:14 prophesies of the virgin birth of Christ. The birth of Christ is the only one of its kind; therefore, Isaiah prophesied only of the birth of Christ. One cannot have a prophecy of a one-time event and have more in the prophecy than the event which fulfill it.

959 Alford Ave., Birmingham, Al.

(To be Continued)

The Eternal Nature of Jesus Christ

JERRY H. WILSON

Jesus Christ had many confrontations with the Jews and always expressed great spiritual truths in trying to defeat their self-righteousness and prejudicial views concerning Himself. A good example is His statement in John 8:58. Jesus made a simple but profound statement: "Before Abraham

Continued on Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Rightly Dividing The Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew

Generally speaking, careful students of the Bible have little difficulty in understanding that a part of Matthew 24 has to do with the overthrow of Jerusalem, which took place in the year 70; and part of the chapter has to do with the final judgment, which, of course, is yet to come. But some difficulty is encountered when we begin to try to determine just which part applies to which event. Verses 29-31 contain language which seems to describe events connected with the final judgment (Matt. 24:29-31). Yet these verses are in that part of the chapter which describes events connected with the overthrow of Jerusalem. I believe a careful consideration of the facts will enable us to resolve this seeming difficulty.

Look first at the word immediately in verse 29. What is the meaning of this word? Those who have erroneously applied these verses to the final judgment say that immediately in this case means 'next in the series of great events,' and that it could be immediately even though thousands of years later. But the word immediately doesn't mean that, and neither does the Greek word from which it is here translated. Most will admit that this is a definition forced upon the word in order to escape the conclusion that the events of verses 29-31 were to take place soon after the events described in the preceding verses. Once we are not afraid to let the things said in verses 29-31 apply to events connected with the



BOBBY DUNCAN

destruction of Jerusalem, we will be willing to allow the word immediately to mean immediately.

Look now at verses 32 and 33: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things (i.e., the things just described, B.D.), know that it is near, even at the doors." We have no trouble with this statement. Here the Lord is emphasizing the fact that the observant disciple would be able to see the signs pointing to the coming destruction of Jerusalem. But this statement immediately follows those verses which have been erroneously applied to the final judgment. Question: Is the final judgment to be preceded by signs to let us know it is at hand? If not, then the language of verses 29-31 must apply to something other than the final judgment.

But there is still another reason why it is not good Bible exegesis to apply the things said in verses 29-31 to the judgment which is yet to come. Jesus said in verse 34: "Verily I say unto you, This generation (i.e., the generation then extant, B.D.) shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Did Jesus tell the truth? If He did, then the things He had prophesied in this discourse up to that point came to pass before that generation passed away, including the things in verses 29-31. It is impossible, by any acceptable rule of exegesis, to separate verses 29-31 from the statement in verse 34. It is safe to say that the "these things" of verse 34 includes every prophecy recorded in the chapter up to this point. It is significant also that the parallel accounts in Mark 13 and Luke 21 have the very same arrangement. If, indeed, the statement recorded in Matt. 24:29-31 applies to the final judgment, it is signally strange that all three of the narratives place it squarely in the context of things that were to happen in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem, and not in that part of the record that deals with the final judgment.

If one has difficulty believing that the language in these verses could apply to the destruction of Jerusalem, perhaps it will help to remember (1) that prophecy is more often than not set forth in symbolical language, (2) that the overthrow and destruction of kingdoms or nations is sometimes personified in the figure of a tumult or shaking amid the heavenly bodies, and (3) that God's judgment against a nation, though inflicted by other nations, is nevertheless a judgment of God. As illustration of these things, consider the prophecy of Isaiah concerning God's punishment of Babylon (Isa. 13). Verses 4 and 5 show that it is the Lord who "mustereth the host of the battle." Verse 6 and verse 9 refer to the time of Babylon's punishment as "the day of the Lord." Verse 10 talks about the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars; and verse 13 speaks of shaking the heavens and removing the earth out of her place. The casual reader might erroneously conclude that this language refers to the end of time, but verse 1 of the chapter clearly states that it is a description of the overthrow of Babylon. Why, then, should we think it incredible that strikingly similar language be used in prophesying of the destruction of Jerusalem?

It is sometimes objected that Matthew 24:29-31 must refer to the end of time, for verse 30 talks about "the Son of Man coming," and Jesus did not personally come when Jerusalem was overthrown. But does the Lord's coming necessarily mean a personal coming? David, in celebrating a victory over his enemies, said: "He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet" (2 Sam. 22:10). Isaiah, in admonishing the people to trust in God, said: "so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight

for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof" (Isa. 31:4). And Jesus warned the Ephesian church: "Remember. . . and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick. . ." (Rev. 2:5). All these passages refer to the Lord's coming, but they do not refer to a literal, personal coming of the Lord. Why, then, must the Lord's coming in Matt. 24:30 be a literal, personal coming?

That the destruction of Jerusalem is spoken of as a "coming" of the Lord may be further seen from an examination of Matt. 24:33 in the American Standard Version: "even so ye also, when ye see all these things, know ye that he (not 'it,' B.D.) is nigh, even at the doors." The footnote in the King James Version also supplies "he" instead of "it." If this is a correct rendering, then it seems that we would have no trouble at all applying everything up through verse 34 to events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem.

Changing Language

J.C. CHOATE

It is not uncommon to hear some brethren talk about "my church" and "your church," "what the church of Christ teaches," and "going to church." At one time you would have heard a chorus of objections to such language; but now little attention is given to it. A few short years ago, members of the church using such terminology would have been classed as very ignorant or too denominational; but now it seems to be accepted.

Why is such language being used more and more? Is it not a sign that we are gradually drifting away from the truths of the Bible? Are we losing the real significance of the "church?" How can we keep from being denominational when we talk about "what the church of Christ believes" or teaches?

All of this tells us something. It says that we either haven't been taught very well, or that we haven't learned what we have been "taught." It is urgent that we get back to the Bible for the truth on these matters. Peter said, "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." (1 Pet. 4:11).

We have found fault with the denominations through the years for their unscriptural terminology and practices. Now some among us are joining them in these expressions. Along with them, some brethren also talk about Christmas, Easter, "witnessing for the Lord," etc. If these things were wrong in the past, how can they be right now? If we condemned our religious friends in days gone by for using these phrases, should not those in our fellowship be rebuked today for using them?

There is a right way! And it can be properly expressed without implying the wrong thing, and certainly without becoming unscriptural in speech. Let us remember that our language will definitely classify us in the minds of those who know us, and will reveal either our Biblical knowledge and loyalty, or lack of it. Tit. 2:7 would apply here: "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you."

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"How do you reply to the contention of premillennialists that Mark 9:1 was fulfilled in the transfiguration scene of Matt. 16:28, as described by Peter in II Pet. 1:16-18?"

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1).

A correct exegesis of this passage leads irresistibly to the conclusion that the kingdom has come, or there are those on the earth over nineteen hundred years old! There is no third alternative. These words being true, one or the other of these conclusions follows. Premillennialists insist that the kingdom is yet future; that it will not be set up until the Lord returns. They must, then, accept the only alternative that remains: some of those included in the number alluded to by the Lord are still alive and now well over nineteen hundred years old!

In a desperate effort to evade the crushing force of this conclusion, future-kingdom advocates cite a parallel passage in Matt. 16:28, which is followed with the transfiguration scene (Matt. 17:1ff.), where, it is alleged, Mark 9:1 and Matt. 16:28 were fulfilled, Peter later having asserted that he, along with others, were on that occasion "eyewitnesses of his majesty" (II Pet. 1:16-18). Were it possible to prove that Peter, James, and John were among those to "see the kingdom" come, the "explanation" falls far short of the demands of the case. Jesus predicted that certain ones would see the kingdom come. Unless, therefore, it is conceded that the kingdom actually came on the mount of transfiguration (which none does), Mark 9:1 was not fulfilled on that occasion. *Either the kingdom came on the mount of transfiguration, or II Pet. 1:16-18 is not a fulfillment of Mark 9:1!* The transfiguration scene was obviously designed to impress Peter, James, and John with the fact that Christ was superseding the old order. The people, having hitherto listened to Moses, the great lawgiver, and Elijah, the great prophet, was henceforth to listen to Jesus, God's Son. There is nothing in the passage itself or in II Pet. 1:16-18 that remotely hints that a kingdom was in the mind of Peter and the other two disciples. As a matter of fact, Peter alludes to the incident to prove that the scene was a confirmation of their faith in Jesus: "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount" (II Pet. 1:16-18). This passage may not be legitimately cited as the fulfillment of Mark 9:1. The two passages are not remotely related in any manner whatsoever.

As a matter of fact, it cannot be definitely shown that Peter, James and John were among those embraced in the promise of Mark 9:1! A careful examination of the context will reveal this fact. Present, in addition to the

disciples, was the multitude (Mark 8:34). In the immediate presence of Jesus was Peter (Matt. 16:22; Mark 8:32). The address of Matt. 16:21-28 and Mark 8:31 to 9:1 was delivered to the disciples. Peter and Jesus engaged in brief conversation. Jesus rebuked Peter for his rashness and lack of spiritual perception (Matt. 16:23). Speaking directly to the disciples, among whom were Peter, James, and John, Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you (second person, and addressed to those in his immediate presence), there are some here of them (third person; hence, persons spoken of — those not in his immediate presence), who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom come with power." It follows, therefore, that those on this occasion who were promised a view of the kingdom before their demise were not among the disciples (which included Peter, James and John), but those of the multitude which stood by! Those of the multitude who were to see the kingdom come were not present on the occasion of the transfiguration. It follows, therefore, that the transfiguration scene does not satisfy the demands of the case.

The view sometimes advanced that the passage presupposes the death of some before the establishment of the kingdom, Judas being in the mind of the Lord (who hanged himself just prior to the establishment of the kingdom), breaks down in the light of the foregoing facts. If the pronouns *you* and *them* are allowed to have their usual significance, they cannot be made to include the same persons at the same time. The *you* to whom the Lord was talking (which included Peter, James, and John) were not the same as the *them* who should "see the kingdom come" in their lifetime.

The conclusion is irresistible: either the kingdom has come, or some of those who were in the multitude on the occasion of Mark 9:1 are yet alive. Premillennialists cannot avoid this conclusion, however hard they may try.

Mark 9:1 is not only hopelessly irreconcilable with the premillennial view touching the matters already discussed; it reveals the very day of the establishment of the kingdom, showing conclusively that it began on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of our Lord, contrary to the view that it is yet future. It declares that the kingdom should come *with power*. To determine when power came is to know when the kingdom came. When did the power come? "They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, doest thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. *But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you*" (Acts 1:6-8). The power was thus to come with the Spirit. When did the Spirit come? "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:1-4). The Spirit came on Pentecost; the power was to come when the Spirit came, hence, the power came on Pentecost. But the kingdom was to come when the power came. The power came on Pentecost; hence, the kingdom came that day. Thus, far from being a thing yet future, the kingdom began over nineteen hundred years ago!

Sunday night is a part of the first day of the week, the Lord's day. (1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10.)

Sunday night is a good time to show our love for Christ and his church. (1 Cor. 16:22; Eph. 5:25.)



JAMES W. CLARK

"A Father's Tribute"

Dear Phyllis and Jimmy,

This is an open letter to both of you on the occasion of your mother and dad's 29th anniversary. This one would not and could not be complete unless we told you how much you two have added to our lives since God gave you to us. I know most parents are proud, and we are proud that they can be, of children that are a source of joy.

Phyllis, we want to thank you for the lessons you taught us. We know you have had to face the fact that you were and are a preacher's daughter. Let me tell you, dear, that I thank you so much for your moral character that has demonstrated what we have tried to say in sermons. Thank you for a demonstrated faith that God will take care of those who put him first. I can picture now a Bible that is close at hand wherever you were and are that is read before you close your eyes. It cheers our hearts and gives us courage to know God's Word is being stored in your heart. I know it has carried you through trials and temptations that all must meet. Our prayer is that you will always have the humble spirit to bow before God's will no matter what the cost. Heaven will be, as you know, worth it all.

Jim, you are miles away, as is Phyllis tonight. But, you are where we would want you to be. I know there are hours, days, months, and years ahead, if the Lord wills, before you will see the great good you will gain from being in a Christian school. But son, preaching God's word demands and deserves the best preparation. Our thanks to you for giving your best. I know what you have always wanted to be and let me tell you that you have multitudes that hope you can be one of the best. Not that any of us want to see you with an inflated ego; we know that you know the cross demands better than that. We wait while you are being trained, more so, to be a better soldier of the Captain of our salvation. We rejoice in your happiness you find and have found on the campus of Freed-Hardeman. Little did mother and I know 29 years ago that God would have done so much for us.

Let us thank both of you for the love you have for each other. It is such a joy to know that you share and bear one another's burdens. Stay always as close as you are and never allow anything to break or mar the tie that binds. I guess you are each other's best cheerleader. But, you know that in the shadows we are there as proud as can be.

Thank you both for your love shown in so

(Continued On Page 4)

The Eternal Nature of Jesus Christ

(Continued From Page 1)

was, I am." Jesus has given us a great insight into His own nature. Notice that He did not say, "I was," which would leave the matter open as to whether there was a beginning point in His existence. This is very interesting when considering that God has used the same expression to describe His nature: "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14). God the Father is the absolute timeless Deity who exists by His own power and volition. He needs nothing to sustain Him. Both God and His Son, Jesus Christ, have always existed. Never has there been a point in time when they did not exist. The Apostle John had previously begun his gospel with a statement of this great truth: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

Several religious groups teach that Jesus Christ is a created being. This is a most remarkable doctrine considering the plain Bible teaching to the contrary. The most prominent of these is the Jehovah's Witnesses, also known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. This false doctrine is a companion to others. Other false teachings include the denial of the Godhead, belief in a millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the earth, denial that man has a soul apart from the body, that death is annihilation along with the denial of eternal punishment in hell. Other false doctrines could be cited but these should be sufficient for any informed Bible student to realize the Witnesses' false status.

In order to uphold their false theories, the Witnesses have produced their own version (? — more accurately, a perversion) of the Bible entitled the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures" (NWT). The King James Version (KJV) is a reliable translation and is a long established favorite among English speaking peoples. The American Standard Version (ASV) is considered to be the most literal translation in the English language by all reputable, conservative scholars. The ASV has essentially the same rendering of John 8:58 as the KJV: "Before Abraham was born, I am." The NWT states, "Before Abraham came into existence, I have been." The first part of this rendering is acceptable but the words "have been" are an evident misrepresentation to indicate a beginning point in the existence of Jesus Christ.

John 1:1 is rendered exactly the same in both the KJV and ASV: "The Word was God." God and Jesus Christ are equal. Both have the essential nature of Deity. Jesus Christ existed in the form of God (Phil. 2:6). Notice the rendering of John 1:1 by the NWT: "In beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Notice the change of the proper noun, "God" to an improper noun, "god," preceded by the indefinite article "a." Again this can only be construed as a definite attempt to undermine the eternal nature of Jesus Christ.

John 1:3 refers to the agency of Jesus Christ in creation: "All things were made by Him." John 1:1-3 is a direct parallel to Genesis 1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). The Godhead was active in creation. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26a). The plural pronouns, "us" and "our," refer to the Godhead. God is the architect of the universe while Christ is the builder and the Holy Spirit is the organizer. All were active in creation.

Other Scriptures also point out the agency

of Jesus Christ in creation: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth" (Col. 1:16). "By whom (Jesus Christ) he (God) made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2). "Thou art worthy, O Lord . . . for thou hast created all things" (Rev. 4:11).

The Witnesses and others have used several prooftexts to prove that Jesus Christ is a created being. Let us examine two of the more commonly used ones:

The first is Colossians 1:15 where Jesus Christ is described as "the first-born of every creature." The word, "first-born" does not mean that Jesus Christ is a creature Himself, but is used in the sense of the oldest son. He is the heir and ruler of all God's creation. All the rights and privileges of the first-born are His in relation to the creation. "Whom he (God) hath appointed heir (His Son) of all things" (Heb. 1:2).

The second prooftext is Revelation 3:14 where Jesus is described as "the beginning of the creation of God." Again, this passage does not teach that Jesus Christ was the first being created. The Nestle Greek Text literal English translation of this phrase is "the chief of the creation of God" (The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, p. 966). Thayer, the respected Greek scholar, states that this passage means that Jesus is the source or origin of creation; "that by which anything begins to be; the origin, active cause" (Greek-English Lexicon, p. 77). All this information is in harmony with what has already been noted about the agency of Christ in creation and will lend no support to the theory that He is a created being.

Prophecies in the Old Testament also point out the eternal nature of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah 9:6, He is described as "The mighty God, the everlasting Father." Certainly the word "everlasting" or "eternal" cannot refer to a created being. The NWT renders this phrase as "Mighty God, Eternal Father." Evidently this phrase slipped by their "scholars" in the editing process. Hebrews 1:3 describes Jesus as "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person."

The clinching argument for the eternal nature of Jesus Christ comes from two parallel verses in the closing book of God's word. Jesus described Himself: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8). The four beasts described God: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Rev. 4:8). Notice the past, present, and future quality of the existence of Deity. The same language is used to describe the eternal nature of both God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son.

Do not be deceived by the Witnesses because they are quite active in evangelism. Could Jesus Christ have served the purposes of God as our Savior if He were a created being? Would he not only be a glorified angel? Would he be much better than man? How could a created being save other created beings? How could a created being triumph over Satan? The blood of the only begotten Son of God was required for our salvation (I Peter 1:18-20).

P. O. Box 384
Waldorf, Md. 20601

"A Father's Tribute"

(Continued From Page 3)

many, many ways. Your thoughtfulness of us rolls the clouds away. I look now across the desk to a picture on this office wall with a brother and sister, arm in arm. Your pictures are there with your mother. Never could one man be blessed more than I have been with

three such as you all. Here is something you may not know. There have been times when I was tired, worn and weary, but knowing you deserved the best I could give, and knowing you would want no less for the Lord's sake, I have been able to reach a little higher to place my hand in his hand to try to lift others to a higher plain.

No, 29 years ago I did not know that 29 years later a father could have so much for which to be so grateful. Thank you, Phyllis, Jim, for being first God's children and ours. May you ever be.

Goodnight,
Dad

P. O. Box 672
Bremen, Ga. 30110

On Scholars

ROGER DILL

There is a need for sound basic scholarship in Bible study and interpretation. The fact is that scholars (?) are copiously quoted on every issue. The question today threatening to overwhelm us is how to evaluate, judge and use scholarship. I believe any fair evaluation of what is happening in the world today would conclude that much scholarship is pseudo-scholarship about the Bible.

This is not intended as anti-intellectualism, as we sit beside a University campus writing this.

1. What are the scholars' fate and life? "By their fruit ye shall know them" is as true of any leader today as it was in the long ago. A mixed up, confused, scholar who is blown about by every wind of doctrine shows little scholarship. Likewise, those who perpetually attack the brotherhood (showing little love) even when preaching on love or any other subject are undermining what scholarship they may have. Even the "scholar's" attitude should be Christlike. The Christian critic has a duty to present constructive, positive efforts to improve his audience.

2. How do the facts fit his scholarship? The real scholar does not expect you to accept his IPSE DIXIT alone. In fact by evidence, witnesses, and experiment he will lay such a foundation that you can often draw the conclusion without his help. How his proposal fits the simple and naked word of God, is often enough to show the strength or weakness of scholarship.

3. What are his credentials? Sitting at the feet of 10,000 infidels for 100 years if each of them had 5 advanced degrees would not encourage me to trust his ability to discern the faithfulness of the Bible as the inspired word of God. We are on shakey ground when we go to sectarian or infidel scholarship (?) for advancing our knowledge about the Bible. I don't mind looking at both sides but I do want my side to get a fair shake. To go to a modern ecumenical scholar will give you little if any help in discovering Bible unity. He started from a different point. He is looking for unity in union not unity in the Spirit's revelation. Such scholarship is worthless to those of us who are seeking real unity in Christ.

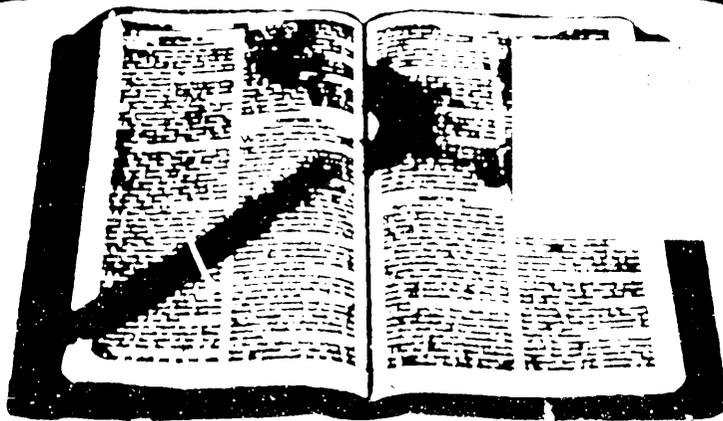
4. True scholarship often comes in conflict with opposing ideas. Such may help us recognize the truth. Vilification, innuendo, name-calling, smearing, or failing to face the conflict usually call in question such scholarship.

Though we are not scholars it often is necessary for us to judge scholarship for the welfare of our own souls and our own decisions. God will not allow us to excuse ourselves on the coat-tail of false scholarship. Such was the error of many who opposed Christ himself. The ordinary man's common-sense is God's defense against deception. — 712 South College St., Auburn, Al. 36830.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



words of truth"
:25

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

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Isaiah 7:14

(Number Three)

FRANKLIN CAMP

(See previous issues for articles number one and two.)

THE CONTEXT

The first six chapters of Isaiah form the background of Isaiah 7. Any attempt to analyze Chapter 7 without considering the background in the previous chapters will only lead to misunderstanding. Four kings, Judah and Jerusalem are mentioned in the first verse. While it is true the verse mentions the kings under which Isaiah prophesied, it also has a broader significance. The background of Isaiah 1:1 is the Divided Kingdom. The background of the Divided Kingdom is the demand for a king in order to be like the nations round about them. The demand for a king was the rejection of God as King. (Read I Samuel, Chapters 8 through 11). The background of I Samuel, Chapters 8 through 11, is Genesis 49:10 and the background of Genesis 49:10 is Genesis 12. In Genesis 12, God promised Abraham that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). In Genesis 49:10 this promise is channeled through Judah and in II Samuel 7 through David. This promise was to be realized in Christ. Anything that would have interfered with the promise ending in Christ would have denied both the sovereignty and the integrity of God.

Verse 1 has this background and introduces the key thought in the book of Isaiah. The verses following in Chapter 1 present the sad consequences that had developed from their desire for a king. The nation became more and more interested in politics and less and less interested in religion. The neglect of religion had produced the conditions described in Isaiah 1:2-15. Because of the sinfulness of the nation, God had allowed their enemies to attack and devour them (Isaiah 1:7). God used their enemies to chasten them, but this did not produce repentance. This shows the condition of things in Chapter 7 and is important in an analysis of the chapter.

In Chapter 2 Isaiah prophesied of the kingdom that started in Acts 2. The background of the prophecy of Isaiah 2 is the condition portrayed in Chapter 1. Their desire for an earthly king was not in keeping with the promise that God made to Abraham, plus the

fact that the earthly kings had become the cause of their present situation. An earthly king had not been the solution to the deeper problem of sin. It had only increased the problem. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was designed to do what an earthly kingdom and its kings could not. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was what God had in mind when He made the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12. The kingdom of Isaiah 2 was to be spiritual in nature rather than temporal and physical. This was the kind of kingdom that God had in mind from the beginning. Their asking for and receiving an earthly king neither stopped nor changed God's plans. The promise to Abraham would be fulfilled in the establishment of the kingdom; thus, Isaiah 2 is an announcement to the nation that their earthly king had failed, that the earthly king was not in God's mind to start with; the failure of the earthly king would not keep God from fulfilling His promise to Abraham. Note the first part of Isaiah 2:2: "And it shall come to pass. . . ." This was said to give assurance to the nation that God's plan had not failed. This statement also is similar to the one in Isaiah 7:9 that is made to Ahaz by Isaiah.

Isaiah 6 must also be studied as background material for Chapter 7. Isaiah seems to have been disturbed over the death of Uzziah. The vision that he has in Chapter 6 is designed to set forth God's Sovereignty and Holiness. *This is a key thought, not only in relation to Chapter 6, but all the book.* Isaiah 6 is basic to the understanding of the entire book of Isaiah. Isaiah's prophecy concerning other nations has as its background the sovereignty and holiness of God as set forth in this vision in Chapter 6. God rules, not only Israel, but all other nations are under His control. What Isaiah saw in the vision in Chapter 6 was the very thing that Ahaz refused to believe in Chapter 7. In pretended piety, Ahaz refused to ask for a sign, as though such would be tempting God. This would not have been the case because God, through Isaiah, had ordered Ahaz to ask for the sign. The problem of Ahaz was unbelief. The unbelief of Ahaz resulted in his refusing to trust and rely upon God and turning instead to alliances with other nations. He refused to "believe that he

might be established" (Isaiah 7:9). Thus the Sovereignty of God shown in Isaiah's vision becomes a key principle in the exegesis of Chapter 7. God, through the prophet, tried to get Ahaz to see the problem. His unbelief, and that of the nation, which led them into sin was the taproot of the problem. When Ahaz refused the offer of Isaiah, then Isaiah gave the prophecy of the virgin birth. This verse must be studied in the light of the previous thoughts. Isaiah 7:14 has as its background the Sovereignty and Holiness of God as contrasted with the unbelief of Ahaz. If one sees the Sovereignty and Holiness of God in Chapter 6, then there should be no problem in seeing the significance of the prophecy of the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14. The two principles of God's Sovereignty and Holiness underscores two things: the faithfulness of God and the need of man because of his sinfulness. The prophecy of the kingdom in Chapter 2 is related to these problems and now the virgin birth of Chapter 7. If one looks at the context of Isaiah 7:14, the so-called problem vanishes.—959 Alford Ave., Birmingham, Al.

(To Be Continued)

Sound Doctrine - What Is It

HARRELL DAVIDSON

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience" (Titus 2:1-2). The words "sound doctrine" present a most interesting word study. "Doctrine" comes from the Greek *didaskalia*. It is sometimes translated doctrine and sometimes teaching. One time it is translated learning (Rom. 15:4) and the inspired writer was pointing back toward the importance of the Old Testament scriptures showing us that we could better understand the New Testament if we knew the Old Testament.

The word "sound" comes from *hugianina*

Continued on Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Praying For Spiritual Gifts

One thing clearly taught in the New Testament is the fact that spiritual gifts were imparted only through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8:14-18; II Cor. 12:12,13; II Tim. 1:6). This conclusively proves that none today possess miraculous powers, for none living today have had the hands of the apostles laid upon them.



BOBBY DUNCAN

But those who claim the gift of the Spirit today say that these gifts come in answer to prayer, and not merely through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. I Cor. 14:13 is used to show that such is the case: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret." It is argued that this verse teaches that the gift of interpreting tongues was given in answer to prayer, and that it would be reasonable to conclude that other gifts would come in the same way. This reasoning seems good, if I Cor. 14:13 teaches that the gift of interpreting tongues would come in answer to prayer. But was Paul telling the tongue speaker to pray for the gift of interpretation? Let us see.

In the first place, did God intend for those who had the gift of tongues to have also the gift of interpretation? If so, why were some at Corinth obviously given the gift of tongues but not given the gift of interpretation? And since tongues were primarily to convince unbelievers (I Cor. 14:22), for the tongue speaker to do his own interpreting would destroy the effect of the miracle. Suppose the multitude assembled on Pentecost (Acts 2)

could not have understood those speaking in tongues, and the tongue speakers themselves had interpreted for them. The force of the miracle would have been lost. How could the hearers be sure that a miracle was even being performed, had such been the case?

In the second place, Paul had already told the Corinthians that they came "behind in no gift" (I Cor. 1:7). The New American Standard Bible uses these words: "so that you are not lacking in any gift. . . ." How could it be thought that Paul was telling them to pray for some additional gift?

What, then, is the meaning of the passage? An examination of the context will reveal that the subject under discussion was the proper use of spiritual gifts. The apostle is speaking specifically in this verse (I cor. 14:13) and the ones immediately following it about the prayers being led in the assembly by those who speak in tongues. In verse 28 he sets forth the rule that those who speak in tongues are not to speak at all in the assembly unless there be an interpreter present. And in verse 13 he is simply directing the man who speaks in tongues to pray in such a manner that the interpreter may be able to interpret to the congregation. Though this meaning is not evident from the wording of the one verse in the King James Version the context lends itself to this understanding. And this explanation of the verse does no damage to the language of the King James Version, provided THAT is understood to describe the manner in which one prayed, and HE is understood to refer to the interpreter. We then have: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray (so) that he (one) may interpret."

Does the original language allow for this understanding of the verse? Yes, it does. In Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament the little Greek word hina (that) is discussed over a space of a little more than two and one-half pages. A number of uses of the word are given, and a number of examples from the New Testament cited. The word is said to signify, among other things: "With the issue, that; with the result, that; so that." And it is under this definition of the word that the prince of lexicographers lists I Cor. 14:13. It is precisely here also that he lists Jno. 7:23: "If a man on the sabbath day receives circumcision that (hina) the law of Moses should not be broken. . . ." and Heb. 12:27: "And this word. . . signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken. . . that (hina) those things which cannot be shaken may remain." It is evident that Paul was giving instructions concerning the matter of praying, and not concerning the content of the prayer itself.

The clause "he may interpret" could just as correctly be translated "one may interpret." In this clause the subject is not stated separately, but is arrived at by observing the form of the verb, which in this case is third person, singular. Since no subject is separately stated the subject of the clause would have to be he or one. There are a number of passages in the New Testament where this type of thing occurs. Jno. 3:3 talks about "the voice of ONE crying in the wilderness." I Tim. 3:4 mentions "ONE that ruleth well his own house." And Heb. 5:12 addresses those who "have need that one teach" them. In each of these passages the subject is derived from the form of the verb, and not stated separately in the Greek. This is exactly the situation which exists in I Cor. 14:13.

With these facts in mind let us review the situation to which Paul addresses himself in I Cor. 14. The Corinthians had an abundance of spiritual gifts (I Cor. 1:7; II Cor. 12:13.) They were told that the primary purpose of the gift of tongues was as a sign to unbelievers

(14:22). However those who spoke in tongues were given permission to use this gift in the public assembly, provided there was one present who could interpret (14:27,28). All things were to be done decently and in order (14:40). If the tongues speaker led in prayer, he was to do so in such manner that the interpreter could interpret the prayer to the congregation (14:13). This is what Paul meant when he said: "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray (so) that he (the interpreter) may interpret" (words in parentheses mine-BD).

The Crying Need

Gus Nichols

Despite the fact of our great laws,

The crying need in each great cause
Is the same it has ever been

A cry for real leaders of men.

The masses follow do not lead

The facts of truth they will not heed,

Unless some great and righteous man

Defends the truth, points up its plan.

Selfish men are not fit to rule,

However much they've been to school

When the wicked rule, people mourn

And stay behind where they were born.

Streams don't rise above fountain
heads.

Leaders must get out of ivory beds,

Climb to the top of the highest steeples,

And honestly view the needs of people.

Our world is sick and wise men weep,

When the shepherds mislead the sheep

When selfish men steeped in their sins,

Seek their own, not the good of men.

Yes, the crying need of our age,

Is not for actors on the stage,

But for real leaders in our fight

For the truth and what is right.

A man can't lead in a great cause

If he lags behind, thinks to pause,

Follows the crowds in a vain show,

Goes where the world wants him to go.

Let leaders rise above the crowds,

Follow light from above the clouds,

And let followers listen unto Christ,

And all seek truth which can't be
priced.

Don't stop your ears to our crying needs,

Heed the call for men of great deeds,

You can at least get off the shelf,

And begin to do right yourself.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Explain our Lord's statement in Luke 6:29, 30. "To him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other. . . Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again."

This unique teaching of our Lord, to his disciples, involved a philosophy of religion wholly foreign to that which characterized the law of Moses. That law required people to love their neighbors, from which they drew the conclusion that they were not expected to love their enemies; and, their views here were not wholly untenable, in the light of many Old Testament utterances, though the Jewish teachers of our Saviour's day carried the matter far, far beyond what was proper.

For example, the Israelites were, on occasion, positively forbidden to make peace with heathen neighbors; and, against the seven nations of Canaan they were instructed to wage a war of annihilation and extinction. (Ex. 34:11-16; Deut. 7:2; 23:6). The "imprecatory" Psalms, doubtless to be interpreted metaphorically, and not literally, which the Psalmist gave by inspiration encouraged the disposition which appears to have been universal among the Jewish teachers. We must keep the proper perspective in mind, in dealing with these matters, and remember that the heathen nations round about Israel were a constant threat to her existence, and to the preservation of the doctrine of the One True God; and it is not surprising that feelings of antagonism were fierce and deep. Unfortunately, the Jews carried the matter to the point of despising any people not Jews, whether they were antagonists or not.

Jesus teaches us that instead of hating others, we are to "do good to them that hate" us. This is not to say that we are to have exactly the same feeling toward those who evilly treat us as we would toward those who are kind and good to us, and who love us. Our Lord had special friends (John 11:3; 13:33), and it would be far from true to assert that he felt the same warmth of affection for Judas who betrayed him, as he did for the disciples who eventually died for him. We are to love our enemies, if such we have; to avoid all bitterness, malice and unkindness toward them, and to do them good; but this does not mean that we are to experience the warm, emotional response from corrupt, evil and depraved persons we do from those who are good, kind and loveable. Love for enemies conveys a different notion, and is the translation of a different Greek word from that used to describe love for dear ones in the Bible. Jesus prayed for those who mistreated him, and we can do the same for those who oppose us, but this does not mean that Jesus accorded the blaspheming Jews who clamored for his death the same place in his heart which John, the beloved disciple, enjoyed! (Luke 23:34.)

If one smite us on one cheek, we are to "offer also the other." Matthew's fuller report of these words reads, "Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). It is most unlikely that our Lord intended for his words here to be interpreted literally. If the statement is to be literally construed, are we at liberty to resort to

retaliation once the second cheek has been turned and smitten? On the assumption that the statement is literal, we would have complied fully with the obligation of this passage, when the second cheek has been turned. Obviously, our obligation goes far beyond any literal concept which thus follows. When an officer struck Jesus, he did not invite further indignity, but instead rebuked the man for the act (John 18:22); and when Paul was struck in the face when on trial in Jerusalem, his sense of justice was outraged, and he spoke out sharply against the offender (Acts 23:1-3). What is taught here is that we are not to return evil for evil; we are never to retaliate when we are mistreated. Physical assault upon us is rare indeed, these days; but mental, psychological and emotional attacks are common. In all such instances we are to return good for evil in imitation of our Lord.

His words, "Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again," must be understood in harmony with the context, and in keeping with the general teaching of the New Testament. Here also, as above, it is not likely that Jesus intended us to interpret his words literally. What is taught is that, in order to do right, we must be willing to go beyond what is asked. It is far from correct to assume that the Lord puts us at the mercy of every thug who comes along and demands our goods! We are obligated to minister to the proper needs of others, but no more. Paul ruled that those who will not work should not be given food (II Thess. 3:10), and Jesus said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs. . ." (Matt. 7:6). Obviously, he does not require nor permit us to give money to an alcoholic to purchase liquor or to an addict to buy drugs. The obligation of the instructions of our Lord in this passage is summoned up in his magnificent statement, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31), and if we are thus motivated, we will not go wrong in determining what our duties to others are.

The Resurg-ing Revival of Reincarnation

A few months ago I answered some questions from a reader of WORDS OF TRUTH relative to reincarnation. At that time promise was made that a more thorough study of this returning error would be presented later in the pages of WORDS OF TRUTH. We are now ready to begin that study. The series will be divided into two major parts. First, we propose to show from current articles what is being taught relative to its revival. Then we shall refute the popular error from an appeal to both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The full series will necessitate several installments.

"THE LATEST REBIRTH OF REINCAR-NATION"

In MID-SOUTH magazine of THE COMMERCIAL-APPEAL, Sunday, July 25, 1976, there appeared an article with the above title. It was written by Franklynn Peterson. On any given Sunday this magazine has a potential of close to one million readers. This is but one of a number of articles written

recently to promote the theory of reincarnation. The proponents of this theory are getting their message before the people of our country. Those who are set for the defense of the truth (Philippians 1:17) need to be taking note of this emerging error and refuting it by an ardent appeal to the Scriptures.

The MID-SOUTH article began with this summary statement: "Thanks to fresh support from science, the belief in past and future life is enjoying a renewed resurgence." Please observe that the basic appeal of the article is to SCIENCE — not to SCRIPTURE. The Bible has been teaching for millenniums that there is a future life. But the Sacred Scriptures do not teach that we have had past existences in other bodies, in other forms, which is an absolute essential of reincarnation. Yet the entire thrust of this whole article was to set forth the thought that people have had previous existences. The entire thrust of our efforts will be a denial of this. I also deny emphatically that our belief in a future life is dependent upon science. Such is dependent upon Biblical testimony.

THE BASIC THRUST OF THE ARTICLE

Reincarnation believes man has had previous existences; it believes man will have future existences. Such belief in a future life does not necessarily mean at all what future life means to the Christian. The Christian believes in a future life in heaven; the reincarnation proponent believes in a future life in existences that are yet to be on this earth. This distinction needs to be kept clearly in mind.

Occultists around the world have been pleased with many late developments in regard to reincarnation. They were pleased with a book written by Chicago psychologist Dr. Elisabeth-Kubler-Ross entitled DEATH, THE FINAL STAGE OF GROWTH. In that book she expressed her conviction that "beyond a shadow of a doubt there is life after death." They were pleased with a statement from Dr. Lee Louis Martello, lecturer on the supernatural, who said, "Science has given reincarnation a new lease on life." Sybil Leek, a well known occultist and self-proclaimed witch, has quipped, "Reincarnation is in. Astrology is out."

Radio and television talk shows have begun to feature more and more the proponents of reincarnation. Dr. Raymond Moody, a physician from Augusta, Georgia, is such a proponent. So is Dick Sutphen, an occultist-hypnotist from the Arizona desert. Sutphen has written a recent paperback bestseller entitled, YOU WERE BORN AGAIN TO BE TOGETHER. Rest assured he was not speaking of the "born again" teaching of John 3:3, 5. He was speaking of the "born again" concept of reincarnation.

Dr. Kubler-Ross based her book upon interviews with more than a thousand terminally-ill patients. She concluded by writing, "They are at peace; they are fully awake; when they float out of their bodies they are without fear, pain or anxiety; and they have a sense of wholeness." "Dr. Ross needs to do an interview with Luke 16:19-31!!

A number of book publishers are fully convinced that reincarnation is very much in our future. Senior editor Tam Mossman of Prentice-Hall says, "Interest in the occult isn't a fad subject. The fact is, a lot of people believe in reincarnation. They don't wear it on their sleeve, however. If you're against the government, you protest. If you're against a landlord, you stage a rent strike. If you're an Episcopalian, you go to church. But if you believe in reincarnation, you've got to go underground, believing very quietly and maybe buying a book on it once in a while." During the fall of 1976 Prentice-Hall plans to

(Continued On Page 4)



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

Sound Doctrine - What Is It

(Continued From Page 1)

and *hugiees*. The first of these two words is the one that we are interested in because it is found eight times in First Timothy, Second Timothy, and Titus. Four times sound precedes the word "doctrine". Two times the word "sound" precedes "words", and two times sound precedes either "faith" or "in the faith". Each instance, however, manifests the proper respect for God and doctrine. A derivative of *hugiaina* is invariably found in the American Standard Version. The derivative is *hugiaino* and is translated "sound" in first and second Timothy and Titus. The term is found in I Tim. 1:10, 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13, 4:3; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2.

The emphasis that inspiration places upon these two words is significant. One can clearly see due to the emphasis that there is some doctrine that is not sound. Jesus wanted us to know that some taught for doctrine the commandments of men (Matt. 15:9). This is an obvious case of doctrine that is unsound. On the other hand we have some doctrine that is all sound. We refer here to brethren who talk a lot about doing the things that God has commanded but never get around to doing any of them. This indicates all sound and no action. Every denominational church in our country has some form of doctrine that it teaches. Could it be said that such is sound doctrine just because it is doctrine? We think not. Paul mentioned "different doctrine" in I Tim. 6:3-5. Timothy was left in Ephesus to teach sound doctrine to these brethren. Isn't it obvious that some of the brethren were teaching doctrine that was contrary to godliness? Those teaching contrary to godliness may not be aware of the things that they are teaching and will not admit it but Paul would have us know that these teachers are really "puffed up, knowing nothing."

"Profane babblings," which are opposed to sound doctrine are condemned by Paul in I Tim. 6:20. Timothy had been taught the truth by Paul. Paul urged him to keep himself pure and guard himself from these babblings. It is interesting to note that a man can say almost anything and if he has some letters after his name, his speech becomes doctrine. This does not make it sound doctrine. We should know that everybody has a doctrine, even demons (cf. I Tim. 4:1, 2).

The folks that teach that we must look for a heaven on earth (social gospel) have a doctrine but it is not the doctrine of God. Any doctrine that is not upheld by the word is a false doctrine and one that we must guard against. Sound doctrine then is healthy words. If you will notice the foot notes in the ASV on the word "sound" in first Timothy, second Timothy and Titus, you will find the word healthy. The gospel is sound doctrine for it has the power to save (Rom. 1:16). Jesus indicated that when men believed and obeyed the gospel they would be saved. Sound doctrine then is the words of Christ. It is doctrine that pertains to wholesomeness or godliness. Sound doctrine has nothing in common with ungodly behaviour.

Further, sound doctrine is inspired scripture. Paul wanted all to know that the scriptures were God breathed (2 Tim. 3:16,17). He does not imply that everything written or done by man is God breathed, but "scripture" comes from a word (*graphee*) that has a "sacred meaning" (*Arndt-Gingrich*). Sound doctrine then includes all that is taught in the word of God on any given issue. What does

the Bible have to say about slavery, civil government, adultery, prayer, material possessions, the church, church government, *ad infinitum*? Whatever the Bible says in regard to these and all other studies within the word, be it known, that this is sound doctrine. This includes all instruction and warnings from God that are recorded in the Book. Paul did not overlook many great subjects in writing to Timothy. Look at: modest dress, the appointment and work of elders, eternal nature of God, eternal nature of Jesus, incarnation, seed of David, Christ to save sinners, the second coming, *ad infinitum*.

Sound doctrine involves everything that the church is and everything that the church stands for that is true. Elders and members of the church have the right to demand that teachers teach nothing other than "sound doctrine." Next we will look at "Sound Doctrine and the Pulpit."

(To Be Continued)

4207 Adamsville Parkway
Adamsville, AL 35005

The Resurging Revival of Reincarnation

(Continued From Page 3)

bring out a book entitled THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF REINCARNATION by David Graham. They are predicting it will be a bestseller. It will be aimed at both true believers in reincarnation and skeptics also.

During 1962 there was a bestseller written by Morey Bernstein entitled THE SEARCH FOR BRIDEY MURPHY. It did not receive the reception it would have, had it been written in the mid-seventies yet Doubleday has sold 200,000 hardcover copies of it during its fourteen-year history. It now sells at \$7.95 per copy and still some 5,000 to 10,000 are sold at this price each year.

In 1974 another volume on reincarnation entitled THE SEARCH FOR A SOUL was published. So far 50,000 hardcover copies have been sold. This is a book "about famed novelist Taylor Caldwell's apparent past lives as revealed under hypnosis. In her trance state, Caldwell recalls having been a maid named Jeannie McGill, an Inca princess, an ancient Greek student of Hippocrates and the mother of Mary Magdalene." We wonder whose ancient mother she might have been had not a little of the Bible been included!

The MID-SOUTH article reported relative to some famous people who supposedly have believed in reincarnation. The founder of the Boy Scouts of America, Ernest Thompson, according to a report from his wife, was a believer in reincarnation. A mystic from the California hills is reported to have told him, "You are a Red Indian Chief, reincarnated to give the message of the Redman to the white race, so much in need of it. Why don't you get busy."

Henry Ford is reported to have been a believer in reincarnation since his early manhood. General George Patton is reported to have said that he knew he had had other existences other than this life. Patton is reported to have told friends "that he could recall fighting with the Greeks on the plains of Troy, and that he had served in Caesar's legions, battled the Huns and ridden with the crusaders to the Holy Land." Had the General been unfamiliar with written history we wonder how much of this he would have remembered!!

The MID-SOUTH article draws some sharp contrasts between the Oriental and Western brands of reincarnation. We quote, "In some parts of the world reincarnation is an important part of religion. Many Hindi sects

believe the soul is reincarnated in the body of an animal, the most virtuous souls reappearing as cows and the most base as worms. Buddhists believe that a soul improves itself spiritually in each subsequent reincarnation, until it reaches a state known as Nirvana and can rest in Buddhist Heaven.

"Americans and other Westerners have a pragmatic concept of reincarnation. For those who believe in it the important idea is that the soul does not die with the body, but returns to life in a new body. There is not as much concern with the mechanics of why, how or even when as there is with evidence. Acceptable evidence has apparently been mounting: According to a recent Gallup poll, 73 per cent of Americans now believe in life after death."

But a firm, confident faith in life after death does not demand that the spirit enter a new body or new form for another earthly existence at all. Faith in the immortality of the soul does not mean reincarnation at all.

American proponents of reincarnation think they can diagnose present day ills and ailments by what these people experienced in early existences. For instance a blind college professor was once a member of a barbaric Persian tribe who blinded their enemies with red-hot irons. Now he is suffering "moral retribution for his earlier misdeeds." Rocky marriages are caused by troubles experienced in earlier existences. Frigidity may refer back to practices of a life lived in the Dark Ages where a husband kept a chastity belt on his wife.

Dick Sutphen, author of YOU WERE BORN AGAIN TO BE TOGETHER, thinks that at least 90 per cent of Americans once had an existence on the continent Atlantis that is supposed to have vanished under the sea. He thinks our hectic lifestyle resembles the hectic lifestyle of this fabled continent that science fiction has had a heyday with for many years. How does he know all this when this is supposedly a prehistoric continent?!

The article closes on this note: "Whether you're a skeptic or a believer about life after death or immortal love, one thing is fairly certain — reincarnation as a fad is not about to die out for some time to come." Hence, we need to refute it soundly and that is precisely what this series will do.

The Efficacy of Prayer

G.F. RAINES

Christians belong to God by virtue of both creation and redemption; and, as our loving heavenly Father, he hears "the faintest cry from the lowliest creatures in the uttermost parts of His universe" and provides "grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

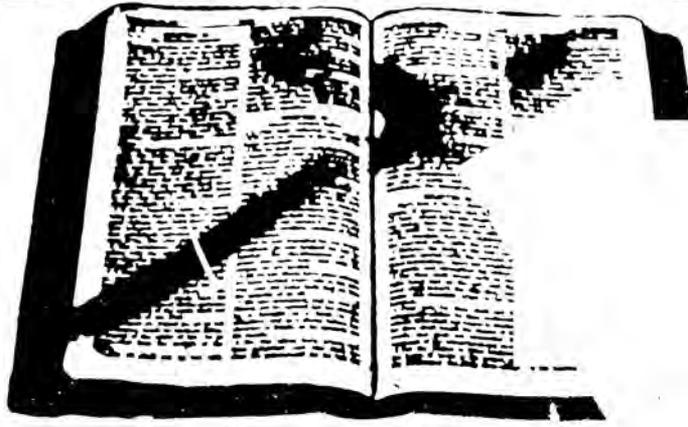
When the prophet Jeremiah was in prison and his spirit probably at lowest ebb, God said: "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer. 33:3).

It is, and always has been, true that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16). We should, therefore, "pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7).

Obviously, only children of God can pray to God as their Father, and all of God's children are in Christ. Paul says: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of ye as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26, 27). —Newton, Miss. 39345.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

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Isaiah 7:14

NUMBER 4

FRANKLIN CAMP

(This is the final in a series of articles on this text.)

THE DUAL PROPHECY

The reason that some contend for dual prophecy is because of the statement in verse 16: "For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." That this verse refers to something in the days of Ahaz is evident, but a dual prophecy cannot be the answer to this problem. I have already shown the impossibility of there being a dual prophecy of the virgin birth. Is there a solution to the problem? A study of the context of Isaiah 7:14 will clear up the difficulties.

First, instead of there being a dual fulfillment of the prophecy, there are two prophecies given by Isaiah. Isaiah 7:14-15 is a prophecy of the virgin birth. Isaiah 7:16 is another prophecy relating solely to the overthrow of Israel and Syria. A study of the context, beginning in verse 1, will enable one to see that there are two prophecies and two fulfillments, not one prophecy with a dual fulfillment.

Prophecy was given by prophetic act, as well as by word. "And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia." Here is an action by Isaiah that is prophetic and called a sign, thus we have in this very book a prophecy by action. The action is called a sign.

"Then said the Lord unto Isaiah. Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field" (Isaiah 7:3). Note this is a command by the Lord to Isaiah to meet Ahaz. Isaiah is commanded also to take "thy son." The son's name was Shearjashub - a remnant shall return - the very thing that happened.

Why did God command Isaiah to take this child? It is unreasonable to think that God commanded Isaiah to take the child and this action have no relationship to the events of the chapter. This is not just an example of a father taking a child with him, but of a father doing it by divine command. According to most exegeses of this chapter, this action by Isaiah

is entirely overlooked. Since Isaiah was commanded to take his child with him to meet Ahaz, what was the significance of it? "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion," (Isaiah 8:18). Notice the word "children" in this verse. "Moreover the Lord said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz," (Isaiah 8:1). Thus, both of Isaiah's children were "signs." Since the child that Isaiah carried with him to meet Ahaz was a sign, is it a proper exegesis of Isaiah 7 to ignore completely this child? If the child is to be considered in the exegesis of the chapter, where will he fit? There is only one place and that is verse 16. The child of verse 16 is Isaiah's child that was a sign, not the son that was born of the virgin of verse 14.

A careful reading of verse 13 through 16 will establish this fact. Notice carefully verse 10: "Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying. . ." Now consider verse 13: ". . . Hear ye now, O house of David. . ." Isaiah's message is to Ahaz and also to the house of David. The sign of verse 14 is to the house of David, that is, the lineage of David, through whom the promise to Abraham was channeled. (See Luke, Chapters 1 and 2). The change from Ahaz in verse 10 to the house of David in verse 13 is significant. In spite of the unbelief of Ahaz, God's promise to Abraham through David would be fulfilled. Verse 14 is God's assurance that the promised seed of Abraham would be born of a virgin. The word "Immanuel" in verse 14 shows His Deity. There was no way a son could be born and be Deity except by a virgin. Verse 15 sets forth His humanity. "That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good" is a prophecy of His sinless life. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Heb. 1:9). Verse 14 is a prophecy of His virgin birth and Deity. Verse 15 is a prophecy of His humanity and sinless life.

Now what about verse 16? Who is the child of verse 16? Is the child of verse 16 the same as the son of verse 14 and 15? The answer is no. As already pointed out, verse 14 is a

prophecy of the virgin birth. This was a one-time event. Verse 16 was a prophecy that would be fulfilled in Ahaz's life. Is there any explanation that harmonizes with these two facts and yet does no violence to the passage? There certainly must be because truth never clashes. A dual fulfillment of one prophecy clashes with the virgin birth of Christ. But let me ask again, who is the "child" of verse 16? If the "child" of verse 16 is not the "child" that God commanded Isaiah to take with him to confront Ahaz, Isaiah's child is never mentioned again. It makes no sense for God to command Isaiah to take the "child" and it never be mentioned again. Chapter 8:18 states specifically that Isaiah's children were for signs and this would include the child that Isaiah was to take to confront Ahaz. Since Isaiah's child was for a sign, and the name means "a remnant will return," what would be more reasonable than for Isaiah to point to this child as a sign to Ahaz? That is what I would expect after reading verse 3, then verse 13.

