



Words Of Truth

...most noble Festus; but speak forth
the words of Truth and soberness."

— Acts 26:25

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NUMBER 1

A Nation "Out From" Under God

Dan Jenkins

One of the joys of being an American is the freedom of speech which has served as a foundation stone of our country for two centuries. Our forefathers came to this land to insure that we might have a nation where all ideas, both political and religious, have free expression. As an American I was thrilled when a local TV station arranged for the Equal Rights Amendment to be discussed by those who were for the amendment and those against it. Jim Dearman, preacher at the West Concord Church of Christ, was asked to speak against the amendment and he arranged for a local lawyer, Miss Charlotte Railey, to assist him in the debate. Those for the amendment chose two ladies, one of them an attorney, to represent their side.

I was at WBMG-TV on December 1, 1977 when the debate was taped. The participants in the debate arrived and the rules were clearly laid out. The debate was to begin with a three minute statement by each side showing why they either favored or opposed the proposed amendment. Following this, various aspects of the amendment were to be introduced and each side was to speak three minutes, with equal time being given each side for any rebuttal comments.

Those for the amendment began the debate with the usual reason given for the necessity of the ERA---women were being discriminated against in our nation, their pay was not equal with that of men, they were being treated as second-class citizens by many of the present laws and the passage of the ERA would give them all their rights. When the time came for the opposing side to present its case the tone of the debate was set. Jim Dearman began by showing from the Scriptures that the teachings of Christ give to women an exalted place rather than one of inferiority. He then showed that both Old and New Testaments (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:26-28) pointedly said that homosexuality was a sin, and for this reason every God-fearing person in America

must be opposed to that which would make such legal in our society. When Miss Railey spoke she quoted from constitutional lawyers at both Yale and Harvard who showed that the passage of the ERA would of necessity make homosexual marriages a part of our way of life. The point was also made that laws already existed to remove the injustices against women in our land and that both of those opposed to the ERA were against such injustices. However, it was affirmed, the ERA was worded in such a way that rather than simply dealing with these injustices it would go far beyond and legalize immorality. Those for the amendment could not deal with this issue! Further evidence was given during the debate showing that the most vocal advocates of the passage of the ERA, the National Organization of Women (NOW), looked upon the passage of the ERA as a necessity in achieving another of their goals, the legalizing of lesbian marriages.

Those for the amendment felt the force of these arguments and asked three times that other aspects of the ERA be discussed. However this was designed as a debate and not as a time for discussion of areas of agreement, and for once the true impact of the passage of the ERA was shown. The moderator was fair, giving equal time to each side. Each participant in the discussion conducted himself in an honorable fashion, so that by the end of the thirty minute program the area of disagreement was clearly seen.

Much to the surprise of many the station has now refused to air the program! Following the taping of the debate those for the amendment demanded to see the station manager, even threatening a court injunction against its showing. Pressure was brought to bear upon the station and so the program, "Spectrum", due to be shown on Sunday morning, December 4, was not shown! Can you believe this! This was not in Russia, China, Cuba nor Hungary; this was in

Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A.! Why was it not shown? Not because of wrong attitudes, not because of unfairness, not because it did not deal with the issue. The station says it was because too much time was spent on the homosexual issue and not on other issues, because those for the amendment asked three times to go on and discuss other aspects of the ERA and because little time was left for summary by both sides. The real reason that it was not shown is that the station yielded to the pressure brought upon it by those for the ERA. Every American should be concerned that such could happen in our nation.

Not only am I concerned as an American, I am concerned as a Christian. Our nation is great because it has exalted righteousness and God has exalted it. Our religious freedom has allowed the cause of truth to flourish, but now I stand in awe as I see the truth of God being withheld from our people.

I am concerned as a father. My children will grow up in this land and I want for them what I had as a child — a nation concerned about righteousness. I have no desire to see them reared in a land where freedom of discussion is not known, and immorality is upheld by the laws of our land. I know that the strength of our nation rests in the strength of our homes — homes governed by God's truth and where His teachings are the rule of our lives.

I am concerned about the future. What other freedoms will be withdrawn from us? What other changes will be made that will make our lives as God-fearing people more difficult? As Jim Dearman said in his closing remarks, "Our forefathers envisioned a nation concerned about righteousness, they wanted to bring about one nation under God, but if the ERA is passed we may find ourselves living in a nation OUT FROM UNDER God." — P.O. Box 26156, Birmingham, Al. 35226.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble brethren, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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Does "Burned Up" Means "Burned Up"?

The Premillennialists of a generation ago and the Zionists of more modern times all claim that Jesus is coming back to this earth and establish his kingdom hereon. (See our editorial for December 9). When the statement in II Peter 3:10 is shown to them, they have no recourse but to deny that Peter really meant what he said, or that he really said what he meant. Peter's statement in II Peter 3:10 is as follows: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in 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."

The real problem seems to be with the phrase, "burned up." The Zionist does not believe that "burned up" means "burned up"; because if "burned up" means "burned up," Jesus cannot establish his kingdom upon this earth when he comes again. Does "burned up" mean "burned up," or does it mean something else? The Zionist insists that "burned up" means "renovated" or "purified." Let us examine the matter carefully.

The phrase, "burned up" is translated from the Greek KATAKAIΟ, a word



BOBBY DUNCAN

which is used a total of twelve times in the New Testament. It is used in Matthew 13:30, and also verse 40 to describe what would happen to the tares when they were separated from the wheat. It is used in Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17 to tell of the burning of the chaff when it is separated from the wheat. It is used in Acts 19:19 to tell of the burning of the many books in that great bonfire at Ephesus. When the tares were burned, were they just renovated? When the chaff was burned, was it just purified by fire? when the books were brought together at Ephesus, were they just warmed by the fire?

Other passages where the word KATAKAIΟ is used are: I Cor. 3:15; Heb. 13:11; Rev. 8:7 (twice); 17:16 and 18:8. In each of these cases it is clear that the word describes destruction by fire; and there is absolutely no cause to believe it means something different in II Peter 3:10.

We are aware that there is a variation among the manuscripts at this passage. Some manuscripts have EURETHESETAI 'discovered', instead of KATAKAIΟ. But this adds no strength to the argument of the Zionist; for to "be discovered" does not mean to "be renovated" or to

"be purified." Furthermore, we believe there is reason to agree with the following statements: "The reading 'shall be burned up' is well supported, and suits the context best" (The Pulpit Commentary). "We consider the variant reading...out of the line of thought" (R. C.H. Lenski).

Incidentally, we have checked several different translations; and the only one we have personally examined at this passage which translates the variant reading is the one put out by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The New International Version, which is being used by a good many brethren, does not accurately translate either EURETHESETAI or KATAKAIΟ. It says: "the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." This appears to be an attempt on the part of the NIV translators to insert their Zionistic theology into the next of the Bible. It is lamentable that the NIV translators stooped even lower at this point than did those of the Watchtower Society. At least the Watchtower Society translators did properly translate the less likely variation; while the NIV translators showed a preference for the less likely variation, and then supplied their own interpretation.

We believe "burned up" means "burned up"!

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 31

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our articles on radiometric dating methods).

C-14 DATING SYSTEMS

Let us now turn our attention to some of the specific radiometric dating methods. The first one which we shall attempt to examine is the radiocarbon dating system (i.e.: C-14 dating). Radiocarbon dating methods often show great ages for life forms (i.e.: something which was once living.) It will be worth our time to see not only



BERT THOMPSON

HOW this system works, but HOW ACCURATE it is as well. Dr. R. L. Wysong, in his excellent book, THE CREATION-EVOLUTION CONTROVERSY, summarizes the workings of the C-14 dating system thusly:

1. Radioactive carbon is formed from the action of cosmic rays on the nitrogen in the atmosphere.

2. C-14, in turn, combines with oxygen to form carbon dioxide which is then incorporated into plant and animal structures.

3. At death, no more C-14 is assimilated into tissues, and that present in organisms decays into nonradioactive materials.

4. Since the present level of C-14 in living tissue is known, and it is known that 1/2 of the C-14 in a sample will decay in about 5,600 years, then to determine the age of a sample of organic material we simply measure the amount of C-14 left.

For example, let's say the C-14 measured in a piece of bone is found to be 1.5

radioactive units (hypothetical units for this illustration). Since life today has an average of 24 radioactive units (hypothetical), and the animal from which the bone came likewise must have had 24 units at the moment of death, 22.5 radioactive units of C-14 have decayed (24U-1.5U=22.5U). One half of C-14 will decay every 5,600 years (1/2 life). Therefore, C-14 has halved in quantity four times. The age of the sample would be: 4 halvings x 5,600 years equals 22,400 years.'1

Now that we understand how the C-14 radiocarbon dating system works, the only question which really remains to be answered is this: how accurate does the system appear to be? And this is indeed a valid and timely question. For our answers, let us turn to various sources. First, hear Dr. Colin Renfrew, writing in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, November, 1977 in an article entitled "Ancient Europe is Older Than We Thought":

"All living cells contain radioactive carbon 14 in proportion to the amount in the atmosphere. When cells cease to absorb radiocarbon, the quantity trapped within them begins to dwindle at a known rate through radioactive decay. Thus, bone, wood, and other organic materials can be dated by measuring the carbon 14 that remains when radiocarbon dating developed in the 1940's, it was assumed that the proportion of carbon 14 in the atmosphere and hence in all living things, had remained constant. But when scientists measured carbon 14 in bristlecone pine rings of known ages, they found STARTLING DISCREPANCIES... CARBON 14 HAS, IN FACT, FLUCTUATED, AND RADIOCARBON DATING HAS TO BE REVISED."2 (Emphasis mine, BT)

In our last article, we examined some of the gross errors which have appeared in various methods of radiometric dating, C-14 included. Yet there is another problem which we have yet to mention. We would like to examine it now. That problem is this: IN MANY CASES, C-14 DATING

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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).

"Discuss the duties of Christians in relation to the business world."

As Christians, it is our obligation to exert our influence for Christ always and everywhere. It would be well if the followers of Christ would exhibit the spirit of Christianity and reflect the tenets which its founder taught with greater effectiveness in the business world.

There is too much of the disposition which prompts many to feel that there is no place for Christ and His cause in the marts of trade and amid the varied activities of the business and commercial world, and that it should be restricted to public worship and to the Lord's day. The only way that Christianity can get into business affairs of the world, to practice Christian precepts; Jesus taught, in one of his parables, that His disciples should be like leaven and permeate and influence all with whom they come in contact, (Matt. 13:33). Paul admonished us to "take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men," (Rom. 12:17). Because His disciples would necessarily be in contact with the world of business, Jesus taught much regarding their duties in this respect, (Matt. 20:1-16; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 12:13-21; John 4:35-38).

The all-sufficiency of the sacred scriptures is clearly evidenced in the fact that they contain instruction governing all pertinent activities for all in every sphere of life. There are rules touching the old and the young, the rich and the poor, and the wise and the simple, the good and the bad; and their various obligations and duties designated. Paul instructed the Ephesians in varied detail, and recognized the different classes in his epistle to the Christians of that city. Among them were servants, masters, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, parents and children. To the servants and masters he wrote: "Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening; knowing that he who is both their Master and yours in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him," (Eph. 6:5-9).

When the foregoing words were penned by the apostle, slavery was a legal institution, millions were in bondage, among whom were many members of the New Testament church. Occasionally, their masters would be Christian, too; and thus the relationship of master and slave would obtain between those who were members of Christ. In such a circumstance it was the duty of Christian servants to be obedient to their masters in the same fashion as would characterize them were their owners heathen; they were not to feel that because such a relation obtained in Christ, they were released from responsibility in the position which was theirs in the world.

Their service was to be rendered, "with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." They were to serve, as if they were serving Christ, whom indeed they were, because they were Christians, and as Christians, they could please Him, not only by rendering acceptable service to their masters. The "fear" to which the apostle alludes was not slavish terror, but concern of doing wrong. The service was to be rendered "in singleness of heart," without hypocrisy or deception; and to be performed not solely or merely for the purpose of pleasing men, but to please Christ. We are thus taught that it pleases Christ when we properly perform our duties in the varied affairs of life.

of Christian servants to be obedient to their masters in the same fashion as would characterize them were their owners heathen; they were not to feel that because such a relation obtained in Christ, they were released from responsibility in the position which was theirs in the world. Their service was to be rendered, "with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." They were to serve, as if they were serving Christ, whom indeed they were, because they were Christians, and as Christians, they could please Him, only by rendering acceptable service to their masters. The "fear" to which the apostle alludes was not slavish terror, but concern of doing wrong. The service was to be rendered "in singleness of heart," without hypocrisy or deception; and to be performed not solely or merely for the purpose of pleasing men, but to please Christ. We are thus taught that it pleases Christ when we properly perform our duties in the varied affairs of life.

Though these words were penned primarily with reference to the relation of slaves to their masters, the principle is applicable to that which exists between employer and employee today. Each worker should seek to perform his full measure of service which his employer may

properly expect, and realize that it is his duty so to do as a servant of Christ. He who shrinks from the performance of reasonable duties or neglects that which his employer has the right to expect of him, steals from his employer, is hypocritical in life, and shirks his duty to Christ! Though employers may not show proper appreciation of the efforts of conscientious workmen, these may be sure that the Lord does, and that He will eventually reward them for the fidelity they exhibit in worthily discharging their obligations in life.

Masters were by the apostle admonished likewise to "do the same things unto them," i.e., to act under the same rule and to be motivated by the same principles of conduct. The master is to remember that he, too, is answerable to Christ for his conduct; and, he must, therefore, act in such fashion toward his servants as to merit and receive the approbation of his Master—Christ. The relationship of master and slave is no more—in this land—but the lessons taught find application in the business and commercial world of our time. As the employee is to serve faithfully and well, so the employer is obligated to consider the welfare of his employees, pay them suitable and liveable wages, and provide proper working conditions. Paul told the Christian masters in Ephesus to "forbear threatening," in view of the fact that they were answerable to their Master in heaven, there being "no respect of persons with" God. So far as the Father is concerned, He recognized no difference between the master and the servant—each stood on the same plane before Him. Christianity, through the diffusion of its principles in the civilized world, ultimately eliminated slavery; and, the perplexing problems which today exist between labor and capital will be resolved, too, when men are willing to apply the teaching of Christ to the complex relationships which obtain in the field today.

Too Much Emphasis On Youth?

T. B. Underwood, Jr.

[Editor's note: We do not ordinarily print articles which have already appeared in other brotherhood papers. We are reprinting this one from the Gospel Advocate at the suggestion of our beloved brother Guy N. Woods. We commend it to your attention.]

First let it be clearly understood that the writer is not *opposed* to special work with young people. However, the time has come that someone speak to the fact that elders everywhere must put work with children, youth and adults in proper perspective.

For over thirty-five years if has been my privilege to be a preacher of the gospel, and in all those years the elders of only one church asked the question, "What will you do with our adults?" All others asked, "What will you do with our young people?"

Some years ago, the Lubbock Avalanche Journal carried an article which stated that many of the religious groups in America were being encouraged to switch from youth emphasis to adult emphasis. They had found that their churches were becoming weak because the memberships were not receiving proper food. Thus, they were being encouraged to see that the "sheep" as well as the "lambs" were being properly fed.

Could this be a part of our problem? Elders in many churches over the land are finding churches are weak. Could it be that those responsible for teaching the young (the adults)

have been neglected for so long that they not only are at a loss to know what to do, but that they do not have a solid, well-grounded, faith in God's word.

When did Isreal begin to have most of her problems, and to turn from God in such a way that he ultimately disowned them? It was at the death of Solomon when Rehoboam listened to the young men instead of the old men! (Read very carefully 1 Kings 12:1-20.) This occasioned the division of the kingdom into Judah and Isreal. It was Rehoboam's decision to take the advice of young men and not listen to the old men.

When the zeal of youth is tempered with the wisdom and experience of age, God's people can be led into proper paths. Many of the problems which have arisen in the church during the past few years could have been avoided by the simple expedient of using the voice of wisdom instead of giving so much responsibilities into the hands of youth.

The zeal of youth is a marvelous characteristic, and it must be encouraged. But when elders listen only to youth and give little heed to those in the church of mature judgement and experience, they are simply asking for problems which they would not otherwise have.

Until elders are sure that the youth in the church have their feet firmly planted in the faith of the gospel revealed in the Testament,

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DOES NOT AT ALL AGREE WITH GEOLOGICAL DATING. Now let us make certain that the reader understands one important point at this spot in our discussion: Such relative time scales as geological time scales cannot be properly used to judge the C-14 dating methods. And we wish to make that crystal clear at this point in our discussion. We do not mention the difference at this point between C-14 dating and geological dating to establish the fact that C-14 dating is often in error. What we do want to establish is this: How do we know which one to accept (if any!) — C-14 dating, or geological dating? As the astute reader will notice from the chart below, they are not, in many instances, the same. Yet we are being asked daily to believe both! The question remains: Which of the two are we to believe? Consider the data in this chart, which is from the book, *SCIENCE AND CREATION*,³ by Boardman, Koontz, and Morris:

Description of Sample	C-14 Date (years before present)	Geological Date (Years before present, approximate)
W-169, Keilor Skull, Victoria	8,500	Pleistocene (300,000 - 1,000,000)
L-137, Peat and wood buried under Pleistocene fossil remains	8,000 to 10,200	1,000,000 - 2,000,000
Gr N-2022, Neanderthal Mandible from Libya	40,700 - 35,000 - 100,000	
UCLA-1292, Sabertooth Tiger LaBrea tar pits	28,000 - 1000,000 - 1,000,000	
Gin-93, Mammoth scapula in Cromagnon burial site, Siberia	11,000 - 20,000 - 35,000	
Ta-121, Mammoth bones, Komi, USSR	10,455 - 35,000	
I-1149-1150, Natural Gas Alabama and Mississippi in Cretaceous and Eocene formation	30,000 - 100,000,000	
MO-334, Coak, Kirgizia	1,680 - 100,000,000	

The above is just a sampling of many such examples from the literature. After looking at such huge discrepancies, it is little wonder that such statements as the following are beginning to appear: "As a result of radio-carbon dates, all the previous interpretations of Pleistocene lake history, depth and position in geologic time must be reassessed."⁴

The question still remains: Which one (if either) of the two methods do we accept as valid — C-14 dating or geologic age dating? Since both are based on assumptions, is it possible that both are in error? Obviously, since both are based on ASSUMPTIONS (we have already established that fact in our earlier articles) it is POSSIBLE that both are wrong. And both have been proven, in many instances, to be just that — wrong! This leads us to the next important section in our study of radiometric dating methods — half-life assumptions.

HALF-LIFE ASSUMPTIONS

The most basic assumption of all radiometric clocks (not only of C-14, but of all others as well—e.g.: potassium-agron, thorium-lead, uranium-lead, etc.) is that decay is constant and unaffected by external influence (does this remind the reader of uniformitarianism????) That is to say, once radioactive clocks are "turned on" they keep reliable time. We repeat: this is the most basic ASSUMPTION of all radioactive clocks! And it is an AS-

SUMPTION that is challengeable from a scientific standpoint! In our next article, we shall try to end our discussion of radiometric dating methods by examining the half-life assumption, since it comes to bear on ALL radiometric dating methods.

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these young people should be taught more perfectly the way of the Lord, (Acts 18:24-28.). Note that it was *after* Priscilla and Aquila were sure that Apollos would acquit himself admirably in the work of the Lord that they gave to him letters of introduction.

Just because the world and our nation give emphasis to youth is no good reason that the church should do so. Our nation, the greatest nation in the world, has of late gotten into diffuculty the same as Isreal of old. It is time that the church quit letting the world set the standard by which to go. The church should set the standard by which the world should go.

Let us then, teach and equip our adults so that they can do a better job training their children.

Keep in mind that the Bible is an adult book. It was written by adults for adults. There are many great and marvelous lessons and principles which can be taught the young from the pages of the sacred volume. But when Jesus was ready to teach adults how to be humble, He took a child and sat him in the midst urging adults to imitate this child, (Matt. 18:1-6.). It was not the other way around.

While it may be getting late to turn the trend, if elders will insist that the adults in the flock receive full and careful training so that they can assume their God-given roles of leadership over the young people, the church will be strengthened, and God's family will once again take its place among men as the leader in matters spiritual. — P.O. Box 150, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

What Is The House Of The Lord?

RONALD COLEMAN

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of Jehovah" (Psalms 122:1).

When David wrote these words he had reference to worshipping God in the tabernacle. This was no rare event in the life of David. Even after the death of his infant

son "David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel; and he came into the house of Jehovah, and worshipped. . ." (II Sam. 12:20).

Later, a more permanent "house" was built - the temple. Solomon built it, and it was also the "house of Jehovah." In the fourth year of his reign, "he began to build the house of Jehovah" (I Kings 6:1). It took seven years to complete (I Kings 6:38). And the Bible says "thus all the work that king Solomon wrought in the HOUSE OF JEHOVAH was finished. . ." (I Kings 7:51). So the tabernacle and the temple both were referred to as the "house" of the Lord.

The word "house" is also used in a different sense in the Bible. That is, with no reference to a constructed building, but rather to a FAMILY. Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house" (Acts 10:20). Noah "prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. 11:7).

What about the expression "the house of the Lord" in the New Testament? Does that refer to a building of some kind, or to the family of God? Paul mentioned the "house of God, which is the church of the living God" (I Tim. 3:15). So the house of God is the church, and the church is PEOPLE - sons of God, members of His family! Christ is a "son, over His house, whose house are WE. . ." (Heb. 3:6). So we (Christians) are the house of God, His family.

Why then, do some Christians frequently speak of the church's building as the house of the Lord? Why are children told to behave a certain way in the building because we must have reverence in the house of the Lord? Why do our brethren insist on publishing Bible class literature that consistently calls the building the Lord's house?

We should know that the church is made up of people - not bricks and mortar. We should know that the house of the Lord is His family - not a physical building where worship takes place. Let's cease to be careless in the way we use these terms.

Not a very serious error, you say? But brethren, why continue making any mistake, serious or not, when we know better? — P.O. Box 376, Arab, Al. 35016.

Obedience

JOE DAVID NEELY

"Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:9). "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). God has always required obedience. Disobedience has always blighted the path of man with many terrifying experiences. The obedience God has required has been strict. Nadab and Abihu offered unto God strange fire "which he commanded them not," and God took their lives as a result (Lev. 10:1-2). This would seem to us a little thing, but it was disobedience and for this they were punished. "The way of the transgressor is hard."

One of the most difficult lessons man has to learn is that of obeying God. In the great address we call "The Sermon on the Mount," our Lord laid down the ground on which he discriminated between wise and foolish men (Matt. 7:24-27). The difference between the wise and foolish was not that one heard while the other didn't, nor that one believed while the other didn't, but that one OBEYED and the other didn't. The whole matter turned on obeying or not obeying what the Lord commanded. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city" (Rev. 22:14). — P.O. Box 2005, East Gadsden, Ala. 35903.



Words Of Truth

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Festus; but speak forth
courage."

— Acts 26:25

December 25 and January 1: Some Holiday Observations

We now stand upon the threshold of the last holiday for the year of 1977 and the first holiday for the coming year of 1978. I speak respectively of December 25, 1977, and January 1, 1978. Both are nationally recognized holidays. They always come one week apart. Therefore they are two holidays that enjoy very close proximity to each other. Occasionally they fall on the week-end as they did this past year when they both fell upon Saturday, and this season when they fall upon Sunday. It has been about ten years now since December 25 and January 1 fell on Sunday. If I have correctly checked my past calendars, the last time was December 25, 1967, and January 1, 1968. A few observations appear to be in order during the closing days of 1977 and before the coming of 1978 relative to these two days.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

DECEMBER 25 AS VIEWED BY THE MASSES

Millions of religious people look upon December 25th each year as the official birthday of Jesus Christ. There is ABSOLUTELY NO Biblical basis for such, but the matters but little to those who have decided that this was really the day he became the Babe of Bethlehem. Likewise there is no proof from any secular source that this was the exact day. Nearly every month of the year has been cele-

brated by some through the centuries as being his birthday. Churches of Christ have long been known as people who deeply appreciate the birth and the death of Christ. But we have no instructions given relative to the exact day of his birth nor any information about the proper way it should be celebrated. Certainly drinking and lasciviousness are not proper ways to celebrate such and yet this is precisely what the masses of men and women, many of whom claim to be religiously devote and zealous, do each last week in December. I read some years back that December is the month of the year in which more liquor is purchased and consumed than any other month of the year. And vast amounts of it are purchased and consumed by people who count themselves to be very religious and who are celebrating the birthday of Christ.

ARE WE NOW YIELDING GROUND?

As a people we have long contended that this day should not be kept as a religious day. Gift exchanges, a joyous disposition and family togetherness are not wrong on December 25 or any day of the year for that matter. In view of our long-time stand why should a church of Christ in Tennessee put on its outside bulletin board the words, "Merry Christmas From All Of Us To All Of You?" Most passers-by who see such will obtain but one connotation and it is a religious one from beginning to end. Why should another Tennessee congregation have the church building decorated with Christmas wreaths just like most any denominational church does with its building from about December 10 through the end of the year? Why in some of the services conducted by churches of Christ are there songs sung about the birth of Christ between Decem-

ber 1 and 25 that are not sung at any other time during the year unless the world with its Christmas theology has influenced us more than we like to think? Why does some of "our" literature occasionally contain allusions to December 25th as the birthday of Jesus Christ? More than once teachers of small classes have come to me with just such literature. Why should members of the church send cards before December 25 with all sorts of religious connections such as the Nativity scene? We get such every year from fellow Christians! Why should a member of the church entertain at this season and place rather conspicuously in the living room or den an open Bible with Matthew 2 or Luke 2 marked for special significance? I have seen such again and again and always to my utter dismay.

JUST HOW FAR HAVE WE GONE IN THIS MATTER?

Far enough that with some Christians Santa Claus gets more money spent on him in December and January than the same family will give to the Lord during a whole twelve months. I mention January because much of the buying done in December does not show up on the credit card statements until the following month or in January. Did this fictitious character get more of your money this past December 25 than you gave to the Lord all that month of December or for that matter all of 1976? What about this coming December 25? Will Santa Claus get more of the family giving spent on him than the Lord will receive during the four Sundays of this December? Through the years I have noted in numerous bulletins that giving takes an annual dip in December and

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

"I am not and most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 20:23

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Can We Know?

Jesus said, "Ye shall KNOW the truth..." (Jno. 8:32). That settles it for those of us who are naive enough to take the Lord at his word and believe it will be just exactly as he said. Others contend that the truth cannot be known; or that we cannot be sure that the position we occupy relative to vital doctrinal truth is the correct position.



BOBBY DUNCAN

"After all," we are reminded, "you cannot possibly believe that you know everything, or that you are infallible. Since this is true, how can you be absolutely sure that you are correct in contending that one must be baptized to be forgiven, or that instrumental music in worship is wrong, or that we should eat the Lord's supper upon the first day of every week? Is it not a fact that many very scholarly people deny all of these? How can you know that you are right and all of them are wrong?"

Such reasoning as the above denies a number of plain passages in the Bible. In addition to the statement of the Lord already cited (Jno. 8:32), there is also his statement in John 7:17: "If any man will do his will, he shall KNOW of the doctrine..." Paul told the Ephesians: "When ye read, ye may understand my knowledge..." (Eph. 3:2); and again: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (5:17). In the epistle of First John, the Greek work GINOSKO 'know' occurs

twenty-five times, or roughly speaking, once in every four verses. You see, this silly doctrine that we cannot know anything for sure was around in John's day, and he wrote to refute it.

Then what of the argument that many scholarly people believe otherwise concerning certain doctrinal truth? Are we insisting that we are smarter than they? No, indeed! We have never claimed to be smart. But differences with reference to the subject, action, and design of baptism, the frequency of the Lord's supper, mechanical instruments of music in worship, the organization of the church, etc., are not differences of understanding; and they cannot be settled merely on the basis of who is smarter than whom. These differences grow out of different attitudes toward the written revelation of God.

The average religionist of our day considers the Bible to be a book of general principles which may be used to serve as

guidelines for daily living. While the Bible certainly is a book of principles which we must follow in daily living, it is much more than that. It is a blueprint which must also be followed in religious activity.

Certainly we do not know everything; and no doubt there are many things in the Bible which we do not properly understand, and never will. But with regard to the fundamental doctrinal things such as we have mentioned, there is no doubt. If we were in error with regard to these matters, such would have been abundantly demonstrated on the polemic platform many years ago. As it is, the very opposite has been demonstrated time and again; and now representative men in the denominational world will no longer sign propositions and debate these matters.

As the scholarly Franklin Camp is wont to say, "We can know that we know that we know that we know!"

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 32
RADIOMETRIC DATING
AND HALF-LIFE ASSUMPTION

People looking for an "absolute" method for arriving at a date for the universe will, we feel, have to continue searching. It is painfully obvious that non-radiometric dating methods will not give an absolute date for the age of the universe, because there are so many assumptions involved. Likewise, it should be obvious to even the most casual reader and observer that radiometric dating methods are not much better, if any. They, too, are based on many assumptions. There has yet to be discovered a reliable "timer" for dating the age of the earth. Since it is entirely outside of the realm of the scientific method to work in "prehistory" areas, we feel safe in saying that a reliable dating system will probably be a long time in coming (if ever!).

The most basic assumption of not only the C-14 clock, but also of all other radioactive clocks (i.e.: potassium-argon, uranium-lead, thorium-lead, etc.) is that decay is constant and unaffected by external influences. That is to say, once radioactive clocks are "turned on", they keep reliable time. In order to ASSUME this, several assumptions must be made, not the least of which are: (1) uniformitarianism, and; (2) constant half-life decay rates. These two assumptions both are challengeable! We would like to examine them in this article.

Has uniformitarianism been the rule rather than the exception? Has everything been moving along at constant rates since the beginning of time? Are radiometric half-life dating systems consistent? Are there any indications that perhaps something (anything!?) could possibly have changed half-life rates? Is it at all possible

that uniformitarianism has not occurred?

Dr. F. B. Juenaman, writing in INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH in 1972, addressed himself to radiometric dating systems. He noted the possible influence of neutrino influx into our atmosphere and its subsequent absorption by elements, causing their instability and decay. And obviously, since neutrino influx can vary, then radio-decay could likewise vary. Juenaman suggests, concerning the possibility of a large influx of neutrinos in the past, that this:

*"... must have had the peculiar characteristic of resetting all our atomic clocks. This would knock our C-14, potassium-argon, and uranium-lead dating measurements into a cocked hat! The age of prehistoric artifacts, the age of the earth, and that of the universe would be thrown into doubt."*¹

Juenaman suggests that the rate of neutrino influx into our atmosphere in the past may have altered the decay of radioactive clocks. Actually, however, the decay of any radioactive mineral can be altered if the mineral is "energized" by being bombarded by high-energy particles from space (neutrinos, cosmic rays, etc.) or from particles emitted from other radioactive minerals in close association. It has also been demonstrated that radio-decay can even be altered by physical pressure and chemical combinations.²

The nuclear physicists, Anderson and Spangler, writing in an article entitled, "Radiometric Dating: Is The 'Decay Constant' Constant?", pointed out concerning their observations of the effect of electricity and other environmental influences on decay rate:

"Under these conditions, one can reach only one reasonable conclusion—barring artifactuality, the detected emissions are not of the random expectation. The deviations (of decay rate) are a function of the environment... we are each convinced that the thesis of decay independence and the thesis of 'decay constancy' needs con-

(Continued On Page 4)



BERT THOMPSON

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

offer this objection and to refuse the use of the word Christmas, because of its origin, while using, without question, many others of similar objectionable *origin*, but which have also undergone modification: but no longer convey an improper sense. Sunday derives from *sacred* "Woden's Day," (Woden was one of the chief idols of mythology); Thursday designates the day of the war God, Thor; and Saturday comes from Saturn, the ancient god

of seed sowing. To us the days of the week bear no resemblance to earlier usage and we use them in harmony with their meaning to us and not to others. Similarly, *Christmas* is not a "mass for Christ," but a day of joy, gladness, and warmth when friends and loved ones take occasion to meet and mingle, exchange gifts and good wishes, and relax in a season of happiness and good will.

Christ In A Death Chamber

"What does the word 'Christmas' mean? When did the observance of the birthday of Christ December 25, begin? Is it wrong for Christians to engage in any of the usual activities associated with Christmas such as putting up Christmas trees, decorating lights, and exchanging gifts?"

The word "Christmas" is derived from the proper name "Christ," and the addition, "mass," a rite or commemorative ceremony. Thus, the word "Christmas" originally signified a ceremony regarding Christ; and, in the minds of many, the celebration of His birth date, thought by such to be on December 25. It is of significance that this word was not coined until the eleventh century—a thousand years after our Lord came to the earth.

However, the observance or celebration of the birth of Christ, dates to the second century of the Christian era, the first traces of such being noted in the reign of the Roman emperor Commodus who died about 180 A.D. A tragic event occurred in connection with its observance when the pagan emperor Diocletian (born in A.D. 284), learned that there was a congregation of Christians assembled in the city of Nicomedia to celebrate the birthday of the Lord, and ordered the church doors closed and fire set to the building, all therein perishing in the flames. In the centuries immediately following the close of the apostolic age, it appears that the birthday of Jesus was celebrated in the spring of the year, often as late as April or May; and, it was not until the fourth century that an agreement was reached by various religious parties and their leaders to observe December 25 as the day of our Lord's birth.

The observance of Christmas, as a *religious* holiday, did not originate in the apostolic age, and is thus without divine sanction. As a matter of fact, it is not possible to determine in what month, or on what day the Savior was born and inasmuch as there is neither precept nor example for its observance, faithful

Christians do not keep it as a religious festival. While some today do regard it as such, many people consider it as no more than a holiday around which many family, social and national traditions have gathered, and there is in it for them no religious implications. I grew up in a home where these views prevailed and though the season contributed much to my happiness and enjoyment, I was never under the impression that we were observing Christ's birthday. Christmas, when thus regarded, is simply an occasion when gifts are exchanged, families get together, and hearts are warmed by the happy festivities. I have always felt that children, not privileged to experience the innocent joys of the holiday season, are being deprived of rich blessings rightfully theirs.

The argument, that Christmas (Christ + Mass), is of Catholic origin, and that the use of the term perpetuates the errors of this ecclesiasticism, lacks merit, for two reasons: (1) the word no longer conveys its exclusive earlier meaning, signifying to many of us no more than a holiday; (2) it is inconsistent to

offer this objection and to refuse the use of the word Christmas, because of its origin, while using, without question, many others of similar objectionable *origin*, but which have also undergone modification: but no longer convey an improper sense. Sunday derives from *sacred* "Woden's Day," (Woden was one of the chief idols of mythology); Thursday designates the day of the war God, Thor; and Saturday comes from Saturn, the ancient god

Jesus had just returned from the country of the Gergesenes. There he had cast the demons out of the demoniac and had created quite a stir among the local citizens. After his return, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came to Jesus asking for help. On the way to Jairus' home Jesus healed a woman with an issue of blood (Luke 8:42-48). Then before they reached the ruler's home word came that the child had died. The story of Jesus in a death chamber is of great interest.

We feel very keenly the tragedy of this girl's death. This incident is recorded in Luke 8:49-56. She was Jairus' only daughter. The light of her parent's life had gone out. She was about twelve years of age. According to the practices of her day, she was at the dawn of womanhood. Many young girls were even contemplating marriage at that age. What should have been the morning of her life had become night.

Jairus was a ruler of the synagogue. He was responsible for overseeing the synagogue and the conduct of the public worship in the synagogue. He had reached a very high position in life and one that gave him the respect of his fellowmen. Possibly Jairus was well-to-do and had climbed the ladder of earthly ambition and prestige. While life had given him many things, his most precious thing had been taken away.

The story of Christ in a death chamber implies several things about Jairus. First, his prejudices were forgotten. Here was a man who was a leader of the synagogue. Already opposition was mounting against Jesus and most of the leaders of the Jews were regarding Jesus as an outsider. Many of them looked upon Jesus as a dangerous heretic. The doors of the synagogue were closed to Jesus in some cases. One must avoid Christ at all cost—and yet in his hour of need, Jairus was one who abandoned his prejudices. Prejudice simply means to judge beforehand. Few things have done more to slow down and hold back the cause of Christ than prejudice. A prejudiced mind shuts one out from many a blessing, and yet in this hour of need Jairus forgot all about his prejudice against Christ and came with a request for help.

Second, his dignity was forgotten. Here he was a ruler of the synagogue. Imagine the picture of the ruler of a synagogue throwing himself at the feet of a wandering teacher, and yet that is exactly what he did. He forgot about his dignified position. All he could think about was how much he loved his daughter and how much he desired her healing. But this reminds us that we must forget our dignity to save our souls. Naaman the leper had to forget his dignity in order to dip in the River Jordan. It frequently and tragically happens that one often stands on his dignity and falls from grace.

Third, his pride was forgotten. It must have taken the conscious effort of humiliation for this ruler of the synagogue to come and ask help from Jesus Christ. None of us wishes to

be indebted to anyone else. It is normal for us to want to run our lives ourselves, and many times in our pride and dignity we simply refuse to ask anyone to help us. But the first step in becoming a Christian is to realize that we cannot be anything other than indebted to God. We just have to throw our pride aside and come humbly to the one who can save.

Forth, it is possible that his friends were forgotten. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that his friends and family strongly objected to his coming to Jesus Christ. They might have considered it beneath his dignity to ask the help of Christ and insisted that he stay away from Christ. It may well be that this ruler of the Jews defied public opinion and home advice in order to come to Christ. And again we must know of individuals who had to defy their closest loved ones and dearest friends in order to come to Christ.

Here is the story of one who forgot everything except that he wanted the help that only Jesus could give him. And because he forgot, he will remember forever that Jesus Christ is his Savior.

Jesus came into the ruler's home and brought Peter and John and James and the parents of the girl into the room where she was. The scene was one of pandemonium. The people there were weeping and wailing for the dead. The custom was in that part of the world that wailing was done by professional wailers. The shrill incessant wailing of professional mourners was filling the house of Jairus that day. There were also the flute players. Again, this was connected with wailers. Usually there was the rending of garments associated with the mourning at a death. Thus, it was into that excited and hysterical atmosphere that Jesus came, and he came giving the remedy for their grief — "Fear not, only believe and she shall be made whole" (Luke 8:50). After putting everyone out of the room, he told them the girl was not dead but only asleep, and they laughed Him to scorn for this. But our Lord performed a marvelous miracle on this occasion. With a helping hand and a word from the Lord, she was raised from the dead. The miracle was immediate and complete. The effect of the miracle was to bring amazement to the family. Jesus, during His earthly ministry, showed His power over disease, over demons, over the forces of nature, and now on this occasion, He shows His power even over death itself. Jesus showed such power on other occasions; notably, with the resurrection of Lazarus and the crowning demonstration of His power over death was His own resurrection. When our Lord came forth from the grave, He lives never to die again, and therein is the difference between Jesus' resurrection and that of the others during His personal ministry.

This incident in the life of the Lord reminds us that the way to benefit from the amazing grace of God is to throw away our pride and humbly to confess our need and obey God. —434 Main Street, Milan, Tenn. 38358

December 25 And January 1:

Some Holiday Observations

Continued from page 1

January. In reality it ought to take a rise for many people are handed generous last-of-the-year bonuses during December and the Lord should be remembered in these. Too often Santa Claus alone is the recipient of the extra money that Christians have during December of each year. Why should this be? Most preachers and elders could tell you why giving often takes a dip in December and January of each year.

December 25 and January 1 this past holiday season came on Saturday. I wonder how many Christians missed services the last Sunday of 1976 and the first Sunday of 1977 because they were more interested in the holiday spirit than in the spirit of holy worship? Some congregations of my acquaintance had singings on December 31. I wonder how many church members preferred a New Year's party to the fellowship and worship of a song feast of praise and adoration. "Partying" often takes precedence over piety doesn't it? Then some wonder why their spiritual thermometer registers so low!!

WHAT ABOUT THE COMING HOLIDAY SEASON?

December 25, 1977, and January 1, 1978, will fall upon Sunday just as they did in 1966 and 1967 and 1960 and 1961 respectively. I well remember in 1966 how that a family did not attend the services faithfully that Lord's Day. It was the big meal day for the wife's family. Her husband's being a leader in the congregation

did not matter. Santa Claus and her family came before God and the family of Christians in that community. There will be many duplications of this on this coming December 25, 1977. It does not take a prophet or the son of a prophet to predict such with accuracy. All that is required is just an acquaintance with the way some of our brethren think and act!!

I understand that the major football games will be played on January 2, 1978, this coming season instead of on January 1 which will be a Sunday. But if they had

been played on Sunday, January 1st, there would have been members of the church all over this country who would have missed Sunday evening services in order to watch the Orange Bowl from Miami, Florida. How do I know this? I know my brethren and how many of them prefer sports to the Saviour and especially football to their faith. Priorities sometimes get mighty confused in Christian households. Some years ago I knew an elder and his family who could never make it to Wednesday Bible Study on time. Why? Because Wagon Train did not go off until 7:30 and they just had to see how the program ended even though Bible Study began at 7:30. Travel time from their home to the building occurred during the Devotional period! Brethren, think on these things between now and January 2 of 1978.—Box 464, Ripley, Tn. 38063.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Continued From Page 2

siderable revision and re-examination... at a minimum, an unreliability factor must be incorporated into age dating calculations."³

Alterations of the decay rate have been measured in modern laboratories. There is also evidence that decay rates have varied in the past.

It is a well-known fact that when radioactive elements decay in certain types of rocks, (for example, mica) the particles emitted from the nuclei produce a zone of discoloration known as pleochroic halo. This zone will vary depending upon decay rate. The more rapid the decay rate, the larger the halo. If decay rates are constant, then we would expect halos to remain constant for the same elements in identical rocks. Although this constancy is popularly believed to be true, it is not!

R. V. Gentry, in an article in the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHYSICS, stated:

"Halo radii and the Geiger-Nuttall law are studied carefully with the result that little or no justification is found for the usual arguments proving the stability of the decay constant over geological time from pleochroic halo data."⁴

Joly, from whom most of the data about pleochroic halos have come, concluded that halos do vary and that DECAY RATES MAY ALSO HAVE VAR-

IED!⁵ The implications that Joly's varying halos have on dating methods is expressed by A. F. Kovarik in a bulletin of the National Research Council:

"His (Joly's) suggestion of varying rate of disintegration of uranium at various geological periods WOULD, IF CORRECT, SET ASIDE ALL POSSIBILITIES OF AGE CALCULATION BY RADIOACTIVITY METHODS."⁶ (Emphasis mine—BT).

Now it stands to reason that IF decay rates can be changed by bombarding nuclei with high energy particles, if decay rates can change due to chemicals and physical pressures, and if there is halo evidence that decay rates have changed over geological time, then it can be easily seen and understood that a statement such as "the decay rate does not change, but is uniform" is not only based on pure assumptions, but those assumptions (and the statement) are more than likely false.

As Dr. R. L. Wysong has so well stated:

"If decay rate can vary (picking just this one assumption common to radiodating methods), how can we speak about the certainty of radio-time? Radioactive clocks can be no more accurate than man-made clocks which show evidence of having been tampered with: gear size changed, spring tension increased, hands manu-

ually advanced, etc. Certainly we would not depend upon a man-made clock showing evidences of such tampering. Similarly, NEITHER CAN WE DEPEND UPON RADIOACTIVE CLOCKS BEYOND THE POINT THAT THEIR ASSUMPTIONS CAN BE CHECKED."⁷ (Emphasis mine—BT).

CONCLUSION

"The fact that most dates are not 'scientific,' has almost entirely slipped by the public. We are all guilty of simply assuming as true what others have or told us about the age of the universe, earth, and life."⁸ And friends, much of it "simply ain't so"!!!

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Words Of Truth

"I am not ashamed of my testimony; but speak forth the Words of Truth and so be bold." — Acts 26:25

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1977

NUMBER 3

Controlling Drinking And Smoking: So Similar

An article in *McCall's* for June, 1977, on "how To Prevent a Drinking Problem" had thoughts that struck me forcefully. It stated that "Most authorities still maintain that recovered alcoholics cannot successfully drink again." Alcoholics kid themselves about "occasional slips" thinking "That's the way we are." Just so with addicted smokers.



Martel Pace

Some suggestions to help cut down on drinking or changing one's habits were: (1) Keep a daily record for a few weeks to see when, where and why they are most likely to drink. Apply the same to smoking. "Self-monitoring... helps reduce the amount they drink by making them conscious of it." (2) Begin by controlling when you drink. A cigarette only after a meal might be a good starting place for quitting. (3) Keep a list of alternatives to drinking. The habitual smoker too many try gum chewing, reading, even meditating on Jesus as Savior to help. But one should avoid social activities where drinking or smoking companions frequent. Most just don't seem to realize that part of conversion is giving up friends who drag us down. Besides, we smoke (second-hand) when in the company of smokers! (4) Don't associate alcohol with status. Cigarette smoking must not be viewed as "big stuff". The saying is right: "Most boys begin to smoke to prove they are men and try to quit 30 years later to prove the same thing." (5) Remember that, if you drink as a medicine to cheer you up or relax, you

may already have a serious problem. If you smoke to calm your nerves you already have an addiction. How sad that one must have a cigarette to calm the frazzled by cigarettes to begin with! (6) Problem drinkers should learn to assert themselves. Ask for coffee or a soft drink. Don't give in to pressure of others who urge you to drink. The smoker must learn to assert his rights by saying, "no, I'm quitting. Please don't smoke around me." Or, just move on to other non-smoking company. Tell others you are quitting; it adds to your own commitment to do so.

All this adds up to: The Christian must never be dominated by anything but Christ.

There is no way we can claim to be like Christ unless we can control our physical appetites. The Bible calls this "temperance" (Self-control) in II Peter 1:5-10. Remember the first thing Jesus did after baptism? He gave up food for 40 days. Perhaps this was to test His commitment of God. Have you ever tested your commitment by self-control of any physical appetite for a season to see if you could? Try fasting for a time. After the first hunger pains are over the results are amazing. You'll never know the full blessings in Christ until you conquer flesh. — P.O. Box 725, Kennett, Mo. 63857

A Restructured, Freer Church?

By DALTON KEY

Many among us today suggest the need for a "restructured church", a "more liberated church", or a "freer church". Since the Lord, the master builder, constructed the church, what need is there to RE-structure that blood-bought institution (Matt. 16:18)? The church, as the House of God, was built by none other than Jesus Christ (I Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:4; Psa. 127:1).

To suggest that the church needs a restructuring job implies that Christ, the church's sole builder and founder, did a less than perfect job. Our Savior founded His church upon the rocky, solid foundation of His deity, authority, and saving power. He built it to stand firm against all forms of opposition, the gates of Hades including. Who among us is brazen and foolhardy enough to affirm Christ's imperfection in originally constructing His church?

Furthermore, our Lord has already liberated (freed) His church. The instrument through which He frees is the truth, the

word of God (John 8:32-34; 17:17). He has mercifully and gracefully freed us from the Old Law, from sin, and from the hand-crafted creeds and doctrines of men (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32; Rom. 6:6-14; Matt. 15:9; Gal. 1:6-12; II Tim. 4:2-4). From what more should we be free? should we free ourselves from ALL law? No, for we are under law to Christ (I Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2; II John 9). Should we free ourselves so that we may "do our own thing" religiously? No, for all that we do must be done in the name of Jesus Christ and in accordance with His doctrine (Col. 3:17; II John 9). We may stand fast only in the "liberty wherewith CHRIST HAST MADE US FREE" (Gal. 5:1).

To restructure that which our Lord has already constructed, or to attempt to free ourselves from things other than those from which Christ has freed us, is to rebel against and discredit His authority (Matt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22; Eph. 1:22). — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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BOBBY DUNCAN

Some Things I Want In 1978!

*Stronger faith in the promise of God;
In His law, greater delight.
Sincere compassion for those down trod;
Courage to stand for the right.
Patience for those who stumble along,
And fail to live as they should.
Fortitude always to fight against wrong;
Love for the whole brotherhood.
Gentleness and mercy for those in need;
Freedom from all prejudice.
Meekness and wisdom in sowing the seed;
Trust in the Lord to bless.
Real appreciation for the value of truth;
Deafness to the applause of the world.
Faithful devotion to the wife of my youth;
Health for my boy and my girl.
Confidence in him who erreth not,
And points the way to Heaven.
Full joy and gratitude for what
His love already has given.*

All of us on the staff of WORDS OF TRUTH wish for all our readers a very joyous and prosperous New Year.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 33

(Editor's note: There are four more articles to be published in this series. Though some of the terms used in the series were not easy for most of us to understand, we appreciate the thoroughness with which brother Thompson has dealt with his subject. This particular article deals in simple language with a matter that comes up for discussion quite often. We commend it to you.)

(NOTE: This article is a continuation of our articles on the age of the earth).

THE EARTH AND APPEARANCE OF AGE

In examining the postulated age of the earth, there is another area which we must not leave unexamined. This area deals with the theory that the earth, when it was created, had the "appearance" of great age. This is a very interesting theory, and bears our investigation.

There are two assumptions common to all dating systems which show ages of great antiquity for the earth. The first assumption is that there was no supernatural creation; the second assumption is that there have been no nonuniformitarian catastrophies. If either creation or catastrophies have occurred, then dating methods based on uniformity are invalid.

For example, if the creation were a sudden, complete creation, there would have automatically been the immediate appearance of age. Were we to look at the creation one second after its completion, it would have appeared to us to be "aged" already. Let us look at a few examples.

Consider Adam. The Bible says he was created full-grown-able to reproduce. So, even though we do not know his exact age, we do know that he was past puberty, and was able to reproduce his own kind. And consider Eve. Immediately after she was created, she was also able to reproduce. So, even though she was "newly created" she nevertheless had the appearance of age. Consider the animals. They too, were created with reproduction capabilities. Likewise, the plants were created not as seeds, but as full-grown, full-blown growing, reproducing plants. While Adam's literal (real) age was only a few minutes old immediately after he was created, his apparent (ideal) age was something far above that (20?, 25?, 30?, 35?, etc.—we do not know; all we know is that he was able to reproduce). While Eve's literal (real) age was only a few minutes old immediately after she was created, her apparent (ideal) age was far above that (like Adam's). And so it was with the plants and animals. Their real age was very young; their apparent age was much older.

A tree chopped down only a few minutes after it was created would have the appearance of being very old. Rivers, immediately after the creation, would have had water running throughout them. Stars would have been visible during the nighttime, even though they had been just created (and were far away). Substances containing radioactive ele-

ments may have contained both parent element and daughter decay products in proportions, giving the appearance of age on the order of billions of years—while only being seconds old in reality.

ACTUALLY, ANYONE WHO ADMITS TO SPECIAL CREATION AUTOMATICALLY ACCEPTS THE "APPARENT AGE" THEORY WHETHER HE KNOWS (or likes) IT OR NOT! To accept special creation is to accept the apparent age concept. Special creation certainly falls into the category of a miracle. And an examination of some of the miracles in the New Testament shows that the apparent age theory has some great validity. For example, Jesus fed 5,000 men with fish and bread. And the fish and bread appeared fully complete, mature. Would it not normally take a long period of time for the growth, harvesting, preparation, and baking of wheat into bread? Would it not normally require a long period of time for fish eggs to incubate, hatch, mature, and grow into adult fish? Yet Jesus miraculously used these elements to feed these people. And consider further Jesus' miracle of healing Malchus' ear. Does not healing normally take time? Does not healing normally require time for the elements of the inflammatory reaction to mend and regenerate tissue?

Actually, many examples could be cited. But the fact is this: Any miracle—which special creation is—would give the appearance of age beyond that which would be required for the same event to happen naturally. THEREFORE, THE BELIEF IN ANY MIRACLE ADMITS THE BELIEF IN AN AGED CREATION!

Jesus' miracles (and the miracles of His followers) are consistent with the facts in this instance. Their miracles had "apparent age" connected with them. Almost any miracle would have, by its very nature.

Now some people automatically infer, when they hear mention of the "apparent age" theory, that this means God also put in such things as fossils to make the earth appear ancient. THE THEORY DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY INFER THIS AT ALL!! Just because "apparent age" is discussed, does not mean that fossils are included in this. In fact, most creationists will tell you that God probably did not "put" the fossils in the earth. God is hardly the kind of personality to want to deceive man—and to this we all agree. So do not confuse "apparent age" with catastrophism. They are two different topics all together, and must be considered separately.

Catastrophism, which we will have to discuss in later articles, may be responsible for much of the apparent age of the earth, since a world-wide flood (i.e.: Noah) would raise havoc with dating methods by mixing radioactive elements and by speeding sedimentary deposition. And no one doubts that a world-wide flood would cause fossilization on an extremely large scale. Yet it is a mistake for people to say that Just because we believe in the apparent age of the earth that we automatically infer that God is a deceptive, sneaky, lying personality who went around burying fossils to deceive mankind. We do not teach this, and do not believe it. Furthermore, it is not inherent in the apparent age theory. It has been suggested by some that any apparent age makes God a deceiver. This is ridiculous, and blasphemous. God—in His inspired Word—INFORMED man of the miraculous creation. We could hardly call Him deceptive, then! If men choose to ignore the testimony of that

(Continued On Page 4)



BERT THOMPSON

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 me a brief, simple, but comprehensive definition of the church."

The church is (a) a body (b) of baptized believers (c) called out from the world (d) over which Christ reigns as head (e) directed by the Holy Spirit through the word of truth. Such is the signification of the word "church," as used by the Lord in Matthew 16:18, when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." When thus used, the term includes all of the Lord's faithful followers on earth.

The word "church" is also used to designate congregations of faithful believers from a geographical standpoint; as, for example, the church in Rome, the church in Corinth, the church in Jerusalem; or, a group of such congregations not otherwise geographically identified: "All the churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16). The word also designates an assembly of Christians, convened for religious ends (I Cor. 14:34, 35). Thus, there is a general sense, a geographical sense, and a congregational (assembled) sense in which the word finds usage in the New Testament.

When used in the general sense, as in Matthew 16:18, there is but one church, as there is but one body of Christ (Eph. 4:4-6); when used in the geographical sense there are as many churches as there are congregations of the Lord's people. All of these congregations, however, are of the same faith and practice; and they constitute the one body. Wholly unknown, in New Testament teaching, is the denominational concept of an invisible church. Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25); to minimize the church is to minimize the blood of Christ; to assert that the church is non-essential is, in effect, to say that Christ's blood was shed unnecessarily. If it is possible to be saved without the church, it is possible to be saved without the blood of Christ; indeed, without being a Christian!

In a marvelous affirmation Paul described the exaltation of our Lord in this clear and impressive manner: "and He put all this in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23). With all things put under His feet, and having been made head of the church, His will is sovereign, unlimited and complete. Inasmuch as "all authority" is His (Matt. 28:18-20), it is wickedness of the most presumptuous nature for conferences, synods, and conventions of men to attempt to exercise the powers and privileges which are His alone. Faithful disciples gladly submit to His will (Matt. 7:21; John 2:4), all others are in rebellion.

Further, the church, of which Christ is head (Col. 1:18), is His body (Col. 1:24); there is but one such body (Eph. 1:3); therefore, there is but one such body wherein are allspiritual blessings (salvation, from sin being, of course, one of them). The church is called the "house of God" (Heb. 3:6), the "temple of God" (I Cor. 3:16), a "spiritual house" (I Pet. 2:5), a

"habitation of God" (Eph. 2:20-22), "God's husbandry" (I Cor. 3:9), the "flock of God" (I Pet. 5:2), "the body of Christ" (Col. 1:18), the "pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15), the "church of God" (I Cor. 1:2), and "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16). These designations, all referring to the church of the New Testament, indicate different aspects of the same body. As an organism - possessing life - it is a body; as a government, it is a kingdom; as a place of worship, it is a temple; as a place of work, a husbandry, etc. These terms denote the divine nature, the divine organization and the divine work of the church. Children of God constitute the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:27), of which Christ is the head.

There is but one such body: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father or all, who is over all, an through all, and in all." Here, the "seven unities" are clearly designated: one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. As there is but one Father and one Lord, so there is but one body, and this "one body" is the church: "And gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body" (Eph. 1:22). Since there is but "one body," and "the church . . . is His body," there is but one (New Testament) church; and it is, therefore, no more out of order to speak of a plurality of Gods or Lords, than it is to talk of a multiplicity of churches. Our Lord has but one spiritual body, the church. "All the members of the Body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ" (I Cor. 12:12-14, 20). There can therefore be but one divine, New Testament church. All denominational bodies have arisen centuries this side of the apostolic age and thus sustain no relation to the body of Christ. Inasmuch as it is possible for one to be a Christian (by obeying the gospel), be added to the church (by the Lord Himself), why should anyone for even one moment consider attaching himself to a denominational body, bearing no relation to the church of Christ, and which came in existence hundreds of years too late to be identified with the church of the New Testament? (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38, 47).

This simple, historic fact should not be overlooked that all religious denominations,

having originated since the close of the apostolic age, are too recent to be the church of which our Lord spoke when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Those who believe in the gospel, repent of their sins, confess their faith in Christ, and are baptized for (unto) the remission of their sins (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3), are saved; in the process of saving them, the Lord adds them to the church. There is, of course, nothing to join; the Lord saves and adds to His own church.

Paul uses, by analogy, the relationship of husband and wife to indicate the relationship obtaining between Christ and the church; "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined (married) to another, even to him who raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4). Inasmuch as the church is the wife of Christ, it behooves it to be faithful to Him, respectful of His will, and dedicated to His cause. A wife who repudiates the husband's name for another man; or who follows the will of another instead of her own husband, is a faithless wife. Religious people who will not wear the name of Christ; or, who follow the doctrines of men and attach themselves to human, denominational bodies, cannot possibly be regarded as faithful to Christ, or to His divine body, the church. It is Christ's will that His church maintain separation from the world and when it fails to do so it is under His displeasure. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6:14-18).

Our privileges are unspeakably great; and, it is our duty as faithful devotees to His cause to maintain the purity of the church in organization, in doctrine and in practice; and, to reject, repudiate and denounce every departure therefrom. We honor the Lord when we respect and do His will, and it is our continuing responsibility to live right, to be honest in our dealings with one another; to remember the poor, teach others the way of duty, and worship God acceptably, all being done in the name of Christ, and to the honor and glory of God. "Unto Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever" (Eph. 3:21).

A Famine In The Land



R. W. Gray

The herdsman and harvester of sycamore fruit from Tekoa warned Amaziah, priest of Bethel, of a terrible famine: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. . . . And they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12). The ominous prognosis was prompted by the opposition of Amaziah to the words of the country preacher. "O thou seer, go, flee away into the land of Judah, . . . and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more at Bethel. . . ." (Amos 7:12, 13).

A reluctance to hear His word has been

reckoned by the Lord for what it is—an affront to His Almighty power and Sovereign dignity. In an obvious reference to a people whose hearts were sensual and hardened against His words Jesus admonished His disciples, "Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine. . . ." (Matt. 7:6). To blasphemous Jews in Antioch Paul and Barnabus proclaimed, "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you. . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46).

That God would condescend to speak at all to a lost and recreant race is strikingly profound (Psa. 8:3, 4), but the hidden mysteries formed in the infinite mind of God before the world was has been revealed to man by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Peter 1:12; Eph. 3:1-11; Cor. 2:9-13). It is still the case that God will look with favor upon those of a poor and contrite spirit, and who tremble at His word (Isa. 66:2). It is still a principle of Jehovah's dealings with man that reluctance to receive His blessings result in His taking them away

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A Famine In The Land

Continued from page 3

that He might give them to another (Matt. 25:24-30).

Never in the history of the world have so many had the opportunity to hear the word of the Lord. There are more churches and more preachers with heretofore unheard-of avenues of disseminating the story of love than has been known before in a single generation. In no nation on earth are these opportunities and privileges greater than in our own. And yet, it is here in 20th Century America that we find a lack of real appreciation for the proclamation of the word. Other nations with fewer opportunities literally beg, "Come over, and help us!" Inasmuch as God is a Lord who changes not, we may be certain that unless we witness an awakening in this country we will experience the great famine of which Amos warned in the distant past (Mal. 3:6).

Evidence of indifference toward God's word is everywhere present. It is even found within the body of Christ. We do not cherish the message of saving grace as we should. We seem to tolerate rather than appreciate both the proclaimer and his message. In far too many instances preachers are viewed as a "necessary liability."

SOME SIGNS OF INDIFFERENCE

Frightening signs of indifference toward the public proclamation of the word are numerous. We might begin by observing the negative attitude toward protracted meetings. Many who read these lines recall the two, three, and sometimes four week meetings of former days. We have moved to the three day "week-end meeting." These are frequently advertised as "lessons to the church," rather than "sermons for the lost." The scheduling of an hour for worship has paved the way to elimination of the "lengthy sermon," and the "sermonettes" are being constantly trimmed to a shorter span. Other activities can, and often do, consume the greater portion of the "hour," and the messenger must not go beyond the prescribed limit of time. Bible school attendance is declining, rather than increasing, in many congregations. The evening services that traditionally featured the public proclamation of the word are attended by an ever decreasing percentage of the membership, and in some cases are used as an "hour of singing and fellowship." While special programs draw better crowds, gospel meetings are supported by the "faithful few." Few there are who seem to insist that their neighbors, family members and friends "go out to hear the word of the Lord."

SOME OF THE CAUSES

We must not underestimate the influence of Satan and the world upon the attitudes of modern man, including those who are members of the church. Spiritual appetites are not keen because of the influence of the god of this world (II Cor. 4:1-4). A heart filled with a love for the world will not enjoy the preaching of the word (I Jn. 2:15-17; 3:19; Matt. 6:21). The thrills, excitement, and entertainment, provided an affluent society by men of the world have turned us off to the things of the Spirit.

Some who preach have sought to overcome the problem of a thrill seeking populace by sensationalism and emotionalism. While some such preaching (?) attracts the larger crowds, it is extremely questionable whether they came to hear the word. It is more probable that they are drawn by the messenger rather than by his message.

Our own emphasis upon personal

evangelism, as good and necessary as this is, has tended to down grade public preaching. It is important that we understand that preaching is to be done by all from house to house. But it is equally important that we do not minimize "pulpit" preaching, one of the means ordained of God to save the lost (Acts 20:20; 8:4; 2 Tim. 4:1-6; Cor. 1:21).

Preachers have contributed to the decline in interest of which we write. The time that should be used in preparation and delivery of the greatest message in all the world is consumed with things of far less importance. There is in society a general lack of appreciation for the integrity of preachers. This is due in part to the politics and would-be professionalism of some who propose to preach, as well as to the lack of moral and spiritual integrity evidenced in the life and attitude of others. Like the world about them, preachers often show a lack of real conviction and dedication to the Lord and His word.

Elders may share in the blame for the decline herein discussed. Many elderships assign to their preacher the responsibility God assigned to them alone, thereby saddling him with numerous activities wholly unrelated to sermon preparation and delivery, and betray in their own attitude the little interest they have in the preaching that is done. Elders can, and should, create greater interest in, as well as appreciation for, the gospel of Jesus Christ. They might begin by letting the congregation know both by word and disposition that they are solidly behind sound preachers and good, Bible centered preaching.

SOME SOLUTION

Greater respect for those who preach, and especially those who serve as "missionaries," should be shown by every member of the church, beginning with the leadership. This would go far in correcting the preacher shortage, as young men would again aspire to this great work, and young women would show more interest in those who so labor.

We may beseech the Lord of harvest that He send laborers into His vineyard. We may show a greater respect for the Bible in the home, and we may again insist upon Bible study attendance and participation in the local congregation. We can set our affections upon the things above, learn to desire the word of God above gold, and to love it taste more than the sweetness of honey (Psa. 19:9-10).

Our Christian Schools, generally conceived as institutions in which men would be encouraged and trained to preach the word, could make a great contribution that would be positive in nature by turning their emphasis from sports and/or academic excellence to an emphasis upon the matter of how we should play the game of life and excel in a knowledge of His precious word.

Gospel Meetings may become the tools they once were in winning the lost. Meetings were attended in the past because we were "sold" on the idea of converting the world through evangelization. We fail now to create an interest in the meeting on the part of our contemporaries because we are so indifferent toward them ourselves.

There has never been a generation in greater need of the truth than our own. And if men could witness a real hungering and thirsting after righteousness on our part, they would search for the eternal verities as never before. If we allow our present opportunities to pass, the next generation may very well

experience a great famine of hearing the words of the Lord.

"what if I say—

*'The Bible is God's Holy Word,
Complete, inspired, without a flaw'—
But let its pages stay*

Unread from day to day,

*And fail to learn therefrom God's law:
What if I go not there to seek*

The truth of which I glibly speak,

For guidance on this earthly way—

Does it matter what I say?"

—Maud Frazer Jackson

P.O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30344

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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record, any alleged deception is of their own doing.

CONCLUSION

We close with this quote from Drs. Whitcomb and Morris: "If God actually created anything at all, even the simplest atoms, those atoms or other creations would necessarily have an appearance of SOME age. There could be no GENUINE creation of any kind, without an initial appearance of age inherent in it." (THE GENESIS FLOOD, p 238). If there was a Special Creation, modern dating methods can hardly be trusted at all!—1004 Hereford, College Station, Tx. 77840.

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble men,
but I speak the words of truth and soberness.

< forth

— Acts 26:25

Paul And Luke According To Oral

For two nights in December, Oral Roberts appeared on his Christmas show. This year he let the world know what others have known for a long time. He is a false teacher. He has claimed that miracles of healings still exist. Yet on his program he unveiled a drawing of a clinic, a hospital and a research center. He said God had shown him this. He even went so far as to say God told him the cost. This he not repeat. He stated that he had seen how Christ brought Paul, the evangelist, and Luke, the physician, together and made a healing team of them in the New Testament. Now, he says, God wants to do it again. This, according to Oral, is to be in "The City of Faith," that he is building on the campus of ORU.



Winfred Clark

There in the clinic, 60 stories high and a hospital 30 stories high with 777 beds, and in the research center, the saint Pauls and saint Lukes will work together as they did in the Bible as Jesus taught. He also states that medicine and prayer will be joined.

Now, what will the modern healers do? Will they now ask those who come to them if a doctor of ORU said they could not work? After such a person has answered in the affirmative will they then ask them to lay aside their crutches and proclaim that they are healed? You can see by this that Oral is going to place his fellow healing advocates in a bad position. Will any of these plead for those who are ill to go to "The City of Faith"?

Now where did he ever get the idea that Paul and Luke got together as a medical and healing team? Nobody would question the fact that Paul and Luke were companions (II Timothy 4:11). But where did he ever come up with the idea that they represented medicine and prayer?

That Paul had the power to heal is a fact. This he could do as could the rest of the apostles (Acts 14:9-11). In Acts 20:9-12, Paul raised a young man from the dead. Any honest student of the Bible must agree that Paul had the power, by the Holy Spirit, to heal. But where is there the case when Paul prayed for one to be healed and could not and then sent him to Luke, the physician? That is the thing to be proved by Mr. Roberts and those like him. You can search your New Testament through and you will not find such a case. No such case exists. Yet, people are supposed to accept this so called arrangement as now being given by God, "like it was in the Bible". Why it

wasn't even like that in the Bible. Yet, you have a man saying God showed him this complex for medical treatment where the Pauls and Lukes can work together.

Let me hasten to say: I believe in physicians, I believe in prayer for the sick, and I believe in proper medical treatment for the sick, but I don't believe that miraculous healing is present today as in the days of the apostles. Also, may I add, neither does Oral Roberts. He proves this abundantly by his present proposition. He alleges that which is not so. Do you think God would show a man something that he ought to do now, which he says was like it was in the Bible, when it never was in the Bible?

Use YOUR imagination a little. Can you see Paul going into Oral's clinic and praying for one to be healed, and then that one's having to go to Oral's hospital with 777 beds?

Paul, I know, Luke, I know, but Oral, who?—P. O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

Games Prognosticators Play

CHARLES COOK

The Bible clearly condemns prognostication (Isaiah 4:13-15). A prognosticator is one who professes to know the future. When James wrote, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow..." (James 4:14), he was speaking pointedly to the prognosticator. To those who would forecast the time of the Second Coming our Lord remarked, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

At various times, particularly in times of uncertainty and change, there arises a resurgence of interest in what the future

holds. We seem to be at one of those peaks of interest now, and sure enough, those claiming prophetic abilities have stepped forward ready to play the game. One of the most famous prognosticators of our day is Jeanne Dixon of Washington D.C. She is reported to have foretold all three of the major assassinations of the 1960's—John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. "She's a pretty good prognosticator," someone said. Is she really?

Hal Lindsey, though he would deny it, is another very successful prognosticator. His

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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Is Man Wholly Mortal?

Many of the sects—including the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the followers of Armstrong—teach that man is wholly mortal; and that when he dies he goes into a state of non-existence. The argument goes something like this: Genesis 2:7 says that "man became a living soul". But living soul is identical in the original language to living creature



BOBBY DUNCAN

in Genesis 1:21, which is talking about the lower animals. Therefore, what man is, the lower animals are; or, in other words, man does not have an immortal soul, any more than the lower animals have an immortal soul.

If the above statements in Genesis were the only passages in the Bible on the nature of man, one might reasonably reach the above stated conclusions. But a careful reading of even these statements is their context would never lead one to the conclusion that man is wholly mortal. For example, we learn in 1:26-28 that man is created in the image and likeness of God. Were the animals created in the image and likeness of God? Since this cannot refer to the physical image and likeness of God (God is a spirit—Jno. 4:24), then in what sense is man made in the image and likeness of God? Furthermore, the statement in Genesis 2:7 that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," is not made concerning the animals. This should tell us something of the distinctive nature of

man.

But there are numerous passages which show conclusively that man has (or is) an immortal soul, which continues to live, even when the body is destroyed. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." This passage shows that the time will come when the soul (or spirit) and the body will go their separate ways. The body will return to the dust, but not the spirit. It will return to God, who is called, "the Father of spirits" (Heb. 12:9).

Jesus said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). If man were wholly mortal, like the animals, how would it be possible for one to have the ability to kill the body, but not the soul? This shows conclusively that there is a part of man (called the soul) which continues to live on after the death of the body. In fact, James designates the condition which obtains when the spirit is separated from the body as death (Jas. 2:26).

When Jesus was dying, he said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46). When Stephen was dying, he said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59).

These verses show that the spirit, at death, does not cease to exist. It merely separates from the body. And in II Corinthians 5:8 Paul wrote about being "absent from the body" and "present with the Lord." How could one be absent from the body and with the Lord, if he were wholly mortal?

In II Corinthians 12:2, the apostle Paul writes of a man (probably Paul himself) who was "caught up to the third heaven." But Paul stated that he could not tell whether it was "in the body," or "out of the body." The fact that one might have been "caught up to third heaven" out of the body shows beyond doubt that the real person, the inner man, the spirit is not the same as the mortal body.

AN OVERSIGHT

We always try to give credit to our writers for the good articles they submit, but we sometimes fail to get the name on the article. The good article entitled "Church in a Death Chamber" (December 23, 1977) was written by brother Leo Powers. We are especially sorry for this oversight, because it was the first article brother Powers had sent to us for publication. We hope he will pardon the oversight and send us another good article soon.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

NUMBER 34

LIFE, MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Evolutionists glory in the "fact" that inanimate matter decided to become an amoeba, which decided WITHOUT a brain to HAVE a brain, arms, legs, sex, and to change millions of times to become man! It was Charles Smith, former president of the American Association For The Advancement of Atheism, who said:

*"In the beginning was matter, which begat the amoeba, which begat the worm, which begat the fish, which begat the amphibian, which begat the reptile, which begat the lower mammal, which begat the lemur, which begat the monkey, which begat man, who imagined God. This is the genealogy of man!"*¹

Yet for all their work through the sciences — geology, archaeology, genetics, comparative anatomy, etc.—they cannot account for life, mind, and consciousness within the framework of their dogma. Since they ignore the Bible's teaching concerning origins, and since they ridicule faith in the Bible and God, they cannot account for the origin of anything.

Evolutionists lean heavily on the idea that life came into being by gradual changes because so much time was (supposedly) involved. They seem to think that given enough time, life could have developed by an evolutionary process. Evolutionists have not been able, however, to give a plausible, reasonable, coherent, agreed-upon explanation for the origin of life. There are as many theories for the origin of the universe as there are calories in a boston-cream pie. In addition, mind and consciousness are added "thorns" in the evolutionists' sides, because their doctrine cannot account for these assets. Yet they are here, and must be explained!

THE HUMAN BODY

Consider the human body. There are few marvels of the universe that even begin to compare with the human body. The brain contains a thermostat with its own nervous system. The framework itself is, with over 200 bones, more durable than steel and every joint, tightly enclosed, moving in a constant bath of oil and at the same time, producing its own oil. The average person develops 2,500 calories a day, which is enough to heat and boil 25 pots of coffee. No air-conditioning system man has ever devised or even thought of devising comes close to the one God gave us.



BERT THOMPSON

The electrical system of the body is beyond imagination. The brain contains ten million nerve cells, while the eye is connected to the brain by 300,000 separate and private "telephone lines." The best mechanical hand ever developed is but a clumsy, feeble effort compared to the hands God gave us. What mechanical hand paints a picture or plays the organ or performs a delicate surgical operation?

The eye is the most expensive camera known to man. It comes with built in adjustment and with an automatic system no other camera has ever known. Each eye contains 100 million nerve cells, which work together perfectly to allow you to see close up and at great distance in living color — within seconds! The human eye makes a Polaroid camera (even the most expensive one!) look like a child's toy!

Your ears have a keyboard of 1,500

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Why is the Lord's Supper regarded as 'a church ordinance' but not 'washing feet'? Did not our Lord institute both?"

The time was Thursday evening of the final week of our Lord's earthly life, prior to His crucifixion. The place was an upper room in Jerusalem. The occasion was the last passover which Jesus would observe with the disciples. (John 13:1-15.)

Judas had already perfected his plans to betray Him, "the devil having already put" it into the heart so to do (John 13:2). There was no compulsion; the betrayer operated under no irresistible force; this design was planted in his heart, *because the soil was ready for such seed!*

Our Lord arose from the table, laid aside His outer robe, girded a towel about His waist, and began to wash His disciples' feet. If the usual procedure were followed on this occasion, Jesus poured water over the feet into a basin, the feet not being put in the water. The feet were washed by the stream of falling water, and following which the Savior dried them with the towel about His waist. Sandals, the ordinary footwear of those days, were not very effective in keeping sand and dirt from the feet; and, it was the custom to remove sandals at the door, where a basin of water customarily sat, in order that the guests might perform this necessary and refreshing act on arrival.

There was no host present in the upper room; no one volunteered to perform this duty; and, the disciples, unwilling to engage in such menial efforts, arranged themselves about the table unwashed. The Lord, after waiting long enough to give the disciples opportunity to do so, began the lowly service *himself*. It was a well-deserved rebuke to that group of proud men, far more effective than a spoken one.

The Lord at length approached the apostle Peter. Evidently, shame and astonishment possessed the disciples, when they realized what was occurring, and not a word had been spoken until now. The fisherman disciple, in unbelief and amazement, asked, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" While all the others sat in shamed silence, Peter could no longer endure the incredible absurdity, and spoke out in indignant protest. Said he, "Thou shalt never wash my feet" (John 13:8). One easily senses rebellion in this reply. It exhibits characteristic obstinacy—his usual and impulsive self. Jesus answered, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." From this we learn that genuine discipleship involves utter and complete submission to the will of Christ; and, that here, Peter perceived that only when the proud heart yields is there communion with the Lord. In total submission Peter said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

Having witnessed the *action*, it was now necessary for the disciples to learn the *lesson* embodied in it. "Know ye what I have done to you?" he asked. "Ye call me, Teacher, and Lord: and ye say well: for so I am. If I then, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also

should do as I have done to you" (John 13:12-15). If one who occupied such an exalted position as His condescended to wash their feet—one of the most menial of services—they ought also to be willing to perform similar service. Far from seeking positions of preference and preeminence, they ought to follow the example of the Lord in service to others, however lowly—as in this instance—such service might be.

"For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you." It is grossly to misapprehend the thrust of this incident to assume that Jesus instituted a formal church "ordinance" in this action. It is necessary to note that we have here an example for *individuals* to follow, not *churches*! Washing feet is nowhere listed as a church ordinance in the Scriptures. It is, indeed, referred to in only one other place, where it is catalogued along with other good works of a godly widow (I Tim. 5:10). Feet washing, as a church ordinance, began to be practiced in the *fourth* century, after the great apostasy had already begun.

There is a vast difference between Christian work and church ordinances. When Jesus wept with sympathy at the tomb of Lazarus, fed the hungry, ministered to the ill and afflicted, and taught the dignity of lowly service by washing the disciples' feet, He set us an example, and we will be greatly blessed by recognizing and following such. Feet washing belongs to this class of duties. On the same evening that Jesus washed the disciples feet, He instituted the supper. It is prominently mentioned in connection with the activities which occurred on the day that the

church was established (Acts 2:42). There are other references thereto in the subsequent history of the church (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:23-30). By the way of contrast, feet washing is never mentioned as an action of the *church* assembled; and, in its only other reference, in the New Testament, it is classed with good works (I Tim. 5:10). Such is the vital difference between feet washing, and the Lord's supper.

Those who engage in what they designate as feet washing today perform an act wholly unrelated in spirit and purpose to that which Jesus did. On occasion, the pope of the Romish church performs a symbolic act in which he affects to wash feet; and, some denominational bodies in this country engage in similar rituals. Such is done, not because the feet of those "washed" are soiled, but as a ritual and ceremonial act. This is to empty the example of our Savior of its real meaning, substituting ritual therefor. To go through the mockery of washing others' feet as the pope does, "after due private preparation, and in the presence of the proudest rank," is not to do what Jesus did on this occasion. He *washed* the disciples' feet; He washed the feet of all the disciples; He washed both feet of each of the disciples; and, He washed them because they were dirty!

Thus, our Lord's act of washing the feet of the disciples was one of humble service—a needed and necessary one. When opportunities present themselves to perform essential service, however, humble, we may and must imitate our Lord's disposition on this occasion. It is an object-lesson of genuine humility.

Do You Lie To Yourself?

In James 1:22, the Bible says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves." Here we have a warning not to hear only, but to be a hearer and a doer of the Lord's will. Those who hear only are deluding (or deceiving) themselves. They are actually lying to themselves through self deception. How can we deceive ourselves? Basically, there are three kinds of self deception.