Furthermore, a careful reading of verse 14 through 16 makes this clear. Notice carefully the following: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil. . ." Notice the word "son" and the pronoun "he". If the "child" of verse 16 is the same as "the son" of verse 14 and 15, why not continue the pronouns, reading thus: "For before he," not "child." If "the child" of verse 16 is the same as "the son" of verse 14 and 15, there would have been no point in using the word "child." Pronouns were used in verse 15, so why were they not sufficient if "the child" of verse 16 is "the son" of verse 14? The truth is that "the child" of verse 16 is Isaiah's child and not "the son" of verse 14. The change from "son" in verse 14 to "child" in verse 16 was by deliberate design and purpose to separate the virgin birth and "son" of verse 14 from "the child" of Isaiah in verse 16. Isaiah's action in carrying his son with him to confront Ahaz and then saying, "This child," (his child) was a prophetic action. The prophetic action of verse 16 was

(Continued On Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Placing Membership

A reader has written to ask about the practice of what is commonly referred to as "placing membership." We appreciate his letter, and are happy to discuss the matter in WORDS OF TRUTH.

It is essential that we understand that the church, in the great and universal sense, including all the saved, never assembles, nor worships. It is not organized for work and service. It has no mailing address, no telephone number, no treasury. The only organization of the church itself is the local congregation. It is this unit that assembles for worship (Acts 11:26; I Cor. 14:23). It is with the local church that disciples are commanded to assemble (Heb. 10:25). Elders are overseers of the local church (Acts 20:17, 28), and it is to the elders of the local church that all Christians are commanded to submit (Heb. 13:17).

In view of these facts, no person can be a faithful Christian and stand aloof the local congregation. It is a sin for one to treat the local church as if it were started by the devil, and not by God.

It seems to this writer that there is a move on the part of some, either consciously or unconsciously to "play down" the role of the local congregation in God's scheme of redemption. The popular thing among some is to take the young people out on a hillside or down by the river to worship God while the church is assembled. Others want to



BOBBY DUNCAN

substitute home meetings and private Bible study periods for the public assembly of the local church. It is certainly in order to engage in private Bible study and to have periods of private worship. But it is rebellion against God to arrange or encourage meetings that are in competition with the local congregation.

While it is clear that each Christian should be identified with a local congregation, there is no set pattern laid out in the New Testament which we are to follow in becoming so identified. "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoke to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus" (Acts 9:26, 27). Saul needed, and received, help in becoming identified with the church at Jerusalem. Observe that he did not try to ignore the local congregation, and yet continue to live the Christian life. Though the term is not found in Scripture, we might correctly say that Paul "placed membership," or "became identified" with the church at Jerusalem.

When a Christian moves into an area, he should very quickly do as Paul did, in order that he might be as useful as possible. If there are several congregations in the area, he should become identified with one of them. Worshiping at first one place and then another, with no home congregation, is a sure and quick way to lose one's influence for Christ and to become a weaker Christian. It is to rebel against the admonition of God to "obey them that have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:17). Which elders are to watch for my soul, if I refuse to be identified with any local church? And how can they watch for my soul if they do not know who I am and that I am a member of the congregation they oversee?

It seems to be using good judgment to make some kind of announcement when one moves into an area and desires to become a part of a particular congregation. Otherwise it might be weeks, or even months, before that person would be recognized by the congregation or by the community as a faithful Christian and member of the congregation. If one is moving into an area where he is unknown, it would be wise for him to bring with him a letter of introduction from the church where he has been worshiping. It would be wise also for churches to ask those moving into their area and identifying with them to furnish references. These references should be checked thoroughly. Much difficulty and headache could be avoided if all would be more thorough in this respect.

While it is not on the same subject entirely, we would add a further word about the deplorable practice of some to switch congregations needlessly. We realize there may be times when it becomes necessary for one reason or another to change congregations. But we know of many cases in which members of the church who were not faithful, and were being admonished by the elders to be faithful, have decided to change congregations. And the deplorable thing is that some other congregation would actually receive the with open arms, without regard to their faithfulness, and without making any effort to determine whether they are sound in doctrine.

The Case of B.S. Skipper

(The story you are about to hear is true; only the names have been changed to protect the GUILTY.)

My name is Bible Study Skipper. I am a lazy Christian.

The time was about 8:25 a.m. Lord's Day morning. I was sleeping soundly after getting to bed late Saturday night.

8:30 - The alarm rang. I reached over, reset the clock for 10:30. I then lay back and began to doze off.

9:15 - I woke up, something keeping me from really getting back to sleep. I decided to get up and get a glass of milk. I drank the milk, went back to bed and dozed off again.

10:00 - The alarm rang. I leaped up and rushed to get ready. After all I didn't want to be late; and services do start at 10:20.

10:10 - By this time I was almost ready. All I had to do was brush my teeth, comb my hair and put on my shoes.

10:16 - I opened the back door and left the house. It was nice to live near the church building.

10:26 - I reached the church building, took off my coat, went in and found a seat. There I was, and only six minutes late. They were singing the second song. It did not take me long to quit panting. Then I felt good.

11:45 - Services were over; I rushed out to get my coat. I spoke to as few people as possible; I wanted to get home to watch TV.

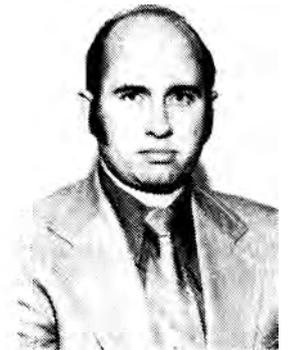
11:51 - When I got home I took off my coat, sat down in my easy chair, relaxed, and thought: How nice to have the rest of the day to myself. I thought: Next time I will make it to church by 10:00, perhaps I might even go to Bible Study - who knows - that is, if I'm not up too late Saturday night.

On the day of judgment trial was held in department 22 in and for the state of "Heaven." The suspect, Mr. Bible Study Skipper, was tried and convicted of a charge of "Neglect." All his accomplices were apprehended, tried on the same charge and convicted. First degree "Neglect" is punishable in "Hell" for a period not longer than "Eternal Life." (Heb. 10:25).

Author Unknown

Receiving Jesus

Jesus "came unto his own, and they that were HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT. But AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he the right to become children of God, EVEN TO THEM THAT BELIEVE ON HIS NAME" (John 1:11-12). Everyone must make a decision about Jesus: to receive or reject him.



JOHN WADDEY

Too long we have left these passages in the hands of sectarians who abused their meaning, as we fought against their interpretation. Christians should boldly use the concept of "receiving Jesus," showing men its true import.

WE MUST RECEIVE JESUS AS "THE CHRIST, the Son of the Living God" (Matt. 16:18). He is the Messiah promised to

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Why Did Jesus Praise The Unjust Steward of Luke 16:1-8?"

We must be very careful to note exactly what is said, in this parable, and not to assume things not in it. Actually, the commendation given was not by Jesus, but by the lord (master, employer), of the steward, though Jesus related and applied the details. Neither the commendation nor the application of the lesson related to the method which the steward used, but to the sagacity and foresight which he utilized in preparing for the future. Rahab, the harlot, is inscribed in inspiration's hall of fame, *not because she lied*, but because she believed in the ultimate triumph of God's plan, and ran grave personal risks in supporting it (Josh. 2:1-24; Heb. 11:31). Abraham and Sarah, to whom the inspired accounts ascribe the highest honors sinned grievously in the matter of Hagar, though other actions of theirs evidenced their dedication and devotion to God. Rahab's falsehood and Sarah's substitution were both opposed to Jehovah's express commands, and neither enjoyed his favor for these actions, but for others.

It was not the high handed method to which the unjust steward resorted which occasioned commendation, but his wise anticipation of later need and his preparation for it, that prompted his lord's comments and our Saviour's use of the incident. The point is simply this: the unrighteous steward planned for the future; in this, he used wisdom and good judgment. Followers of Christ ought to exercise the same sagacity and forethought in preparing for the world to come. In demonstration of the fact that God looks with favor upon those who prepare for the future and who use their present opportunities to increase and enhance their future ones, he said, "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" (Luke 16:10-12). The unjust steward handled his lord's affairs in such fashion as to increase his own future welfare. We are stewards of God here below. If we do not improve our opportunities by the proper use of the things of this life we will not be privileged to enjoy "the true riches" in this life to come.

Mormonism Exposed

NO. 2

EDITED BY WINDELL H. GANN

It is interesting to note the contradictions within the Mormon system. This issue points out the esteem the Mormons give the Book of Mormon, yet we see that LATTER DAY SAINT DOCTRINES CONTRADICT THE BOOK OF MORMON.

On November 28, 1841, Joseph Smith made the following statement: "I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God

by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book" (DISCOURSES OF JOSEPH SMITH, p. 189). Orson Pratt, one of the twelve apostles of the Mormon church said, "The Book of Mormon professes to be revealed to the present generation for the salvation of all who will receive it . . . the nature of the message in the Book of Mormon is such, that if true, no one can possibly be saved and reject it; if false, no one can possibly be saved and receive it" (DIVINE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON, p. 1). Pratt further stated, ". . . therefore, no man, nor woman, nor child, that has come to the years of accountability, can be justified, for one moment, in rejecting God's revealed will contained in Book of Mormon" (PAMPHLETS BY ORSON PRATT, p. 25).

The Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 27:14, says, "Woe be unto him that rejecteth the word of God." The whole 27th chapter of 2 Nephi tells about how the Book of Mormon will come forth. In the Doctrine and Covenants, §27:5, it says, ". . . Moroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon, containing the fullness of my everlasting gospel."

If the Book of Mormon is the most correct of any book on earth, if those who reject it will be lost, and if it contains the fullness of the everlasting gospel, then why do Mormons teach and practice so many doctrines that are in direct conflict with it?

MORMONS TEACH THAT THERE ARE MANY GODS

Joseph Smith said, "I will preach on the PLURALITY OF GODS . . . when I have preached on the subject of Deity, it has been the PLURALITY OF GODS" (DISCOURSES OF JOSEPH SMITH, p. 27). The Pearl of Great Price (Book of Abraham, chapters 4 & 5) tells how the GODS formed the heavens and the earth, and how the GODS created the beasts of the earth, and how the GODS created Adam. Brigham Young said, "How many Gods there are, I do not know. But there was never a time when there were not Gods and worlds" (JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES, Vol. 7, p. 333).

THE BOOK OF MORMON TEACHES THERE IS ONE GOD

"And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No. Now Zeezrom said unto him again, How knowest thou these things? And he said: An angel hath made them known unto me" (Alma 11:27-29). "And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, . . ." (Mosiah 15:5). "Behold I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son" (Ether 3:14). The testimony of the three witnesses of the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was supposedly translated reads, "And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God."

If the Mormon doctrine of many Gods is right, then the Book of Mormon is wrong!

MORMONS BELIEVE A

CHANGING, PROGRESSIVE GOD

Brigham Young said: "The God that I serve is progressing eternally, and so are his children" (DISCOURSES OF BRIGHAM YOUNG, p. 22). Wilford Woodruff, the fourth President of the Mormon church, said: "God Himself is increasing and progressing in knowledge, power, and dominion, and will do so, worlds without end" (JOURNAL OF DISCOURSE, Vol. 6, p. 120).

THE BOOK OF MORMON

TEACHES GOD NEVER CHANGES

"God is the same yesterday, today and forever and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing" (Mormon 9:9). ". . . And behold I say unto you He changeth not; if so, He would cease to be God,"

(Mormon 9:19). "For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity" (Moroni 8:18).

MORMONS USE WATER INSTEAD OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

In 3 Nephi 18:8, we are told that the Lord "commanded his disciples that they should take of the WINE of the cup and drink of it." And in verse 13, we are told that "whoso among you do more or less than these . . . the gates of hell are ready open to receive them." Moroni 5:2 also talks of the manner of administering the wine. Moroni 6:6 says, "And they did meet together oft to partake of bread and WINE in remembrance of the Lord Jesus." Brigham Young said, "belivers in him are required to eat bread and DRINK WINE in remembrance of the Lord Jesus" (DISCOURSES, Vol. 13, p. 139).

It is interesting to note what the DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS have to say: §20:75, p. 34, "It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and WINE in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus." But in §27:2, p. 40, it says, "it mattereth not what ye drink when ye partake of the sacrament . . ." §89:6, p. 154, it is said then they take the sacrament, ". . . this should be WINE, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, of your own make."

It would be a bit difficult for inspired(?) statements to be more contradictory than this!

Mormons teach that baptism is essential for salvation of all men. They teach that they must be baptized for all dead persons who did not have an opportunity to hear the gospel and be baptized while they were alive.

Joseph Smith said, "The greatest responsibility in the world that God has laid upon us is TO SEEK AFTER OUR DEAD" (JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES, Vol. 6, p. 7). Brigham Young said, "This doctrine of baptism for the dead is a great doctrine" (JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES, Vol. 16, p. 166).

THE BOOK OF MORMON DENIES SUCH

Mormons spend several million dollars a year in their genealogical society to trace records of those who have died so they can be baptized for them. Even though the Book of Mormon is supposed to contain "the fullness of the gospel," it never mentions the doctrine of baptism for the dead, not even once! It mentions the words "baptism," "baptize," "baptized" and "baptizing," 144 times, but never in connection with the dead.

The excuse that the doctrine of "baptism for the dead" was removed from the Bible by Roman Catholics would certainly not prove true in the case of the Book of Mormon. The Catholics nor anyone else has tampered with the Bible and they certainly never had the Book of Mormon and therefore they could not have removed the doctrine of "baptism for the dead" from it, but it is not there!

The Book of Mormon condemns the very ideas that led to the practice of baptism for the dead. It plainly indicates that there is no chance for a person to repent after death if he has known the gospel and has rejected it. See Alma 34:33-35; 40:26; and 11:44.

The Book of Mormon also teaches that those who have died without the law need no baptism. Read Moroni 8:22 and II Nephi 9:23-27.

THEREFORE, according to the Book of Mormon, there is no class of people that baptism for the dead could help! Those who have not had the law need no baptism, so it would be a waste of time to search out their genealogies and be baptized for them. Those who have heard and rejected the gospel do not have another chance for repentance, therefore baptism for the dead could not help them.

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Isaiah 7:14

(Continued From Page 1)

directed to Ahaz. Before Isaiah's child was old enough to know the good and to choose the evil, Israel and Syria were forsaken of their kings. As proof that this is correct, compare the language of verse 16 with Chapter 8:4. Note the parallel: "For before the child shall know. . .," (7:16). "For before the child shall have knowledge to cry. . .," (8:4). Is it difficult to see the similarity of language and the principles in these verses?

Now let me ask, Who is the child of 8:4? Surely, no one would deny that the child of 8:4 is Isaiah's. Then it should be plain that the child of 7:16 is also Isaiah's and it was no virgin birth. How could God have done more to avoid the confusion? God told Isaiah to take his child with him and even named the child. Surely, no one would insist that the child that Isaiah carried with him was born of a virgin, but it was this child of Isaiah's that he had with him, perhaps even in his arms, when he made the prophecy of verse 16. It was this child that was already born that was the sign of verse 16. It seems to me that God's naming the child that Isaiah carried with him should take care of keeping "the child" and "the son" separated. "The son" of verse 14 and 15 is Christ, born of a virgin. "The child" of verse 16 was Isaiah's child, already born and born in the ordinary way. Here we have two prophecies and two fulfillments, not one prophecy and a dual fulfillment. Isaiah 7:14 should read "virgin," not "young woman." All attempts to justify the R.S.V. translation of Isaiah 7:14 are misdirected efforts. The King James and the American Standard Version are correct. They set forth the truth in Isaiah 7, as well as in Matthew 1.

It has long been my conviction that the Bible is its best interpreter. Letting Isaiah, along with Matthew, interpret 7:14-16 solves all the difficulties without compromising the fundamental truth of the virgin birth of Christ. This analysis of Chapter 7 fits the text, the context, and the key thought of the entire book. It holds forth the truth of Isaiah 7 and defends inspiration, prophecy, and the virgin birth. This is not a strained interpretation. It is just a simple, plain explanation of a passage that has been made difficult by ignoring what the passage says.

This is just one example of where either the King James or the American Standard Versions should be used instead of the R.S.V.—959 Alford Ave., Birmingham, A. 35226.

Receiving Jesus

(Continued from page 2)

mankind from the Garden of Eden. He fulfilled more than 300 prophecies relating to the Messiah in the old law. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). Being the Son of the Living God, Jesus is divine, yea he is deity. He is the WORD which was God (John 1:1). He is the "I AM" (John 8:58). He is our great God and Saviour (Tit. 2:13). No man truly receives Jesus unless he believes these truths about him.

WE MUST RECEIVE HIM AS LORD OF OUR LIVES. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9). If Jesus is the Lord of our lives, then we are but slaves. The apostles commonly referred to themselves as bond-servants of Jesus (Rom. 1:1). As slaves of Jesus we have no "rights." They have all been surrendered unto our Lord. His will is our law. We must continually deny ourselves (Matt. 16:24). Many have confessed that they

believe Jesus to be God's Son while never acknowledging him as the Lord of their lives.

CHRIST MUST BE RECEIVED ACCORDING TO TRUTH. Only God's truth can make us free from sin, error and damnation (John 8:32). All acceptable worship must be in spirit and truth (John 4:24). God's word is that exclusive source of heavenly truth (John 17:17). To receive Jesus in any way other than the Bible way is of no value. Inspired men taught sinners to receive Jesus by faith, repentance and baptism (Acts 16:31, 2:38). So today this is the only way to receive Jesus.

SINNERS MUST RECEIVE JESUS IN LOVE We must love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk. 12:29). Surely we must love His only Son as much. "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father that sent him" (John 5:23). This love must be more than pious words and public pronouncements. It is demonstrated by faithful obedience. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). This speaks not just of great and obvious precepts, but even of the small and seemingly unimportant teachings. Love for Jesus is seen in faithful obedience.

WE MUST RECEIVE HIM BY OBEDIENCE. Since this point has been thoroughly discussed above, we only add this thought: Jesus "became unto all them that obey him, the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). The denominational concept that "receiving Jesus" is merely to "open the heart" and say "I receive Jesus" is completely foreign to the revelation of God. No man receives Jesus by faith alone (Jas. 2:20-26). It is a false delusion if men think they have received him unto salvation in that way.

HE MUST BE RECEIVED FOR A LIFETIME. We must be faithful unto death to receive the crown of life (Rev. 2:10). Part-time discipleship is not accepted. There is no retirement age. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mk. 13:13). A short-term reception of Christ is worse than no reception at all (II Pet. 2:20-22). For once a man has tasted the good word of God and the blessings of salvation and then rejects it, there is nothing left to pierce his calloused heart and bring him to repentance (Heb. 5:4-6). When one receives Jesus as Lord, he must never look back to the old life (Lk. 9:62). Those who do so are not fit for the kingdom of God.

Having seen what it means to receive Jesus, the only remaining question is: Have you so received him?

The Fruit of the Spirit

NO. 5

In defining the works of the flesh the apostle used the plural, but when approaching a definitive description of the Spirit's fruit he uses the singular. It is obvious that the presence of any of the WORKS of the flesh is sufficient to condemn the soul (Gal. 5:19-21). It is equally obvious that every attribute ascribed to the Spirit must be present on the fruit-bearing branches of our lives. The FRUIT of the Spirit is borne in us, therefore, when ALL these desirable



R. W. GRAY

characteristics and attitudes are manifested in us. When one is missing, we lack that much bearing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23). In this article we consider attribute number five:

GENTLENESS

From the Greek CHRESTOTES, gentleness denotes kindness and goodness of heart. It is an attitude of heart acquired by the constant practice of the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12). The corresponding adjective CHRESTOS is translated "good," "kind," "gracious." As an indictment against both Jew and Gentile Paul cites a passage from Psalms fourteen in which it is stated, ". . . there is none that 'DOETH GOOD', no, not one" (Rom. 4:12b). It was the absence of "goodness" or "gentleness" that condemned a world without Christ and without hope (Eph. 2:11-14). The word is used of God's "goodness" in his longsuffering toward fallen man (Rom. 2:4). In this verse we see that longsuffering and forbearance are closely associated with gentleness or "goodness," and that it is the latter that makes possible the practice of the former. The word is translated "kindness" in Colossians 3:12 where we find it in this context: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, KINDNESS, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Again we see that the thought is that we be benignant; that we show kindness, especially toward inferiors. In Ephesians 4:32 we are exhorted, "be ye kind one to another, forgiving one another, . . ."

The various ways the Spirit used the word gives us a clear definition of this fruit. Its presence in one's life is also discernible, as it makes for peace and good will. We never resent one's being kind or gentle toward us, and we find it difficult to say unkind things about him.

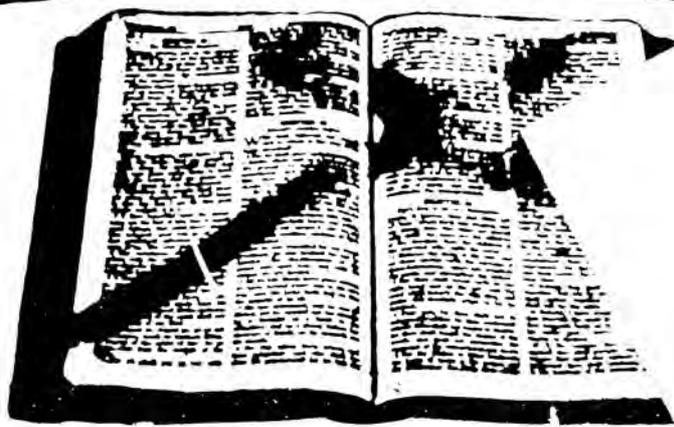
In his excellent little book, "Happiness Guaranteed," Hugo McCord observes, "The English word GENTLEMEN ought to have more meaning than that of a distinction from the other sex. Every man ought to covet such a character and disposition that other people might inwardly think every time that man's name came to mind of a gentle person, a gentleman!" Those who knew brother Gus Nichols knew such a man. There was in his gentle goodness a genuineness that could not be missed. This fine Christian did not seek friendship only among those who might bid to be his "peers" in knowledge and ability, but great warmth and gentleness was exhibited toward those looked upon as "lesser lights." It is a genuine pleasure, a real joy, to be in the presence of one who is kind and gentle. Let us not forget that the wisdom that is from above is first "pure, then peaceable, GENTLE, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

Mormonism Exposed

(Continued From Page 3)

There is no one, then, that baptism for the dead could save. Millions of dollars that could be spent to help save the living are used in doing work for the dead, which according to the Book of Mormon, "availeth nothing."

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"

Jn. 8:32

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

"speak forth the words of truth"

Acts 26:25

"And truth came by Jesus Christ"

Jn. 1:17

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"All of Us Have Lived Before" - Jeane Dixon

In reality a study of reincarnation belongs to the field of the occult. The occult has reference to that which is hidden, obscure, deeply mysterious and lays claim to that which is miraculous or nearly miraculous. Reincarnation belongs to this general movement and is making a rapid comeback as set forth in our initial article.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

REINCARNATION DEFINED

The term, as defined by Mr. Webster, means, "The belief that the souls of the dead successively return to earth in new forms or bodies; hence, a rebirth of a soul in a new, esp. a human, body." This definition fits well what was set out in the initial article of this series.

"THE REINCARNATION OF PETER PROUD"

One of the movies which has been made and distributed during the mid-seventies bears the above title. This writer did not see the movie but did read a rather thorough magazine review of it while waiting to see a doctor sometime ago. The movie raises the question, "Who are you Peter Proud?" The movie weaves a far-fetched theory that Peter Proud had a previous existence and is now in another body for this return engagement to an earthly existence. Recent movies like this one have aided in the resurging revival of this ancient and deeply superstitious error that has not one syllable of basic truth to undergird it.

JEANE DIXON: AN AVID ADVOCATE OF REINCARNATION

The NATIONAL ENQUIRER in its December 10, 1974, edition presented nearly a full page of an interview with Jeane Dixon, the widely known astrologer and self-proclaimed psychic and prophetess, in which she affirmed that "We're on the Brink of

Discovering the Amazing Secrets of Reincarnation." She is spellbound by these fantastic visions of what she designates as being "of the utmost importance to mankind." Here are some of the predictions she made relative to the reincarnation and what this amazing discovery will mean to all of us. She says, "ALL OF US HAVE LIVED BEFORE. And all the knowledge from our previous lives will surface with tremendous and wonderful consequences" (Emphasis mine - RRT). When these ancient memories of ours are tapped she affirms that "Telepathy will become the everyday way of communicating." According to this it would seem that IT and T may well be in a business that will soon vanish. Who will need a telephone or telegraph when telepathy becomes common in mind transference? She says that in the discovery of reincarnation "Age-old remedies will be rediscovered and applied to modern medical know-how, eliminating all killer diseases." She affirms that "an incredible method of space travel used by ancient astronauts will allow man to explore the far reaches of the universe." She affirms that "the Key that unlocks vast new food sources will be revealed." If people of ancient times knew of all this, why was hunger such a gnawing problem for them through the ceaseless centuries of the past? Why did so many millions perish due to famines? Jeane Dixon feels that "once we understand the mysteries of reincarnation - the rebirth of a soul in another body - we'll be able to plug into the memory banks of our minds and recall our previous lives."

GREAT MEDICAL AND MECHANICAL BREAKTHROUGHS

"Primitive cures and medical concoctions - long lost to modern man - will create further breakthroughs in medicine, conquering all diseases. Centuries-old engineering theories will be applied to today's advances in the mechanical field to create tremendous new inventions," said Mrs. Dixon. If ancient times had such amazing and marvelous cures and medical concoctions, we wonder why the

plagues of antiquity took such a heavy toll of human lives. We wonder why the average span of life was so very low back then. We wonder why so many babies died in infancy when the men of ancient medicine did not know what to do. Since these great geniuses of the medical past did not conquer by any means all the illnesses and diseases when they were here the first time, how does Jeane Dixon know they will be able to accomplish the second or third time around what they surely failed to accomplish when first here? Will they be able to do in reincarnated forms what they miserably failed to do when they were here the first time? If time continues to roll on, we have no doubt that there will be breakthroughs both in medicine and within the realm of newer inventions but such will not be done as a result of reincarnated beings at the medical and mechanical controls. We have no hesitation at all in the making of this sweeping statement in refutation of her superstitious nonsense!

WHAT SHE THINKS OF NOAH'S ARK

Jeane Dixon says: "I saw cities hidden like jewels in the jungles and under the sea."

The archeologists will uncover "the mysteries of the past simply by having people think back to their previous lives" contends the self-proclaimed prophetess and famed psychic seer of our day. This will be a lot easier than all that shoveling they formerly had to do in their scientific investigations!!

"From this we'll separate fact from fiction in mythology and learn the truth about such things as the lost continent of Atlantis and NOAH'S ARK.

"The greatest good of unveiling the mystery of reincarnation will come in increased harmony - by drawing on the minds of those of us who, as ancient leaders learned the secrets of peace.

"Man's mind will mature. He'll become proud of his intellect. Personal hatred and war will end."

Her statement that reincarnation will enable

(Continued On Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Taking Pride In Sin

Much has been said — but not too much — about the sinful condition of our nation. It has been suggested, and probably correctly so, that our nation has already surpassed the point in wickedness at which the great nations in history have been overthrown. Just how much worse we can get we do not know, nor how long God will tolerate such gross immorality.

One of the things that seems to be coming to the front more and more is the fact that some take pride in advertising their wickedness. We are not referring to the commercial advertising of products that are used by the devil in his work, such as the advertising that is done by the liquor industry, though we would rejoice to see such outlawed. But we are referring to the fact that some actually take pride in their wickedness. Again we are not referring to one who may take pride in his shrewdness in performing some wicked deed, but we are referring to those who take pride in the fact that they are wicked.

For example, look at some of the T-shirts and hats being worn. Time was when those who drank alcoholic beverages were not so very proud of the fact. Now some will pay a premium for a shirt or a hat which advertises the fact that they drink a certain kind of beer. These are not worn for the purpose of advertising that certain beer, but merely to state that the wearer is a devout beer drinker.



BOBBY DUNCAN

In other words, such attire is designed to enable the wearer to say: "I am a sinner, and I am proud of it!"

Maturity, in the minds of some, seems to be measured by the amount of sin one is able to commit. On a recent television program we were shown a preview of the new collegiate football season. One of the coaches featured on the program was shown at work with his team. He openly cursed the members of the team. In practically every sentence he spoke to them, there were the kind of four letter words that have sent many to the woodshed. The point being made by showing this coach in action was this: He is tough! Oh, yes! Not being able to speak a complete sentence without cursing makes one tough, doesn't it? It seems to this writer a mark of ignorance — not toughness — that one has not the ability to express himself in plain English without using words that are offensive to those who are concerned about decency. And this applies to farmers, politicians, mechanics, miners, doctors, lawyers, and Indian chiefs, as well as to football coaches.

In the Bible sin is characterized as a disease (Job 20:11; Isa. 1:4-6), as madness (Eccl. 9:3), as a bitter thing (Deut. 29:18; Heb. 2:15), as selfishness (II Ki. 5:20-27; Jer. 45:3), as bondage (Jno. 8:24-36; Rom. 3:9), and as defiling (Pr. 30:12; Heb. 12:15). It is to be put away (Ps. 34:14; II Tim. 2:19), guarded against (Ps. 4:4; 39:1), striven against (Heb. 12:4), confessed (I Jno. 1:9), and avoided in appearance (I Thess. 5:22). Yet some seem to want to engage in as much as sin as possible, and enjoy bragging about it.

If there are degrees of punishment in Hell, and there must be (Lk. 10:12-14; 14:42), surely one of the hottest places will be reserved for those who not only engaged in as much sin as possible, but also liked to boast about how wicked they were while they lived in this world.

The Misfit

RAY HAWK

It certainly is a good thing Jesus is not living on earth today as he once did in the first century! If he did, he would be a MISFIT!

Jesus did not get along too well with those who were the religious leaders among God's people in his day. Jesus was a preacher of love, but he was also a preacher who did not hesitate to call sin by its rightful name. When it came to public discussion, he did not run from confrontation as do some today. Neither did he pull any punches. He put each one of his opponents to silence (Matt. 22:46). Jesus did not stop with a public confrontation, but went on to denounce publicly the leading religious party BY NAME in no uncertain words (Matt. 23)! He was not afraid to use descriptive and bold language; something that is quite rare today (Matt. 23:33)!

If some of my preaching brethren had been present in the multitude of Matt. 23:1, they would have choked on Jesus' words! In fact, I often wonder if the speech of Jesus would not apply to some preachers today? I can just hear some of my brethren AFTER Jesus finished that speech. "Now Jesus, you ought to have more finesse." "Now look, Jesus, don't you know that language like that will drive them away? You ought to be more tactful. Why, we will have to live with these folks after you are gone. Besides, you've been denouncing some influential people."

If Jesus had been working with some congregations today, he would have signed his own walking papers with his actions, described in Matt. 22 and 23! In fact, some

elders would have gone to the Pharisees and APOLOGIZED for Jesus' actions and words! If Jesus had asked for their support by opening their building to him to hold the debate, they would have vigorously refused! Some elders would have fired Jesus. After all, speeches like that will hurt business!

If Jesus lived upon earth today, he would be shunned by some men in the church of Christ who refer to themselves as "gospel preachers." They would not want him in a meeting with them, for he filled his lessons with quotations from scripture (Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:16-21). He would not sidetrack some subjects and preach what people wanted to hear, but rather what some need to hear — like on divorce (Matt. 5:31, 32; 19:9). He would condemn others for saying and doing not (Matt. 23:3). He would call others goats (Matt. 25:33). If Jesus held a meeting where some work, they would breathe a sign of relief when he left. No doubt, some would work hard to see that Jesus never returned while they were there. Yes, If Jesus lived upon earth today, he would indeed be a misfit in the minds and actions of some. What about you?—4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

I'm Glad Jesus Was Tempted

BYRON NICHOLS

Have you ever felt glad that Jesus was tempted to sin while He lived on the earth?

Matthew, Mark and Luke all recorded the fact that Jesus, after His baptism by John, was subjected to three temptations by Satan. We perhaps have the idea at times that this series of trials constituted all of the temptations that Jesus was ever subjected to. However, Luke says that after these three temptations the devil "departed from Him FOR A SEASON" (Luke 4:13). That was not, then, the end of His being tempted. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that our Lord was "in all points tempted like as we are." Again, Hebrews 2:18 states that Jesus "hath suffered being tempted." These verses declare to us that Jesus Christ, though being the very Son of God, endured temptations just like we do today. The Bible is telling us that sin was at times attractive and appealing even to Jesus! If this were not true, then there would have been no temptation involved, would there?

Yes, I'm glad that Jesus was not immune to the appeal of sin. The writer in Hebrews 7:25 tells us that Jesus ever lives to make intercession for those who draw near unto God through Him. What a tremendous blessing this is! Just think, as we pray to God through Christ that same Christ who knows just what it is to be tempted is pleading to the Father in behalf of us, remembering that Satan has the ability to make sin very attractive to man. How could we ask for more?

But wait - there is more. Such scriptures as 2 Timothy 4:1 & 8, Matthew 16:27, Acts 10:42, 2 Corinthians 5:10, and Matthew 25:31-34 reveal that this same Jesus who was tempted and who now intercedes for us is going to be the Judge who will hear our case and declare our eternal destiny. As our Judge Jesus will offer to us the consolation that He has been in our shoes, He experienced human life with its problems and trials.

Yes, because He will be my Judge, I am very glad that Jesus was tempted.—Route 10, Box 1361, Springfield, Mo. 65803.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it possible that the words, 'my Father's house,' in John 14:2, refer to the church, and that 'many mansions' has reference to the many congregations which compose the church? This view is occasionally offered."

I, too, have heard it; and, I regard it as an utterly impossible "exegesis" of these wonderful words of our Lord to his disciples. The "Father's house," is in heaven; the church (a body of baptized believers, called out from the world, over which Christ reigns as king, and which is directed by the Holy Spirit through the Word), is on earth. To regard the church as composed of congregations is a gross misapprehension of the church; it assumes that the church is one thing, and the congregations composing it, something else. Brethren occasionally speak of "the congregations of the church," thus perpetuating this folly. A congregation is "a church;" the Lord's people, in the aggregate, are "the church," and the two concepts ought to be kept distinct. One might as well speak of "a church of the church," as "a congregation of the church!"

The view (it should not be dignified by the term *argument*) that the phrase, "my Father's house," refers to the church, results from the assumption that a word must have exactly the same meaning in every instance where it occurs. This fallacy leads to much error, as in the case before us. The reasoning is as follows: The "house of God," in I Tim. 3:13-15, refers to the church; the word "house," appears in the phrase, "my Father's house;" therefore, the Father's "house," is the church. In both passages, the usage is metaphorical; in such cases, the context must always determine the significance of the word. To illustrate: Both Paul and Peter describe the church as a *flock* (Acts 20:28,29; I Pet. 5:2). Our Lord, during the public ministry, identified his disciples as a *flock*. The flock is the church! Are we thence to conclude that the church existed during his sojourn on earth and the view that it was not established until after his death and resurrection and ascension on the day of Pentecost, is erroneous? This "argument" is as valid as the house-church argument, and both of them are fallacious. Heaven is a city (Heb. 11:10); Memphis is a city; is Memphis therefore heaven??? The effort at exegesis we are reviewing produces error because it disregards the fact that in the figurative use of words, the meaning may be very different in the different contexts in which they appear. Such is obviously so in John 14:2, and in I Tim. 3:13-15. Jesus uses the word "house," to denote the dwelling place of God and his children, *when this life is over*. Note the definite designation of time when it will be ready for occupancy: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2,3). The "house" of God referred to in John 14:2, is where our Lord went, when he left the earth, and to which place he will carry his faithful followers when he returns for them at the end of the age. This is where the throne of the Lord is (Psalm 11:4). This is in heaven. The church, however,

is here on earth (Acts 2:47). It is called "the household of God," because it houses the family of God — the church. But, this is not the Father's "house," to which ultimately we hope to be taken.

"Many mansions" emphasizes the roomy aspect of that future abode. The Greek phrase thus translated signifies *many rooms*. The meaning is that there will be ample provision for all; not one will be left out who by diligent effort prepares for the heavenly abode. We all know the thrill and excitement which are ours when we return home from a long and weary journey to see the happy smiles of dear faces; to find that our coming is expected and longed for; our room is in order, and a hot meal prepared. If these wonderful earthly experiences bring inexpressible warmth to our hearts, how vastly great must be the joy which shall be ours when, our earthly pilgrimage over, we settle down, in our heavenly home with our loved ones, for ever and ever.

Eighth Annual Gus Nichols Preachers' Workshop Postponed

BILL HUGGINS

Due to a conflict in dates, and the national interest in the Warren-Flew debate in Denton, Texas, the Eighth Annual Gus Nichols Preachers' Workshop has been postponed. It has NOT been discontinued. An even greater Workshop is being planned for 1977.

P. O. Box 28
Booneville, Miss. 38829

Falling From Grace:

10 Biblical Reasons Why

As most of us know, denominational circles are teaching that it is impossible to fall from a saved condition so as to be separated from God and eternally lost. Many think that if one can fall from grace this somehow limits God and his promise of the free gift of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). But this attitude requires a presupposition that God's gift cannot be true if one can lose that gift. Too many in the religious world still do not understand that God gives man a choice of salvation, and that if he turns



STEVEN CLARK GOAD

from God, it is a decision on the part of the individual. In light of this, here are ten solid, biblical reasons why we can know that one can fall from grace.

1) PAUL TOLD SOME CHRISTIANS THAT THEY WERE SEVERED. In writing to Christians, Paul used language that just cannot be misunderstood without a great deal of help. He wrote: "Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law; ye are fallen away from grace" (Galatians 5:4). To be sure, the words SEVERED and FALLEN are very explicit. Someone usually raises the objection that these people were never really saved in the first place. If that be true, why did Paul tell them they had been separated from something they were never a part of? This would make Paul's reasoning absurd. And this is the very same attitude Peter was aware of when he wrote: "Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye FALL from your own steadfastness" (2 Peter 3:17). This same sentiment is expressed by the writer of Hebrews as well when he discussed the required perseverance of the Christian (Hebrews 12:15).

2) JESUS SPOKE OF FAITHFULNESS AS A LIFE PURSUIT. Why would the Son of God suggest that we must be faithful and true if we could not possibly fall from grace? It is a paradox of reasoning to think that one who cannot possibly alienate himself from the Lord must persevere. In the words of Christ: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10b). It is easy to see what the outcome of one would be who did not persevere.

3) THE NEW TESTAMENT EMPHATICALLY TEACHES THAT SOME WILL TURN FROM TRUTH. It is nothing new for people to become enraptured by occultism and other such nonsense. Substitutes for Christianity have been offered up in all sizes and forms for years. Paul was aware of this when he wrote to Timothy of those who would turn from Christ unto fables originated by the mind of man. In his words: "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3, 4).

4) PETER WARNS THOSE WHO FALL AWAY OF THEIR ABOMINABLE CONDITION. It is a sobering and tragic thought when one realizes that somehow, some way a man who knows Jesus and then turns from him is in a sadder predicament than before he ever obtained that grace. Listen to this grave announcement! "For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [this means saved people], they are again entangled therein and overcome [how can one be overcome who cannot possibly be overcome?], the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Peter 2:20-21).

5) CHRISTIANS WERE REQUESTED TO "TRY" THEMSELVES. Why on earth would Paul ask Christians who cannot possibly fall to test themselves? "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Corinthians 13:5a).

6) THE WRITER OF HEBREWS MAKES IT UNMISTAKEDLY CLEAR. "For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted

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"All of Us Have Lived Before" -Jeane Dixon

(Continued From Page 1)

us to know the truth about Noah's Ark is nothing but open and flagrant blasphemy against the Bible. Moses has already told us the truth about Noah's Ark in the book of Genesis. I deeply resent the placing of Noah's Ark and the highly fictitious lost continent of Atlantis in the same category. The Bible has much to say about Noah's Ark. Moses mentioned it many times in Genesis, chapters 6, 7 and 8. Christ referred to it in Luke 17. The writer of Hebrews referred to it in the great chapter of faith, Hebrews 11. The Bible does not mention the first syllable in regard to the lost continent of Atlantis. Science fiction, not Scriptural fact, has given notoriety to the fabled land of Atlantis that supposedly sank beneath the seas before history began. I am deeply suspicious of anything that is PREHISTORIC and has nothing of a factual nature to support its reality. Surely any person who has a degree of respect for the Bible would not think of suggesting that Atlantis and Noah's Ark should be placed in the same category. If there ever were a mixing and mingling of fact (Noah's Ark) and fiction (the lost continent of Atlantis), this takes first prize in a contest that has no competition. Those who respect the Bible at all would never think of suggesting that the last word of Noah's Ark will have to come from reincarnated personalities. The Bible serves that purpose and serves it supremely.

Jeane Dixon is convinced that she has lived before and she is just as sure that in other of her lives she was a great scientist, a great faith healer, a great leader of men and a great worker for peace. In view of such it is strange the world has been in warfare for so much of its history. What were all her great workers for peace doing during these wars? This needs an answer! Consistently and uniformly she employs the WE and US throughout her interview — not THEY and THEM. We doubt she ever taught a course on humility during any of her other appearances on earth!!!! — P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Falling From Grace:

10 Biblical Reasons Why

(Continued From Page 3)

the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6). The reason that the doctrine often referred to as IMPOSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY is so vile and reprehensible is that it counters multiple passages such as this that make "the fall" so obvious and alarming!

7) IF ONE CANNOT FALL, WHY DID NO LESS THAN AN APOSTLE SAY HE MUST EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL CONSTANTLY?

Surely an apostle would qualify as one under God's grace. The apostle Paul was saved, redeemed, sanctified and made anew, yet he suggests that even so, he could behave himself in such a way as to be disqualified. Hear his words: "But 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" (1 Corinthians 9:27). The Calvinist is asked how Christians can possibly make each other stumble if a Christian cannot possibly fall? "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling" (Romans 14:13). The conclusion is inescapable: a Christian can stumble and a Christian CAN fall!

8) JOHN REVEALS THAT CONTINUAL CLEANSING BY JESUS' BLOOD REQUIRES A "WALKING IN THE LIGHT." The condition of grace is a conditional state of being. Just as life is conditional on various factors such as the heart functioning properly and the correct metabolic processes, so is spiritual life conditional on the proper direction of one's life. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

9) THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT NEW CONVERTS ARE EASILY SNARED BY THE DEVIL. If this be not true, then why do we give converts special attention? Why is a newborn baby given extra special care? A passage which might be easily overlooked which deals with this subject is the one regarding the qualifications of elders. Paul wrote to Timothy that an elder should not be a "novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (1 Timothy 3:6). Anyone with an ability to reason deductively can see that it is a strain on a new convert to give him too much leadership responsibility. It is so much of a strain that an inspired writer suggests that he could FALL from grace.

10) FINALLY, DOUBLE-TONGUED CHRISTIANS FALL. If one cannot sin so as to fall from grace, then every Christian can do as he pleases and be saved in spite of it all. But James informs Christians that even though they have been saved, they still might be lost because of idle talk. "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; that ye fall not under judgment" (James 5:12).

The tragedy about all this is that one who thinks he cannot fall from God's grace is resting his hope on fallacy. It simply is not true! People have died thinking hydrochloric acid was water. It looks like water. It has no smell. But nevertheless, it is deadly. The idea that one cannot fall from grace, if it were true, would have eliminated the apostate church. Yes, the idea is appealing, but, brethren, IT IS DEADLY!

2576 Pleasant Valley Rd.,
Mobile, Alabama, 36606

Deathbed Repentance

G.F. RAINES

The expression "deathbed repentance" is a term that I have heard from time to time as long as I can remember. Most of us have known people who lived wickedly during all the time when they were in good health and began to seek salvation only when they sensed the imminence of death.

According to J.M. Tribble, late professor of

New Testament literature at Bethany College in West Virginia, "A Christian physician in Boston. . . for years noted cases in his note book until he had the names of three hundred who had professed repentance on what they thought was their deathbed, and only three percent of the number after recovery remembered their repentance or honored their profession. A London missionary noted three thousand cases in his long life with almost the same result. This accords with the experience of all who have made any observations here. . . People who are insensible to God's mercies through life are not generally otherwise at death" (TRIBLE'S SERMONS, Christian Publishing Co., St. Louis, 1892, pp. 91, 92).

If your soul is not right with God, "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). "Today if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:8). "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1).

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

"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).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22).

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Please read Tit. 2:11-14; Gal. 5:19-24; 2 Pet. 1:5-11.

Too Horrible To Exist

About a century ago a group of atheists decided to show the world what a fine civilization could be built if only the "superstitions of Christianity" were excluded. They founded the little town of "Liberal," Missouri; and they boastfully advertised that it was the "only town of its kind in the United States." It was without preacher, priest, church, God, Christ, Hell or the Devil!

Some months later the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* carried a lengthy story about the town of "Liberal," in which it was pictured as the seat of the Devil and a den of iniquity. Its hotels were brothels, and vice had become virtue. Gambling, stealing, drunkenness and brawls were the usual occurrences of the day.

The story was so frightening that the men of Liberal had Clark Braden, the author of the story, arrested for criminal libel, and sued the *Post-Dispatch* for \$25,000. In the trial, the evidence of wickedness was so overwhelming that the jury took but a few minutes to render a verdict in favor of the defendants. The suit was dismissed, and the town of "Liberal" paid all the court costs.

The town of "Liberal" was an absolute failure. It was not long until lifelong atheists, who had moved into the town to enjoy its advantages, left in complete disgust. They found living in an atheistic town intolerable. One of their number confessed that "an infidel surrounded by Christians may spout his infidelity and be able to endure it, but a whole town of atheists was too horrible to contemplate."—The Good News/Shades Mountain, Birmingham, Alabama.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

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

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Perilous Times

RAYMOND ALLEN HAGOOD

When one reads II Timothy 3:1-8, he is often tempted to deal with the symptoms of the problem presented in the first verse rather than the cause of the problem. Paul declares in verse one that in the last days perilous times shall come. In verses 2-4 he lists a group of sins which, at first, appear to be the cause of the perilous times. After close examination, however, it becomes very apparent that the sins Paul lists are not the cause of the trouble, at all, but simply the symptoms of the difficulty.

The causes of the perilous times are by nature far more subtle than the symptoms and are easy to overlook. Paul says in II Timothy 3:5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." The problem presented here is that some of these individuals appeared to be fine Christians, but, inside, they were empty. They were like mannikins, having an external human form, but hollow within. They were guilty of the very same sins of the Pharisees, as described by our Lord in Matthew 23:27,28. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:27,28).

This external form led to denial of the power of godliness, in that they did not accept and live the truth. They were hypocrites in the highest sense of the word. How many people does this verse describe today and how many problems within the church are a direct result of this "form of godliness"?

When men pretend Christianity, they are the most vicious type of sinners. They live an open lie that sears their consciences to the point that they can engage in any sin and their only concern is whether or not they will be detected in their misdeeds. Is it not easy to see how destructive this "form of godliness" can be? It works evil under the guise of good. It wounds the sensitive consciences of babes in Christ. It corrupts the values, honesty, and integrity of our young people and it presents to the world a dim view of the church.

The second source of the difficulty is presented in II Timothy 3:6: "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away

with divers lusts." Paul says "for of this sort." What sort is Paul describing? The ones described here are those mentioned in verse five who have a form of godliness. These individuals are able to gain access to the houses of women whom Paul styles as "silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts."

Paul also says that the women are led captive or made slaves of these false teachers. What power do these false teachers have that enables them to make slaves of other people? Their power lies in the fact that these men are so corrupt that their consciences are seared to the core and they can therefore engage in any deception without feeling the slightest sense of remorse. With this calloused attitude they have no concern for the truth and will teach anything that will gain them popularity. It is easy to see, then, that these false teachers gain power over weak women by appealing to the women's evil desires and lusts. They literally soothe or scratch the itching ears of these women and in doing so, make them loyal servants.

The ability of false teachers to gain a acceptance is quite amazing. They are smart enough to know when to speak and when to remain silent. They cover their false doctrines in such a way that only the informed person can detect the error. They are easily able to select those individuals "having a form of godliness" who will give heed to their doctrine. Their most effective teaching is not done in public, but is done privately by subversive methods. False teachers will continue to have power and influence as long as there are brethren in the church who have a form of godliness and who want to be encouraged in their sins rather than corrected according to the Bible.

The final reason for the perilous times is given in II Timothy 3:7,8. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the truth." Notice verse seven. Paul describes a problem in which people are obviously studying and gaining knowledge. Paul states that these folks are "ever learning", but somehow are never quite able to know the truth. What is the source of this difficulty? The problem is not that they are not able to understand and know the truth, but that they

will not accept and live the truth.

Paul uses the example of Jannes and Jambres, who are thought to be the sorcerers of Pharaoh. Moses is representative of truth in this statement, since he was the proclaimer of truth to the Pharaoh. Jannes and Jambres literally stood against Moses and resisted the truth of God. Such is the nature of these individuals ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. The individuals described in verse seven are not interested in obeying the truth.

Paul depicts them as men of corrupt minds. The word "corrupt" is from a Greek word which means "a huckster who sells for personal gain." Paul also describes them as being reprobate concerning the faith. The Greek word for reprobate means "not standing the test." Therefore these men cannot stand the test. The picture painted here is that of individuals who desire knowledge in all fields, yet will not accept truth when it is presented to them.

God always measures a man by his attitude toward truth. The Bible proclaims that truth will make us free, but it can do so only if we accept it. When men refuse to accept truth, when false teachers are able to carry away captives, and when hypocrisy is rampant, then we can know assuredly that the church is in a time of peril. In such times we must look for and deal with these three causes.

"The Power of Positive Thinking"

CLIFFORD M. SMITH

The book, "The Power Of Positive Thinking" has been one of the more popular books on religion published in America. Its popularity stems from the fact that it encourages people to put out of their minds all that is pessimistic and disagreeable and develop for themselves a positive outlook that makes everything seem all right, even when it is all wrong. Because Dr. Peale is a very warm and friendly person who radiates the very

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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God's Tomorrow - A Review

We who preach, we who write, and we who edit brotherhood periodicals should be extremely careful of the things we say and of the stands we take, "knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (Jas. 2:1). It is certain that we must answer to the Judge of all the earth for any harm we do by our preaching and writing.



BOBBY DUNCAN

An awareness of this fact often accounts for our reluctance to call names in our refutation of false doctrine among brethren. God hates those who sow discord among brethren (Pr. 6:19). It is sobering to remember that we must stand before the Lord to give account of the things we preach and the things we write.

But there is another thought equally sobering, i.e., that we must stand before the Lord to give account of the things we should have preached and should have written, but did not. The same verse which says there is "a time to keep silence" says also that there is "a time to speak" (Eccl. 3:7). To keep silence in a time to speak obviously is as great a wrong as to speak in a time to keep silence. Those who are in positions to renounce sin and refute error and do not do so are neither servants of God nor friends of the brotherhood.

It is with this fact clearly in view that we begin our review of the book GOD'S TOMORROW, by Robert Shank. Shortly after brother Shank became a member of the church a report came to this writer that

brother Shank held to certain unsound views concerning the kingdom. Since brother Shank was scheduled for speaking engagements in our area, we wrote to question him about this report. His reply was to the effect that he was still studying the question, and had no intention of teaching publicly anything about the kingdom except the fact that the kingdom is the church, and those in the church are also in the kingdom. We took him at his word, and dropped the matter. We felt surely that one who had studied himself out of the doctrines of unconditional election and the impossibility of apostasy would have no difficulty in learning the truth on other subjects as well. And so long as he was not teaching error, we were content to remain silent while he studied.