MICHAEL D. STONE

First of all, we can deceive ourselves by rationalizing about sin. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death. . . ." Sin is a terrible thing. It is something that God hates. Today, many of us condone things which were condemned by us in the past. Why was it wrong then and alright now? If it was wrong then, it is wrong now. If not, why not? In Galatians 6:7, the Bible says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Deceived here means not to lie to yourself about the seriousness of sin. Mocked means that God will not tolerate our taking lightly his commands. A man is going to reap exactly what, and even more than, he sows.

Secondly, we lie to ourselves when we

rationalize about our personal responsibility. In Genesis 3:12, we notice Adam's putting the blame on God and Eve for his sin in eating of the forbidden fruit. Each one of us has a personal responsibility to God and to the church. Sometimes, we find those who seem to think that only the elders, preacher and deacons are to be actively involved in the church work. May God have patience with those who hold such a view.

Thirdly, we can deceive ourselves by believing that we are going to be the exception to the rule. The Bible is an absolute standard of conduct for the world. It is filled with commands which must be adhered to by all. For example, hearing, believing, repenting, confessing, being baptized and daily living for Christ are essential to salvation. This is God's rule. Some, however, believe that they do not have to do those things because they are going to be the exception to God's rule. By whose authority do they appoint themselves as the exception? I don't know; however, I do know it was not by God's authority. There are warnings in the Bible for those who are lukewarm and unfaithful, that unless they repent they will be lost. Do you lie to yourself? — 111 Piedmont Drive, Concord, N. C. 28025.

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.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

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keys. The average piano has only 88. The human ear is so sensitive that in a completely soundproof room, you can actually HEAR the blood flowing through the vessels in the body. The heart pumps blood through a system of thousands of miles of vessels, while resting a sixteenth of every second. That totals up to about six hours a day, or about 20 years during the normal life span that the heart beats and then rests. No wonder the Scriptures declare that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made."

The human body is an insurmountable obstacle for evolutionists. It is estimated by scientists that the average adult human body contains approximately 100 trillion cells. And, of course, these cells are not all alike, and do not all have the same kind of life spans. White blood cells, for example, perform different functions in the body than red blood cells. These white blood cells have a life span of about 13 days. Red blood cells, on the other hand, live about 120 days. Some of the cells that live in the alimentary tract live 1½ days. Nerve cells may live up to 100 years.!

Scientists say that 250 average-size cells, arranged end to end, would cover only 1 inch. Some cells, we know today, are so small they would make 1 inch only if 6,000 of them were arranged end to end. Yet, even being so small, the 100 trillion cells which make up the human body, if arranged end to end, would form a line that would reach around the earth 2,000 times!! We are told by scientists that from the standpoints of receiving sustenance, disposing of wastes, repair work, and communications, that any one cell of the human body is better organized than any city in the world. Did all this fantastic world of cells and cellular life just, by chance, HAPPEN? Evolution says it did, yet cannot by any stretch of the imagination explain how.

And what about reproduction of the human body? In the reproductive cells the DNA is what might be called the blueprint for another human body. And each reproductive cell contains not 46 chromosomes, but 23 - another interesting point which evolutionary dogma cannot explain. Two human reproductive cells unite and contain the entire blueprint for another human being. The human mind and brain cannot comprehend its own development from those two reproductive cells. How can something so small carry the plans for building such a remarkable thing as the human body? And how could this possibly be accounted for by mere chance? Dr. Harold F. Blum, himself an evolutionist, stated it this way:

*"The spontaneous formation of a polypeptide of the size of the smallest known protein seems beyond all probability. This calculation alone presents serious objections to the idea that all living matter and systems are descended from a single protein molecule which was formed as a chance act. How, when no life existed, did substances come into being which, today, are absolutely essential to living systems, yet which can only be formed by those systems?"*²

Let it be made clear to all. Dr. Blum, an evolutionist, has echoed what should be crystal clear to all people, evolutionists

included: life cannot be explained by evolution. "Every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4).

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Games Prognosticators Play

Continued from page 1

book, "The Late Great Planet Earth," has sold well over five million copies since it was released in 1970. In it he theorizes that Jesus will return in the 1980's. He too is thought to be "a pretty good foreseer."

In 1974 David Wilkerson, author of "The Cross and the Switchblade," announced that the Lord sent him a vision about the future which disclosed "five terrible calamities" that will take place during this generation. People turned out in masses to hear him tell this vision. . . they seemed to think he was a pretty good forecaster.

If I were evaluating these people, and others of like calibre, I too would judge them "pretty good." That is, pretty good at playing the prognosticator's game. Here's how it works.

In the prediction game the key word is survival. Jeanner Dixon has a certain technique that assures her success which includes a staff of aids whose responsibility it is to keep her public image favorable. She works the averages, which means she makes a lot of predictions and capitalizes on the ones that come about. And, a part of the game is to ignore her misses and play them down. Her formula is to predict in such a way that even if she is not always right she is almost never wrong. You never hear about her misses.

One report states that she is correct sixty-five percent of the time. Can you imagine Isaiah being sixty-five percent correct and publishing a report showing how accurate his predictions were? The point is, Isaiah and all the prophets of God were one hundred percent correct. Not one of their utterances failed to come true. The New Testament is God's report, saying ALL their predictions were accurate!

Jesus said, ". . . that ALL things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me (Luke 24:44). Every prophetic statement in the Old Testament about the Messiah and His Kingdom was fulfilled (Luke 24:27; Acts 3:18). What God's prophets predict must come true—not some of it, but ALL of it. This is the test of a real prophet: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" Deuteronomy 18:22). Jeanne Dixon plays the AVERAGE GAME and almost one

half of her predictions never come true. She picked Nixon over Kennedy in 1960 and predicted the Russians would be the first to land on the moon. For those "bloopers" she received only sympathy from her die-hard followers, but she failed God's test of a true prophet.

Hal Lindsey plays the game differently, he plays the WAITING GAME. His predictions are of the "doomsday" type and appeal to millenarians who look longingly for a future kingdom on earth. If it does not happen in our generation as Lindsey predicted, whose going to be mad at him? Not the millenarians, they are forgiving! Not the sinners, if there is anything the wicked need its an extension of time. They can only be grateful!

Augustine said he thought the world might end in A.D. 1000. It is said that at the close of the first millennium of the Christian Age all Europe was besieged by "end of the world" mystics. It seemed likely that the world might end at that date, so the pronosticators had people selling their possessions and fainting at the slightest sound of thunder. The Catholic Church cleaned up by having wealthy landlords all over Europe deed their holdings to the church in exchange for pardon of their sins. There's money to be made in the prognosticating business and who knows that better than Lindsey?

In the nineteenth century there was another burst of eschatological interest when men like William Miller, R.C. Shimeall, Joseph Worlf and others began prophesying that Jesus would return soon. Miller gave 1843 as the exact date. One lady of means was so convinced she moved to Palenstine and established residence on the Mount of Olives. She kept two beautiful white Arabian horses in stables there. One was for Jesus to ride and, presumably, the other was for her.

Of course, we are familiar with the Jehovah's Witnesses and their three attempts at naming the date of the Second Coming. . . three misses and still growing! It only proves that Lindsey will be forgiven if the Lord fails to return by 1988. Say, he is a pretty good prognosticator!

And as for David Wilkerson, he plays yet another kind of game. He predicts things were already know. This is the REASONABLE ASSUMPTION GAME. In that vision he received about the future, here are the five calamities he warned would come: (1) economic recession, (2) earthquakes and famines, (3) a flood of pornography, (4) hatred of parents by youth, and (5) a period of persecution of Christians. Well, we have never seen these things on earth before and we are certainly grateful to have this advanced information. Let us all be looking for these things!

A book publisher is reported to have said to a writer, "Look, if you want to write a best seller in the field of prophecy, name the antichrist and set a date." So the game continues to be played. Prognosticating anyone? — P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766

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Words Of T. L.

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1978

NUMBER 5

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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"Election Of Elders"

Perhaps someone looked at the title of this article, and thought: "What a poor choice of words. Surely it should be 'Selection of Elders' ". That's exactly what this writer thought when he saw the caption in a church bulletin. But upon reading further he learned that elders were indeed being elected by popular vote of the members of congregation.



BOBBY DUNCAN

There were four candidates; and in order to be elected, a candidate had to receive 80% of the votes. From a later issue of the bulletin, we learned that only two of the four candidates were elected, and that they would serve terms of two years.

Doubtless some are thinking: "This must have taken place in one of the denominational churches." We would that such were the case. We could even wish that it had occurred in some congregation far removed from the Deep South. But it happened in a so-called church of Christ (one where there are no mechanical instruments of music in the worship) not more than three-score miles from Jasper, Alabama. How far will some go in departing from the truth?

What a convenient arrangement this would be! In the first place, the members of the congregation could (and, no doubt, did) elect those to oversee the affairs of the congregation who would do things as they wanted them done. And if one wanted to

participate in different forms of ungodliness, he could cast his vote for those who would endorse his worldly practices. In the second place, if an elected elder did not abide by the wishes of at least 80% of the members of the congregation, he would know that his re-election would be unlikely. In this manner, the government of the local congregation would be in harmony with the wishes of the

majority of its members—whether young or old, good or bad, male or female—and not in harmony with the will of God.

But this is just another step away from the Scriptures in the evolution of this liberal church. How much better it would be if members of the Lord's church would all be content to allow His word of point the way!

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is the use of individual communion cups scriptural in view of the fact that when the Lord instituted the Supper it is said that he took 'the cup,' (not cups) and gave thanks and passed it to the disciples? If we follow the example of Jesus must we not use only one cup?"

Matthew's report of the institution of the Lord's Supper reads as follows: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins. But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:26-29). It is axiomatic that whatever proves too much proves nothing. How are all the churches of Christ, through the world, to use but "one cup" (container) in the observance of the Lord's Supper? Such is obviously impossible. The difficulty is not removed by conceding to each congregation one container; in this case, there is not one cup but many — as many cups as congregations. Moreover, the passage cited will not admit of such a practice. Jesus spoke of "the cup" (singular), and from this to infer that each congregation is to have its own "cup" (container) is actually to argue for a plurality of cups — *as many cups as congregations*. To contend for "one cup" and then to justify as many cups as there are congregations is to abandon the argument as well as to be guilty of gross inconsistency.

"One cup" (container) advocates are confused and in error regarding the significance of the word *cup* as used in the institution of the Supper. It is remarkable that, in the passage setting out the details of the Supper's institution, we have our Lord's own definition of the *cup*: "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. . . .but I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (1) Jesus took *the cup*; (2) he gave *thanks* for the *cup*; (3) he instructed the disciples to *drink* the *cup*. Obviously, Jesus did not tell the disciples to drink which he gave thanks for, "the cup" which he bade the disciples to drink was that which the literal cup contained—the fruit of the vine. Thus, by *metonymy* (the container "for the thing contained" Webster's Collegiate Dictionary), our Lord used the "cup" to signify that which it contained, the fruit of the vine. This, the context clearly shows. It is first said that the Lord took "the cup," gave thanks for "the cup," and instructed the disciples to drink it; but later, when alluding to that which he took, for which he gave thanks, and which he told the disciples to drink, he said, "I will not drink henceforth of *this fruit of the vine* until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Thus, "the cup" of the first sentence (verse 27), becomes "this fruit of the vine" in the last sentence (verse 29). In effect, the Lord said, "By the 'cup' I mean,

'this fruit of the vine';" the "one cup" (container) advocates say, "By 'the cup' we mean the container!" The Lord regarded *the cup* as the contents; opposers of individual communion containers regard "the cup" as the vessel. They are thus in hopeless conflict with the Lord in this matter. The two positions are beyond reconciliation. The cup, defined by the Lord, is that which it contains, and the vessel is without significance; those who contend for one container, transfer the significance to the container, thus sharply differing with the Lord on what "the cup" is.

Inasmuch as "the cup," by our Lord's definition, is "the fruit of the vine," it follows that when we use the fruit of the vine [juice of the grape], we have but one cup, regardless of how many containers may be used to distribute it!

It is of interest to note that we also have an inspired commentary on the meaning of "the cup" from Paul. In his letter of the church in Corinth, he wrote, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10:16, 17). Be it observed that the apostle referred to the "cup of blessing" (singular), not "cups" of blessing. When he penned these words, he was in Ephesus (I Cor. 16:8). Thus, the "we" of the passage, included brethren in both Corinth and Ephesus. Paul did not say, "The cup of blessing which you bless. . . ." but "the cup of blessing which we bless. . . ." The church in Ephesus and the church in Corinth were using the same "cup" of blessing. Many miles separated them; between them was the broad expanse of the Aegean Sea. Notwithstanding, both congregations used the *same cup*. Obviously, they are not the container, but that which it

contains. The churches in Ephesus and Corinth were using different containers in the observance of the Lord's Supper, but they were drinking of the same cup of blessing—the fruit of the vine. Inasmuch as *the cup* is the fruit of the vine, it is not significant whether it be served in one vessel or a thousand; there is but "one cup of blessing" used, when *this cup* is "the fruit of the vine."

The "bread" alluded to in the foregoing passage is also figuratively used: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." We may be sure that the churches of Corinth and Ephesus were not eating of the same literal loaf; yet, Paul declared that though many partook, they all ate of "one bread." There is but one bread, because it represents the one body. Christians throughout the world in nearly twenty thousand churches of Christ gather around the table of the Lord and in each congregation partake of bread which represents the one bread (body) of the Saviour. As there is one bread (observed in thousands of loaves all over the world), so there is but one cup (the fruit of the vine), though it is distributed in tens of thousands of containers, wherever the saints assemble.

Why not object to more than one copy of the Bible in worship since the scriptures refer to "the book" (Luke 4:17), after the same fashion in which "the cup" is mentioned? As there is but "one gospel," and "one baptism" (Eph. 4:4-6). The "one book," is practiced in thousands of communities; so, too, the "one cup" (the fruit of the vine) is observed in many containers. Those willing to accept the Lord's definition of "the cup" have no problem with this matter.

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Subscribe To The Words of Truth



WORDS OF TRUTH

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

— Acts 26:25

Twenty-Five Years And Three Hundred Times Through The New Testament

On January 1, 1953, I began a practice of reading the New Testament through once a month. Today, December 29, 1977, or twenty-five years later, I have completed my three hundredth journey of perusing the wonderful and weighty writings of the beloved new covenant. I desire to share with you three



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

observations with the hope that I may encourage you to adopt a similar plan of consistent and concentrated Bible Study if such a plan is not yours already.

It has been as much a part of each day's activities as eating, sleeping, exercise or breathing. In fact the practice is so deeply embedded that I now find it difficult to close my eyes in sleep until the allotted chapters have been read. If I do get a day or two behind, I try to catch up the next day or so. Tomorrow, the Lord willing, I begin what I trust will be another twenty-five years and three hundreds times through the New Testament. Each time I read it the more convinced I am that it is God's Book. Man's book would not have that kind of inexhaustible power to draw a reader back month after month and year after year. I have read hundreds of religious books through over the years and a few of them have been read two, three or four times such as the works of Brother Woods and a few others. But only God's Book draws me back again and again and each time with new lessons to be learned. Commensurate with this has been also an annual journey through the Old Testament that began in 1952.

missed without getting behind. With the three chapters perused daily from the Old Testament this makes for a dozen chapters per day. This is a great diet for a child of God. Now before you say that you do not have that much time let me suggest that these dozen chapters do not require as much time as you spend eating. Leaving off just one television show daily would provide ample time for the average reader to follow this plan successfully.

PROFIT OF THE PLAN

This will keep one in daily contact with God and his word. This will enable one to keep every verse in its context. This will enable one to read each book of the Bible as it was written—beginning at the first and continuing to the final syllable. This will enable one to saturate himself with the word of the Lord. This will enable one to stay under the power of God's word. It will enable one to be at home with the Bible and find most any passage he needs with rapidity. It will enable one, after so many readings, to quote verbatim large portions of Scripture. Even those one is unable to quote he will have the gist of their content in mind. By doing this reading from the same Bible, which I recommend very highly one will gradually associate certain verses and chapters as to their particular place on a page both as to their beginning and their end. This gives one a good working knowledge of his Bible. It ceases to be a strange book to him and becomes a real devoted friend. This enables one to walk daily with the Lord, his apostles and the early Christians. The three chapters daily from the Old Testament enable one to reap great profit and constant learning with patience from those who lived prior to John, Jesus, Calvary and the church. Frequently it will be the case of where one will read an Old Testament prophecy and will read of its fulfillment in the New Testament in that same day's reading assignment. These daily chap-

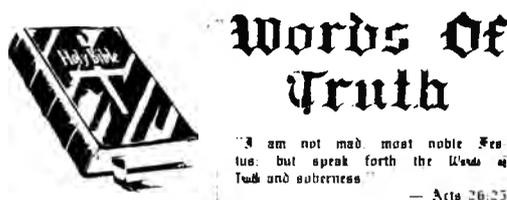
THE PLANTING OF THE PLAN

During 1950-51 Coleman Kurfees Allmond and I were roommates at Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee. He was named after Coleman Overby, M. C. Kurfees and of course possessed the last name of his father Hugo Allmond. All three were faithful and able preachers of the gospel in their day. Sometime during that year Coleman mentioned one day that his Dad, then the preacher at East Side Central in Detroit, had the practice of reading the New Testament through once a month. The idea lodged in my heart. It was a word fitly spoken such as John D. Cox experienced in his youth and tells about in the great and heart warming book that bears that very title. This concept of New Testament reading crystalized in my thinking over the next year or two. I then decided to inaugurate it on New Year's Day in January of 1953.

PROSECUTION OF THE PLAN

There are 260 chapters in the New Testament. Nine chapters per day will put one through the New Testament by the 29th day of each month. I read four chapters in the four gospel records and Acts per day. Except for John the sum total of chapters in each of these books is divisible by four. Five chapters one day in John takes care of the extra chapter. Twenty-nine days puts one from Matthew 1:1 to Acts 28:31. Then five chapters are read in the Epistles and Revelation. This is almost an even balance in the two major segments and means one is reading about the Lord's life or the history of his church in four chapters and relative to Christian living in five chapters on a daily basis. Twenty-nine days will put one from Romans 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 with only three chapters required the final day. In all months except February this plan will allow either one or two days to be

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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Smoke Over Huntsville, Alabama

Please read the following quotation, and tell what "man-made forms and rituals" the author was talking about:

"The scriptures nowhere limit us to five acts of worship. MAN has done this through human reasoning and deductions. Therefore, free people are free to take some liberty with the MAN-MADE forms and rituals" (EMPHASIS MINE BD).

What is your answer? What are the "man-made forms and rituals" the author is talking about? If you said, "the five acts of worship," you are wrong. Not only so, but if this was your answer, you have "a rare talent of slanting words and meanings toward an erroneous conclusion;" and you know better. Furthermore, you are unethical and unChristian; and you hold the same philosophy held by the Catholic Church in the dark ages. Beside all this, you consider yourself the very "epitomy" (sic) of truth, feel justified in whatever action you take, regardless of whether or not it conforms to ethical or moral standards, can do no wrong, and have no conscience. Oh, and I almost forgot! You are sectarian, deluded, and possessed by the party spirit. So says the editor of ENSIGN FAIR, a paper published for the purpose of allowing "free expression of views by those who are free of sectarian bias to those who should serve the Lord in love, Peace, Joy and Thanksgiving."



BOBBY DUNCAN

An article in the November issue of ENSIGN FAIR concerned itself with defining a "free" church; and the statement about "man-made forms and rituals" was a part of that article. In the November 7 issue of WORDS OF TRUTH we dealt with the matter as honestly and fairly as we know how; and consequently we became the recipient of all of the above accusations and epithets.

As we have pointed out time and again, one of the earmarks of the liberal movement in the church is its inability to express itself so as to be clearly understood. When a man's own words are used to show what he believes or teaches, he denies believing or teaching any such thing, and says, "I have been misunderstood." We do not believe we misunderstood the article under consideration. We never have claimed to be very smart, but we believe we can understand plain language.

Now, in order to see if we misunderstood, let us us ask a simple question or two. Do those in so-called "free" churches believe that Christians must worship the Lord on the first day of the week by engaging in five acts of worship? Do they believe those who leave off one of the five acts of worship on the first

day of the week sin in so doing? Do they believe those who leave off one of the five acts of worship on the first day of the week sin in so doing? Do they believe those who add a sixth sin in so doing?

A simple YES or NO answer will suffice, and certainly will not be misunderstood. If the answer to any one of the above questions is NO, then it seems we properly understood the article under consideration, and an apology from the EF editor should be forthcoming. If all three questions are answered in the affirmative, then perhaps the EF editor will tell us what "man-made forms and rituals" were referred to in the article under consideration. Please keep in mind that whatever these "man-made forms and rituals" are, so-called "free" people can take certain liberties with them, while those of us who are not "free" would oppose taking these liberties. Now, what are the "man-made forms and rituals," and what liberties can "free" people take with them that the rest of us would oppose?

Yes, the editor of WORDS OF TRUTH realizes that God is looking at him. What about the editor of ENSIGN FAIR?

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Number 35

MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS

It is difficult (we may correctly say even IMPOSSIBLE) for the evolutionist to try to explain in his dogma the origin of life. But to try to explain MIND and CONSCIOUSNESS through evolution is catastrophic! Perhaps man knows less about that with which man knows—the human mind—than any other thing. The human mind is so fantastic that it is contrary to the mind's own reasoning powers that the human mind came into being by mere random chance. If the mind evolved, this means that non-living matter (which evolved) then evolved into a state where it became conscious of itself!!!

How are we to account for man's vastly superior knowledge and mental powers—out of all proportions to his brain size? It is true that there are many basic similarities between man and animals. It is also true that there are many differences. From whence arose those differences, considering that humans are supposed to have arisen from the same primordial ancestors? Consider these differences:

MAN VERSUS ANIMAL

TRAITS	MAN	ANIMAL	SCRIPTURE
Sight	Yes	Yes	Acts 4:20
Belief in God	Yes	No	John 14:1-2
Hearing	Yes	Yes	Matthew 7:24
Pain	Yes	Yes	II Cor. 2:4
Soul	Yes	No	I Cor. 15:45 Genesis 2:7
Obeys Christ	Yes	No	Matthew 7:21
Eternal Life	Yes	No	Romans 6:23

These are some of the differences in man



BERT THOMPSON

and animals. There are others as well. For example, many animals cannot think and reason (in the true sense of those words). But man can. And there are many other differences as well. If man and animals came from the same ancestors, as evolutionists say, why are there so many differences?

Why is it man exhibits mind and consciousness to such an advanced degree above that exhibited by animals. Man is a free moral agent. He can choose to worship or not to worship. He can be kind or mean—by choice. He can choose to love or hate. He has choice! From whence did it arise?

"No one has ever seen a mind. A surgeon cutting in the brain sees only nerves and blood vessels: to know what is going on in the brain he must ask the patient. Only through language can we get any sort of direct picture of the working of the mind."¹

"Today, even though we are awed and even frightened by the intellectual achievements of man's mind, the mechanisms that make it possible are still unknown. Knowledge of the outward form of the brain is well advanced. But what of the neuron mechanisms involved in consciousness, thought, perception, behaviour, memory? They are unknown."²

Dr. John C. Eccles, President of the Australian Academy of Sciences, said of the human brain:

"The ten to fifteen billion nerve cells in this cerebral cortex are the center of operations. Each of the sense organs on its own lines to specific, well-defined regions of operations. All messages to the brain are sifted and decoded, decisions are made and orders relayed to appropriate stations of the body. It staggers the imagination how well it does the job."³

How are we to account for all of these things? There is nothing—absolutely nothing—in the theory of evolution which can explain the moral nature of man, or his mind and conscience. As Dr. Basil Overton has so well stated:

"In this space age when there is so much talk about space and the wonders of space, we should all be reminded that the most important space in the universe is that between the roof of one's mouth and the top of his

Continued on page 4

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"How widely must sins be acknowledged? Must every sin, even those known only to God, be confessed before the congregation?"

The scriptures clearly teach that every known sin, of what ever nature, must be confessed to God. Any sin, every sin, unrepented of, establishes a barrier between God and the individual rendering fellowship impossible. David said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psalm 66:18). But, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). Thus, God graciously forgives and receives to himself every erring child who has genuinely repented and has acknowledged his sin. Forgiveness is dependent on, and may be obtained only by confession of sin by those who stumble and fall. If the heart is impenitent, confession will not follow; and, without it, there is no forgiveness.

But, to what extent should sins be confessed to the brethren, and before the congregation? That some such confession is required follows from the dictum of James, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (James 5:16). The purpose clause of this passage is significant. Why are we to confess our faults one to another? "That ye may be healed," i.e., be forgiven. There is another implication in the passage involving the purpose of confession. This is that we may be able, "to pray one for another." Why are we to "pray one for another?" That we may be forgiven. Thus, the act of confession is related both to the prayers of the brethren and the forgiveness of God.

It is, however, impossible to pray for another's spiritual condition, unless we know what that condition is, and we can know it only as he chooses to reveal it to us. As a matter of fact, we are forbidden to pray for one who sins on any other basis. John wrote, "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin unto death" (I John 5:16, 17). Thus, (1) there is a sin unto death; (2) there is a sin not unto death; (3) we may pray for a brother who sins "not unto death," but we are forbidden to pray for a brother whose sins "not unto death". We learn from this that (a) there is a sin the Lord will forgive; and (b) there is a sin the Lord will not forgive. For those guilty of the former, we may pray; we may not pray for those guilty of the latter. However, we are taught to *confess* our sins one to another *and pray for them*, that they may be forgiven. For some, however, we are not to pray. These are those who will not confess their sins.

those who will not confess their sins. This follows conclusively as can be demonstrated by the logical process following: (1) The Lord will forgive every sin a brother confesses (James 5:16); (2) there is a sin which the Lord will not forgive is a sin which a

brother will not confess. There is no forgiveness for an impenitent brother. Moreover, faithful brethren are prohibited from praying for his forgiveness until he repents. They can know of his repentance only by his confession; therefore, they can pray for him only when he acknowledge his sin and demonstrates his penitence.

The foregoing considerations make it obvious that our responsibility in such matters involves only those sins which are open and public, before all. The verbs of James 5:16 are present imperatives, and thus signify, "Keep on confessing your sins one to another, and keep on praying one for another..." The passage does not deal primarily with confession to God (though this is implied in James 5:16, immediately preceding), nor to the elders or preacher (!) but to one another—the brethren generally. Sins known only to God should be confessed only to the one or the few, as the case may be; public sin, sin known to all, should be confessed publicly and before the church. It is a practical rule, clearly grounded in the premises above that the confession should be as public as the sin—but no more so.

The deplorable practice of establishing, in religious meetings, a "confessional," in which the purest and best and most faithful members of the church are influenced by emotional appeals to respond to an invitation because of their awareness of weaknesses, imperfections and shortcomings, is a travesty

on God's plan and an abandonment of the teaching of the New Testament regarding the proper procedure in such matters. All such weaknesses ought to be acknowledged to God in private prayer in the home—not in the public assembly. There is no rule of reason or revelation which requires those who are living as best they can to submit to high-pressured appeals of preachers (desirous of reporting a large number of "responses" to their efforts) and to confess that they are mindful of their frailties (such awareness must ever be with us all in this life); all such weaknesses are provided for by "walking in the light," and by the continuous cleansing of the blood, "from all sin" (I John 1:7-9). James 5:16, cannot properly be cited to sustain this hurtful and absurd practice of maintaining a "church of Christ confessional;" if this teaches that one is to confess to the preacher who makes the appeal, it teaches as clearly that the preacher must immediately confess his sins to the *confesses!* The sins contemplated are those of the confessors and confessees. "Confess your sins one to another," is the edict of James. He who truly repents will be desirous for all who knew of his lapse into sin to be informed of his penitence, but he will shrink from any effort to publicize weaknesses which would not otherwise be known and whose circulation would only reflect further upon the cause of Christ.

"Super-Christians" And The Super-Bowl

Dan Jenkins

Life in America almost stopped on Sunday evening, January 15, as across our nation large numbers gathered around television sets to cheer their favorite team to victory. Millions of dollars had been wagered from Las Vegas to local office pools and, for some, this gave added interest to this event. People gathered, not only in private homes, but in public bars so they could eat, drink and be merry during this gala event. Little else seemed to matter except the Cowboys and the Broncos. Tragically, there were many Christians who chose this event over worshiping Jesus. Perhaps they failed to realize the true impact of their absence from Sunday evening service.

IMPACT ON THE WORLD

At work on Monday morning and all through the week the subject was discussed. "Did you see that pass...Do you think it really was an interception...Was he really out of bounds?" When these questions were asked many Christians could join right in with the discussion — for they saw every play! I'm not surprised that those who were not Christians would think that seeing this game was the most important event that happened on Sunday, because they don't understand that Golgotha was for them. How tragic it is though when Christian are no different from those who are not redeemed! "Super" Christians can use such times of discussion to talk of how they were assembled worshiping Jesus. It becomes an opportunity for them to let the world see that Christ really means something to them. In doing this, they are being the light and salt that Jesus spoke of. Those Christians who chose to miss worship cannot. Which kind of Christian are you?

IMPACT ON THE CHURCH

The absence of some Christians from the Sunday evening worship had an impact on the church. It robbed other Christians of the

encouragement that comes from hearing their fellow-Christians sing, pray and worship. Perhaps the invitation songs were not as encouraging to those lost ones who were near to obeying the gospel. Perhaps that babe in Christ noticed the absence of more "mature" Christians and was led to believe that worship really isn't so important after all. Perhaps those present left, feeling that such a display showed just how few really loved the Lord more than anything else in the world; and rather than leaving having been refreshed by the assembly, they were despondent over what had happened. The absence of some hurt the church.

IMPACT ON THEIR CHILDREN

Little did those present realize the impact it had on their children and little did those absent sense the impact such absence had on their children. Some years from now the latter group will be heart-broken because of their children. They may look back and fail to remember times like this as they reflect on why their children have left the church. But this does not change the fact that children learn far more by a parents absence from worship to watch television than they learn by sitting in hundreds of Bible classes and worship assemblies! They will learn more in seeing some father or mother cheer over a fumble or a touchdown than they will over many lectures from that same parent about the importance of worshiping God.

IMPACT ON THE INDIVIDUAL

Since faith for both the sinner and the saint comes from hearing God's word, the absence by some robbed them of just that much building of their faith. In the days that lie ahead they will face temptation and will be weaker in their attempt to resist sin. They already are weaker, for the next time it will be

Continued on page 4

Twenty-Five Years And Three Hundred Times Through The New Testament

Continued from page 1

ters perused and a certain number of verses committed to memory each day over a quarter of a century have been among the most precious and profitable aspects of my study with God's Book. I recommend them both without reservation.

One further word about the Old Testament. Since there are 365 days per year and only 929 chapters in the Old Testament one can miss a number of days and still finish this portion of the Bible with ease in the course of a full year.

CONCLUSION

Casual mention of an older preacher's practice of reading monthly the New Testament planted an idea that I have sought to practice with diligence and persistence for a quarter of a century and with much in the way of spiritual profit. For me it was an idea whose time had come. Perhaps this article in this worthy journal will be a word fitly spoken and will crystalize into an idea whose time has come for another who may chance to read these words. But whether you follow this or another

plan, by all means work out a plan to read God's word daily just as you feed your body daily. The soul must be fed to be strong. Faith must be fed daily if it is to live, grow and develop into the most powerful factor influencing the human personality. And in urging you to read God's word daily I am thinking in terms of more than a half dozen verses daily and in a sleepy minute's setting before closing one's eyes for a night of rest.—P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Science And Nature: Two Votes For God

Continued from page 2

head. Within the bone-box on top of a normal human's head there resides a brain which is the seat of a mind and consciousness. Neither the box, the brain, the mind, or the consciousness can be explained on the basis of any sort of evolutionary process."⁴

We could hardly agree more! Evolution cannot, try as it may, explain the moral capacity of human beings.

A tremendous proof of this fact (i.e.: moral nature of man is beyond the proof of the theory of organic evolution) was given by Dr. Thomas B. Warren during his debate with atheist, Dr. A.G.N. Flew in Denton, Texas in September, 1976. Dr. Warren, through a series of straightforward, well-thought-out questions, asked Dr. Flew to explain the moral nature of man. Dr. Flew found himself, if we may coin the old adage, "between a rock and a hard place." Dr. Flew stated that there was no value on the earth before human beings. This, of course, automatically implies that value is subjective—a condition of the human mind. Yet Dr. Flew stated that the Nazis did real (objective) moral wrong in slaughtering 6 million Jews at the commands of Adolph Hitler. Dr. Flew wanted to say that the Nazis did real, objective evil, yet he could not—at least he could not without putting himself into the middle of a logical contradiction, which he did. He asserted that value is subjective, yet he believed that objective wrong was committed.

The real issue here is not the Warren-Flew Debate,⁵ but what that debate proved to be of importance to our discussion in this paper. Dr. Warren vividly pointed out to Dr. Flew and the audience that an atheist (evolutionist) could not explain man's moral nature. Atheism (evolutionism) could not explain man's consciousness. Dr. Flew found himself entangled in all sorts of contradictions in trying to have both subjective and objective value. Both cannot be right. The evolutionist wants objective value, but the only way he can get it is to accept God. That, of course, he is unwilling to do. And so, men continue on in their utter determination to do without God. As G. K. Chesterton put it: "When men cease to believe in God, they do not believe in nothing, they believe in anything."⁶

Man is moral. He has mind and consciousness. Evolution cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, account for it. From whence did it arise? The only feasible explanation to an unbiased mind is GOD! It could have come from nowhere else!

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4. Overton, Basil. "Life, Mind, and Consciousness." IN: THE SPIRITUAL SWORD. Dr. Thomas B. Warren, Editor. Getwell Church of Christ. Memphis, Tennessee. April, 1971.

5. WARREN-FLEW DEBATE. National Chris-

tian Press. Box 1001. Jonesboro, Ark. I would like to recommend this book! It is a tremendous work for any Christian or atheist interested in evidences for God's existence—and the absolute impossibility of atheism. It is worth every penny of the \$12 it costs. Dr. Warren is at his finest!

6. Chesterton, G. K. Quoted IN: FORTIFY YOUR FAITH IN AN AGE OF DOUBT. Wayne Jackson, Author. 3906 E. Main St. Stockton, CA. 95205. p. 32. 1974. — 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

Why I Do Not Sleep During Worship

Mrs. Douglas M. Williams

1. I have come to learn of God's will for me. I cannot hear when I sleep. (I Thess. 5:6).

2. I am held accountable for this period of worship (Rom. 14:12). I dare not miss a minute of it.

3. Jesus is with me — I must not sleep.

4. Others are watching me — I do not want to set a bad example (Matt. 5:14; 5:16).

5. The greatest book in all the world is being studied. People are begging and praying for this opportunity on foreign soil — I must not sleep through it.

6. I always come to worship rested because

I get a proper night's sleep the night before. I prepare to worship God.

7. I want to encourage the preacher. We need more like him who are willing to preach the gospel.

8. I do not want to disappoint my Lord, as did Peter and the two sons of Zebedee in the garden of Gethsemane, when he returned and found them asleep. I do not want my Lord to say to me, as recorded in Matt. 26:36-40, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

"Super-Christians"

Continued from page 3

somewhat easier to miss worship—they've done it before and one more time wouldn't matter that much. And when death comes and they stand helpless they may long for greater faith to sustain, but it will not be there! They missed hearing God's word and this is the only source of faith!

WHAT IF JESUS HAD COME

If you missed worship to watch the Superbowl just what would you have said if Jesus had returned? Do you think He'd say, "Come ye..." when you by your absence had refused His first invitation? If I had missed worship, I'd ask my family and the church to forgive me for my sin in doing this so that I could look forward with my hope for His coming. What about you?—P. O. Box, Birmingham, Alabama, 35226.

Route 1, Box 48
Andalusia, Al. 36420

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

P.O. BOX 48086

JANUARY, 1978

Dear Friends,

Some two months has passed since the last newsletter. We have determined that it is not necessary to produce a monthly newsletter while we are in the United States. This will save us both time and publishing money.

Since the last newsletter we have traveled many miles and spoken many times on behalf of the East African Mission-field and mission work in general. I have been to both Oklahoma Christian College, where I had a part in the annual mission workshop and to Abilene Christian, where I shared in the mission emphasis program of the Missions Department and talked to several prospective missionaries about the possibilities of their coming to East Africa. We have also had opportunities to speak in churches in the states of Tennessee, Michigan, Texas, Oklahoma, and Florida, as well as our home state of Alabama. All this has been fairly heady experience for a recently returned African missionary. We have none the less enjoyed the opportunities we've had and the exposure that the East African work has had.

We are now finished with what we call our "reporting." That is we have completed the circuit to all our regularly supporting congregations and given them a first hand report on the status of the work in East Africa. These congregations together number thirty-three. In addition to this we have given a report to 18 other congregations that do not now support the East African work on a monthly basis, but either have done so in the past or have given substantially to the work or travel funds in past years. All congregations that have been regularly supporting the mission effort in Kenya have been asked to extend and increase their backing of the work. All congregations that were visited that do not now regularly support the fund have been asked to join in. The response to this request has been heartening. Several new congregations have been added to the list of regular supporters. These faithful congregations are to be commended for their concern for lost souls. We thank God for His servants at the Liberty (Walker Co.), Morris (Jefferson Co.), and Whites Chapel (Fayette Co.) congregations. In keeping with our practice these new supporters are from the same area of Alabama where our total support comes. Aside from these new supporters several of the long-time supporters of the work have already increased their backing. A complete list of supporters both old and new will appear in the next newsletter.

During January we will attend services at the 6th Avenue Church in Jasper. This will be our first opportunity for all of us to attend one congregation as a family for more than one Sunday. Sixth Avenue has had the oversight of our work for nine years. Starting the last week in January we will again be on the road. If the Lord wills in the last three months of our time here in America we will visit again every one of the our supporting congregations in order to be with these great friends one last time before our departure so as to say "goodbye" for the next three to four years. This will take us right through to our departure date of May 1st.

The following is a list of the congregations we have visited during October, November and December:

October 2, Sunday morning - we were with the congregation at PEA RIDGE in Fayette Co., Alabama. This old country congregation though small, has been a major supporter of mission work for several years. They often give more than many other congregations several times their size. On this morning \$200.00 was given by the church toward the work fund.

October 2, Sunday night - we were at the WEST WALKER congregation in Walker County near Jasper. West Walker is one of the newer congregations in Walker County. They have supported the East African work on a monthly basis from the first day they opened their doors. On this evening we were given \$100.00 toward our equipment fund.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Van Leith \$10.00
 Grover and Carolyn Hosmer 10.00
 Charles and Cathy Patton 20.00
 Wilbern Busby 20.00
 Hermon Moon 20.00
 Russell Noojin 10.00
 J. D. Dailey 10.00

Oct. 5, Wednesday - on this evening we visited with the congregation at WHITSON PLACE in Tuscaloosa Co. Whitson Place does not support our work monthly, but



BERKLEY HACKETT

has contributed toward our work and travel funds on a one time basis in the past. We also have at least two individuals who contribute on a regular basis. On this evening they gave \$270.00 toward our funds. They have recently taken a giant step in having their first full-time Evangelist. He is Mike Raines and is a native of New Zealand married to an America.

Whitson Place Church \$200.00
 Julian Smallwood 10.00
 Fletcher Gurganus 10.00
 William Feltman 25.00
 Mike Raines 25.00

Oct. 9, Sunday morning saw us at the little congregation at MACEDONIA, HOLLY GROVE ROAD, between Jasper and Townley. These brethren have been faithful in their support for several years. On this morning they contributed \$55.00 toward this end.

Leonard Wilson \$25.00
 Nancy Oden 10.00
 Fred Swann 10.00
 Oscar Reid 10.00

Oct. 9, Sunday evening on this night we reported to the ALDRIDGE congregation near Parrish, Alabama. Aldridge has supported the East African work faithfully with a twice yearly contribution for many years. We have many fine friends there. On this evening \$136.30 has given toward this fund.

David Robertson \$1.00
 Melvin Stanford 8.00
 Les Kilpatrick 2.00
 Pete Stanford 3.00
 Connie Richardson 1.00
 Kelly Richardson 1.00
 Ginnie Robertson30
 Ronny and June Jones 10.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Larry Jones 10.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Jones 10.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Jones 20.00
 Terry Stanford 5.00
 Ruby Jones 5.00
 W. N. Eldridge 10.00
 Charles and Judith Richardson 50.00

For the rest of the month we were out of state. I spoke at the LIVONIA church in Detroit, the WARE BRANCH Church (who contributed toward printing equipment) in Chattanooga, Oklahoma Christian College in Tulsa and at CORDELL, Oklahoma. It was great to get back home, but we were not to stay in Alabama long before we were on our way to Abilene Christian University in Texas.

Nov. 6, Sunday. On this morning I opened at meeting at the EARNEST CHAPEL Congregation between Oakman and Parrish. Earnest Chapel lost their building recently in a fire. This was the first gospel meeting in their new facilities.

Nov. 9, Wednesday was spent with the brethren at the ZION church at Parrish. Zion supported the East African work monthly from 1969 to 1974. On this night \$70.00 was given toward the equipment fund.

Mae Harlan \$5.00
 Lola Argent 5.00
 Mrs. Geo. Short and L. C. Short 50.00
 Dewey Salter 10.00

Nov. 13, Sunday morning - on this morning we visited with our friends at LIBERTY in Jasper. Liberty is one of the strong country churches in Walker County. On the morning \$253.00 was given toward the completion of the equipment fund and has since been determined that the congregation would give \$77.50 monthly in the work in East Africa.

Vivian Wiggins \$10.00
 Sam and Betty Wilder 3.00
 Hubert Calloway 10.00
 Jerry and Patsey McLemore 10.00
 Brodie and Betty Plyler 100.00
 Sandra Wright 30.00
 Robert L. Barton 10.00
 Clarence and Grace Ingle 25.00
 Curtis and Louise Swiney 25.00
 J. A. Portzer 25.00
 William and Donna McLemore 25.00

Nov. 13, Sunday Evening. On this evening we visited HAMILTON, Alabama. Charlotte's sister, Mary attends here with her family. On this evening \$97.00 was donated to the mission fund by individuals of this congregation.

Anon \$ 2.00
 Foy Knight 5.00
 Dr. and Mrs. Jn. Kerr 50.00
 Somar Fleming 10.00
 Anon 5.00

Harold D. Ritchie 5.00
 Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Davis 10.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Dye 10.00

Nov. 23, Wednesday night. Saw us at the TARRANT Church in Birmingham. Tarrant supported this work on a monthly basis some years ago, but do not presently do so. On this evening \$60.00 was donated to the fund and we discussed the possibilities of the congregation rejoining the work in Kenya.

Mr. and Mrs. Geo. W. Latham \$50.00
 Vie Eubank 10.00

Nov. 27, Sunday night - On this night we visited the congregation at HOOVER in Birmingham. On the night we visited them \$85.00 was donated toward the mission fund by members of the congregation. Later \$400.00 was given as a one-time donation to the work.

Richard Reynolds 25.00
 John C. Rogers 25.00
 Anna Watts 10.00
 James Lawrence 10.00
 Robert Sisco 5.00
 Mr. R. B. Myrick, Sr. 10.00

Nov. 30, Wednesday night - on this evening I spoke to the TUBBS congregation. We have many fine friends in this county congregation. On this evening \$70.00 was donated by individuals.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Tubbs 10.00
 Mr. and Mrs. Hayes 20.00
 Anon 5.00
 Wheeler Pounds 20.00
 Wake Carmichael 5.00
 Charles Gray 10.00

Dec. 4, Sunday morning - I spoke with the brethren at CROSSROADS. This congregation has made great strides in the past years and will soon begin on a new building program. On this morning \$63.55 was given by individuals.

Lucille Robinson \$ 5.00
 Anon 10.00
 Jerry Rutland 20.00
 Velira Trotter and Fairy Bridges 10.00
 Anon 3.55
 Terry and Velma Clark 10.00
 Esther and Allen Ingle 10.00

Dec. 4, Sunday evening. On this evening we visited DOVERTOWN. Several visitors came for the service from nearby Corinth congregation. \$75.00 was given by individuals toward the mission fund.

Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Taft \$20.00
 Clara Perry 5.00
 Rachel Causey 25.00
 Roy Watts 25.00

Dec. 7, Wednesday night found us at HACKLEBURG, Marion Co., Alabama. This is the congregation where my friend, James Mays, preaches. His wife's family attends at Pleasantfield in Walker Co. On this evening \$230.00 was donated by individuals to the fund.

Nancy Fredrick \$ 5.00
 J. C. Evans 25.00
 Ralph Burselon 20.00
 Hudon Black 100.00
 Jimmy Engle 10.00
 C. M. Lawler 25.00
 Lebon Kennedy 10.00
 C. B. Shackelford 25.00
 Silas Ellis 10.00

Dec. 11, Sunday morning. I spoke at the congregation at SHADES MOUNTAIN in Birmingham. Shades Mountain has oversight of mission work in India for several years. They are in the process of phasing out their State-side support of native preaches so that the local Indian congregation can take up this responsibility. \$450.00 was given by the members toward the East African work.

Dudley Williams \$200.00
 James D. Foster 100.00
 Ned Mitchell 25.00
 Dan Jenkins 25.00
 Mrs. Lyn Puley 10.00
 George M. Davis 25.00
 Emmett Kincaid 20.00
 Henry Dawson 20.00
 Dr. Robert Ford 25.00

Dec. 11, Sunday night - was spent at MORRIS near Birmingham. Morris will be joining in the East African work on a monthly basis. We thank God for their concern and love for lost souls. On the evening I was there \$148.00 was given by individuals.

Lucille McCombs \$20.00

Anon.	20.00
Auston Sawyer	3.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jackie Cabler	20.00
Hubert Mulvehill	25.00
Kerry and Glenda Newland	10.00
William Cary, Sr.	50.00

Dec. 14, Wednesday evening. I spoke to the congregation at CENTRAL near Winfield, Al. Central has a new preacher who will be working with the congregation full-time.

Anon	\$5.00
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Dec. 18, Sunday evening - was spent with our friends at BEAR CREEK in Marion County. Bear Creek has helped the East African work in the past by contributing to our travel fund. This time \$267.00 was donated by individuals.

Penny Lauderdale	\$10.00
Ruth Cole	5.00
Marie Tidwell	5.00
Shirley Davis	5.00
L. O. Smith	10.00
Bertie McInnish	5.00
Dennis Pounder	20.00
Lexie Tidwell	10.00
Mrs. Phillips	1.00
Jeff Nelson	1.00
H. G. Phillips	10.00
H. G. Behel	10.00
Freddie and Anita Poe	25.00
Royce Mann	50.00
Earl Reynolds	5.00
R. O. Barr	50.00
Judy Epperson	5.00
Lessie Tidwell	5.00
Dalton and Oma Williams	10.00
Wm. and Frances Jones	25.00

The following are names of regular monthly contributors and those who for various reasons did not appear under the congregations where they attend:

Jake Blackwell	\$100.00
Fletcher Gurganus	10.00
Bruce Blanton	15.00
Gary Robins	100.00
Mrs. Howard Davis	100.00
Herman King	20.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
Phillip and Katie Anthony	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers F. Laurent	10.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
Eugene and Ellen McMurray	20.00
J. E and Goldie Terry	10.00
Anon	10.00
Herman King	20.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	10.00
C. Eugene McMurray	20.00
Eugene and Allen McMurray	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. Ben L. Morris	20.00
Mrs. Bruce Myers	25.00
J. E and Goldie Terry	10.00
Daniel T. Kimbrell	30.00
Grady Barker	100.00
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Parker	25.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

List of Contributors to African Mission Fund For Month Of October, 1977.

Barn Creek Church of Christ	50.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cottdale Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ	15.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00
Pea Ridge Church of Christ	200.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	10.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Sixth Avenue Church of Christ	1700.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Whitson Place Church of Christ	200.00
Total	\$3375.00

List of Contributors to African Mission Fund for month

of November, 1977.

Aldridge Church of Christ	120.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ	100.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central (Tuscaloosa) Church of Christ	100.00
Cottdale Church of Christ	75.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia (Holly Grove Road) Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ	15.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
New Hope (Oakman) Church of Christ	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Sixth Ave. Church of Christ	1200.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	100.00
Total	\$2,685.00

List of Contributors to African Mission Fund For Month

of December, 1977.

Barn Creek Church of Christ	50.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	40.00
Central (Tuscaloosa) Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	50.00
Cottdale Church of Christ	75.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Hoover Church of Christ	400.00
Macedonia (Holly Grove Rd) Church of Christ	25.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ	15.00
Northport Church of Christ	75.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Ave. Church of Christ	1200.00
Tubbs Church of Christ	200.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
Whitehouse Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Total	\$3,090.00

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CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO: "EAST AFRICAN MISSION FUND".



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most i.
the Words of Truth and su

k forth

, 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 1978

NUMBER 7

In Touch With Headquarters

The full and complete battle dress of the "Christian soldier" is described in Ephesians 6:10-17 and is called the whole armor of God. We should emphasize the need of the **WHOLE** armor in order to carry on the warfare against spiritual darkness and wickedness in the world. Now, in a somewhat unexpected place we have set forth in verses 18-20 a matter that is extremely important to every soldier; keeping in touch with headquarters. These verses read: "with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, and on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."



(Virgil Bradford)

When I was a student in an R.O.T.C. high school the Colonel in charge called me into his office and instructed me to study a little rule book designed for soldiers. I remember only one thing in that book, and that is the statement that read, "THE FIRST DUTY OF A SOLDIER IS TO OBEY ORDERS." When General Dwight Eisenhower was in command of the allied forces that invaded western Europe he was constantly in touch with the entire army that landed on those shores to turn the tide in favor of those fighting against Hitler's Germany. When he gave the order the whole army moved as one man, eventually bringing that horrible war to its end.

Above all things it is our duty and privilege to serve under Jesus, the Captain of our salvation,

and obey his orders as we keep in touch through the study of the Scriptures and prayer. When we pray we speak to God through the Son; when we read the Lord God speaks to us by his word. Thus the communication is complete (Heb. 2:10). The armor which we have studied in times past is of little value unless it is rightly used, and we can never know how to use it effectively without orders from headquarters. There is never a time or place for us to dispense with prayer. Pray at all seasons, says the apostle. We should study our prayers, being sure that they are in spirit, sincerely, from the heart.

Watchful perseverance is enjoined. "Watching" comes from a compound word meaning to chase sleep. There is no better way to avoid a surprise attack from Satan and his agents than to be regular in Bible study and in prayer. Hence, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee" (Eph. 5:14). Pray for all the saints. Saints are Christians, and Christians are not miraculously shielded from temptation. So "we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (Rom. 15:1). Specifically, we ought to pray for the elders of the church. Theirs is a tremendous responsibility. Pray for them. Pray for those who teach the Scriptures in the home, in the classroom, from the pulpit and wherever the opportunity presents itself. Pray for those who are parents. There is no more noble work than that of rearing children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And don't forget those young people who are under tremendous pressures on every side. Remember especially the "newborn babes" in Christ. Baptism is not the end of the line but the beginning of the Christian warfare.

Let us also not forget that countless thousands of goods, honest people are in the world who are earnestly desiring to know and do God's will, but lack direction. If we pray for them let us also seek them out and endeavor to lead them to Christ. This should bring us to more highly evaluate radio and TV programs in which the plain, simple gospel of Christ is preached. Those who engage in this good work need great wisdom that they may know how to present the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

This certainly does not exhaust the list; the sick, bereaved and distressed should be remembered in prayer.

Finally, it may be surprising that the peerless apostle asks the brethren to pray for him. We must remember that Paul, though an inspired apostle, one of the greatest men that ever lived, was yet a human being. He never lost sight of the fact that he could faithfully preach the word and yet through some weakness fall away. (Cf. I Cor. 9:26f). And if this great servant of God needed the prayers of the saints, how much more do I!!! May the God of heaven help us to pray regularly, sincerely, unselfishly. When we thus stay in touch with headquarters the Christian armor will never fail. Put it to the test.

Franklin, Tenn. 37064

The Deity of Christ

JAMES PILGRIM

The deity of Jesus is as reasonable as it is so.

FATHER

John 5:32-38 shows that God bore witness of Jesus. (cf. also. John 8:18). Did that witness include testimony to the deity of Jesus? Indeed, for God said of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). The witness of the Father is true. (John 5:32). God was speaking of the deity of Christ before He was born of the virgin Mary. (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; 9:6). All who believe the Father must accept the deity of Jesus, the fact that the Son is also God.

HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit would come, and when He did, He would bear witness of Jesus. (John 15:26, 27; 16:13-15). Did the Spirit come? Yes.

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble brethren, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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Homosexual Ministers

In the January 23 Birmingham Post Herald it is reported that a task force of the United Presbyterian Church has recommended that the church adopt a policy statement allowing homosexuals to be ordained to the ministry. The proposed policy statement included the following: "For some homosexual Christians growth toward mature Christian living may imply accepting celibacy; for some it may imply accomplishing reorientation to heterosexuality; however, for others it may imply remaining open to or attaining full companionship and partnership with a person of the same sex" (Emphasis mine—BD).



BOBBY DUNCAN

According to an Associated Press report, this particular task force was made up of nineteen members, and was organized to study homosexuality. Only five of the nineteen members are opposed to ordaining homosexuals.

The majority will ask the General Assembly to adopt a policy statement outlining church attitudes toward homosexuality in general and ordination in particular. According to the majority report: "Homosexuality...is a strong, enduring, not consciously chosen and usually irreversible affectional attraction..." and is "a minor theme in Scripture."

A few observations are in order. In the first place, observe that the report has to do with admitted, practicing homosexuals. It does not

have to do merely with those who may have had some homosexual relations in the past, or who may tend toward homosexuality. Those under consideration are those who would serve as ministers while attaining "full companionship and partnership with a person of the same sex" in some cases. It would be interesting to know what book these would use as a text in their preaching. Can you imagine what one of these preachers would say in a sermon based on Romans 1:26, 27: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into what that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet"? It would be extremely interesting also to hear him preach a sermon on I Corinthians 6:9, 10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Instead of "abusers of themselves with mankind," several translations (including the RSV and the New ASV) have "homosexuals."

But the sad truth is that the Presbyterian church has departed from the simple teaching of the Bible in so many areas that it really makes little, if any, difference to them what the Bible says about homosexuality.

In the second place, since this was a "task force to study homosexuality," we wonder what materials were studied in reaching a conclusion. The Bible is given us as God's standard of right and wrong. "The statutes of the Lord are right..." (Ps. 19:8). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of the Lord shall not pass away (Matt. 24:35). It would seem, therefore, that in studying a matter of this nature—especially as it relates to those who would be ordained to preach—the Bible would be consulted.

What Happened At Calvary

The darkest hour in human history occurred in Jerusalem some 1900 years ago. Sin reached its highest pinnacle; human depravity sank to its lowest ebb when Jews and Gentiles together crucified Jesus the Son of God. Against this black background of wickedness the one who came as the light of the world glowed in all his holy glory. As the blood freely flowed from his wounds, many world shaking and world altering events were taking place.

1. As the Savior writhed in anguish and pain, his life slowly ebbing from his wounded body, THE SERPENT'S HEAD WAS BEING BRUISED. The Creator had promised his fallen children that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head while being bruised in his heel (Gen. 3:15). These enigmatic words were never fully comprehended until the past mysteries were made plain by the gospel of the new covenant. Christ, the only man ex-

clusively the product of a woman, being virgin born, delivered a crushing blow to Satan, the old serpent (Rev. 12:9), while suffering on the cross. What appeared to be Christ's destruction was turned into great triumph by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4). Paul explains that when he was nailed to the cross, he despoiled the principalities and powers making "a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14-15). Never will Satan enjoy the power he once knew before the Lord came down, and the day hastens when he shall be forever cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10).

2. The SIN DEBT of all humanity WAS BEING PAID in full as our Jesus hung suspended between heaven and earth. It has always been true that apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). Likewise it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins (Heb. 10:4). But the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, does cleanse us from all sin (1 John 1:7). While some might be willing to die for the good man who is their friend, the marvel of it all is that Christ died for us while we were weak ungodly sinners and enemies of righteousness. Now we are justified by his blood and we shall be saved from future wrath

practically every wicked practice that men allow to get its grip on them? Does this make all these forms of wickedness right? Why not ordain as ministers those who are impenitent in all these areas? Mind you, now, we are not talking about those who are weak, and struggling to overcome their faults. We are talking about those who refer to willful and habitual practice of sodomy as "growth toward mature Christian living."

If lukewarmness in the church at Laodicea made the Lord want to vomit, what effect will this have?

Considering the decision that was reached, do you suppose the Bible came in for much thought in this study? But here again is a commentary on what happens to those who lay aside their respect for the authority of the Bible.

The fact that homosexuality is referred to in one of the newspaper articles as "a minor theme in Scripture" shows that those writing the report are not very familiar with the Bible. So far as specific acts of immorality are concerned, there is not a sin condemned more severely than homosexuality; and such condemnation abounds on the pages of the Bible. Sodom is mentioned by name some thirty times in the Old and New Testaments as an example of God's judgement against wickedness. But the sin with which Sodom is identified, more than with any other, is the sin of homosexuality (See Genesis 19). As a matter of fact, homosexuality itself came to be called in the Bible by the name of the city of Sodom. "Sodomites" are referred to in no complimentary terms in Deut. 23:17; I Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; and II Kings 23:7. We would challenge anyone to name a sin which is more severely condemned than this terrible sin.

In the third place, are we to understand that since this sin is "a strong, enduring, not consciously chosen and usually irreversible" practice, it is, therefore, not a sin? If so, then drunkenness is not a sin. Is not alcoholism "a strong, enduring, not consciously chosen and usually irreversible" sort of thing? In fact, could not this be said of



JOHN WADDEY

clusively the product of a woman, being virgin born, delivered a crushing blow to Satan, the old serpent (Rev. 12:9), while suffering on the cross. What appeared to be Christ's destruction was turned into great triumph by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4). Paul explains that when he was nailed to the cross, he despoiled the principalities and powers making "a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14-15). Never will Satan enjoy the power he once knew before the Lord came down, and the day hastens when he shall be forever cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented forever (Rev. 20:10).

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it correct to say that 'the conscience is not a safe guide'?"

No.

Neither is it proper to affirm, as is so often done, that "the conscience is a creature of education." Both statements evidence an erroneous concept of the nature and purpose of the conscience; and, each assumes for the conscience a function which it does not, and cannot, perform. "Conscience" and "consciousness" derive from the same Greek word (*suneidesis*), and the ASV renders it "consciousness" in Heb. 10:2. In this passage, its meaning is obvious; it conveys the notion of awareness, the realization of one's obligation to avoid that which the judgement condemns and to follow that which the judgement approves. Basically, the conscience monitors one's thoughts, motives, actions and general manner of life; it has nothing whatsoever to do with determining what is right and what is wrong—this is the faculty of the judgement. The conscience simply commends us when we do what our judgement tells us is right; and it chides us when we do what our judgement tells us is right; and it chides and condemns us when we do what our judgement tells us is wrong.

The conscience is thus a safe guide in ascertaining whether our conduct is in harmony with our judgement; and, so long as it is not allowed to become hardened, seared over and calloused, it serves effectively in the area which God designed for it. But, it was not intended to serve as a standard of right and wrong; and, it is not a "creature of education" so as to be equipped for such action. If we think what we are doing is right, we have a *good* conscience (Acts 23:1; I Tim. 1:5, 19; Heb. 13:18; I Pet. 3:16, 21), a pure conscience (I Tim. 3:9; II Tim. 1:3); and a conscience *void of offence* (Acts 24:16.) If we think we are doing wrong our conscience is *evil* (Heb. 10:22); *defiled* (Tit. 1:15), and "seared with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4:2). What we *think*, however, does not determine what is right and wrong and, like Paul when he persecuted the saints, we may have "a good conscience" though we are grievously in error. In such instances, it is the judgement which is at fault, and which must be "educated." When this is done, the conscience will swing around and approve that which it formerly condemned, and oppose that which it before approved.

A proper understanding of the conscience and its functions is sorely needed these days. Many people think it is the sole criterion of conduct; it is sometimes referred to as "the voice of God!" This gross and hurtful error prompts multitudes of people today to disregard the teaching of the scriptures and to follow their "inner leadings," on the assumption that in this manner God speaks to them. We must be careful not to contribute to this concept by leaving the impression in our preaching and teaching that the conscience is a guide of moral conduct. It is wrong to disregard the promptings of conscience, because it is designed to lead us to review our

judgement; but, it is our judgement (our concept of what is right or wrong) which determines whether the conscience approves or condemns us. It is only when we have brought our thoughts, actions and manner of life into harmony with the teaching of the scriptures, that we are right; and when we do what we believe to be right, our conscience will perform its proper function, and support our actions. The conscience then is an

awareness that we ought to conform to our judgement of what is right and it manifests itself in sanctioning that which we believe to be right, and opposing in us that which we believe to be wrong. Right, however, is determined, not by what we believe, but by what the Book teaches. Conformity thereto will bring our judgement into line and with it our conscience.

Inspirational Examples Of Dedication To God

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Jehovah's Sacred Volume is literally filled with inspirational examples of dedication to Deity, of consecration to Christ. Abel is remembered for his devotion in worshiping God as Heaven dictated (Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4). Enoch exhibited his devotion to God by walking with Jehovah for three hundred or more years (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5). Noah manifested his dedication to the God of heaven by his long tenure as a preacher of righteousness and by his faithfulness in the erection of the ark for the saving of his family (II Pet. 2:5; Heb. 11:7). Abraham, Issac and Jacob demonstrated remarkable dedication to Jehovah God as they exhibited what a life "of faith" and "by faith" will do for men who headed great families and served as the founders of a spiritually oriented race of people (Heb. 11:8ff). For forty long years Moses showed his beautiful brand of dynamic dedication at the helm of wandering Israel, yea of obstinate Israel most of the four decades. Space forbids our telling of the full dedication of Ruth and Esther, of David and Daniel, of Samuel and Elijah, of Jeremiah and Isaiah and a number of others.

In the New Testament there is the devoted John, the Messianic Harbinger, the dedicated apostles and the consecrated Christians of that first century who early laid the groundwork of the budding Christian movement.

MODERN EXAMPLES OF DEDICATION

Dedication and devotion to God and His system of saving truth did not die with the worthies of the Old Testament or with the spiritual giants of that eventful first century. I want to share with you some of the inspirational examples of dedication of people who have lived nearer our time.

I think of the pioneer whose straight-forward type of preaching was stirred up opposition from the enemies of the cross. Before going to the pulpit one night in a gospel meeting he was handed a note to the effect that if he preached, he would be killed while in the pulpit. When time came he went to the pulpit and preached courageously and convincingly as he had been doing each of the other evenings. At one time in his sermon so many stones were thrown against the meetinghouse that he had to pause till the noise died away. He preached his full sermon that night and lived to preach many more. Will not your admiration for the man abound when I tell you that he preached his full discourse that evening with his back to an open window?

I think of Brother R.V. Cawthon, a great gospel preacher for the first half of this century. He established many of the great congregations in the Nashville area. I preached for Brother Cawthon's home congregation for a number of years and he

greatly encouraged me. He often told me stories of his colorful days on the firing line for Jesus Christ. Upon one occasion Brother Cawthon was about to baptize a young girl. The father of this girl was opposed to his daughter's baptism. He sent word to Brother Cawthon that if this baptism materialized, that he would be on the banks of the stream with a loaded gun. When time came for the baptism the man was right there with his loaded gun. Brother Cawthon went right ahead with the baptism not knowing whether the man would make good his threat or not. He did not shoot. Later Brother Cawton baptized that very man. I admire both Brother Cawthon and the young lady for both depicted great dedication upon this occasion.

I think of the Catholic lady and her two daughters whom I baptized some years ago. We had to do it without the husband's knowledge. The lady knew he would have stopped such a transaction, even by force, if necessary. That took dedication of a heroic nature.

I think of a young man who told me just before I baptized him that he would be in trouble when his Dad learned of his conversion to Christ. I think of another young man who was to be baptized and his father literally and forcefully detained him from making an appearance the night he was to be baptized. Later I met that young man in another town and we baptized him without his father's knowledge. He was a late teen-ager at the time. That young man came out of denominationalism and ran well the Christian race for a time only to succumb again to the ways of the world. Temporary dedication will not enable one to win the crown of life. Permanency of dedication is imperative for this heavenly acquisition.

I think of the boy in service far from home on a certain Wednesday. Some of the fellows told him they were going into town that night for a period of revelry. Wine and women were on their planned agenda. They invited him to go. In a moment of fleshy weakness he consented to their lascivious plans. Later the thought hit him, "This is Wednesday. Tonight in Nashville, Tennessee, my mother will be at Bible Study at Charlotte Avenue. When they pray she will be remembering me also in her prayers." He could not spend a night in sin while his dear mother back home had a prayer for his moral, spiritual and physical safety. He told the fellows he would not be going with them after all! Mothers, had this been your son, would he have been able to have said this about you? A good many sons of so-called

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What Happened At Calvary

Continued from page 2

(Rom. 5:6-9). The blood of the wounded Savior cleanses our guilty conscience (Heb. 9:14). The effective benefits of his sacrifice extend backwards to Eden and forward to the end of this age (Heb. 9:15). So effective was this sacrifice of his life that it need never be repeated. He was once offered to bear the sins of many (Heb. 9:28).

3. CHRIST TASTED DAMNATION for us as he hung there. It was heaven's plan that Jesus should "taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). Most people think only of his physical death when they read such verses, but much more is involved. His death was a vicarious one. "Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:5-6). He made "His soul an offering for sin" (Is. 53:10). Although he died physically, all humans yet die, whether saved or sinners (Heb. 9:27). There is, however, a death that faithful children of God will never taste, i.e., the second death, or death of the soul which is separated from God in eternity (Compare II Thess. 1:9 and Rev. 20:14-15). Do you recall how our Lord cried out in agony when the darkness fell upon the earth scene, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15:33-34). What does this mean? God laid upon the Son all the sin guilt of humanity as he hung dying on the Roman cross. But sin cannot stand in the presence of a righteous, holy, God. So God drew back, separated Himself from His own son in that awful moment. But what does it mean to be separated from God? That is nothing less than damnation itself. For to be lost is to be separated from God (Is. 59:1-2). Our king paid a price far more dear than merely dying in a painful way. He tasted even the horrible second death for us that we might be saved!

4. As those terrible scenes transpired, THE WAY TO HEAVEN WAS BEING OPENED FOR US. We can now boldly enter the holy place of heaven itself "by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:19-20).

5. That day THE OLD COVENANT WAS BEING REMOVED AS GOD'S GOVERNING LAW. The Jews made dead to the law of Moses by the body of Christ (Rom. 7:4). He "blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us; and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (Col. 2:14).

6. As the old covenant was passing away. THE NEW COVENANT WAS BEING RATIFIED AND DEDICATED. When instituting the holy supper, the Lord said of the fruit of the vine, "This is my blood of the covenant. . ." (Matt. 26:28). The Hebrew writer further explains, saying, "For this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant." He further adds, "For where a testament is, there must be the death of him that made it. . . wherefore, even the first covenant hath not been dedicated without blood" (Heb. 9:15-18). Our new covenant would be but worthless paper without the death of Christ to certify its message.

7. As the hateful crowd jeered the dying Messiah, the purchase price WAS BEING PAID FOR HIS CHURCH. Paul reminds us all that the church of the Lord was "purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). If the modernist who rejects the doctrine of the saving power of the shed blood of Christ is correct, the church, the Bible, and the very idea of salvation are all made void and meaningless.

8. As the unnatural darkness settled over the land, THE OLD AGE WAS DYING AND A NEW AGE WAS COMING INTO EXISTENCE. The age of the law had come through Moses,

now the aeon of grace and truth was beginning (John 1:17). The kingdom which John the Baptist and Jesus both had promised was now ready to be built upon the one foundation (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 3:11). Later that day his disciples would lay his mangled body in a borrowed tomb, but God would raise him up on the third day even as prophets had foretold. After showing himself alive by many infallible proofs he would ascend into the heavens to take his seat at the right hand of

the Father where he would rule and reign until the end of the Christian age (Acts 2:32-36).

As we behold this dreadful scene outside Jerusalem's walls on Calvary's hill, we, by the knowledge which our scriptures offer, can see the salvation of humanity with all its attendant blessings. The question of the hour is "Have you appropriated these blessings for yourself?" — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn. 37921.

The Deity Of Christ

Continued from page 1

(Acts 2:1-4). What did the Holy Spirit through the apostles say about Jesus? Acts 2:22-36 shows He was deity. Further, the Spirit moved Peter to tell Jews in Jerusalem that Jesus was God's Son. (Acts 3:12, 13, 26). Thus, deity proclaimed Jesus to be deity. Surely the testimony of the Spirit is true.

WRITTEN WORD

A study of the Old Testament scriptures leaves no doubt as to the deity of Jesus, for the scriptures testify of Jesus. (John 5:39-47; 1:45). We have given two instances of the Old Testament proclamations concerning Christ's deity. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6). Daniel also wrote of the coming king. (Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14). cf. also. Hosea 11:1; Micah 5:1-3. The New Testament is abundant in references to Christ's deity. (John 1:34; 3:16; 18, 5:22, 23; 6:69; etc.).

WORKS

The works of Jesus are great evidences of His deity. (John 5:17, 36; 10:25; 14:11; 15:24). The healings (Matt. 8:16—Note the word "all"), raising of some from the dead (John 11:11-14, 21, 31, 32, 37-46; Matt. 9:18-26), and other works of Jesus (John 2:6-10; Matt. 14:15-21; John 10:18 & 20:1-10) are indeed distinguishing marks. These works, and more, so set Jesus apart that the multitudes thronged to Him (Matt. 9:26, 36) to the point He could not be hid. (Mark 7:24). The works of Jesus prove Him to be deity, God.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

John the Baptist (the baptizer) is among the greatest human witnesses to the deity of Jesus. The people felt John was God's Son, however, John set the record in order. (John 1:19-34). In these verses John declared, (1) that he was not the Christ, (2) that he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, (3) that Christ was greater than he, (4) that Jesus is the Lamb of God, (5) that Christ takes away the world's sins, (6) that the Spirit came upon Jesus, (7) that Jesus was proved to be God's Son by the Spirit coming upon Him, and (8) that he saw and bare record that Jesus is the Son of God. John, therefore, faithfully fulfilled

his mission. (John 1:7).

MISCELLANEOUS

Other proofs of the deity of Jesus include the testimony of disciples (John 15:27; 19:35; 21:24), the virgin birth (Matt. 1:16-25), the pre-existence of Jesus (John 1:1-3), Christ's perfection (I Pet. 2:21-25; Compare this to man's state, Rom. 3:23), the prophecies. (Isa. 7:14; 9:6). The list could go on. Even Satan (Matt. 4:1-11) and the devils (Matt. 8:28, 29) could be

called as witnesses of Christ's deity.

CHRIST

We have purposefully saved the Lord's testimony about Himself for last. Now that we have heard others, let us hear what Jesus says about Himself. Did He claim to be deity? Yes, more than once. (John 8:14, 19, 23, 28; Matt. 27:43). Every time Jesus said, "My Father," He was claiming deity for Himself. Even His prayer of John 17 is an evidence of His deity. Was His record true? Yes. (John 8:14).

CONCLUSION

The evidence is in. the verdict is crystal clear. The Lord Jesus Christ, like the Father and the Spirit, is deity, God. —Via Daily Devotional, Centre, Al.

Inspirational Examples Of Dedication To God

Continued from page 3

Christian mothers could not, for their mothers do not believe in or practice faithfulness at Mid-Week Bible Study. In some congregations this would get from 50 to 75 per cent of the mothers. Mothers, have you read carefully this paragraph? Maybe you should reread it again and again! I know that you should, if your presence is elsewhere each Wednesday night.

The list could be multiplied a hundred fold and then the half would not be told. What about our dedication to the Lord? How strongly is it exhibited for others to emulate?—Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063

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WORDS OF TRUTH

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1978

NUMBER 8

Life After Life: A Refutation

No. 1

This series of timely lessons is presenting a refutation of a book written by Dr. Raymond Moody and which appeared in the January issue of the **READER'S DIGEST** for 1977. For a number of months this book has been among the top sellers in our nation. In this book Dr. Moody relates a number of case studies of people who have undergone "near-death" experiences either once or, as in some cases, more than once. In this study we will be turning to the Bible which is God's Book to see what he has to say relative to death and the beyond.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

GOD AND HIS BOOK STAND ALONE IN THIS REALM

Each esteemed reader of **WORDS OF TRUTH** should be deeply impressed with the fundamental fact that God alone is in position to write a book that deals with life and death in their true meaning. While upon his death bed the renowned and celebrated writer, Sir Walter Scott, is reported to have requested of an aid that stood nearby, "Bring me the Book!" The aid knew there were thousands of books in the Scott household. Quite naturally he replied, "What Book?" In essence the remarkable Scott replied, "There is but **ONE BOOK!**" He was speaking of the Bible. Scott was a great writer himself. He knew personally and intimately many of his contemporary greats in the realm of literary pursuits. Yet he recognized very keenly that there is only **ONE BOOK** for a dying man. The same can be said for the living man. There is only **ONE BOOK** about life and about death that can speak with any degree of real binding authority and totally accurate information. Regardless of how many degrees a person may have behind the name he attaches to a

written work, he knows but little of life and even less of death. Dr. Moody has a doctor's degree in philosophy and more recently has acquired one in medicine. But he is still a man; in no sense of the term is he inspired.

Dr. Moody's book is filled with human testimony; God's Book is filled with divine testimony. One man can be wrong; one hundred men can be wrong; one million or even one billion can be wrong. A prominent business concern in a large Southern city has used quite frequently an advertisement which in essence says that so many tens of thousands of its citizens, who use their product naturally, **CANNOT** be wrong. But any number of men and women can be wrong. The damage is not nearly so great when one is wrong in just a secular matter. But the matter is filled with eternal weight when people are wrong about crucial issues that touch their souls. And nearly the whole world was wrong in Noah's era. Very few were still loyal to Jesus at the time of his crucifixion. Only seven thousand had failed to bow the knee to Baal in Elijah's day. Most of the nation, the Northern Kingdom or Israel, was wrong about who was really the God of his people. Elijah was alone on Mr. Carmel as Jehovah's only representative of right, his only preacher of purity.

WHAT IS DEATH?

This is a proper question for our initial beginnings of refuting Dr. Moody's finding and conclusions. It is of significance to observe that the Bible does not say that death results when the brain ceases to function properly. The Bible does not say that death results when the heart ceases to beat. The Bible does not say that a person is dead just because another thought he was dead. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are uniform in teaching that physical death occurs when the spirit leaves the body or when the soul vacates the human tabernacle of clay that it formerly inhabited. Moses describes the death of Jacob's beloved Rachel who died in childbirth. The penman of the Pentateuch wrote, "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his

name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin" (Gen. 35:18). Rachel died when her soul or immortal spirit left her body. The very first recorded resurrection in the Bible was performed by Elijah. We read, "And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived" (1Kings 17:20-22). When did the child die? when his soul left the little body? When did the child come back to life? When the soul returned to that lifeless body again. This was a miracle. Please keep the miraculous in mind. It is a most important point.

Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, spoke of this very same concept by saying, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The body came from dust; that is its destiny at death. The spirit came from God; it goes back to him at death. The body does not return to God and the spirit is not placed in the tomb. Man is a dual being. When alive his body and spirit are united; when dead the spirit and the body are separated.

The New Testament teaches the very same concept. In Mark 5 and Luke 8 we have the record given of where Jesus, acting as the Resurrection and the Life, raised from the dead the twelve-year-old damsel who was the daughter of Jairus. She was physically dead when Jesus entered the room where her spiritless corpse lay without movement or any form of life. We read the description from Luke, the beloved physician; "And he put them all out and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done"

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Words Of Truth

I am not made, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and substance.

— Acts 26:23

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Women's Leading In Prayer

Are we inconsistent in opposing chain prayers, with women leading some of the prayers, while admitting that there is nothing wrong with a woman's adding her comment in a Bible class? Some say that we are. They reason that the woman adding her petition to a prayer is leading the group in its praying. Is there a difference?



BOBBY DUNCAN

We believe there is. But before we discuss this difference, let us make one or two observations with reference to some expressions sometimes used in discussing this matter—expressions which we consider to be misleading. Some speak of those who "oppose women's praying in public." We do not know of anyone who opposes women's praying in public. It is her leading a group of men and women in prayer that we oppose.

Occasionally also we hear reference made to those who "oppose a woman's praying in the presence of men." Again, technically, this is not what is opposed. If it could be shown that Anna (Luke 2:36:38) prayed aloud in the presence of Simeon and Joseph, that would not prove that they were participating in the prayer with her. Even though one brother use Anna as proof of his contention that women can scripturally lead men in prayer, it cannot be shown that Anna even prayed aloud. Yet it is not a matter of "praying in the presence of men," as some erroneously contend. It is a matter of whether or not women should lead

men in praying to God.

But back to our original question: What is the difference between commenting in class and adding a thought to a prayer in which the group is participating? Does the principle which allows a woman to comment in a Bible class also permit her to word a part of the prayer? We believe there is a line of distinction between these two things. In a class situation, the teacher has dominion (I Tim. 2:12 ASV) over the class. He directs the discussion in the way he chooses. Even those comments made by members of the class are subject to review and correction by the teacher. In fact, the teacher of a class might even interrupt in the middle of one's comments to make a point or simply to end discussion of a matter.

In a prayer situation such as we are considering, none of the above would be true. The one who begins the prayer has no dominion over the group after someone else begins wording the prayer for the purpose of making a point or ending the prayer would certainly not be in order. The matter of

dominion is the specific area of difference.

We would add that if a man is no more "in charge" of a class when a woman is making a comment than he would be in the prayer session under consideration, the former would be just as unscriptural as the latter. Simply saying that he is in charge in either situation does not make it so. No doubt, most of us have seen situations in which a man stood before a class, but the class itself was dominated by some woman sitting in the class. Such is certainly a violation of the principle set forth in I Timothy 2:12 and I Corinthians 14:34.

If a woman may word a sentence or two in the middle of the prayer, we see no reason why she could not end the prayer. And if she may end the prayer, why couldn't she begin the prayer? In other words, she could lead the prayer from beginning to end. We realize that some will say that the same reasoning would apply with reference to a woman's commenting in class; but for the reasons already given, such simply is not true.

What Does Your Offering Cost?