However, in 1975 brother Shank published GOD'S TOMORROW, which Dale Evans Rogers says is "a gem of comfort and assurance!" This little book not only teaches error concerning a future kingdom and other matters, but does not evidence the same quality of study and reasoning as produced his earlier books, LIFE IN THE SON and ELECT IN THE SON.

It is not our purpose in this review to discredit the integrity, the scholarship, or the ability of brother Shank. It is rather to refute the error which he has written and published in a book, and to allow brethren who are using him and supporting his work to know of his erroneous views.

I CORINTHIANS 13:12

While the major portion of our discussion in later articles will have to do with error concerning a future kingdom here on this earth, we will deal in this article with a misuse of I Corinthians thirteen. Three times (pages 18, 38 and 50) I Corinthians 13:12 is quoted, either in part or fully, and is applied to the eternal life to come. For example:

"God intends rather to open the book wide in the life to come, to give us a full knowledge of himself. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians

Now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.

Only in the eternal life to come we can know our Creator in the full and joyful way he wants us to know him" (p. 38).

We would not argue with the conclusion reached by the misuse of this verse, for it would seem to follow from other passages (II Cor. 5:1-8, for example). But this is not only an erroneous, but also a dangerous misuse of a passage. If verse 12 of I Corinthians 13 applies to the eternal life to come, so do verses 8-11. This plays right into the hands of those who insist that miraculous gifts of the Spirit continue to this present time.

A careful examination of the passage in its context will reveal that the apostle was discussing gifts of the Spirit, their proper use, and their duration. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part" (I Cor. 13:8,9). The time would come when these miraculous gifts - prophecies, tongues, knowledge, etc. - would be abolished. They were designed only for that age during which God's revelation to man was in the process of being given. When this revelation was completed, these miraculous gifts would cease. And so states the very next verse: "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

That the passage cannot apply to "the eternal life to come" may be further seen from the fact that this chapter makes it plain that some of the things being discussed are

temporary, while some are permanent. The point is made that, after the temporary is done away, the permanent will remain. Verse thirteen makes it plain that faith, hope, and love are permanent. The temporary would be done away, and the permanent would remain, "when that which is perfect" came. But we will have neither faith nor hope in the life to come, for faith is "a conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1 ASV), and "hope that is seen is not hope" (Rom. 8:24). But faith and hope were to abide after "that which is perfect" came. Therefore, "that which is perfect" cannot refer to the eternal life to come.

So far as we are able to determine, this is exactly the position advanced by every brother who has defended in debate the proposition that miracles do not continue to the present time. Our brother, in denying this, inadvertently joins hands with Pat Boone (A NEW SONG, p. 122), C.J. Weaver (NICHOLS-WEAVER DEBATE, p. 66), Ben Franklin (WOODS-FRANKLIN DEBATE, p. 179), Dean Dennis (THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST TODAY, published by FGBMFI, p. 14), and every other advocate of Pentecostalism.

Please understand that we are not accusing our brother of believing that miracles continue today. We are merely showing that he makes the same mistake in his use of this particular passage that is made by the Pentecostal in his effort to maintain the idea that miracles have not ceased. It would be interesting to hear our brother explain why we do not have miracles today in light of his application of I Corinthians 13:12.

(To be continued)

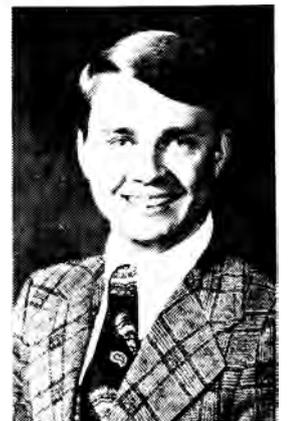
"Florida Churches"

Just the other day I had the pleasure of talking to a preacher friend of mine who is presently preaching for one of the "oldest and most influential" congregations in Florida. Our conversation was in reference to a speaking engagement I had planned with this congregation.

At the request of one of the elders my friend asked me how I felt about men and women going swimming together. I told him that there was nothing intrinsically wrong with men and women's being together in WATER, anymore than there was anything wrong with their being together in a house, a boat, or a car. "However," I said, "I strongly oppose the wearing of immodest apparel, and I know of no apparel more IMMODEST than a swimsuit."

A lengthy discussion then followed, during which this brother tried to defend such clothing as appropriate and modest. He also added that to his best knowledge virtually all "FLORIDA CHURCHES" (His words, not mine. RD) believed the same thing. He assured me that the elders of his congregation saw nothing immodest about swim suits (excluding bikinis???) and even arranged for swimming parties on the beach for their young people.

After I informed my friend that I could not endorse such action he relayed my sentiments to his elders. Two days later a telephone call came from one of these elders suggesting that under the circumstances it would be better for



RAY DUTTON

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Did the Holy Spirit fall on the hundred and twenty the same as it did on the twelve apostles on the day of Pentecost?"

No.

The meeting in which the hundred and twenty disciples assembled was not at the same *time*, and most likely not at the same *place* as that where the apostles were assembled on the day of Pentecost when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is very clear that the meeting mentioned in Acts 1:12-15, occurred several days before Pentecost - in the interval between the ascension of the Lord, and the events of Acts 2. It was fifty days from the Passover to Pentecost. Jesus was with the disciples for a period of forty days following his resurrection (Acts 1:3). Thus, ten days intervened between his ascension and Pentecost. The meeting of the hundred and twenty occurred during this period. This is very obvious from the fact that in this meeting Matthias was selected to take the place of Judas; and this selection had already been made before the day of Pentecost.

Where the hundred and twenty met, is not clearly indicated; it is very possible that it occurred in the "upper chamber," where the disciples met immediately following the Lord's ascension, and their return to the city. There were regular meetings with godly women present during this period (Acts 1:14). If it were not in the upper chamber, there is nothing in the text or context to identify their place of meeting as that where the apostles were assembled in Acts 2:1ff. On the contrary, the manner in which reference is made to the meeting of the apostles, "in one place," appears to distinguish it from the "place" where earlier meetings of the disciples occurred.

Moreover, the antecedent of the pronoun "they" in Acts 2:1, is not the hundred and twenty of Acts 1:15, but "the eleven apostles" in Acts 1:26. Thus, only the apostles "were all together in one place." Only the apostles "were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1,4).

The allegation that others were in the building where the apostles were assembled and that while only the apostles received the *baptism* of the Spirit, others received a measure of the Spirit of less degree, is utterly groundless. (1) Only the apostles were in the room when these events began. Others came only after the baptism had occurred. (2) It was the "sound" of the Spirit's coming which filled "all the house where *they* (the apostles) were sitting," not the Holy Spirit. Only the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

The apostles were "filled" with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). This filling was figurative, not literal; and it refers to the endowment of power which was theirs, and not to a literal infusion of the Spirit. A few days later, following the memorable Pentecost day, the apostles were *again* "filled" with the Holy Spirit. If the filling was literal, had they lost their earlier reception? And, if the filling was literal and was the baptism of the Spirit, were they again baptized in the Holy Spirit on the occasion described in Acts 4:23-31?

Thoughtful people will surely perceive that the *pouring out* of the Spirit, the *filling* of the Spirit and the *baptism* of the Spirit designated the bestowal of power upon the apostles by the Spirit and that the terms used are metaphorical, and not literal representations of what occurred. It is vital to remember in any proper study of the work and influence of the Holy Spirit that the *measures* of the Spirit were measures of *amounts of power* which the Spirit exercised through those endowed, and not literal affusions of the essence of deity - the Spirit. The Spirit is a Person - not merely an influence. The influence which the Spirit wields today is solely through means - the Word of God which he (the Spirit) gave us.

Reincarnation: The Silent Topic of Sacred Scripture

Toward the assumed and revived doctrine of reincarnation we want now to turn our attention to the Word of the Lord and see whether it receives any warrant from the same. We want to go to the law and to the testimony as Isaiah counseled in the ancient past in Isaiah 8:20. We want to seek out of the Book of the Lord and read as the same

Hebrew Seer advised in Isaiah 34:16. We want to do as Jesus told the inquiring lawyer in Luke 10:26, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" We desire to do as Peter suggested in I Peter 4:11, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; . . ." Our appeal therefore as to what is wrong with reincarnation is the same appeal Paul made when discussing a religious issue with the fickle Galatians. In Galatians 4:30 we read, "Nevertheless what saith the scripture?"

WHY THE BIBLICAL SILENCE?

The word REINCARNATION is not found in the Bible. Neither is the doctrine of reincarnation found in the Bible. The Sacred Scriptures are as silent as a tomb in regard to the support of this Oriental and recently vitalized Western nonsense. But we hasten to write that the Scriptures are not silent in the refutation of this false doctrine. The Bible refutes the doctrine in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as I plan to prove most conclusively in the remainder of our studies on this emerging error of our day.

In view of what Jeane Dixon has told us of the great importance of reincarnation, does it not seem exceedingly strange that Jehovah God would write a Book which employed the literary efforts of some forty inspired penmen over a period over a period of nearly sixteen hundred years and yet not say that first thing in defense of reincarnation? And yet after some nineteen centuries of time, according to Jeane Dixon, the Lord has revealed by visions galore to her that reincarnation is really so and that we are currently on the brink or threshold of discovering its vast secrets, and when discovered, they will lead to a glorious life for all of us. According to Jeane Dixon time is nearly at an end, for she says Christ will come back the second time between now and December 31, 1999. If she is right in her 1971 Little Rock prediction about when the

Lord would come the second time, then we are right now in the concluding moments of this earth's tenure. If reincarnation is as important as Jeane Dixon assures us it is, why did the Lord wait till the eleventh hour and the fifty-ninth minute of human history to tell her so much about this fabulous theory she has weaved into a 1974 interview? Don't you believe this question deserves an answer from Jeane Dixon? I do and I cannot help but feel that millions more share a like sentiment.

If what Jeane Dixon told the world in this 1974 interview is really a new revelation from God, then the Bible is not a full revelation of saving truth. The truth of God was not once and for all delivered as Jude, more than nineteen hundred years ago, affirmed in the third verse of his terse epistle. Shall we believe what Jude by inspiration wrote or what Jeane Dixon teaches by her fallible finger tipping, crystal ball gazing, looking into the twelve houses of the Zodiac or meditating in St. Matthew's in Washington on an October night in 1974? My choice is with Jude who wrote by the inspiration of God and not what she learned from finger tipping, crystal ball gazing, looking at the starry heavens above for some sort of astrological guidance or meditations received in a church building belonging to an apostate religious group in the nation's capital.

GENESIS 5: A REFUTATION OF REINCARNATION

The Old Testament clearly refutes the doctrine of reincarnation. Genesis 5 does it in striking fashion. Moses is the writer of this chapter as he is of the entirety of Genesis and all the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament). Genesis 5 is a chapter of longevity of life. Some of these patriarchs lived to be well beyond the nine century mark. For instance Adam lived to be nine hundred and thirty years. Let us keep firmly fixed in mind that Moses wrote this chapter hundreds of years after every person in this chapter had died. Yet he wrote in regard to Adam, "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: AND ALL THE DAYS THAT ADAM LIVED were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." Uniformly Moses employed the same comprehensive language in regard to all these men who lived so many centuries and then died. He told how long they lived. He gave their age at death. He described their stay upon earth by the crystal clear language that this tenure for each of them constituted ALL their days upon earth. Moses did not teach that Adam, Seth, Enos, Mahalalel, Jared or any of the rest of this chapter had come to earth again in other forms, in other bodies for an additional pilgrimage. Genesis 5 refutes reincarnation once and for all and does it decisively.

JOSHUA AND DAVID REFUTE REINCARNATION

Both Joshua and David in the Old Testament spoke of their going the way of the earth. This was their unique manner of describing physical death that was coming to them. Joshua said, "And behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof" (Josh. 23:14). David, in similar language, wrote in 2 Kings 2:1, "I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; . . ." If reincarnation is so, why did not Joshua and David respectively promise their generation that their going was very

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Robert R. Taylor Jr.

"The Power of Positive Thinking"

(Continued From Page 1)

spirit he seeks to cultivate in others, his book has been among the best sellers.

In the very beginning of this article, I must be reminded of the fact that much of the teaching of our Lord grew out of positive thinking and was therefore positive teaching. Let me hasten to say, however, the significance of the Bible that so many people fail to see is that the burden of its message is born out by both *positive* and *negative* teaching. An age old precedent requires the clearing of the new ground before planting and cultivation of the crop to be produced. The building contractor removes debris, clears away the trees and brush before beginning to build the structure. In similar fashion our Lord has to negate the thinking of his hearers before injecting into their hearts eternal principles of a positive nature. Often as we read from the Biblical message of Jesus we observe his forbidding certain ideas of practices which would hinder the reception of the message or lesson he was about to teach. Several verses in the great sermon on the mount serve to illustrate this truth. At Matthew 5 and verses 33-36 the Lord discussed our speech, our language, and he says: "Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by the heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black." That's strong negative teaching. Don't swear. Don't swear by God. Don't swear by heaven. Don't swear by the earth. Don't swear by yourself. Don't swear! It's hard to get more negative than that, and yet our Lord regarded such negative teaching to be essential to prepare the minds of his listeners for the forthcoming lesson. Let us read on. "Let your speech be, yea, yea; nay, nay: and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one" (Mt. 5:37). We readily recognize the emphasis to be upon developing such qualities of character that the Lord's people need not swear. Our forefathers had the right idea when they would say, "Let your word be your bond." Jesus taught that man's character should be so that his "yes" would mean "yes" and his "no" would mean "no".

Again our Lord uses the negative approach in setting the stage for portraying the eternal truth regarding attitude on giving. The account found in the middle chapter of the sermon on the mount teaches: "When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward" (Mt. 6:2). This is negative teaching! Don't do like the hypocrites! Don't go out to do a good work and sound a trumpet or call the newspaper reporters and photographers and get all the publicity from it that you can. Jesus says, "that's not right!" "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret: and thy father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee."

In view of the number of times the Bible sets forth the importance of negating an idea or practice which is wrong and goes on then to establish that which is right, many of us find difficulty entertaining the often suggested

philosophy, "preach positively, because negative preaching offends and drives hearers away." Our Lord was one who knew that success in agronomy was largely dependent upon proper preparation of the soil. He likewise knew the false ideas and philosophies of men had to be negated, cleared away, removed before the hearer could receive the truth. Toward the close of Matthew 6, a list of prohibitions is given in the form of negative teaching, such as, "Be not anxious for your life," including anxiety about food, clothing, shelter, etc. We might be ready to ask, "What will happen Lord, if we put aside these things of prime interest? What will fill the vacuum, the void, the vacancy?" And then we look at verse 33 where he gives the answer: "But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Jesus is here emphasizing the value of the Christian's citizenship in the kingdom, and he is careful to prohibit and negate hindrances and interferences. Application of this lesson involves our work as gospel preachers and teachers. Brethren, can we succeed in leading souls to Christ and ultimately into heaven without removing the obstacles of liberalism, anti-ism, existentialism, denominational dogmas and doctrines? Jesus says such would be vain effort (Mt. 15:9).

210 Alabama Ave.
Cordova, Al. 35550

Reincarnation: The Silent Topic of Sacred Scripture

(Continued From Page 3)

temporary and each one would come back in another form, in another body perhaps before that very generation faded from the scene? The truth of the matter is that neither Joshua nor David believed in reincarnation. They both believed in a resurrection but a resurrection and reincarnation are as far apart as are the poles. The two words have nothing in common outside of their beginning with the same letter of the alphabet. That is as far as the similarity extends.

The Shepherd King further refuted the ridiculous dogma of reincarnation at the death of his infant son in 2 Samuel 12:23. There the grieving monarch said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." David knew that the stricken baby would not be coming back to earth anymore. David believed he would go see the little lad but he did not believe the smitten lad would come back to him either in another form or in another body on this earth. The truth of the matter is that David did not believe in any form of reincarnation. He knew for a surety and a certainty that the little child was gone permanently as far as another earthly pilgrimage is concerned.

P. O. Box 464
Ripley, Tenn. 38063

"Florida Churches"

(Continued from page 2)

everyone involved if I did not come.

IS THIS THE CASE?

Although this preacher and two of the elders with whom I talked stated that mixed swimming was accepted in ALL "FLORIDA CHURCHES" that they knew of, I just can't believe it. Some of the most respected preachers in our brotherhood preach for "Florida churches," and it would be hard for me to believe that these men could endorse the flagrantly disgraceful and inexcusable immodesty that is seen on Florida's beaches.

And surely it is not true that the majority of "Florida churches" screen all of their prospective preachers on the same basis as did this congregation.

MODESTY AND SHAMEFACEDNESS

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety . . ." (I Tim. 2:9). The key word in this verse is the word "shamefacedness," which comes from the Greek word, "AIDIOS," and means "a sense of shame" — the quality of character that "precedes and prevents" a shameful act, particularly with regard to others (Thayer, p. 14).

Paul here requires the Christian woman to wear the kind of clothing that would be preventive of any shameful consequence. However, today's swim suits are by no means a preventive. They are unquestionably one of the major PRODUCERS of lewd and lustful desires. If not, why has it always been the case that pin-up girls are dressed in swim suits instead of modest dresses? Why is it that everything from corn plaster to bulldozers is advertized with a woman dressed in a skimpy swim suit? The answer is so obvious that it would be foolish even to give it.

LASCIVIOUSNESS

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, LASCIVIOUSNESS," (Gal. 5:19). Lasciviousness is from the Greek word, "ASELGEIA," and refers to any act or manner designed to produce vile and impure thoughts in the minds of others (Thayer, p. 79). Therefore, not only is it wrong to have lewd and lustful thoughts (Matt. 5:28), but it is also wrong to act, say, or dress in such a way as to cause others to have such thoughts.

Since Christians should "by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14), they should be able to decide whether or not the wearing of the average swim suit of today is lascivious or lust provoking.

Obviously at least some of our Florida brethren think not. But what is the basis for this thinking? Is it a carefully reasoned CONVICTION, or is it merely a CONVENIENCE? Have these brethren just resigned themselves to the old adage, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em"? Or do they really and seriously believe that such brief attire has no lust producing effects?

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

From my own personal experience I cannot believe it is the latter. I was not reared in a Christian home, prior to my obeying the gospel. My family owned and operated a recreational resort on Lake Lewis Smith. Thousands came each summer to swim and ski. Because of my love for the same I lived in a swim suit from the time I got up each morning until the time I went to bed.

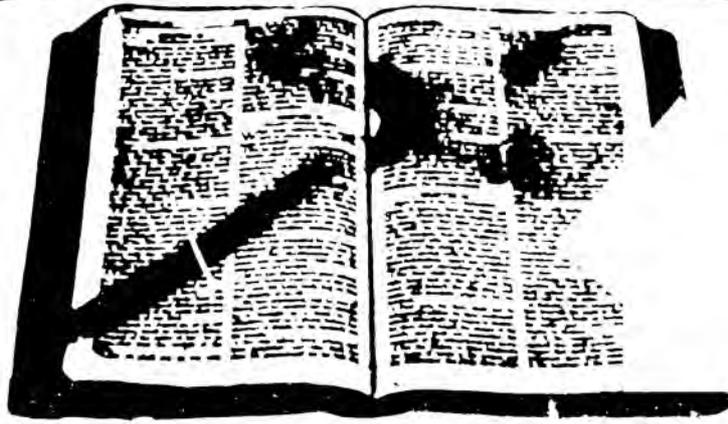
However, after I obeyed the gospel and began to study my Bible, it took me only a few weeks to be convinced that a Christian should not participate in mixed swimming. No one had to tell me it was wrong, anymore than they had to tell me about the kind of desires such clothing will stimulate. I knew better than anyone what kind of thoughts went through my mind when I saw young girls revealing so much of their bodies.

My convictions, therefore, are not in the least dictated by tradition or by the region I live in. I know by personal experience that Christian men and women have no right before God to display their bodies to each other in the way swim suits do.

And friend, if it is wrong in ALABAMA it is just as wrong in FLORIDA. May God help such elderships as the one mentioned to see the danger in this matter.

1501 6th Ave.
Jasper, Al. 35501

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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What Saith The Scriptures?

WINFRED CLARK

All will have to agree that much is now being said in the name of religion. Such was true in Paul's day. He would appeal to the scripture. Note Romans 4:3: "For what saith the scripture?" Now, that is a potent question if ever one was asked. He had just asked in verse 1, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?" He knew there was a way to find the answer. To the scripture he could with confidence go. Note some vital lessons implied in these verses.

NOT EVERYTHING SAID FITS WHAT THE SCRIPTURE SAYS. If such were true you would not have Paul asking such a question. If just anything said about Abraham was scriptural you would not have him asking such a question. It is obvious that Abraham was not justified by a lack of regard for what God said. He believed God (Verse 3). That fits the scriptures (Gen. 15:6). But his believing in God does not mean there was nothing for him to do. Begin reading Gen. 12 and read through Gen. 22 and see if he ever did anything God told him to. Now can it be said of our day that all that is said fits what the scripture says?

One says, "One cannot fall from grace." In fact some go so far as to say, if he fell he was never saved. One might ask, how could he fall from a position he did not occupy? Preachers labor long and loud to try to say this very thing. Now, what saith the scriptures? Do they have anything to say on the subject? Gal. 5:4 says, "... ye are fallen from grace." Paul did not say they COULD; he said they HAD. Now who are these people? Surely according to denominational teachings, they were never saved. They are in the church (Gal. 1:2), they had been called into the grace of Christ (Gal. 1:6), they had received the Gospel (Gal. 1:9), they had received the Spirit (Gal. 3:2,5), They are brethren (Gal. 3:15), They are all children of God (Gal. 3:26), they were Christ's (Gal. 3:29), they were heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:29), they were sons of God

(Gal. 4:6-7), they had liberty by Christ (Gal. 5:1). Now, if some denominational preacher wants to argue with Paul, that is his privilege. He sure has his work cut out for himself. What Paul says is scriptural. It is part of the scripture. For a man to deny this equals denying the scripture.

The same can be said relative to baptism and also the church. A great deal is being said now, but such talk does not fit the scriptures. (Note Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 6:1-6; Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38). Again, we ought to ask, what saith the scriptures?

WE MUST BE CONCERNED WITH WHAT THE SCRIPTURE SAYS. Paul would never ask the question if such were not the case. We just don't have the final answer until we have the answer of the scripture. Men can appeal to

feelings, ancestors, pluralities, and the like. None of these set aside what the scripture says. Note Luke 16:30. Abraham tells the rich man that his brethren had Moses and the prophets. That means that they had the Old Testament. If that would not convince them, nothing that God would use would persuade them.

Paul let people know that there is no substitute for the scriptures. Note his same question of Rom. 4:3 asked again in Rom. 11:2. He asks it again in Gal. 4:30. Do you think he would keep asking such a question if WHAT is said is not important?

WHAT IS SAID IS RELEVANT. If it is not why would he appeal to such? The Bible has something to say to the situation at hand.— P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

The First Annual "Spiritual Sword Lectureship", One Of The Great Events of 1976

GARLAND ELKINS

Some time ago the elders of the Getwell Church of Christ announced that the first annual "Spiritual Sword Lectureship" would be conducted, the Lord willing, October 24-28.

During the lectureship the basic message of every book of the New Testament will be discussed in the light of the general theme of the entire Bible and in view of the crucial situation, involving a number of specific problems, which the Lord's church presently faces. There will also be five special lectures.

The message of Christ for Christians and all others is revealed in twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Each of these books

makes a unique contribution to the whole. Each Christian (and all others) needs to understand each individual book and how it fits into the whole of the New Testament. Though there are needs for lectureships which deal with methods, there is far more urgency for those that are devoted to content. The first annual "Spiritual Sword Lectureship" will concern itself with the proclamation of the doctrine of Christ, and to the opposition of all false doctrines (Rom. 6:17, 18; II Tim. 1:13; I Tim. 4:16; Rom. 16:17, 18; II Jno. 9-11).

The speakers will come from across

(Continued on Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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God's Tomorrow - A Review

(NUMBER 2)

The book **GOD'S TOMORROW**, by Robert Shank, was published in 1975. In an earlier article we gave some background information relating to the need for this review. We also discussed his erroneous and dangerous misuse of I Corinthians 13:12. In this article we will observe other errors taught in the book.



BOBBY DUNCAN

A mistake which occurs most often is the mistake of using a passage which has a certain sound, to apply to things to which it does not apply. For example, in order to show that "heaven is a place of beauty, joy and gladness," brother Shank quotes from the sixteenth Psalm a verse which Peter quoted (Acts 2:28) and applied to the time when Jesus would be raised from the dead and would ascend to the right hand of God (Page 30). In the same paragraph, as if it were all part of the same quotation, he quotes from Psalm 87, a psalm which obviously refers to the literal city of Jerusalem. Note verse 5: "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her." How could this be referring to heaven? Are we to understand that people will be born in heaven? It is interesting to note that, later in the book (page 56), in discussing the "holy city, new Jerusalem," which our brother says is to be the "heartland and capital of the new earth," he again quotes from this same psalm. And so it seems that little effort is

made to determine the proper application of a passage, just so long as it sounds good.

A great deal of the first half of the book is taken up with speculation about heaven and the future life. It is suggested that we will enjoy music, fine art, golf, growing tomatoes, eating, etc. in heaven (pages 34, 35). Our brother is also sure that Christians will, at death, be immediately clothed upon with a physical body (pages 36-38). This matters little, in so far as our serving God while we live on earth is concerned, nevertheless it seems in order to make the following observations. After arguing that we will have a physical body immediately at death, a difficulty is acknowledged: "One question remains: if God has provided a 'heavenly' body for the 'clothing' of our spirits at the death of our present mortal bodies, what about the resurrection of our earthly bodies, which is so clearly promised in the Bible?" (Page 40). Notice brother Shank's answer to this question: "God has provided both for an interim body between death and the resurrection, and for the eventual resurrection of our original bodies in perfection" (page 40). On page thirty-seven he says that this "interim" body is not mortal.

Now look at the difficulty he is in. According to our brother Shank, we will be given an immortal body immediately at death. Then at the final resurrection, our original bodies will be raised "in perfection." Does this mean we will have two bodies? If not, what is going to happen to the interim body, seeing that it will not be mortal? This is the kind of difficulty in which a man finds himself when he begins to speculate about things which are not revealed. Why cannot one be content to teach what the Bible says about a matter, and stop there?

THE NEW WORLD

Beginning on page forty-five, our brother sets forth the idea that since creation, God has been moving toward his ultimate goal of a world without war, crime, violence, poverty, pollution, waste, sickness, accidents, disabilities, and death. He adds: "The Bible speaks of 'the world to come,' which is something more than the heaven that now awaits us beyond this life" (page 46). It is this idea, which is developed throughout most of the remainder of the book, that makes the book most objectionable, especially to those who are familiar with the errors of premillennialism. But those who have not read **GOD'S TOMORROW** may think we are here attributing to our brother a position which he does not hold. Let us observe some other statements from the book, to establish just

exactly what the author is teaching.

Note the following: "The coming of the new earth will mark the end of time as we now know it, with its processes of aging and death. . . ." (p. 48). "Christ's resurrection body is perfectly adapted to earth. . . His body is equally adapted to heaven. . . It is equally adapted to the new earth to come" (pp. 52, 53). "The earth, too, awaits a coming glorious resurrection. Just as Christ's body suffered death and was raised. . . so the earth will experience a 'death' and a resurrection in perfection for ever. . ." (p. 53). "Sometime in the coming 'day of the Lord,' God will perform a mighty work of re-creation, totally renewing the earth in beauty and perfection for ever" (p. 55). "The heartland and capital of the new earth will be the 'new Jerusalem' of which John wrote in the Revelation" (p. 56). "As God planned from the beginning, heaven and earth will merge and the heavenly Jerusalem which is now 'above' will no longer be ABOVE, but will be united with a perfect earth for ever" (p. 58).

We have not taken a single one of these statements out of its context. We have no desire, and no reason, to attribute to brother Shank a position which he does not hold. But brother Shank believes, and teaches in **GOD'S TOMORROW**, that Christ will come back to this earth, and an earthly kingdom will be established upon a renewed earth, Jerusalem being the capital, just as does the Premillennialist. He does not believe, as does the Premillennialist, that this reign will be limited to a thousand years, but that it will last "for ever." On page 71 he quotes from Revelation 11:15: "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." He then adds: "That time will come, and the world moves inevitably toward it with the passing of every day. **IT IS NEAR?**" (Emphasis mine).

These quotations set forth clearly the position held by our brother. We have presented these at length so that our readers may know for a certainty that we are not building a "straw man." Yet there are some things our brother did not tell us. He did not say a word about the "Rapture," which is so near to the heart of the Premillennialist. But isn't the "Rapture" a necessary part of the theory of a renewed earth? Where are the righteous people going to be while the earth is being cleansed and purged and renewed? Would he say in the Rapture? If not, where?

In future articles we will deal with the arguments made to try to support our brother's erroneous views concerning a future reign of Christ on earth.

Capital Punishment - No! Legalized Abortion - Yes!

(How do they justify it?)

DOUGLAS SIMS

No person who is aware of the things going on around us today can deny that our nation is beset with many problems. Newspapers are laden with proof of the ungodly trends being set by the citizens of the United States. Television programming has reached a new low in moral standards. Much of it is not fit for anyone to view. This is a great contributing factor to the decline of our moral standards.

Among the great issues America is facing today there are two which are gaining much attention. The issue of **CAPITAL PUNISHMENT** has brought out much emotional discussion both for and against. On one hand

it is opposed on the grounds that the practice is "immoral." Others say it is a weapon against the poor and minorities. It is continually argued in the courts, all the way to the Supreme Court. Every state is involved in this most difficult problem.

Another great problem in the headline today is that of **ABORTION**. Not many issues have brought so much harsh discussion to the surface. It seems to be an issue which has few neutral observers. Most are either very strong for legalized abortion or equally strong against it. It is a major religious issue. It has become one of the most important political issues

(Continued on Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"If only the apostles had the power to transmit miraculous gifts through the laying on their hands, how do you explain the action of Ananias in Acts 9:17, in connection with Saul's reception of the Holy Spirit, and the action of the elders [the presbytery] along with Paul in the bestowal of a 'gift' upon Timothy [1 Tim. 4:14]?"

It is significant that the inspired writer, in discussing the action of Ananias in this matter makes clear, in the reference to the laying on of hands, that it was in order that Saul might receive his sight (Acts 9:12). This was the purpose of the laying on of hands by Ananias; and this is all this action accomplished. In discussing the purpose for which Ananias was sent to Saul, it is said that two things would be achieved: (1) he would receive his sight; (2) he would "be filled with the Holy Spirit." But, it is not said that the latter resulted from the laying on of hands. It is certain that it did not for the following reasons: (1) Saul of Tarsus was to become Paul, *the apostle*. As an apostle, it was requisite that he be baptized in the Holy Spirit. That he possessed this measure of the Spirit definitely follows from the fact that his gifts and attainments were "in nothing" behind "the very chiefest apostles" (II Cor. 12:11). (2) But only Christ could, and did, administer Holy Spirit baptism (Matt. 3:11), an action wholly beyond the powers or privileges of any man. Why then is it said that as the result of Ananias' coming Saul received his sight, and the Holy Spirit? Ananias came to Saul to tell him what to do to be saved (Acts 9:5,6). *Had Saul refused to listen to Ananias, he would have neither received his sight nor have been baptized in the Holy Spirit.* Thus, while Ananias did not transmit the Spirit to Saul, he would not have received it but for Ananias' coming.

The presbytery (the elders) did not, and could not, transfer the gift to Timothy. It was done "through" (*dia*) the laying on of Paul's hands "with" (*meta*) the accompaniment of the elders. Paul did it; the presbytery sanctioned the action. This distinction is very clear in these Greek prepositions. See I Tim. 4:14, and compare it with II Tim. 1:6.

Some Thoughts Concerning Personality

G. F. RAINES

Personality is "the totality of an individual's characteristics" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary).

Dr. Laurance F. Shaffer, Associate Professor of Psychology at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, said: "The personality of an individual may be defined as his persistent tendencies to make certain kinds and qualities of adjustment. The predisposition to maladjustment lies in possession of personality characteristics that tend toward a nonadjustive response to baffling situations, or toward one form or another of inferior solution" (The Psychology of Adjustment, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1936, p. 282).

Dr. Evelyn N. Duvall says: "Personality is not just an endowment which some people have and others lack. You were not born with

a good or a bad personality. . . . The many aspects of every personality are not accidental, but have causes and often elaborate histories. What makes you YOU depends upon years of responding to life's situations. Your personality is made up of many things: the kind of body you started with, the type of home you were born into, the sort of people you have associated with, the way you have been brought up and the things you have learned, and most important of all, how you have felt and acted about them" (When You Marry, D.C. Heath and Co., 1953, p. 4).

Dr. John E. Horrocks of Ohio State University says:

"Stott. . . in a study of 1855 farm, small town, and city children found that the two most important factors in family living and the social life of the home, as they affected the personality development of the children in the family, were the 'confidence, affection, and companionability' pattern, and the pattern of 'family discord' or 'parental misconduct.' Children from homes characterized by 'good' patterns of family life as contrasted to 'bad' were better adjusted and more appreciative of family life and were superior in their general personality adjustment" (The Psychology Of Adolescence, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951, p. 35).

The Book of God, the Holy Bible, says:

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Because of the extremely powerful influences of heredity and environment, no two personalities are ever exactly alike, but all people should strive diligently to develop an INTEGRATED PERSONALITY. Dr. Helen S. Shacter, former Professor of Psychology at Northwestern University, says: "The integrated person knows what he wants and has a definite code by which he lives."

The best code by which to live is the GOLDEN RULE, enunciated by our Lord Jesus Christ in the matchless Sermon on the Mount, as follows: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12; see also Mark 12:30,31).—Newton, Miss. 39345.

The Old Testament: A Thorough Refutation Of Reincarnation

A study of reincarnation is really a study of the occult movement. It bears all the essential features of belonging to the field of occultism. Reincarnation is the theory that suggests that people come back in other bodies and forms for additional existences on earth. Such is enjoying a resurging revival in our time. Like its occult cousin,

astrology, reincarnation was quite prominent in the ancient minds of Oriental people and still is an accepted belief in that part of the world. Now a number of Western minds have been captivated with reincarnation. In our previous study attention was focused upon some of the statements made in the Old Testament by Moses, Joshua and David which

thoroughly and completely refute and repudiate this senseless and ridiculous theory.

THE BOOK OF JOB REFUTES REINCARNATION

Job is one of the oldest books of the Old Testament. It thoroughly refutes this senseless system we are currently examining. The patient sufferer of Uz said in Job 14:1-2, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." Please note that Job suggested that there is only one birth for man of a physical nature. But if reincarnation is true, man has many births and will have any number of mothers during the time he exists upon earth. Job views man's pilgrimage on earth as a one time affair. It is of short duration and filled with many troubles. His one pilgrimage on earth is likened to a flower which is cut down and a shadow that continues not. But if reincarnation is true, then man is like flowers that might grow, bud and blossom over many generations of time. He is then likened to shadows that come and go over a period of many generations. Instead of there being a permanent cutting down of the flower and a permanent discontinuation of the shadow as far as an earthly pilgrimage is concerned, there will be the emerging of the flower in many bodies, in many forms and the appearance of the shadow generation after generation. If Job 14:1-2 is true in its dynamic declaration, and it is, reincarnation is false to the very center of its colossal claims and arrogant assertions. If on the other hand reincarnation is so, then Job 14:1-2 is without meaning or sensible interpretation. Reader friend, the matter is just that simple.

But even more to the point in refuting reincarnation is Job's statement in Job 16:22. There the patient patriarch of Uz declared, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." His current life was to continue for a few more years. Then he was to make a departure. There would be no more returning to the earth for him. Now if reincarnation is true, Job's statement falls to the ground as a false declaration on his part. And the Spirit of truth which inspired the making of this statement and its infallible inclusion in the Sacred Scriptures uttered falsehood. If reincarnation is true, Job may have been back to the earth in other forms and in other bodies scores of times or even hundreds of times since the initial making of this statement. If Job 16:22 is true, reincarnation is false. If reincarnation is true, then Job 16:22 is reduced to absolute falsity. If you have been giving any type of favorable responses to all these far-fetched theories of reincarnation, don't you see what such does to the Bible? Reader friend, you cannot be a believer in reincarnation and be a believer in the Bible at the same time.

SECOND SAMUEL 14:14:

A REFUTATION OF REINCARNATION

Another Old Testament refutation of reincarnation is set forth in a statement that an unnamed woman made to the Shepherd King in 2 Samuel 14:14. The passage says, "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. . . ." But if reincarnation is true, the departed life at physical death will be gathered up again. In fact it may be gathered up again in many other forms or bodies and quite literally for dozens or even hundreds of additional existences on earth. Surely reason has to take leave of the human brain before any can take this theory seriously!! If reincarnation is true, then 2 Samuel 14:14 is false. If 2 Samuel 14:14 is true, then reincarnation is false to the very core of its teaching. Reader friend, which position are you going to take? It is either the Bible or the

(Continued on Page 4)



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

The First Annual "Spiritual Sword Lectureship", One Of The Great Events Of 1976

(Continued from Page 1)

America. Brother B.C. Goodpasture, distinguished Editor of the Gospel Advocate, will speak during the Sunday morning worship hour on the subject of "Soldiers of Christ Arise." The inimitable G.K. Wallace will conclude the series on Thursday morning. Brother Wallace will be speaking on the subject of "What Shall We Conclude?"

Those desiring further information should write to Thomas B. Warren or Garland Elkins, lectureship directors, and enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope for a free brochure. All lectures will be presented in the meetinghouse of the Getwell Church of Christ, 1511 Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38111.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24:

9:30 a.m. — "The Living Message of Luke", Hugo McCord.
10:20 a.m. — "Soldiers of Christ Arise", B.C. Goodpasture.
7:30 p.m. — "The Messages of the Books of the New Testament Live Today", Thomas B. Warren.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25:

8:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of Matthew", Wayne Jackson.
9:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of Mark", William Woodson.
10:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of John", Dan Billingsley.
11:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of II Corinthians", Rex Turner.
BREAK — 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Galatians", Jim Boyd.
2:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Philippians", Garland Elkins.
3:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Colossians", Pat McGee.
BREAK — 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Romans", J.D. Bales.
8:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Acts", Andrew Connally.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26

8:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of I Thessalonians", Robert Taylor.
9:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of II Thessalonians", William S. Cline.
10:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of I Timothy", Malcolm Hill.
11:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of II Timothy", Roy Lanier.
BREAK — 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Titus", William Wilder.
2:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Philemon", Tom Holland.
3:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Hebrews", Tom Eddins.
BREAK — 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of I Corinthians", Roy Deaver.
8:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Ephesians", Wendell Winkler.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27

8:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of James", Rubel Shelly.
9:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of I Peter", Franklin Camp.
10:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of II

Peter", V.E. Howard.

11:00 a.m. — "The Living Message of I John", Noel Merideth.

BREAK — 12:00 noon until 1:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of III John", John Parker.

2:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Jude", Kenneth Jones.

3:00 p.m. — "The New Testament and Controversy", Lindsey Warren.

BREAK — 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m. "The Living Message of II John", Alan Highers.

8:00 p.m. — "The Living Message of Revelation", W.B. West, Jr.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28

8:00 a.m. — "Teaching Survey of the New Testament", Warder Novak.

9:00 a.m. — "New Testament Books Disprove Pre-millennialism", Johnny Ramsey.

10:00 a.m. "What Shall We Conclude?", G.K. Wallace.

The Old Testament: A Thorough Refutation Of Reincarnation

(Continued from Page 3)

revival of ancient Oriental nonsense-reincarnation. In the words of the colorful Tishbite on Mount Carmel, Elijah, "How long go ye limping between the two sides?" (I Kings 18:21 — ASV).

AN ARGUMENT FROM ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB

In the book of Genesis it is mentioned specifically of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that at death each was gathered unto his people (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:33). This had reference to their going into the realm of departed spirits where they continued to live as far as God was concerned though their dead bodies were interred in the Palestinian sepulchre of Machpelah. Many centuries after the death of Abraham, the father of the faithful, Jesus spoke about this great patriarch. Exactly where did God's Son locate the whereabouts of Abraham? Did he leave the impression that Abraham had been on earth in many other forms or bodies during the many centuries since he first lived in Ur, Canaan and Egypt for a total pilgrimage of some 175 years? Absolutely not! The Christ located Abraham where he had been since he fell asleep at the end of his first AND ONLY 175 year pilgrimage some 18 to 19 centuries before the birth of the Christ child. According to Luke 16:19-31 Abraham was in that same area of the Hadean world — the place for departed spirits who are righteous at death — as the Paradise into which the Crucified Christ went between his death and his resurrection some three days later. This is the place where Lazarus, the righteous beggar, was comfortably situated subsequent to his own demise. There is absolutely nothing in all the Bible to suggest that any of these three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, has come back in other bodies and other forms by the route of reincarnation since each one died nearly four thousand years ago. Reader friend, it is the Bible versus reincarnation; it is the Bible versus Jeane Dixon. You cannot believe both in the Bible and in reincarnation. One must go. Will it be the Bible or the senseless system of absurd reincarnation? For many Americans it will be the Bible that has to do the disappearing act; reincarnation will be accepted as the greater of the two. How sad such is!!

DANIEL REFUTES REINCARNATION

Daniel 12:2-3 is another weighty Old Testament passage which refutes thoroughly resurging reincarnation. The passage states in

crystal clear language, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." But how can people sleep in the dust of the earth if they keep coming back in reincarnated forms from generation to generation? What if some of these were righteous the first time they went through life and then the second and third times around, they were real moral reprobates? Will they awake to everlasting life based on their first time around or to shame and everlasting contempt based on their second and third times of moral degeneration? Which life will determine their manner of resurrection and the place of their eternal destiny in the world that is yet to be? If the first one which was righteous does, then what about their second and third lives which were vastly wicked? What if they were really wicked and corrupt the first time around and then became righteous each of the other times they came back in reincarnated beings or forms? Just which time around will determine their manner of resurrection? We wonder if some of these points do not deserve some more answers from Jeane Dixon. Reader friend, do you not wonder in regard to the same?

Capital Punishment - No! Legalized Abortion - Yes!

(Continued from Page 2)

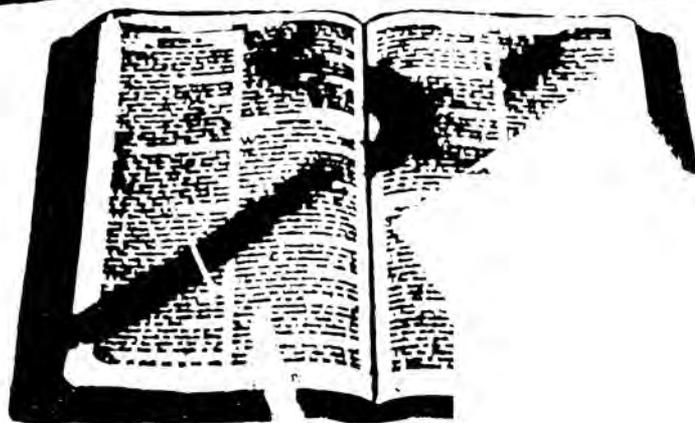
the upcoming presidential election. Surely, every citizen has heard much discussion on both sides of the issue.

It is not my desire here to present any new information on either subject. I believe the Christian will arrive at the right answer by looking to the Word of God. If you want some answers to the medical aspects of abortion I recommend the HANDBOOK ON ABORTION, by Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Willke. If you have any real doubt about the question of whether it is the taking of a human life, I believe the information they offer will settle the question once and for all.

My purpose here is to pose a most interesting question. Many of the critics of the practice of CAPITAL PUNISHMENT are supporters of LEGALIZED ABORTION! I want to know how the two viewpoints can be justified? I know that not everyone opposing the practice of capital punishment is in favor of legalized abortion, but many of the leaders in the abortion legalization effort today are making such arguments. I fail to see how the two views can possibly be held by one individual. If the execution of a criminal is "immoral" as some claim, how could any sane thinking person feel that killing an unborn child is morally justified?

The Bible shows examples of God's approval of capital punishment by the "powers that be." Can you find one example of His approval of the practice of abortion? We all know the answer to that one! Both these issues, and all others, have an answer in God's Word if we will seek it out. The problem lies in the fact that people are no longer concerned with what God has to say about anything. Where will it all lead? Look to Israel of old and you will see. When they turned from God, He allowed them to pay the penalty. Wake up, America! "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). Unless we change our direction, we may find there is no way back. We must use our freedom to do as we ought to do, NOT as we please! — 326 East Avenue, Cedartown, Ga. 30125.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

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NUMBER 42

A Bible Question Answered

Question: "Please name one person in the Bible who went down into the water of baptism a sinner, and came out a Christian."

Reply: Without hesitation I can name Saul of Tarsus as one who went down into the water of baptism a sinner, and came out a Christian. From his youth Saul had believed in God the Father, and in the



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS

Old Testament scriptures as inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 11:22; Gal. 1:13-14; Acts 22:3; 26:4-5). His zeal for Moses and the Prophets was manifested in his zeal against Christianity (Acts 7:58; 8:1; 3; 9:1-3). He did this through "unbelief" (1 Tim. 1:13) so far as JESUS CHRIST was concerned. "I verily thought with myself I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I 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 26:9-12).

But on the Damascus road, Saul became a believer in Christ. "As he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9:3-5). At this point I remind you that later Paul wrote: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). So by "hearing," Saul became a believer in JESUS — being convinced that he is ALIVE subsequent to his crucifixion. He must be the Son of God! (Rom. 1:4).

As soon as Saul became a believer in the risen Christ, he wanted to obey Him, inquiring, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to

do?" (Acts 9:6). "Faith ONLY" did not save Saul of Tarsus; for three days he was miserable: "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (Acts 9:9). He had not BELIEVED AWAY HIS SINS, NOR PRAYED THEM AWAY! After three days, when Ananias arrived, Saul was still in his "sins" (Acts 22:16). Later he wrote that he was saved "by faith" (Rom. 5:1) — but it was not by "faith ONLY."

Believing that Jesus is the Christ (Rom. 10:9), Saul changed his evil purposes. Upon his arrival in Damascus, instead of persecuting Christians, as he had intended (1 Tim. 1:13), he wanted to become a Christian himself! (Acts 9:2, 6). Such a "change of mind for the better, with abhorrence of one's past sins, heartily to amend" is Thayer's definition of "repentance." Jesus said, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3). Peter commanded, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Hence, repentance is necessary to salvation. This is the point at which one breaks off the intentional practice of sins. But forgiveness or "remission of sins" ALREADY COMMITTED is not promised until after repentance is followed by baptism: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:38). When Ananias came, he found Saul an UNSAVED penitent believer in Christ — unsaved, for he yet had his "sins" (Acts 22:16).

Furthermore, this unsaved believer had confessed Jesus Christ as "Lord" (Acts 9:6). After Jesus identified himself, Saul inquired, "LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). This confession of Christ is necessary "unto" salvation (Rom. 10:9-10). But Saul was not saved the moment he made it, for three days later he yet had his "sins" (Acts 22:16).

Consider the man, Saul of Tarsus, to whom Jesus sent Ananias: (1) He believes in Jesus as the risen "Lord." (2) He has repented. (3) He has confessed with his mouth that which he believed in his heart — that Jesus is "Lord" — and had expressed a desire to obey him. In addition to these requirements, he also fasted and prayed until Ananias arrived to tell him what he "must do" (Acts 9:6). But Saul still had his "sins" when Ananias came

(Acts 22:16).

Ananias told this unsaved penitent believer who had confessed Christ as "Lord," to "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). This man whom Jesus sent, told Saul that he still had his "sins." At this point the blood of Jesus Christ had not "washed away" any of them! — For of course it is the BLOOD that saves us (Col. 1:14; Rev. 1:5). But, Christ's BLOOD was SHED IN HIS DEATH! (Jn. 19:31-34). He was "dead already" before his "blood" was shed. So, in order to reach the "blood," we must be "baptized INTO HIS DEATH" (Rom. 6:3-4). Neither faith alone, nor repentance, nor confession, nor prayer will put one "INTO" the DEATH of Christ, where his blood was shed; but baptism does. Since this is true, Saul of Tarsus went down into the water of baptism a sinner, and came out a Christian!!

Dear Reader, if one is saved before baptism, he is saved without contacting the blood of Jesus Christ which was shed in his death (Jn. 19:31-34; Rom. 6:3-4). Saul (later known as Paul) wrote that he was saved "IN" — not OUT OF — Christ (2 Tim. 2:10; Col. 1:13-14), and that he was "baptized INTO Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3-4). If your conversion differs from Saul's, which do you suppose is wrong? yours? or Saul's? He wrote that his was "a PATTERN to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" (1 Tim. 1:16).

Review the facts of Saul's salvation as related in Acts 9, with Acts 22:16. Believe in Jesus Christ who said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16).

9 Found It

WINFRED CLARK

Driving down the highway or street, one is apt to see the above sign. Such announces a supposed discovery. Just what "it" is is not described, but left to one's imagination. The bumper sticker does not tell where or when "it" was found. Well, there are some things

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

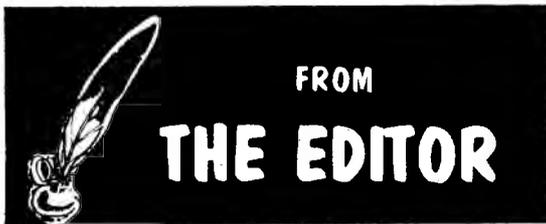
RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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God's Tomorrow Withdrawn

Brother Robert Shank has agreed to discontinue circulation of the book, **GOD'S TOMORROW** and we have agreed to discontinue our review of the book. In a meeting Wednesday night with the elders of the Sixth Avenue church, brother Shank made the following statement for publication:



BOBBY DUNCAN

"Because it is a matter of concern, and some regard it as divisive, I will agree not to continue the distribution of the book as long as I am associated with this work." The work to which he refers in this statement is the work of Marvin Bryant and others who are working under the direction of the Alpine Hills church in Mobile. Upon receipt of such a statement from brother Shank, the elders of the Sixth Avenue church and the editorial staff of **WORDS OF TRUTH** were more than happy to discontinue our review of the book.

This agreement was reached after about two hours' discussion of the matter. Those in the meeting were Robert Shank, Marvin Bryant, and Alan Cloyd of the Bryant - Shank ministry; Flavil Nichols, associate editor of **WORDS OF TRUTH**; Ray Dutton, circulation manager of **WORDS OF TRUTH**; David Beard, Paul Dozier, Sam Evans, Lincoln Herzig, Henry Hyche, Dempsey Jones, A.C. McGlaun, John Panter, Wayne Primm, E.R. Tarence, and Fletcher Wade, elders of the Sixth Avenue church, and the writer.

It is at great personal sacrifice that brother Shank does what he has agreed to do. We commend his willingness to make this sacrifice in the interest of peace and harmony. Few, if any, gospel preachers can afford to pay for the publication of a book, and then

remove it from the market. Consequently brother Shank is suffering a financial loss of about \$2,000.00 by stopping sale of the book. We would urge our readers to send him a contribution to help recover this great loss. His address is 624 King, Mt. Vernon, Mo. 65712. Or if you would prefer, you may send the money to us and we will see that he gets it. In either case checks should be made payable to Robert Shank.

The elders of the Sixth Avenue church are to be commended for their action in standing together in regard to this matter. It was they who decided that the book should be reviewed in **WORDS OF TRUTH**. We were simply acting at their request. May God help elders everywhere to be impressed with the duty that is theirs to stand firmly for right and against wrong. If all would do so, we would have far fewer problems with which to deal.

We are sure that some have refused support to the Bryant - Shank ministry because of **GOD'S TOMORROW**, or because of our review of the same. If such is the case, we would encourage these to reconsider the matter, and to give support to the program. We sincerely believe that the things that have happened will help insure against serious errors in this work in the future. This is especially true if those of us who support the work are the ones who really do care about soundness.

Two Resurrections??