BY MICHAEL D. STONE

Satan aroused King David to take a census of Israel. So, David ordered Joab to take the census. Joab tried to talk David out of it but to no avail. After the census was taken, Joab reported to David that Israel consisted of 1,100,000 fighting men and Judah 470,000 fighting men. Levi and Benjamin were not numbered. David should have listened to Joab and not taken the census because it seemed to indicate that he was more concerned with the armed strength of his people than maintaining his faith in God and His promises.

God was very displeased with King David's action and struck Israel down. David confessed his sin to God but God was not about to let him get off that easily. The Lord sent the prophet Gad to give David a choice of three punishments. The punishments were: (1) three days of famine; (2) three months of defeat at the hand of enemies or; (3) three days of an epidemic from the Lord. David chose the third one and 70,000 men of Israel were killed. This seems to be an appropriate punishment since the sin seems to have been the reliance upon numerical military strength.

When David saw the destruction and the

angel of the Lord about to destroy Jerusalem as well, he appealed to God for mercy concerning Jerusalem. David told God that these people were innocent, that it was he who was guilty and deserved the punishment. The Lord's angel ordered Gad to tell David that he should go and erect an altar on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

When the king came to Ornan and told him what he wanted to do, Ornan offered to give the king the threshing floor. David did not want it given to him so he paid Ornan 600 shekels worth of gold by weight (See II Samuel 24). David said, "I will not take that which is thine for Jehovah, nor offer a burnt-offering without cost." The king did not want to offer God that which did not cost him anything (I Chronicles 21).

What about us? Are we willing to give to God that which is valuable to us or are we willing to give God the scraps? If we give to our God that which has cost us little, have we really pleased our God? What does your offering cost you? — 503 Plymouth Street Kannapolis, N.C. 28081

"Oh, God"

I have not seen the movie by the above title, nor do I plan to do so. As far as this writer is concerned, it is blasphemous. What I have to say about this movie is from an article in the Saturday, December 17, 1977 PENSACOLA JOURNAL. Mr. Mike McLeod wrote the article and interviewed "The Rev. Richard T. Harbison, of the First Presbyterian Church" concerning the movie.



RAY HAWK

According to the article, George Burns plays the part of "an in-person visit by the Deity to reassure the modern world." Mr. Harbison gives his impression of the show by preaching two sermons on it. He states, "I felt that 'Oh,

God' was a gallant attempt to express an age-old message through a popular medium. The message is about God's love and joy and goodwill."

On behalf of Mr. Harbison I must say that sometimes reporters fail to tell everything a man says or to report correctly all he did say. However, just from Mr. McLeod's review, the ads on TV, and the title of the movie itself, I could not say anything good about it nor recommend that anyone see it!

First of all, how could George Burns or any actor play the part of "an in-person visit by the DEITY TO REASSURE THE MODERN WORLD"? The only visit in flesh by God was when He came in the flesh (John 1:1-14). To portray another fleshly entrance into the world is to deny that Jesus is the one who can reassure the modern world.

Second, if the reporter got Mr. Harbison's sentiments correct on the film, how can it in anyway be construed as "the message is

Continued on page 4

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please discuss the importance of 'the context' in determining the meaning of scripture."

Hermeneutics is "the science of interpretation and explanation; especially that branch of theology which defines the laws applied by exegesis." There is an aphorism in this science which says that "a text taken out of its context becomes a mere pretext." An elementary rule of interpretation is to note the significance of the context before attempting to arrive at a conclusion regarding the meaning of any passage. Failure to observe this simple rule leads to many absurdities in interpretation. More, it tends to breed disrespect for the word of God itself. The very common practice of bodily lifting a passage from its context and using it in any fashion the whim of the speaker or writer may dictate, or the occasion seem to require, has led many to believe that "you can prove anything by the Bible." It is not to be wondered at that many subscribe to this view when denominational preachers are constantly engaged in this very attempt. Not infrequently such speakers frankly say, "The meaning of this passage is _____, but I propose to use it in the following sense _____ today!" This is simply to confess an intention of perverting the passage to the purpose of the speaker, thus abandoning its original significance.

Those who have proper respect for the word of God will never use it in this manner, even though that which they seek to prove is true. It is never right to put a strained or forced construction on a passage, however worthy the end in view may be. Passages must be allowed to have their original significance, and that alone; and any other usage is a deceitful handling of the word of God. In determining the meaning of any passage we are to follow the usual and ordinary rules that would govern us were the subject matter a paragraph from the morning newspaper. Were we engaged in an effort to ascertain the meaning of a statement in the paper we would never think of lifting a sentence from its context and attempting to understand it independently of its place in the paragraph. This same common-sense rule ought to, and must characterize, our study of the scriptures if we are to glean from them what God intended.

Come With Us To The Bible Lands

My family and I invite you to join us for a tour of the lands of the Bible, departing New York June 16. We will see Rome, Egypt, Israel and Jordan in this thirteen day tour. Those who desire may extend the tour to include Athens and Corinth. The price of the thirteen day tour is only \$1345 per person. In every place we go, advance arrangements will have been made for hotel, meals, guides, etc. For a full-color brochure write: Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

Opposing Error



JOHN WADDEY

For some years now, a common concern of all faithful Christians has been the creeping emergence of an apostasy within the ranks of the Lord's church. Numerous articles have been published on these matters and thousands of sermons have been delivered relating to it.

Only a blind man could truly claim that he sees no evidence of this unholy departure. But there has been a great deal of confusion as to how to deal with the problem. This has led to indecision and inactivity on the part of many concerned Christians. Of those who did elect to act, not all proceeded in the most profitable way. Some felt that tolerance and loving acceptance would somehow smother out the fires of error. Of course it did not. Others blindly began to flail at everything and every man whom they suspected, even as a man lashes out at snakes in a bad dream.

This approach is counter-productive because good works and innocent men are often wounded along with the bad. It also further fuels the fires of the liberal brother who seeks to discredit our objections to his cause.

The times and problems demand an intelligent, balanced response to false doctrine. Paul admonishes us, "Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16). Brethren must clearly understand the issues at hand. They must recognize just who the enemy is. We must carefully document and identify the error and its teachers (Rom. 16:17). We must be unyielding and consistent in our opposition if we are to win this crucial battle (I Cor. 15:58).

While we commonly call our latest intrusion liberalism and modernism, these words need to be more precisely defined in order to keep false teachers from dodging behind our imprecision. Technically the word liberalism suggests those who deny the Biblical doctrine of revelation and inspiration, the miracles of the Bible, the deity of Jesus, and other fundamentals of the Christian faith. We have very few men among us who have fallen to this low plane. Our trouble makers rather question the authority of the Bible to settle religious issues. They are questioning and rejecting the principles of faith, worship and practice which we are sure are solidly based upon scriptural precedent. Theirs is the ancient sin of denominationalism, i.e., the placing of human wisdom and preference above the revelation of God (Is. 55:8-9). Those among us who have taken the road of pentecostalism have in addition to the above, elevated their subjective emotional feelings above the sacred scriptures. They forget that man can never direct his own spiritual steps (Jer. 10:23). While they are liberal in the sense that they have taken unlawful liberties with God's Word, work and worship, they are not liberals in the classical sense of the word. They are truly modernists in that they have attempted to subvert the old Jerusalem gospel delivered by Christ and his apostles with a new gospel of human opinions. When they thus go beyond the doctrine of Christ, they have not God (II John 9).

While these terms have become valid by

current usage, we must be careful and discriminatory in our use of them. Better to take the time to spell out a man's error than to cast a vague label upon him that might be easily shaken off. In this we must "prove all things, hold fast that which is good; (and) abstain from every form of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). When we take the time to pinpoint his errors and scripturally refute them, we will occasionally discover that what we suspected was liberalism was simply a new way of doing an old thing and not a thing sinful or wrong.

Another danger in dealing with liberalism is that we become obsessed with this one issue and neglect other important aspects of our faith and work. Some become so engrossed in fighting liberalism that all evangelistic activity ceases. Our major concern is always to evangelize the world for Jesus (Mk. 16:15-16). Others become so embittered in battling enemies that Christian charity and brotherly love disappear. "Everyone that loveth is begotten of God... He that loveth not knoweth not God..." (I John 4:7-8). Some neglect the positive aspects of congregational work in their determination to stamp out liberalism. When any or all of these happen, Satan has won a subtle victory. He has the false brother, but then he has diverted the sound brother from the only work that will save the souls of the lost. Let us not be ignorant of the devil's devices (II Cor. 2:11). Really, his infernal majesty does not care if we fight liberalism, so long as we abdicate our responsibilities elsewhere. The watchword is BALANCE. When we lose that we lose everything in the long run. "Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Let us then put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and having done so may we stand and fight (Eph. 6:11-13). — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

Life Is Like The Sky

D.J. CABRERA

To Dr. and Mrs. Wilford S. Bailey of the Auburn Alabama Church of Christ to whom I owe my knowing Christ.

When the day is just out of bed,
Sun peeping from on high,
How beautiful the sunbeams are,
How lovely is the sky!

Then when the sun at noon becomes
A blinding ball of fire,
The beauty of the sky's hidden
By its glaring attire.

But later in the afternoon,
The sky's nice to behold;
Pretty once more is it, now clothed
With woven rays of gold!

Then when the moon appears at night
The daylight shadows gone;
Prettier is the sky, with stars
Twinkling in unison!

This life is like the sky, when young:
Carefree, happy and gay;
At noon of life, burdened with cares,
It's bent from work all day.

The afternoon of life is sweet,
When one has peace with God,
With Christ the last lap of the road
Is paved, not made of clod.

As life's evening shadows lengthen
It's drawn closer to Him.
And eternity's voice, calling...
Sounds like a sacred hymn!
— 13 Forestry, Vasra Village
Quezon City, Phillipines

"Oh, God"

Continued from page 2

about God's love and joy and goodwill? God's love is not shown by an 81 year old comic dressed in "a windbreaker, tennis shoes, and a baseball cap." God's love, joy, and goodwill are not expressed through dialogue written by uninspired men and produced by Carl Reiner who is an atheist. God's love, joy, and goodwill is expressed through the New Testament by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ!

Third, George Burns' reply as to why he as Reiner's god doesn't do miracles today is totally false and completely leaves out Jesus! Satan through Carl Reiner is very subtle. Burns' line is, "I don't do miracles. They're too flashy and they upset the natural balance. The last miracle I did was the 1969 Mets. Before that I think you have to go back to the Red Sea."

The inspired apostle Paul shows a time would come when miracles would cease (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Eph. 4:11-13). That time came when Jesus by the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem in A. D. 70 (Matt. 24:1-34; Luke 21:5-36). Miracles were used to confirm the word given by inspiration (Mark 16:17-20; Heb. 2:3,4). Once that word was confirmed, the need for miracles ceased.

Reiner throws in the 1969 Mets as humor. However, he makes the same mistake that many religious people make today. They think natural phenomenon is miraculous phenomenon! Some things look impossible to accomplish, but when they are accomplished some THINK a miracle has taken place.

Then George Burns says the last time before 1969 that God did a miracle was the Red Sea. That leaves out all Bible miracles from the Red Sea through the book of Revelation! Reiner's atheism really cut out great deal there and probably most people who saw the movie laughed and never caught onto what was taking place. Satan implanted an atheistic thought right there!

Apparently Mr. McLeod asked the following question, "If there is a loving God, why doesn't he step in to do something about the pain and sadness of life?" Most, if not all Pentecostals think that healing is in the atonement. If you are saved, you will be healed. However, the Bible does not teach that doctrine. If it did, Christians should be the healthiest people in the world. But they are no healthier than the next fellow.

Why does God allow pain and sadness in the world? We live in an imperfect world due to man's desiring his own way. That desire is expressed in sin. God does not force His love upon us but offers it. We may either respond or reject it. This free-will allows man to get drunk and kill innocent people on the highway. It allows men to be less than conscientious in doing their jobs correctly. So, a bad part goes into an airplane, or a mechanic, due to an argument with his wife, fails to notice a bad connection and a plane full of people falls out of the sky and they all perish. If God forced His love on us by making us do everything right, we would be little more than mindless robots. So, we have free-will and may express it by responding to God or rejecting Him. Most people reject Him. So, we live in a world where sadness and pain occur.

Fourth, in the picture, Mr. McLeod states that George Burns is asked, "if Christ was His son." Burns' response is, "Jesus was my son. Buddha was my son. Confucius. Mohammed. Moses. All the fellas." You can see Reiner's atheism poking in again! Now, this not only points out Reiner's atheism, but very well pictures denominationalism! If one church is

as good as another, why isn't one religion as good as another? Actually, the New Testament shows us there is ONE God, ONE faith, ONE Lord, and ONE body or church which saves (Eph. 4:4-6; 1:22,23). All other gods, faiths, lords, and bodies are counterfeit!

The movie, "Oh, God" is blasphemous. A better title for it should have been, "Oh, a false god."—4860 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

Life After Life: A Refutation

Continued from page 1

(Luke 8:54-55). When did she die? When her spirit left her youthful body. When did she begin to live again? When the spirit returned to her body. Luke did not mention that she began to live when her brain began to function again; he did not mention that she began to live after her heart began to beat again. Quite obviously the spirit's return meant the functioning again of the brain and the beating again of the the heart. He mentioned specifically the return of the spirit to her body.

The death of the first Christian martyr adds another interesting insight into this vital matter. We read of this cruel stoning in the closing verses of Acts 7. The Bible says, "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59-60). When did Stephen die? When his spirit vacated his battered body outside one of the Jerusalem walls.

Even earlier than this we read of the demise of Jesus on Calvary. In his dying moments he prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost" (Luke 23:46). Giving up the ghost is a Biblical designation signifying death. His death occurred when his spirit vacated the crucified tabernacle of clay.

With all this wealth of vital information before us from both the Old Testament and the New Testament we are now ready to note the clearest definition in all the Bible relative to what physical death really is. The inspired James expressed the matter this way in James 2:26 by saying, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James did not say that the spirit apart from the body is dead; it is not the spirit that dies. He did say that the body apart or without the spirit is dead. With this firmly fixed in mind we are now in position to understand why Rachel died when her soul or spirit was in departing from her body. We are now in position to understand why the soul or the spirit had to come back into widow's son during the era of Elijah. We are now in position to know why Jesus prayed for the Father's reception of his spirit and why Stephen prayed as he did in regard to his departing spirit.

Reader friend, are we not in position to come to another very important conclusion? A death in the Bible sense and what doctors call a clinical death may not always be the same thing. We are NOT NOW living in the day of miracles. If a person is really dead, Bible style, a physician could no more call back his spirit than he can perform any other miracle. If the attending physician could call back the spirit, he would be doing the same thing that

Elijah did, that Elisha did, that Jesus did, that the apostles did in Biblical times. If not, WHY NOT? I for one do not believe for a moment that a single one of Dr. Moody's cases of "near-death" studies was dead, Bible style. Had they been they would have STAYED DEAD until the morning of the resurrection. Will any deny it in view of clear Bible teaching? If so, on what Scriptural grounds? — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063

Love Is Still Important

G.F.Raines

In 1768, the Encyclopedia Britannica had four sentences on the atom and five on love. In a recent edition of the same encyclopedia, there are nine pages on the atom and nothing on love!

Love is, nevertheless, as important today as it was in 1768. Paul says: "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:8).

Dr. James A. Knight has said: "Psychiatry has rediscovered the primary position of love in man's world. Psychiatry and the church can find common cause in reemphasizing the crucial importance of love in individual and group life."

Strongly emphasizing the extremely great importance of love, Paul says: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13:1, 2).

Peter says: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren. love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth" (1 Pet. 1:22, 23).

John observed that, "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, cannot love God whom he hath not seen" (1 John 4:20).—Newton, Miss. 39345.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth



Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

Love and Jealousy

Although they are poles apart in nature, yet these two things have some common characteristics! There is nothing that love will not do to help a friend, nor is there anything that jealousy will not do to downgrade or destroy its object! Perhaps no story in the Bible is more illustrative of this fact, nor is there one that is better known, than the story of David and Jonathan. David was an obscure and ordinary shepherd in a little country town in Judah's land until one day, in the sight of two great armies he performed a service for his people that forever took him out of obscurity. Sudden success nearly always brings rapid distinction, but it also brings trials and risks from which the obscure are free. Many a time when the rich and successful are envied the one who does the envying is acquainted with only a part of the responsibilities of the ones they envy.

David leaped at a bound into honor and fame, but for that very reason he found himself at the beginning of his troubles. Had he not learned in days past that he might safely commit himself fully to the Lord he would never have survived his tribulations. It should also be remembered that it was during his darkest hours of trials that he made the closest friend he ever had!

If there was a man in the entire congregation of Israel that had reason to be jealous of David it was Prince Jonathan. He was a noble soldier and next in line for the throne of his father; and here now was a greater hero to offer this threat to his welfare. Yet it is remarkable that this truly "Prince of a Fellow" and prince of the kingdom never displayed a shade of jealousy in his entire dealings with David. Each of these great men recognized the greatness in each other and admired the adventuresome spirit of the other and became the closest of friends! Wouldn't it be fine today if each of us were able to recognize the good in others, and sympathize with others in their trials and sorrows! As a rule it is the small character, and one who is

quite unsure of himself that displays jealousy and envy. The one who is doing his best and can appreciate the best that is in others never has to resort to unfair tactics to maintain in his own standing or reputation.

Now another character enters the picture, one of whom we are not so proud. At first it appeared that David had nothing to fear from Saul. Perhaps because of popular opinion Saul felt compelled to promote and honor David for a short while, but a black cloud of jealousy soon appeared on the horizon. Saul could not bear to hear the new champion praised more than himself, and he began to brood over the matter, and became suspicious that someday this worthy soldier might be a threat to his kingdom. We wonder a thousand times over why Saul did not rejoice that they were both on the same side! Our wonderment is increased when we observe that this same spirit of jealousy is sometimes found among Christians(?). Indeed, no more wretched fate can befall any man that to be filled with envy and so to chafe and jibe at all who surpass him; to become a prey to jealousy, and mistrust or disparage all who seem to please God or man more than he.

Had Saul had a right spirit David might have helped him to build a more secure kingdom than any of which he had ever dreamed, but Saul became gloomy, crafty, and cruel. The more David did for the kingdom the more he was envied and despised by Saul, until finally Saul did everything he could to kill him! However in reality it was Saul himself who was being killed—and David lived on in service to God and his country.

The eternal principles of this memorable story are just as true today as when it was written. That person who allows his mind to be filled with envy and jealousy instead of kindness and love is slowly but surely taking his own life—and his own soul. Furthermore

the trials and tribulations that were heaped upon David were strengthening him for grander and nobler things in service to God. Then, as now, "All things" worked together for good to those who loved the Lord, and who were called according to His purpose. Don't let jealousy and pride keep you from giving your best to the Master. P.O. Box 672 Bremen, Ga. 30110

The Holy Spirit Simplified

ARNOLD SEXTON

The nature and work of the Holy Spirit has always been a difficult subject. This difficulty has led to all kinds of fanciful theories concerning the workings of the Spirit in our age. The charismatic that has invaded the church has brought on a renewed interest in the study of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that part of our difficulty lies in the area of speculation. We need to see what the Bible plainly says about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and leave it there. This article will set forth the personality of the Spirit, and what the Bible reveals about how He operates on the heart of man today.

The separate personalities of the one God has been confusing to many. The fact that the plural form ELOHIM is used in the Old Testament shows that there is more than one personality in the godhead (Col. 2:9). The problem presented now is that there is "one God," and three personalities. The natural question is: "How can there be one God and also three Gods?"

To offer a simple explanation of this, let us

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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tus, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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Members At Large

Occasionally we hear of some who choose not to be identified with any one congregation, even though there may be one or more in the area where they live. They worship first with one, and then with another congregation. Sometimes on the Lord's day they simply hold their own private worship in their home. They consider themselves faithful Christians—as a rule, just a notch above the rest of us in faithfulness.



BOBBY DUNCAN

The practice we have described is certainly not in harmony with any teaching of the Bible. It never was God's plan for Christians to be members of the church at large. God's plan involves the universal church. In the First Century those who were Christians were also members of a local congregation. Please observe why "member at large" concept is not in harmony with the New Testament.

In the first place, such a practice would do away with the local church completely. If it is right for one member to refuse to become identified with any local congregation, then it would be right for two to do so; and if two can do so, then ten can. But whatever is right for ten would be right for a hundred; and if it is right for a hundred it would be right for everybody. The only reason it would be wrong to dissolve every local congregation in the world is because it would be wrong for one person to refuse associated with any local congregation.

In the second place, one cannot possibly

obey all the instructions given to Christians in the New Testament without being a part of a local church. Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey them that have rule over you, 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." If one does not belong to a local church, how can he possibly obey the ones who have the rule over him? This verse also makes it plain that God intends that every Christian be under the oversight of an eldership. Each individual elder is under the direction and supervision of the eldership in each congregation.

The apostle Paul addressed the Philippian

letter to "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1). In chapter four, he calls these a church, meaning local congregation (v. 15). In other words, all the saints at Philippi were in the local church at Philippi. There were no members "at large."

Those who think they can be faithful and useful members of the church without being faithful and useful members of a local congregation are sadly mistaken. Not only do they fail to make any significant contribution to any local congregation, they also fail to contribute significantly to the welfare of the body of Christ in a general sense. Beside all this, they set a terrible example.

"Eleventh Hour" Evangelism

By DOUGLAS SIMS

In the twentieth chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus taught a lesson we need to remember today. He likens the Kingdom of Heaven to the man who hired laborers into his vineyard. The first ones were hired "early in the morning." At the third hour, others were hired. Still others were hired at the sixth and the ninth hours. Finally, some were hired at the eleventh hour.

A number of lessons may be derived from this parable, but let us consider one very important one. We learn from it that salvation is never beyond the reach of anyone until the last breath is drawn. Some may not have a great amount of time to work in the vineyard, but the reward is promised to them as well as the life-long workers.

When I first became involved in personal evangelism, some "experts" in the brotherhood were saying that the chances of converting a person of sixty years of age or older were one in several thousand. Not knowing any better, I supposed them to be correct. The truth is, however, that people can be reached with the Gospel at any age, if we are willing to take the time necessary to teach them. Any honest person who will accept the Bible as the final authority in religion can be reached, but he will never be taught if we have determined in advance that he will not respond to the Gospel.

During the past 24 months, the church in Cedartown has witnessed the truth about converting the older prospects to Christ. In this period eight souls have been added to the

Lord here, all of which are near or past the age of sixty. Two were about seventy years of age. Each was taught in private study sessions. This was not accomplished quickly, but in some cases involved quite a bit of time. I believe the reason for failure in teaching some older people is being in too great a hurry to see results. Is it not just possible that this hinders the teaching of prospects of any age?

Most Christians seem to have forgotten what made the church of the first century grow as it did. The teaching was not left to the Apostles alone, but all faithful disciples were eager to share the great gift of salvation they had received (Acts 8:4). If we all truly believed that our own personal salvation depended on teaching the multitudes of lost souls all around us, we wouldn't be making excuses about why some can't be reached. The real reason we are not reaching more is that we have too many other things that keep us from taking the time to teach the lost.

Only one thing is certain in regard to converting the lost. Whether the prospect be the young, the middle-aged, or senior citizen, not one will be converted until someone teaches him. If we will sow the seed, or help to water it, God will continue to give the increase, even among those nearing the eleventh hour. Never forget, however, that each one must be thoroughly taught if souls are to be delivered from the power of darkness. It is the Gospel that is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16).—330 East Avenue, Cedartown, Ga. 30125.

The Christian's Attitude Toward The Bible

By KEN TYLER

There is a very prevalent attitude which says, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe as long as you are sincere." In other words, if you believe in sprinkling and someone else in immersion or deceit" (sincere, Thorndike-Barnhart Dict.) both beliefs are acceptable to God. The same applies to the purpose of baptism, the music of the church, organization of the church, or anything else.

But are you and I going to be deceived by such reasoning. This belief will send a soul to hell because it is contrary to the word of God. Jesus said in His prayer to the Father shortly before His betrayal, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The word of God is truth. The truth only gives one message. It either says, "Baptism is sprinkling or baptism is immersion-not both."

Truth denies the attitude that one can believe anything he wants to and still be pleasing to God. I must do exactly what God's word teaches or else I have department from the truth. If it doesn't matter what one be-

lieves then there is no truth.

But Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). Worship cannot be pleasing unless it is according to truth (John 4:24). The commandments of men will send damnation. It does make a difference what we believe. If it doesn't there is no such thing as commandments of men.

Consider the following passages: Gal. 1:8: "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." Rev. 22:18-19, Pro. 30:6, and Deut. 4:2 teach us that we are not add to nor take away from God's word.

The Christian's attitude toward the Bible then must be: "The word of God gives only one message. This message, of course, is truth. Anything that disagrees with this one message is false and devised by man. Therefore, it does make a difference what we believe." — P. O. Box 376, Arab, Al. 35016.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"When Paul said, 'the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,' was he suggesting that we should look beyond the plain, literal statements of the scriptures and find the real truth which may really be opposed to, or different from what the word actually says?"

No. Absolutely not. A more false and dangerous conclusion was never reached.

Though such a conclusion is frequently drawn and such an approach to the scriptures is often made, it is a gross misapprehension of what Paul teaches in the statements alluded to, and is simply *not* so! The statement must be seen in its context in order to discover its meaning: God has made us (Christians) "ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth: but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written, and engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away: how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory?" (II Cor. 3:6-8). The apostle was thus drawing a contrast between the old and the new covenants—the covenant which was given to Israel at Sinai, and the covenant under which Christians live today, which became of effect on the memorable Pentecost day when the church began. The old law was the "letter," the new law, under which we live, is the "spirit."

To use the words, "letter," and "spirit," in the sense suggested in the phrases, "letter of the law," and the "spirit of the law" and to conclude that there is a difference between the intent of God, and the expression of his will in the scriptures is dangerous, doctrinal heresy. Actually, as will be seen by taking the entire context into consideration, the "spirit" really means the letter of New Testament teaching, in contrast to the covenant "written and engraven on stones," under which the Israelites lived. The law of Moses was the *letter*; the law of Christ is the *spirit*. The former was "the ministration of condemnation" (death), because it could not give life; the latter, the spirit, is the "ministration" of life, because through it spiritual life is obtained. We serve today "in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6).

Come With Us To The Bible Lands

My family and I invite you to join us for a tour of the lands of the Bible, departing New York June 16. We will see Rome, Egypt, Israel and Jordan in this thirteen day tour. Those who desire may extend the tour to include Athens and Corinth. The price of the thirteen day tour is only \$1345 per person. In every place we go, advance arrangements will have been made for hotel, meals, guides, etc. For a full-color brochure write: Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

"Life After Life": A Refutation

No. 2



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

In this series of articles we are taking note of some popular teaching that is being done relative to so-called clinical deaths and what people supposedly have experienced in such phenomena. In particular we have set forth the basic gist of a book by Dr. Raymond Moody. For many weeks it has been

listed in our news paper, THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL, of Memphis, Tennessee, as being among the best selling paperbacks in the nation. READER'S DIGEST carried it as the book review in January of 1977. This greatly aided its growing popularity. We are currently in the midst of presenting a four-part refutation of Dr. Moody's teachings. Many of his findings and conclusions do not square with Bible facts and that makes him wrong regardless of his academic background and the multitude of his case studies.

THE SPIRIT AT DEATH: BIBLE STYLE

The word death in our the title of this segment applies only to the body; the spirit itself does not die. Quite to the contrary it continues to live after it leaves the body of its former habitation. It is true that the spirit is conscious after it leaves the body. The Bible never has taught soul sleeping, many religious leaders to the contrary notwithstanding. But does the spirit linger in the room where death occurs? Does the spirit go into the next room to watch and listen to grieving relatives? Does the spirit seek to communicate with the doctors, nurses and relatives over the body it has just vacated? Does the spirit become all knowing the moment it leaves the body? Is there knowledge that the human personality needs that can only be gained on the other side of death and cannot be gained from God's Book of ALL TRUTH? Does the Bible teach that the dead know what is going on among the living? Does the spirit just come and go at will in these "near-death" experiences? Do they tell all after the return from death? They did for Dr. Moody. Does the Bible offer any shred of sanction for such? I am quick to deny that it does. In order to examine such, these are therefore some of the questions we raise; these are some of the answers we seek from the Author of life and the one who knows all about death. And that one is not a medical doctor who has turned into a psychiatrist; it is none other than the Almighty himself.

At the death of the body does the spirit go to the ceiling of the room while the soulless tabernacle of clay lies without motion upon the hospital bed with surrounding doctors and nurses seeking to return life to it? Does the departing soul remain in close proximity to the body it has just vacated? Is there some light from the Bible as touching these momentous matters? I verily believe there is. In the closing verses of I Samuel 4 we have the wife of Phinehas who was upon the threshold of giving birth to a child when she heard the traumatic news of her husband's death, the death of her father-in-law and the defeat of Israel in a decisive battle with the Philistines. This brought about the immediate delivery of her expected child. She died in the process. The Bible says, "And about the time of her death, the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast brought forth a

son. But she answered not, NEITHER DID SHE REGARD IT" (I Sam. 4:20). That does not sound like one of Dr. Moody's cases of death, where the so-called separated spirit hovers nearby and regards all that is done by the attending persons? I wonder why her spirit was not aware of what the attending women were trying to tell her about the newborn son? Why was there no awareness on her part? Her spirit was already gone and she was in reality dead. No miracle was performed to bring back the spirit to her lifeless body, her soulless remains.

There is another significant passage of Scripture that throws light on this very point. The Bible says, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun" (Eccles. 9:5-6). The key to this passage is supplied by the qualifying expression, "that is done under the sun." They KNOW NOT ANYTHING beyond death that is done under the sun. This is true of those who have been dead for a long time; it is likewise true of those who have been dead for just moments. How do I know the latter point is true? We have just read from the Bible that a woman who died in childbirth regarded NOTHING of the surroundings. Why is this so? Because the body that is left behind void of a spirit cannot hear or understand. The spirit has already departed and not just to the ceiling or to the next room either. If the spirit remained at the ceiling or went into the next room, it would still be under the sun and be in position to know what is going on. But this is the very thing that Solomon, the Wisest of the Ages, denied in the Ecclesiastes passage.

THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT AT DEATH

Does the spirit seek or attempt to communicate with those still in the land of the living? Not according to the Bible. The Bible condemns nothing any more strongly than the idea of communicating with the spirit world by those who are still in the land of the living. Does the spirit become all knowing when it leaves the body? It did not so in the case of the wife of Phinehas. If it did, how could Solomon tell the truth and say that those who are dead, that is gone from this earth, know nothing that is done on the earth? Solomon was writing with the inspiration of God guiding his words. He was not depending upon human testimonial cases as did Dr. Moody in the writing of his sensational book. And whether Dr. Moody intended to write within a sensational framework or not, that has been one of its chief selling powers. If Dr. Moody had written just what the Bible says about death and the beyond, nothing more and nothing less, his book would not be a best seller; it would have never been reviewed in READER'S DIGEST. If you doubt this, what other religious book that is true to the Book of God has ever been reviewed in READER'S DIGEST? Some of us, this writer included, have sought to get articles teaching some vital truths relative to morals and manners in the pages of READER'S DIGEST and all to no avail. Book purchasers today, for the most part, are far more interested in the novel than in the noble and true; in the sensational rather than in the Scriptural; in the mysterious and hidden rather than in the revealed and the crystal clear. And Dr. Moody's book is a clear appeal to the novel, the sensational, the

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"Life After Life": A Refutation

(NO. 2)

Continued from page 2

mysterious and the concealed regardless of how much he may deny such. That is why it is a best seller.

The Bible does not teach that your dead relatives know what you are doing. They do not watch you as you go about making their burial plans. They do not hear the words that are spoken over their mortal remains. They cannot read your minds and know what you are thinking before you say it. That is the prerogative of Deity and not of humanity—either in the flesh or out of the fleshly body. Such a concept would turn every departing spirit from a human body into Deity instantly at death? If not, WHY NOT? The very absurd idea that a hovering spirit knew what the live relative was going to say even before the words left his lips in worse than preposterous. It is no wonder that Dr. Moody agreed that his study was not scientifically based; it was not Scripturally based either!

ARE WE NOW DEFICIENT IN ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE?

Does the Bible teach that there is knowledge that man needs this side of death that can

only be obtained by someone who has gone to the other side and brought it back? A thousand times NO. In John 16:13 Jesus Christ promised that the coming Spirit of truth would guide them into all truth. Did he do it? Surely he did and no one has to go to the other side of death to obtain that all saving system of vital truth. Paul affirmed in II Timothy 3:17 that the Scriptures fully equip the man of God into all good works. Does he have to go to the other side of death to learn what these good works are and how he may accomplish them? Absolutely not! The inspired apostle Peter suggested in II Peter 1:3 that we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness. We do not have to go to the other side of death or listen to one who has just been, supposedly, in order to know about life and godliness. If there are things on the other side of death that people can only learn there and no place else, then the Bible is not all sufficient. Before anyone is carried away with Dr. Moody's book he needs to take a long, lingering look at what it will do to God's Book of truth.

Is the Bible deficient in its teaching relative

to our loving each other? A number of Dr. Moody's related cases reported that they were told to come back and love people. Yet the Bible has been commanding love for neighbor and for brethren in the Lord for centuries. Not a single one of them related anything that is close to the first and second commandments regarding love in Matthew 22:36-40. Not that first one related anything comparable to what Jesus Christ taught about the new commandment in John 13:34-35. If so, WHERE is such found in his related cases? People do not have to have "near-death" experiences to learn the great need for love. That is one of the reasons God gave us the Bible. Reader friend, did you note something missing in the various ones I quoted that had gone through this "near-death" experience? Not that first one came back with the urgent determination to obey the gospel of Christ and be just a New Testament Christian. Does it not make you wonder why not that first one came back with how imperative is the need to obey just the gospel and be just a Christian-nothing more and nothing else? It surely makes me wonder!!—P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

The Holy Spirit Simplified

Continued from page 1

first look at a typical family. There are three people in this family, and the family name is Smith. Now, if someone is talking about one of the members of this family and they use only the name Smith, you would need to determine by context which one was under consideration. On the other hand, if they put a first name to it you would know which one was being discussed immediately. The principle is the same in reading about God in the Bible. God is the generic term. We might say it is the family name. Sometimes it is possible to determine who is under consideration only by the context. Genesis 1:1 refers to all three. At other times a specific one will be under consideration. In I Corinthians 8:6, the Father is called God. In John 1:1, Christ is called God. Acts 5:3,4 calls the Holy Spirit God. There is one "God family" united for one purpose, but there are three personalities.

Paul helps us to see that more than one personality may be one. He said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase...Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one...." (I Cor. 3:6-8). Paul and Apollos were not one personality, but they were one in purpose and intent. When the Lord prayed for all believers, He clarified this point. He prayed "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee,..." (John 17:21). Notice that He wanted all believers to be one in the same sense that He and the Father were one. All believers are not to be one personality. If that were the case, that would be some personality! Therefore, the conclusion is the God and Christ are not one personality: they are one in purpose. The husband and wife furnish another example of how more than one personality may be one. In teaching on marriage, Jesus said, "...they twain shall be one flesh" (Matt. 19:5). The wife does not lose her identity when she is married. The sense in which they are one is in the bond of marriage. They work as a unit; they are united; they are one. In the same way, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are one; yet, they have distinct personalities.

The idea that the Holy Spirit is some kind of an influence "better felt than told" did not originate in the Bible. Because of space these

thoughts are given briefly. Notice that His work proclaims personality: he speaks (I Tim. 4:1); he teaches (John 14:26); he reproves (John 16:8); he leads (Gal. 5:18); he appoints to service (Acts 13:2; 20:28). Notice also that he has emotions and is affected as a person: he may be vexed (Isa. 63:10); he may be grieved (Eph. 4:30); he may be quenched (I Thess. 5:19); he may be lied unto (Acts 5:3); despite may be done to Him (Heb. 10:29). All of these declare the personality of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is working today. Every person who comes to Christ must come by the Spirit's influence. The question is "does He work?" The question is "how does He work today?" The answer is simple if we let the Bible speak. He works through the gospel. The Holy Spirit has always operated through His word to make Christian. Paul said that the power of salvation was in the gospel (Rom. 1:16). The Corinthians were begotten by the gospel (I Cor. 4:15). Read the following passages for more evidence on this: I Pet. 1:22, 23; John 20:30, 31; Acts 15:7; John 6:45.

The idea that the Holy Spirit operates on man separate and apart from the word originated in the minds of men. The Bible does not hint of such a thing. Why should one think the Spirit's influence is reduced by operating through the word? The Bible is the Holy Spirit's instrument to change lives. This writer grew up on a farm near Kennett, Mo. On that farm, we used several instruments for different jobs. We used a combine to thresh beans. We used a mechanical cotton picker to pick cotton. Does the fact that we used these instruments take away from the effectiveness of the work that we did? Surely, one can see that an instrument may be a very effective tool. Suppose someone plunged a sword into your side. Does the fact that he never touched you personally take away the pain and the danger from the wound? An instrument skillfully used is very effective. Surgeons, farmers, mechanics, etc., all use instruments to accomplish their purposes. Why should it be considered strange for the Holy Spirit to use an instrument (the Bible) to accomplish

His purposes? The Bible is the greatest tool the world has ever seen. It is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses to convert men.

The fact that men who claim an influence separate from the word in conversion always try to use the Bible to justify it should tell us something. This alone shows us that their influence (spiritual experience) is powerless without the Bible. These are the ones who claim the Bible is a dead letter unless the Spirit opens our understanding to it. Yet, they run to this "dead letter" in an effort to justify a miraculous leading by the Holy Spirit. They fail to understand that the Bible is the instrument of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not the instrument of the Bible. Paul showed the sufficiency of this tool given by the Spirit when he said: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). —1115 Sloan Avenue, Birmingham, Al. 35217

Recent Publications Of Interest

THEISTIC EVOLUTION, by Bert Thompson, PhD. This 236 page book on theistic evolution deals in clear fashion with the false theories concerning this ever-present issue. Brother Robert Taylor has promised to write a brief review of the book for WORDS OF TRUTH in the near future. It is a Lambert Publication.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE, by Bobby Duncan. This 16 page tract was published several years ago, but has been out of print some time. We have recently printed it again. It sells for \$12.00 per hundred or 15 cents each. For a free sample copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501



Words Of Truth

"I am not
the Word"

Festus; but speak forth
the truth."

— Acts 26:25

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A Flip Of A Coin

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

We heard recently of a couple who when they were married, belonged to different denominational organizations. And, in order for the dilemma to be settled before difficulties could arise, a solution was suggested. A coin would be tossed into the air and heads or tails would determine the direction the couple would travel religiously. The outcome of the toss of the coin was that the couple started to attending "his church". Ridiculous you say? No, not if one church is as good as another. This method would be just as reasonable as attending a church because it was nearer home than others, or, because most of the prominent people attend a certain church. If it truly doesn't matter which church you belong to, the method of deciding where to attend is immaterial. But, could you imagine the following:

1. Joseph's asking Potiphar's wife to guess a number between one and ten before he made up his mind whether "to lie by her" (Gen. 39:7-10).

2. Moses', in giving those solemn injunctions to Israel saying, "I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: Therefore, draw straws to determine what you are going to choose" (Deut. 30:19).