ROGER E. DICKSON

Many, if not most, premillennialists today teach that there will be two different resurrections in the future in relation to the supposed millennial reign of Christ here on earth. It is affirmed that some "will be resurrected immediately before the actual return of Jesus to earth" and that some will be resurrected "at the end of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ here on earth" (Perrine, **FUTURE LIFE**, p. 16). It is stated that "The dead in Christ [the righteous] that are His at His coming, will be raised out of the dead, and the rest of the dead [the wicked] will be left until another and final resurrection, and the Millennium will occur between these two resurrections" (Blackstone, **JESUS IS COMING**, p. 48).

A brief study of some basic Bible facts will show that premillennialists have slipped on their understanding of the events of the resurrection.

Contrary to premillennial thinking, the resurrection of the wicked and righteous, and the judgment, will be in the same day, the last day. The following scriptures should help us understand better this thought: John 6:40 says that the resurrection of the righteous will be in the **LAST DAY**. And, John 12:48 says that the judgment of the wicked will also be in the **LAST DAY**. Therefore, we can justly conclude that the resurrection of the righteous and the judgment of the wicked will be on the same day, the last day.

There will be no one thousand year gap between these two great events of history. The righteous will be raised and judged and the wicked will be raised and judged on the same day, the last day.

The Bible pictures a simultaneous resurrection of both the righteous and wicked. It teaches that the righteous and wicked will be resurrected even **IN THE SAME HOUR** (John 5:28, 29). The Bible teaches that when Christ comes again, He will immediately render vengeance to the wicked and not wait a thousand years to do so (2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 14, 15; Matt. 16:27). The Bible teaches that

when Jesus comes again He will judge all nations and separate the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:31,32; II Cor. 5:10; Rom. 2:16; 14:10-12). The goats will be separated from the sheep at Jesus' second coming, not a thousand years after He comes.

The Bible picture of the second coming of Christ leaves no room for a one thousand year gap between the resurrection of the righteous and wicked. Jesus will come at the sound of the **LAST TRUMP** on the last day (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16; John 6:39, 40, 44, 45; 11:24). That day, the last day, will be a day of wrath and revelation (Rom. 2:5; Rev. 6:17), a day of judgment (Rom. 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:9; 3:7; Acts 17:31; 1 John 4:17), and a day of redemption and salvation for the righteous (Eph. 4:10; 1 Pet. 2:12; 1 Cor. 5:5).

The Bible states that Jesus will come as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:2, 4; 2 Pet. 3:10). He will come to raise both the righteous and wicked (1 Cor. 15:50-58; John 5:28, 29). All will be gathered before the judgment seat of Christ and the wicked will be separated from the righteous (Matt. 25:31-34, 41, 46); the earth will be burned up (2 Pet. 3:10); the righteous will go into eternal life and the wicked will go into eternal punishment (Matt. 25:46).

In all of this activity, where is the mention, or even hint, of a one thousand year gap between the resurrection of the righteous and wicked? It is just not there. In fact, the Bible definitely pictures Christ's second coming as an end of history upon this earth and not the beginning of a one thousand year reign of Christ. — Instituto De Estudos Biblicos, Caixa Postal 30.543-01000, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

I Go A Fishing

In John 21:3 Peter said to the other apostles, "I go a fishing." This is the man who was personally trained by Christ to be a leader in his kingdom (Matt. 16:19). This is that same Peter who had earlier sworn his life-long loyalty to the Master (Lk. 22:33). This man saw the resurrected Christ repeatedly with his own eyes.



JOHN WADDEY

Yet for some reason unknown to us, Peter was ready to give it all up and go back to his old occupation of fishing. His thoughts became reality and we see the bold preacher, the fearless disciple, in his fishing boat toiling over his nets. Yet Peter's Lord did not accept his defection from his post of duty. The Master personally confronted this preacher turned fisherman with the piercing question, "Lovest thou me more than these . . . ? Feed my sheep" (John 21:17).

The usual sermon on these verses deals with the two different Greek words for love or perhaps on the miracle of the fish catch. But the most obvious lesson of all is commonly overlooked. Here was a preaching servant of God, A.W.O.L. from his post of duty, back at his old occupation. Here is the Savior asking, "Peter, do you really love me? If so, why are you not where you belong, feeding my sheep?"

Across the land are hundreds of brethren in

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

Under what law was Cornelius worshipping before Peter's visit to him? [Acts 10:1-48.]

We may, at first thought, wonder why a man possessed of so many admirable traits and of such fine moral character as did he should need conversion: (1) he was a devout man; (2) who feared God with all his house; (3) who gave liberally of his possessions to the people; and (4) who prayed to God always. The word "prayed", appearing in this context, is not the usual word for prayer, but one signifying to *beseech*. It not only means that Cornelius prayed because it is right to do so; it indicates that he continually besought the Lord for help and direction in the right way. His prayer was heard; and, his alms served as a memorial before God. Evidenced here is the fact that in spite of, and despite his many moral attainments, he had, in order to be saved, to obey the gospel. Man sustains an obligation (a) to himself; (b) to those about him; (c) to God. Men are often disposed to forget that while they are discharging their duties to themselves and to those about them they are neglecting the much higher obligation they owe to God. The most unjustifiable of all sins is the highhanded refusal to render to God his due; and this attitude is characteristic of those who, however civil and moral their conduct toward others may be, treat with contempt the commandments of the great Jehovah.

It is interesting and important, in this connection, to inquire as to the nature and identification of the law under which Cornelius, the Centurion, was worshipping God. (1) It was not Christianity; for, he had not thus far obeyed the gospel. (2) It was not Judaism, because he was neither a Jew nor a proselyte to the Jewish religion, being an uncircumcised Gentile. There has been but one other law, through the ages, under which God accepted worship: Patriarchy. (3) It follows, therefore, that Cornelius was worshipping God under a system which had continued from Eden, — the patriarchal arrangement. We should recall that the law of Moses was given *only* to the descendants of Jacob — Israel — and to those Gentiles who suffered themselves to be proselyted — by circumcision — to it. (Deut. 5:2; Acts 2:10; 13:43). Inasmuch as Cornelius was neither a Jew nor a proselyte, it follows that he was worshipping God under the patriarchal system obtaining from the beginning. It had, indeed, been in the divine purpose to make of the two — Jew and Gentile — "one new man," (Eph. 2:14-18) but the attitude of Jews toward Gentiles had thwarted that plan, until the events of Acts 10. Here began a series of events eventually to result in the union of all men submitting themselves to the will of God in Christ (Gal. 3:29); and, in consequence, the end of a system of worship which would have terminated at the cross but was extended to the house of Cornelius because of the shortsightedness of the Jews touching the inclusion of the Gentiles in Christ's redemptive plan.

The heavenly visitor said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God." A "memorial" is a remembrance: thus Cornelius' prayers and alms served to recall for the Lord matters

earlier announced. What were they? The answer to this question is to be found in the results which followed; viz., the promise of salvation to *all* nations through Christ. The time had arrived for the accomplishment of this divine purpose; hence the effort to bring Cornelius — the first Gentile convert — into the kingdom of Christ. Hitherto, he had worshipped under the only arrangement available to him — that which had obtained for those not Israelites since the events of Sinai. *This was the patriarchal system.* To deny this, one must affirm one of two propositions: (1) There was no salvation for the countless multitudes of people who lived and died outside the fold of Judaism, from Sinai to the cross, regardless of how much of the moral law was written in their consciences and exhibited in their lives or (2) uncircumcised Gentiles were members of, and always participated in the blessings of the Jewish covenant! The second proposition is obviously absurd; and, the first proposition is clearly shown to be false by Paul's affirmation in Romans 2:12-16. That the devout officer was worshipping God under the system of patriarchy is the only conclusion harmonizing the difficulties of the case. It is, to this, no valid objection that, *after* the angel's visit, Cornelius was to hear words whereby he and his house were to "be saved"; at the moment the angel appeared to him he became accountable to God under this, the Christian dispensation; prior to the visit of the angel he was answerable only under the system which alone was available. Nor, can it be affirmed, from these premises, that on the foregoing assumption, all men, who have not heard the gospel today ought to be regarded as in his category. No one lives in his category; the gospel had never been extended to embrace the Gentiles prior to the events of Acts 10. It follows, therefore, that the condition of the Gentiles, from Pentecost to the house of Cornelius was legally that which characterized the Jews from the cross to Pentecost. When one law supersedes another, the effects of the superseded law carry over to the point where the newer law becomes effective. The events in Caesarea made clear the fact that God no longer regarded the Jews, *because they were Jews*, above others; thenceforth men of all nations who fear him and work righteousness are acceptable to him. (Acts 10:34,35.)

The Church In Prayer

HARRELL DAVIDSON

A passage of scripture in Acts 12 reminds me that the church should pray. The first martyr among the apostles had been killed by Herod (Acts 12:1-2). Herod now proposes to kill Peter to satisfy the Jews. They were bent on destroying the church. They would have him killed (Acts 12:3). Herod thought that the best time to kill Peter would be after the Jewish Passover (Acts 12:3). The passage under consideration is verse 5: "Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

In the public ministry of Jesus he taught that men should always pray (Luke 18:1-8). Therefore, the Jerusalem church was only doing what Christ had instructed them earlier to do. The biggest problem we face in prayer is found in Luke 18:8: "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth." Do we lay it all at the feet of God in prayer?

Disciples knew to pray for they prayed from the time of the ascension until Pentecost (Acts 1:14). We do not mean that they prayed every moment, but they made time available for prayer and took advantage of talking to God. One might say, "I lead in public prayer all the

time." Brother, if this is the only prayer life you have, then you don't have very much. Christian people should know that prayer is a privilege received by those who have obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:40,42).

God's people are taught to pray. "Continue instant in prayer," (Rom. 12:12). "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). Paul told Timothy to pray (1 Tim. 2:1,2).

Prayer should not be thought of as exclusively an emergency device. However, when God's people were in trouble they prayed (Acts 12:5). They also prayed about their trouble (Acts 4:23,31). Well, God's ears are still open to His people. We should pray in faith that God will answer our prayers (Jas. 1:5,6). Let us as individuals pray to God for strength to overcome the wicked one. Pray for the elders and deacons. Please pray for your preacher. Pray for our own membership. Then when we come together let us together pray for each other and those with special needs.—4207 Adamsville Parkway, Adamsville, Al. 35005.

Can You Guess?

The Biggest Problem In The Church Today Is. . .

BY BERT THOMPSON

Permit me, if you will, to begin this article with a short question: Who among us has ever heard the statement which serves as the title of this article? And, permit me if you will, a second similar question: Who among us has ever made the statement which serves as the title of this article? It is likely that most of us have either HEARD or MADE the statement that "the biggest problem in the church today is" (and you fill in the ending).

As we sit in Bible classes, lectureships, worship assemblies, etc. we often hear people make this statement. Has it ever struck you as strange that no two people agree about what the "biggest" problem in the church today really is? One fellow told me recently that the church's biggest problem was failing to heed John's admonition to love our brothers (1 John 2:9-11). Another friend some weeks ago told me the church's biggest problem was weak leaders in positions of authority. Earlier, a brother mentioned to me how the church's biggest problem was its failure to properly teach its young people, with the result being that they grew up as "Bible ignoramuses." Still another Christian lamented the fact that the church's biggest problem was vested in her inability to carry out a broad-based mission program comparable to those of many denominations. To fill this page with the "biggest problems of the church today" as told by her members would hardly be a difficult task!

This one thing amazes me. I hear all of this talk about "biggest problems of the church today" as told by her members would hardly be a difficult task!

This one thing amazes me. I hear all of this talk about "biggest problems" and I'M NOT EVEN A PREACHER BY OCCUPATION. It is almost beyond my comprehension to imagine what gospel preachers must hear as they go about their ministry. Surely they could fill volumes on the church's "biggest problems."

At the outset of this article let me make two points perfectly clear. First, I am not so naive as to believe the church is without her problems. As long as humans comprise her membership, human problems will plague her. Second, I am not against an ordered approach aimed at problem recognition and problem solving. Since problems do exist, it behooves us to recognize them and solve them

(Continued on Page 4)

9 Found It

(Continued from Page 1)

children of God have found. They can tell you where such was found. In fact, they can tell you where you can find it.

IF "IT" REFERS TO BAPTISM, "I FOUND IT." Let me tell you where. Take a Bible and turn over to the page that records Mark 16:16. There you will find IT. The Lord put IT right there. He put IT between faith and salvation. He didn't put IT after salvation, but before. Now that is where you can find IT. But while we are at it, turn over to Acts 2:38. You will find baptism right after repentance and before the remission of sins. Now, you won't find IT after the remission of sins. IT just doesn't fit there. That is, not in God's divine arrangement. One has no trouble finding IT, if he is looking for baptism.

IF "IT" REFERS TO THE CHURCH, "I FOUND IT." Notice that I did not say "them". I can't find churches all of a different sort that are IT. Jesus talked of building IT in Matt. 16:18. When I read that verse I can see IT in the intention of Christ. Acts 2:47 sets forth the fact that the saved are added to IT. Paul discusses such in Eph. 5:23-27. Herein we learn that Christ is the head of IT. Christ is the saviour of IT. Christ gave himself for IT. He has a plan by which those in IT are washed. He will have IT to be a glorious church, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Paul must have wanted men to find IT for he gave information to describe IT.

Now a question is in order. Can you find the church you are a member of in the Bible? How hard would it be for you to find it? Is it described? If it is of human origin and arrangement you could not find it.

IF YOU SPEAK OF THE PLAN OF SALVATION, "I FOUND IT." Notice that we refer to the plan, and not an experience. Acts 16:17 speaks of Paul and Silas as servants of God who show the way of salvation. There is then a way to be saved. Not all ways save. But Paul and Silas were preaching the gospel. Is there a way to be saved that is outside the gospel? Notice that Jesus commissioned the apostles to go preach the gospel. Mark 16:15. The one who believed the thing preached and was baptized was to be saved. That was and is still the plan of the Lord to be saved. It hasn't changed since Acts 2. Everywhere you find saved people after that you find them saved in that way. Is that what men have found: Is that IT? I can find this one that is revealed in the Bible? Is there another one?

Yes, there are some things of which I can say "I found it" in the Bible. If you can't find IT there, IT isn't worth having.—P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

9 Go A Fishing

(Continued from Page 2)

precisely the same situation as Peter was. They have decided to return to their old occupation or some other profession after they have trained themselves for preaching God's Word and spent some time at it. When these "fishing" brethren read the twentieth chapter of John, do these questions of Jesus and that sacred charge mean nothing to them? Can one say that he truly loves Jesus when His sheep are suffering from a serious shortage of shepherds? Which do I love most, my extra financial security, my more permanent location, my better fringe benefits or my Lord and his sheep? How would such a fishing brother" respond to Jesus' questions? Would

he hang his head and respond, "Yes, Lord, I LIKE you," rather than boldly confess, "Lord, I LOVE you?"

Peter was humiliated when three times Jesus pressed him on whether or not he truly loved Him. "Lord," he responded, "thou knowest I love thee!" If so, why was he there on the lake in his boat? That is the lesson brethren need to see today. If we truly love the Lord and his cause, let us put our hand to the work he has given us to do. He wants us to feed his sheep, that is, do the work of an evangelist. Away with the flimsy excuses about not being appreciated, not enough job security, not enough income. The real question is HOW MUCH DO I LOVE MY LORD and His church?

WHAT IF PETER HAD STAYED ON THE LAKE?

What if Peter had not been reclaimed to his preaching post? We might have a totally different report in Acts 2 of the events of that first Pentecost after the resurrection. Acts 10 and 11 might tell a different story rather than the conversion of the first Gentiles. There would be no two epistles in our Bible so full of riches and blessings if Peter had stayed on the lake. Who would have taken his place? My brother (you who have given up preaching) who is taking your place? No one can. So short is the supply of gospel preachers, that if one drops out there are no reserves to fill his place. Oh, a man may move to a congregation from which you departed, but somewhere down the line a pulpit is left vacant. Souls will be lost that only you could have reached and won to Christ. Battles will be lost by forfeiture because so many men deserted the ranks that an army could not be mustered. Small struggling mission points will languish or maybe wither and die because no one was available to lead them to maturity. Mission fields will continue under Satan's domain because men who could have taken the gospel into such areas have "gone fishing" rather than manfully meet their duty.

BUT MY CASE IS DIFFERENT

Likely some "fishing" brother will be ruffled and retort, "But my case is different." Is it? Peter had a family to think about, too (Matt. 7:14). Peter gave up his business with all of its economic benefits (Matt. 4:18-20). Peter "left all" of the comforts of private life to follow Jesus, which seems to have included house, brethren and sisters, parents, children, and land (Matt. 10:28-29). Peter did a lot of traveling. He had some rough and disheartening experiences as a preacher. He was not always appreciated for his work. His workload seemed endless and his work-related problems were many. But Jesus had made the point clear to Peter. If you really love me, Peter, feed my sheep. Forget the fishing business, your job is out there preaching the gospel, leading my people. Peter understood from that morning on the shore of Galilee until his death that there was no turning back. He preached Jesus and tended the sheep until he died a martyr's death. May we who preach learn that lesson as well as he did.

I recognize that some men are forced out of their work as preachers by circumstances beyond their control. It is not to these we speak. I heartily agree that a man who is not himself converted, or is unsound in his faith or is immoral should step down: the sooner the better. I offer these thoughts for the true child of God, of sound faith, who has no compelling reason to leave the ministry of the Word except that he, like Peter, was ready to go back to his old occupation of fishing or whatever it might be. Do you, my brother, truly love the Lord? Should you not be feeding his sheep? — Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

The Biggest Problem in The Church Today Is. . .

(Continued from Page 3)

as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Some of us feel toward the church as we feel toward colleges or high schools from which we have graduated. Once we have graduated, we become an alumnus. This, in turn, we feel, gives us the inalienable right (some would even say responsibility) to gripe and complain. Immediately upon becoming an alumnus we set ourselves to the task of pointing out the institution's "biggest problem." Some of us in the church feel the same toward her. Upon becoming a member, we feel we somehow become qualified or obliged (maybe both) to point out the church's "biggest problem." (This is not to say that all alumni or all Christians think and act in this manner.)

The issue before us is this: What is the church's biggest problem today? Is it our failure in mission work, or our failure to train our youth, or our failure to choose qualified leaders, or our failure to love one another, or our failure to. . . AD INFINITUM? What is the church's biggest problem?

The church's biggest problem is not OUR. . . It is ME!! The church's biggest problem is that I do not have the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The biggest problem is that I have not added to my faith, virtue - and to my virtue, knowledge, and so on (II Peter 1:5-7). The problem is that I have not controlled MY tongue as James told me to do (James 3:5-10). The problem is that I have shirked MY God-given responsibility to carry out Jesus' Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16). The problem is that I have spoken inappropriately against a brother, even when I have God's commandment not to (James 4:11).

The problem is that I have been proud instead of humble (James 4:6). The problem is that I have not obeyed the elders (Hebrews 13:17). The problem is that I have been negligent in attending services of the church (Hebrews 10:25). The problem is that I have not cared for orphans and widows (James 1:27), for those in prison, in hunger, in need of clothing and shelter (Matthew 25:31-46). The problem is that I have not provoked any of my brethren to good works (Hebrews 10:24). The problem is that I have not held fast to that which is good and I have not abstained from that which is evil (I Thessalonians 5:21-22).

The biggest problem in the church today is neither YOU nor THEM. It is I!! And until I come to a fuller understanding of the Word of God, I shall not rid myself (or the church) of the problem.

The first steps to take to make certain the church no longer has any "biggest problem" are these:

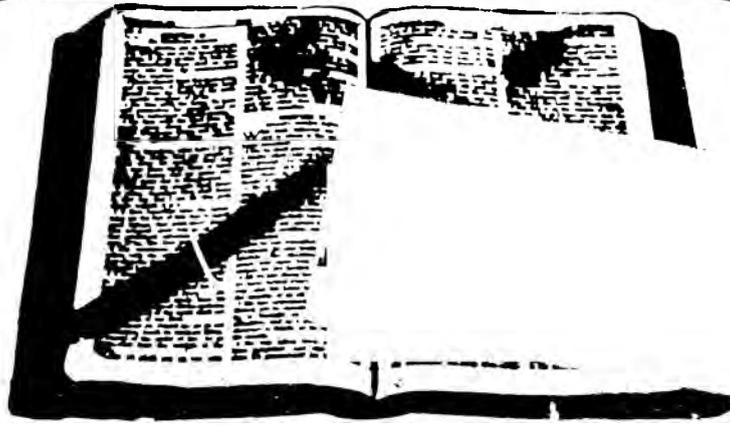
1. Confess my sins and accept God's forgiveness (James 1:16, I John 1:9).
2. Bridle my tongue (James 1:26);
3. Carry out the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16);
4. Teach others so they can do likewise (II Timothy 2:2);
5. Obey the elders (Hebrews 13:17);
6. Make Philipians 4:8 my goal in life.

The church does not need "problem spotters" nearly as bad as it needs problem solvers." If I solve MY problems, more than likely the problems of others will seem much less important and-or troublesome (that is to say, I will not always be busy pointing out someone else's problems). I cannot help some brother get the speck out of his eye as long as I have the log in my own (Matthew 7:4-5). That's a proven Biblical principle. And I look forward with anticipation to a time when I will not have to hear someone say "The biggest problem in the church today is. . ." because you and I will have solved all those problems a long time ago.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



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

VOLUME 17

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NUMBER 43

J. W. McGarvey On Ministerial Education

In April of 1865 John McGarvey wrote an essay for LARD'S QUARTERLY on the subject of MINISTERIAL EDUCATION. Bro. McGarvey was without question the leading scholar of the day. He headed the College of the Bible at Lexington, Kentucky, and taught hundreds of men that passed through its program. As one committed



JOHN WADDEY

to Christian education and deeply involved in it, he was well qualified to assess the merits, failure and needs of the schools of that day.

In a preliminary observation he notes that "the question at issue. . . is not whether our young preachers should be educated, but what kind of education they should have." Again, he says, "It is time that our ideas were more sharply defined, and that our educational schemes were rendered more efficient."

He observes in passing that it was the self taught men who were the pioneers of the Restoration and many of them were still the most powerful and successful preachers of that day. Strangely, the "successful evangelists" of his day were really all men of this class, while (the) educated preachers were often found very quietly passing away their lives in the dull routine of weekly sermons and very WEAKLY congregations." He noted that, "It is not education which renders preachers inefficient; but the want of education. What education they have is not of the right kind, or it lacks some of the elements of a proper ministerial education." Regarding preacher education, he noted that "that which produces the best results is best."

The following are some of the suggestions Bro. McGarvey made:

I. "First of all we place a knowledge of the Word of God. Without this, the preacher is the most dangerous character in the community, and the greater his eloquence and

learning the greater the danger."

A. This embraces a familiar acquaintance with its history, its biography, its poetry, its prophecies, and its didactics.

B. It involves an acquaintance with all the leading subjects treated of in the whole Bible, with the passages in which they are treated.

C. It also includes specific knowledge of all the perversions of Scripture common in the sectarian world, together with the correct method of exposing them;

D. And all the points of infidel assault, together with the means of defense.

E. He should be prepared to impart to the people at all times the Scripture instruction which the times demand.

II. "It is most important that the young preacher should have the proper MORAL TRAINING FOR HIS WORK."

A. With the above foundation laid, he still needs the results of the experience and reflection of wise predecessors, to prepare him for the details of his work.

B. He should be instructed in reference to the best course of study to pursue while engaged in his labors, so as to cultivate most successfully his own peculiar talent.

C. He should be impressed with the necessity of constant industry, and be advised as to the best disposition of all his time.

D. He should learn how to deport himself toward the world, toward the church and its officers, and toward his brethren in the ministry.

E. He should be taught that his field of labor is not confined to the pulpit, but extends from house to house throughout the community and reaches down to all the little children.

F. Knowing this, he should be fully advised as to the most successful method of cultivating the entire field.

III. "The last and least important department of ministerial education is an elementary course in literature and science, such as our

colleges usually furnish. If our object were to make authors, or critics, or professors, this department would be indispensable; but for the man who is to go out among the people, and make known nothing but the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have already seen that it is not so. In conjunction, however, with sound Scripture knowledge, and proper moral training, it must be a means of greatly increasing the preacher's usefulness. A knowledge of the Greek language alone enables the student of Scripture to make much more rapid and satisfactory progress, while the mental culture and discipline resulting from the pursuit of the entire college curriculum, enables him both to acquire and to communicate with greater facility.

THE KIND OF TEACHERS

PREACHER STUDENTS NEED

IV. "A professor in such a school would wield a fearful power for good or evil."

A. He should therefore be a man of well-balanced head and heart.

B. His devotion to pure primitive Christianity should be above suspicion.

C. He should be a model for young preachers, in character and habits.

D. He should be himself a preacher of varied experience and success.

E. No man who has not actively encountered the errors and iniquities of the world, and endured the practical trials of a preacher's life, is qualified to prepare young preachers for the conflict before them. Only he who has done the work himself, and done it well, is competent to say how it should be done.

"The course of study to be pursued in such a school should be strictly Biblical. Only such books as contribute to a complete and practical knowledge of the Scriptures should be put into the students' hands."

Bro. McGarvey concludes with these thoughts:

"We must never lose sight of the fact. . . that a knowledge of the English Scriptures alone is a sufficient education to make a most

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Why We Should Support Good Works

Paul exhorted Titus to teach that the people of God should "be ready to every good work" (Tit. 3:1). And in I Peter 2:17 we are told to "love the brotherhood." These passages show that our interest in the growth of the church and the salvation of souls is to reach beyond the circumference of the efforts with which we and our respective congregations are directly connected.

Every effort that we call a "mission" effort must depend for its support upon those who are removed to some degree from the work. This is the thing that makes it a "mission" effort. Without the help of Christians who are interested in helping populate heaven, such works cannot survive.

Our Christian colleges and preacher training schools must depend for their survival upon the good will and contributions of faithful brethren. Tuition paid by students does not nearly pay for the cost of an education in these institutions. And every Christian owes a great deal to such schools. The preachers who preach to us, those who write our Bible class material, those who produce other teaching aids, in so many cases have been trained in one of these institutions. It would be difficult to find a Christian in the world who has not in some way benefited by one of our Christian schools. For this reason, we should feel a debt to those fine institutions.

Jesus taught that it is more blessed to give

than to receive (Acts 20:35). When we hear of opportunities to help preach the gospel to those who have not heard it, we should be impressed with the truthfulness of this statement. Aren't you glad that you are among the number being asked to help, rather than the number who are to receive the help? Isn't it good that we are not among the heathen who have not had the opportunity to become children of God? We should gladly give our support to the preaching of the gospel to the lost. What a blessing it is to be on the giving end in such cases!

But another reason - and a very important one - why sound brethren should support good works, is in order that these good works might be sound. One of the surest ways to keep a

work sound is for sound brethren to support it. If a certain effort depends upon a large number of sound brethren for its support, every effort will certainly be made to keep the work sound. If some departure from soundness is made, and sound brethren cry out, then the necessary correction will be made. But if sound brethren do not support good works, their voices are apt to be drowned out by the noise of those who are not so sound, and yet who give their money that a work might be carried on.

We would urge that faithful brethren support every good work they can possibly support. This is one sure way to keep good works good.

Sound Doctrine - The Pulpit

HARRELL DAVIDSON

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13). Having ascertained that sound doctrine is healthy words, inspired scripture, the words of Christ. We now focus our attention on the man who speaks the word.

While a particular preacher is dispensable, preaching is indispensable. Every New Testament church grew when sound preaching was done. This pattern is still true today. The church is not growing where God's word is not being proclaimed in its purity and simplicity. The preacher has some qualifications to meet in order to be the person in the pulpit that he ought to be.

Paul said: "But thou, O man of God, . . ." (1 Tim. 6:11). So men who speak the word of God are called men of God. In the GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMMENTARY on first Timothy by David Lipscomb, p. 183 we note: "Man of God" is one devoted to the service of God. It frequently in the Old Testament means the prophets inspired of God and sent to teach the people, but under the new covenant the name is extended to all faithful men in the Lord Jesus Christ." We should observe that any faithful man is to be called the "man of God." This doesn't apply to the preacher alone though we should be careful to note that a preacher cannot be true and not be a man of God. Surely he must reflect deeply into the things that God has spoken and let them so rule his life.

The preacher in regards to his qualifications should read second Timothy 2:3. Paul would have us to "commit thou to faithful men" the things that we have heard and studied. This takes into consideration man's natural ability to speak in such a fashion as not to hide the glorious gospel. It is true that some training may help the individual become a better preacher but caution is needed. Not all training is fruitful. Some institutions pass themselves off as Christian institutions but are not giving men faithful training. In such cases a stump in the back yard amidst the peach trees would be a better training ground for the preacher. The worst thing that could ever happen to the young preacher is to be given false doctrine as a training course preparatory to his useful service. Man should never teach false doctrine as the truth.

A preacher's speech is likewise a very valuable tool. No one would want to take away deliberately the power of the word through incorrect speech. Though we are not to depend upon excellency of speech, one is better equipped to teach if he can speak the language correctly. This does not imply that we are to use big fluent words that most do not understand. Brother Glenn Wallace, speaking on the Freed-Hardeman College

lectures a few years ago, advanced the thought that if some of our modern day preachers were asked the same question that Peter was asked in Matt. 16:15-16 it might sound something like this: "Jesus said, 'whom say ye that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'" The Eschatological Anticipation of the Cosmos, the Epistemological problem of the ages, the Christological controversy to come. And Jesus answered and said unto him. . . "Who???"

Another qualification listed in this passage is, "the same commit thou to faithful men" (second Timothy 2:3 emphasis mine HDD). The person who is an ungodly, God-denying, Christ rejecting, unbeliever is one who does God great harm. Look at the great ability of known false teachers in the world such as Graham and Armstrong and countless others. Ability without faithfulness is a waste of time. Faithfulness in this concept involves having a love for the truth. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16).

The preacher cannot be faithful to something that he doesn't know. Therefore the preacher is one that must be taught the word of God. Diligent study is necessary in order to be the "man of God" that he ought to be. One cannot get the proper study by lying in the bed to a late hour every day. Men such as Franklin Camp, the late brother Nichols and others are men who rose early to study and meditate on the word. There is nothing that will replace study. Any lack of study robs the preacher of needed passages to prove or get over a point. When scripture is not known we must resort to worldly examples to prove our point. What better way is there to prove something than with other scripture?

The preacher must preach the truth in order to be faithful. All of the preaching today is not faithful preaching. A watered down version of the scripture is not faithful preaching. The constant striving to be different or be dramatic or tell the Bible story as if it were some novel is not faithful preaching. Some folks are striving to do nothing more than present something new. To this some might respond that we are trying to destroy originality. Nothing could be further from the truth. We believe that each preacher should develop his own style and arrange the material in the most logical way possible. We believe that each person's style is different from every one else. Though this is true it does not necessarily follow that we must present some new thing in order to be "God's man."

In looking at the things a preacher should preach we should be reminded that preachers do not preach just to please mankind. When it comes to the message itself, if such message

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"When did the meeting mentioned in Acts 20:7 occur?"

On the "first day of the week." They came together on the first day of the week, "to break bread," — to worship. "Break bread" here is likely a synecdoche for all the items of worship, teaching, singing, the contribution, the Lord's Supper and prayer (Acts 2:42), derived, of course, from the fact that bread was "broken" (eaten) in the Lord's Supper. Otherwise, where is authority for "fruit of the vine" in Acts 20:7? On the assumption that the phrase, "to break bread," is a literal, and not a figurative allusion, this passage, at least, could not be cited to support any activity other than breaking a piece of bread. In this case, where is authority here for the items of worship? It seems clear, therefore, that the phrase, "to break bread," is a figurative statement embracing all the items of worship, including the Lord's Supper. I recall, as a boy, growing up in West Tennessee, that it was customary to announce in those days that "the church meets at eleven o'clock, each Lord's day, to break bread," i.e., to worship. It is not a valid objection to this conclusion that it is said Paul "preached" (Greek, *discoursed*), since the emphasis here is obviously on the fact that Paul preached. Every Lord's day *somebody* preached (taught).

The Corinthians met on the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:1, 2). In the meetings of the early church, the Lord's Supper was observed (I Cor. 11:20, 33), and the Hebrews were exhorted not to forsake their assemblies (Heb. 10:25). It is clear that it was the practice of the early church to meet thus regularly; and, they were taught so to do by the Lord when they were told to "observe all things whatsoever" he had commanded (Matt. 28:20).

The meeting of Acts 20:7, occurred on "the first day of the week." Thus far, all is clear. But, at what hour, on the first day of the week, did it occur? This is a matter of much greater complexity, and about which various opinions obtain. It is my view that (1) the Jewish mode of determining when the day began was still followed at that time; (2) consequently, "the day" on which they met began at sundown; and, (3) therefore, the meeting was held during the *first* hours of the Lord's day, and during the dark portion thereof, rather than during that period which would be designated today as Sunday night. Disregarding, for the moment, the difference in the mode of computing the beginning and ending of the day, the meeting occurred either on what is *now* Saturday evening, or what is *now* Sunday evening. It is my view, reasons for which follow, the first of these conclusions is the correct one. *I should like to make it clear that the meeting did not occur on Saturday, the seventh day of the week, but on Sunday, the first day of the week, and, I believe, at its very beginning, soon after sundown, continuing throughout the night.*

(1) The *urgency* which characterized the apostle, at that time, seems strongly to support this conclusion. The Great Contribution, from Gentile churches, for the poor saints in Judea, had been gathered, and Paul, and his group, were carrying it to Jerusalem, which he hoped to reach by the Jewish Pentecost day, not far distant (Acts

20:16). Despite his haste, it was necessary to spend a few days in Troas, enroute. Paul arrived there on Monday, and remained for seven days, evidently to be privileged to worship with the church in its regular Lord's day assembly. He left immediately following (Acts 20:11). The meeting occurred at night, either in that portion of it which we now designate as Saturday night; or, if the Roman method of computing time were followed, on Sunday night. If the latter, we have the unbelievable situation of Paul and his group, faithful servants of Christ and completely dedicated to his Cause, allowing the entire light portion of the Lord's day to pass *before they met for worship!* This is not in keeping with what we would expect of Paul and his company, and it is inconsistent with his desire to go on to Jerusalem so soon as the worship had been consummated and the meeting terminated.

(2) Moreover, a correct exegesis of verse 11, shows that if they met according to Roman time, and the meeting was on Sunday night, they did not actually partake of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's day, *at all!* The Roman method of determining the beginning and ending of the day, which we use now, is from midnight to midnight. But, the narrative clearly shows that Paul's speech continued until midnight and that the breaking of bread occurred after his sermon. Thus, the breaking of bread, mentioned in verse 11, occurred after midnight, and thus *after* the Lord's day had ended, on the assumption that Roman time was followed and that the meeting took place on Sunday night. In view of the fact that they came together "on the first day of the week," for the purpose of breaking bread, we must assume that this they did.

(3) If to this the objection is offered that the breaking of bread, in Acts 20:11, was *not* the Lord's Supper, but a common meal, we reply textual, grammatical and lexical evidence all oppose such a view. In the Greek text and in the American Standard translation, the article *the* appears before the word bread, reading, "And when he was gone up, and had broken *the* bread, and eaten . . ." showing a direct connection between *klasai arton* (to break bread, verse 7), and *klasas ton arton* in verse 11. The reference to *the* bread — the bread already specified in the text, is obvious. Why would the Holy Spirit designate a common meal in such fashion? Undoubtedly, as Hackett, Conybeare and Howson, McGarvey, and a host of other eminent scholars agree, the allusion is to the bread earlier mentioned — the bread of the Lord's Supper. But, this occurred *after* midnight — Monday morning, according to Roman count. The disciples met to break bread on the first day of the week — Sunday, not Monday.

(4) Does not the fact that it is said Paul broke "the bread," and then ate, imply no more than a common meal? As Conybeare and Howson indicate, we must carefully distinguish between the breaking of the bread (denoting the action involved in verse 7), and the eating of food, designated in the word *geusamenos*, appearing in verse 11. To break bread, in biblical parlance, is to eat; hence, two occasions of eating are mentioned here — not one. Obviously, Luke is not saying, "When Paul ate and had eaten . . .!" Thus, "the bread," refers to the bread of the Supper; he partook of it after midnight; this must have been after midnight following the onset of the Lord's day, which began at sundown. Following the Lord's Supper, Paul took food; and departed at daybreak. The meeting was thus held in the first part of the Lord's day, and in its dark portion.

This view of the matter, I believe, is the most reasonable, and most likely explanation of the circumstances which can be offered. It

is supported by many eminent scholars. Brother J. W. McGarvey, for example, wrote, "The brethren met in the early part of the night, yet it was 'the first day of the week.' We have no evidence that either Jews or Gentiles had adopted the custom of counting the hours of the day from midnight; consequently we must suppose that the night in question was that belonging to Sunday, as it was then reckoned, or Saturday night, as we now style it. It was the night following the Jewish sabbath, which was still observed by Jewish disciples, and the incident shows that the disciples at Troas were in the habit of meeting on this night to break bread. Any time after sunset on that evening would be the Lord's day as they counted it, and after midnight, which was the time of breaking the loaf on that occasion, was on the Lord's day, as we count it" (*Commentary on Acts*, pages 181, 182).

Are we then bound by the Jewish mode of counting time and must we regard the day as beginning and ending at sundown? No. There is nothing in the New Testament which designates any specific arrangement for computing this matter. The allegation that the Jewish method is "God's method," and that this arrangement is binding on the church today, is fanciful and false. Christians properly follow the method prevailing where they live. There are three hours difference between Eastern Standard Time and Pacific Standard Time. A meeting, to partake of the Lord's Supper at 1 a.m., Sunday, in New York would be scriptural; a similar meeting at the same time in Los Angeles would be unscriptural, because it would be at 10 p.m., Saturday night!

I once partook of the Lord's Supper in Tiberias, on the shore of the historic Sea of Galilee at 8 a.m. on Sunday morning. At that moment, it was 11 p.m. Saturday night, in Memphis, Tennessee.

Christian Joy

G. F. RAINES
Newton, Miss.

The Christians of ancient times suffered many hardships and endured much persecution, but archaeology and history testify that they were the happiest of all people.

Archaeologists found a piece of papyrus in the ruins of ancient Rome on which this message was inscribed: "It is a wicked world, Donatus; but in it I have found a serene and happy people. They are the Christians, and I am one of them."

Barnabas described the early Christians as "children of joy."

Genuine Christians in all ages have been happy. Christian happiness is the accompaniment of peace of mind, and peace of mind is the effect of submission to the will of God.

The prophet Isaiah says:

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isa. 32:17).

"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. 57:20, 21).

J. W. McGarvey On Ministerial Education

(Continued from Page 1)

efficient ministry, and that we are dependent upon men of this degree of education for . . . the greater number of our active proclaimers. Our course of study, therefore, must be adapted to the impartation of this education, and to the supply of this class of preachers."

We at the East Tennessee School of Preaching share Bro. McGarvey's philosophy about training gospel preachers, and we thus strive to prepare faithful men to preach God's Word. — East Tennessee School of Preaching, Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

Sound Doctrine - The Pulpit

(Continued from Page 2)

is from "the book" no preacher is subservient to any man. He is to speak the word of God without fear of man. A preacher must preach the truth regardless of who the gospel hits or hurts. The word of God has the power to cut and convict. It cannot be preached in its purity without cutting deeply in the hearts of those who hear. This is necessarily going to expedite some hard feelings for a while. You will be told that you developed that lesson just for the individual, or you are too personal. Others will say you preach too loud or too plain. Sometimes elders may want to see you out of the house when you tell the truth. Truth has a way of hurting the offender. Remember all preaching must be done with love. God is love, no man can preach God without preaching in love. If preaching cannot be characterized by love it cannot be sound doctrine.

Paul wanted Timothy to: "Guard that which is committed unto thee" (1 Tim. 6:20). The Greek tells us that "guard" literally means to "guard the deposit." What has been deposited? Brother Nichols once said that if a man has studied the word of God sufficiently, when he opens his mouth, God's word is going to come out. If however, man has studied something else, words other than God's will come out. We cannot but tell the things that we know.

Seeking for new doctrine is not guarding the things that have been committed to us. Such only leads to apostacy, which Paul warned the young preacher of in 1 Tim. 4:1-4. The same threat looms over our heads today. Men today are more interested in compromise than the pure gospel of Christ. They are more interested in getting along with the brethren than with preaching the truth. There are some things that would be worse than a congregation's splitting if such had to be done over doctrine. The word of God is truth (Jno. 17:17). Truth is sound doctrine. If every preacher could be a Jeremiah and have the word of God as a fire in his bones, the direction of the church would change in the next year (cf. Jer. 20:9). Preacher, preach sound doctrine. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (Jas. 2:12). In the next article we look at "Sound Doctrine - The Pew." — 4207 Adamsville Pkwy., Adamsville, Ala. 35005.

All Florida Churches?

RAY HAWK

(Editor's note: The following article is the kind of response we hoped to receive from brethren in Florida after publishing Ray Dutton's article on "Florida Churches". Neither we nor brother Dutton accused Florida churches in general of endorsing immodest apparel. Brother Dutton simply passed on an accusation made by a preacher and two elders in a Florida church. The response of brother Ray Hawk is exactly what we expected from a number of good sound brethren in Florida. Our thanks to brother Hawk for his excellent article.)

In the Friday, September 17, 1976 issue of WORDS OF TRUTH, brother Ray Dutton had an article on "Florida Churches." I appreciated brother Dutton's remarks. He told about "one of the oldest and most influential congregations in Florida" turning him down for a speaking engagement because Ray believes swimsuits are immodest. The preacher of this Florida church tried to defend swimsuits as modest and said that to the best of his knowledge "virtually all Florida churches believed the same." Ray went on to say that he knew of a number of respected brethren who preached in Florida and he found it hard to believe that these men could endorse "the flagrantly disgraceful and inexcusable immodesty that is seen on Florida beaches." Brother Dutton is right! There are men in Florida who share his views with him. These preachers speak out against immodesty just as strongly as any Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, or Arkansas preacher does.

Pensacola, Florida has some of the best and most beautiful beaches to be found anywhere in Florida. When the season is right, literally thousands flock to the beaches. Those who go are not only local people, but visitors from Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. No doubt a number of those

who go to the beaches are members of the church from near and far!

Before we moved to Florida, I preached for churches that supported my preaching against immodesty. Yet, members would vacation in Florida and returned with the best tans I have seen anywhere. I know they could have received them without going onto the beach in swimwear. However, my family and I have lived in Florida over a year now and none of us are tanned except on the arms and face. We have never gone to the beach in swimwear. There are many, many members of the church in Florida who have never worn a swimsuit in public places, nor been immodest in what they wore in public.

Brother Dutton said, "If it is wrong in ALABAMA it is just as wrong in FLORIDA." Amen! I don't know how many preachers are in Florida, but I believe most of them teach 1 Tim. 2:9,10 as strongly as any brother does. Although immodesty on the streets is more prevalent here than in other places in our nation, brethren are no different in the congregations here than in the hills of Arkansas. We have some in the pew who do not agree with 1 Tim. 2:9,10 as there are brethren in the pew in Alabama who do not agree with Paul. But, we still preach it as Paul stated it. I cannot speak for all Florida churches, but I do know that in Pensacola, Florida, the Bellview elders, preachers, and most of the members believe in modesty and speak out against immodesty!

I hope brother Dutton will not run upon many churches in Florida as the one that cancelled his speaking engagement. I know that if he were scheduled to speak at Bellview, he could preach on immodesty as strongly from our pulpit as he does at Jasper, Alabama. — 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

Reply To An Editor

I recently wrote an article entitled "Which — Doctrine or Opinion". The article appeared in the July 8, 1976, issue of "Gospel Advocate"; June 11, 1976 issue of "Words of Truth" and the June issue of "The Defender."

After having read the editorial in a recent issue of one of our brotherhood papers, it seems to me that the editorial makes reference to me and to my article mentioned earlier. I shall again defend the Bible position relative to the matters contained therein.

My original article was a challenge of some statements made by brother Jim Reynolds concerning his views of doctrine and opinion. Brother Reynolds has to my knowledge not yet replied to my challenge of his statements. Surely one with a Ph.D. could defend his position against a "young man" with only a degree from Freed-Hardeman College.

I contend that there is a vast difference



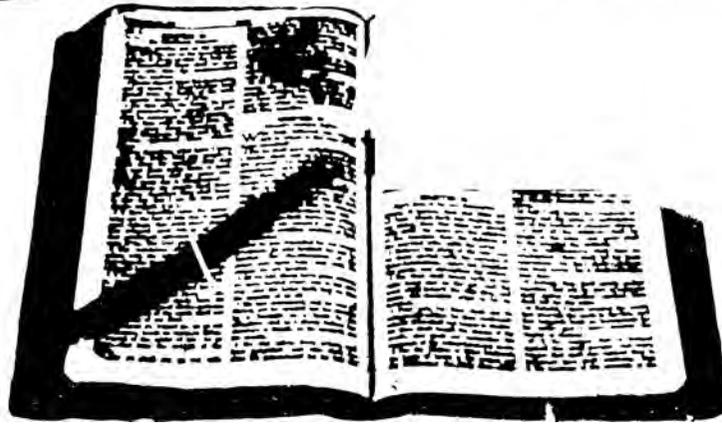
MICHAEL D. STONE

between opinion and doctrine. I also believe that I and other faithful brethren can distinguish or draw a line between the two. Doctrine, not opinion, is the basis of fellowship. We are to abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9). However, in the aforementioned editorial, the editor states, ". . . there isn't another person in the brotherhood who would agree with him" (that's me). I challenge that statement. The editorial goes on to say, "Who has it (sound doctrine)? The answer is, nobody has it. The Word of God does have it." I certainly agree that the Word of God does indeed have it. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). If the Word of God is sound doctrine, and it is, then it follows that, if one knows the Word of God, he knows sound doctrine. This "young man" thinks that many know and faithfully preach the sound doctrine. Men like B. C. Goodpasture, Guy N. Woods, Foy Wallace, Jr., J. Noel Merideth, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., Thomas Warren, William Cline, Bobby Duncan and a host of others.

This writer may be "young", however, he can differentiate between those papers among us that are sound and those that are not. And, too, age makes one wise only if the years have been invested wisely.

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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Youth - The Church's Greatest Loss

ARNOLD SEXTON

The tragic loss of so many young people to the cause of Christ is alarming to the sincere child of God. It should be apparent to the most casual observer that something is responsible for this great exodus. It is human nature (or perhaps the devil's nature in man) to look for an answer outside of oneself. There are at least four areas that one may explore to find the answer: the world, the church, the parents, and the children themselves. In some cases, the problem may lie in one area. In others, it may be in a combination of two or more areas. Since the problem is individual in nature, the answer must be determined individually. The Bible is very explicit in spelling out the responsibility of a Christian in each area. When one learns to relate to Bible teaching in all of these areas, it produces the effect that God intended. A failure to do this always creates problems. It is hoped that a look at these areas will be helpful in dealing with these problems.

THE WORLD

The world is a constant threat to every young person in and out of the church. Many young people become blinded to the blessings that are in Christ by the glitter of this world. The devil works overtime figuring out ways to keep one ignorant of the benefits of the gospel. Paul said, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 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" (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

The big problem that one has in dealing with younger people is in convincing them that they are not to love the "world." The term "world" means the evils that are in the world. This is the thrust of John's remark when he said, "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 of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust

thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). The young person, as well as many others, has a problem in separating the good of this world from the evil. The problem lies in separating the needs of life from the lusts of the flesh. The desire that one has to engage in an activity may cause him to classify a sinful act as a need. Therefore, he substitutes the desire (lust) by classifying it as a need. Then, he rationalizes the act by making it respectable. How many people do you know who drink, dance, etc., who will admit that these things are sinful? The young person has a disadvantage here. He usually does not have the knowledge and maturity to make a distinction. One of the marks of a strong Christian is to be able to make this distinction. Paul said, "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" (Heb. 5:14). Before anyone can refrain from evil, he must know what evil is.

THE CHURCH

The church must also accept its share of the blame for so many young people's being lost. There are some dangerous attitudes in the church that are making their contributions to the problem. These range from "liberalism" to "indifference."

The major problem that faces the church is in determining the role that the church should play in the development of its youth. There are too many families that feel the responsibility of developing their children belongs to the church. Of course, the church has a responsibility to its children. However, the responsibility to them is the same as it is to the adults. If one is old enough to obey the Lord, he is old enough to assume Christian responsibility. The church is a body of believers who have responsibilities to one another. The failure of the church to teach this is causing many of our young people to be lost. The church should keep in mind that the young will not always be young. When they are made to be a privileged group, age will some day cause them to grow out of it. After

this happens, they are no longer served. This causes a great let down because they no longer are the center of attention. Many of them cannot make this adjustment and are lost for Christ.

THE PARENTS

The primary responsibility for rearing children belongs to the parents. As has already been mentioned, some parents want the responsibility given to the church. However, the Bible does not admonish the church to bring the children up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." This obligation was given to the father. Now let's hear Paul: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

The failure of the parents to recognize their duty here has caused many a casualty. The importance of the home should be seen by its age. It has been the foundation unit of society in three dispensations. It is older than the church, and it outlasted the Patriarchal and Jewish ages. This should give one some idea of its importance. The home alone will not always guarantee that the child will remain faithful to God. However, it is the greatest single influence in setting the course of the child's life.

THE CHILDREN

The young person also has a responsibility to God. There comes a time in life when a young person must assume responsibility for his own life. There is a tendency on the part of some to blame the church, their parents, etc., for the sinful life that they live. Some will say, "my parents forced me to do right when I was young so I want to do wrong now." The implication is that if the parents had made them do wrong, they would do right now. God has made each person a free moral agent. He may choose to do right or wrong. One must learn to be responsible for his own actions. This writer is presently forty-three years old. Should the decision be made to leave God

(Continued on Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Make A

Clear Distinction

Those who read this paper regularly know that we make a real effort to stand for that which is right and against that which is wrong. We do not mind letting it be known which side of an issue we are on, and why. We try to be specific in opposing sin and error, and if necessary, will even call names. We are committed to the exhortation given by Paul to Timothy: "Preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2).

Having said so, we would now add that there is a real need for making a clear distinction between what is a violation of the teaching of the Bible, and what we personally do not like. The fact that I personally do not like a thing does not mean that this thing is wrong. For example, the Bible clearly teaches that "if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him" (I Cor. 11:14). I can oppose long hair on men from the scriptural standpoint, because it is a clear violation of what the Bible teaches. Now it may be that I personally do not like a mustache or a full beard, but this does not give me the right to condemn such, as if it were strictly forbidden in the Bible. What I like or dislike, and what the Bible condemns may be entirely two different matters. Needless to say, all of us should "abhor that which is evil," and "cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).

Furthermore, it is extremely important that we make a clear distinction between those things that violate the clear teaching of the Bible, and those things which seem to us not



BOBBY DUNCAN

to be in the best of judgment. We are taught by Inspiration that a thing might be lawful, but not expedient (I Cor. 6:12). On one occasion Paul did that which he said was not expedient (II Cor. 12:1). We would assume that he meant that it would not be expedient under ordinary circumstances to do what he did on that particular occasion. At any rate, it was not sinful for him to do that which he said was not expedient.

Some things are entirely within the realm of human judgment, and have not been regulated by God. Certainly we must always use our best judgment in connection with the work of the Lord. It would be a sin deliberately to do something in the Lord's work which we know to be in poor judgment at the time. But our judgment is not infallible, and so we are bound to make mistakes.

Not only is our judgment fallible, but those things which are judged to be expedient by some might be judged to be inexpedient by others. So long as we are operating in the realm of judgment, we should be charitable toward those whose judgment differs from ours.

We have a right to question each other's judgment. But in doing so, we should make it plain that our questions are questions of judgment. In differences over matters of judgment there should be no strain upon the fellowship existing between brethren.

We repeat: We are not saying that sin and error should be winked at, and that those guilty of teaching error or of unscriptural

practices should be included in our fellowship. We are saying that we should make a clear distinction between what is wrong and what we don't like, and between what is a violation of the word of God and what is not according to our best judgment.

TOOTING OUR HORN

Within the past few days we have received two letters that are very rewarding. One of them was sent to brother Tommy Vernon of the Barn Creek church near Hamilton, Alabama, and brother Vernon was kind enough to send it on to us. The letter said, in part: "I want to thank you and the church in Barn Creek for sending us the WORDS OF TRUTH. They are truly uplifting to me and many others . . . THE WORDS OF TRUTH have helped us greatly in stopping liberal trends in the congregation here."

The other letter came directly to us, and said: "Thank you for your continued dedication to the field of Christian journalism. WORDS OF TRUTH far surpasses in quality any publication I receive."

We appreciate such gracious remarks. Of course, we have received also some mail that was not so complimentary!

If you would like to help increase the circulation of the paper, you may write for a bundle of the papers to give to the members of some congregation where you will be preaching in a meeting, or to the members of the local church, if they are not already receiving it.

Is It Worth It?

JOHN THOMASTON

There is pleasure in sin. This truth is being preached by Satan at every opportunity. The lives of millions throughout the world reflect the result of such teaching. Many live caring only for the things which bring them immediate pleasure. Sinful pleasures are often included in lists of desired attainments. Maybe it seems foolish to one who is actively enjoying a life of sinfulness, for us to ask, "Is it worth it?" "Of course, it is!" comes the quick reply. But is it really?

Initially, we should consider the nature of sinful pleasure. Such pleasure is frequently followed by regret, sorrow, and even emotional instability. The exciting affair which seemed so right at the moment, may haunt an individual forever. Also, sinful pleasure is very brief. Only for a moment can one enjoy sin; then the pleasure is over. Moses knew sin was like this; by his actions he indicated that it's just not worth it. "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" (Heb. 11:24, 25). A pleasure that does not endure is not worth the effort. How small sin's pleasure is when compared to the eternal bliss of heaven!

Many would testify today, that the pleasure of sin is not worthwhile. Two familiar witnesses, however, should be enough. Ask these two men, if you are still not convinced.

In Luke 16, we read of a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. He enjoyed the pleasurable life; but he forgot God! He died a wealthy man. Yet, when he died, he left it all. He lifted up his eyes in hell, being tormented

by the flames. This man, though once rich, now is in a hopeless, helpless condition. Mr. Rich Man, is it worth it?

Consider, one Judas Iscariot. He was a disciple and close associate of Jesus. Still, he betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. (Some have concluded this was about three months' wages.) Judas regretted his actions and took his own life. He even tried to give the money back to those who paid for his actions. It would be foolish to ask Judas, "Is it worth it?"

Many forsake the Lord for much less than Judas did. The pleasure of sin appeals to great numbers of people. We are fortunate that as Moses did, we still can realize the deceptive nature of sin's pleasure. We read in Rom. 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." HEAVEN, not sin's pleasure, will surely be worth it all! — Rt. 3, Box 257A, Dahlonega, Ga. 30533.

Industry

The gospel does not abolish industry, but changes its nature and chief design; it dignifies toil, mitigates the evils connected therewith, and creates new motives to diligence. The triumph achieved on Calvary never was designed to supersede the duty of close application to enterprising duty. Its first command couples us to some honorable and useful pursuit. Its language is, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands as we command you." "If any man will not work, neither let him eat."

—Selected via THE MINISTER'S MONTHLY

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please explain Romans 3:25. Were sins forgiven before Christ died on the cross?"

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

This marvelous passage plumbs the depth of man's depravity and soars to the holy heights of God's great scheme for redemption of the race. It speaks of man's need of a Saviour; the redemption that is in Christ; the propitiation that is affected through his blood, his righteousness and forbearance; and the justice mingled with mercy that is characteristic of his dealings with man. Here, too, is seen God's attitude toward those who sinned before Calvary, and the manner in which he dealt with those who thus sinned - a fact unfortunately obscured in the King James translation.

The word *aphesis* is the usual Greek word for "remission," and occurs often in the Scriptures, particularly in the writings of Luke. It means the releasing or letting go of something, formerly of debts, and then later came to be used in its higher application of the releasing of sins. A form of this word occurs in Acts 2:38: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (*eis aphasis hamartion*)." *Aphesis* is the usual word for "remission" throughout the sacred writings. This word, however, is not the word translated "remission" (King James Version) in this passage. The word thus translated in this passage is the Greek term *piresin*, and occurs nowhere else in the Greek Testament! It does not carry with it the idea of releasing or letting go of sins. Thayer defines it as "pretermis- sion, the passing over, letting pass, neglecting, disregarding" of sins. The revisers, recognizing this essential difference in the two terms, did not follow the King James translators. They render the term quite properly, "the passing over." Thus God merely "passed over," for the time, the sins of those who died in faith under the old order, without complete and final absolution thereof. There was thus no absolute forgiveness in former covenants. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:1-4). Thus, had Christ not died, the rivers of blood that flowed from Jewish altars would never have operated to take away sins. Their efficacy was solely due to the fact that they anticipated the "fountain in Jerusalem for sins and uncleanness," provided by the

Lamb of God.

Moreover, the old order of "pretermis- sion," the *passing over* of sins, had operated as long as it well could. Says Thayer in this connection: "Because God had let pass the sins committed previously (to the expiatory death of Christ) - i.e., had tolerated, had not punished (and so man's conception of his holiness was in danger of becoming dim, if not extinct)." To the same end Trench says: "There needed, Saint Paul would say, a signal manifestation of the righteousness of God on account of the long pretermis- sion, or passing over of sins, in his infinite forbearance with no adequate expression of his wrath against them, during all those long years which preceded the coming of Christ; which manifestation of God's righteousness found place, when he set forth no other and no less than his own Son to be the propitiatory sacrifice for sin."

God, therefore, merely *pretermis- sion* the sins of the old worthies; they were not remitted. The word here used, *piresis*, suggests a temporary passing of sins only, and there is the very definite suggestion that the one who thus passes over, for the time, has the privilege of returning with the original demand, if he wills. Thus did the people of the old covenant stand in relation to God. All had sinned; God mercifully devised an arrangement by which they might hold off the day of accounting; but this arrangement held forth no promise of final and complete absolution. It was in anticipation only; it borrowed its efficacy only by virtue of the fact that it typified the death of Christ on the cross. The credal statement that Christ stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world and that his sacrifice was as effective during the old covenant as the new is thus seen to be without foundation.

The Debate At Denton: A Triumph of Truth

A debate of deep significance was conducted at the North Texas State University Coliseum in Denton, Texas on the dates of September 20-23, 1976. The distinguished dis- putants representing the most radical of propositions were brother Thomas B. Warren, a faithful and able preacher of the gospel, editor of SPIRITUAL SWORD, staff writer for the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, and professor of Philosophy and Christian Apologetics at the Harding Graduate School in Memphis, Tennessee, and Anthony Flew, professor of philosophy of the University of Reading near London, England. Professor Flew is one of the most influential atheists of our age. He has international prestige among his atheistic colleagues around the world. Brother Warren is widely recognized as one of the ablest Bible scholars of our day. His name is a household term among faithful members of the church of Christ. Both men hold an earned doctor's degree in philosophy. Brother James D. Bales served as moderator for brother Warren. Brother Roy Deaver kept time for brother Warren and aided in many other ways. Professor Flew had two of the North Texas State University professors of



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

philosophy serve in similar capacities for him.

About six thousand people attended the sessions each night with the number slightly less on the closing night. The deportment of both disputants, with the exception of two unnecessary and offensive words by Professor Flew in his final speech, was exemplary throughout. Audience behavior was fine throughout. Brother Warren's dignity in language and conduct toward both his opponent and his audience were of the very highest order throughout the four nights. Mr. Flew maintained a far higher attitude throughout this debate than Charles Smith did in his debate with W.L. Oliphant and Woolsey Teller did with James D. Bales. Both Smith and Teller were atheists at the time they met our brethren regarding the existence of God.

It was my privilege to attend all four nights of this significant debate. I want to share with you some of my observations.

THE PROPOSITIONS

Professor Flew affirmed on Monday and Tuesday nights, "I know that God does not exist." At least this was the proposition he had signed to affirm. Those who came to hear atheism affirmed by an appeal to clearly stated and precisely presented arguments were sadly and sorely disappointed by Flew's type of affirmative debating. What he did was neither affirmative nor debating in the real sense of the terms. He spoke for a total of two hours Monday and Tuesday nights and never gave a single affirmative argument, though brother Warren begged him to time and time again. Brother Warren told him that he was not going to make the affirmative arguments for him!! Even that did not prompt any affirmative action for the two evenings from Professor Flew. He was anything but affirmative or logical in his totally unexpected approach. In two nights of impotent debating (??) he established quite dynamically the weakness of his own espoused philosophy of atheism.

On Wednesday and Thursday nights brother Warren affirmed the existence of God. He did so by precisely stated arguments. Cogently, he appealed to such arguments as cause and effect, the design argument, and the presence of objective moral law in our world. Many impressive charts were employed in setting forth the towering strength of the theist's cause in this controversy. Professor Flew never once called for any of the Warren charts to be shown while he was speaking in order that he might seek to answer and refute them. In his charts brother Warren refuted both atheism and evolution soundly and convincingly.

The atheistic professor from England was not really in the affirmative the first two nights and steadfastly refused to be in the negative the last two nights. Consistently throughout the debate he read from previously prepared material. Most of it did not touch top, bottom, side or edge of the real issue. Yet brother Warren gave him an abundance of material that demanded replies had the English professor of philosophy really been interested in a true debate.

ATHEISM: THE FALSEHOOD OF FOLLY

It was obvious to all in his opening speech that Professor Flew was a visibly shaken man. The first set of excellently worded questions submitted by brother Warren to him just a few minutes before the debate began had evidently upset him considerably. His opening speech sought to place the concept of God in the same role of imagined beings as the Abominable Snowman, some other sort of legendary creature, fairies, and the like. Professor Flew sought to object to the existence of God upon the ground that evil exists in the world. He impressed me as really being afraid to turn loose with full force on

(Continued on Page 4)

Youth - The Church's Greatest Loss

(Continued from Page 1)

today, it would not be the fault of my parents. They gave the right training. The church would not be at fault. It has given better treatment than has been deserved. The fault would be personal. Even though there are many influences in the lives of all, the decision to serve Christ must be personal. Paul shows the responsibility of children by saying, "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" (Eph. 6:1-3).

IF LOST - WHAT THEN?

It is a sad thing to see a child of God lose his children to the world. There are no words of comfort to take the place of this loss. However, some are so overcome with sorrow that they lose their ability to function as they should in God's kingdom. Some are so overcome that they abandon the church. This also is a tragic loss. It is certain that their children cannot be influenced by them to come back to the Lord if they too have forsaken him. The only possibility of bringing the lost child back to God will be in the faithful discharge of Christian duty.

Regardless of where the blame lies for the spiritual loss of a child, whether it is the world, the church, the parents, the children, or in the combination of two or more, the parents still have their responsibility to God. Some of the great men in the Old Testament had difficulty in this area. God classified David as "... a man after mine own heart ..." (Acts 13:22). This great man had problems with his sons Absalom and Amnon. The loss of these sons did not cause David to quit the Lord. Also, the character of Aaron was good enough to be selected as God's first high priest under the law; yet, it will be noticed in Leviticus 10:1-3 that his sons, Nadab and Abihu, rebelled against God's method of worship. Aaron must have been cut to the recesses of his heart. But, he continued to serve God and registered no protest.

A parent's disappointment over the loss of a child to Christian service should not turn into bitter resentment. Neither should he become so discouraged that he loses his effectiveness as a servant of Christ. The only possible way to turn the child around is to follow the advice of the young people and "hang in there". — 1751 Damon St., Birmingham, Alabama 35217.

The Debate At Denton: A Triumph Of Truth

(Continued from Page 3)

this favorite argument of the atheists. He no doubt knew that brother Warren had delivered a devastating blow to this atheistic argument in his book, **HAVE ATHEISTS PROVED THERE IS NO GOD?** He claimed, and this is a usual atheistic objection, that the punishment for sin in hell does not harmonize with the concept of a God of infinite goodness and holiness. As he did with all other objections brother Warren handled this one masterfully.

Professor Flew was in trouble with the well known arguments of the atheist every time he

sought to discuss them. He agreed that an artificial hand has a maker, that a watch has a maker, and that a car has a maker. Yet he refused to see and concede that the natural hand has a Maker, that the one who wears the watch has a Maker, and that the one who drives the car has a Maker.

Throughout the debate brother Warren pressed home with cogent effectiveness the moral argument. Did the Germans do wrong in exterminating six million Jews during the Nazi "Reign of Terror?" Professor Flew knew they did wrong. His conscience, not his moral atheism, would not allow him any other conclusion. Brother Warren showed that it was not German law, not English law, not American law, and not even international law which they violated. In the words of Judge Robert Jackson at the Nuremberg trial they (the Germans) violated a higher law. Brother Warren showed conclusively and convincingly this to be God's law which they had violated. The atheistic professor had no real answer for this. It was a real thorn in his side all the way through the debate.

Like all his predecessors in infidelity Professor Flew had to major in the employment of indefinite language and guesswork speech. This has been standard terminology for all men such as Voltaire, Darwin, Paine, Hume, Smith, Teller and now Flew. Professor Flew filled his speech with expressions such as "It seems to me." He was his own chief authority and of course as good an authority as any other atheist or agnostic from which he might have quoted at length. The testimony of a hundred of them or tens of thousands of them would have been no more authoritative than of just the lone professor from the University of Reading near London, England.

Professor Flew showed us in convincing fashion just how filled with folly and self-evident weakness atheism really is. His exceptionally weak case for his espoused philosophy of unbelief strengthened the faith of thousands in the concrete case for theism.

GOD IS

In the full conviction of the truthfulness that God does exist and is infinite in all his varied attributes brother Warren marched forth to meet a modern Goliath who has challenged the army of Jehovah. He answered every quibble that Professor Flew raised in the form of pointed objections. He marshaled argument after argument for his cause. Time and time again he showed the utter folly of accepting the eternity of matter and that men came from dirt, rocks, gasses, and water which had to be the atheist's source of origins for all forms of life. At one point Professor Flew

complained and said that he (Flew) would need to be a professional biologist to answer the charges laid against evolution. Brother Warren immediately countered in the very next speech by reminding his opponent that evolution did not belong in the realm of science but in the field of philosophy. Brother Warren then reminded the self-confessed novice in evolution that philosophy is the very realm in which this debate is taking place! Evolution took a sound thrashing at this debate. In reality evolution had no one to defend it at this debate.

Professor Flew had it difficult because he was facing a man who had no Calvinism to defend. I can well imagine that Professor Flew could whip a Calvinist in a similar debate with considerable ease. During one of his speeches Professor Flew gave a lecture on modern day religious experiences and so-called revelations such as the virgin Mary's appearances. Such was wasted effort. Brother Warren told him in essence, "I fight that as much as you do." The well prepared theist who stays with just the truth has nothing to fear from the onslaughts of atheism.

During the last night brother Warren challenged Professor Flew to a debate at the University of Reading on the inspiration of the Bible. The University of Reading professor had an entire speech in which to accept the Warren extended challenge. Toward its acceptance he was as mute as was his evidence during the debate for knowing that God does not exist. It is my prediction that Professor Flew will not be anxious soon to debate again the likes of Thomas B. Warren.

Thank God for Thomas B. Warren who marched forth to do battle with one of the greatest atheists of our age. This modern Goliath of infidelity went down in a crushing defeat just as did another Goliath of an ancient age who dared defy the army of the living God of heaven. Thank God for Gary Ealy, Rex Dean, the student groups at North Texas State University and Texas University for Women, and the University congregation in Denton for making possible this significant debate on a most crucial issue. For if God does not exist, then everything we hold dear is no more than a puff of wind. But he does exist and all our Biblical hopes are solid and secure in him and in his Son - the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the anchor that holds! The debate at Denton was surely a TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. I am glad I was in attendance.

The book of the debate is to be printed. It may be ordered from the University church of Christ, 403 Welch Street, Denton, Texas 76201.

Truth: The Superior Argument

RICHARD E. BLACK

Truth is demanding. Its seeker is isolated from the masses. He walks to a different beat. His concern is for right. Personalities find secondary or lower consideration. The errorist cannot so act, he holds "men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16). Those intent upon attaining absolute truth often find themselves stigmatized as strange in disposition and deserted by the populists.

Truth is victorious. It will out. Truth cannot be buried. It will rise to face us in every act of life. Its standard will judge in eternity. Those

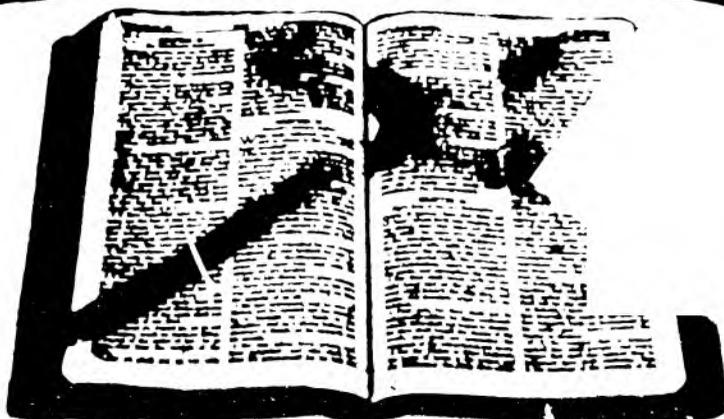
who will not pioneer its resources are "proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (I Tim. 6:4). Satisfaction with present knowledge stifles, stagnates and reduces one to the unteachable: "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of truth" (2 Tim. 3:7).

Truth rewards. "Sanctify them through truth" (Jno. 17:17). To fight it is folly, in Christ or out, for "we can do nothing against the truth" (2 Cor. 13:8).

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



forth the words of truth"

25

by Jesus Christ"

VOLUME 12

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1976

NUMBER 45

Memories Concerning Gus Nichols — A Great Man

WILLIAM WOODSON

On November 16, 1975 Gus Nichols passed from this life. He was born in a log cabin near Carbon Hill, Alabama, January 12, 1892. He served as a gospel preacher since August 1919. He distinguished himself as a preacher, teacher, debater, counselor, husband, father and friend. In all of his activities he was exemplary as a Christian and as a man.

As the year has passed since his death, I have often thought of the great things he did and what he meant to me and thousands of other Christians. Precious memories are stirred within as we think of this good man who meant so much personally and to the cause of our Lord. I think that those who knew him will share several memories of him.

We remember his struggle against great odds to achieve a place of great effectiveness in service. His beginnings were humble and his early life had the limitations which are so well known. He farmed, worked in a coal mine, and preached under difficult circumstances. Often he would work twelve or more hours for a dollar a day. He knew the necessity of hard work but he had a dream of effectiveness. The same diligence that characterized him in physical labor was true of his intellectual and spiritual growth and the results were legion.

We remember his desire for learning and reverence for truth. He never sought controversy but he was not afraid to defend what he believed. He thought that the more the truth is rubbed the brighter it shines. His faith was as that of a little child but it had the strength of a giant. He was not deterred from his search by personalities, personal considerations or desire for prominence. One who looks at his books recognizes the patient, diligent effort which went into his learning and growth.

Another memory is that of his counsel and advice. He knew how to feel his way into a person's heart. He spoke out of vast experience and great thought. One almost instinctively trusted him. He was never hard to talk to and never talked down to anyone.

One could feel his genuine love and good will. In face to face discussion it was well-nigh



GUS NICHOLS

impossible to resist the wisdom and strength of his counsel. To do so seemed the height of folly. His heart was pure, his hands were clean, and his counsel reflected great wisdom.

One remembers his love for the brotherhood as well as for the fine church in Jasper, Alabama. His efforts were not hindered by petty concerns for the fleeting interests of the moment. In his heart he saw all of our great brotherhood and loved it dearly. He wanted to do that which would aid the cause of Christ in general. He also served in an outstanding work in Jasper. He cared not for the honor that men might give, rather he sought to use his life for the cause of Christ.

We remember his influence as a family man who influenced his children to become great workers in the church. His beloved wife has long served as a worthy mother in Israel and trusted companion. In their lives are reflected

the great ideals which moulded their waking moments through their Christian life.

His lengthened shadow is still among us. We remember his voice, his example, and his zeal for every good work. It would be good to write a note of remembrance to Sister Gus Nichols. Her address is Apartment 11, Woodcrest Apartments, Seventh Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

We do not expect to meet another man like him in this life.

Study The Bible

E. Paul Hovey tells about a small boy living in the ghetto who was ridiculed for his belief in God. "If God really loves you," he was asked, "then why doesn't he take better care of you?" "Why doesn't he tell someone to send you a pair of shoes?" The young boy thought a moment, then replied, "I think he does tell someone, but they aren't listening."

This lad has very accurately pictured so many professed Christians. Those who are fully aware of the teachings of Jesus about serving others often find themselves "waiting" for someone else to act (Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46). Somehow, the conclusion has been reached that Jesus was talking to others. He is instructing us but we aren't listening. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

We are too prone to want things coming our way all the time. Like the little girl whose mother explained the Golden Rule by saying, "always remember, we are here to help others." The girl asked, "Well, what are others here for?" Or, like Bobby, whose mother said, "you ate all that cake without thinking of your sister." Bobby replied: "I was thinking of her all the time. I was afraid she would come home before I finished it."

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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the history of the Jewish nation. It was here that Deborah and Barak overthrew Sisera and the host of the Midianites (Judges 5). Here it was that Jehoshaphat overthrew the combined armies of Ammon and Moab (II Chron. 20). The battle of Gideon and his three hundred took place in this same area (Judges 7). It was here that Josiah tried to turn back the armies of Egypt, and lost his own life (II Kings 23:30; II Chron. 35:20). As a matter of fact, the **INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA** comments as follows: "Hardly an equal area of earth can so often have been drenched with the blood of men. No doubt many conflicts were waged here in far-off times of which no record remains" (Vol. II, Page 994). It seems only natural that the Lord, in speaking of some great conflict that was to come, would refer to that place which had become synonymous with war.

What great battle was being spoken of in the verses under consideration? Scholars are not agreed. Some say this refers merely to the conflict between the church and her enemies,

and that these verses are written to assure the saints that God's people will eventually overcome. It is our view that these verses refer to that great outpouring of the wrath of God upon the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation because of her sins. Jesus foretells of the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew twenty-four, Mark thirteen, and Luke twenty-one.

While we may not be able to point with certainty to the fulfillment of the prophecy contained in Revelation 16:16, it is a fact that we can certainly say that Christ will never set foot on this earth again. The reason He will not set foot upon this earth again is simply that, when He comes back again, there will not be any earth to set foot upon. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Pet. 3:10).



Sound Doctrine - The Pulpit

HARRELL DAVIDSON

Armageddon

In Revelation 16:14 reference is made to "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Verse sixteen says, "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Those who try to force upon the book of Revelation a literal interpretation, and try to make it all apply to things yet in the future, see in



BOBBY DUNCAN

these verses a battle that allegedly will take place in the Plain of Esdraelon. They say this battle will be between the armies of God and Satan, and will usher in the millennium.

In reply to this idea, we would observe that the careful reader of Revelation will note that the very first verse of the book states that the things contained therein are "signified." This means that the Revelation is a book of signs and symbols, and should not be understood as literal. This is further demonstrated by mention of things such as beasts, dragons, frogs, eagles, horses, chains, bottomless pits, etc. The very nature of the language in connection with which these are mentioned demands that a figurative application be made. This being the case, why should we understand as literal a passage which has its setting amidst language that is most assuredly figurative?

What, then, is the battle of Armageddon? It is generally agreed that the name Armageddon comes from Megiddo, which is the name of a mountain located in what is known as the Plain of Esdraelon. This plain has been the site of many significant battles in

In the two preceding articles we have pointed out that the words "sound doctrine" come from words meaning healthy doctrine or teaching. Therefore, the inspired word of God is sound doctrine. We have further shown that the preacher has a responsibility to God and man to teach that doctrine which is found in the word of God. It is to be taught without addition or subtraction (Rev. 22:18, 19). In this article we want to focus attention upon the hearers.

When we think of the pew we first call to mind the elders of the Lord's church. It is not our pleasure in this article nor do we have the time or space to talk about all their requirements. Timothy and Titus had thirty qualifications given to them, fifteen each, altogether there are about twenty-two different qualifications that must be met before one can be an elder. One of the responsibilities that the elders have is to be "apt to teach." It is not their responsibility to originate the material that is taught. God has originated that which needs teaching today. The Holy Spirit did not originate truth but was to speak the things that were shown unto Him (Jno. 16:13). Therefore, elders do not have the right to originate anything new or old, but they must adhere to the word of God in all things. This writer does not believe that an elder must teach in a classroom. We believe that this commandment can be fulfilled when an elder is capable with the word to correct error when it is taught in a public or private situation.

Elders are to watch for the souls of the flock. This has some reference to the teaching characteristic that they must have. Since the elders are responsible for the flock it stands to reason that they are responsible for that which is taught the flock (Acts 20:28). The elders have the responsibility of seeing that the truth is taught. They have the responsibility of securing the men that they feel can feed the church with the kind of spiritual food that it needs. It is at this point that much unrest has occurred in the church. Many elders have let the preacher become a "pastor" and they are letting him rule the church. They have turned the running of the church over to the

preacher. We believe that this is what is wrong with many congregations today. They are being eaten by the cancer of liberalism, and they are in that position because the elders have failed in their responsibility to oversee the flock in the teaching program. The day that elders stop hiring and paying false teachers we will see a new day dawning in the church. When liberal preachers run out of money they will do something else for a living. Every elder should therefore, make sure of the man that they are getting to preach the word. They have the responsibility of knowing whether he will speak sound doctrine. Paul told Titus that a bishop must be: "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" (Tit. 1:9). So be it!

Next we think of the deacons of the Lord's church. They have certain qualifications to meet also. Again it is not our part to talk about their qualifications in this short essay. We believe that the major thing that deacons need to be aware of is that they are not elders. More than a handful of reports have come to this writer about deacons trying to get the preacher fired or the elders kicked out or otherwise trying to run the church. In one instance the elders fired a man and the deacons demanded that he be hired back. The elders complied with this demand. In another instance the deacons wanted the preacher to move and, though the elders could see nothing wrong with either his doctrine or his personal life, they almost agreed. At least it presented a church squabble. Deacons need to know that they are helpers in the church and not the same as elders. They do not have the spiritual oversight of the church and should not feel constrained to take over for the elders. In fact they sin in so doing.

The next group of people that we think about in the pew is the Bible class teachers. This group of people is very special to this writer. They study very hard and they make their rooms attractive with different decorative techniques. They take a personal interest in

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Does Paul's injunction, 'Owe no man anything,' [Rom. 13:8], forbid installment buying, loans and similar monetary obligations?"

No. One who "owes" another is in another's "debt." The word *debt*, often appearing in the scriptures, translates several Hebrew and Greek terms, all of which have the general idea of something *due*. Bank loans, installment purchases, credit buying on open account, all involve or imply a due date before which there is no obligation to pay, and consequently, no debt. Violation of the apostle's edict occurs only when the due date comes, and payment will not, or cannot, be made. Inasmuch as it is wrong to be in this position, it would follow that it is also sinful to incur debts which cannot be reasonably expected to be met when due. It is of course possible for unforeseen circumstances to render such impossible, for the time; but these emergencies are usually resolved by prompt attention to the matter through payment of interest and extension of the loan. To allow a debt to go unpaid and to make no effort to satisfy the creditor is wrong, whatever the circumstances; and, all obligations ought faithfully to be discharged when due, if at all possible.

We must not overlook the fact that far, far more is involved than the obligation to discharge monetary debts. We owe a full measure of service to our brethren and to the people of the world around us (Gal. 6:10), to the fatherless and the widow (James 1:27), and to all who are lost (Matt. 28:18-20). It is our duty to be kind, cheerful, considerate, forgiving and merciful. Paul confessed himself debtor to all men, and so are we (Rom. 1:14). We must never forget this.

Paul admonished, "Owe no man anything, save to love one another." Here is a debt we can never pay, though we are continually engaged in discharging it (Rom. 13:10).

Incorruptible Love

G.F. RAINES

The grand old Book of God tells us that the grace of God is "with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible" (Eph. 1:24.)

Jesus says: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Our Lord "became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9); but those who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus. . . shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thess. 1:8,9).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

The New Testament: A Thorough Refutation of Reincarnation



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

In our study of the Old Testament we discovered that the word REINCARNA-TION is not found in the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. The same is true of the New Testament. There are 27 books of the New Testament. There are two hundred and sixty chapters. There are nearly eight thousand verses from Matthew 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. Yet reincarnation either as a word or as an idea is not found in any of these books; it is not found in any of the chapters; it is not found in any of these verses. One has to go to Oriental superstition or to some modern occultist like Jeane Dixon or Syble Leek to find out what reincarnation is all about. Yet there are many passages that refute clearly and convincingly the entire range of reincarnation in its colossal claims and arrogant assertions.

REINCARNA-TION: NO PART OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

If so, where in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John or the remainder of the New Testament did the Lord make mention of reincarnation either in precept or in principle? It is highly significant in all the quoted material we have given thus far from Jeane Dixon in the 1974 interview relative to reincarnation that not that first time did she ever refer to any word from Jesus in the New Testament that her far-fetched theories were endorsed by him. He told his disciples to go forth and disciple or teach all the nations. They were then to baptize the ones they instructed into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). Yet in all the instructions they gave people in the book of Acts in order to make Christians of them, not that first time did any apostle, prophet or inspired preacher ever mention that first single, solitary syllable in regard to the theory of reincarnation. Therefore we conclude that the reincarnation theory is neither part nor parcel of the process that is imperatively needed to make of people Christians. But when they made people into Christians their job was not yet fulfilled was it? They were commanded in Matthew 28:20 to engage in additional instruction of the baptized. The Master of all men commanded, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Please note that the apostles were to teach those recently baptized to observe all things which he (the Christ) had commanded. Did they do it? If they did not, they were disobedient to his marching orders delivered to them. If they did, and there is no doubt that they accomplished this, then what we have in the rest of the New Testament is what Jesus commanded them to teach Christians. But it is a foregone conclusion that they never taught anybody at any time under any circumstances one single, solitary syllable in regard to reincarnation. If they did, where is the book, the chapter and the verse authority that sets it forth? Since they did not teach the Christians of the first century anything relative to reincarnation, then we

just Scripturally and logically conclude that reincarnation is neither part nor parcel of what Jesus told the disciples to teach his people subsequent to baptism. If the Lord Jesus Christ has revealed something to Jeane Dixon that no one has known about until the 1970's, then those who have preceded her within the Christian Age have been deprived of all this amazing knowledge as she likes to refer to it. How can we account for this concealed knowledge, this hidden wisdom?

On the night of his betrayal Jesus told his apostles, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:13-14). Jesus told the apostles that the Spirit would guide them into all the truth. But the apostles never said anything about the reality of reincarnation. Do you not wonder why, in view of its expressed importance by such an one as Jeane Dixon? In view of their total silence on the theory of reincarnation, do we not have to conclude logically and Scripturally that the theory of reincarnation has absolutely nothing to do with the truth that saves men and women from their sins? If reincarnation is neither part nor parcel of the "all truth" system revealed to the apostles in the first century, then why is Jeane Dixon claiming to tell the world during the 1970's what the Lord wants people to know about reincarnation? If reincarnation had been a part of this "all truth" system revealed to the apostles within the first century, then it would have been included in the preaching they did and the writing of the New Testament. But they never preached reincarnation. They preached the resurrection but not reincarnation, and the two are as far apart in meaning as are the poles. They never wrote anything favorable to the theory, yet it was a doctrine commonly accepted by many of their time and by those who came before them. How can we account for their having left it out of the "all truth" system of saving faith which they delivered once and for all? (Jude 3). If they left out something that all the Christian Age has needed to know and believe, then they were either derelict in their duty or else the Spirit deliberately withheld from them necessary knowledge. Either horn of this dilemma will be a sharp one for the self-proclaimed psychic and Crystal Ball Gazer. These questions need an answer from the proponents of reincarnation such as Jeane Dixon. Do you not agree, reader friend?

REINCARNA-TION: NO PART OF PAUL'S DOCTRINE

In a sweeping and highly comprehensive passage Paul says, "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." Jean Dixon assures us that reincarnation is a religious doctrine and her current knowledge of it comes from visions and revelations which the Lord has extended to her. Yet it is a most obvious fact that the Scriptures do not endorse

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Sound Doctrine - The Pulpit

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their students and see to it that each student has a Bible and other materials that may be needed. The teachers many times point out to the elders a particular physical need that a student's family might have. Teachers are therefore very special.

Teachers have the responsibility of teaching the truth. Teachers need to remember that Bible classes are not the worship period. Teachers need to remember that they are not the elders or the deacons or the preacher. One case that we are aware of finds a teacher trying to teach false doctrine. The elders asked her to stop doing this but she told them that she would buy her material from the company that she wanted to, and that as long as she was teaching the class she would teach what she wanted to, and it was not any of their business. The elder standing beside her took her material from her and told her never to go into that classroom again unless she would submit to the elders and unto God and teach the truth.

Teachers will have to give account for the way they handle the word of God. James warned that there should not be too many masters or teachers (Jas. 3:1). Teachers must therefore, teach the pure word of God. There is no substitute for the truth. When good sound material cannot be bought then you may have to write your own material. We also suggest that you examine very carefully the material that you are using. Elders should have already done so, but check for yourself. Make sure you teach the truth. Various companies are making a deliberate effort to teach false doctrine through the printed page.

In the pew we have those who are members of the Lord's church who do not fit into any of the categories that we have mentioned thus far. These are the backbone of the church and are the people that elders and deacons must depend on if the work is to be done. These folk support the elders of the church because they have been taught to submit to them that have the rule over you (Heb. 13:17).

This group has a responsibility toward sound doctrine. Members of the church are variously told in the scriptures to "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith quit you like men, be strong" (I Cor. 16:13). In first John 2:21 we note: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth." Here is evidence that the people in the early church knew the truth. They had the power to discern whether the things that were taught were so or not (I Jno. 4:1). Likewise, members of the church today have the pure word of God. You have the responsibility to study and make sure that the things taught are the truth. If you find that the truth is not being taught go to your teacher and confront him with the truth. Go to your elders and let them know the error that you have heard taught. Enlist their help in eradicating this error. You have the scriptural right to demand that truth and nothing but the truth be taught. In some isolated cases many of the members are better read than the elders of the church. You may in such cases need to teach the elders. You must not wink at the error that is taught. You must not let your guard down. You must continue in your fight for the truth in an unrelentless manner. In a "last ditch" effort you may have to withdraw

yourself and worship elsewhere. You cannot financially or spiritually support error that is taught. Whether in the pulpit or the pew, let us all dedicate ourselves to the pure word of God.

The New Testament: A Thorough Refutation of Reincarnation

(Continued from Page 3)

reincarnation. Therefore the theory is not a part of the inspired word of God. Her contention that she received these from God begs the question. She assumes something to be true that she has not proved. Reincarnation is not a part of the inspired word of God Almighty. If it is, where is the Book, Chapter and Verse authority which establishes it? Paul suggested that the Scriptures completely equip God's man unto every good work. But they do not equip him in regard to the theory of reincarnation. Therefore we conclude that this theory is neither part nor parcel of every good work.

REINCARNATION: NO PART OF PETER'S DOCTRINE

Furthermore the apostle Peter informs us in 2 Peter 1:3, "According to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue . . ." This sweeping and deeply comprehensive verse suggests in crystal clear language that we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness. But the Scriptures do not endorse reincarnation at all. Therefore the theory of reincarnation is not a part of life or godliness. If it does not belong to life, it belongs to death. If it does not belong to godliness as a religious thought, then it belongs to ungodliness. And that, reader friend, is exactly and precisely its fully deserved locale. If not, WHY NOT? That is where we will leave it! — P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Agriculturist Lays An Egg!

JOHN TRACY

A familiar statement alleges, "sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me." But, don't you believe it! The words we say can be just as damaging psychologically and spiritually as sticks and stones can be destructive physically. For recent proof of the point, one has only to notice the circumstances surrounding the resignation of former Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz. Last August following the Republican National Convention, Butz was guilty of uttering an obscene racial slur, which recently surfaced and caused enough social and political pressure to be exerted on him to prompt his resignation.

Butz commented on his abusive language by saying, "This is the price I pay for a gross indiscretion in a private conversation." The problem with language is, however, that what begins and is intended to remain private, often ends up being public. Seemingly there is some strange fascination about passing on some juicy bit of scandal. On a well equipped farm one may find a machine that looks like a low-slung wagon called a "spreader," which is capable of sowing in every direction indiscriminately. One who gossips often

performs the same function in spreading idle comments or rumors at will. The result is that reputations are ruined, friendships are broken, and scandals are created.

In response to the resignation of the Secretary of Agriculture, President Ford said that Butz was "wise enough and courageous enough to recognize that no single individual, no matter how distinguished his past public service, should cast a shadow over the integrity and good will of American government by his comments." In a similar sense, no Christian should ever cast a shadow over the church he serves or the one whose name he wears. James declared that the tongue "is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:8). A Christian who becomes engaged in backbiting, talebearing, the use of "angry words" or other forms of crooked speech often poisons his reputation as a member of the church for which Christ died.

Within the contest of his brief announcement of resignation Earl Butz said, "I sincerely apologize for any offense that may have been caused by the unfortunate choice of language used in a recent conversation and reported publicly." But, his apology was too late. Trying to retract his off-color story after it had been told was like trying to put the toothpaste back into the tube. Careless, ill-chosen words, once uttered, are irrevocable.

Solomon emphasized the importance of our words in Proverbs 6:16-19: "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, a 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." Notice that four of the deadly sins listed by this wise man deal with an improper use of language. Paul's warning is sound advice for all who would be Christ-like: "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth" (Eph. 4:29). A Christian must recognize the tremendous power of the words he speaks, for:

"A careless word may kindle strife; a gracious word may smooth the way; a cruel word may wreck a life; a joyous word may light the day; a bitter word may hate instill; a timely word may lessen stress; a brutal word may smite and kill; a loving word may heal and bless." — 1686 Williamson Road, Macon, Ga. 31206.

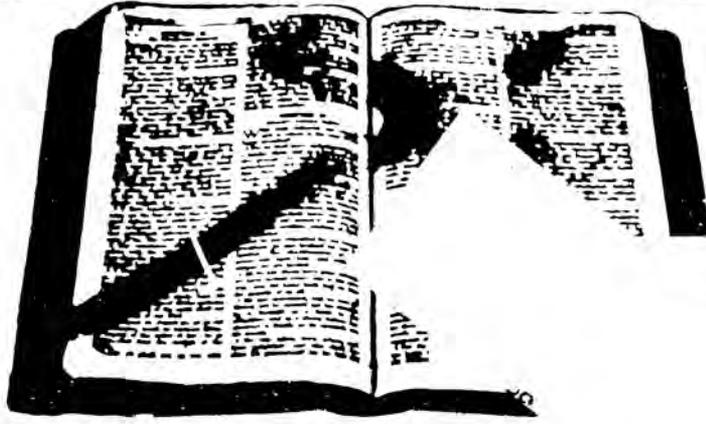
What? Blood For A Fellow Like That

EDSEL BURLESON

A poor tramp was brought into the Yaounde Hospital in the Cameroun with his seventh attack of jungle fever. The administrators were petitioned for blood to save his life, but they refused. The natives also refused. The missionary doctor's wife had the right type of blood so she offered. The doctor said to her, "do you know what kind of fellow this is? He probably has ten native wives, he is filled with disease, and is always drunk. Do you really want to give your blood to a fellow like he is?" Her simple and kind answer was "Jesus did".

How many of us stop and think that Christ died for the sinner and we were once steeped in sin? We should have bowed heads and accept the low seat of humbleness instead of taking on the haughty mind so many of God's "so-called" children possess. To many times we look about us and pass judgment on the fellow next to us or across the aisle when all the time we should be down on our knees asking God's forgiveness.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

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Christian Courtesy

[The following article from the powerful pen of the late beloved brother Nichols appeared in WORDS OF TRUTH in 1972. Those of us who knew him can see so much of him in this article. —Editor]

GUS NICHOLS

God, through the apostle Peter, said, "Be courteous" (I Pet. 3:8). Discourtesy is a popular sin in our modern age. Perhaps it is largely a sin of ignorance. Many do not seem to know that the Bible commands us as Christians to "be courteous." We do not have to ignore God's divine law of courtesy just because we are living in a busy age when most people are having running fits and fail to take time to be cultured and dignified enough to be Christian ladies and gentlemen. It is right, and even our duty, to fit into the niceties and cultures of modern society, without going to any of its sinful extremes.

1. One fails to "be courteous" when he fails to express genuine thanks and appreciation for every little favor received from others. The command to "be courteous" should be a well-rooted and grounded habit with all Christians. I believe it was George Washington who said a gentleman "is a man of high breeding and education." The facts are that if a man had the "high breeding," in the sense of culture and training, he will be labeled as a "gentleman" by those who know him best.

2. One thing which will help people to obey the command to "be courteous" is to love people. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 23:37-40). No normal person would want to mistreat himself, ignore and fail to appreciate himself. We should think of ourselves highly, but not "more highly" than we ought to think (Rom. 12:3; Gal. 6:3). If we love our neighbor as ourselves we are sure to treat him as we would like to be treated by him, and we will "be courteous."

3. Of course, all verbal abuse, such as railing on our neighbor, cursing him, reproaching him, and nagging at him, is discourtesy. "Be courteous" (I Pet. 3:8).

4. It is also discourteous to ignore the general rules of good breeding and culture round about us. A courteous man would not sit in a home, even his own, with his hat on,

but he would remove it upon entering the door. "Let not then your good be evil spoken of" (Rom. 14:16). Avoid unnecessary criticism, when you can do so without doing wrong.

5. It is discourteous for "hippies" and others who imitate them to appear in the public assembly of the saints wearing overalls, torn off above the knees, barefooted, with long hair all frizzled up, when they could wear "modest apparel", yet wear men's clothes (Deut. 22:5). "Be courteous" (I Pet. 3:8).

6. Discourtesy gives one a bad name, and the Bible says for us to choose a good name, even above much silver and gold (Prov. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1). No person with Christian training will prefer bitter criticism to a good name. No normal person wants to be odd and always different from the Bible rules of good breeding just for the sake of being different. We should seek the commendation of good and cultured people, rather than the approval of the wicked.

7. It is discourteous for girls and women to appear in the presence of men without "modest apparel, with shamefacedness, and sobriety, or wisdom" (I Tim. 2:9-11). As soon as Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, "The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made for themselves aprons" (Gen. 3:7). Though there was as yet no other people in the world, God did not want them to expose their bodies in such shameful manner, even in the presence of each other, and so "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). God did not consider them "clothed" and so he "clothed them." While their bodies were thus partially exposed and far too nude, God reckoned them as unclothed. While they were undressed they hid among the trees when they heard the voice of God in the garden. They were afraid to appear before God unclothed. We wonder today just how many women and girls would be willing to stand before Christ in judgment dressed, or undressed, as they appear in the assembly of the saints for worship of God. Would they want Jesus to see their naked legs and thighs?

"And when Moses saw that the people were naked; for Aaron had made them naked unto

their shame among their enemies" (Ex. 32:25). Then God had about three thousand of them put to death (Verses 26:29). Yet they were not entirely nude, they were just "naked unto their shame" - naked to the point of shame, like many women and girls today. One is not nice, pure, holy and free from lust who will do such things.

8. "Be courteous." Take the poor into your home and feed them - make a great dinner or supper for them (Lk. 14:12-14). Lying excuses may appear to be courteous, but they are sinful in the sight of God who knows they really did not want to do as invited. Excuses for not attending church services are usually nothing but "lies dressed up." Down in their hearts they do not want to serve God, but are choked by a lot of worldliness.

9. "Be courteous" even when people falsely accuse you and say all manner of evil against you. Don't pout and quit the church as though enemies could cause God to turn against you and send you to perdition while you are faithful to God (Matt. 5:9-12).

10. "Be courteous" on the telephone, and when you are not face to face with people. It is a sin to abuse people and say unkind things to them because of the distance between you.

11. "Be courteous" at home when talking to your wife, your husband, children, or parents. Some people are very "courteous" to their neighbors and others, but about as mean as the old devil at home.

12. "Be courteous" unto those who are discourteous. Show them the difference in a Christian and a sinner. Show them what the word of God can do for a man who is totally committed unto the proposition of serving God and being a real Christian. Yet don't compromise the truth while being "courteous."

True Christians Love One Another

G. F. RAINES

Christians are members of the same body, children of the same divine Father, heirs of the same inheritance, and, therefore, should

(Continued on Page 4)

WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Is It Ever Right To Do Wrong?

In the early part of Romans, Paul shows that the grace of God was made manifest because of the sinfulness of man. Some were ready to conclude that, this being the case, they should sin more so that more good might come. And some even accused the apostle of saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come" (Rom. 3:8).

Paul unflinchingly refuted this idea. It is a fact that there is never a time when it is right to do wrong!

We hear some talk today about "situation ethics." This is the philosophy that says, under certain circumstances, it is right to do wrong. God's word is considered by some to be the standard of right and wrong; but it is such a standard only so long as its precepts fit into the situation under consideration. If the particular situation seems to indicate that it would be better not to follow the precepts of God, then some other course is chosen. Simply put, this is the disposition that says it is sometimes right to do wrong. But is it ever right to do wrong?

It is not a question of whether or not God can bring good from evil. One example will suffice to show that God can bring good from evil. Joseph was sold into Egyptian slavery by his own brethren (Gen. 37). They confessed that their action in selling their brother was a sin (Gen. 42:21, 22). Yet it was through all of this that the nation of Israel was preserved alive (Gen. 45:5). So there can be no



BOBBY DUNCAN

questioning the fact that God can bring good out of sinful deeds. But is it right to do wrong?

It is not a question of whether doing right can result in some harm. The faithful proclamation of the gospel resulted in the murder of Stephen (Acts 7). Paul was imprisoned, and probably eventually beheaded, because of his faithful stand for that which is right. Our own experiences tell us that harm can come from doing right. But is it ever right to do wrong?

Some think it is right to do wrong if it is for a good cause. One religious group owns and operates distilleries, and sells alcoholic beverages to the detriment of society. Yet they would seek to justify this by saying, "It is for a good cause." This group also conducts gambling operations, and seeks to justify them in the same way. Sometimes our brethren will be caught up in what they believe is a good work, and will help conduct a gambling operation in its behalf. We refer, of course, to the selling of chances in a raffle of some sort. The principle violated in this type operation is the very same one violated at the roulette wheel. The wrong that is done is not made right by the fact that it might be for a good cause. Is it ever right to do wrong?

If it is ever right to do wrong, then we do not need the Bible. If we are to survey the situation, and then determine if the Bible should be followed in each individual case, why would we need the Bible? Such a practice would simply amount to following our own judgment in the final analysis. And if we are going to follow our own judgment in

determining whether the Bible is best in some particular case, then our own judgment becomes the final authority.

If it is ever right to go against the word of God, and do wrong, then man is wiser than God. God gave the Bible as a standard by which to live and judge right from wrong. But if the standard is not reliable, and there are times when we must resort to our own common sense in contradiction to the standard, then God is not as wise as we are.

It is a significant fact that Jesus never did wrong. In John 8:46 He challenged His enemies to point out one sin in His life. Certainly if there ever could be a time when it would be right to do wrong, Jesus would have been justified in going against God's revelation. But He wasn't, and He didn't.

No apostle or inspired man ever taught anyone to do wrong. They taught ever and always that we should be governed by the word of God. They gave their lives for the sake of teaching and doing that which God's word teaches.

It is the very height of arrogance for one to conclude that he has found a situation in which following God's precepts simply would be the wrong thing to do. Yet we have even seen brethren, in carrying on and promoting some extremely worthy work, who thought the time had come when they must compromise just a little with the devil, sacrifice just a few small principles of truth and righteousness, and "do evil, that good may come."

May God help us to be impressed with the fact that, regardless of the circumstances, it is never, never, never right to do wrong!

What's Your Excuse?

DOUGLAS SIMS

Some of my brethren are the best "excuse makers" in the world. By an "excuse" I mean those answers they give instead of telling the truth. If you see the excuses you have used in the following list, think of just how flimsy they are, and stop using them to get around doing the Lord's work.

EXCUSES FOR NOT OBEYING THE GOSPEL: 1. Nobody cares enough about me to ask me to obey the gospel. 2. Everyone is pushing me to obey the gospel and I'm not ready. 3. I don't know enough. I need to study more. 4. I'm as good as most of the people in the church.

EXCUSES FOR NOT ATTENDING ALL THE SERVICES: 1. I don't think the Bible teaches going more than once a week. 2. My schedule is too heavy. (Ball games, civic clubs, lodges, etc.?). 3. I need my rest. I have to work hard all week.

EXCUSES FOR NOT GIVING AS PROSPERED: 1. Times are tough. (Times are tough for the church, too!). 2. I have a family to support. (So do the most of us!). 3. I have too many bills. (Who made them?). 4. You can't tell me how much to give. (God can!). 5. I give a "token" gift. It's the thought that counts. (One dollar token?).

EXCUSES FOR NOT TEACHING A CLASS: 1. Need to be in a class myself. (Don't we all?). 2. Don't know enough. (How much do you study?). 3. Someone else can do it better. (True, but they already have a class!).

EXCUSES FOR NOT VISITING OR DOING PERSONAL WORK: 1. That's the preacher's job. (Can he go to heaven for you too?). 2. I'd just make a mess of it. (How do you know if you haven't tried?). 3. I don't know what to

say. (Have you ever attended a class to learn?). 4. I don't have time. (You have the same amount as everyone else!). 5. I have to work too hard. I'm tired. (What kind of work is most important?).

EXCUSES FOR WORLDLY BEHAVIOR: 1. Others are worse sinners than I am. (Who wants to pattern after the worst?). 2. Times and customs change. (Who changes them? Not God!). 3. I don't try to be a religious fanatic. (Don't worry, you aren't!). 4. What I do hurts only me. (It hurts all who love you, including God!). 5. What I do is none of the elders, preachers or church's business. (Just what is their business, then?).

EXCUSES FOR "QUITTING THE CHURCH": 1. The preacher preaches too hard. (Are you sure it's not the truth that hurts?). 2. Someone offended me. (Does this happen to you very often?). 3. I don't agree with the way "they" do things. (Who are "they"?). 4. I don't like the ones who take the leading part. (Why are they leading instead of you?). 5. My parents MADE me go to church as a child. (Have you ever stopped to think WHY they did that?). — 326 East Ave., Cedartown, Ga. 30125.

One of the most admired men I ever knew was the man who fired me from my first job. He called me in and said, "Son, I don't know how we're going to get along without you, but starting Monday we're going to try." . . . (selected)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please explain Romans 14:14, 15, 19-21."

"I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself; save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean of itself; save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. . . So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offense. It is good not to eat flesh, not to drink wine, not to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth" (Rom. 14:14, 15, 19-21).

Vexing questions of conduct often arise in the church today, and the church of the first century was not without its quota of such problems. Idolatry was widely prevalent; and, in the heathen temples of the land sacrifices were regularly offered. Portions of the animals thus offered were thenceforth offered for sale and much of the meat available in the marketplaces had been brought there from some heathen temple. Such posed a problem for the saints of the early church. Would they, in eating such meat, become partakers of idol worship? Was it proper for them to attend these feasts with friends? Or, should they altogether abstain from such participation? These were questions often raised and with which Paul frequently dealt as in the verses above.