3. The faithful warrior Joshua's imploring Israel to make up their minds as to whether they were going to serve Jehovah God or the gods of the heathen nations: "But as for me and my house, we are going to settle the matter by flipping a coin into the air" (Joshua 24:14, 15).

4. The courageous Prophet Elijah's demanding Israel to make a choice between Baal or God and to quit "limping between the two sides by tossing a gold piece into the air" (I Kings 18:21).

5. Our Lord's instructing people to toss a denarius into the air to determine whether they would enter the "strait" or "broad" way (Mt. 7:13, 14).

6. The apostle Paul's instructing the Athenians to rationalize about the matter pertaining to worship of idols or paying homage to the God of heaven, and, that such should be done by a secret ballot (Acts 17:22-31).

Thank God that such important decisions were not determined by mere chance. And neither can the choice of church membership be left to "a flip of a coin". But, the world has

been fed on a constant diet of "attend the church of your choice," and, "one church is as good as another," for such a long time that the decision has become a frivolous one.

The church of the New Testament is the body of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23). The Lord gave his precious blood in order for the church to come into existence (Mt. 16:18; Acts 20:28). The only way a person can become a member of the church of Jesus Christ is, as a penitent believer, to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38). The Lord himself will add that saved person to his spiritual body, the church (Ac. 2:47).—East Hart Avenue, Opp, Alabama 36467.

Time Do You Use It Or Abuse It?

By DALTON KEY

While God lives within and inhabits eternity, we, for the present, must be content to live, labour, and love within the framework of time (Isa. 57:15; Pa. 90:2, 10). How we use our time is not a matter to be taken lightly. In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." Listen to the Psalmist: "The days of our years are threescore and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. . . . So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psa. 90:10, 12).

May I ask you a personal, probing question? How do you spend the majority of your time? Do you use it wisely or do you abuse it wildly? "Redeeming the time" is a divine injunction (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). Do you heed and follow it as you should?

1. Do you spend more time praying to God, or prying into the business of others?

2. Do you spend more time rearing your children in the way of the Lord, or raising "cain" about some pet gripe?

3. Do you spend more time working away, or wasting away?

4. Do you spend more time helping others, or hurting others?

Someone has said, "Yesterday is a cancelled check, tomorrow is a promisory note, today is cash." God, through Paul, said, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). — Box 619, Douglass, Ks. 67039.



Words Of Truth

I am not made most noble men
but speak forth the words of
truth and soberness
— Acts 20:25

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Question About The Eldership

Several times in recent months we have been asked to comment on situations involving elders whose children have committed fornication, and have become fathers or mothers out of wedlock. The question involves whether or not this sin on the part of an elder's son or daughter would disqualify the elder and demand that he resign.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Needless to say, the sin of fornication is a terrible sin. The fact that a child is conceived does not make the sin itself any worse; but it does broaden the knowledge of the sin and make the natural consequence of the sin greater.

But does the sin of fornication on the part of a child disqualify his father as an elder? We do not believe that it necessarily does. After all, the children of elders are human and make mistakes just like all the rest of us. Would we say that an elder's child must be sinlessly perfect? If not, what sin can he commit without causing his father to become disqualified?

Furthermore, it would seem that the child's attitude toward the sin he has committed would more nearly demonstrate how well the father has done in rearing the child than would the sin itself. If he is genuinely penitent, confesses his sin, and seeks to live exactly as God would have him live, this demonstrates to a degree the fact that he has had some training and teaching by his parents. If he is rebellious and impenitent,

then the opposite could be true.

Decisions as to whether an elder should resign under circumstances like the ones we have described should be made largely by the eldership itself. Members of the congregation should not concern themselves with trying to

"Life After Life": A Refutation

(No. 3)

This article continues our refutation of certain ideas set forth in Dr. Raymond Moody's book which bears the title, *Life After Life*. This book is the outgrowth of many case studies that Dr. Moody has had with people who have gone through "near death" experiences and what they have related to him regarding such.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

We continue now as we take note of what the Bible teaches in regard to real death and the beyond. Dr. Moody does not believe the Bible has much to say on death and the beyond. There may be more in the Good Book relative to these sobering themes than he realizes. I know that many of our questions are not answered but what the Bible does say in the regards in factual and cannot be wrong. Such cannot be said for all set forth in his case studies. Be it recalled that his book has been consistently on the best selling lists for many months. For a while it was near the top. It is still in the top ten as this message is written in May of 1977.

A REFLECTION ON BIBLICAL ALL-SUFFICIENCY

From a consideration of his many case studies I conclude that many of these people with these "near-death" experiences were under the impression that two major lessons were stamped upon their minds. One was their need to go back to life on earth and learn how to love. We dealt with that in our previous article by suggesting that God's Book, not a "near-death" episode, teaches this. We all have access to God's Book; only a few have access to these highly visionary "near-death" experiences and the testimony they bring back from such is subjective to the nth degree and then some!! There is NO way to deny such; there is NO way it can be an objective type of study. Even Dr. Moody realizes this as one of the weaknesses of his case studies. It is unfortunate that he seemingly does not realize that all of this is a serious and glaring reflection upon the all-sufficiency of the Bible. Another major lesson is the need for knowledge. But one does not have to have this experience to know his need for knowledge. The Bible tells us again and again about our need to know the truth and warns us in numerous instances relative to the dangers of Biblical ignorance. It would be interesting to know how many of these case studies have done much more Bible studying since their return from these "near-death" experiences. Our need to know and what we ought to know in the way of preparation for life and preparation for death are set forth with completeness in God's Book. This aspect of his case studies leaves the impression that the Bible is not all sufficient in the realm of knowledge. This I deny unequivocally. Before any reader is carried away with Dr. Moody's book about life and death, he needs to think clearly what his book

decide when an elder should resign. In this, as in all other matters of judgment, they should allow the eldership to handle such problems in whatever way it sees best; and then they should cooperate to the fullest with whatever decisions are made.

does to God's Book of real objective truth as touching both life and death.

HIS SPIRITUAL BODY CONCEPT REFUTED

The case studies of Dr. Moody suggested that most of them found themselves in a new body or a spiritual body as soon as they left their earthly bodies. Dr. Moody and the people of his case studies do not believe what Paul taught in the great resurrection chapter of I Corinthians 15. Paul teaches clearly and forcefully in this chapter that the spiritual, the heavenly, the incorruptible and the immortal body will not be given until the body is raised from the dead at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The veteran apostle wrote, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:50-55). This new or spiritual body will be given at the resurrection day, when Christ comes and when death has ended. Hence it is a foregone conclusion that these people in Dr. Moody's book were not given new or spiritual bodies the moment they left their earthly bodies. These case studies just will not square with the plainest and clearest of Biblical facts relative to the great beyond. LIFE AFTER LIFE is not telling it the way the Bible SAYS IT WILL BE!!

HIS BOOK: AN OPEN REPUDIATION OF BIBLICAL TEACHING ON ETERNAL DESTINES

Dr. Moody says that not one person has described "pearly gates, golden streets and winged, harp-playing angels or a hell of flames and demons with pitchforks." He further states, "So, in most cases, the reward-punishment model of the afterlife is abandoned and disavowed, even by many who had been accustomed to thinking in those terms." Though he has added some non-Biblical terminology to his description yet his meaning is quite clear and patently obvious. These case studies think they have discovered some things in their "near-death" experiences that negate everything the Bible says in regard to heaven and in regard to hell. If this is not an open repudiation of the great Bible doctrine of rewards for the righteous and punishment for the wicked, what would it take to constitute such? Some of these case studies evidently had been taught some truth about heaven and hell from the Bible before this highly visionary, vastly overrated and deeply subjective "near-death" experience occurred. Then they abandoned such when they returned; they disavowed it.

The twenty-first chapter of Revelation speaks of the gates which are made of pearl

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What are the Dead Sea Scrolls? Where and when were they found? What contribution do they make to our knowledge of Old Testament history? What have they added to our knowledge of the New Testament period?"

In the early part of 1947 an Arab was tending his goats in an area about fifteen miles south of Jericho and to the northwest of the Dead Sea where he came, by chance, upon a cave in a ravine known as *Qumran*, which proved to contain a veritable library of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic writings of the most significant nature. These remarkable manuscripts were leather rolls enclosed in cloth wrappings and stored in earthen jars. In rapid order, after this unique find became known to the world, other discoveries were made and the *Qumran* caves have yielded hundreds of documents which have excited Biblical scholars throughout the world, and which have been subjected to the most minute scrutiny.

The library evidently belonged to a Jewish sect which occupied the region near the Dead Sea where the documents were found from slightly before 100 B. C. until about the fall of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. It is conjectured that the members of the "*Qumran* community" (so designated from the name of the wadi where the scrolls were found), were a strict, ascetic sect known as *Essenes*. Much of the literature dealt with the sect itself—its worship, its customs, and its teaching. But, there are other documents, or portions thereof, which are of tremendous value and interest to us today. Among these are brief quotations from various Old Testament books, e.g., portions of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Judges are quoted and three are fragments of commentaries on Micah, Nahum and Zephaniah.

Perhaps the most important find in this area, however, was the discovery of a scroll containing the text of Isaiah in Hebrew, and the first two chapters of the book of Habakkuk with a commentary thereon. The significance of this discovery to Christians will be at once apparent, when it is recalled that until this find, the oldest Old Testament manuscripts dated no further back than about the year 1,000 A. D. These scrolls enable us to know what the text was which our Lord and the apostles used! And, it is a matter of no little satisfaction that these texts are identical, in all important respects, to our Old Testament text today, thus establishing once more the fact that God preserves his word for all subsequent generations. Is it not reasonable to conclude that if God thus guaranteed the preservation of the text of the Old Testament, much of which was designed to bring the Jews to Christ (Gal. 3:23-29), he has surely done so with that precious portion of his word—the New Testament—which alone contains the way of life and salvation? If, as we are told, his word "is settled in heaven" *for ever*, may we not believe that it is equally permanent in character and structure here on earth? (Psalm 119:89). We may indeed rejoice with Peter, the apostle, that while "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the

grass, the grass withereth and the flower falleth: *but the word of the Lord endureth forever*" (I Pet. 1:24, 25).

The contribution which the Dead Sea Scrolls make to Christianity is indirect and circumstantial. In view of the fact that the New Testament completely supplies our every need (II Tim. 3:16, 17), it is not to be expected that either in these Scrolls or elsewhere will anything be found supplementary to that divine and all-sufficient record. The Scrolls, being the production of a Jewish sect, make no direct mention of Christianity or of its teaching and add nothing to the record touching its origin or mission. The benefits

which we derive from these remarkable discoveries are confirmatory not supplementary; they simply reassure us of truth which we already possessed; and they tell us nothing we did not already know regarding the religion of the Old Testament. The basic teaching of Christianity—the Deity of our Lord, His Virgin Birth, His Incarnation, His Sacrificial Death on the cross, and His glorious Resurrection and Ascension and Coronation—is set out in documents which bear on their face conclusive evidence of their divine origin and consequently the truth of the matters which they set out. How very happy and thankful we should be that such is so!

The Called According To God's Purpose

W. C. QUILLEN

"We know that all things work together for good to them that live God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

It is evident that God is concerned about His people who love Him, who are the called according to His purpose, and that a special providence attends them. All things work together for their good. Such necessitates a special providence; not miracles — not a direct operation of God's Spirit and power without means or law; but a working of God's power through His laws, both natural and spiritual.

This same thought is frequently found in the sacred Scripture. Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Such requires a special providence. We should know that if God can accomplish His purpose by miracles, then He can surely fulfill His purpose without miracles.

However, God's promises of good things here, and of better things hereafter, are conditional, and they are limited to certain people. Two broad and comprehensive conditions are specified in the text being considered: 1. To them that love God; 2. To them who are the called according to his

purpose. Do we qualify for God's special providence? Are His promises for us? Are we among "the called according to his purpose"?

How can we know we are "the called"? Can we know by the way we feel? or by our opinion? or by human tradition? No one can know that he is called of God by such human means. We can know the mind, will, and purpose of God only as He reveals such matters to us through His written Word (II Cor. 2:9-12). The Bible teaches that Christ died for all men (Heb. 2:9); that the gospel is for all men (Mk. 16:15); that the invitation of Christ is for all men (Matt. 11:28-30); and that God calls men by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14).

There are no Christians to be found where the gospel has not been preached. If God calls men in some other way, the Great Commission is senseless, and all efforts to fulfill its requirements are useless.

Yet in areas where the gospel is preached, Jesus said, "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 20:16). Why this? The answer is simple: many refuse to respond to the call (Rom. 10:13-18). Those who refuse the gospel's call are not among those "who are the called according to his purpose" (See Act. 2:36-41).—P. O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.

Does The Bible "Say What It Means"

All human speech is uttered in language that is literal, figurative or a combination of both. Some have thought that the Bible has nothing figurative in it because it "says what it means and means what it says." This is indeed true, but the Bible was written to men, for men, in language they were accustomed to. Our daily conversation is filled with figures of speech, and so is the Bible.

Some of the more common figures in God's word are the simile, metaphor, metonymy, personification, synecdoche, anthropomorphism, interrogation, etc. (Several good books are in print that give a rather complete list of figures of speech with illustrations of each.



VIRGIL BRADFORD

Every Bible student should possess one of these.) In the January 13, 1978 issue of WORDS OF TRUTH you will find an excellent example of the "metonymy" in Guy N. Woods' "Open Forum" in which he shows that the "cup" of the Lord's Supper is literally the "fruit of the vine" or juice of the grape. The figure employed in that particular metonymy is the CONTAINER FOR THAT WHICH IS CONTAINED. No one in his right mind would consider swallowing a literal cup, or container, or glass, metal or wood.

In this article I wish to give a few examples of a figure of speech frequently used in the Scriptures, namely, the ELLIPSIS. This figure is one in which a word, or words, is omitted but which must be understood to be therein as an implication. Or, there may be a denial of something of lesser importance in order to give emphasis to something of greater importance. For Example:

1. In Psalms 51:4 David prays, "Against thee, thee only I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight." It is evident that the sin of David with Bathsheba is in mind. (II Sam.

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"Life After Life": A Refutation

Continued from page 2

and the street that is of pure gold. Revelation 5, 14 and 15 make mention of the living creatures and the twenty-four elders who had harps, of hearing the voice AS the voice of harpers harping with their harps and of certain ones who had the harps of God. I have never thought of these as lital harps such as we know on earth. It would be difficult for one to conceive of spiritual beings with earthly, literal harps. But they were harps adopted for the heavenly world and the purposes God had for them. Of that we can rest assured. The Bible so teaches of this wonderful place called heaven.

The Bible associates an immersion in fire, a furnace of fire and a lake that burns with fire and brimstone, the fire that is never quenched and as being in torments in this flame with the punishment beyond death. In Matthew 25:46 Jesus said concerning the groups that appeared before him in judgment, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Reader friend, any type of experience that calls in question what Jesus Christ and the writers of the Bible taught so clearly, as these case studies most assuredly do, cannot be of God. It is the devil's work, not God's work, to deny the concept of the reward-punishment of the afterlife. Such works as these are designed to make infidels of men and not believers. And any book that makes infidels of men would

have been better left unwritten and unpublished!"

THIS BOOK MAKES OUR DEPARTED PEERS AS JUDGES

Some people with this experience report of the beings, more than one mind you, who do the judging. How does this square with Bible teaching? It does not square at all. The Bible speaks of Jesus as the Judge—not those who have gone before us as Judges. The Bible says in John 5:22, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed ALL JUDGMENT UNTO THE SON: . . ." (Emphasis mine—RRT). Paul told the Athenian philosophers, "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:3). In his final chapter Paul wrote, "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; . . ." (II Tim. 4:1). Any system that removes Jesus Christ as Judge is not of God; it is of the devil. Make no mistake about that.

A GRAVE AND GLARING MISCONCEPTION OF JESUS

These case studies report a wholly false view of this being of light that some suppose is Jesus, that others think of as an angel and

that others simply designate as a nameless being. I wonder why they have so much trouble deciding who this being of light really is!! Is not this "near-death" experience designed to acquaint them with real knowledge and many of them do not even learn the name of the being of light? Some of them cannot even name him when they come back and talk to people like Dr. Moody and yet are sent back with supposedly a greater degree of knowledge than they ever had before. This being of light is the grandest thing they witnessed and they do not even know his identity!! How strangely fascinating all this superstitious non-sense is!! Those who think of him as Jesus do not know much about the Christ of the Scriptures. They have him as somewhat of an over indulgent grandfather who is not concerned with their sins and even treats their sins with humor!! Not that first one reports that this being of light told the person of any displeasure of his past life. Not that fire one reported that the being of light gave instructions to come back to life and then obey the gospel and live the Christian life. Surely the being of light they described has no kinship at all with the Christ of the Scriptures. Read the pictures of his judgment scenes in the Bible and see if I am not right on this vital and fundamental point.—P. O. Box 464, Riplev, Tn. 38063.

Does The Bible "Say What It Means"

Continued from page 3

11). King David committed adultery with this woman. Since she had conceived David was determined to shift his guilt to Uriah, her husband. When this effort failed he had Uriah murdered on the battle front. Then the child born of this adulterous union died and David brought shame upon himself and his people. No wonder that he said in this Psalm, "my sin is ever before me" (vs. 3).

You might say that David was trying to cover up, to hide, his sin. But that is not the case. In the agony of his soul he denied that he had sinned against the woman, her husband, his own body, etc., in order to emphasize the awful fact that he had SINNED AGAINST GOD ALMIGHTY. Thus he employed the ellipsis; he said what he meant and mean what he said, in figurative language.

2. In Hosea 6:6 we read, "For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." With the background sins of Israel in mind the Lord is saying that he does not ONLY want sacrifices, but more, he wants their lives to conform to standards of righteousness set forth in his word. He commanded sacrifices of the people but stresses in this manner that sacrifice and conduct must be harmonious. He is teaching Israel, "I want your sacrifices, but only upon the condition tht you straighten out your lives" (Cf. Also Isa. 1:10-17).

3. Another from John 6:27: "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life." Taken literally this would lead us all to give up our jobs and do nothing else to provide our living. This would be foolishness. It would contradict the Scriptures that teach us to work for our own needs and for others whom we might find in need. Hence, "Work not only for the food that perishes, but much more work for that

which is everlasting."

4. Now try John 12:44. "And Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me." If we should fail to consider the elliptical nature of this statement it would be an outright contradiction and would appear to come from a deranged mind. Think of it: "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me." Without adoubt the Lord Jesus is saying, He that believes on me does not believe on me ALONE, but also on the Father that sent me.

5. "Thou hast not lied unto me, but unto God" (Ac. 5:4). Peter knew that Ananias had lied unto men. Eveyrone there knew that he had lied to them as Peter spoke. The young men who carried Ananias out and buried him knew he had lied. Then why did Peter say he had "not lied unto men"? The point is that Ananias had done something far worse than lie to men; he had lied to the Holy Spirit, to God Almighty. Both Ananias and his wife were slain for this and as a result great fear came upon the church and all who heard of Anaias' sin against God (Ac. 5:1-11).

6. Paul says to the Corinthians, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (I Cor. 1:17). Now if this statement is to be taken literally why did Paul baptize Crispus, Gaius and the household of Stephanas? Did he disobey the Lord in so doing? I think not. When we apply the figure under consideration we see that the apostle is telling the brethren that he was not merely sent to baptize people, but rather to preach the gospel, and that any of the brethren who accompanied him could do the baptizing. The obvious reason for Paul's baptizing so few was the divisions referred to in verse 10 to 17. Little emphasis is placed on the WHO in baptizing, but great stress placed on the WHAT that was preached. (A brother once

challenged my teaching on the radio, and in so doing boasted that brother-----had baptized him. It appeared that the baptism didn't "take" if his refusal to admit the truth is any criterion in the case).

7. Finally, "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little win for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (I Tim. 5:23). Let no one imagine that this is license to engage in social drinking. Solomon wrote, "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:31f). Timothy had some stomach disorder according to the text, and Paul is telling him that he does not have to drink water only, but may also use a little wine for medicinal purposes.

Many ellipses are more difficult than these where they are found in longer passages, but we must include this type of study in order to understand the Scriptures.—Rt. 9, Green Valley, Franklin, Tn. 37064.

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

Speak forth

26:25

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NUMBER 11

"Life After Life": A Refutation

(No. 4)

This will be our concluding segment of study relative to a very popular and best selling book of our day which bears the title LIFE AFTER LIFE. Its author is Dr. Raymond Moody.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The book deals with a number of case studies of people who have undergone so called "near-death" experiences and what they told Dr. Moody in his interviews with them. For many months the book has been way up on the best selling lists of current volumes now available for the reading public which apparently has but little discernment about what it reads. In my judgment the book is WAY, WAY DOWN the list as far as objective truth is concerned. The book does nothing to enhance the Bible; quite to the contrary it is a real reflection upon the Bible and some of its cardinal concepts as touching life and death. But now to our final refutation.

Let us now take note of what is taught in Luke 16 as the Bible says, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man died, and was buried; And in hell (Hades-ASV) he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime

receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot: neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Luke 16:19-26). Reader friend, this message from beyond death does not sound anything like one of Dr. Moody's case studies of where everything is rosy, peaceful and comforting regardless of the manner of life lived prior to the "near-death" experience. Why do you suppose there is such a vast difference? Here is one of the major differences: Luke 16 is inspired truth; Dr. Moody's book, even though a current best seller, is not inspired truth but simply based upon fallible, very fallible, human testimony. Jesus did not teach that the spirits of the departed hang around like feathers floating in the air or like a piece of paper blown to the ceiling to watch the mourners, to observe the attempts to revive them or to listen to the funeral orations said of them. Death in the Bible as far as the spirit is concerned is a DEPARTURE-not a REMAINDER at the scene of death.

Is it possible to bring back messages from the beyond? Dr. Moody's book thinks it is. Plato, the Greek philosopher thought so. The Tibetan Book of the Dead thought so. Emanuel Swedenborg thought so and claimed he had been in contact with spiritual entities from the beyond. Dr. Moody's book is filled with HUMAN TESTIMONY-not DIVINE TESTIMONY. Plato was not inspired. The Tibetan Book of the Dead was compiled and written by men. Swedenborg was not inspired and disbelieved much of what the Bible teaches with clarity and force. Had he believed the Bible he would not have become enmeshed with spiritualism.

What does the Bible say in regard to this query? It is truly significant that not that first person who returned from the dead by way of

a miraculous resurrection ever revealed that first single, solitary syllable of what he experienced between death and his resurrection. And these people were really dead for their spirits had left their bodies. The son of the widow of Zaphath said nothing about what he witnessed. The son of the Shunamite woman whom Elisha raised from the dead in 2 Kings 4 said nothing about what he witnessed. The widow's son whom Jesus raised from the dead in Luke 7 said nothing of this experience from death till Christ lifted him from the funeral casket or coffin in which he had been placed. The daughter of Jairus in Mark 5 and Luke 8 said nothing. Jesus told them to feed her immediately-not listen to her fabulous experiences from the land beyond. In John 11 Lazarus had been dead four days. Yet not that first syllable is recorded of what he experienced. Dorcas in Acts 9 and Eutychus in Acts 20 said nothing. Paul said it was unlawful for him to tell what he witnessed in Paradise (II Cor. 12:1-7). Jesus spent some forty days on earth subsequent to his death. He had been to Paradise. Yet he said nothing about that experience or anything sensational that was concerned therewith. The disciples, so far as is recorded, asked him nothing about what he had experienced or where he had gone. Quite to the contrary he talked with them about the Great Commission, the kingdom of God, the spread of the gospel, their tremendous tasks in this great, Herculean undertaking, etc. He said absolutely nothing such as Dr. Moody relates that his "near-death" cases have reproduced according to their own history. These Bible resurrections did not occur in order to allow those who returned the opportunity to delineate what the other side is like. They happened to confirm God's Word. They happened to prove the Deity of Christ. They happened to prove that Christianity was of divine derivation. But the cases about which Dr. Moody relates serve not

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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truth, and to stop their false teaching; but if they persist in teaching error, they should be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17). We are happy that our great brotherhood is becoming more and more oriented in this direction.

The fact that concerned brethren are becoming increasingly alert to the dangers of liberalism the church presents both a danger and a responsibility. The danger lies in the fact that one may become so conscious of liberalism that he considers those who differ with him on any matter as being liberal. Faithful and good brethren, some of whom have been in the very forefront of the battle against liberalism, have been accused of being hypocritical and liberal. This was not because of any doctrinal unsoundness or any unauthorized religious practice, but simply because of a difference in judgment. Such recklessness makes no contribution to the fight against true liberalism. We doubt

seriously whether the names of the good men involved have been significantly damaged by the accusations against them, but if they have not been, it certainly is not the fault of the one making the accusation.

Our responsibility lies in the fact that we must make a clear distinction between those who teach and practice error and those who merely differ with us in connection with matters of judgment. This responsibility belongs both to those of us who write and those of us who read articles in brotherhood publications.

We are frank to admit that the prospect of editing this paper received a lion's share of consideration in our decision to move to Jasper two years ago. We believe WORDS OF TRUTH to be a powerful weapon which makes a significant contribution in the battle for truth. May God forbid that we ever lose sight of who the real enemy is!

Does Anybody Have Some Goats For Sale?



FROM THE EDITOR

Who Is The Enemy?

It is extremely important in the fight for truth and right for God's children to make a clear distinction between friend and foe. This is no less—maybe even especially—true in connection with the battle against the liberal movement which would turn the very kingdom of the Lord into a second rate, man-made denomination.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Needless to say, there are many already who contend for doctrines and practices which years ago were proved unscriptural in debate with denominational preachers. Things such as a belief in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion and upon Christians, speaking in tongues, women's preaching and leading in prayer, extending fellowship to those in the denominational world, endorsing instrumental music in worship—things unheard of among brethren a few years ago—are now real issues which must be met and defeated. Some are advancing the position that elders in the church have absolutely no decision making authority at all. Some are teaching that Jesus is going to establish a kingdom upon this earth when he comes again. Some are insisting that the New Testament is not a pattern to govern God's people in faith and practice: they say it is just a book of suggested guidelines for us to follow under most circumstances.

Those who seek to maintain such theories and practices as we have mentioned are enemies of the truth and of the church. Their teaching should be refuted on every hand. Efforts should be made to get them to see the

Civic clubs use various methods to insure attendance by their members. Sometimes special assignments are given for the absentee.

The most ingenious plan to come to my attention involved a big, old stinking goat. For the member who failed to put in his appearance at the weekly noon meeting,

Mr. Goat would be tethered right in the middle of his front lawn where he was to spend the next 7 days. Besides the nuisance of having a noisy, evil-smelling goat tied in the yard, there was a banner which said, "this guy can't be depended on to be present, but instead is a hurt to our effort."

It was reported that soon after the program was begun, the average attendance soared close to the 100% mark.

For the church member who will not be moved by the love, grace, and mercy of God and commands of Jesus Christ to attend the services of the church, it just might be that an old goat would help. Do you know of any old goats for sale?

As long as one regards worship occasions a drudgery to be avoided when possible, just that long he has no concept of what Christianity is all about. The Master wants us to be servants who enjoy and long for those occasions to praise and honor the Father. He wants us to say as did David: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1).

The surrender which characterized the Apostle Paul should ever be the goal of every Christian. He said: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

This is the kind of devotion that would prevent parents the heartache of the following anonymous lines:

My daddy thinks it's nice of me
To go to Sunday School-
To hear the helpful lesson
And to learn the Golden rule.

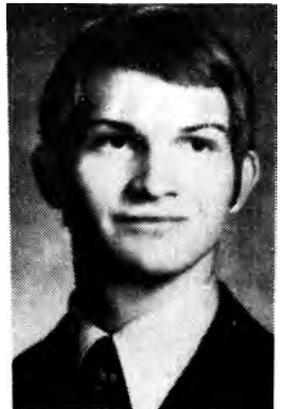


EDSEL BURLESON

So I dress up very neatly
And travel off alone,
While dad hunts up his paper
And decides he will stay at home.
And if some Sunday morning
Something else I'd like to do
My Dad looks very stern and says
"Son, I'm surprised at you."
Now, I've wondered and wondered
Yes, time and time again,
Why Sunday School is good for boys
And not for grown up men?

The Death Of The Righteous

Standing before Balak, the King of Moab, Balaam lifted up his voice and declared, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his" (Numbers 23:10). There is a vast difference between the deaths of righteous and wicked men. Solomon lamented, "I saw the wicked buried" (Ecc. 8:10). According to the Psalmist, "The way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psa. 1:6). We find an excellent example of the death and destiny of a wicked man in the person of Luke sixteen's rich man. Truly, "The soul that sinneth. . . shall die" and "The wages of sin is death" (Ez. 18:20; Rom. 6:23).



DALTON KEY

Unlike the deaths of wicked men, the deaths of righteous men present not horror, but hope (I Thess. 4:13; Heb. 6:19). "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psa. 116:15). "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13). Our Saviour promised, "I go to prepare a place for

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Do the scriptures teach that there will be degrees of enjoyment in heaven, and degrees of punishment in hell?"

Yes.

This conclusion seems to be irresistible unless one is prepared to grant that God will perform a miracle on each personality and make all exactly alike in the home of the soul. I believe that each individual will possess, in the next life, the degree of excellence in spiritual attainment, which he obtained here; and that he takes into the world to come the characteristics for good which he acquired in this life by his dedication and devotion to the Saviour.

It will be admitted that there exists vast differences in the degree of attainment here—differences which must continue to increase up to death. Some, like the incomparable apostle to the Gentiles, die in the triumph of great faith, in full assurance that it is "very far better," to depart, and "to be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23); others, of infinitely less spiritual development, will be saved, notwithstanding the fact that their achievements are far fewer than Paul's. To assume that individuals of such great disparity will enter heaven on exactly the same attainment level requires us to accept the conclusion that those like Paul must be *moved backward* or else those of the latter classification must be *arbitrarily moved forward* to compensate for the difference. Either conclusion is repugnant to our sense of justice, opposed to the analogy everywhere observable in God's dealings with men, and—as we shall show—opposed to the plainest teaching of the scriptures.

There are vast differences in the degree of enjoyment which the saints derive in the service and worship of the Lord here. These gradations are as numerous as the individuals who participate—the difference being, not in the nature of the worship, but in the spiritual level of the worshippers. Some, for example, find absorbing interest in the preaching of the gospel; others, in the same audience, and listening to the same presentation find the effort only mildly interesting or down-right boring. This variation in interest, characteristic of every service, results largely from the difference in the spiritual attainment levels of those present. It is reasonable to suppose that these differences will continue to exist in the heavenly realms.

This argument from analogy may be extended and applied to the question: Will there be degrees of punishment in hell? It is reasonable to conclude that if there are variations of enjoyment in the Lord's work, here on earth, these variations will continue in heaven; and, this conclusion, in turn, becomes a premise on which we may argue that differences will likewise obtain in the degree of punishment suffered by the lost—differences determined by the opportunities available to, and spurned by them here on earth. It is worthy of note that this principle is recognized and followed in this life. There are some crimes which result from greater punishment. Our codes of criminal procedure reflect clearly the principle that men ought to be punished in

a manner commensurate to their guilt, and their guilt is determined by the responsibility of the person or persons accused.

Our Lord recognized this principle, and applied it to the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt. 11:21-24). It will be "more tolerable," (It will fare better) with Tyre and Sidon in judgment than with them, because they had spurned their greater opportunities. Capernaum, whose opportunities exceeded all others, since our Lord lived there for three years, will be judged by a vastly stricter standard than Sodom, though Sodom will not escape judgment. This principle our Lord also taught, with emphasis, in the parable of the wicked servant. "And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with a few stripes" (Luke 12:42-48). The "stripes" represent punishment; the "number" of stripes the degree of punishment. Those who *know not*, but do things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with "few" stripes. Stripes, whether few or many, will be administered *only* to those who are lost, since the righteous will receive no stripes *at all*. It is clearly and emphatically shown here that punishment will be administered, in

the next life, proportionate to the guilt which men possess, and their guilt will be determined by the amount of opportunity they had in life.

It is unmistakably taught by our Lord in the foregoing instance, that (1) there are different levels of knowledge possessed by people; (2) there are different degrees of preparation; (3) there are variations in the amount of service rendered; and (4) these differences will be the determining factor in the administration of punishment. The parable of the talents clearly establishes the fact that *not as much was expected* of the one-talent man as was expected of the five-talent man, but, the one-talent man was expected to perform the *full* measure of service of which he was capable; and, he was condemned, not because he did not do as much as the five-talent man, but because he did not measure to the standard of achievement of which he was capable (Matt. 25:14-30).

Some will suffer a "much sorer punishment," than others (Heb. 10:29); there is, then, a "sore" punishment, and there is a "sorer" punishment—the comparative adjective indicating punishment greater than what would be described as "sore." The Bible abounds with evidence of truth of the principle herein set forth.

The Resurrection Of Jesus



(VIRGIL BRADFORD)

The faith that we hold, based on the teaching of the Bible, is unique in that our Head was dead but is now alive and shall be alive for evermore (Rev. 1:18). The heads of other religions are dead heads. The authors of those religions died, and so did Jesus Christ, but only of him can it be said that "he died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3-4). If it were not for this marvelous truth we would be, as Paul says, "of all men most pitiable" (I Cor. 15:19).

THE RESURRECTION IN PROPHECY AND TYPE

The Sweet Psalmist of Israel wrote of the resurrection of Jesus, saying, "I have set Jehovah always before me: Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption" (Ps. 16:8-9). The Psalmist also referred directly to the resurrection of the Christ when he wrote: "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my Son; This day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:7). The apostle Paul quotes both of these Old Testament passages, showing that the direct application is to the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus, AS ALSO IT IS WRITTEN IN THE SECOND PSALM, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee....Because he saith also in another Psalm, Thou wilt not give thy holy one to see corruption" (Ac. 13:32-36). Hence, there can be no doubt concerning the prophecies in Psalms 2 and 16; they foretell

the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

The wicked rulers of Jerusalem plotted against the Lord to take his life, saying, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol are at agreement." But the Lord's answer to them was this: "Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste" (Isa. 28:14-22). Isaiah foresaw what we know to be a fact of history, that is, the Jews cast Jesus out as a builder would cast aside an unfit stone; they put him to death. But Jehovah God reached out, as it were, and brought this cast-out "Stone" to the chief position in the building of God, the church. Just as your head gives directions to all the members of your body, so Jesus as the Head of the church guides, directs and instructs every member. If a man is not seriously looking to Jesus Christ for direction in every phase of life let him not imagine that he stands in favor with God. "if a man love me, he will keep my word" (Jn. 14:23).

The prophet Jonah took a three day journey into the deep in the belly of a great fish (Jonah 2). Jesus alluded to this when he was challenged to give a sign to the scribes and Pharisees. He gave them one sign, the sign, of the prophet Jonah: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the earth" (Matt. 12:39-41). The third day Jonah was cast from the whale's belly. The third day Jesus Christ came alive and left the tomb as the conqueror over death and all the powers of Satan (I Cor. 15:4). Isaac might also be looked upon as a type of Christ being offered to God in sacrifice. The Hebrew writer says in reference to that trial recorded in Genesis 22: "By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: Yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son, even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall they seed be called: accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from

Continued on page 4

The Resurrection Of Jesus

Continued from page 3

whence he did also in a figure receive him back" (Heb. 11:17ff).

JESUS FORETOLD THE RESURRECTION

After Jesus performed his first miracle in Cana he went up to Jerusalem to the Passover. He purged the temple of the greedy extortioners there, and when asked for a sign said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Those present thought that he spoke of Herod's temple, but not so, for "he spoke of the temple of his body" (Jn. 2:13-22). The death and resurrection of the Messiah was foreign to their thinking because they, as some today, were looking for a materialistic kingdom such as Israel had known centuries before. Even the apostles failed to grasp the idea of death and resurrection of the Redeemer.

"From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Matt. 16:21). Peter spoke his disbelief, and that of his brethren, and this attitude was not removed until they were actually witnesses of the death and resurrection of Jesus (Lk. 24, Jn. 20, etc.).

These things came to pass just as the Spirit of God said they would. The whole Christian system rests on these grand facts of the gospel: Jesus died for OUR SINS; he was buried; he arose the third day. He is alive and shall be alive eternally.

THE BURDEN OF APOSTOLIC PREACHING

From the day of Pentecost till the end of

the way the apostles and other witnesses of the resurrection never swerved from their course in preaching Jesus and the resurrection. On that day Peter declared, "THIS JESUS DID GOD RAISE UP, whereof we are all witnesses" (Ac. 2:32). At this point he could also set forth the grand truth that "God hath made that same Jesus both LORD and CHRIST" (Ac. 2:36). Having proclaimed these wonderful all-important facts, and having the question from the audience, "What shall we do," Peter, for the first time in history announced the way into the kingdom of God: "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" (Ac. 2:38). Some 3000 souls were added and compacted into one body, the church, that day. This process has not ceased, for the everlasting gospel is still being preached; people all over the world are repenting and being baptized in Jesus Christ in spite of all the false doctrines that Satan and his cohorts are preaching to persuade men that they need not do what the Lord says do in order to be saved.

Very soon after Pentecost Peter and John were put in prison for their fearless preaching of the gospel (Ac. 4:ff). Later all the apostles were jailed, beaten and then loosed with the charge not to preach in the name of Jesus. Do you think this stopped them? Not for one day, for, "every day in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ" (Ac. 5:42).

The martyr Stephen saw Christ standing at the right hand of God and for his testimony

went to be with Jesus (Ac. 7:55ff; Phil. 1:23; I Thes. 4:13ff). In the presence of Herod Agrippa Paul raised the question, "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?" (Ac. 26:8). God did raise up Jesus and will raise us up by his power (I Cor. 6:14). If we believe it, let us SAY SO and ACT LIKE IT. Franklin, Tn. 37064

The Death Of The Righteous

Continued from page 2

you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). Observe a few example of the righteous' death:

ABEL. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4).

ABRAHAM: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people" (Gen. 24:8). "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

PAUL. "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" (II Tim. 4:6-8). "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 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" (Phil. 1:21, 23, 24).

The righteous can say as did David, "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).

If you were to die at this very moment, would you "die the death of the righteous"; would your last end be like their's? — Box 619, Douglass, Ks. 67039.

Redeeming The Time

Ephesians 5:15, 16 reveals that Christians are expected to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil." There is nothing that has been more abused and misused than time. Paul's point is that God's people must not squander this precious commodity. They must use their time wisely by taking advantage of every opportunity for



RON STOUGH

doing good. Every wasted moment and every neglected opportunity allow evil to become more firmly entrenched in the world.

Those who would use their time properly must never lose sight of the following:

(1) The purpose of life. The Scriptures clearly teach that man was created not simply to satisfy his fleshly desires, but to serve the living God. After experimenting with every facet of life, Solomon wrote, "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). The life devoted to satisfaction of self rather than service to God is wasted because it deviates from the purpose for which man was placed upon the earth.

(2) The priorities of life. Jesus demanded that his disciples seek first the kingdom of

God, and his righteousness (Mt. 6:33). The only way to find time for God's business is to make time for it. The difference between the man who uses time wisely and the man who squanders it is not simply activity. All men are busy, but some men use their time for things that are important, while others occupy themselves with things that ultimately don't matter. The Christian who seems to find time for everything except the Lord's business testifies by his own life something is wrong with his set of values.

(3) The danger of procrastination. Procrastination has been called the thief of time. Indeed, it is one of the devil's most powerful weapons in keeping men from fulfilling their obligations to God. Man has no guarantee of the future. The inspired writer said, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Opportunities not immediately seized are often lost forever. These lines engraved on a sundial sum up our thoughts:-

The shadow of my finger cast
Divides the future from the past.
Before it stands the unborn hour
In darkness and beyond thy power;
Behind its unreturning line
The vanished hour, no longer thine;
One hour alone is in thy hands,
The now on which the shadow stands.
1104 Mill Street, Cassville, Mo. 65625.

"Life After Life": A Refutation

(NO. 4)

Continued from page 1

those purposes at all. They have aided him in writing a best seller all right but there still remains but one Book that is worthy of man who wants to know about both life and death and that Book has God as author and not Dr. Raymond Moody's name on the outside cover. Like other books LIFE AFTER LIFE will have its day and fade but God's word about real life and genuine death will continue to march on and on long after both Dr. Moody and his current best seller have faded totally from human minds.



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 20:25

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NUMBER 12

The Pilot's Compass

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). In a beautiful poem about the Bible, there is a particular line that goes like this: "It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's character." While I have never had the experience of a navigator's use with a compass, I have had to use one in other activities.

Some time ago, I was hunting with a Christian friend in unfamiliar woods. The weather was terrible. The sky was unusually dark and the sun was hid from human view. The rain descended in torrents. The timber was massive in size. As I continued to seek game, I became aware of the fact that I was 'temporarily mis-located'. I thought I knew the way back to familiar territory, but, the more I walked, the more I realized that I did not. It was then that I took out my small compass and began to follow a certain course. However, after walking some distance, I looked at the compass again and noticed that I was following the wrong end of the needle. I was actually traveling in the opposite direction from where I wanted to go. Then, I began walking toward the desired direction. After some time, I arrived at my destiny.

Perhaps, this experience is not completely parallel with the lessons I want to impress upon your thinking regarding the spiritual guide, but I feel that there are some thoughts you should ponder.

1. A person may 'feel' that he is walking in the right direction in religious matters and be completely lost. Man is not a safe guide. Subjective feelings are not reliable. Only God is the sure Guide (Jer. 10:23).

2. A person can look at the Bible in an improper manner and still be lost. Many failed to rightly divide the word (II Tim. 2:15). Some wrest the scriptures unto their own destruction (II Pet. 3:16;). Many are given wrong directions by "blind" leaders (Mt.

15:14). Others are "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 3:7). One must have an open mind and be willing to study diligently, possessing the attitude of obedience in the searching of the Scriptures (Acts 17:11; Jno. 7:17).

3. An individual must place complete trust in God's compass, the Bible and submit fully to the guidance of the Lord. This compass

points only one way—upward to heaven (Jno. 14:6). It requires faith to believe that ones sins are washed away in baptism by the blood of Jesus (Eph. 1:7). It requires trust in God to believe in eternal life for the Christian. But, God, who cannot lie, demands your complete confidence if He is to guide you in the right direction by His Word (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Rt. 1 Box 13 Opp, Al. 36467.

Sound Doctrine Or Fables?

W.C. QUILLEN

When Paul charged Timothy to "preach the word," he predicted that "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:1-5).

Each week a great number of religious radio and television programs, sponsored by prominent denominations and featuring some well advertised personalities, are heard and seen in our living rooms. Much of the time is given to appeals for money to keep the program on the air, or to support some pet project being sponsored.

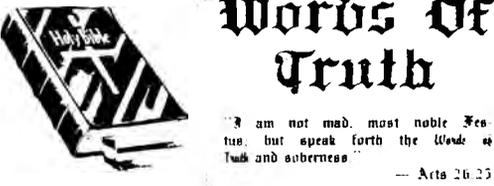
The subject matter may range from political issues and social action to getting the Holy Ghost, and testimonials of personal mysterious acquaintance with Jesus and the miraculous healing of some dreadful disease; from the glorious rapture and the seven years of great tribulation to the coming of Christ to establish a literal kingdom with His literal throne in literal Jerusalem, and personally to reign for a literal thousand years, with the resurrected righteous dead and the Jews, who He will deliver from the great tribulation.

Everything is geared to the sensational, and designed to appeal to the emotions and to entertain the physical.

When have you heard any of these preachers tell their audiences what the Lord says that man must do in order to be saved? Do you ever hear them quote the Great Commission as given by Jesus in its entirety? Do they tell men that they must be taught of God in order to come to Christ? (Jno. 6:45; Matt. 28:19). Do they ever say that Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?" (Mk. 16:16). Or, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?" (Jno. 3:5).

When do you hear these men, who claim they personally know Jesus and have the Holy Spirit, tell believers to "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?" (Act. 2:38). Or, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord?" (Act. 22:16).

Do men prefer false fables to the Word of God? — Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.



Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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The Apostle Of Truth

The apostle John has been referred to as the apostle of love, because in his writings he has so much to say about the subject. For example, in John's gospel, *agapao* and *agape* (verb and noun forms of the word translated "love") appear a total of forty-four times as compared to twenty eight times in the other three gospels combined. This is not to mention the



BOBBY DUNCAN

fact that he uses *phileo* (another word translated by the word "love") a total of thirteen times as compared to eight for the other three combined. We would certainly say this qualifies John as "the apostle of love."

However, it might be interesting to those who think that love forbids the strong preaching of the truth to note that this same apostle also is eminently qualified as "the apostle of truth." He uses the word *aletheia* "truth" (in all its forms) a total of fifty-six times in his gospel. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all combined use the same word a total of seventeen times. And so "the apostle of love" is also "the apostle of truth."

It was John who said: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (1:17). It was he who recorded the words of our Lord: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (4:24). Some other things he recorded are: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (8:32). "And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. . . . And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (8:45,46). "I am the way, the truth, and the life . . ." (14:6).

"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (18:37).

It is John who tells of the Lord's referring to the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of truth" (16:13). It is he who records Christ's references to the fact that men are sanctified through the truth (17:17,19) and to the fact that God's word is truth (17:17).

Really we should not be surprised to learn that "the apostle of love" is also "the apostle of truth," because love and truth are natural go-togethers. It was God's love for the world that caused him to send his Son to die on the cross for our sins (Jno. 3:16); but it is only through our obedience to the truth that we can have remission of sins (1 Pet. 1:22). Christians are taught to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15); and those cannot be saved who receive not the love of the truth into their hearts (II Thess. 2:10).

Incidentally, we might also add that John is "the apostle of plain preaching." It is he who records: "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou

make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly" (10:24). It was he who wrote: "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead" (11:14). It was he who recorded the words of our Lord: "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father" (16:25). And it was John who tells us that "his disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb" (16:29). The word which is translated "plainly" in these verses is not used at all in Matthew or Luke. It occurs one time in the book of Mark. Perhaps this fact justifies our referring to John as "the apostle of plain preaching."

Certainly there is such a thing as preaching the truth in a rude and ugly manner; and such we abhor. But if we think there is something paradoxical about plainly preaching the truth out of hearts filled with love, we need to read the book of John.

Jesus And Evangelism

ROGER DICKSON

The life and work of Jesus was evangelistic. Because He knew that the gospel was the only hope for mankind, Jesus generated within the hearts of those early disciples the necessity of broadcasting the good news to all the world. And that's exactly what they, those early disciples, did.

Jesus was sent into the world to seek and save the lost (Matt. 18:11; Lk 19:10). You might say that He was God's first missionary bearing the gospel to the lost. Philippians 2: 5-8 more than explains the missionary attitude and actions of Jesus.

The gospel records are saturated with the evangelistic activity of Jesus. "He taught in their synagogues" (Lk. 4:15). "He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee preaching" (Mk. 1:39). He "went about in all Galilee...preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23). "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching..." (Matt. 9:35). "He taught in Capernaum" (Jn. 6:59). "And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogues" (Matt. 13:54; cf. Mk. 1:21; Lk. 4:15; 6:6; 13:10; Jn 18:20). Yes, the work of Jesus was evangelistic.

And Jesus placed no little emphasis on "going forth" to preach and teach about the kingdom. His evangelistic commands rang with a sense of necessity and urgency that would characterize His true disciples in any place and at all times in history. "Behold, I send you forth..." (Matt. 10:16). "Go your ways, behold I send you forth as lambs" (Lk. 10:3). "These...Jesus sent forth, and charged them saying, 'Go...'" (Matt. 10:5). "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matt. 28:19). "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel..." (Mk. 16:15).

In the atmosphere of the above words of urgency in which the disciples were engulfed, a compelling motivation was generated within their hearts that sent them into the far corners of the earth. They went in obedience to the Master's mission. But they also went because of the Master's life-giving message. They knew mankind needed it, therefore, "they went forth" (Mk. 16:20). "And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42). "They...went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). That was the center of the

activity of the first century church.

If any word ever accurately expressed the work of the early Christians it would have to be *evangelism*. They went! They preached! From the housetops, from the street corners and from the synagogues of the Jews they sounded for the good news of the Bright and Morning Star that had appeared over the hills of Judea. And as a result, the world that then was, was "Turned upside down" by the preaching of the gospel. Concerning those first evangelistic efforts the apostle Paul wrote, "Their sound went out into all the earth, and their works unto the ends of the world" (Rom. 10:18). Wouldn't it be just great if some future historian could write the same words concerning the evangelistic work of the church of this present time? Caixa Postal 30-543, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

FRANK CHESSER

The Bible clearly reveals one all-powerful, all knowing, omnipresent God. Thus, the scribe spoke the truth when he said, "...for there is one God, and there is none other but he" (Mark 12:32). Within this one God, this one divine essence, are three persons - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit (II Cor. 13:14). They are co-equal, co-powerful and co-eternal.

To the degree it is possibly for humanity to comprehend deity, the difficulty lies not with regard to the Father of the Son, but with the Holy Spirit. Some view the Spirit as a mere substance or fluid. Others refer to the Spirit as being nothing more than an influence or power like wind or electricity. Still others view the Spirit as some dark and mysterious force exerting a direct and mystical influence upon

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"Who or what were the demons so often mentioned in the New Testament? Are people possessed of them today as they were in the first century?"

Demons were wicked spirits, under the direction of Satan, opposed to God, and capable of causing much misery to man (Matt. 8:28-34, 12:24). Their powers over human beings enabled them to afflict people with dumbness (Matt. 9:32, 33), blindness (Matt. 12:22), and insanity (Luke 8:26-36.) They acknowledged the deity of the Lord, conceded their wicked state, recognized impending judgment, and trembled in contemplation of it (Matt. 8:29; Luke 4:41; James 2:19). The apostles were given the power to cast out demons and an instance in which they exercised it is seen in Luke 10:17, 18, though Mark 9:18-29 shows that their lack of faith hindered their ability to do this on the occasion mentioned.

Efforts to "explain" demonology of the New Testament as (1) popular superstition; (2) accommodation of the Lord to current views; (3) illness or insanity; (4) fallen angels; or (5) what is perhaps the most absurd of all, the progeny of angels and wicked women, all fail either (a) because of their own obvious falsity or (b) because they conflict with known facts and our Lord's limitless goodness and knowledge.

An induction of statements will reveal that (1) they were intelligent beings (Mark 1:24; 5:7, 8); (2) they were wicked and were ultimately to face judgment (Rev. 9:11); and (3) they came from the "abyss." These considerations have led thoughtful men to conclude that they were disembodied spirits of wicked men who in some way escaped from Tartarus of Hades and afflicted persons whom they seized. So strongly did Alexander Campbell believe this that in his lengthy and intricate discussion of the theme in his *Lectures and Addresses* he wrote, "We conclude that there is neither reason nor fact — there is no canon of criticism, no law of interpretation—there is nothing in human experience or observation — there is nothing in antiquity, sacred or profane—that in our judgment weighs against the evidence already adduced in support of the position that the demons of Pagans, Jews and Christians were the ghosts of dead men, as, as such have taken possession of men's living bodies, and have moved, influenced and impelled them to certain courses of action." This was the view of the Jewish historians Josephus and Philo. The former wrote, "Demons are the spirits of wicked men, who enter into living men and destroy them, unless they are so happy as to meet with speedy relief," and the latter said, "The souls of dead men are called demons." Early Christian writers, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, and many others, may be cited to this same effect. Lardner's conclusion, after detailed examination of these ancient writers on this theme, is "The notion of

demons, or the souls of dead men, having power over living men, was universally prevalent among the heathen of those times, and believed by many Christians;" and brother McGarvey, in his commentary on Matthew and Mark says that "In the Jewish usage of the term it is applied exclusively to the departed spirits of wicked men. This usage was adopted by Jesus and the Apostles, and consequently all that is said of demons in the New Testament agrees with it."

Are people today afflicted by demon possession? Obviously, not. Even a casual examination of the instances chronicled in the New Testament will show that the circumstances attending demon possession then are not characteristic of our day.

Growth — At Whose Expense?

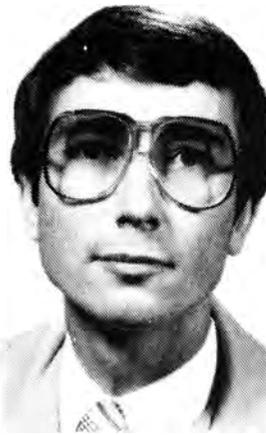
Let it be clearly understood by one and all at the beginning of this writing that I am not opposed to church growth. It thrills my heart no small amount to hear and read about the growth that is taking place in many congregations in America today. The thing that concerns me is how we grow and at whose expense?

Recently, the following statement ap-

peared in a church bulletin: "It hurts me deeply to read church bulletins that spend their space tearing down the successes that are being enjoyed by other churches. I feel sorry for those who feel that it is necessary to do so. Usually this is done by some church or preacher that has no great growth to talk about and therefore looks around and tears down something positive that is being done by others." The writer of that statement is going to be hurt as this writer "tears down the successes that are being enjoyed by other churches" in this writing. Furthermore, I cannot be accused of "tearing down others because I have no great growth to talk about," since I happen to preach for one of the fastest growing churches in North Carolina.

Church growth is very important. Every congregation and every Christian should desire growth. If your congregation is growing, ask at whose expense; yours or others? Some congregations accept into their fellowship those who have been disfellowshipped at other places. That certainly increases the attendance, but brethren, is that growth? Is it growth when you make a mockery of the scriptural action of faithful brethren in disfellowshipping by taking these into your fellowship without repentance? Is that what you call growth? God forbid!

Also, some congregations have become big promotional enterprises to the extent of watering down the gospel. I'm not against promoting the work of the church. I try to promote our work here because I believe that anything worth having (Gospel Meetings, Bible Schools, etc.) is worth promoting. Last October, the church here had the best attended Gospel Meeting in its thirty-one year history at the present location. Bobby Duncan did the preaching and we did the promoting. The meeting would not have been the success it was without some kind of promoting. Our



MICHAEL D. STONE

promoting, however, was not more important to us than the gospel preached. Is it growth when congregations are doing a lot of promoting and very little sound teaching? Is it growth when people are brought in and all they hear is how great they are and how much the preacher loves them and misses them when away without pointing out the sins in their lives? That will attract a crowd but is that real growth?

Real church growth takes place when sinful people adhere to the powerful preaching of the Word of God. On Pentecost, in Acts 2, the preaching was powerful and to the point and several thousand responded. That my friend is true church growth.

503 Plymouth St., Kannapolis, N.C. 28081.

John 3:16 Or Acts 2:38?

By JAMES JOYNER

We have before us two wonderful passages of scripture. These two passages should be of special interest to you because both of them deal with God's great plan for redeeming mankind. Both of these passages deal with the same subject but say entirely different things about that subject. John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son and that if we believe in Him we should be saved. Acts 2:38 tells us that Repentance and Baptism give us forgiveness of sins. Your first impulse is probably to ask the question, "Which of these two passages is correct? Are we saved by Faith in Jesus Christ, or are we saved by Repentance and Baptism?" Before you decide which of these two passages is correct, examine each one and see what it is teaching.

JOHN 3:16

The event surrounding this passage is that of Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night. Jesus immediately tells him that he must be born again. As Jesus tells Nicodemus about this new way of life He uses an example from the Old Testament to illustrate His teaching. The children of Israel spoke against God and Moses; because of their rebellious attitude God sent fiery serpents among the people and many of the people died. The children of Israel repented of their sins and asked Moses to ask God to deliver them from the fiery

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Baptism Of The Holy Spirit

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the heart of man in order to secure his salvation. Much of this difficulty would be instantly removed if, like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was recognized as a "divine Person."

The Bible abounds in references substantially the personality of the Holy Spirit. Seven times in John 16:13, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit with personal pronouns. The Holy Spirit displays personal actions such as speaking (I Tim. 4:1) and teaching (John 14:26), and possesses personal traits such as mind (Rom. 8:27) and will (I Cor. 12:11). The personality of the Spirit can be seen by noting various actions perpetrated against him by men. He can be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31), grieved (Eph. 4:30), and lied to (Acts 5:3). Thus, the Holy Spirit is a person. He is a divine person, possessing all the attributes of deity. He is co-equal, co-powerful and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. He is God!

In Joel 2:28-32, Joel prophecies concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit without regard to race, sex or social status. This prophecy constitutes the background for every reference to the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit in relation to humanity in the New Testament. The first of such references is the promise of the baptism of the Spirit in Matt. 3:11. This passage is often cited in an effort to establish the availability of Holy Spirit baptism to all those who will seek for it. However, John's statement is prophetic in nature and prophecy can be understood only in light of its fulfillment. The New Testament reveals only two instances of Holy Spirit baptism. Acts 2 records the baptism of the Spirit in connection with the apostles. Acts 10 records the baptism of the Spirit in connection with Cornelius and his household.

The apostles' baptism in the Holy Spirit was essential in order to qualify them for their role in God's scheme of redemption. They were to make known the will of God to man. They were to function as instruments through whom God would grant these same abilities to others. Thus, they were to inaugurate, confirm and establish New Testament Christianity in the world. Christ promised to fulfill their every need by giving them miraculous power. This clothing with power was to be granted in the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5,8). Acts 2:1-4 records the coming of the Spirit upon the apostles. Peter identified the coming of the Spirit with the prophecy of Joel (Acts 2:16). Thus, as prophesied by Joel and promised by Christ, the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit to qualify them for the work which God had ordained for them to do.

Some years after the events of Pentecost, God instructed Peter to go and preach to Gentiles, Cornelius and his household. Scarcely had Peter begun before the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and all those present with him. As a manifestation of their reception of the Spirit, they spoke with tongues and magnified God (Acts 10:44-46). With regard to this unique incident, several things should be noted:

Cornelius and those present with him did receive a baptism of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles is not referred to as a "baptism" of the Spirit in Acts 2. Consequently, how do we know what happened to the apostles in Acts 2 constituted a baptism of the Spirit? We know this because

of the promise made by Christ in Acts 1:5. Christ promised the apostles that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. That promise was fulfilled in Acts 2. Therefore, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles in Acts 2 constituted a baptism of the Spirit.

In regard to Cornelius, Peter said, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:15-16). When the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and those with him, it reminded Peter of what Jesus said in Acts 1:5. Therefore, Acts 1:5 furnishes the background, not only for what happened to the apostles in Acts 10. Inspiration ties both the apostles and Cornelius to the promise of Christ regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:5.

However, Cornelius and those of his household did not receive "apostolic powers." The Holy Spirit did not come upon them for the purpose of making them apostles. Just as there is a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Word, even so is there a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit and the power (Acts 1:8). When the Spirit came upon Cornelius and those with him, it reminded Peter of the promise Christ made regarding the "baptism" of the Spirit in Acts 1:5, but it did not remind him of the promise Christ made regarding the "power" of the Spirit in Acts 1:8. Cornelius and his household received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as did the apostles, but they did not receive apostolic power.

For what reason was Cornelius and his household baptized with the Holy Spirit? To save them? To make them spiritual? To show that baptism was not essential to salvation? How does the Bible use this incident? If we can determine how the Bible uses it, we can know the purpose of it. It is used three times (Acts 10, 11 and 15) to prove "that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:6).

Approximately thirty years after Pentecost and twenty years after the experience of Cornelius, Paul said, there is, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:6). That one baptism is the baptism of the great commission (Mark 16:15-16). It is water baptism of the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 8:36-39). Holy Spirit baptism was administered by Christ. The baptism of the great commission is administered by man. Holy Spirit baptism had no connection with salvation. Water baptism is a condition of salvation to a lost world. Holy Spirit baptism has fulfilled its purpose and is no longer available to man. But for as long as the world stands, the gospel must be preached and men must ask, "here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36). Box 173, Thomson, Ga. 30824.

John 3:16 Or Acts 2:38?

Continued from page 3

serpents. God directed Moses to set a serpent of brass upon a pole. All of those who would look upon the serpent of brass would be saved from the snake bite (Num. 21:1-9). Jesus taught Nicodemus and teaches you that no longer is a person to turn to a brazen serpent, the law of Moses, his own goodness, his works, or anything else for deliverance, but now a person must turn to Him. John 3:16 teaches you that if you will turn to Jesus Christ as your source of salvation and if you will place your complete trust in Him,

then you will be saved.

ACTS 2:38

Peter had just finished preaching the first Gospel sermon. During his message Peter told the Jews present that they had killed the very one who had come to save them. The people listened to what Peter told them and realized that they were guilty of a terrible sin, for the scriptures tell us that they were "pricked in their hearts". Wanting to be forgiven of this sin they asked "What shall we do?" Peter did not tell these Jews to believe in Jesus, because they already believed in Him. Peter told these believers to "Repent and be Baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for (unto) the remission of your sins". Acts 2:38 teaches that when a person places his Faith in Jesus Christ as his source of salvation then he must meet the terms of Repentance and Baptism before his sins are forgiven.

CONCLUSION

There is no contradiction between John 3:16 and Acts 2:38. They are both inspired of God and are true. If you believe John 3:16 can you refuse to believe Acts 2:38? If your faith in Jesus does not lead you to obedience then you do not have the same faith that the people on Pentecost had and yours is not a *Saving Faith*. You may wonder why God placed Repentance and Baptism as terms of Pardon. I can tell why God told the people on Pentecost to Repent and be Baptized before he would forgive their sins if you can tell me why God required Naaman to dip seven times in the Jordan River before He would cleanse him of his leprosy (II Kings 5:1-14). The important thing in both of these events (Pentecost and Naaman) is that when God has spoken it is not ours to ask why, it is only ours to OBEY. If you Believe in the Son of God then you will Obey Him. BELIEVE in Jesus Christ as your only hope of Salvation (John 3:16), REPENT of your sins (Acts 2:38), CONFESS Christ before men (Rom. 10:9-10), be BAPTIZED for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38), and then you will be a CHRISTIAN. After you become a Christian, search the Scriptures and be obedient in all that God requires of you.

Memphis School of Preaching Lectures

ROY J. HEARN

The twelfth annual lectureship of Memphis School of Preaching will be held March 27-30, 1978. The general theme will be "Moral Issues Facing the Church, the Home, and the Nation." In view of the growing immorality in our nation, this is a vital theme.

Speakers to participate are Guy N. Woods, Thomas B. Warren, Robert R. Taylor, J. F. Camp, B. B. James, Paul M. Tucker, Garland Elkins, W. N. Jackson, V. E. Howard, W. Ralph Wharton, James Dearman, John Waddey, James G. Moffett, Howard D. Parker, John W. Barcus, Kenneth W. Franklin, James A. Thomasson, Wesley Crews, Lee Brown, Kenneth Joines and Roy J. Hearn. Subjects such as Atheism, Equal Rights Amendment, Divorce and Remarriage, and a variety of other topics will be discussed.

Daily at 9:30 a.m., Mrs. Robert R. (Irene) Taylor will conduct special classes for the ladies. She will deal with moral aspects of the home, and problems of E.R.A. The lectures will be conducted in the auditorium of the church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38118. Phone 901-362-5139.



Words Of Truth

"I am not
the Words c

stus; but speak forth

- Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

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NUMBER 13

Faithfulness — Our Theme

The words "faithful" and "faithfulness" appear many times in both the Old and New Testaments. They are applied to God (Deut. 7:9), to Christ (Rev. 19:11), to God's commandments (Psa. 119:86), to Moses (Num. 12:7), to Daniel (Dan. 6:4), to Paul (I Tim. 1:12), to Silvanus (I Pet. 5:12), to mention a few.



CURTIS DOWDY

Just think about who the faithful of today are associated with; indeed, we are "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1).

A reasonable question just here would be, "What does faithfulness involve and/or require?"

In the first place, one might think in terms of a faithful husband or wife, a faithful son or daughter, a faithful father or mother, a faithful employer or employee. Would you consider your spouse faithful if he or she came home just occasionally? Would you consider an employee faithful if he or she showed up for work two or three times a week? Now we are beginning to see the point!

In the second place, think in terms of steadfast, stable and steady. In short, one can't be "faithful" unless he is steadfast, stable and steady. The individual who without reason misses sessions of worship, edification and service is not steadfast. The one who quits because someone hurts his feelings, because he doesn't like something that is being done or because he thinks that someone who comes is a hypocrite is not stable. The person who gets all excited for a time and then grows cold and indifferent is not steady. Now it becomes more clear!

In the third place, last Sunday I asked that those assembled write out their thoughts

and/or definition for faithfulness, a large number responded, and I am giving a composite here:

Love and loyalty to Christ and the church by giving our bodies as sacrifices. Living day by day according to the Lord's commands and keeping oneself unspotted from the world. To read and study the Bible and to attend every service of the church one is able to. Being able to trust in God when tried. Putting God first, others second and self last. Willing to do anything for the cause of Christ as a dedicated and loyal Christian. Knowing that the Lord's will will be done and "may it be done by me!" Being trustworthy and dependable and using ones talents where ever they fit in. Sacrifice time, money and self to spread the gospel

truth and to remain steadfast to the end. Maintaining right attitudes and manner of life. Praying, believing and trusting in His promises and Grace.

There you have what I believe to be a sound and rather full definition of "faithfulness," and this from the hearts of many disciples who have studied the Bible. It would be interesting to know the hours of Bible study, prayer and meditation behind that composite definition.

Brethren, now that we know what it means to be faithful let's be reminded that faithfulness is both necessary and possible. Too, read Revelation 2:10, 13 for encouragement and I Cor. 15:58 for activation. "Be Thou Faithful!"

P.O. Box 456, Obion, Tennessee 38240.

Worship That God Hates

ALTON HAYES

Amos, the prophet of God, wrote about 800 B.C. While he wrote so many centuries ago there are lessons to be derived from this great book even today. Although Amos says of himself, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son" (meaning that he had not been to a school of prophets), he seems to get to the root of their problems better than any other man during his day. Many today would say that Amos did not have the training that it took to be a prophet of God; yet, he approaches God's word in such a way that problems of our day are exposed.

A problem that Israel had (and many today also have), was that they chose to worship as they pleased. Amos reproved them by saying, "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years; and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with

leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: *for this liketh you*, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God" (Amos 4:4,5 emphasis mine). They had changed the worship of the true and living God into worship of false gods. Their golden calves were set up at Dan and Bethel. Gilgal—the site where they had first worshipped God in Canaan—was now a place of idolatry. Sacrifices, tithes, and free offerings were common to them; but they were characterized by the idea of "this liketh you." Worship had simply become something they did because they like to do it and not because it was commanded of God.

All would agree that Israel was wrong in worshiping God in this manner. However, not so many would agree that the so-called religious world of today is wrong when they manifest the identical attitude

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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Lack Of Conviction Our Real Problem

Webster defines the word *conviction* to mean "strong belief." In this article we are using the word to mean a strong enough belief in something to cause one to act in harmony with his belief, regardless of the cost or consequences. It is in this sense that we say Daniel had real conviction when he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself



BOBBY DUNCAN

with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (Dan. 1:8). It was this kind of conviction that caused him to pray to the Lord three times a day, despite the command of the king forbidding any man to ask a petition of any god or man (Dan. 6). The certainty of being thrown into the den of lions could not keep him from doing what he believed was right. It was real conviction that led Abraham to take Isaac into the land of Moriah to offer him as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:1-14). It was real conviction that caused Joseph to remain faithful to God while he was in Egypt, and to refuse the advances made toward him by the wife of Potiphar (Gen. 39). And it was real conviction that caused Moses to refuse "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).

We believe the greatest problem in the church of our Lord is a lack of real conviction. Far too few are disposed to stand firmly for

the right and against the wrong, without preaching against immodest dress, long hair on men, dancing, smoking, public swimming, social drinking, short hair on women, irregular attendance, covetousness, divorce and remarriage, etc.? Is it because they do not know the truth about these matters? Oh, no! It is rather because of a lack of real conviction. The disposition to compromise what one knows is the truth for the sake of popularity and friendship characterizes far too many. It is simply more convenient to neglect the truth with reference to some matters; and to some convenience has a stronger appeal than conviction.

The same thing may be said of church members whose lives are not conformed to the truth with reference to these things. Why, for example, do some neglect the assemblies of

the saints? Is it because they have never been taught any better? Perhaps so, in some cases. But in most cases it is simply a lack of real conviction. They simply do not believe in the teaching of the Bible strongly enough to act upon it at all costs. Why do some not give liberally? Why do some insist on dancing, drinking, smoking, public swimming, etc.? It is not because the truth about these matters is obscure, or has not been taught. It is rather because of a lack of real conviction.

It is not hard to guess what those who demonstrate a lack of real conviction would have done if they had been in the place of Abraham, or Daniel, or Moses, or Joseph. And it is not more difficult to determine from the Bible what will happen to such when they stand in Judgment on the last day.

The Problem Of Liberalism

Liberalism emphasizes intellectual liberty and individual freedom from restraint. When one practices liberalism he will be led to a rejection of God and the Bible.

Liberalists teach that truth is not absolute but relative. Therefore one is to look at faith subjectively, that is, from within by our own inner feelings, and not objectively by



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

God's Word. This teaching will, and has, led people in religion to a state of confusion. The liberalists maintain that one is at liberty to decide what is truth and what is not, and he is not compelled to believe anything but his own feelings on any biblical subject. To many this is a most wholesome doctrine, as it allows one to do what he wants to do when he wants to do it. If we follow this form of liberalism, we will be like the people of old when it was said of them: "...but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6; 21:25). We must forever call people back to the Word of God, which is truth, that we may know of the one faith (John 8:31-32; 17:17; Jude 3; Heb. 11:6).

Liberalists insist that one should not preach the plan, but the man. One cannot preach faith, repentance, confession and baptism, but "preach the man" is their plea. This type of teaching is no more than a "social gospel" and the "philosophies of men." Reader, one cannot preach the man without preaching the plan; for Jesus himself said we must believe, repent, confess and be baptized (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32-33; Mark 16:16). The subject of baptism nauseates a liberalist as he is too "intellectual" to preach on such an old subject, but is only interested in preaching "Jesus." Again I proclaim, it is impossible to preach Jesus without preaching baptism. "Then Phillip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:35-36). Jesus was preached, and the recipient wanted to be baptized. Why? because in preaching Jesus, Philip preached baptism (Acts 8:35-38).

Liberalists do not distinguish the church from denominations. In not believing in the

church as "the called out" they conclude that attendance is not essential, thereby giving liberty and freedom from seeking the church or kingdom first (Matt. 6:33).

We must forever teach that Christ is head of the church, that the church is the body of Christ, and it is impossible to have one without the other (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). The saved are added to the church, and Jesus is the saviour of the body, the church (Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:23). We must put the church first in our attendance and also worship God through the correct avenues (Matt. 6:33; Heb. 10-25).

Liberalists put more stress on the speaker than the words that are spoken. They also rely upon the wisdom of the speaker more than the wisdom of God. A liberal is not hard to detect as he gives the connotation that through his "intelligence" he know more than anyone else. Frequently we observe that liberals have an arrogant and haughty disposition. If one disagrees with them they say it is because one is not a scholar. God uses Moses who was not eloquent and who had a slow speech and tongue to teach what He wanted man to know (Ex. 4:10). The power is not in the man, but the words of God spoken by man (I Cor. 1:18-25). Our attitude should be, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42). No true Christian is against education, for we must study (II Tim. 2:15), but Christians are against the way education is sometimes used in an attempt to destroy the teaching of God through His Word.

Liberalists will teach that elders of the Lord's church do not have any authority. Liberalism seeks to destroy all authority, that the individual may have freedom from all restraint. Those who advocate liberalism will try to do away with all leadership of the church that they may then exercise their intellectual liberty. No elder, or group of elders, has authority to add or take away from God's Word, but they do have authority to feed, rule and take the oversight of a congregation of the Lord's people (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17; I Pet. 5:2). We must esteem our leaders in the church (I Thess. 5:12-13), for elders are to "exhort and convince the gainsayers," and use correction for those who are living in error (Titus 1:9-11).

May we forever stand against the teaching of liberalism. Those who believe in liberalism are trying to change the thoughts and actions of man from the divine to the human. May we have the attitude of the psalmist when he said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps. 40:8). — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

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, as you claim, God does not forgive all sin in baptism, and people who have been divorced and remarried before they learn and obey the gospel, but are without the "exception" mentioned in Matt. 19:9, do you not make adultery the unpardonable sin, when Jesus taught that it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?"

1. I do not "claim" that God "does not

forgive all sin in baptism;" on the contrary, I believe that he does; but, it is not possible for one to be scripturally baptized who has not repented (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38), and repentance requires the termination of sinful conduct as a prerequisite to baptism. Does our querist seriously believe that one repents who intends to continue in sin? The implication of his question is that one who *begins* a manner of life before obeying the gospel, which God disapproves following salvation (Matt. 19:9), may nevertheless continue to live in this mode with the approval of God, *after* obeying the gospel! Surely, the fallacy of this contention must be obvious. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery..." (Matt. 19:9). "Whosoever," here is as broad as the race; it embraces all people in and out of the church.

2. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt.

12:31,32), is an "Unpardonable" sin, but so is every sin, unrepented of. I doubt that our querist is prepared to accept the logical import of his question. His argument is intended to follow this course: 1. The only unpardonable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. 2. Adultery is not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. 3. Therefore, adultery is not the unpardonable sin. Must we then assume that inasmuch as there is only one unpardonable sin—blasphemy against the Spirit—no other sin will condemn and thus one may live and die in an adulterous relationship and still go to heaven? If the brother's implication has any merit, it rests in this conclusion. Is he prepared for it? But, why limit the sin to adultery? If the only sin, unrepented of, is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then only this sin, and no other, though *unrepented* of, will keep us out of heaven! A more obvious false view was never advocated.

Four Vital Questions Relative To Inspiration

One of the crucial issues facing the religious world today touches Biblical inspiration. It is not nearly enough to determine if a person believes in the inspiration of the Bible. He may have a totally different concept of inspiration than does the querist in his initial raising of the question. Therefore we raise and answer four fundamental questions as touching the inspiration of the Bible.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

Just what is meant by the inspiration of the Bible? Perhaps the clearest and most forceful affirmation of Biblical inspiration comes from the pen of the apostle Paul. He wrote in II Timothy 3:16-17, "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." Quite literally this means that all Scripture has been God-breathed. The message of the Bible did not begin with man; it originated with God. God employed about forty carefully chosen penmen over a period of some sixteen centuries of passing time and conveyed his will to their mind and guided their hands in the recording of the same by his unerring and infallible Spirit of truth. They did not write down their thoughts and feelings; they wrote down God's thoughts and feelings relative to the scheme of human redemption. This is why David said some three thousand years ago, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue" (II Sam. 23:2). This is why Peter suggested, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (Spirit-ASV)" (II Pet. 1:21). This is why Jesus promised his apostles, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:19-20). This is what is meant by the inspiration of the Bible. The Bible is a divinely inspired book; in no sense of the term is it simply a humanly inspired volume. This sets it apart from all other books. The Bible is in a

class all by itself; it is not like any other book.

What is verbal inspiration? As already suggested in the previous segment of thought inspiration has reference to the God-breathed nature of the Scriptures. According to Mr. Webster the word verbal means, "Of or pertaining to words; consisting in, or having to do with, words only; esp., dealing with words rather than with the ideas to be conveyed..." Hence by verbal inspiration we mean the inspiration of the Bible in its very words. Some have the concept that God simply planted the idea of the thought in the minds of the writers and then allowed them to choose their own words to set it forth or to clothe it. Hence, this would be "idea" or "thought" inspiration but not word inspiration. In this case we would only have inspiration in the idea or the thought but not in the actual words employed. Is there a Scripture that will answer this question once and for all relative to this momentous matter? Indeed there is and it is crystal clear in its intense import. Paul affirmed in I Corinthians 2:13, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost (Spirit-ASV) teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Paul says we do not employ the words we have learned from our patients or from our teachers in setting forth these vital matters; we employ the very words chosen and supplied us by the Holy Spirit. If true of Paul, and it was, then it is true of all other Biblical penmen. If not, WHY NOT?? Beloved readers, we do not refer to the Bible as THE IDEA of God; we do not call that book the THOUGHT of God. How do we refer to the Bible? Just as the penmen of Hebrews 4:12 did "The WORD of God" (Emphasis mine-RRT). Nothing is taught with greater clarity upon the pages of the New Testament than the verbal inspiration of the Bible. There has never been a day in my life when I believed in any other type of Biblical inspiration other than verbal inspiration.

What is plenary inspiration? The word plenary, according to Webster, means, "Full, entire, complete." Hence, we are speaking about inspiration that is full-not empty; we are speaking of inspiration that is entire-not partial; we are speaking about inspiration that is complete-not incomplete or lacking in any essential facet. Is there a Scripture that makes such a marvelous claim for the Bible? Indeed

there is and here it is. The Bible says of itself in II Timothy 3:16-17, "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" / That rich and thoroughly encompassing ALL makes the case stand tall indeed for plenary inspiration. That all means full; it means entire; it means complete. All this adds up to plenary inspiration for the Bible. From the opening syllable of Genesis 1:1 to the closing syllable of Revelation 22:21 the entire Bible is inspired of God; it is verbally inspired; it enjoys plenary inspiration. "The Bible said it; I believe it; that settles it." The case for the plenary inspiration of the Bible is an exceptionally strong one indeed.

Did Paul on occasion disclaim inspiration such as in I Corinthians 7? When this query is raised the querist usually has in mind the following statements in the seventh division of I Corinthians: "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment...And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away...Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful...But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 7:6,10,12,25,40). When we take the position that the Scriptures are given by plenary inspiration and are verbally inspired in their basic nature some raise an objection based on these Pauline statements in I Corinthians 7. In the first of these verses the apostle is making the concession to whether people will or will not marry. He COMMANDS neither way. The verse has nothing to do with whether Paul was writing by the inspiration of God or not. He made this statement by the inspiration of God. The second and third verses have to do with statements regarding marriage that Jesus gave while on earth or did not give. In verse ten Paul is telling what Jesus taught while here in his personal ministry; in verse twelve the apostle was giving legislation not touched by the Lord but now issuing forth from an inspired apostle. In verse twenty-five the apostle did not have anything from the Lord's

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Worship That God Hates

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toward God. The Bible states that our music in worship to God is to be singing (Eph. 5:19). When asked why certain groups do not sing but rather play and sing, the reply often comes, "We just like mechanical instruments of music." Even though God's word specifically states that the disciples gathered on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper, many partake annually, semi-annually, or quarter-annually. This practice is thought to be justified by the reply, "We like it that way." God was not pleased because Israel chose to worship as they liked. He will not be pleased when we do the same today.