The apostle, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, knew that no kind of food is "unclean" (ceremonially polluted), inasmuch as the Mosaic distinction of foods had been abolished in Christ. This fact was made crystal clear to Peter by means of the great sheet let down from heaven (Acts 10:9-17). Christians are, therefore, at liberty to eat anything they please. Nothing in this, the Christian age, is to be avoided, as food, because it was classified as unclean in the Jewish age. (The word "unclean" is used, in this connection in the Scriptures, not to mean that which is dirty or contaminated, but of ceremonial uncleanness.) It was a distinction established by law which did not exist in nature. (Leviticus 11 provides much information touching such matters). The distinctions thus established terminated when the law, of which they were a part, ended at the cross (Col. 2:14-17).

However, a brother not informed of this fact, and who eats of that which he *thinks* is forbidden, acts in violation of his conscience. Because he believes that he is sinning, the effect upon his conscience is the same as if he were actually performing a sinful act. Moreover, if such a brother who, because he thinks it wrong to eat such meat, carefully avoids such, yet observes another brother eating meat, the effect upon him is twofold: (1) he is grieved (at what he regards as a brother's wrong-doing); (2) the brother's action, in disregard of another's conscience, is not motivated by love.

Thus, two weak brethren are contemplated, each of whom observes a strong brother doing what both believe to be wrong. But, is such actually wrong? In eating such meat did not the stronger brother violate moral principle in

the act? Obviously not; acts which are not themselves sinful, are not transformed into such by the opinions of others. It is, therefore, obvious that the apostle in this passage is discussing the effect of the acts of the stronger brother on the weak brother. The stronger brother, in doing what the weaker brother feels to be wrong, is putting a stumblingblock in his brother's way. How? By prompting the weaker brother to follow the example of the stronger brother and thus eat meat himself, in violation of his own conscience; or by causing the weak brother to lose confidence in the stronger brother with consequent withdrawal of fellowship from him, and abandonment of the faith. In either instance, the weaker brother is led into a course which may be disastrous.

In such a case, what is the duty of the stronger brother? "Overthrow not for meat's sake, the work of God." Knowing, full well, that there is no moral principle violated in the eating of such meat, such a one nonetheless chooses to use his liberty in such fashion that it will not lead to the destruction of others. The lesson is therefore one of love - love for a weak brother, love which prompts us to sacrifice rather than to wound weak consciences and thus sin against Christ.

This, indeed, is the law of Christian charity. In this is summed up the attitude which should characterize us in all such instances. One must not participate in that which is indifferent in itself, if one's sincere, conscientious, but improperly taught, and thus misguided brother will be led to stumble and fall thereby. Said Paul, in this connection, "Wherefore, if meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, and I cause not my brother to stumble" (I Cor. 8:13). "Stumble," here is from a root which designates a trap, a snare, "any impediment placed in the way, and causing one to stumble or fall" (Thayer). It is unthinkable that a faithful Christian would, for a trifling indulgence of the moment, do that which would lead to the destruction of a brother in Christ.

We must, however, be cautious in the application of the principles thus taught by the apostle. They may not be properly applied to situations not embraced in his contemplation. Suppose one should object to participation in that which is right and proper, and necessary to the discharge of the will of God? Are we to refrain from all such participation simply because a weak brother objects? To do so would be to put us at the mercy of every captious complainer in the church! Paul's instruction is applicable only to matters within themselves indifferent - things neither right nor wrong - and not acts involving Christian duty. The objector, in the apostle's view, was a man sincere and conscientious, objecting to a matter - in this instance, eating meat which had been used in heathen temples - involving no moral principle.

We are thus taught liberty is not license; we do wrong whenever we use our freedom in Christ in such a fashion to cause injury to others. When others are influenced by what we do - and there are always those in this category - we ought to be motivated by the law of love and gladly refrain from using our liberty when such would operate injuriously on a brother. There are certain acts conceded by all to be right; and, about such there is no controversy. In these all may freely engage. There are others plainly and positively prohibited. To engage therein is wrong, always and everywhere wrong. There are others, involving no moral principle, which we may, or may not, engage in, depending on the effect of such actions on others about us. Here, the true disciple of the Lord, under the motivation of Christian love, will not hesitate to follow a course leading to the good of all.

Lectures By Russell Artist

WILLARD COLLINS

Dr. Russell Artist, who retired in August as a Professor at David Lipscomb College, has more time available now to present two series of lectures on two vital themes. A former missionary to Germany where he was associated with Otis Gatewood in mission activities, Artist has served many years as a gospel minister and college teacher. These lectures are a product of a lifetime.

The series of four lectures on "Archaeology and the Bible" are:

"An Introduction to Archaeology and the Bible" . . . Slides (Archaeology - Handmaid of the Scriptures)

"Proving the New Testament" (Ephesus - the First Candlestick of the Revelation.) Slides

"They Stole Him Away" (Proof of the empty tomb for this scientific age) No Slides

"Proving the Old Testament . . . The Tunnel of Hezekiah" Slides

The five lectures on Creation Vs. Evolution: "The Problem of Origins"

(How did things get started? The origin of matter - Astronomy - The origin of life - Biochemistry - What about spontaneous generation?)

"Fish Stage in Our Development" (The evidence from embryology and comparative Anatomy examined . . . and found wanting!)

"Each After Its Own Kind" (The evidences from classification and genetics in the light of Bible truth.)

"The Fossils Say 'No' to Evolution" (The fossil record examined . . . and found to support creation, not evolution! Paleontology.)

"Man - Created or Evolved?" (The famous Java 'Ape-man'. The so-called 'Dawn-man,' etc. Was man specially created by God - A living soul - or has he evolved?)

The five lectures on Creation Vs. Evolution are also illustrated with slides with the exception of the one he gives on Sunday morning.

Any interested congregation may make contact by writing to Dr. Russell C. Artist, 1057 Parkwood Terrace, Nashville, Tennessee 37220. His telephone number is AC 615-373-0963. - David Lipscomb, Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

Are You Faithful

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" "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 10:23, 25).

A church member recently said he thought it was all right and permissible for a



TOMMY VERNON

(Continued on Page 4)

True Christians Love One Another

(Continued from Page 1)

"love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22).

Fervent love is "warm in feeling; ardent."
"This love of the brotherhood should be like the fire upon the golden altar in God's ancient temple. It should be holy, and be ever burning; it should never be permitted to go out. This will require much watching and prayer" (Elijah Goodwin).

Jesus says: "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 says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:20, 21). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

Are You Faithful

(Continued from Page 3)

Christian to skip the worship occasionally. He did not think God was so demanding as to expect a person to be present every Sunday.

This attitude of mind is widespread throughout the brotherhood in general. When one learns that on any given Sunday not more than 75% of the membership is present at most congregations, it causes him to think that maybe this is a rather widespread feeling among the members. Surely 25 out of every 100 are not sick or otherwise hindered from attending the services of the congregation.

Let us stop to think about this matter. Suppose one member can willfully stay away from the service for just one Sunday. Would it not be reasonable to say that every member of that one congregation could also be absent on that Sunday? For us to be consistent we would have to say yes. This being true the Elders could make an announcement that on a given Sunday there would be no service at all; that it (that one Sunday) had been declared, by them, a "holiday". Would any dare say that this would be pleasing to God?

Again, if it is right for a member to skip the worship for one Sunday, just how many Sundays would he have to be absent before it became wrong? Would it be about two weeks? About two months? Fifty-two Sundays? Some might say that it would not be wrong to be away for fifty-two.

But the very reason that it is wrong to miss worship for the whole year is the fact that it is wrong to miss for one week! In view of the above mentioned things — ARE YOU FAITHFUL in your attendance for every service of the church? — Rt. 1, Box 135, Bear Creek, Ala. 35543.

Take the Sunday with you through the week; it will sweeten all the other days. Religion is a process repeated, not a process remembered . . . The sickness which is only on Sunday must be cured by the Great Physician . . . The best investment on this earth — is the time spent in God's House . . . (selected)

Preach The Word

"Great Paul", a mammoth seventeen-ton bell in one of the towers of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, was silent for seven years because of manpower shortage. But in May 1971, England's largest bell, with its 1,350-pound clapper, returned to life. It is now rocked by two powerful motors. On a still summer evening, it can be heard seven miles away. Twice daily the sound of "Great Paul" rises above the din of traffic with a resonant E flat.

The centuries-old Gospel bell has been silent too long in some churches. The good news that "Christ died for our sins . . . was buried, and . . . arose again the third day" (I Cor. 15:3, 4) has been muted, with resultant moral and spiritual decay and confusion.

Harrell Davidson

Bible Classes Are Destructive

Looking for another excuse for being absent from Bible class? How about the one above? IT IS TRUE that BIBLE CLASSES are DESTRUCTIVE!

Regular attendance and participation in Bible class will destroy many items:

1. IGNORANCE. God said of Israel, "My people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Ignorance was among the sins that crucified the Lord. Peter commands us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18).

2. LUKEWARMNESS. God promises to "spue out of his mouth" all those who are lukewarm (Rev. 3:16). We are taught by Paul to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Rom. 12:11).

3. SLOTHFULNESS. The truly "fervent in spirit" will attend not only the Sunday morning worship and Bible study, but will also be present at every opportunity to assemble with the saints of God.

THOSE who are interested in working for the Lord, serving others seeking to be of aid in saving others; those who show a deep love for the brotherhood and for all mankind, are the ones who are also interested in learning more of the good work of God. They participate actively and eagerly in Bible class work. — Selected via The Newport News, Va. Bulletin

Preaching The Word

JERRY T. BRAMLETT

When I was a small lad and would attend gospel meetings and services of the church I always knew I would hear the word of God preached, and after the last amen I knew that I had been to a biblical worship service. Within the past few years I have heard what was classified as a sermon, but in reality it was no more than a thirty minute sermonette that could have been spoken at any civic club or any denomination in town. I attended an area wide meeting once and the speaker had two songs sung for the invitation and much persuading was done and I asked myself, had I been a visitor there, how would I have known of what the speaker was persuading me to be a member. The audience was not told how to

obey or who to obey. Bethren, this is indeed incredible when men profess to be gospel preachers and the gospel is not preached.

We must believe that people who are outside of Christ are lost because salvation is in Christ (II Tim. 2:10). Believing that people are lost then we need to preach the word whereby a person can be translated into the kingdom of Christ and be saved (Col. 1:13-14). The question is: will the word of God save? The answer is a very emphatic "Yes"; because James said: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). Peter was commanded to preach the word of God to Cornelius that he could be saved. "Who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14). To be saved a person must be converted from error to truth, and "The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Ps. 19:7). To be saved one has life, and the word is life. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). "Holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16).

To please God we must have faith. "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" (Heb. 11:6). If we do not have faith in Jesus Christ we will die in our sins and thereby be lost. "For if ye believe not that I am he: ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). The question to consider is: how can we obtain faith that is pleasing to God and that will cause us not to die in our sins and be lost? Paul has the answer in Romans 10:17: "So the faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Preaching the word of God is the answer to being saved and being pleasing to God.

Jesus said that we "must be born again." We are to be "born of water and of the Spirit" to "enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, 5). How can we be born again that we can be in the kingdom of God? Peter has the answer recorded in I Peter 1:23. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Peter knew, for he had preached the word on the day of Pentecost, and those who received the word were baptized and added to the church (Acts 2:40-41, 47). Through preaching and obeying the word of God man can be born again and be a member of the Lord's church.

Every person will stand, appear and give account of himself to God in judgment (Rom. 14:10, 12; II Cor. 5:10). We will go into everlasting punishment or into life eternal (Matt. 25:46). We should preach and obey the word as we will be judged by it. "he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

With the reasons I have given in this article, as well as numerous others that could be given, let me exhort every reader of this great publication to study and obey God's word that you will not be rejected. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6).

P. O. Box 118, Parrish, Al 35580

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

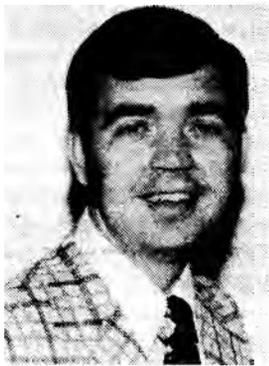
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The Broadness of the Narrow Way

In the great sermon on the mount Jesus pleaded with his hearers to "Enter ye in at the strait gate." He explained that the wide gate and broad way leads to destruction and damnation while the narrow way leads unto life. But he said, the many shall travel the broad way and the few will find the narrow way.



LEON BARNES

By saying that the way that leads to eternal life is strait and narrow Jesus indicated that it was to be entered with some difficulty and sacrifice. Also, it would be traveled only by concentrated effort. This way is too narrow for the half-hearted and indifferent. It cannot be traveled by the casual travelers down the road of life. One might leisurely walk down the broad road to a devil's hell, but he will never stumble along the highway of holiness.

Many are offended at the very idea of narrowness. We pride ourselves on being broad thinkers. We are ashamed to be thought of as narrow-minded. Yet Jesus demands that the road to life be a narrow way. It is possible for us to make that narrow way too narrow at least in our thinking. Just how broad is that narrow way?

It is broad enough for every individual who will travel the way. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men (Tit. 2:11-12). Jesus Christ, when he went to the cross to die for man, tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). Thus a blasphemer and a persecutor like Saul of Tarsus was not only invited to enter the narrow way, he came and while traveling toward eternal life, led multiplied thousands of others to come also.

It is broad enough to take in a good moral man like Cornelius and offer him real life. It is broad enough for a woman caught in the very act of adultery to be forgiven and thus to travel this way. It is broad enough for a woman who had been married five times and was now living with a man she had never taken the trouble to marry to travel it when she came into contact with Jesus of Nazareth (John 4). It is broad enough for even those

who had shouted with anger "crucify Him, crucify Him" about the Son of God himself, to be invited in. Many of that same crowd stood before Peter on the day of Pentecost. They heard him speak of Jesus as the Son of David. They listened as he told them how they had crucified their Savior. They heard him tell of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. These individuals were "pricked in their heart and cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered "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."

This way is broad enough for men of every color, every language, every social standing and every educational level to travel. It is even broad enough for men of every background to travel. One may have only dabbled in sin or he may have gone down into the very depths of sin. Either way God still cares for him and encourages him to enter the strait gate and walk the narrow way.

Note also, the narrow way is broad enough

for Christ to walk by the side of every traveler and hold his hand. Jesus gave the greatest challenge to Christians when he gave the great commission but he also gave tremendous comfort when he said "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20). Today he shouts to us not to be overcome of covetousness but to learn contentment "for I will never leave thee or forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

When we travel the narrow way we can say with the Psalmist "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psa. 23). As a matter of fact this way is too narrow for anyone to travel it alone. One must have the companionship of Christ to overcome temptations that befell him (I Cor. 10:13).

Truly, the way that leads to heaven is narrow but let's not forget just how broad it is. — 5124 Camp Robinson Road, North Little Rock, Arkansas 72118.

Man Is More Than A Unit In Society

Read Psalm 8 as a basis for this study.

Evolution would have us believe that man is simply a high class animal or a more progressed animal. The Communist would have us to believe that the individual is of very little importance. There are many who simply believe that man is just a unit in society. Man is, however, much more! What is man?

Man is God made or created - Gen. 1; Psa. 8.

Man is to have dominion over all things - Gen. 1.

Man has been given an eternal spirit - cf. Matt. 16:26.

We need to study and teach God's Word to reaffirm the glory and the majesty of man as it teaches us. We need to see the importance of just one as seen in the teachings of Jesus.

We need to be impressed with the fact that God gave man the earth to subdue and enjoy,

but with this blessing comes the responsibility to conserve these resources. We were not given this to waste or mis-use!

We may be overwhelmed by the universe. We may see our inadequacy in the face of a fast moving world. We may ask, "Where am I going?" If we really know why we are here and live according to that knowledge, we have the answer to the question, "Where am I going?" The answer will depend on how well man recognizes who he is and why he is here. If he knows God made him to serve Him and our fellows, if he is obedient to God's will, then he is going to Heaven at the end of life's road here. Do you know who you are, why you are here, and where you are going? No, I didn't ask that to insult you but to get us all to think - We are God's creation, to serve Him according to His will, that we may spend eternal years with Him. — Joe David Neely, via TRUTH.

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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An Urgent Plea

It is not unusual to see an urgent plea in brotherhood publications. But this plea is unusual in that its outcome will touch the lives of the vast majority of the entire brotherhood. Please read on.

The 1976 TEACHER'S ANNUAL LESSON COMMENTARY published by the Gospel Advocate Company was written by brother Rex A.

Turner. This writer has stated on several occasions that he believes this volume has the greatest practical value of any in the series dating back to 1922. Recently he wrote brother Turner for the specific purpose of relating these sentiments.

In reply to our letter, brother Turner said in part: "I had purposed that I would write B.C. Goodpasture today to inform him that I could not write the commentary for another year, as much as I would like so to do." Brother Turner explained that the Alabama Christian School of Religion, of which he is president, must have additional funds in order to continue operation. "I am obliged to give up my writing and apply myself to the problem of raising money and getting the school more firmly organized," brother Turner wrote. He continued: "We must have an additional income of at least \$2,000 per month."

Now, in a time when the church so desperately needs great and good men in strategic locations, it would be a great waste



BOBBY DUNCAN

for brother Turner to forsake his writing to spend time in raising money. We certainly want to see the Alabama Christian School of Religion continue. It has done a tremendous job, and is on the threshold of even greater accomplishments. We realize that without sufficient funds the school cannot continue. But is it the part of wisdom to allow a man of brother Turner's stature and ability as a writer to leave off his writing in order to give his time to raising support for the school? For us to allow this to happen would be the eiptome of folly.

What is the alternative? The alternative is for brethren who appreciate brother Turner's great scholarship and unswerving devotion to

supply what is lacking in financing the school of religion. By doing so, you will not only be supporting a most excellent school for training preachers and church leaders, but you will be making it possible for one of our brotherhood's most effective writers to continue his good work.

Every course taught in the school is directly connected with the teaching and preaching of the Bible. The faculty is made up of men such as Franklin Camp, Gary Bradley, and Curtis Cates, Jr. in addition to brother Turner and a number of others. Churches would do well to put this good work in their budgets.

Brethren, please give this matter serious consideration in your next elders meeting. Unless we act now, it may be too late.

Biblical Love No. 1 Why Should We Love?

RONNIE HARPER

If we could come to a proper understanding of Biblical love, we could go a long way toward solving many of our problems. Love, to the Christian, is greater than faith and hope (I Corinthians 13:13). There are two basic questions that we should study in order to properly understand love: 1. Why should we love. 2. What is Biblical love. This article will attempt to deal with the first question. Why should we love?

In Romans 13:8-10, Paul wrote "for he that loveth hath fulfilled the law." The commands of the law were centered around love. If one loves his neighbor, he will not take his neighbor's life. If one loves his neighbor, he will not steal from him. If one loves his neighbor, he will not try to destroy his neighbor's good name by bearing false witness. Paul concluded in verse ten by saying that "love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is as much a part of the Gospel as it was the law of Moses. Jesus taught, in the sermon on the mount, that we are to love our enemies. We are to bless them that curse us. We are to do good to them that hate us. We are to pray for them that persecute us (Matthew 5:43,44). Just because someone does wrong to me does not make it right for me to do him wrong. We are told, rather, to love our enemies. If we hate those that hate us, we are bringing ourselves down on their level. If, however, we love them we are demonstrating the true spirit of Christianity.

We should love each other because it is the mark of discipleship. Jesus said "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). How can the world know that we are Christians if we do not have brotherly love? It is one thing to attend all the services of the Church. It is another thing to practice true religion. It is one thing to read the Bible daily. It is another thing to live it in our daily lives. The world cannot possibly know that we are Christians if it does not see love in our lives.

John described the person who has no love as a blind man. "But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (I John 2:11). This describes the spiritual condition of such a person. He is blind. This writer has toured many caves. In many caves, about half way through the tour, the guide turns the lights off. It is so dark in a cave without any lights that one cannot see his hand when it is right in front of his eyes. Fish have been found in underground streams, having eye sockets but no eyes. These fish have become blind because they have been

exposed to nothing but darkness for years and years. It is a sad thing to observe that there are many so-called Christians in that kind of condition spiritually. If we expose our souls to darkness for a long period of time, we will become spiritually blinded to the point that we will not even desire to regain our sight. Such is the condition of one who hates his brother. There is no middle ground between love and hate. Jesus never mentioned any middle ground, neither did any of the New Testament writers. If we do not love our brother, we hate him. He who hates his brother is in darkness. It is impossible for one to walk very far in total darkness without stumbling. Jesus said, "he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whether he goes" (John 12:35).

We should love because, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7). These blessings are only promised to those who walk in the light. If these blessings are only promised to those who walk in the light, then those who walk in darkness cannot have these blessings. If those who do not love their brothers are in darkness, then they cannot have these blessings. Those who do not love their brothers are in darkness, therefore they cannot have these blessings. They cannot have true fellowship, neither can their sins be forgiven as long as they continue in this condition (I John 1:7; 2:11).

We should love because, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14). Brother Guy N. Woods wrote: "This reference is not to future death; it already exists and will reach its consummation in the next life" (Commentary on Peter, John and Jude p. 278). The person who lacks love is spiritually dead.

Let us all strive to have true love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, for lost sinners, but most of all for God, his Son Jesus Christ, for his Church, and for the inspired word of God.

"And now abideth faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (I Cor. 13:13). — Box 249, Carbon Hill, Alabama.

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Words Of Truth

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"In Romans 14:23, the Bible says that a man who doubts is condemned if he eat. Does this mean that, if a man has serious reservations, he should not do a particular action?"

Yes. We must never follow a course which violates our conscience. When a man violates his conscience, he is deliberately doing that which he believes is wrong, and disapproved of God; and, this leads to defilement of conscience, and, eventually, to its destruction. In a chapter, the theme of which is, "things sacrificed to idols," Paul wrote, "We know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one. . . . Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled" (I Cor. 8:8-13). Idolatrous worship abounded among the heathen in the first century; and, in the idol temples of that day, animal sacrifices were offered. Often, the meat was carried to the market place and put on sale for food. Some of the brethren felt it was wrong to purchase and to eat meat which had thus been used; others, knowing an idol is nothing could, and did, eat this meat without compunction. Weaker brethren, observing this, were tempted also to eat it, though they believed it sinful so to do. Paul wrote, regarding it, "But food will not commend us to God: neither, if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to the weak. For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols? For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whose sake Christ died" (I Cor. 8:8-12).

If the "strong" brother can eat this meat, without harm, why will the eating of it by the "weak" brother cause him to "perish?" *Because he is pursuing a course in violation of his own conscience.* To be right, we must not only do right, we must also *think* we are right. Merely thinking we are right does not make us right — Paul had a conscience void of all offense while persecuting Christians (Acts 23:1; 24:16) — but we cannot be right, unless we think we are. "To him that accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Rom. 14:14). This shows us we must never do that which we think is wrong. When we do this, it is because we are motivated by reasons other than the desire to do right and to please God. Such motivation is destructive of both character and conscience, because it prompts one to do that which is regarded as opposed to truth, and in conflict with the will of God. A good person will not violate his conscience in any matter. "But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (I Tim. 1:5).

If we must respect our conscience in all such matters, does this mean that the conscience is an infallible monitor of what is right? By no means. It may be warped, prejudiced, or grossly uninformed. The conscience is the monitor of our judgment.

When we follow a course our conscience approves, we are simply doing that which our conscience tells us is wrong, we are in conflict with our judgment of what is right. In such cases, we need to bring our judgment into harmony with God's will, as set out in the New Testament, and then our conscience will approve us when we conform thereto, chide us when we do not.

We must be exceedingly careful not to extend the principle taught by Paul in I Cor. 8, and Rom. 14, beyond that which he intended. In these chapters, he deals with the matter of eating meat sacrificed to idols — an action involving no moral or religious principle. To

argue that it is right to engage in social drinking, immoral practices, the use of narcotics and similar matters if one believes such things to be permissible, is to misapply the principle taught, and to degrade it. These, and similar matters, are basically sinful; it is wrong to engage in them regardless of what one thinks about them, because they are opposed to the will of God.

Paul teaches us in Rom. 14:23, that we submit to the truth for the truth's sake; we must, as children of God, be true to our consciences, and faithful to his will; a good man with a bad conscience is an anomaly. Loyalty to God demands a good conscience.

Florida Churches? Or Alabama Churches?

(We appreciate the following article from a faithful brother in Florida. We would remind him and others who read brother Dutton's article entitled "Florida Churches," that it was a preacher and two elders in Florida who accused all Florida churches of endorsing immodest dress. It was not brother Dutton. We certainly meant no offense to faithful brethren in Florida by publishing the article, and if they feel we have done them an injustice, we are happy to apologize. — Editor)

DON DELUKIE

WORDS OF TRUTH, Volume 12, Number 40, dated September 17, 1976 contained an article by Bro. Ray Dutton that I want to comment concerning. Many things I have read in brotherhood publications have left me puzzled on more than one occasion because I had no first hand knowledge of them. However, this article has delved into an area in which I definitely do have first hand knowledge.

Let me say immediately that the biblical precepts set forth by Bro. Dutton are sound, and endorsed by the elders here, and this writer. In the Palo Alto Avenue congregation in Panama City, Florida, we realize that immodesty is a problem here just as immodesty is a problem on the streets of Alabama cities. My objection is that a blanket accusation of all Florida churches is the impression left by entitling this article "Florida Churches." He admits that he "just can't believe" that all Florida churches are engaged in disgraceful pursuits, but definitely leaves a questionable impression.

The real kicker is that such an article should emanate from Alabama of all places. As the ministers along the northwest coast where I am located will quickly verify, the majority of Christian beach inhabitants here during the summer are members from - ALABAMA! They show up in vast numbers on Sunday mornings with their faces puffed and red from a weekend on the beach. Now I suggest if you

want to preach on immodesty on the beaches, you start in Alabama. I can produce ample registrations, visitors cards, etc., to back this up.

The public beach is off limits to Christian families and children in our congregation. Certainly many families go to isolated spots for swimming and sunning, just as many Christians north of us have swimming pools in their back yards for this purpose. When coming here many Alabama Christians are discrete and frequent only private places. There is no doubt in my mind that there are some Christians in Florida who endorse mixed swimming complete with skimpy swimming attire, just as there is no doubt that there are those in other states so inclined, and as our guest register demonstrates. This doesn't make a wrong right, or one congregation guilty of the folly of another. This type of reasoning would mean that all of the congregations in Nashville are bad because there is one liberal one there!

The Christians at the Palo Alto Avenue congregation do not wish to be lumped into a broad category of "Florida churches" who are hedonists. This congregation is led by four faithful and conservative elders of the highest calibre. I have found them to be firmer on many matters than those of my home state of Louisiana. All deacons and teachers in this congregation have agreed to a proclamation that denounces lasciviousness in any form. Over 50 percent of our contribution goes directly into mission work. We have 2 fully supported missionaries in cities in Georgia and Pennsylvania where the Lord's church was not known prior. We reach out to the lost through Florida's first "Bible Call" program. Recent speakers for meetings here were Guy N. Woods, James Bales, B.C. Goodpasture, J.J. Turner, Cleon Lyles and John Davis. Whoever this mysterious person (unnamed in Bro. Dutton's article) might be, he is not a spokesman for this area. He is invited to inspect any of the congregations meeting in the Panama City area and its environs. — P.O. Box 906, Panama City, Fla. 32401.

"Be Thou Faithful"

G. F. RAINES

The apostle Paul tells us that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

Faithfulness is unfeigned submission to the will of God; "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6). John says: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

Our Lord Jesus Christ says: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22). "Be thou faithful unto

death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Paul, writing to "holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1), said: "Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God" (Hb. 3:12).

It is possible for one who has been born again to become unfaithful and, consequently, lose his soul. Only those who have been born again are in the kingdom (John 3:3-6), and the Son of man "shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:41, 42). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

Sealed of God

Ezekiel records an awful vision of judgment upon the men of Jerusalem. However, the true and faithful disciples were preserved because they were marked with the seal of God (Ezek. 9:1-6). So in the Revelation, God's faithful ones are "sealed" upon their foreheads so as to be identified and protected in the judgment that was to come upon men (Rev. 7:1-4). The idea of a divine "seal" placed upon God's children runs throughout the new covenant. Surely all men should desire to know and understand what this seal is, what it means, and how to receive it.

I. What is the seal of God placed upon Christians? It is important to remember that we are thinking of an analogy. God does not LITERALLY write upon our foreheads with ink, or mark us with a brand. But He does something LIKE that when we become His children. This act of God marks us as belonging to Him. Paul answers our question in Eph. 1:13-14. Those who hear the word of the gospel and believe are "SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT of promise."

II. Who gives us the seal? The inspired apostle Paul answers this question. "... God. . . also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." (2 Cor. 1:21-22). No man can give us the heavenly mark of identification.

III. WHO receives this seal? John tells us it is given to "the servants of God." (Rev. 7:3). It is given to those who are HEIRS of eternal life (Eph. 1:13-14). The seal being the Holy Spirit, we know it is given only to those "that OBEY him" (Acts 5:32). And Gal. 4:6 says, "because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. . ." So then this seal is impressed upon all who become Christians.

IV. WHEN then are we sealed? Peter responded to the urgent question of the Jews on Pentecost, whose hearts had been pricked by his sermon: "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). At salvation we receive the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5). Again in Eph. 1:13, we are sealed IN CHRIST. But we get into Christ by baptism (Gal. 3:26-27). So then, we are sealed when we obey Christ in baptism.

V. What does the seal mean to me? First, it marks me as the possession of God. Christians are a "people for God's own possession." (1 Pet. 2:9). It identifies us as kings and priests of God (Rev. 1:6). It is also our "earnest" or downpayment on heaven (Eph. 1:14). It is God's sacred pledge that what He began in us will be fulfilled. The Holy Spirit with which we are filled, also sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts (Rom. 5:5). It guarantees our bodily resurrection from the dead (Rom. 8:11). The Spirit in our lives brings liberty and transforms us into the image of Christ (2 Cor. 3:17-18). We are strengthened with power by his Spirit in our inward man (Eph. 3:16). We experience righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17). These blessings are ours if we have been sealed by God with His Holy Spirit.

VI. What our seal means to the unsaved.



JOHN WADDEY

The seal upon each Christian is a constant reminder to the lost of their undone condition. Although no visible, literal mark is evident, there is the intangible mark, obvious to all, in the Christian's life. It is seen in the love, joy, peace, long - suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self - control, the fruit of the Spirit of God in the life of all saved men (Gal. 5:22).

VII. The indelibility of the seal. According to Paul, we are sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). Jesus promises, "He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more, and I will write upon him the name of my God. . ." (Rev. 3:12). Such words describe that permanency of our salvation and relationship to God. "Neither death, nor life,

nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

The only thing that could rob us of the heavenly seal is our own sin. When caught in the web of his own sin, David prayed, "Take not the Holy Spirit from me" (Ps. 51:11). We can grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:30), quench the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19), and even despise the spirit (Heb. 10:29), by continuance in sin. When we do thus, we cannot expect to retain our standing as the "sealed of God."

Having considered these precious thoughts from the Book Divine, we ask, Have you the seal of God upon you? — Karns, Tenn.

God's Guiding Counsel

"Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps. 73:24). In this marvelous statement we see at once the willingness of Jehovah to save sinful men and in his willingness also the wisdom, love and concern for man who was made in the image and likeness of God. God never

forces himself upon man, but requires that we respond to his overtures of love and mercy by faithfully doing his will (Isa. 1:18f). His will is his word and has been once delivered to all who are disposed to follow (Ps. 119:105; Jn. 6:63ff; 12:48-50).

We should desire the counsel of the Lord because of its excellence. This excellent word comes to us through Jesus Christ, aforetime described as "wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). It was by the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" that our Saviour was crucified for us (Ac. 2:23). Sometimes we hear of the "tragic death of Christ on the cross" but it would be far more tragic if he had not gone to that cross. We should still be without God and without hope in the world had he not done so. The counsel of God is immutable, unchangeable, and men should all be aware of the fact that their rejection of his word changes not a syllable. By that word we shall all be examined in that day.

WHO NEEDS GOD'S COUNSEL?

The Pharisaical "moral man" feels no need of God or of Christ. He reckons that he is good enough not to need him. Hence, if he studies the Scriptures at all his motive will not be to know and obey what he finds there. The worldly wise are so filled with human wisdom that they exalt themselves above him. The preaching of the cross is to them foolish preaching (Cf. 1 Cor. 1:21). Those who are physically and financially strong may be endangered by a sense of false security and thus neglect the counsel and wisdom which is from above. But on the positive side every sinner needs to be guided by the immutable counsel of the Lord. All who want to avoid eternal ruin and stand in God's eternal kingdom must learn to depend, not on themselves, but on the Lord. This should include every responsible being on earth (See Rom. 3:23; Jer. 10:23; Eccl. 7:20, etc.).



VIRGIL BRADFORD

SOME REJECTING GOD'S COUNSEL

It is said that many people, including the publicans, justified God, being baptized with

the baptism of John. But the "Pharisees and the lawyers rejecteth THE COUNSEL OF GOD for themselves, being not baptized of him" (Lk. 7:29). Jesus lets us know that those who put father or mother before him cannot be his disciples (Matt. 10:37). There are likely many thousands in our time exactly like those rulers who believed on Jesus, 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" (Jn. 12:42). Pride led to a total rejection of that which they knew to be the truth.

Again, the parables of Jesus enlighten us as to the many who reject him. The cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of human hearts take precedence over the more important things (Lk. 8:11ff; Mk. 4:10ff).

But not only do some allow the things of the world to hinder them from serving God, — they are not content for others to do what they refuse, and will by word, deed and example lead others to stumble and fall into sin. It is better, says Jesus, that a great millstone be tied around his neck and that he be cast into the sea than to cause one of the Lord's little ones to stumble (Matt. 18:6). None can live without influencing someone, somewhere, somehow. Idolatry shows its hideous face in many ways leading the careless and indifferent to continue in sin and rejection of the counsel of God (Cf. Col. 3:5).

MUST ACCEPT TO BE RECEIVED

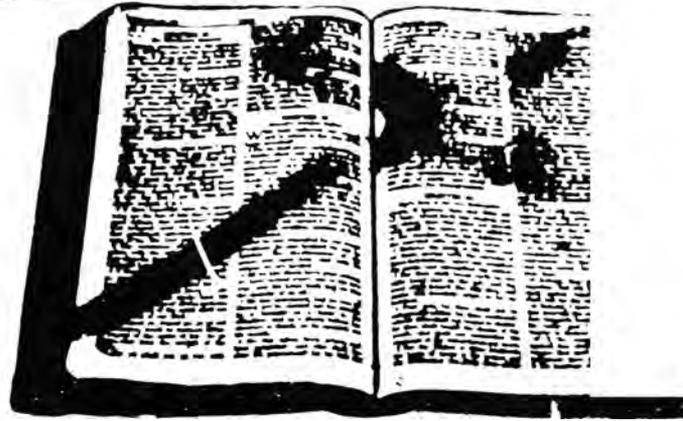
No doubt many thousands of us would like to live as we please now and then be received to glory, but it cannot be so. Then we would be willing to accept the counsel of God! Or, would we? If we are unwilling now, it may be highly doubtful if we would welcome God's guidance ever. Please notice again the order of the test: Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel (that's right now) and AFTERWARD receive me to glory.

Paul reinforces this principle thus: "Instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly IN THIS PRESENT WORLD. . ." (Tit. 2:11-14). SO, LET US SEEK TRUE RICHES in the counsel of God and serve him faithfully who loves us so much (Rev. 3:17). — Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"Speak forth the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

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

VOLUME 12

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1976

NUMBER 48

David Or Eliab?

It is becoming obvious that one does not gain in popularity by opposing error. This in spite of exhortations to contend for the faith (Jude 3). In fact some of the most derided people are those who will take a stand. Multitudes are ready to assign various name tags. These men are "watchdogs, witch hunters" and the like. If this were



WINFRED CLARK

new, one might fall back in alarm. Not so. Read I Sam. 17. God's people are fighting against the Philistines. Out of their camp came Goliath, a giant. He threw his weight around with one challenge after another. This went on for forty days. David's brethren, one of which was named Eliab, was in the army that heard the challenge. When David appeared on the scene, having been sent by his father, he heard the challenge. He asked in verse 26 about meeting this man in battle. David was concerned about the reproach on Israel. He couldn't see how anybody could just stand by and let an uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God. It was unthinkable that nothing was being done.

As David talked of the matter his own brother became angry with him. Why did you come? You are out of your place, you should tend to your own business with those few sheep. He presumed to read David's heart by saying pride and naughtiness was in it. "You are just here to see a fight." All of this is in verse 28. Now, does any of that sound familiar? Are all the Eliabs dead? Are all their voices muted? Has their tribe faded from the earth? No, a thousand times no! If you think they are, then get in the fight against the liberal trends. Call attention to unlawful practices that will seep from one congregation to another. Ask if something can't be done about the encroachments of error into the Lord's body. Oppose the passive attitude adopted by many and see if Eliab is dead. No Eliab wants a Davis to attempt something he is afraid of.

Tell me brethren, where would Israel have been without the Davids that would meet the Goliaths? They wouldn't make much progress

would they? You can't bury your head in the sand and say Goliath is not out there. They knew better. They had heard his same old challenge for 40 days.

Now, I've got a question. Maybe somebody will answer it. Should David stop and not oppose Goliath because of what Eliab said? After all, he wouldn't want his name connected with David when he went out would he? He wouldn't want anybody to know they came from the same family. Should David listen to this to the point of saying, "What is the use? Nobody will care." David was looking to the future and he was looking beyond the jabs of Eliab. Israel was larger and God's cause was greater than the

misrepresentations of Eliab.

I guess after the battle was over and Goliath's head was taken to Saul, Eliab saw how wrong he was. It was David's business. Pride and naughtiness were not the motivating factors in what he did. He went forth in faith and in the name of the God of Israel. Eliab reaped benefits from David's effort though he discounted him.

David knew there was a cause, evidently. Eliab didn't understand that some men are ready to lay their lives on the line for the Lord. I doubt Eliab would know what they really meant. I'll take David. You can't get much help from Eliab. — P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

The Key To The Puzzle

RAY HAWK

Have you ever put a puzzle together and found you needed one more piece to really tie the whole thing together? The book of Hebrews does just that for the New Testament.

The book of Hebrews occupies many roles. It is the genesis of the new covenant. The word "genesis" means "beginnings." As Genesis shows us the beginning of creation, man, sin, nations, and Israel; so the book of Hebrews indicates the beginnings of Christianity and the demise of Judaism. Heb. 1:1 shows that what was received by the fathers in the past is ready to vanish away (8:13). Why? Because, Jehovah now speaks to us by His Son (1:2). That which was revealed by the prophets "in time past" allowed the faithful to see the promises from "afar off" (11:13). We who have received the kingdom today look back at its beginning in the first century (12:26-28). Genesis shows us the beginning of the ages. In Heb. 12:2 Jesus is said to be the author (captain) and finisher (perfector) of our faith. The book of Hebrews reveals that Jesus is the originator of the ages (Heb. 1:2, 10; 11:3). The word "world" is the Greek word, ages. The book explains that Christ is the sacrifice for that of which he is author and finisher (9:11-14). Heb. 13:8 reveals that Jesus transcends all, for he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Also Cf. 1:12. That of which he is the author and

finisher is an eternal covenant (13:20). Therefore, Hebrews shows that every prophecy in the Old Testament, beginning with Gen. 3:15 and 12:2, 3, finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ! The book shows the establishment of Jesus' covenant (the New Testament) and the end of the old (the Old Testament).

Hebrews is the book of Exodus to the New Testament. The book of Exodus tells about Israel's exodus (departure) from Egypt to Canaan. Hebrews shows the exodus from Judaism to Christianity! Christians have passed from an inferior covenant to a SUPERIOR one (8:6-9). The exodus in Hebrews is from an inferior PRIESTHOOD to a superior one (7:23, 28). Hebrews shows the superiority of the PROMISES under the new covenant (8:6; 9:15; 10:36). We also see the superiority in POWER of the blood (9:22-26), as well as that of PUNISHMENT (10:25-29; 2:2).

The book bears the same relationship to the New Testament as Leviticus does to the Old. Leviticus is a book on FELLOWSHIP through SANCTIFICATION. Chapters one through seventeen of that book shows us the GROUND of FELLOWSHIP through SACRIFICE. Chapters eighteen through twenty-seven tells us the WALK of that fellowship through SEPARATION. In Hebrews we see Jesus as

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Tradition



BOBBY DUNCAN

We hear quite a bit of criticism by those who want to restructure the church of Christ concerning what they call "tradition". They seem to be under the impression that whatever might be described as tradition must of necessity be out of harmony with the will of Christ.

While it is true that many, both in the church and in the

denominational world, have followed the traditions of men to the extent of opposing the truth, it is also noteworthy that the word "tradition" is used in at least two other senses: (1) It is used to denote those things commanded of God (II Thess. 3:6), and (2) it is used to refer to certain practices which are altogether in harmony with the Scriptures, but which are not spelled out in detail therein, such as the practice of closing the worship service with a prayer.

Certainly every faithful child of God should be in opposition to any tradition of man which would cause him to be in violation of the will of God. Jesus condemned the Jews of His day for their strict adherence to the traditions of their elders while setting aside the commandment of God by their traditions (Matthew 15). Their mistake was in taking a purely human practice and incorporating it into their system of worship. Jesus said they who did so worshipped in vain (Matthew 15:8,9).

In II Thess. 3:6, however, the apostle Paul uses the word "tradition" to refer to divine injunctions, and those who do not walk according to such tradition are to be withdrawn from. It would be interesting to hear those who ridicule tradition in general comment on this particular passage. Should the tradition mentioned in this verse be avoided? If not,

then it must be that the word "tradition" does not in and of itself necessarily denote something that is to be condemned and scorned.

There are also certain traditional practices within the realm of human judgment that are not necessarily practices to be avoided. For example, most of the churches of Christ in this part of the world meet on Sunday morning for worship. There is nothing wrong with this practice, even though from a Scriptural standpoint twelve o'clock Sunday would be just as good. The fact that this is a practice of long standing does not mean that it must be changed in order for us to have Scriptural worship.

Some are now advocating the idea that the order of our worship must be changed week after week. According to them, if a service begins week after week with three songs and a prayer, a tradition is established, and we are then worshipping God after the traditions of men. This idea is without any scriptural foundation and exhibits a serious lack of common sense. Apply the same kind of reasoning to the matter of changing the order of worship week after week, and you have the same "problem." That is, it becomes traditional to change the order of worship week after week, and we are then worshipping God after the traditions of men.

I do not have to sit at a different place at the table three times a day to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by my wife. And at our house, if there is dessert, we always eat it last. I never remember thinking that a meal tasted dull or flat just because my iced tea glass was sitting in its usual place on the table, instead

of being under my chair; or because we offered thanks at the beginning as usual, instead of waiting until the end of the meal. If my wife had to have a hundred or more different varieties of serving techniques in order to stimulate my appetite, this would be indicative of very poor health on my part. And soon the variety itself would become commonplace.

The word "tradition" is something used as a cloak to try to hide the sins of those who refuse to do the will of God. They refuse to attend Bible classes, and then try to deny they have violated any command of God, by saying that the Bible classes are the traditions of men, and not commanded by God. While it is true that the details for the Bible class arrangement are not spelled out in Scripture, the classes themselves are authorized by the command to teach (Matthew 28:13,19). When we meet on Sunday morning for Bible classes we are doing just exactly what the Bible has commanded, though the details for the arrangement are arrived at through human judgment.

One may say: "There is no room for human judgment in God's arrangement." If such is the case, then where is the Scriptural authority for beginning a service with three songs and a prayer (or in any other way, as for that matter)? The thing to be done is clearly taught in the Bible, but the details for doing it are left to human judgment. There may be a traditional way of doing a thing that is altogether right and scriptural. Let us take heed lest we either accept or reject a practice just because there might be some sense in which it is traditional.

"What Kids Need Today Is Plenty Of LSD"

EDSEL BURLESON

The Christian Athlete presented this interesting account: "In the dairy of Brooks Adams is a note about a special day when he was eight years old. He wrote, 'Went fishing with my father; the most glorious day of my life,' and through the next 40 years there were constant references to that day and the influence it had on his life."

"Brooks' father was Charles Francis Adams, Abraham Lincoln's ambassador to Great Britain. He also had a note in his dairy about the same day. It simply said, 'went fishing with my son; a day wasted.'"

Someone has said that the eighteenth century discovered the man, the nineteenth century discovered the woman, and the twentieth century discovered the child. Now that he is discovered, let's train him. It doesn't take too careful an observation to determine that a very poor job has been done in many families. "Children are natural mimics - they act like their parents in spite of every attempt to teach them good manners."

Solomon's instruction, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6), is

simply his way of saying, "teach a child the way he should go and go that way yourself." We should consider not so much what the child is today as what he may become tomorrow.

Too many fathers give too little consideration to the word "Train." This includes more than telling them how; it means showing them how. Parents are concerned about where this younger generation is headed, but most give little thought as to what started it in that direction. Some families can trace their ancestry back three centuries, but can't tell you where their children were last night. If we paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children, we would now be living in a jungle of weeds. It is far cheaper to train children well than to mend men and women.

Our children are the only earthly possessions we can take with us beyond this life. A child is, in a sense, our second chance. The hopes of tomorrow are the children of today.

"What kids need today is plenty of LSD — Love, Security, and Discipline.

Lectureship Theme Announced

Living soberly, righteously and godly — Titus 2:12 (The Gospel Confronts Modern Moral Issues) will be the theme of the Third Annual Lectureship of the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions, Knoxville, Tennessee. The Lectureship will be conducted April 7th, 8th, and 9th, 1977.

The elders of the Karns Church of Christ, who oversee the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions have decided to print

the lectures. The decision to print the lectures was made after it was observed that there is a great need for materials which set forth Bible answers to the moral problems of the 20th Century. The book will be sewed paperback of approximately 300 pages and will sell for \$4.00 per copy. Pre-publication price will be \$3.00. Orders for pre-publication copies are now being accepted. (Money must accompany

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"In view of the fact that the saints in Rome were told to 'Greet one another with a holy kiss,' why do the churches of Christ disregard this admonition today?"

This query involves the assumption that greeting, by means of kissing was commanded by Paul in the passage alluded to (Rom. 16:16). This is an unwarranted conclusion. Neither here, nor in any of the other instances where this mode of greeting is mentioned in the New Testament (I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 5:26; I Pet. 5:14), was kissing ordained as a method of greeting; in each instance of its occurrence, the Holy Spirit designated the kind of kiss to be used, i.e., a "holy" kiss, a kiss "of love." Kissing, as a way of greeting, already existed; and, it did not begin with Christianity. The practice dates to the period of patriarchy, and is widely observed, to this day, in many non-Christian lands, and is engaged in by people of many religions.

Emphasis, in the Spirit's injunction, is on the word *holy*. The kiss was to be a holy one - not a lustful, licentious one. Thus, the kiss, already in vogue as a mode of greeting, was sanctified, and elevated to the level which should characterize Christians.

A cheery word, a handshake, a smile are means of greeting in our land and in our age, and not kissing. Any greeting, engaged in by Christians, should be meaningful, sincere, without affection. Kissing, unrestrained, leads to promiscuity; hence, a practice already engaged in was to be holy, pure, chaste, when participated in by Christians. But, it is not a "church ordinance;" it is not bound on Christians today; and it is seldom engaged in. We obey the spirit of the injunction when we greet our brethren and sisters today by shaking hands with them warmly and sincerely.

Happiness

Happiness has many houses,
And dwells in many places;
It lives in many moments,
And shines in many faces.

It laughs with little children,
Whose hearts are free from pride;
It seeks a sunny meadow,
Or a quiet fireside.

It haunts the house of service,
Knows the place of prayer,
Where broken hearts are mended,
Happiness is there.

Happiness has many houses,
But mostly it will come
Where faith and love are living,
Where God can make His home.

— Selected

Figures indicate that Americans spend about \$29 billions for alcohol each year and consume over 400 million gallons of distilled spirits along. A dry year could cut the federal deficit in half. Yes, dearie, but the other half's almost enough to "drive you to drink."

The Writings Of Paul: A Refutation of Reincarnation



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The most prolific writer of the New Testament, Paul, surely did not believe in the theory of reincarnation. If he be the writer of Hebrews, and the weight of the evidence surely points in that direction, he gave us one of the strongest statements in the Bible that reincarnation is not so. He wrote in Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment." Man has but one appointment with death. But if men continue to come back through the process of reincarnation time after time, then they experience many deaths. If what Jeane Dixon is telling the world is true, each one of us may have died a hundred or more times in previous existences. Reader friend, do you believe God's Book supports anything this senseless? I do not for a moment. I reject the whole gamut of reincarnation lock, stock and barrel. I can think of hundreds of Scriptures which thoroughly refute reincarnation; I cannot think of that first one that offers that first remote proof for reincarnation. It is a doctrine that is void of sense, sanity and Scripture. Such is about the only kind thing that can be said in regard to reincarnation.

PAUL DID NOT EXPECT TO RETURN TO EARTH VIA REINCARNATION

Paul's many allusions to the other world that awaited his coming soundly, solidly and sensibly refute the theory of reincarnation. He surely never expected to come back perhaps scores of hundreds of times in other bodies and forms. He knew that this life was a one time experience as far as he was concerned. For instance he said to the saints of the most high God in Philippi in Philippians 1:21-24, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Now if reincarnation is true, just how could death be a gain to Paul? Instead of his going to be with the Lord into a world of gain and profit, he might have any number of other pilgrimages before him as far as this old sinful world is concerned. He might have before him the coming back in other bodies and other forms scores of experiences before he entered into the rest that awaited him beyond the curtain of death. If reincarnation is so, Philippians 1:21-24 is without meaning or profit.

In the expression of sentiments strikingly similar to this he told the Corinthian Christians in 2 Corinthians 5 that to be present in the body meant an imposed absence from the Lord. One of the things he longed for was to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. This is why death was so precious to the apostle Paul. Now death could not be precious for him if he knew he were going to have to come back again and again to fight the flesh, sin and Satan all over again time after time in an innumerable amount of reincarnations. Paul would have had nothing but disdain for the whole concept of reincarnation. The theory would have

negated much of what the future held for him.

Again Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." What special profit would there be to his having fought the good fight, his having kept the faith, and his having finished his course if he still had many other reincarnated periods ahead of him when the same battles, the same race, and the same course would loom before him? If reincarnation is so, how could Paul rest with assurance that the future crown of righteousness would one day really be his until he had run successfully, had fought bravely, and had finished the final course in all the reincarnated periods of earthly life that lay in his future? If reincarnation is so, how could any faithful Christian ever die in the warm embrace of hope knowing all the time that the next time around, he might forfeit the very thing he had been faithful to in his previous existence? The truth of the matter is that he could never have any hope in such a miserable theory. How can anyone see glory and good coming from such a ridiculous system of far-fetched thought and theory? Yet this is what Jeane Dixon thinks will bring the world its greatest glory. Aren't you happy the Crystal Ball Gazer is not at the controls of the Universe? We would really be in a monumental state of utter confusion were she at the controls of the Universe!!

JUDGMENT PASSAGES: A REFUTATION OF REINCARNATION

Paul's judgment passages truly refute this ridiculous and absurd theory. Paul taught in Romans 2 that every man will be judged in accordance with the law under which he lived. But what about a man who first lived under the Patriarchal Dispensation, had a reincarnated experience under the Mosaic Economy and has had several reincarnated existences under the Christian Age? Will he be judged under the Patriarchal law, by the Mosaic Law, by the law of Christ, or by a combination of all three laws?

Suppose a person only has two lifetimes on earth. During one existence he was unfaithful to God; during the other existence he was faithful to God. Since according to the Bible we will be judged according to the deeds done in the body, what will be his eternal destiny? His first life demands hell because of his wickedness. His second life points to heaven because of his faithfulness. Just where will such people as this be in eternity? Does the crystal ball of Jeane Dixon have an answer for this question? It needs an answer you know!! Perhaps another meditative session at St. Matthew's in Washington will provide some answers to the multitude of questions her falsehoods raise!!

Paul told the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "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." Now if reincarnation be true, a person may have had a multitude of bodies and forms in which he experienced life on this earth. But Paul affirmed each of us would give an account of what was done in HIS

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The Key To The Puzzle

Continued from Page 1

our High Priest and a better sacrifice (5:10; 10:10). By him we are sanctified and have fellowship with God (13:8-16). Our walk is by faith (10:38, 39).

In Numbers we see the "goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22). We see Jehovah's severity in chapters one through fourteen with the old generation who rebelled against God and died in the wilderness. They wandered for a total of forty years while death took its toll (chapters fifteen through twenty). God's goodness is seen upon the new generation in twenty-one through thirty-six by Jehovah's taking them to the border of Palestine, ready to enter the promised land.

Hebrews also shows us that some have acted as did the old generation (3:7-19), and fell away (6:4-6; 10:25-29, 39). God's severity is seen in such passages as 2:1-3. His goodness is seen throughout the book, if one remains faithful.

Deuteronomy is a book that restates God's law and promise to His children. The same can be said about the book of Hebrews. Deuteronomy looks backward in chapters one to eleven. It reviews their way from Sinai to Moab as well as reviewing the Law. In chapters twelve to thirty-four it looks forward giving final rules and warnings before entering into their earthly inheritance. Hebrews reviews the Old Testament Law and shows the SUPERIORITY of the New Testament covenant. It shows Christians where they have been, are at that time, and where they are going.

The book of Hebrews is a great book. We need to study these great books over and over again that we may glean from them the eternal message given to us from God. — 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

Lectureship Theme Announced

Continued from Page 2

pre-publication orders.) The lectures will cover many problem areas: abortion, alcohol, pure speech, bribery, dancing, tobacco, drugs, gambling, movies, adultery, marijuana, the home, lodges, marriage, divorce, and remarriage, carnal warfare, modest apparel, television, and the new morality. Some of the speakers who will appear are: John Cupp, Jerry Dyer, Jimmy Eaton, Thomas Eaves, Garland Elkins, Ben Flatt, Hugh Fulford, Neil Gallagher, Fred House, Wayne Jackson, Billy Nicks, Clifford Reel, Rubel Shelly, J. J. Turner, Robert Taylor, John Wadden, Jim Waldron, and James Watkins.

For further information write:

Thomas F. Eaves

East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions

Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road

Knoxville, Tennessee 37921

The Writings Of Paul: A Rebutation of Reincarnation

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BODY — NOT HIS BODIES. If reincarnation is true, there is no way to understand 2 Corinthians 5:10. It is Paul versus reincarnation. It is the Bible versus Jeane Dixon. It is the Bible versus such movies as "The Reincarnation of Peter Proud" and "On A Clear Day You Can See Forever." It is the

Bible versus such books as **THE SEARCH FOR A SOUL, THE SEARCH FOR BRIDEY MURPHY, YOU WERE BORN AGAIN TO BE TOGETHER, THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF REINCARNATION**, etc. Those who do not know whether truth lies with the Bible or with

the proponents of revived reincarnation are in real spiritual trouble. No person can be a believer in both reincarnation and the Bible. One must go; only one may stay. Which will it be for you reader friend? As for me and my house it will be **THE BIBLE!**

They Burn Their Children

God commanded His people—

"And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech" (Lev. 18:21).

But they did it anyway!

"Yea, they sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood" (Psa. 106:37-38).

"Moreover he (Ahaz) burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and BURNT HIS CHILDREN IN THE FIRE, after the abomination of the heathen" (II Chron. 28:3).

Kimchi on II Kings 23:10 described the worship of Molech in these terms: "And his face was (that) of a calf, and his hands stretched forth like a man who opens his hands to receive (something) of his neighbor. And they kindled it with fire, and the priests took the babe and put it into the hands of Molech, and the babe gave up the ghost. And why was it called Tophet and Hinnom? Because they used to make a noise with drums (tophim), that the father might not hear the cry of his child, and have pity upon him, and return to him. Hinnom, because the babe wailed, and the noise of his wailing went up" (CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND ECCLESIASTICAL LITERATURE, by McClintock & Strong, Vol. VI, page 439).

MORAL DEPRAVITY

The average person of today, whether religious or not, has a hard time understanding how men could become so depraved of morality that they would actually burn their own children in the name of worship. Just to imagine someone taking a sweet, little, innocent child and willfully burning it to death is too horrible to think about.

GREATER HORRORS TODAY

But before we judge the worshipers of Molech too harshly, let me tell you of a greater horror that exists today. There are those in our world today who have reached such a point in moral depravity that they have actually devised ingenious ways to butcher their own children. Unknown to the masses of society, these individuals are guilty of such atrocities as using knives to mutilate their children beyond the point of recognition. Some of these sadists actually cover their children with an acid-like, caustic solution and literally burn the flesh from their bodies. Others practice infanticide by exposure. As soon as their children exit the womb they are laid aside and left to die without any care or compassion from their parents.

It is estimated that more than a million and a half children are thus treated each year in



RAY DUTTON

the United States alone. The United Nations reports that possibly 40 to 55 million children are victimized by these methods annually throughout the world.

PERFECTLY LEGAL

What kind of punishment would our courts think appropriate and just for such killers? NONE, no punishment at all! The reason is that such killing is perfectly legal according to our United States Supreme Court, January 22, 1973.

Who are these child slayers? They are the women of our society who, with the aid of a willing doctor, have their unborn children destroyed by the method of killing known as ABORTION.

Since the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court, millions of tiny, innocent, unborn children from a few weeks to nine months have been methodically slaughtered in the name of "a woman's right to privacy."

The wholesale destruction of these children cannot even be justified as an act of religion, such as the sacrifice of those children to the fire-god Molech. The only requirement for a woman to have her unborn child killed today is that she wants the child killed and she can find a doctor who will do the killing.

LEGAL — BUT IMMORAL

Just as prostitution in Nevada may be legal, but is immoral; and just as divorce for every cause may be legal, but is immoral, abortion may be legal in the United States, but according to the word of God it is IMMORAL!

"These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him . . . hands that shed innocent blood" (Prov. 6:16, 17).

"Being filled with all unrighteousness . . . MURDER . . . who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are WORTHY OF DEATH" (Rom. 1:29-32).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these . . . MURDERS . . . of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

" . . . MURDERERS . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about the humanity of the unborn child, what abortion does to that child, and what you can do to help save these children, write to Ray Dutton, President, Alabama Citizens for Life, 1501 6th Ave., Jasper, Ala. 35501 - or call (205) 384-6446.

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Words Of Truth

WORDS of TRUTH

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



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

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A Year After His Death: A Quartet Of Noble Insights

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

By the time this article sees the light of printed day it will be a full year since the passing of the noble Nichols of Jasper, Alabama. To say that we all miss this great and godly man is to put the matter mildly. I miss writing him a letter nearly every week and sending him an article for WORDS OF TRUTH as I did for some seven years. I wrote in excess of three hundred articles under his editorship of this great paper and I could easily count on one hand the number of articles he failed to use and these may have gotten lost in the mail. He was always kind, gentle, helpful, and encouraging to me as one of his weekly writers.

Many factors met and merged to make the noble Sage of Jasper into one of the greatest Christians since the days of inspired men. The most eloquent of tongues could not do him full justice at the time of his passing nor can they do so. The most talented of our journalistic penmen could only touch the hem of the garment in the many tributes that were written relative to his illustrious goodness and greatness. One year after his passing my thoughts rest upon him and all that he meant to me and a great brotherhood that loved and appreciated him. I choose a quartet of incidents that exhibit in noble measure the greatness of the man and his courageous character. These could be multiplied a thousand times over and still the half would not be told.

"THE LORD WILL BE WITH ME"

A number of years ago brother Nichols came to preach in a short gospel meeting at Ripley, Mississippi. In a later meeting at Ripley sister Nichols came with him. My family and I were living at Ripley at the time of this second meeting and the Nicholises stayed in our home for the week, and what treasured blessings they brought us. But in this first meeting brother Nichols came alone. When the meeting closed he let it be known that he was driving back to Jasper that night. The distance was close to 150 miles or about three hours of driving time. Brother Nichols was in his mid-seventies at the time. One of



GUS NICHOLS

the ladies said something like this: "Brother Nichols, I hate for you to have to drive all the way to Jasper by yourself." With deep confidence ringing in his melodious voice he assured the elderly and concerned sister that she need not be in a state of anxiety about him. He said confidently, "I will not be by myself. The Lord will be with me." And no man of our time believed it any more strongly than did the noble Nichols. He had drunk deeply of the passage, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5-6).

THE ARTICLE NEEDED MORE SCRIPTURE

Brother Nichols was a book, chapter, and verse preacher. That is the kind of writer than he was also. He was that type of editor as all his writers knew and respected. Brother Franklin Camp tells the story of a brother who once sent an article to Brother Nichols. Brother Nichols did not think it had sufficient Scripture in it. Hence he went through it as the editor and added a number of pertinent

Scriptures. The brother should have made it more of a book, chapter, and verse article in the beginning and the Scripture loving Nichols would not have had to do it for him. Those who think the day of the proof text is gone and that book, chapter, and verse preaching will not get the job done should have gone to school to brother Gus Nichols. They were trained under the wrong kind of men. Brother Nichols trained his boys in his preacher training classes there at Sixth Avenue to be book, chapter, and verse preachers. That is what he wanted his writers in WORDS OF TRUTH to be also. Brother Nichols had nothing but disdain for the kind of preaching or writing that would not allow God a word in at all. God's word was never crowded out of his preaching and writing but his sermons and articles were filled with the word of the Lord.

A LESSON FROM A LOG TRUCK

Brother Nichols was a man with keen, sharp powers of observation. He witnessed lessons of profit where many people would see nothing. I remember well hearing him tell of traveling among the hills and coming up on a truck hauling a great big log. Now the only experience that some people would see in this is frustration due to the difficulty of passing such among the hills and curves. As brother Nichols thought about that log he said to himself, "Gus Nichols, you need a backbone just like that log on that truck." Brother Nichols was much too modest to have said this, but all of us who knew and loved him so well would have said, "Brother Nichols, you already have achieved the courageous likeness of your wish." It would have been easier to have bent that big log than to have bent the Nichols' stance toward the God of heaven, his only begotten Son, and the Bible. Like John the Baptist he was not a reed that could be shaken in the winds (Matt. 11:7). He was like the mighty mountains as I portrayed in a tribute to him that appeared in WORDS OF TRUTH and the GOSPEL ADVOCATE soon after his death.

ALWAYS THE DILIGENT STUDENT

For many years brother Guy N. Woods has

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Brother Nichols



BOBBY DUNCAN

It is altogether proper and fitting that this column say something about the memory of our late beloved brother Gus Nichols on this, the first anniversary of his death. Brother Robert Taylor has done an excellent job in his fine tribute (front page), and we appreciate his good remarks. In the October 22 issue of

WORDS OF TRUTH brother William Woodson also had a good article honoring brother Nichols. These men were closely associated with brother Nichols, and what they have written came from hearts enriched by the closeness of that association.

We feel also that our lives were enriched by living within thirty miles of this great man for nearly eighteen years. We had the opportunity of consulting him often in regard to dealing with error. On more than one occasion we drove the thirty miles to ask his advice in regard to matters of judgment. He was always willing to help, and despite his busy schedule, never became hurried in helping one with a problem.

In May of this year we moved to work with great Sixth Avenue church, where brother Nichols spent more than half of his long life. As those who preach know, sometimes it is more difficult to follow a good preacher than it is to follow one who is not so good. This is not so in the case of brother Nichols. Perhaps there are several reasons. Perhaps one of them is the fact that those who knew brother Nichols knew that he was all but inhuman, and that whoever came when he was gone would not nearly measure up to his great stature.

But there is no question that one of the

reasons moving to Sixth Avenue after brother Nichols had spent forty-three years here was not difficult, is the fact that brother Nichols' life was spent in exalting Christ. If brother Nichols ever made any effort to exalt Gus Nichols, nobody ever knew it. For all of the years he lived in Jasper he held up the word of God, and called upon people to believe and obey and live by the Bible. This is, no doubt, one of the things that made brother Nichols great.

We have met many people since moving to Jasper, and quite often we are asked, "Are you the one who took brother Nichols' place?" Our reply is always the same: "No one takes the place of Gus Nichols."

We do consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be permitted to labor where he labored for so long. Only eternity will reveal just how great brother Nichols really was. His influence for good will be felt by many generations yet unborn.

A Comment About A. Campbell

About two years ago Zondervan Publishing House of Grand Rapids, Mich. published THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (General Editor, J.D. Douglas). Though this work is valuable from many viewpoints and is therefore highly recommended to serious studies of church history, it does contain some gross defects. Within the volume, Robert G. Clouse, Professor of History, Indiana State University, made the ignorant but oft repeated allegation that Alexander Campbell was "one of the founders of the Disciples of Christ and the Churches of Christ," and that members of these groups were nicknamed "Campbellites" in 1832. One would expect that a Ph.D. Professor could better research his subject from primary sources, rather than simply polly-parroting a trite cliché.



WAYNE JACKSON

So far as is known, the first man to use the opprobrious epithet "Campbellite" was Robert A. Owen, the English Free-thinker who came to America to institute a system of socialism and with whom Alexander Campbell debated in defense of the divine origin of the Christian religion in 1829. (See A.B. Barrett, THE SHATTERED CHAIN, p. 32.) It is extremely interesting to note, therefore, that those who so delight in using the appellation are indebted to an infidel for coining the term. It is truly sad that the man who labored throughout his life with the view to causing men to abandon human names and creeds for a return to primitive Christianity, should be so cruelly charged with being the founder of the "Campbellite Church." Campbell utterly rejected the malicious accusation. In 1826 he penned the following.

"Some religious editors in Kentucky call those who are desirous of seeing the ancient order of things restored, 'the Restorationers', 'the campbellites,' and the most reproachful epithets are showered upon them because they have some conscientious regard to the Divine Author and the divine authority of the New Testament. This may go well with some, but all who fear God and keep his commandments will pity and deplore the weakness and folly of those who either think

to convince or to persuade by such means" (THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST, Vol. IV, pp. 88,89). In 1828 Campbell again addressed himself to the question, "What is a Campbellite?" He caustically wrote: "It is a nickname of reproach invented and adopted by those whose views, feelings, and desires are all sectarian - who cannot conceive of christianity in any other light than an ISM. These ISMS are now the REAL reproachers of those who adopt them, as they are the INTENDED reproaches of those who originate and apply them. He that gives them when they are disclaimed, violates the express law of Christ. He speaks EVIL against his brother, and is accounted as a railer or reviler, and placed along with haters of God and those who have no lot in the kingdom of heaven" (THE CHRISTIAN BAPTIST, Vol. V, p. 270).

Frequently the letter written by Henry Clay to Campbell on the occasion of the latter's trip to Europe in 1847 is quoted by those who are opposed to non - sectarian religion. The letter refers to Mr. Campbell as "the head and founder of one of the most important and respectable communities in the United States" (Robert Richardson, MEMOIRS OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, Vol. II, p. 548). Though it is certain that Clay had only intended to honor Campbell, it is very evident that he was completely ill - informed concerning the restorer's religious activities.

Robert Richardson, Campbell's biographer and son-in-law, plainly wrote: "Mr. Campbell never for a moment entertained the thought of becoming the head of a party or of allowing himself to be recognized as the FOUNDER of a religious denomination." He cites the following letter written by the teacher from Bethany.

"To The Editors Of The Commercial Bulletin:(New Orleans)

Gentlemen: Allow me to thank you for the kind and complimentary notice which you gave, in your issue of the 13th inst., of my arrival in your city.

I also feel very grateful to the ministers and members of the Methodist Church for tendering me the use of their house of worship for Lord's day evening, and regret that it was not within my power to accept it. You have done me, gentlemen, too much honor in saying that I am the 'founder' of the denomination, quite respectable in many portions of the west, technically known as 'Christians', but more commonly as 'Campbellites.'

I have always repudiated all HUMAN HEADS and HUMAN NAMES for the people of the Lord, and shall feel very grateful if you will correct the erroneous impression which your article may have made in thus representing me as the founder of a religious denomination" (MEMOIRS II, p. 441).

"Let The Cattle Be Stayed"

RAYMOND A. HAGOOD

After the Pharaoh in the land of Egypt had suffered many plagues at the hand of God, he decided that it would be advantageous for him to work out some kind of compromise with Moses and the children of Israel. Pharaoh wanted to keep the children of Israel as slaves, but he also wanted to be relieved of these plagues. He devised a diabolical plan whereby he would allow the Israelites to go into the wilderness and sacrifice to God, but he would keep their blessings, knowing that they would return to their possessions. Pharaoh said in Exodus 10:24, "Go ye, serve

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please explain what Paul meant when he said, 'Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.'" [I Cor. 1:17].

A proneness to attach undue significance to the work of men in the preaching of the gospel had led to factious conditions in the church in Corinth. The situation there obtaining prompted Paul to write to them as follows: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 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 baptize any other. 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."

In an effort to eliminate baptism from the plan of salvation, advocates of the doctrine of justification by faith only cite this passage as evidence that baptism is no part of the gospel. Their reasoning follows this pattern: Paul asserts that Christ sent him, not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. Hence, (1) since Paul was sent to preach the gospel, but (2) was not sent to baptize, (3) baptism is no part of the gospel! Suppose that their conclusion is correct. Grant that in so doing they eliminate baptism as a condition of salvation, what results follows? In avoiding one difficulty, they simply plunge headlong into another, which, from their viewpoint, is more serious than that which originally confronted them. One cannot get into the Baptist Church or, for that matter, any church — without baptism. Baptism is therefore, essential to the existence and maintenance of the church. If baptism is no part of the gospel, obviously its fruits are not. The Baptist Church, for example, cannot exist without baptism. But baptism, we are told, is no part of the gospel! The conclusion, then is irresistible that the Baptist Church is no part of the gospel. Moreover, Paul warns that to preach another gospel than that which *he preached* is to bring upon one's self the curses of heaven. But baptism — and, consequently, its fruits — constitutes no part of the gospel. Merely to preach baptism and its consequences is, therefore, to bring upon one's head the anathemas of heaven. Are those who seek to eliminate baptism prepared to accept the logical consequence of their argument? We think not.

As a matter of fact, they err greatly in their assumption that baptism is no part of the gospel. The theory springs from the assumption that Paul was without a commission to baptize — that Christ sent him not for this purpose. Why, then, did he baptize Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanas? Were these individuals baptized without divine authority? To assume

that Paul disavows any commission to baptize in this statement injects this problem into the matter: *Why did he baptize at all?* One of two things follows conclusively: either Paul overstepped his authority in baptizing anybody in Corinth, or the construction is at fault.

Paul was glad that he did not baptize many in Corinth. Recently we heard a man say (a Baptist preacher, incidentally) that if baptism is essential to salvation — a condition precedent to becoming a Christian — Paul said in effect that he was glad he did not make many Christians in Corinth! His statement boomeranged, however; for one cannot make a Baptist without baptism. Was Paul glad he did not make many Baptists in Corinth? The apostle makes clear why he was glad that he did not baptize many there: "*Lest any should say that I baptized in mine own name.*" The state of division obtaining there was such that Paul rejoiced he had not contributed to it by having a large party in the church there wearing his name. Until they were able to place the preachers in the proper perspective, Paul was glad that his converts in Corinth were comparatively few in number.

But what is the true significance of the statement, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." Does Paul exclude baptism from the gospel, as advocates of the

doctrine of justification by faith only assert. We have seen above that their logic follows this pattern: (1) Paul was sent to preach the gospel, but (2) Paul was not sent to baptize; (3) therefore, baptism is no part of the gospel. It is admitted that premises (1) and (2) are substantially correct, inasmuch as they are set forth in this fashion in the text. But what about (3), the conclusion? *Here the syllogism is at fault!* To reach this conclusion, one must admit that he is no logician, or else that he seeks purposely to deceive. The conclusion (that baptism is no part of the gospel) is reached by adroitly changing a verb ("baptize") into a noun ("baptism"). Correctly stated, the syllogism runs thus:

1. Christ sent Paul not to baptize,
2. He was sent to preach the gospel;
3. Therefore, to baptize (the mere act of baptizing) is no part of gospel preaching.

A failure to see this betrays either a lack of discrimination, or else a willful attempt to deceive. Paul, in the passage, is simply showing that the act of baptizing is not a part of gospel preaching. His associates could, and did, take the actual work of baptizing off of Paul. This writer holds meetings constantly, but seldom baptizes anyone, this work usually being done by the resident preacher where the meeting is being conducted. Yet who could deny that his time is spent in *preaching the gospel?*

What Shall I Do With Jesus?

Over 1900 years ago there was the trial of Jesus which was of such importance that all men have been affected by it. At this trial the question was asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" (Matthew 27:22). This question is of such magnitude that it involves all people, even to this very hour.



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

Let us look at what others have done with Jesus Christ. "Pilate said unto them, whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?" (Matthew 27:17). Pilate was saying in 20th Century phraseology, "I'll be neutral." Many people today attempt to have this attitude, but it is impossible. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30). We are saved or lost, in the narrow or broad way (Matthew 7:13-14), and we cannot sit on the fence and be neutral. Judas sold the Lord for 30 pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16), and many are selling the Lord today for the love of money. Peter denied him although he had said that he would die with the Lord, and that he would not deny him (Mark 14:31). Yet in Mark 14:66-72, we read where Peter denied his Lord three times. Many today in the church are like Peter — they say one thing and do another, and they are denying the Lord by living a life of hypocrisy.

"What shall I do with Jesus" is not a question of what your parents, husband, wife, or children should do, but rather what shall I do? This is one of the greatest questions that we must ever face. My soul and your soul is at stake. "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). Every living person of the age of accountability must accept or

reject. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" (Matthew 6:24). This is a personal decision because judgment will be personal (II Corinthians 5:10).

We now come face to face with another question. What shall I do without Jesus in time of trouble? Friends and relatives will do all they can, but this is not enough, for man cannot save. A person might think that one can go through life without trouble, but the Bible informs us on this matter in Job 14:1. "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." What will I do in the hour of death? (Hebrews 9:27). The world today is concerned with learning how to gain more, few are concerned how to die. The rich farmer in Luke 12 was preparing to live better by building bigger barns, but was not preparing for his soul to pass on to the next world.

What shall I do without Jesus in the day of judgment? "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). Can we do without Jesus and be saved? The answer is an emphatic "No."

Let us consider another important question. What shall Jesus do with me? In this life we have the choice to decide what we will do with Him. "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door. I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). Jesus will not force himself on anyone as he is not an intruder, but a person must open the door to have Jesus Christ. What we do with Jesus in this life will determine what He will do with us at the judgment. "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). You and I can know now what Jesus will do (Hebrews 5:8-9; Matthew 7:21).

Many years ago Pilate faced this question and today every person living must face the

A Year After His Death

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conducted the Open Forum of the Freed-Hardeman Lectures in inimitable fashion. Each year of this highly exciting and deeply profitable period brother Woods would call frequently upon brother Nichols to give his understanding and wisdom relative to a difficult passage or a thorny problem that had been submitted for the attention of the Open Forum. On occasion, but not often, the two great and godly giants would disagree about some point and yet they always did so in the finest of Christian manhood and maturity. On one occasion a difficult Scripture had been raised. Brother Nichols gave his understanding of the passage. When he finished brother Woods said, "Brother Nichols, I hate to have to do this." Then he referred to a point from the Greek that had a direct bearing on the meaning of the passage in question. Brother Nichols later told me something like this, "While brother Woods was calling my attention to this I was saying to myself all the time, 'Pour it on!' " Brother Woods made his point in the finest of Christian spirit and brother Nichols was so very grateful for the point of elaboration. He was teachable to the very end of his long and illustrious life. That was a mark of the man's greatness. He remained a student to the very last. Truth was the pearl of great price to him. Great and godly men like brethren Woods and Nichols learned from each other. What a fine example they have set through the years for all the rest of us.

CONCLUSION

These four incidents in his life serve as a sterling sample of what made brother Gus Nichols into a marvelous, magnificent man. The Sage of Jasper left many beautiful footsteps on the sands of time. By following him as he followed the lovely Lord we too can make our lives sublime as he did his. What a spiritual challenge he left us. What a lovely legacy, a holy heritage he bequeathed the generation that knew, loved, and respected him.

"Let The Cattle Be Stayed"

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the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you."

Moses was not deceived by Pharaoh's plot, but rather responded by saying that not only were the children of Israel to be freed, but they were to be allowed to take all of their belongings, including their cattle. Moses knew that the children of Israel could never be severed from the bondage of Egypt as long as they left part of themselves in the land of Egypt.

Satan has long employed this technique used by Pharaoh in his effort to steal men's souls. He has convinced many individuals who have become Christians to leave a little part of their affections in the world with him. Many who have left the darkness to enter the light have been content staying in the shadows. Many who have put off the old man and put on the new man have kept part of the old man. As a result of this they have not severed themselves from Satan and completely given themselves to God. It is a sad but true fact that many have allowed "the cattle to be stayed."

When the rich young ruler came to Christ inquiring what he must do to enter the kingdom of heaven, our Lord finally

In the past ten years a number of schools of preaching have sprung up. Hundreds of men have taken advantage of these schools, attended, graduated, and are now in the fields reaping multiplied souls for Christ. Hundreds of others who desired to attend a school could not because they were unable to find support. Others started but had to drop out due to inadequate support. Why?

ERRONEOUS IDEAS

It seems that some churches will not support a preacher student because they are stingy! If they cannot get any personal benefit from the man, they do not want to help him. If he was able to preach for them or work with their young people, they would support him while he is in school. But, since they cannot get that kind of benefit from him, they do not want to help him.

In connection with this, some brethren will not support a student, because they feel he isn't doing anything worthy of their support! Pay a man to study? Some congregations don't even want their preacher to study, except on his own time! After all, they hired him to visit, do personal work, and take care of the church building. He may not be the pastor, but HE IS THE ASSISTANT PASTOR! With this kind of idea, one can see why they would never support a student. They don't think he is doing anything worthwhile!

Others will not support a student because their idea of study is to fill in a few blanks to get ready for Bible class. Such brethren think a Preacher's School is little more than a glorified Bible class. With this idea, one can see why they do not feel anyone is worthy of support who attends a school of preaching.

Some brethren don't think preacher students need much support when they attend

responded by instructing the young man to sell all that he had and give to the poor. We are not to conclude from this commandment that selling all that we have is a prerequisite to salvation. However, Jesus so instructed this young man because he knew that, while the young man was willing to give most of himself to the Lord, he wanted his riches "to be stayed."

Fewer souls would return to Satan, once they had become obedient to God, if we emphasized more the importance of giving oneself totally to the Lord from the very beginning. In truth, we are all tempted to be deceived by Satan's lies in this regard, and to let some worthless lust and desire keep us from the true happiness found in Christian service. The major reason many Christians become unfaithful to the Lord and unhappy with Christianity is that they are torn between the old life and the new life. They have left part of themselves under the control of Satan, and therefore find it impossible to serve the Lord as they should. No one can be the kind of happy Christian that God would have us be if he lets the "cattle be stayed" in the kingdom of Satan. — 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Ms. 39180.

So They Want To Preach?



RAY HAWK

a school. I suppose they believe God will provide manna from heaven! If a man is earning \$12,000 to \$14,000 a year, he will have several debts. Some of them he can pay off so he can enter the school needing less than what he formerly earned. However, how many of us could live on \$3,000 to \$5,000 less than what we now earn each year? If these men are willing to sacrifice, surely churches can appreciate that sacrifice and help support them adequately while they are in school.

I have known students with a family of three or four, that have been on the verge of poverty because brethren thought they could live on nothing. One student had a wife and two children. He was trying to live on \$300 a month. His rent was \$160 a month. His utilities were about \$100 a month. Use your arithmetic and see what they had to buy food, clothing, gasoline, car repair, etc., etc.! Yet, there are brethren who are just insensitive enough to allow this kind of thing to happen, time and time again, and not care.

CHURCHES THAT UNDERSTAND

I am thankful for the churches who are now helping students to get the education they need to preach. These churches either supply all or partial support. They are considerate enough that when the students visit with them to make a report, the church pays all their expenses.

Some of these churches have made an agreement to send a man to school if he will be their missionary when he graduates. Some men are now preaching in Georgia, the Carolinas, and other places that have agreed to that kind of an arrangement.

A church may look upon their support of a man in a school as mission work. Without their support he would never be able to prepare himself to convert souls. Every time he converts someone, it will be due to their interest in him while he was studying for that day when he would be on the field.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you have a young man in your home congregation who wants to preach, why not decide to support him fully in a preacher's school for two years? If you cannot afford his full support, why not agree to help him raise the support he needs? Sponsor him while he is in school and guarantee him his money each month. It will mean a great deal to him.

The words of Paul are still relevant today. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:15). A man cannot go unless he can preach. He cannot preach unless he has been trained. If a church can send a man to preach, it can support him while he trains himself to preach. Will you help support a man in one of the preaching schools? — 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Fla. 35206.

What Shall I Do With Jesus

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question, "What shall I do with Jesus?" Friend, do not take this question lightly, for the answer you give now may decide where you will be in eternity a million, a billion or a trillion years from now. Let Jesus be the Lord and Master of your life by obeying the gospel and being faithful unto death. See Hebrews 11:6; Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32-33; Mark 16:16 and Revelation 2:10. — P. O. Box 118, Parrish, Al 35580.

WORDS of TRUTH

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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17



"In the words of truth"
Acts 26:25

"It came by Jesus Christ"
Jn. 1:17

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"Flat Earth Theology"

In the October 1976 issue of the DOES GOD EXIST? bulletin, there appeared an article entitled, "Flat Earth Bible Study Techniques," authored by the editor, John Clayton, of South Bend, Indiana. The thrust of the article is to emphasize that during the Dark Ages it was popular for "Christian scholars"



WAYNE JACKSON

to assert that the Bible teaches the earth is flat. Moreover, it is suggested, there are those of the brotherhood today who, in a similar vein, espouse the antiquated notion that the earth and all its inhabitants were created in a span of six literal days. There, he dubs "flat earth theologians."

In order to appreciate why such a charge is made by brother Clayton, one needs to understand something about his theological bias. John Clayton holds a B.S. degree and a M.S. degree from Indiana University, as well as a M.S. degree from Notre Dame University. He boasts of having some one hundred and sixty graduate hours in geology; in fact, he does not hesitate to say: "I am a specialist in this field." What he does neglect to emphasize is the fact that virtually all of his education was at the feet of evolutionists who ridicule the Bible as a patchwork of folklore. Those who have carefully studied brother Clayton's writings are well aware of the fact that one of his problems is his insatiable desire for forcing the Bible into harmony with the current theories of geology. He employs the concepts of evolutionary geology as a strainer through which he presses the Word of God; and some of the distorted views resulting are outright amalgamations with unbelief!

Consistent with the notions of evolutionary geology, brother Clayton believes that the earth is some 4.5 billion years old and that man is "a very recent new-comer to this planet." He asserts that if one compared earth's entire history to a one year time scale, man "has only been here for one minute and two seconds compared to a year or roughly 1/450,000th of the history of the Earth"

(DOES GOD EXIST? COURSE, 8). He thus flatly rejects the clear biblical statement that the earth and its creatures were created the same week. He therefore writes:

"The most commonly used Biblical text to prove the Earth is very young in age is Exodus 20:11.

'For in six days the Lord made heaven and Earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested . . .'

"If this passage were all that existed in the Bible about the creation, certainly we could conclude that the entire creation took place within six days, including everything that has ever existed on the Earth being formed during that time. This is a very shallow conclusion, however, and in the view of the writer is inconsistent with the Genesis record as well as other parts of the Bible."

Clayton further alleges that the purpose of this passage was not to reveal the age of the earth, but to establish the Sabbath as a day of worship. He declares: ". . . the writer of Exodus AVOIDS the creation question and concentrates his attention on his own purpose" (emp. WJ). Our brother is a woefully careless student. The purpose of Moses' statement was not merely to establish the Sabbath law; it was also an explanation as to the WHY of the Sabbath. Why observe one day in seven? Because in six days God created the earth and its creatures and on the seventh day He rested! To say that Moses here "avoids" the creation question is to make a completely foolish statement! The divine writer did not avoid a reference to the CREATOR. "Jehovah" is specified. He did not avoid referring to the Lord's ACTION. God "made" these things. Note: J. Clayton repeatedly attempts to distinguish between "created" (BARA) and "made" (ASAH) in an effort to find a basis for a "creation" of some sort prior to the creative week of Genesis 1. It is a baseless argument; cf. Gen. 5:1; 6:7, etc. Finally, Moses did not avoid the TIME ELEMENT, for he declares the creation was accomplished "in six days". Why the attempt to explain away the obvious sense of the passage? Moses literally speaks of Jehovah who actually made a literal creation in literally six days. And if brother Clayton were not so captivated by the spirit of evolutionary geology he would have no difficulty in seeing the clear meaning of Exodus 20:11. The truth

is, the reason Moses introduced the creation account at that point was the obvious connection between the "days" of the creation week and the Sabbath "day," which was assuredly a literal day.

It is significant also that the inspired Moses affirms that ALL created life — celestial, terrestrial, and aquatic — had its origin in that initial week. Brother Clayton begs to differ with Moses. On numerous occasions he has asserted that forms of life now exist which are not included in the biblical record. For instance he wrote: "I think a careful examination of Genesis 1, however, reveals that that account does not include every living thing on the Earth, unless one is willing to stretch the Hebrew beyond its normal usage. I do not believe you can find any Hebrew word in Genesis that includes amoeba, bacteria, virus, bats, worms, etc." (LETTER, Sept. 9, 1975). The possible implications of this view are: (a) There was a creation of certain life forms prior to the week of Genesis 1; (b) New forms of life have evolved since the week of Genesis 1; or, (c) Genesis 1 is an incomplete record. Brother Clayton has hinted before that there may have been a creation prior to Genesis 1; for instance he opined that the "day-age theory" and the "gap theory" are "more consistent with the (Genesis) record" than other views (LETTER, Sept. 5, 1975). He seems to be unaware of the generic classifications of life in Genesis 1, but more seriously, he totally disregards Moses' complimentary account in Exodus 20:11, which states that ALL things were created in that original week!

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

Regarding Adam, the first man (I Cor. 15:45), and Eve, Jesus said: "But from the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them" (Mark 10:6). Now what is actually the truth on this matter? Let us consider several views. (a) The creation existed millions of years before man, and Christ, accommodating Himself to the ignorances of that age, deliberately misrepresented the situation. (b) The Lord, living in pre-scientific times, did not know the real geological facts of the matter. (c) Christ did not really say this; Mark, an uninformed writer of the first century, merely attributes it

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WORDS of TRUTH

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Let Us Be Careful

Those who are familiar with WORDS OF TRUTH and with us personally know that both it and we have done our best to stand firmly for truth and right, and against error and sin down through the years. We spoke out against anti-ism clearly and regularly a few years ago, when it was such a threat to the church; and we still do as the need arises. In more recent years we have spoken out against departures from the faith in the other direction. It has been our observation that those who refused to take a stand against right-wing anti-ism are also refusing to take a stand against left-wing liberalism. As for us, we cannot be a part of the great "silent majority". We plan to continue teaching truth and opposing error, whether on the right or the left. We are thankful that many others are doing the same, and many of them much more effectively than are we.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Having so said, we believe we will not be misunderstood when we urge that brethren exercise good judgment in the discussion about certain differences that have arisen in connection with our bus programs. Some of the speeches we have heard and articles we have read have manifested a good spirit and evidence of a great deal of forethought. Others, however, showed some signs of scorn for those who differed with them, and demonstrated what appeared to be a disposition to exclude from fellowship those whose judgment did not coincide with their own. May it be understood that we refer here to those defending certain practices, as well as

those opposing certain practices. As a matter of fact, some of the most scathing language we have heard in connection with this matter was in CRITICISM of those who had been CRITICAL of certain others.

It seems obvious, at least to this scribe, that, while some of our brethren are using extremely poor judgment in some areas, that most of the differences centering around the bus program are in areas of judgment. We realize also that one may use such poor judgment as to sin, even in a matter of judgment. For example, Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). It is completely within the realm of human judgment as to how one is to GO. But it would have been a serious error in judgment for this writer to have walked to recent preaching appointments in Texas, Indiana, and Georgia. Had he done so, brethren would have been in order in pointing out the folly of such action. On the other hand, we could argue that many preachers live next door to their meetinghouses, and walk to their preaching appointments regularly. If it is in order to walk a short distance to preach, how can one be consistent and argue that it would be wrong to walk longer distances? Would it be Scriptural to walk a block, but not a mile? To walk a mile, but not two? To walk two, but not ten? We walk across the street every morning to the study to preach by means of radio.

If one were to try to establish that it is unscriptural for one to walk to the place where he is to preach, in order to be consistent, he would eventually be driven to the position that one could not walk across the street in order to preach by means of radio. But if he were to

less studying. Most preachers and classroom teachers know this, and are consequently hesitant to ask a question in class, lest the members not come back. It seems that some think that God is trying to trick us, or has given a book that is not meant to be understood. Hence, to them it remains a closed book and a deep, dark mystery. This is a disease that is reflected in absence, indifference and lukewarmness. It is hoped that some reading this article may be jolted out of their complacency, for the ignorance that destroyed Israel will destroy you unless you repent.

A symptom is a change of bodily function indicating a background disease. Disease is primarily a lack of ease but has come to mean sickness, an ailment, illness or a malady whether physical or mental. It may also apply to other irregularities. Inflation is a symptom; irresponsible spending is the disease. A "missing cylinder" in your car is a symptom; the disease may be water in the gas or a broken wire. A headache may be a symptom; the disease one of a thousand things.



VIRGIL BRADFORD

Now, we see by the church bulletins a great deal of time and space spent on certain matters, though important alright, which are indeed SYMPTOMS but are being handled as if they were the diseases. Three items are most prevalent, namely, absence from worship, the contributions and a lack of involvement in the general activities of the congregation. Every Bible student knows Scriptures that can be readily quoted to show that these are real problems, but are we dealing with SYMPTOMS or DISEASES? Without doubt there are serious underlying diseases which manifest themselves in the three symptoms mentioned. What are some of them?

A leading disease in the church today may be variously described. It may be called a lack of knowledge. It is ignorance of the word of God. This was one great cause of Israel's defection and fall (Isa. 5:13; Hos. 4:6). Our people are not even reading the Bible, much

admit that such is in the realm of human judgment, and then proceed to show that walking distances of many miles to preach is poor judgment under most modern circumstances, he would have less difficulty.

Even so, we believe that separate worship services and the giving away of ten-speed bicycles can be more consistently and successfully opposed by showing that they represent the abuse of a principle that is legitimate within the bounds of good judgment. Who opposes the giving of awards at Vacation Bible School? But this does not justify the abuse of the principle. Who opposes the hiring of someone to keep the nursery during the services? But this does not justify the abuse of the principle. It is the abuse of the principle, and not the principle itself, which we should oppose.

But the primary purpose of this article is to urge that brethren, in discussing these matters, do so with all prudence. Let us take care that we do not harshly judge one another. Let us not impugn one another's motives, or integrity, or respect for the authority of the Bible. Let us be willing to admit that our own judgment is not always perfect, and that we may have erred in matters pertaining thereto. Let us unite in standing firmly for truth and against error. Let us "love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22). Let us do everything that we can do, and that is right, to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). And, finally, let us avoid an unnecessary division in the body of Christ, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

Symptoms Or Diseases?

Another disease close akin to ignorance is LAZINESS. Some brethren are able to hold good jobs, analyze the latest political situations, do some extra school work for self-improvement, and yet be mentally and intellectually lazy. Such a one will not arise from his chair to reach for a Dictionary or Commentary to add a bit of knowledge on something that he or she "has always wondered about." Hear some words of wisdom: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise: which provideth her bread - and gathereth her food in the harvest." But the "Bible Sluggard" answers, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep" (Prov. 6:6ff). So we may expect such persons to dodge the Bible class, slip in late and get out as soon as the Amen is said.

Someone said, A motor often begins to sputter before it stops. So also some are fault-finders about many things, the disease being bundled up in one word, namely, WORLDLINESS. This is a most serious disease. The love of pleasure, even though not of itself sinful, is surely accounting for many an empty seat and diminished contribution. It may be fishing, vacationing or any one of a

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Explain I Cor. 1:18-27. What did Paul mean by the 'foolishness of preaching?'"

Corinth, in the first century, was one of the most dissolute and corrupt cities in the ancient world. The marvelous power of the gospel, to convert men, and to turn them from their lawless and vile manner of life, is especially evidenced in the conversion of the Corinthians. That Paul, and his companions, were not deterred by the formidable obstacles which faced them there, indicates their confidence in the power of truth to change the conduct of men, and to meet all of their spiritual needs, regardless of their former manner or mode of life. If the gospel could achieve this in Corinth, we may be sure that it is adequate to turn the hearts of men to the cross everywhere.

Moral evil was not the only barrier to the gospel in Corinth. The educated, among the Greeks, were dedicated to a philosophical approach to life, and they prided themselves in their ability to solve the problems of life by human reasoning and worldly philosophy. Their views were wholly at variance with the gospel, and it was necessary for Paul, in his epistle, to show the superiority of the gospel to all philosophy. It is, however, noteworthy that the apostle did not condemn wisdom, as such; he demonstrated that the truth which saves men is the only philosophy needed; and he condemned the display, the vain exhibition of learning, so characteristic of the Corinthians. Philosophy is powerless to save one individual; the gospel, believed and obeyed, can save the world (Rom. 1:13-17; Mark. 16:15,16).

"For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. . . Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:18,20,21). The "word of the cross," is the gospel concerning the cross - the teaching which attributes salvation to the atonement which our Lord made on the cross. This, the world regards as foolish; and, because they will not accept it, they are perishing. Others, because they regard it as God's way of justifying men, have accepted it, and are saved. The gospel is "the power of God," because it is God's instrument through which is appropriated salvation (I Cor. 15:1-3). It is the only means through which a knowledge of salvation may be obtained. There is no salvation through worldly philosophy or the other systems of men; the "wise," the "scribe," and the "disputer," were men endowed with much worldly knowledge, but none of these by their knowledge of philosophy and skill in human reasoning, had anticipated the plan by which God offered salvation to the world. If their wisdom is so great, the apostle implied, how did they not foresee his plan before it appeared? Why did they now regard it as foolish? The reason is obvious: God's plan, through the gospel, revealed the *foolishness* of their systems and exhibited the utter emptiness of all schemes men may devise for

salvation. Paul referred to "the foolishness of preaching," not to say that the preaching is foolish, but to point out that what men regard as foolishness is really God's way of saving the world!

The disposition to depend on reason in order to faith is an attractive one, but exceedingly dangerous inasmuch as, in the nature of the case, the process is susceptible of the errors of fallible men. Logic is valuable in testing the conclusions reached through faith, but it ought never to be substituted for, or made equal to, inspired testimony. Alexander Campbell expressed suspicion of anything "that must be argued out by a long

process of ratiocination," and he was right! The "Sage of Bethany" insisted that "a system which requires much reason to comprehend, would be most unsuitable to the great mass of mankind," and he argued that *opinions* result from *reasoning*, while *belief* springs from *facts* (based on inspired testimony), and he observed that "a thousand persons can believe a fact, for every one that can comprehend a logical process of reasoning." (Campbell - Owen Debate, page 318). Faith is not a leap into the dark. It is a leap from the darkness of human philosophy into the glorious light of God's truth!

Some Great Things Proved By The Birth Of Christ

There are some things involved with the birth of Christ that had to come to pass in order to preserve the integrity of God and the scriptures. His birth was of much greater significance than any in the history of the world. No other birth has had so much depending on it as that of the birth of our Lord. Without this great event the essentials of the more abundant life, here and eternally, fall. Let us notice some necessary things that now stand because of his birth which could not otherwise.



ARVEL CURTIS

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST PROVES THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD (Matt. 1:21). The birth of Jesus proves the faithfulness of God in His promise to bruise Satan's head. After Satan's subtlety, in pulling God's first man creation away from Him, judgment was placed upon him. "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" (Gen. 3:15). Satan stole away man's heart and obedience from God in the Garden of Eden, and enjoyed some victory in the death of Christ. But the victorious resurrection of Christ gave him a sting that he could never overcome. For generation after generation those familiar with God's promise waited. The faithfulness of God proved their waiting not to be in vain. Jesus was born (Matthew 1) was crucified (Matthew 27) and bruised Satan in his glorious resurrection (Matthew 28).

The birth of Jesus Christ proved the faithfulness of God in His promise made to Abraham, near 2,000 years beforehand, that in his seed all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3). The birth of Christ was the keeping of that promise. Forty-two generations passed from Abraham to Jesus without the lineage being broken. What family tree could reach this far except Abraham's? If this lineage had been broken we would stand without hope today. Truly, the birth of Christ proved the faithfulness of God in His Abrahamic promise.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST PROVED THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF GOD. By the supernatural power of God the creation stands or falls. By the supernatural power of God the birth of Jesus Christ and Christianity stands or falls. By the omnipotence of God the world was brought into existence ready for use by mankind. God spoke, and it happened

(Gen. 1:1-28). As the creation in the first chapter of Genesis involved the supernatural power of God, so did the birth of Christ in the book of Matthew. Jesus was born without an earthly father. Since both of these chapters (Genesis 1 and Matthew 1) involve the supernatural power of God, one cannot be denied without denying the other. The denial of either ends ultimately in the denial of the entire Bible and the God who gave it. In the occurrence of a natural birth there is involved an earthly mother and father. Since Christ was born without an earthly father, his birth was not natural and proved the supernatural power of God. As sure as we can look about us and see God's creation, as Genesis 1 records, that is just how sure we can be about the virgin birth of Christ in Matthew 1. His birth was a miracle, and should strengthen our faith in all miraculous accounts recorded in the inspired word of God.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST PROVED THAT GOD FULFILLS HIS PROPHECY. If the prophecies of God's prophets were not fulfilled as they pertain to Jesus Christ, the world is lost without hope. Many have failed in their prophecy (Jehovah's Witnesses on the 2nd coming of Christ). How tragic if God's prophecies had failed as the prophecies of men fail. Suppose the prophecies of God had failed concerning the birth of Christ (Isa. 7:14), concerning his dying for our sins (Isa. 53), concerning his resurrection (Gen. 3:15)? How sad if God's prophecies that concern the church had failed (Isa. 2; Dan. 2)! But none of these failed. The birth of Christ settles forever the question of God's prophecy's being fulfilled. God is able to fulfill. If it is a prophecy of God it is fulfilled. If a prophecy is not fulfilled it is not of God (Jer. 28:9; Deut. 18:22).

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST PROVED GOD'S LOVE FOR ALL MEN. Jesus was with God before his earthly journey (Jn. 1:1; Gen. 1:26). God gave him up for a while to live in the flesh in order to be our Saviour (Jn. 1:14). God's plan for His Son included not just coming in the flesh but dying a cruel death in the flesh (Phil. 2:6-9). Christ came to die for our sins. What more could God do to express His love toward us than give His Son? Such love we can hardly comprehend (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:6-9). The birth, life and death of Christ proved beyond any doubt the matchless love of God.

It is God's will that all come to the Christ of Matthew 1 for salvation. To gain access to the blessings offered in him, each must believe that he is God's Son, repent of sins, confess his faith in him as the Son of God, be baptized for remission of sins (Cf. Jn. 3:18; Lk. 13:3; Rom. 10:10; Acts 2:38; Rev. 2:10). The birth

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Symptoms Or Diseases?

Continued from Page 2

dozen things - and always the church, with some, is placed far down the preferential list. (See 2 Tim. 3 concerning those who are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.")

Then, there is the "love of money" that is taking its toll (1 Tim. 6:9-10). Of course, when the average brother goes in debt \$10,000 for the latest model car with all the latest gadgets and conveniences you may expect him to cut down first on the work of the Lord that requires money. Wealth has always been dangerous and most of us might not know what to do with an over abundance. It is written in Israel, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" (Deut. 32:15). Proverbs 30:8-9 gives us a fine ideal situation regarding such: "Give me neither poverty nor riches - lest I be full and deny thee - or lest I be poor and steal."

Again, under the disease called worldliness is that of a different sort. Imbibing alcohol, committing adultery, using vulgar language and so on manifest themselves in the various symptoms. When husbands and wives are at daggers point constantly in the home you hardly expect them to be faithful unto worship and every good work carried on by sincere and faithful brethren. All such are babes in faith and are in need of spiritual milk that they may grow thereby unto salvation.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Y-O-U are. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). "Call for the old paths - and walk therein - but they say, we will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16). "So then each one of us shall give account of himself unto God" (Rom. 14:10-12).

AND I AM. "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16f). As preachers we must not shrink from declaring the "whole counsel of God" which includes warnings and reproofs as well as instruction (Ac. 20:27; 2 Tim. 4:1ff). Brethren, let us not be job holders to the point of withholding truth from any man. The diseases of the soul are the most serious kind because they deal with eternity and not with time only.

AND ELDERS ARE RESPONSIBLE. How many fall into the category described in Ezekiel 34? There the Lord said, I am against the shepherds that feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the sheep? But in all fairness to elders, the sheep also have responsibilities toward the shepherds. They must submit themselves unto those who have the awesome task of shepherding souls (Heb. 13:17).

Perhaps the one word that sums up all our "diseases" is that "besetting sin" of UNBELIEF. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God" (Heb. 3:12). Unbelief may be synonymous with disobedience (Heb. 3:19-4:6). But either way the result is fatal and eternal. The diseases keep people from becoming Christians. And some who have obeyed the gospel are allowing the same diseases to rob them of their eternal home. — Route 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

Some Great Things Proved By The Birth

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of Christ proves God's love for all men and His desire that they be saved. For men to become partakers of His love they must believe and obey His word. — P.O. Box 6477, Moore, Oklahoma 73160.

"Flat Earth Theology"

Continued from Page 1

to Him. Or, (d) Christ, the divine Son of God, who was there at the creation (John 1:1), told the truth and thus man, along with the rest of God's handiwork, existed from the beginning of the creation. Brother Clayton thinks this last view is "flat earth theology." It would be interesting to know how he feels about the others.

PAUL'S TESTIMONY

In Romans 1:20 Paul affirms the following: "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse . . ." The apostle declares: FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD the invisible things of God have been: (a) clearly seen; (b) perceived (from NOEO, used of rational intelligence); (c) that they may be without excuse. Now just WHO observed and perceived those things that were made from the creation of the world? If no man was there for millions of years, who was observing the created phenomena? An amoeba? Some dinosaur? Obviously Paul is contending that MAN has existed since the creation of the world; he has enjoyed the capacity to observe and comprehend the truth that a Creator stands behind the creation; accordingly, those who refuse to glorify him as Creator are without excuse. It might be further added that it is inexcusable that one who professes to believe the Bible as God's inspired revelation should ignore such verses in deference to the theories of evolutionary geology.

CONCLUSION

A theory of creation (or any other theory) which reflects upon the integrity of Jesus Christ, or His inspired writers, is not an

innocent opinion. It is a dangerous and destructive human philosophy. A number of prominent and unquestionably sound brethren have expressed amazement that John Clayton is so widely used in our brotherhood in view of the gross errors he teaches. Brother Clayton's popularity is probably due to the following: (a) He bills himself as a converted atheist, and many brethren are simply mesmerized by the glamor of that appellation. They think it will draw crowds and it does. (b) To be fair, some of the material that our brother presents is good and his presentation is declared by many to be excellent. Many brethren, though, are apparently oblivious to the fact that it only takes a little poison in a good meal to do you in! (c) Brother Clayton has had many personal tragedies and problems of great magnitude and has often shown real courage and spiritual stamina. Certainly such elicits our sympathy and admiration; this does not, however, permit us to ignore his dangerous false teaching. (d) It is claimed that he is winning numbers of atheists to the truth. What truth? Doubtless he has won some from pure atheism, but it is far from admirable when men are only won to a false, semi-evolutionary theology. (e) And finally, the sad truth is, a sizable segment of our brotherhood is so painfully ignorant of the biblical facts regarding creation and the subtle and dangerous implications of compromising theories, it is not able to detect the errors that are being taught. We simply must LISTEN to what is being said. If teaching does not conform to the Scriptures, the teacher propagating it must be forbidden an audience until such time as he comes to a better understanding of the Truth. — 3906 East Main St., Stockton, Calif. 95205.

Deaf Services Not New



JAMES PILGRIM

Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Though not nearly fast enough, we are beginning to launch efforts to reach ALL the lost. Many churches are now reaching out for the deaf. We rejoice at this good work. The time and effort put forth by brethren to do this work is commendable.

Recently this writer saw a sign with this message: "Deaf Services." The message was well received with joy. However, one wonders if there have not been deaf services all along. Many who have perfectly good ears have been deaf to gospel preaching through the years. The problem existed in the days of Isaiah (Isa. 6:9, 10), Christ (Matt. 13:14-17), and Paul (Acts 28:25-28). Our day is no different in this respect. A few examples will suffice to prove the point.

The need to believe (Heb. 11:6), repent (Acts 17:30,31), confess Christ (Rom. 10:9, 10), and be baptized (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4) has been preached by faithful brethren repeatedly. Many, however, have closed their ears to the truth. Brethren have been encouraged to be faithful (Mark 13:13; I Cor.

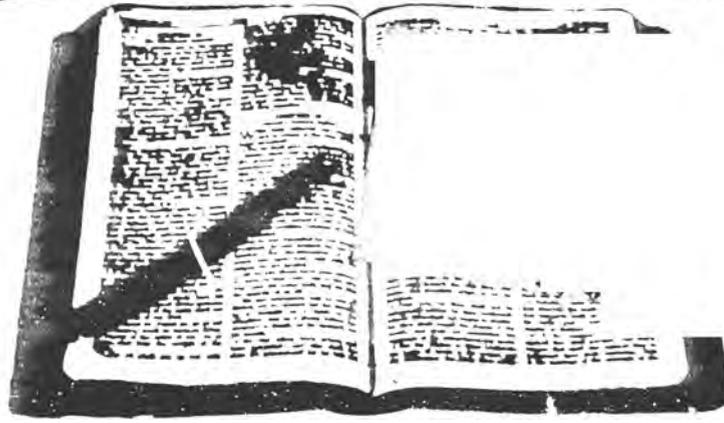
15:58; Rev. 2:10). Many brethren have been deaf to this message. World evangelism (Mark 16:15) has been encouraged all along, but it seems that some brethren did not hear the Lord's message. The righteous have proclaimed purity (1 Tim. 5:22) to many over the years. Some have not heard a word. Modesty (1 Tim. 2:9,10), language becoming Christians (Col. 4:6), total abstinence (1 Cor. 6:9-11), and such like, are subjects receiving no little attention. However, not all brethren have heard what was said.

Without belaboring the point, let it again be said that there have always been deaf services. The deaf for the most part, have been so at their own choosing.

This writer has been impressed at the attention of the physically deaf in services. They must concentrate fully, remaining wide awake to get the full message. They cannot look around, play, and such like. It seems that they go away with the message delivered. With what do those with good ears go away? How do you listen? Do you accept God's message, making application to your life? In short, do you have open or closed ears to God's truth?

Let us continue to have services for the deaf, but, believed, let us not be deaf to the message, whether it be declared to us by word, sign, or whatever. — P.O. Box 414, Centre, Alabama 35960.

WORDS of TRUTH



"Ye shall know the truth
and truth shall make you free"
John 8:32
"The word is truth" John 17:17

"Speak with the words of truth"
Acts 26:25
"and truth came by Jesus Christ"
John 1:17

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NUMBER 51

Workers Together With God

In rebuilding the Jerusalem wall that had been destroyed in Nebuchadnezzar's siege the Jews found it necessary to stand guard against those who would disrupt their efforts on the one hand, while they engaged with fervor in the task before them on the other. It was a mark of determination and wisdom to show diligence in defending their work as they went on with the construction. Their efforts are for naught if the structure is to be damaged or torn down before completion. Conversely, no ground would have been gained if all their energies had been expended in the matter of defense.



R. W. GRAY

The great work of restoring New Testament Christianity has been properly compared to the work done by these zealous and dedicated Jews. And like them, present restorers face the prospect of having the foundation of their work destroyed while the work is yet underway. It has been our avowed purpose to continue the dual task of defending the faith against all would-be assailants while we continue to build upon those ancient principles found within the divine blueprint.

The spread of truth is hampered when all our efforts are spent in rebuking and exposing the apostates within our ranks. For while this is a necessary work it is not the first order of business. Satan has gained an advantage when he diverts all our attention to the matter of "holding ground," rather than "taking new territory for Christ."

We are gravely concerned to note, however, that many are oblivious to either danger. Some either do not know, or will not admit, that there are straws in the wind (not merely straw men as some contend) that threaten the very foundation principles that made a restoration possible. Some are determined to change the "image" of the church. If they have their way we will no longer be known as a distinct body of believers striving to be Christians only. To these we must not yield, nor can we ignore their destructive purposes. But equally appalling is the absence of holy

zeal for bringing the lost to the Saviour. We are not growing as we did and far too few are alarmed. A keeping house for the Lord syndrome has set in, and by some means we must be shaken from our lethargy. We are at a point in time when we must take the initiative; attacking Satan's strongholds and advancing truth under the mighty banner of the cross of Jesus Christ.

In restoring the wall the Jews found it necessary from time to time to arm every builder with weapons of defense. At other times some were building the wall while skilled swordsmen guarded and protected both the workers and the wall (Nehemiah 4:13-18). We can learn a valuable lesson from the following: ". . . Half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half held both the spears, the shields, and the bows . . ." (Nehemiah 4:16).

The lesson to us is that the church has need of those who are skillful in combating error. We need to encourage them in the great work they do. The church has need as well of those who are talented workers; those capable of stirring us up to greater things. The former should be encouraged to concentrate upon the job of defending the faith, while the latter give attention to the urgency of evangelism. How foolish it would have been had those workers on the wall criticized those who were set for defense. Both were needed for the success of the work.

This is no time to be quarreling among

ourselves. A great challenge is before us. Let those skilled in polemics use their talents in preserving the church. Let those who are apt in the art of persuasion use their skills in this good cause. Let us cease unnecessary criticisms of those whose talents and efforts lie in a different area than our own. God has need of all.

"And I said unto the nobles, and unto the rulers, and to the rest of the people, 'the work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall . . . In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God will fight for us.' So we labored in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared" (Nehemiah 4:19-21).

Perhaps the most important admonition Nehemiah gave the restorers is found in chapter four, verse twenty two: "Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, . . ." Our first concern must be that we have returned to Jerusalem; that we are within the wall of Spiritual Israel, and that we intend to build upon and protect those sacred walls as citizens of the city of the Living God. Surely, our assignment in rebuilding Spiritual Zion is greater and far more challenging than the duty assumed by the Jews in rebuilding the walls of ancient Jerusalem. It can and will be carried on when we, the people, have a mind to work (Nehemiah 4:6). — P. O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30344.

What God Is Able To Do

G.F. RAINES

One of the exceedingly great and precious truths of the Book of God is the fact that God's power is infinite (without limits). Paul assures us that he "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20). Let us consider some of the wonderful things that God can do.

1. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you" (2 Cor. 9:8).

2. In the resurrection of the dead, God, through Christ, "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

3. God is able to save all who come unto

him by Jesus Christ, who says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). If you want to know what you must do to be saved, please read Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rev. 2:10.

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

Someone has well said that God is able --
"To break the bond that binds you;
To wash away your sins;
To give you freedom from fear;
To put a new song in your heart;
To give you hope in death;
To raise you from the tomb and to adorn you with the robe of immortality."

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Earmarks of Liberalism

A great deal - but perhaps not enough - is being said in pulpits and religious papers about liberalism. While it is true that some would erroneously brand any who differ with them on any subject as liberal, real liberalism does exist. And those who refuse to recognize its existence, or to do or say anything to combat it, are among its greatest allies.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Like other false teachers, the liberalist does not announce that he is a false teacher. And, like other false teachers, he teaches a great deal that is true. But the thing that makes him a liberalist is the fact that he challenges and denies the authority of the Bible. Usually this is done in such subtlety that one does not realize what is taking place until his faith has been undermined and his respect for the authority of the Bible has been destroyed.

This discussion has to do with some of the characteristics of the liberal movement in general. Just as one who recognizes poison oak or poison ivy may avoid its harmful effects, it is hoped that our mentioning some of the characteristics of liberalism will be instrumental in helping some to avoid its harmful effects.

CERTAINTY OF UNCERTAINTY

The liberalist likes to refer to what he calls "traditional church of Christ doctrines." He scoffs at the idea that one should be dogmatic in teaching that baptism is a burial in water, that the Lord's supper should be eaten every Sunday, that instrumental music in worship is not in harmony with the will of God, or

anything else, regardless of how plainly it is taught in the Bible. He says that we cannot be certain about these things. After all, men who are eminently scholarly hold differing views with regard to all of them. How can we be sure ours is the right view? And beside this, we will admit that we do not know everything. And since we do not know everything, it may just be that we are wrong about these things. In other words, the liberalist is *absolutely certain* that one cannot be *absolutely certain* about anything. The only thing he knows for sure is that he doesn't know anything for sure.

While it is true that there is room for differing opinions regarding matters of opinion, there are some things clearly revealed. These are matters of faith, not opinion. And while it is certainly true that we do not and cannot know everything, this does not mean that we do not and cannot certainly know anything. One may not know everything about mathematics, but this does not mean that he cannot be absolutely sure that two plus two makes four. The old, threadbare, denominational idea that the Bible is susceptible to conflicting interpretations is not in harmony with sound reasoning, much less the teaching of the Bible.

ETERNAL ATTACHMENT TO THE TRANSITORY

The fads in theological pronouncements change almost as rapidly as the fads in women's fashions. The liberalist seems to enjoy hearing himself parrot these pronouncements to the ridicule of the eternal truth of God. Attitudes and philosophies in the religious world are continually changing. What was quite modern and stylish yesterday is now old and worn. Think how much attention was attracted just a few years ago at the announcement that "God is dead!" This theology had its fleeting day of publicity, and has now become antiquated. So it is with all the fads of the theologians. But the eternal truth of God does not change. How ridiculous it is for the liberal to insist that we turn loose of the eternal word of God in order to latch on to the latest fad in theology, knowing full well that tomorrow this transitory fad will be replaced by another, which in turn will be replaced by another, which in turn...

EXPRESS INABILITY OF EXPRESSION

Despite illusions of intellectual characteristic of liberalists in general, the liberalist usually has a great deal of difficulty in saying what he means. We refer to the fact that so often when we learn from one's own tongue or pen what he believes in reference to a particular matter, we are told that he really does not believe that at all. He has just been misunderstood. Now, we know that the most careful speaker or writer will occasionally say something that he does not mean to say. And we further know that sometimes the clearest language is misunderstood by a careless audience. But here we are considering those whose speeches and writings time and again

represent them as holding positions which they say they do not hold. When their own statements are used to show their positions on certain matters, they say: "You misunderstood me." While anyone can be misunderstood, there is something seriously wrong with a man's ability to express himself when he is forever having to explain that his position on some controversial issue is actually just the opposite of what his speeches and writings have been generally understood to indicate. There seems to be some possibility that the defect is such a person is not in his ability to express himself, but rather in his integrity. Perhaps his speeches and writings accurately represent his position, but he is not willing for some to know what he really believes, lest they consider him unsound. Rather than admitting to these what he really believes, he simply says he was misunderstood.

CRITICISM OF CRITICISM

We know it is much easier to criticize others for what they are doing than it is to do something constructive ourselves. And there are, no doubt, some who attack the positions of influential brethren because of jealousy or envy, or to attract attention to themselves. But there are also some who attack error and false doctrine because of their love for the truth and their determination to the faithful to the charge committed to them: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). Christ was quite critical of some in His day (Matt. 23). The apostle Paul attacked the false doctrines of those in his time (Gal. 1:6-10; I Cor. 15; Acts 17; etc.). No faithful servant of our Lord can sit quietly and allow error to go unchecked and unchallenged. And those who stand for error are to be marked so that they may be avoided (Rom. 16:17).

Yet every effort on the part of faithful brethren to offset ungodliness and error within the church is met by a barrage of criticism by those who do not believe we ought to criticize. There are many brethren who never will be led away into religious error, but who make their contribution toward its advancement by their disposition not to oppose and to criticize all who would. In other words, they criticize the faithful, but refuse to criticize the unfaithful.

The church of Christ is never more than one generation away from apostasy. If we allow one generation to grow up not being taught the distinct difference between denominationalism and the Lord's church, apostasy has become a reality. This will have happened when liberal brethren can ridicule the church, challenge the integrity of the Bible, poke fun at the restoration movement, and sow the seeds of denominationalism without any fear of being branded as liberalists by faithful brethren.

Blaming Others

RAYMOND ALLEN HAYGOOD

After Adam and Eve had sinned in the Garden of Eden and when God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day and found Adam and Eve hiding, he asked, "Where art thou?" Adam responded by saying that he had heard a voice in the garden and had hid himself because he was naked. God asked, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" (Genesis 3:11). The Bible teaches in Genesis 3:12 that the man Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree

and I did eat."

In these few verses we become acquainted with a great fault of mankind from the very beginning, that of blaming others for our own sins. In essence, what Adam had done was remind God of the fact that he had not really asked for a woman, but that God had given her to him. Then in a real effort to relieve his responsibility, he blamed the woman for giving him the fruit. In truth, God did punish the woman severely, but he also rendered due punishment to the man for his sin.

God undoubtedly in these few verses

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Does I Cor. 2:9 teach that it is impossible for the mind of man to conceive of the wonders of heaven?"

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2:9). How often has this passage been made to apply to the glories of heaven, the excellencies of which we are wholly unable to apprehend here! Eyes have never seen, ears have never heard, nor has man ever been able to visualize with the mind's eye, the grandeurs and glories of the heavenly clime. Cited for this purpose, the verse which immediately follows is never quoted! It says: "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:10). What is it that the Lord has revealed to us? That which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, that which has never entered into the heart of man—the things which God hath prepared for them that love him! What, then, is the significance of the passage? Throughout the whole of this section of the Corinthian Epistle the apostle has been developing the thesis that Christianity is a revealed religion; that man, unaided by inspiration, can never know the blessings of redemption. The Corinthians boasted of their highly-developed systems of philosophy, but such could never reveal to them the goodness, love and mercy of the most high God. Such, however, have been revealed — not through human systems of reasoning, but by means of the Holy Spirit, who, through the apostles, gave the message of life and salvation to the world. Thus that which man unaided could never have known has been vouchsafed to him through the medium of revealed religion, the agent of which is the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:11). Before the revelation was made, man had no conception of what was in store for him. Now, however, all has been revealed — revealed through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, no longer true that "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." God "hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

Modern Day Apostles

ROGER E. DICKSON

There are those today who contend that there should be apostles in the church as the original apostles of the 1st century (Cogan, A CATECHISM FOR ADULTS, p. 71). It is taught that "there can be no doubt that steps were taken in those days (1st century) to perpetuate and maintain the Quorum of the

Twelve Apostles as leading officials of the Church, with world-wide jurisdiction" (Conway, THE QUESTION BOX, p. 155). And, "the pattern established by the Savior provided that there should be twelve apostles and new men were appointed to succeed the original members as they passed away" (A CATHOLIC DICTIONARY, p. 254).

The fallacy of the belief in modern - day apostles can be pointed out in many ways. Let's consider just a few reasons why there can be no apostles in the church today.

1. THERE CAN BE NO APOSTLES TODAY BECAUSE THERE IS NO MAN WHO CAN FULFILL THE QUALIFICATION OF BEING AN EYEWITNESS OF JESUS.

For one to be an apostle, he had to have been with Jesus "beginning from the baptism of John unto the day he was received up" unto heaven (Acts 1:21,22; 10:40,41). No man today can fulfill such a qualification. Matthias fulfilled this qualification in Acts chapter 1 when he was chosen to replace Judas who had betrayed Jesus (Acts 1:20-23).

Paul, on the other hand, was an especially chosen apostle, a child "untimely born" (I Cor. 15:8). But Christ appeared unto Paul that he might be qualified as being an eyewitness of Him (Acts 22:14). Jesus personally selected Paul as He did the rest of the apostles (Gal. 1:1; Acts 9:15; 22:14,15; I Cor. 15:8). Paul received the gospel by revelation (I Cor. 15:1-3; Gal. 1:11,12). He performed the signs of an apostle (2 Cor. 12:12). Let those today who claim to be apostles prove their apostleship in the same manner as those apostles of the 1st century. No one today can be an apostle who has not been an eyewitness of Christ or who has not been chosen to be an apostle according to the manner by which the first apostles were chosen.

2. THERE CAN BE NO APOSTLES TODAY BECAUSE THE FIRST APOSTLES WERE PERSONALLY CHOSEN BY CHRIST.

Jesus PERSONALLY chose the twelve apostles during His ministry (Lk. 6:13; Acts 1:2; 9:16; 24:16-18; Jn. 14:16,27). Matthias was personally chosen by casting lots (Acts 1:24-26). He was also chosen to fulfill a prophecy that one should take the place of Judas (Acts 1:20). As stated before, Jesus personally appeared to and chose Paul (Acts 9:3-9). Let those today who claim to be apostles claim also to have been called personally by Jesus. They must, if they are to be consistent.

3. NO ONE CAN BE AN APOSTLE TODAY BECAUSE NONE CAN RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS PROMISED TO THE APOSTLES IN THE 1ST CENTURY.

Jesus personally promised the apostles that they would receive all truth when the Holy Spirit was given to them (Jn. 16:13). They, the apostles, were told by Jesus to wait in Jerusalem to receive power from the Father (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:5). Jesus promised that they would be His witnesses (Lk. 24:48,49; Jn. 15:16,27; Acts 1:8,22).

The Holy Spirit was poured out upon THE APOSTLES on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). This was the power promised by Jesus. And only the apostles received this baptismal measure of the Spirit. Today, there is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5), the baptism in water (Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:20,21) and none can be baptized in the Holy Spirit as the apostles of the 1st century.

4. THERE CAN BE NO APOSTLES TODAY BECAUSE NO ONE TODAY HAS THE POWER TO IMPART MIRACULOUS GIFTS AS THE APOSTLES OF THE 1ST CENTURY.

Only the apostles could lay hands on others and thereby impart the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17,18; 19:6). Proof of this is the fact that those in the church at Rome could not receive other miraculous gifts until Paul came unto them (Rom. 1:11). By the

laying on of Paul's hands, Timothy received a miraculous gift (2 Tim. 1:6). This ability, or power, to impart miraculous gifts by the laying on of hands was absolute proof that one was an apostle in the 1st century (2 Cor. 12:2).

None today have received miraculous power as the result of the laying on of apostles hands, such is proof that there are no apostles today. If not, then let those who claim miraculous power come forth and prove their power.

5. THERE IS NO NEED FOR APOSTLES TODAY BECAUSE THE ORIGINAL APOSTLES ACCOMPLISHED THEIR INTENDED PURPOSE IN THE 1ST CENTURY.

The apostle's work, as directed by the Holy Spirit, was to build up and firmly establish the early church (Eph. 4:11-16; 2:19,20). They were the original witnesses of Jesus and His resurrection (Lk. 24:48,49; Acts 1:8,22). They accomplished their work by delivering unto the church all truth (Jn. 16:12,13). They continue to teach the truth today through the inspired New Testament (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:3). And, it is interesting to note that only the twelve names of the original apostles who firmly established the church in the 1st century will be written on the twelve foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 21:4). No names of so-called modern-day false apostles will be there.

Only those who were personally called by Christ and had been an eyewitness of His ministry could be apostles in the 1st century. It was to the original twelve apostles that Jesus promised the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a baptismal measure. It was only to these men that the Holy Spirit was given in a baptismal measure. They, the original apostles, could perform the "signs of an apostle," which proved that they were apostles of Christ.

Paul was an apostle "untimely born," but personally called by Christ and given the power, as the other apostles, to impart spiritual gifts.

The purpose and work of the apostles was accomplished in the 1st century. The foundation of the church was laid over 1900 years ago. Therefore, we have no need for apostles today. — Calxa Postal 30.543 01000, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

The International Gospel Hour Needs Your Help In 1977

In the latter part of 1975 I penned an article relative to the needs of the International Gospel Hour which features the preaching of brethren V. E. Howard and Thomas B. Warren and which is under the eldership of the Nash church of Christ in Texarkana, Texas.

Brother Flavil Nichols who was then the editor of WORDS OF TRUTH, was graciously kind in allowing it to appear promptly in this great weekly. That article, and one like it that appeared in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, according to brother Howard, brought much response by way of help to the program during 1976. A word of



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Blaming Others

Continued from Page 2

established a principle that is true for mankind throughout the perpetual generations — that every man regardless of the circumstances surrounding his sin, is still totally accountable to God for his own evil. It is quite true that men may deceive us, lie to us, and encourage us in evil, but to try to gain any relief of accountability for our sins before God by blaming others is utter folly.

If you remember, the prophet discussed in I Kings 13 believed the lies of the older prophet and in doing so disobeyed God's will and was punished by death. We might logically conclude that the older prophet should have been given the entire burden of blame for his intentional deceit, and the other prophet could have spent much time blaming the old prophet for lying to him. In the final analysis the prophet, as is true of all men, had to pay the debt for his own sin.

In II Corinthians 5:10 the Bible teaches that every man shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give account for all the good and evil he has done in this life. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). On that day it will profit us nothing to attribute blame to anyone else for our wrongdoing. The Bible says that we must give an account for our own actions, not for the actions of someone else.

It is important to remember these principles, because we are hearing more and more nowadays of individuals blaming others for their own failures. Members of the church who become indifferent and unfaithful to the Lord often try to excuse their actions by pointing out the hypocrisy and shortcomings of many in the church. More and more parents and teen-agers are blaming the church, the preacher, the elders, for children who lack interest in religious matters and who leave the church. The trend is shown in such comments as "Little Johnny or Susy doesn't like the Sunday school teacher because he's not interesting enough," "The preacher preaches too long", "The elders aren't caring for the needs of the young people by supplying the things they enjoy", and the list goes on and on, limited only by man's ability to think up complaints. Many of these comments are an attempt on the part of some to blame someone else for their own inadequacies.

The tragic thing about blaming someone else is that it usually prevents us from looking at ourselves. On many occasions the apostle Paul instructed brethren to take heed to themselves, or shall we say, to see themselves. If we cannot objectively see ourselves and our own shortcomings as they really are, then we will never be able to correct them properly. It disturbs this writer no little bit to see these procedures of attaching blame to someone else becoming so widespread, because in the final analysis it can only hurt the church and never help it. — 25 Union Place, Vicksburg, Ms. 39180.

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy, you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction. Fear secretes acids; but love and trust are sweet juices.

—Beecher.

The International Gospel Hour Needs Your Help In 1977

Continued from Page 3

genuine thanks to all those who responded so generously. Throughout 1976 the program has grown by leaps and bounds. With this increase comes greater needs for the coming year of 1977.

In the closing weeks of this year many elderships will be making congregational budgets for 1977. Brethren, please consider putting The International Gospel Hour in your 1977 budget. We hope many individual Christians will send contributions to the program. My family and I have sent a number of checks to the program during 1976 and plan to do the same in 1977. We have done this without cutting into our congregational contributions at home or at places where I was conducting gospel meetings.

It is my good pleasure to aid brother Howard in research and script writing. Literally hundreds of hours have been spent during 1976 in researching the material and the actual writing of nearly three hundred scripts. This is enough material to make three good sized books if it were all compacted together. Brother Howard then takes this material and adapts it to the program along with subjects of his own choosing from time to time.

THE PREACHERS

Forming the heartbeat of this effective radio ministry is the preaching of brethren V. E. Howard and Thomas B. Warren. They are talented, versatile and dedicated men of God with the weight of lost souls upon their holy hearts.

Brethren, these men are loyal to the trust of truth which has been given to them or placed into their hands. They have never, nor do we believe they will in the future, betray that trust of truth. Such is my unbounded confidence in their valiant veracity. No question mark hangs over these men — either in their character or the type of preaching they are courageously committed toward doing on The International Gospel Hour. They have earned our trust; they deserve our helping hands right now and on a continuing basis. These men work under the sound, sacrificing and able eldership of the great Nash congregation in Texarkana, Texas.

THE PROGRAM

The International Gospel Hour right now has a daily five minute, a daily fifteen minute, a weekly fifteen minute, a weekly twenty-five minute and a weekly thirty minute program. At this writing (late November) some one hundred stations carry the program. An impressive number of these stations are 50,000 watt stations and are capable of beaming the program over vast areas of our land. While recently enroute to a gospel meeting in eastern Ohio I picked up the powerful San Antonio, Texas, station and heard The International Gospel Hour though I was some one thousand miles from the station. The program is on the extra powerful XEG station each Sunday night from 9:15-9:45. This international station broadcasts from Mexico and can be heard in nearly every state in the nation and in the greater part of Central and South America. Think how vast is the coverage of just this one station. A powerful station in British West Indies has been recently added.

Currently, some two hundred to two

hundred fifty programs are being heard weekly. Printed copies are available on request. Recently 500 copies of sermons were requested by one of our penitentiaries and were sent. Material has been sent to inmates at a number of other prisons. Radio can penetrate places where the human messenger cannot go in person or may not even know to go.

The costs of producing the program, taping, printing, mailing, Bible Correspondence, etc., have increased also by leaps and bounds in 1976. The adding of every station means an increase in operational costs. Brother Howard suggests that their costs have about doubled within the last year. That leads to the third major segment of this article.

THE PLEA

Brother Howard recently stated, "Right now we need more congregations to put us in their budget . . . We can't discontinue this work without sacrificing souls . . . The printing and mailing costs are not handed down from the 'sky.' We had to discontinue sending out sermons on cassette because of no money to pay the cost. Yet, we still must send some. More recently we have sent them to inmates in three different states (prisons) and of course at no charge to them — but somebody must pay the costs.

"Our work is growing by 'leaps and bounds' — and we just must have more brethren to help us. Many churches and individuals are contributing regularly, but must have more as we continue to expand the out reach of the gospel to millions . . . I am sure many brethren will help when properly informed."

Brother Howard made this last statement after requesting that I make this plea in some of our prominent religious publications.

Last year we reported that the great Nash church in Texarkana, Texas, sacrificing sponsors of the program, was going in the red at the rate of about \$1,000.00 per week. That amount has been cut to about \$300.00 to \$400 per week but the color is still red and not black! That is still entirely too much! Brethren, let us get them in the black early in 1977 to the extent that they can begin liquidating all back indebtedness and can expand into vastly needed areas of their work for all of 1977. Why not send them a last-of-the-year contribution for 1976 and place them in your budget for 1977?

It is still the intention of all connected with this program to preach the gospel to every creature in our time. But we must have your help to do it. — P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Interesting Facts About The Bible

**Contains 3,560,480 letters; 810,697 words, 31,175 verses.

The middle verse is the 8th of the 118 Psalm.

The word 'and' occurs 46,627 times.

The word 'Lord' occurs 1,855 times.

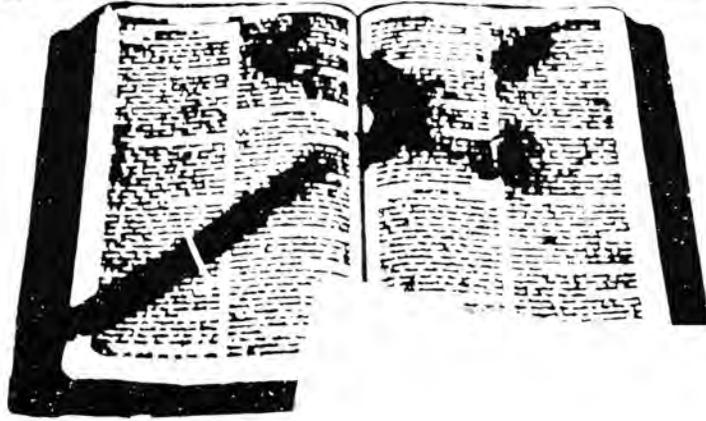
Ezra, Chapter 7, Verse 1, contains the alphabet.

God is not mentioned in the book of Esther."

Where did we get these facts?

Through a prisoner who had enough time to compute them. Extracted from "Good Words" Vol. 11, No. 6, house magazine published monthly at The United States Penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia. Edited and printed by prisoners.

WORDS of TRUTH



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

"Thy word is truth" Jn. 17:17

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

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

VOLUME 12

FRIDAY

NUMBER 52

If The Foundations Be Destroyed

The psalmist asked: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psa. 11:3). Jesus set forth the necessity of building upon the proper foundation (Matt. 7:24-27). The foundation determines the stability of a building, any organization, the home, nation and church. We are reminded that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psa. 127:1).



GLANN M. LEE

THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOME

The home, the oldest Divine institution, was ordained of God in the Garden of Eden. The home is designed to be a PLACE OF HAPPINESS, a "heaven on earth." Of all places for the "golden rule" to be practiced, it should be practiced in the home (Matt. 7:12). Parents are to be willing to dispense with their own desires in the best interest of the children.

The home is to be a PLACE OF LOVE. In the home each is to be taught to love God (Matt. 22:35-40), and to love one another (Eph. 5:25-29, 33). Children are to be taught to love and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-3).

The home is to be a PLACE OF TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE (Prov. 22:6). "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24). Eli's failure should be a warning to every parent because "his son's made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (I Sam. 3:13). Fathers are reminded to "provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). This training needs to start early. The training of a Timothy begins with a godly grandmother and a godly mother (2 Tim. 1:5). We are not surprised that Jacob's sons lied to him inasmuch as he had lied to his father (Gen. 37). David committed adultery and murder. Later his son Amnon committed adultery with his half sister, Tamar and Tamar's brother Absalom killed Amnon (2 Sam. 13). Parents must set the proper example.

The SACREDNESS AND SANCTITY of the

home must be preserved because it is ordained of God. Homes may be corrupted through lack of discipline (Eph. 6:1), lack of love, loose living and immorality, lack of guidance, and lack of parental example.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE NATION

Government is ordained of God (Rom. 13:1-7). Law officials are ministers of God (Rom. 13:4). Christians are taught to pray for rulers (I Tim. 2:1-2). Our nation is threatened with the ever present dangers of Catholicism, Communism and worldiness. Edward Gibbon, in his "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," lists the following reasons for the fall of Rome: "An alarming increase in divorce and the breaking up of the Roman home; higher and higher taxes, until the load became unbearable, while the officials of the empire continued to spend public funds with reckless indifference; a mad desire for excitement which led to all sorts of moral extravagances, which finally engulfed the empire and destroyed it; increased political pressure for armaments, but with blind disregard for destructive elements building up inside the empire; and a decline in religion an withholding of support from character building institutions."

In his book, "This Grace Also" Mac Layton states: "The standard of living has been climbing higher and higher while the standard of life has been going lower and lower. There are more young ladies serving in the saloons, night clubs, and the dives of this country than attending our colleges. We have the finest homes but the least home life. We have conveniences that save us many hours, but no time to read God's Word and pray. In a land of abundance we have not learned to abound. We have proved over and over again that to be better off is not to be better. This

generation seemingly believes it can drink its way to peace, and enjoy its way to heaven."

Time may be running out for us! One has written: "The average age of the world's civilizations has been 200 years! These nations progressed through the following sequence: from bondage to spiritual faith; from spiritual faith to great courage; from courage to liberty; from liberty to abundance; from abundance to selfishness; from selfishness to complacency; from complacency to apathy; from apathy to dependency; and from dependency to bondage!"

FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

The church is ordained of God (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20; I Cor. 3:10-11). The certainty of the establishment of the kingdom (Matt. 16:18) and the stability of the kingdom (Dan. 2:44; Heb. 12:28) are among the solid certainties of our faith.

Dangers confronting the church include a rejection of the authority of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20); a rejection of the gospel through substitutions and changes (Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 1:18; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 John 9; Rev. 22:18-19, John 12:48); and indifference. Indifference will lead to a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6; Acts 17:10-11); a lack of discipline (2 Thess. 3:6; Rom. 16:17; Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20); a lack of zeal (Rev. 3:14-17; Rom. 10:1-2; Tit. 2:14); a lack of conviction (Rev. 2:18-20; Matt. 12:30); and a lack of devotion. (Matt. 15:8; Rom. 6:17; Rom. 10:10).

If we sow the wind, we'll reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7; Gal. 6:7). One has no spiritual foundation who does not obey (Matt. 7:24-27). One can have Divine assurance by building upon the Divine foundation (Matt. 7:24-27; 2 Tim. 1:12; Phil. 4:13). — 3248 Lorna Road, Birmingham, Al. 35243.

"Just Use Me"

I am the Bible.
I am God's wonderful Library.
I am always — and above all — the Truth.
To the weary pilgrim, I am a good, strong Staff.
To the one who sits in black gloom, I am glorious Light.
To those who stoop beneath heavy burdens, I am sweet Rest.

To him who has lost his way, I am a safe Guide.
To those who are distressed by the storms of life, I am an Anchor, sure and steadfast.
To those who suffer in lonely solitude, I am as a cool, soft Hand resting on a fevered brow.
Oh, child of man, to best defend me, just use me. — Selected.

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BOBBY DUNCAN..... Editor
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

FLAVIL H. NICHOLS..... Associate Editor
Rt. 1, Box 1412, Sumiton, Alabama

RAY DUTTON..... Circulation Manager
1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama

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Shut-Ins And The Lord's Supper

One of our readers has asked us to comment on the matter of serving the Lord's supper to those unable to assemble with the rest of the saints. We are happy to do so in this column.

We should understand that the Lord's supper is one, and but one, of the items of worship in which Christians are to engage upon the first day of the week. We are also to worship by singing (Eph. 5:19; I Cor. 14:15), praying (I Thess. 5:17; I Cor. 14:15), engaging in a study of God's word (Acts 20:7), and contributing of our physical means to the treasury of the church (I Cor. 16:2). Whatever the shut-in's attitude toward the Lord's supper, this same attitude toward the other items of worship should prevail. The Lord's supper contains no mysterious or miraculous power. It is no more a means of maintaining fellowship with God than any other items of worship commanded by God. One cannot maintain fellowship with God while wilfully refusing to do any of the things God has commanded. In order for our worship to be acceptable, it must be performed in harmony with His word (Jno. 4:24; Matt. 15:8, 9).

The ideal situation, of course, is for each member of every congregation to come to the place of meeting at the appointed time, and to worship with every other member of the church (I Cor. 14:23). But some, because of circumstances beyond their control, cannot be present at the appointed hour. Does this mean



BOBBY DUNCAN

that they must forego their worship altogether? No. Since the time of day when we worship is not set forth in the Bible, but is left to human judgment, some who could not be present for the morning worship come and eat the Lord's supper at the evening service. Most would agree that this is in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. Those who abuse this Scriptural principle by allowing selfish motives to keep them away from the morning service, and then come and eat the Lord's supper on Sunday evening, need to get their priorities properly arranged. They are not putting God and His kingdom first in their lives (Matt. 6:33), and if they continue this course, in the judgment, they will be "weighed in the balances" and "found wanting."

But there are some who are, for one reason or another, unable to attend any service of the church — ever. Since the place of eating the Lord's supper is no more specified than the hour, would it not be in order for these to eat the Lord's supper when and where they can do so upon the first day of the week? They will not be eating it at the same PLACE the other members of the church eat it, any more than the man who eats it on Sunday evening eats it at the same TIME others eat it. But in both cases they are doing what the Lord has instructed. It would be just as much a sin for one to abuse this principle, and wilfully stay away from the assembly, and eat the Lord's supper at home, as it would be for one wilfully

to miss the service on Sunday morning and then come and eat the Lord's supper on Sunday evening.

A family we used to know would occasionally plan a family outing for the Lord's day, and would absent themselves from the assembly. They felt it was perfectly all right for them so to do, provided they ate the Lord's supper before leaving home in the morning. This, of course, is the abuse of the principle we are discussing. I doubt that God is pleased with one who has such little regard for the local church and its assemblies.

It is sometimes suggested that one who is unable to assemble with the saints is excused from eating the Lord's supper. In other words, God does not require one to eat the Lord's supper who is simply not able to attend the services of the church. Perhaps this is so. But do we worship God just because we are required to do so? Is it not we, rather than God, who benefit from our worship?

If I were permanently shut-in, and could never assemble with the saints at the regularly appointed time and place, this would not bring an end to my need for God and for worship. I would still want to sing, pray, study God's word, give of my income, and eat the Lord's supper upon the first day of the week. Just eating the Lord's supper on the first day of the week is not enough. If we are going to worship upon the first day of the week, we should engage in all the above activities.

Why Should I Worship God In The Church?

1. THE CHURCH IS THE HOUSE OF THE MOST HIGH GOD AND HE HAS MADE IT MY DUTY TO WORSHIP HIM THERE. He has promised to meet me there, but He cannot meet me there unless I am there. In Matthew 18:20 we read: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." If we gather in the name of Jesus He will always be there, but unless I am there I miss His presence and blessing. I need the help the church affords and others need the encouragement my example affords by being with them.



TOMMY VERNON

2. UNLESS THE CHURCH IS ATTENDED I, THE CHURCH, THE NATION AND THE HOME WILL SOON LAPSE INTO DARKNESS AND ALL WILL BE LOST. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30). Hence we see from this verse that if we do not attend the services in the House of the Lord, we scatter abroad, and if we scatter abroad we are showing the world we are not with the Lord - not on the Lord's side.

3. I NEED THE FELLOWSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE. The fellowship of God's people in the best fellowship in the world. I cannot obtain and enjoy this good fellowship without attending the services of the church. To abandon the fellowship of the church is the same as to abandon prayer or the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:41-42).

4. IT SHOWS MY LOYALTY TO GOD AND TO THE BRETHREN, IN THE SAME SENSE THAT MY ATTENTION TO MY HOME AND COUNTRY SHOWS MY LOYALTY TO THEM. If I stay away from home without a just cause, I am showing a lack of interest in the home, or if I fail to attend to the duties I owe to my country, I show that I am not interested in its welfare. In like manner when I stay away from worship I show that I am not interested in the work of the church, which is the greatest work on earth.

5. MY FAMILY AND MY NEIGHBORS ARE READING MY LIFE MORE THAN THEY READ THEIR BIBLES. If I do not go to church I show to them that I do not love the church nor God to whom it belongs. God cannot say to me, "Well done," unless I do well, and I am not doing well if I stay away from the services of the church.

6. IF I DO NOT ATTEND CHURCH I AM NOT DEALING FAIRLY WITH MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS, LEAVING THEM TO CARRY THE ENTIRE LOAD OF THE WORK THAT IS TO BE DONE. It is my duty to help shoulder the load of work which the church is to do if it is doing what it ought to in fulfilling the mission it has in the world.

7. I OWE SOMETHING TO THE PREACHER IN THE WAY OF MORAL SUPPORT, TO SAY NOTHING ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT I OWE HIM. To stay at home from church is to weaken and belittle the work of the local preacher.

8. THE CHURCH IS THE ONLY RELIGIOUS HOME THAT GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE ON THIS EARTH. To stay away from church is to stay away from the only place on earth I can call my religious home. "Home, sweet Home - there is no place like Home."

9. THE CHURCH IS A SCHOOL FOR MY CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION. I need the

(Continued On Page 4)

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please explain I Cor. 3:10-15. May men, in ignorance, teach error leading to the destruction of those they influence, yet be saved themselves?"

Paul wrote to the Corinthians as follows: "According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire" (I Cor. 3:10-15).

We have been asked to comment on the following statement regarding the foregoing passage from Paul:

"The reference is . . . to the erroneous interpretations of Scripture, and the crude or fanatical preaching of sincere but ignorant men. . . The sincere but mistaken teacher's efforts will be shown worthless in themselves, but the teacher himself will be saved and will receive the reward of personal character, but not that of a good builder."

It would be difficult, in our view, to miss the meaning of the apostle more than the writer of the preceding statement does in these observations regarding I Corinthians 3:10-15. Such a view is not only a misapprehension of the significance of the passage; its implications are exceedingly dangerous and detrimental to the cause of Christ. Its clear and unmistakable conclusion is that a teacher or preacher may actually advocate doctrines leading to the destruction of the souls espousing such *yet himself be saved!*

The truth is, the "reference" is not to doctrine, but to disciples. The words, "any man" must be regarded within the framework of reference characteristic of the theme discussed, and is limited to those who build on the foundation - Christ. "Any man" is thus any preacher or teacher. His "work" is his converts. These converts will exhibit varying degrees of faithfulness, represented by the substances named: stubble, hay, wood, precious stones, silver, and gold. It will be observed that these materials, in the order indicated, show an increasing imperviousness to fire. The "fire" will try them. Some converts will be like stubble - their endurance is so limited, they soon perish. Others are like hay - a bit better able to endure the fire than the former. Wood endures fire better than hay; precious stones better than wood; silver better than precious stones; gold, being completely impervious to fire is not affected by it.

"Each man's work shall be made manifest" - each preacher's converts will appear in their true character - and the "day" shall declare it. The day will, of course, be the judgment, when the record of all men will become manifest. The "work" (of the gospel

preacher) will be revealed "in fire," and "the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is." What fire? The fire of hell, so Barnes, and others. The fire of persecution, trial, and earthly difficulties, so McKnight. In support of the former view is the association of the phrase with "the day" which obviously points to the last Great Day. In either event, the character of those involved will be exhibited, resulting from the test of faithfulness they have undergone. Those "converts" represented by the materials susceptible to fire (wood, hay, stubble), will be lost; those represented by gold, silver and precious stones will be saved. What effect will this have on the preacher or teacher?

"If a man's work shall abide. . . he shall receive a reward." The "man" is the preacher or teacher. His "work" is his converts. They "abide" by being faithful. The preacher, in this event, "shall receive a reward." Reward of what? Not simply or solely or only his *salvation*. The faithfulness of the preacher's converts will not automatically operate to save the preacher. If saved, it will be on the basis of his own faithfulness, not that of some other. The reward is something more than salvation.

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet as through fire." Here, again, "the man" is the proclaimer of *truth*. His work is his converts. The burning of his work represents the loss of these converts through their unfaithfulness. In this event, the preacher "shall suffer loss." Loss of what? Not his soul. As the faithfulness of the preacher's converts will not save him, neither will their apostasy automatically operate to deprive him of his salvation (assuming that he is not responsible for their apostasy). Moreover, though he "shall suffer loss," he himself "shall be saved!" Hence, the loss which he suffers is not his salvation. It is the *reward* he would have received, had they been faithful. (Here, incidentally, is clear evidence of the doctrine of degrees of reward - a matter often taught in the New Testament.)

The comments under review in this article utterly misapprehend the apostle's meaning. The "work" of the preacher, contemplated here, is not his *doctrine*, but his *disciples*. Doctrines can neither be tried by fire of persecution or the judgment, but *men* who preach false doctrine, *leading to the damnation of their hearers will be lost along with those they mislead*. It is truly a delusive and dangerous theory which would argue, as the foregoing comment under review does, that men can be saved who have taught doctrines leading to the damnation of others.

With the following comments from J.W. McGarvey, on I Corinthians 3:10 - 15, we fully agree: "If a teacher's disciples endure the test of judgment, he shall receive a reward, of which his converts will be at least a part (I Thess. 2:19; Phil. 2:16) but if his disciples do not stand that test, he shall of course lose whatever property he had in them, and perhaps more (II John 8). The teacher may of course be saved independently of his disciples, for salvation is a gift and not a reward; but he will be saved as a steward who has lost the things of his stewardship; as a tenant who has had his harvest burned, or as a contractor whose structure has gone up in flames."

All of us who teach and preach God's word should carefully lay to heart the implications in this remarkable passage from the pen of Paul. It is a serious thing to bring unworthy materials into God's building. That such can be done is obvious from the apostle's illustration. We must ever be on our guard to teach and inculcate such truth as will protect those who receive and obey it from error, and

confirm and strengthen them in the faith so that they may be classified as gold, silver, and costly stones, rather than wood, hay or stubble. In so doing, we enhance our "reward," and we assure them of salvation.

The Value of Reading

G. F. RAINES

In READER'S DIGEST (April 1965), Andre Maurois said: "No exercise of the mind that I know of gives as much joy and value as reading."

Elizabeth A. Simpson (Director, Reading Service Institute for Psychological Services, Illinois Institute of Technology) says: "Through reading we acquire new ideas, obtain needed information, and broaden our interests. All these achievements can lead to a happier, more successful life" (THE WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA, 1960 edition, Vol. 15, p. 151).

According to THE NATIONAL OBSERVER (Nov. 22, 1965, p. 23), Samuel Johnson, the famous British man of letters, said: "A young man should read five hours in a day, and so may acquire a great deal of knowledge."

Atwood H. Townsend said: "No matter how busy you may think you are, you must find time for reading now, or else surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance."

Tryon Edwards said: "We should be as careful of the books we read, as of the company we keep." Edwards described a good book as "a casket of jewels for your household."

You should read a variety of good books and thus acquire a "liberal education," but I particularly urge you to read the Bible frequently, diligently, and prayerfully, for the reason that this matchless book was written "by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correct, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

"The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom" (Horace Greely).

"The whole hope of human progress is suspended on the ever growing influence of the Bible" (William H. Seward).

The famous author John Ruskin said: "To my early knowledge of the Bible I owe the best part of my taste in literature, and the most precious, and on the whole, the one essential part of my education."

The Book of God itself says:

"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. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa. 1:1, 2).

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:17, 18). — Newton, Miss. 39345.

Why Should I Worship God In The Church?

Continued from Page 2

instruction it affords and learn something new everytime I go. Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God. . . ." Therefore, I go to study the Word of God in order that my faith may increase (Rom. 10:17).

10. THE CHURCH IS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. Those who do not belong to it, and attend its services cannot hope to be any part of the bride when the great Husband comes for His bride. Would you please read Rom. 7:1-4 and Eph. 5:24-27.

11. WHEN I KNOW THE CONGREGATION WHERE I AM A MEMBER IS

11. WHEN I KNOW THE CONGREGATION WHERE I AM A MEMBER IS MEETING AND ENJOYING SWEET FELLOWSHIP WITH EACH OTHER, IT MAKES ME FEEL BAD IF I CANNOT BE WITH THEM IN THAT GREAT AND WONDERFUL GATHERING. I am like David said he was, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1).

12. IT IS JUST PLAIN SINFUL FOR ME TO ABSENT MYSELF FROM THE SERVICES OF THE LORD WHEN IT IS REASONABLE FOR ME TO ATTEND. In Heb. 10:24,25, we read: "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."

13. I BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD TEACHES THE LORD IS COMING AGAIN, AND I WOULD RATHER BE FOUND IN HIS PLACE OF MEETING, WAITING FOR HIS ARRIVAL THAN ANY OTHER PLACE ON THE FACE OF THIS EARTH.

14. READ JOHN CHAPTER 20 AND LUKE CHAPTER 24 AND you will see that Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, missed when he missed a service where the Lord was present. — P.O. Box 135, Bear Creek, Al. 35543.

Round By Round

Heaven is not reached by a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

We rise by the things that are under our feet—

By what we have mastered of good or gain,
By the pride deposed and the passion slain
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

—Dr. J. G. Holland.

Unanswered Prayer

"He asked for strength that he might achieve; he was made weak that he might obey.

"He asked for health that he might do greater things; he was given infirmity that he might do better things.

"He asked for riches that he might be happy; he was given poverty that he might be wise.

"He asked for power that he might have the praise of men; he was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.

"He asked for all things that he might enjoy life; he was given life that he might enjoy all things."

Marks of False Teachers



LEON COLE

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1). The false teacher is described in this passage as one who "retreats" from the truth. He knows the truth, has been exposed to it, but has again and again refused the truth.

Such individuals are prone to "wrest" the scriptures as mentioned in II Peter 3:16. This word "wrest" can be translated "twist" or "pervert" and means to "turn upside down" An automobile turned upside down may retain all the mechanical parts but it cannot operate in the manner originally designed. The false teacher "turns the scriptures upside down" in an effort to justify his practice, consequently then the scriptures do not operate as originally designed.

In II Timothy 3:1-5 there are twenty characteristics of times described as being perilous. There are at least two of these that describe false teachers in the church and the result of their teaching. "Having a form of godliness" they are destitute of spiritual life. Further these apostates will rise to places of prominence and exert great influence. They will seek to unite people religiously without giving any thought to basic doctrines. Such sounds a little like some of the folks today who are calling for "unity in diversity" or declaring that there is a difference in "gospel" and "doctrine." It is obvious too that these false teachers are persuasive — so much so that Paul warned Timothy, "from such turn away."

The second of these characteristics is that under the guise of religion they will be traitors. A traitor always works from the inside. He wears the uniform and moves with those he has betrayed. Such a one names the name of Christ and claims to have been obedient to His will. But in reality he is in league with Satan.

They seek to work inside faithful

congregations. Jude tells us these false teachers will creep into the church, enter alongside, or slip in a side door by stealth and dishonesty (Jude 4). The writer describes these men as ungodly and putting wrong in the place of right. He further said, "they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness". These persons acknowledge no restraints. A thing would be right according to the situation in which one finds himself. I heard one who claims to be a gospel preacher declare that social drinking was not wrong in countries where such was accepted behaviour, like France or Spain. This is the spirit of modernism which refuses to acknowledge the authority of Christ.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1). Here again is the picture of a traitor; one who will bring in false teaching with the true. These teachers will gain the confidence of brethren by apparently teaching the truth, then in their "rap sessions," "cell meetings," "private Bible studies," "life groups," and "over the coffee cup" they bring in their destructive heresies.

It has well been said, "a nation can survive its fools and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within." A traitor will speak the accents familiar to his victims and at the same time undermine the pillars of the city. If this is true in the world, how much more true it is of the church!

Another mark of false teachers is an exaggerated emphasis on education without God. "Ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 3:5-7). This should not be interpreted as a criticism against all education, but it is a sad commentary that in many pulpits book reviews are given instead of the writings of men being reviewed by "THE BOOK", and theologians are quoted more often than God. Especially is this true when we remember that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7).

Let us earnestly contend for the faith, continue to preach the word, reprove, rebuke, and exhort will all long suffering and doctrine, as long as the Lord gives us life. — 1402 Rickwood Road, Florence, Alabama 35630.

A Mule, A Goat, A Bee, A Skunk. . . .

If a man were given a mule, a goat, a bee, and a skunk and assigned the task of making a working combination of them in order to accomplish a given work he would throw up his hands in disgust and say, "That is impossible." Yet, in almost every church there is a kicker, a butter, a stinger, and a stinker, and the elders have the task of trying to make of all these a united working group with the faithful of God's children. Now can't you appreciate the great job the elders of the church have before them?

Every church member should remember that it takes the united efforts of every member to make a church what God wants it to be. When we are always kicking against the Lord's work; when we are grouchy; when we

always find fault with the work of the elders; and say stinging things to them and others; and above all trying to raise a big stink, "we should remember we are mule-headed (and footed); butting our heads against the truth; and being as offensive as skunks."

—Selected

Is It Better

To be lied about than to be the liar.
To be slandered than to be the slanderer.
To be cheated than to cheat.
To be imposed upon than to be the bully.
To lose your money than to be a thief.
To be the victim than the sinner.
To be defeated than to stoop to deceit.

—Roy O. Smith.