Another problem with Israel's worship was that they did not worship God with the proper spirit. Amos described the problem in this manner: "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea and sell the refuse of the wheat?" (Amos 8:4-6). They entered into a day of worship with an improper spirit. Their thought was not one of pleasing God. The thought they had was, "When will all of this worship end so I can do something profitable." They yearned for the feasts to end so they could get back to making money. Their desire was for worship to get over quickly so they could get back to cheating others.

Once again we would all agree that their worship was wrong, but let us look at certain attitudes prevalent today. We almost invariably think of this passage when we see many of the businesses opened on the Lord's day. From the business that is transacted on that day one would be hard pressed to realize that it is "the Lord's day."

Their attitude was to worship God while planning to cheat others. How can one possibly purpose to worship God yet cheat his neighbor? But by the actions of some it would seem that they believe that God only hears and sees them when they gather to worship. If this were not the case we would not have to worry about someone singing "O How I Love Jesus" one day, and profaning His holy name the following day. We would not see those who claim to be children of God (on the Lord's day), acting as though they were children of the devil the remainder of the week.

We should also learn from Amos' description of Israel that we will not accidentally worship God. The greatest of all teachers said to the woman at the well, "God is a spirit: and they that worship him *must worship him in spirit* and in truth" (John 4:24 emphasis mine). Israel could not worship God without the proper spirit. We cannot worship God without the proper spirit today. Attitudes that are expressed by some show us that there are those who do not believe this. "Do I have to attend all the services?" "I don't get much from the services anymore." "I sure hope the services soon get over so I can go home and watch the ball game." These statements and others like them are simply symptoms of the

problem—a failure to worship God in the proper spirit.

In the book of Amos God finally has enough of Israel's improper worship and cries out, "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offering of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5:21-24). God would not accept worship as the Israelites were presenting Him. He will not accept worship like this today.

It is time—yea past time—that preachers begin to teach on worship as did Amos. Elders need to feed their flocks with a study of worship. Christians everywhere should examine the Bible and align their worship with it. God hated Israel's worship. He also will hate our if we fail to worship Him properly.

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Four Vital Questions Relative To Inspiration

Continued on Page 3

ministry that he was quoting as he did earlier in the chapter. He gives his own judgement both in verses twenty-five and forty. Yet in both statements he was giving inspired judgment. Relative to all he wrote in I Corinthians he said in I Corinthians 14:37, "If any man 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." Paul placed no disclaimer of inspiration in any of his writings—neither in I Corinthians 7 nor any other place.

TWELFTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

MARCH 27-30, 1978

Memphis School of Preaching

4400 Knight Arnold Road

Memphis, Tenn. 38118

GENERAL THEME: Moral Issues Confronting
the Church, the Home and the Nation.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

Monday, March 27, 1978

- 8:30 Wesley Crews: "The Standard of Morality"
- 9:30 Mrs. R. R. (Irene) Taylor: (To the Ladies) "Marriage is Ordained of God"
- 9:30 John W. Barcus: "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Can You See Christ in Me at All?"
- 10:30 Lee Brown: "Church Discipline, Who, Why, When, How?"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH HOUR
- 1:10 R. J. Hearn: "Look to yourself that ye lose not the thing which we have wrought" — 2 John 8
- 2:10 Paul M. Tucker: "Current Influences that Weaken Our Society"
- 3:10 Garland Elkins: "Laying a Good Foundation in View of Eternity"
- 7:00 Singing led by: Alfred Metheny
- 7:15 W. N. Jackson: "The Darkest Cloud Over the Church"
- 8:00 Thomas B. Warren: "Atheism, The Ultimate Destroyer of Religion and Morality"

Tuesday, March 28, 1978

- 8:30 James G. Moffett: "America Under Divine Judgment"
- 9:30 Mrs. R. R. (Irene) Taylor: "The Husband/Wife Relationship"
- 9:30 W. Ralph Wharton: "Facing Denominational Trends"
- 10:30 Robert R. Taylor: "Problems of Divorce and Remarriage"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH HOUR
- 1:10 Paul M. Tucker: "Antidote for Moral and Spiritual Decay"
- 2:10 W. N. Jackson: "The Church Faces an Immoral World"
- 3:10 Garland Elkins: "The Alcohol Problem"
- 7:00 Singing led by: Warner Kirby
- 7:15 James Dearman: "Evil Results of Sowing Wild Oats" (For young people, especially)
- 8:00 V. E. Howard: "Grace and Law: Are They Harmonious?"

Wednesday, March 29, 1978

- 8:30 Kenneth Joines: "When the Son of Man Cometh, Will He Find Faith?"
- 9:30 V. E. Howard: "Influence of Christian Men" or "Effective Radio Preaching"
- 9:30 Mrs. R. R. (Irene) Taylor: (To the Ladies) "The Parent/Child Relationship"
- 10:30 W. Ralph Wharton: "Set for the Defence of the Gospel"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH HOUR
- 1:10 John Waddey: "The View of the Church on Abortion and Euthanasia"
- 2:10 B. B. James: "Works of the Flesh Defined and Reasons to Oppose"
- 3:10 Howard D. Parker: "The Need of Spiritual Growth"
- 7:00 Singing led by: Willie Bradshaw
- 7:15 J. F. Camp: "Parallels from the Prophets on Morality"
- 8:00 James Dearman: "The Bible Versus E.R.A."

Thursday, March 30, 1978

- 8:30 B. B. James: "Conviction or Convenience"
- 9:30 Mrs. R. R. (Irene) Taylor: (To the Ladies) "The Truth About ERA-IWY"
- 9:30 Kenneth W. Franklin: "Make Straight Paths for Your Feet"
- 10:30 J. F. Camp: "Parallels from the Prophets on Morality"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH HOUR
- 1:10 John Waddey: "Influence of Pornography and Biblical Condemnation"
- 2:10 James A. Thomasson: "Facts that Support our Faith"
- 3:10 Howard D. Parker: "The Character of Spiritual Growth"
- 7:00 Singing led by: Roy Williams
- 7:15 Robert R. Taylor: "Womans Place in the Church"
- 8:00 Guy N. Woods: "Challenges Facing the Church"

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Words of h

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

— Acts 26:25

Premillennialists And Modern Israel

CHARLES COOK

On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion announced the formation of the independent State of Israel. For the first time in almost 2,000 years the Jews had a homeland. In spite of opposition, the Jewish People have created a struggling nation since Ben-Gurion's announcement just thirty years ago. Many of their achievements are impressive. However, no Jew today knows what tribe he belongs to, the records having been demolished by the Romans in 70 A.D. To re-establish the Levitical order and the Old Testament priest system would be impossible. It is not even possible for those claiming Jewish ancestry to prove it. Modern Jews include people of many races and backgrounds and not one of them can trace his lineage back to Abraham. They hold no clear title to Jerusalem and on the very mount where their temple is to be reconstructed stands a Muslim Mosque. The Jews are not as re-established as many people think!

The news media keep us constantly aware of Modern Israel's existence. Their existence is proof enough for millennialists that there is Scriptural significance involved. They argue that the return of the Jews to their homeland could not be coincidental, but is a definite fulfillment of prophecy. All of the action in the Middle East of late has given impetus to their theories.

Premillennialists insist that Israel has never yet occupied the total land area originally promised to Abraham, hence God is about to keep that promise today. They insist that because no conditions were specified when God made the land covenant with Abraham it is yet to be fulfilled. The Israelis in Palestine today are said to be the physical descendants of Abraham. They agree that under Joshua the promise land was possessed by the Jews and that God later drove them from that land in keeping with His warnings of Deuteronomy 28-30. But they claim that during the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivity God caused His Prophets to utter restoration promises about

Israel's future greatness. So, because the Jews allegedly never yet received all the land promised to Abraham and the exile prophets spoke of Israel's future greatness, the premillennialists conclude that the physical kingdom of Israel will be restored. The questions are: Was the Abrahamic land promise fulfilled during Old Testament days? And, were the exile prophets predicting that God would restore literal Israel to its former physical glory, or were they predicting that the Church would be God's new Israel in spiritual glory?

It is true that God specified a certain land area and promised Abraham his descendants would be a great nation and would occupy it (Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-18; 15:1-6, 18). However, it is not true that God made these promises to Abraham without any conditions. Abraham and his descendants were to practice circumcision as a "token of the covenant" between God and himself (Genesis 17:10-19). A close study of Genesis 17 leaves no doubt that there was a condition for Abraham and his seed. In verse 4 God said, "As for Me..." indicating His part in the covenant; and in verse 9 God said, "Abraham, thou shalt keep My covenant...every man child among you shall be circumcised," indicating Abraham's part. Circumcision was then a condition for being able to inherit the land.

God told Abraham his descendants would possess the land from the River of Egypt (WADI-L'-AREESH) to the Euphrates, some 60,000 square miles of land area (Genesis 15:18). The promise included the lands of all the tribes mentioned in Genesis 15:19-21.

In Numbers 34:1-13 God outlined to Moses the exact land space of the Abrahamic promise. But, it is untrue to say that the Israelites have never historically possessed that land area. Joshua 21:43-45 reads, "And the Lord gave unto Israel ALL the land which He swore to give unto their fathers: and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all

that He swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; ALL came to pass." In his final speech Joshua said, "...not one thing failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you. . ." (Joshua 23:14). The premillennialists are wrong in saying the Abrahamic land promise has never yet been fulfilled!

Further, the Old Testament teaches that God made conditions for Israel to meet in order to continue to stay on the land after they possessed it (Deuteronomy 28 - 30). In this section God spelled out blessings for keeping His covenant and curses if they failed to keep it. In Deuteronomy 30:1-10 God stipulated that they had to "keep the Law of Moses" in order to keep the land. From the time of the Judges to the Divided Kingdom, Israel shamefully disregarded God's Law, and true to His word, He allowed Assyria (721 B.C.) and Babylon (606 B.C.) to carry them away (II Kings 17:6; 25:8-10). What the prophets predicted during and after this captivity period concerned not the restoration of physical Israel, but the fulfillment of a spiritual kingdom, God's true Israel, the Church!

Bear in mind, in order for Israel to possess the promised land they were to keep the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 30:2). If modern Israel is to possess the land from the border to Egypt to Iraq they too will have to "keep the Law." But Christ abolished the Law of Moses (fulfilled it) and anyone in this age who attempts justification before God by the Law is "fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4; Matthew 5:17; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:9).

God's Israel today is the church and fleshly Israel has been "cast away" (Romans 11:15). Paul wrote, "They which are the children of God: but the children of the promise (New

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble King, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. Acts 26:24

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FROM THE EDITOR

Does I John 5:10 Teach We Are Witnesses?

Most of those in the denominational world, and many in the church of Christ, erroneously refer to what they do in talking about the gospel as "witnessing for Jesus." Since a witness is one who is able to give first hand testimony concerning a matter, no man living today can be a witness for Jesus. In the New Testament those who were referred to as



BOBBY DUNCAN

witnesses were those who could give first hand testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ. One passage which clearly shows this to be the case is Acts 10:39-41: "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: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (emphasis mine—BD). Please note the clear teaching of this passage that all of the people were not witnesses; but the witnesses were those to whom Jesus was shown, and with whom he ate and drank after he arose from the dead.

There are a number of other passages which show that this is the sense—the only sense—in which the word "witness" is used

in the New Testament (Cf. Acts 1:8, 21; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 26:16; Luke 24:46-48).

Recently we have run across some who insist that I John 5:10 teaches all believers are witnesses. The passage states: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

Does this passage teach that one becomes a witness when he believes on the Son of God? No, indeed! A witness is one who gives testimony. This verse is talking about the reception of the testimony which is given. Notice that the verse does not say: "He that believeth on the Son of God is a witness...." It

says: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath a witness...." i.e., he has received the testimony given by witness. This testimony has produced faith in his heart. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). We may safely say that this passage teaches that faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is produced by inspired testimony.

Incidentally, such being the case, suppose one living today could correctly refer to himself as a witness. His "witnessing" would be of no benefit in producing faith; for it is testimony of the word of God that produces faith in the human heart.

A Faithful Reader Of Words Of Truth Passes

In the July 23rd issue of 1976 I penned a warm and well deserved tribute relative to a saintly Christian lady who has long lived in the county where I now live and labor, Lauderdale County, Tennessee. The article in her honor was entitled "Faithful And Fervent At Fourscore And Eight." On February 16, 1978, Sister T.W. Cleek, Sr., the object of the



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

earlier tribute, passed from earthly scenes. She was fourscore and ten at the time of her demise. Brother Jerry Corlew and I conducted her funeral at Halls, Tennessee, on February 18. He based his remarks on Hebrews 11:4. Like Abel of an ancient age she being dead yet speaketh. My remarks were based on Revelation 14:13. She came out of human denominationalism in 1916 being baptized by John T. Smith. She was a faithful and fervent Christian for some sixty-two years. Living and dying in the Lord were her daily goals. As far as her family and friends could tell she did both with superb success.

She was a long time reader of the Bible, the GOSPEL ADVOCATE and WORDS OF TRUTH. In recent years her hearing was almost gone. Yet she would turn up all the volume on her radio in order to hear the gospel preaching over the air waves. She still attended services when able at all, yet could make out only an occasional word. Usually the part she did hear would be Bible quotations. I have the distinct idea that is what she listened for most in a sermon and enjoyed the most. But should that not be true of us all? She always wanted to be in service to show where her love lay and to be a means of encouragement to her fellow Christians. And in a real sense she was a modern daughter of this very type of eloquent encouragement; she was its very personification to all who knew her, loved her and deeply admired her. She was a great Christian lady.

During my last visit with her she told me that she was just waiting for the Lord to come and take her home. The day of coming death was not dreaded by her; it was the day of victory for her. I do not think I have ever known but one other person who wanted to go to heaven any more deeply than did she or talked about it more, and that was the late and

lamented Brother Gus Nichols, the founding and long time editor of this great weekly. He was a man with heaven on his horizon and she was of the same beautiful brand of fervent faith and hallowed hope.

At the cemetery the valiant verses of John 14:1-3 were read as a beautiful carpet of newly fallen snow covered the silent city of the dead in Halls, Tennessee. Her life had been built upon faith in God, faith in his Son and faith in the heavenly hereafter. Her life had been filled with purity. The newly fallen snow seemed to suggest the same type of purity in a world that is filled with so much of the ugly and filthy. Hers had been a life of spiritual beauty and radiant purity.

The reading family of WORDS OF TRUTH has lost one of its most faithful members. Most of you did not know her. But she had much in common with you. She loved the Godhead, the Bible, the church, fellow Christians; and she loved the paper that you now hold in hand and that contains a final tribute to her. — P.O. Box 464 Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

The Helmet Of Salvation

The whole purpose of the coming of Christ to earth is summed up in Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." This must also be the purpose of the church, seeking and saving the lost, through the preaching of the gospel of Christ (Cf. Rom. 1:16). The "Christian Soldier"



VIRGIL BRADFORD

has not put on the whole armor of God as long as he disregards the "helmet of salvation." The Lord himself is described as having "a helmet of salvation upon his head" (Isa. 59:17). And again, the Christian is urged to have on his head the

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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"Do the Scriptures permit remarriage, following divorce, for any cause?"

Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery" (Matt. 19:9). The meaning of these words of our Lord is simple, clear, unmistakable. "Whosoever," ("no matter what person," "any person at all," Webster; "whosoever" is the *emphatic* form of "whoever," thus pointing up the universality of the application), "shall put away his wife, except for fornication (physical unfaithfulness to the marriage vow) committeth (literally, keeps on committing, the action of the verb is linear, continuous) adultery.

Under consideration in this passage is "any person at all." What is affirmed of him? If he puts away his wife and marries another, *except for fornication*, he keeps on committing adultery. What do the words, "except for fornication" signify? The Greek phrase *ei mee epi porneia*, literally says "if not upon fornication," meaning, in our idiom, only when fornication has occurred, thus establishing fornication as the sole ground on which the "whosoever" of the passage may scripturally remarry. Who is this person?

The passage involves two people in a union described in the context as marriage. The divine origin of the relationship and its insoluble nature are both emphasized: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it hath not been so." And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrieth another committeth adultery: and he that marries her when she is put away committeth adultery" (Matt. 19:4-9). Normally, neither of the parties is free to sever the union and contract another marriage; to do so is (a) to enter into a state of continuous adultery and (b) to foist such upon the third party involved. However, to this general rule there is the exception, "for fornication," that is, where fornication has been committed, the *one against whom* this greivous sin has been committed—the *innocent* party—may remarry. If, as our Lord affirmed, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery," the converse is also true, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, *when she has been guilty of fornication*, and shall marry another does not commit adultery."

To this the objection is often offered that in other places in the New Testament the exception, "except for fornication," is not mentioned, and that the Lord, in these instances, ruled that "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marrieth another committeth adultery against her." (Mark

10:11), thus making no allowance for any condition or exception. This is precisely the argument which denominational theologians make in opposing baptism for the remission of sins on the ground that some passages mention only faith, and not baptism, and that consequently, baptism, because not mentioned in those instances, is therefore not to be regarded as essential! Obviously, (a) all details of any doctrine must not be required to be found in one passage; (b) we ought to take all that the Lord has said before reaching any conclusion on any matter of teaching; and (c) the Bible does not have to repeat any statement in order for it to be true!

Mark 10:11, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery," is the Lord's general law on marriage "Whosoever shall put away his

wife, *except* for fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery, is the Lord's exception to his own general law. We must believe his law and respect his exception to his own general law. We must believe his law and respect his exception. Both are right; neither *may* be dispensed with; and, they are not in conflict. Two extremes are current in brotherhood reasoning on these matters. (1) There are those who teach that, "whosoever shall put away his wife, though no fornication has been committed, is free to remarry;" (2) others, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, even if she has committed fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." Both views are wrong, and each is an officious intermeddling with the will of the Lord. We must take what he says as right, for such as it is!

Just One Good Family

FRANK CHESSER

"If we could get just one good family..." This was the wistful statement made by the little three year old daughter of a preacher friend of mine who labored recently with a small, struggling congregation in Georgia. Only those who have labored with congregations of like nature know the feeling.

Most members of large congregations in areas where the church is strong have no concept of the tremendous need in other areas of our country, not to speak of foreign fields. Consider the family who moved from Texans to Georgia city with a population in excess of two hundred thousand. Upon their first visit to a particular congregation, they let it be known that they would be visiting some of the congregations in the area before deciding where to place membership. Needless to say, they were shocked to learn their choice was quite limited in view of the fact that there were only three established works in the area, two black and one white.

The plight of small struggling congregations in difficult areas is most sad indeed. Why is it that a preacher can leave a large congregation with a good reputation in the brotherhood and the elders will immediately be flooded with resumes, while small works in mission areas beg for help with little or no response? How can we justify multiple families on the payrolls of large congregations while many would give their right arm for just "one good family?"

Such congregations often have as their preacher a young man with little or no experience in local work. Such situations usually result in one of the following? First, some become so discouraged that they soon move on to larger and more established works. Playing a major role in some such instances is the lack of understanding together with excessive and totally unrealistic demands of the supporting congregation. Second, some use these smaller works as stepping stones to larger works. From the outset, it was never their intention to stay. Their heart was never in the work, and thus, little good was accomplished. Third, a few stay, work hard and by the grace of God, help build a strong church. They constitute the exception and not the rule. A survey of Georgia will reveal many small struggling congregations that have been in existence from five to twenty years having had almost that many preachers.

The great need in Georgia and many other such states is for good, strong preachers to move in and stay. College students and military and secular retirees would do well to

consider moving into an area where the church is weak and in great need of good, stable Christian families. Or perhaps joining other families and making their home in an area where the church is non-existent. The Macedonian call is being heard in many areas of our country. Who will answer the call? — Thomson, Ga. 30824.

A Proper Balance

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

In many relations in life, extremes are dangerous. The writer of Proverbs petitioned God to prevent him from two opposites in life, riches and poverty. He knew that there were dangers involved such as forgetting God and/or stealing, along with profaning the name of God (Prov. 30:7-9.) The homemaker has a very difficult task in planning and preparing a

balanced diet of food for her family. She knows that such is needful for good health. Our public institutions of education emphasize the need of physical exercise along with the academic to meet the needs of both the mind and the body. In our Christian schools, the Word of God is taught in order that the young person may also become even better suited for life (I Tim. 4:7,8.) Such instruction makes a complete man, balanced in every respect (Lk. 2:52.)

I can remember very well a statement made by a teacher of mine as he remarked to a group of young men that it was "very needful that preachers retain a proper balance in their teaching the Bible". And, you know, I have found that this is very difficult to do. There is a tendency to over-react to the erroneous teachings and habits of others. There are so many individuals (congregations, too) who seemingly cannot keep a good and proper balance in doctrinal and moral matters.

Some churches are very strong in preaching against denominationalism but are lacking in love and purity of life. Bur on the other hand, I have seen congregations that thought they excelled in love and tenderness but they compromised the truth with error. And, consider the ultra-conservative brother who

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Premillennialists And Modern Israel

Continued from page 1

Testament Christians) are counted for the seed" (Romans 9:8). Of the fleshly descendants of Abraham, Paul clearly says they have been "broken off" (Romans 11:20).

While writing to the Gentile Christians at Ephesus, Paul reflects that they were at one time "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). He added, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). The "household of God" is the church (I Timothy 3:15). So, Paul concluded: "But now

in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). These Gentiles were now "in Christ" and a part of "the commonwealth of Israel" under a new covenant. They were not the fleshly descendants of Abraham, but Paul declared: "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). Also in Galatians Paul proclaimed, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision (being a Jew) availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision (being a Gentile), but a new creature. And as many walk according to this rule peace be on them, and mercy, and upon THE ISRAEL OF GOD (the Church)"

(Galatians 6:15, 16). People become God's chosen today not by physical birth, but through the new birth (John 3:5).

Our futuristic friends cannot say the Abrahamic land promise has not been fulfilled, nor can they prove that modern Israel is connected with God's covenant with Abraham. Let them produce one New Testament passage predicting the rise of physical Israel again, then we will be ready to take serious their ideas about a coming millennial kingdom on earth. P.O. Box 3049 Lihue, Hawaii 96766

The Helmet Of Salvation

Continued from page 2

"the helmet, the hope of salvation" (I Thess. 5:8).

We sometimes hear statements that indicate that there is a vast difference in the head and the heart. The inference might be that what involves the head is purely intellectual, while that which involves the heart is emotional. While there may be some shade of difference in the head and heart we must be careful not to allow such differences to do away with the need of "using your head" in matters of salvation. Feelings are frequently highly unreliable. Jacob surely "felt" that his son Joseph was dead for about twenty years, and then learned that he was quite alive and well and serving as the ruler of Egypt under Pharaoh. The late Hall Calhoun used to say, "I don't know I'm saved because I feel it, but I feel that I'm saved because I know it." This is true, but only when that knowledge is based firmly upon the teaching of God's word.

When Israel was very far gone from God in sin they were still invited by Jehovah, "Come now, and let us REASON together" (Isa. 1:18). Men reason with the mind, or heart, and here the Lord was interested in their turning from sin that they might be made as white as snow.

Isaiah also lays stress to the use of the mind in foretelling the establishing of the church, saying, "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3). Jesus refers to the teaching of the prophets, saying in reference to the new covenant, "They shall all be taught of God" (Jn. 6:44f). And to fulfill this, Jesus says, "Come learn of me" (Matt. 11:28f).

Nowhere do we find greater stress laid upon the absolute necessity of teaching than in the Great Commission. Go teach, or make disciples, says Jesus (Matt. 28:19). Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation, he says (Mk. 16:15). And Paul tells us in Colossians 1:23 that the gospel was preached in all creation under heaven. Hence, these and many other such Scriptures show the necessity of teaching, teaching and continuing to teach the unsearchable riches of Christ. No teaching, no salvation! An alien, let us say, from Germany does not move into the U.S.A. and settle down "feeling" that he is now a citizen. No, he must determine that he will live here the

required number of years, declare his desire and intention to become a citizen, and through following the laws of naturalization eventually be one of us. So, alluding to brother Calhoun's statement the alien does not "know that he is a citizen because he feels that he is, but he feels that he is because he knows it." So it is with every Christian that has ever lived.

Is there no place for emotions? The answer is, Yes. Fear may be a most wholesome emotion. "Fear not them that kill the body—fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). Then in process of time "perfect love casts out fear" (I Jn. 4:18). The love of God and his goodness toward man should lead him to sorrow for sin and repent (Rom. 2:4). When the Ethiopian obeyed the gospel and was saved from sin he went on his way rejoicing (Ac. 8:26ff). To the saints of the Lord Paul says, "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). These and other emotions are present with men, depending upon the condition of their heart and mind and soul. But emotions must not be allowed to precede the knowledge of truth, the truth that makes us free (Jn. 8:31f).

CHRIST, SAVIOUR OF THE CHURCH

The spiritual result of preaching the word is the saving of souls; the saving of souls results in the church of Christ. Christ is the "Saviour of the body, the church" (Eph. 5:23). Sometimes we hear people say, "The church doesn't save you." Indeed, the church is not the Saviour, the **THE CHURCH IS THAT WHICH JESUS SAVES**. And apart from Christ and the church there is no salvation. The church of Jesus Christ is a result, therefore, both of teaching and of learning. Read Acts 2 in its entirety and see the Great Commission in action.

The Great Commission IS FOR AND TO US. It is true that the Commission was originally given to the apostles. It is just as true that they put that Commission into action as the church of the Living God beginning on Pentecost (Ac. 2). Furthermore, we have the example of those who were persecuted and scattered from Jerusalem going everywhere preaching the word (Ac. 8:4). And Paul urges Timothy to commit to faithful men the same gospel that he received from Paul (II Tim. 2:2). Woe unto us if we try to evade the responsibility of preaching the gospel!

Woe unto those who obey not the gospel! Both will be lost unless they repent and turn to the Lord in humble obedience to his will. It is high time for all to "save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Ac. 2:40).

The Almighty gave us intellect with which we believe, reason, think and understand. He gave us emotions that should be deeply stirred by the great love and compassion of God our Father and the eternal sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. He gave us a will with which we purpose, intend and obey his will. This is the head, the heart and the mind of men at work. Brethren, let us all put on the helmet of salvation and take up the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.—Route 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

A Proper Balance

Continued from page 3

winds up in the camp of the liberal. He lacked the balance of rightly dividing the word. Some who say that we have neglected teaching on the Holy Spirit now believe in speaking in tongues and the special leadings of the Spirit. Other brethren are suggesting that we have emphasized obedience too much and thus they are implying the denominational dogmas such as salvation by grace alone or by faith only. Others declare that the church has placed too much teaching on the Bible fact that a man can fall from grace and that this gives them the right to teach that a Christian cannot fall away. In combating ritualism, some congregations conduct a very loose, informal, spontaneous affair that they call worship. Others have come from not wanting to fellowship anyone to declaring that we should fellowship everybody, no matter their teaching.

As you can readily see, there is a dire need for a proper balance based squarely on the Old Paths of God's Truth today in the kingdom. May each of us strive to this end. Rt. 1 Box 13 Opp. Al. 36467

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Words Of Truth

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

— speak forth

Acts 26:25

Why Should You Be A Christian?

[This was first written as a letter to a loved one following a funeral of a near relative. Personal items have been deleted.]

Dear —————:

I have been intending to write this letter since the funeral, but so many things have been demanding attention that I just haven't been able to get it done.

I believe that I detected in you that day a deep need and desire to make your peace with God and His holy Son, Jesus. That need is in all of us. The wise men

said that God has placed eternity in the heart of man (Eccle. 3:11). Jesus said that we cannot live by bread alone (Matt. 4:4). Every man and woman sooner or later has to come face to face with Jesus of Nazareth and decide what he will do with him. You must accept or reject him (John 1:11-12). And you must be prepared to accept the eternal consequences of the decision you make. May I suggest a few reasons why you need to be a Christian.

1. You owe it to yourself to save your soul from the sure and certain punishment that awaits those who die in sin. Our sin separates us from God (Is. 59:1-2). The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). The awful penalty of torment in hell awaits the sinner (Rev. 20:15). No rational person wants to endure this punishment.

2. You should be a Christian because of the joy and happiness of heaven. Everyone loves to go to pleasant, happy places. We want to be with good people and loved ones. There are only two destinies beyond the grave. In one all the evil, wicked people of all the ages will be



JOHN WADDEY

gathered. It will be horrible if only because of its repulsive population. The other place will be a paradise, filled with earth's finest and best people. God himself and Jesus will be there. Eternal bliss will be the lot of those who go there. When John the apostle sought to describe it to us, there were not sufficient words in the human language adequately to picture it. Read about it in Rev. 21:1-27.

3. You need to be a Christian because it will make you a better person, a better wife and mother. When we are living apart from God, few of us live as good as we know we should. On becoming a child of God, we then have God's help to be a better person. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13). Your husband and children deserve to have a Christian wife and mother to bless their lives and provide a godly example for them.

4. Being a Christian gives us many personal blessings. Peace within is one of the greatest (Phil. 4:7). Forgiveness of sin and freedom from guilt and shame are priceless (Acts 22:16; Rom. 8:1). We do not have to worry about the problems of life when God is our saviour. Read Matt. 6:31-34; Rom. 8:31; 37-39.

5. We need to be Christians to help save our world from being destroyed in a tidal wave of wickedness. When nations get so morally corrupt that there is not a decent remnant of god-fearing people, God will destroy them (Lev. 18:24-30). If God could have found just a few righteous people He would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah. Not finding them, He utterly destroyed those cities. Read Gen. 18:19-28.

When we become Christians we gain a great and wonderful family of brothers and sisters in Christ around the world. Ours is a lonely world. Especially is it hard to find good people who will be loyal friends, who will love us in an unselfish way. Fellow Christians will be our friends, not for what they can get out of us, but because we are all God's children (Gal. 3:26; Rom. 12:10). We help bear one

another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). Surely one of the greatest joys in Christ is Christian fellowship.

Becoming a Christian is not a complicated matter. The Bible teaching on the matter is simple and clear. One must first recognize his lost and undone condition (Rom. 3:23). We must realize this before we will want to save ourselves (Acts 2:40). Secondly, understand that you cannot save yourself by just being good or going to church. These things cannot save for they will not wash away sins (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9). You need God to save you and he saves people by the gospel of Jesus (Rom. 1:16). You must believe in Jesus enough to do whatever he commands you to do (Rom. 5:1; Heb. 11:6; Heb. 5:8-9). We have to make up our minds to break with sin once and for all. The Bible calls this repentance. It is a change of heart that results in a change of life (Acts 17:30). Our faith must be sincere and strong enough to lead us to confess publicly our faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10). We confess that Jesus is our Lord. That means that we are ready to become his servant and do whatever he says. Jesus commands all who wish to be saved to be baptized in water for forgiveness of their sins. Read carefully Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:42-48; and Acts 22:16. This baptism is an immersion in water. When we do this God takes away all our sins by the blood of Jesus (I John 1:7-9). At the same time God is saving you from your sins. He adds you to His church (Acts 2:47; I Cor. 12:13). Your new life in Christ begins then and there (John 3:3-5).

Don't you want to be a Christian? I truly hope so. For a long time I have wanted to sit down and study these things with you and your family. Could we do this in the near future? Why not talk these things over with your mate and let me hear. We will be praying that you will say yes. We love all of you so much and want to see you in heaven. We want to share our joy in Christ today. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road Knoxville, Tenn. 37921

Yours in the hope of heaven,
John Waddey



Words Of Truth

"I am not made, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness" — Acts 26:25

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FROM
THE EDITOR

"Closer To The Pattern"

From time to time we hear of some who have chosen to become members of the church of Christ because they feel it is "closer to the New Testament pattern" than any other church. Statements such as this indicate a serious lack of understanding of



BOBBY DUNCAN

the New Testament and a failure to appreciate the nature of the church described therein. It implies that the church of Christ is a denomination among many denominations, but that it is more like the church in the New Testament than are other denominations.

May we say in the beginning that we do not claim to be perfect in the practice of New Testament Christianity or infallible in our understanding of the Scriptures. But the church of Christ to which we belong is the church we can read about in the New Testament: it is not just more similar to it than other churches.

Those who are members of the church of Christ today are those who have been saved by obedience to the gospel of Christ, and have been added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:47). Other churches, with very, very few exceptions, do not teach the gospel plan of salvation. Therefore those who have become members of other churches have not obeyed the gospel of Christ; and they have not become members of the church that we read about in

the New Testament.

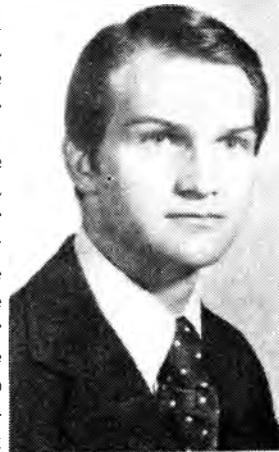
The difference, then, between the church of Christ and other churches is the fact that the church of Christ is the church that we read about in the New Testament, while other churches are not.

Some would point to weaknesses and frailties on the part of members of the church, or to the fact that none of us is infallible in his knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. To them, this is proof that we have not restored New Testament Christianity in the Twentieth Century. But please observe that in New Testament times the church was made up of weak and frail human beings, with an

The Bible Is Being Attacked

(No. 1)

It is indeed my sincere desire and heart's longing that you, dear reader, are united with me in the belief that the Bible, as God's book, is the best and most blessed book ever written. This holy volume of divine truth contains the mind, will, and power of God, and therefore can cleanse and keep the sons and daughters of men from sin; prompt men to be-



DALTON KEY

lieve; prick the receptive hearts of those who hear it; cause men to tremble; and finally save the obedient soul (Rom. 1:16; Jno. 15:3; Psa. 119:11; Rom. 10:23; Acts 2:36,37; 24:25; James 1:21). This book, the Book of books, contains the very truth of God, for Jesus, in prayer to the Father, said, "Thy word is truth" (Jno. 17:17). That no book can compare itself favorably to God's book is set forth in plain, pointed, yet precise language in the text of Isaiah 55:8,9. In this passage, God, through Isaiah, says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways higher than you ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Relative to this, the apostle Paul wrote, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Cor. 1:25). Yes, the Bible, as the pure and precious precepts of our perfect God, is the best book in all the world.

A good many attacks have been leveled recently against the Bible. It is in rebutal to these audacious attacks and in defense of the gospel that we plan to pen some two or three articles to be run within the pages of this renowned religious weekly which is dedicated to the proclamation and defense of the life-giving "words of truth." In these articles we will deal with the attacks leveled against the Bible's (1) inspiration, (2) authority, (3) infallibility, (4) understandability, (5) completeness, and (6) relevancy.

Attacks upon the Bible are nothing new: God's word has always had it's enemies—it's opposition. There have always been the Voltaires, the Ingersolls, the Paines, and the Gambettas who made it their life's endeavor to destroy the sacred volume. Even in the days of the apostles there were those who "would pervert the gospel of Christ," who would "hold the truth in unrighteousness," and who would unendingly wrest and twist the scriptures to the own destruction (Gal. 1:4;8; Rom. 1:18; II Pet. 3:16,17). The apostle to the

imperfect knowledge and understanding of the will of God. But they had obeyed the gospel of the Lord, and had been added by Him to the church.

If the primary difference between the church of Christ in the world today and other churches is the fact that we are just closer to the pattern of the New Testament than are they, then we really are not the church we read about in the New Testament. If this is the case, may God give us the wisdom and the courage to get out of whatever it is we are in, and obey the gospel of the Son of God so that He will add us to His church!

Gentiles prophesied of a time when men would not endure sound doctrine and would depart from the faith (II Tim. 4:3,4; I Tim. 4:1,2). God, through John, warned, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jn. 4:1). As long as there has been revealed truth, there has existed opposition to that truth.

The word of God is currently being attacked from both without the church and from within. The Bible's outside enemies continue their battle in the forms of atheism, agnosticism, infidelity, denominationalism, and other equally harmful trains of thought. From the inside, within the very structure of the church itself, God's blessed book is being attacked by modernism, liberalism, and pseudo-intellectualism. Surely this is one of our generation's most dangerous delemmas. It seems to be hard enough battling for the cause of truth against those outside the body of Christ, but it becomes more difficult still to weed out the false prophets and heretical teachers from within.

The Bible's inspiration is being attacked. We believe the Bible to be the verbally, plenary, unquestionably inspired word of God. In conjunction with this belief, Paul wrote, "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). This basic and fundamental foundation truth upon which our Christian faith rests, the inspiration of the Holy Bible, is currently being attacked from all sides. Many within the church of our Lord have publicly and openly admitted their disbelief in the Bible's inspiration. Such is a sad and sorrowful situation to say the least.

A man simply cannot believe in the truthfulness of the Bible and disbelieve in it's inspiration! This statment's validity lies within the Bible's own claims in this connection. Beginning with Moses and concluding with the apostle John on the lonely isla of Patmos, every Bible writer has claimed to speak for God. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:20,21). Scholars inform us that the phrase "Thus saith the Lord" or it's equivalent occurs not less than two-thousand times within the sacred text.

Our Lord spoke by inspiration, for He said, "My doctrine is not mine but His that sent me" (Jno. 7:16). Again He said, "The Father...gave me a commandment, what I

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is your view of the theory being advocated by some in the church today that those who have been divorced and have remarried, without scriptural justification, before they learned and obeyed the gospel, are not answerable to the teaching of the Lord in Matt. 19:9, on the allegation that such people are not under the law of Christ and are responsible to civil law only?"

I have been preaching the gospel for more than forty years. It is believed that during this period I have engaged in more religious discussions, publicly conducted, than any man, in or out of the church, alive today; and, I should like to say that in all of my experience in dealing with foolish and fallacious "arguments," and false and far-out "theories," I have never examined one more positively and palpably wrong, more sophisticated and untruthful, more mendacious and harmful, in its consequences, than this. The wonder to me is that any person at all informed in the teaching of the scriptures could, for one moment, entertain the conclusions which logically follow it. But some among us, do; and many others will, unless there is more firm and forthright dealing with it on a brotherhood level, because its appeal is obvious and the reasons why it is advocated are clear.

I have neither the time nor the space to deal with all the so-called arguments which have been advanced in support of the contention. Those who desire a thorough discussion of all the matters involved are referred to *The Spiritual Sword*, issues of April, 1972 and January, 1975, for a thorough examination of, and very effective answers to the allegations which have been made in behalf of the theory. I shall deal herein only with those considerations which have been made in behalf of the theory. I shall deal herein only with those considerations which have been made in behalf of the theory. I shall deal herein only with those considerations which I regard as conclusive in demonstrating the falsity of the theory and, once this is done, it follows, logically, that any view in conflict therewith is false.

1. *The theory assumes that moral law is applicable only to those in the church, and that people who have not obeyed the gospel are incapable of committing adultery or of violating other specific moral laws. But, this is shown positively to be false again and again in the New Testament, both by precept and example, and in the most direct manner. See, for example, Rom. 1:18, 19, 28-32; 3:10-18; Acts 24:25; Acts 17:31. A passage which forevermore settles this point, since it is a clear affirmation of the Holy Spirit himself of specific sins among alien sinners is I Cor. 6:9, 11: "Or 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 men, not thieves, nor covetous, nor drunk-*

ards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of our God."

2. *The theory makes marriage a church ordinance; whereas, it began in Eden, centuries before the church was established, and it has no relation to the church, as such; i.e., people are answerable to God under the laws of marriage whether they are members of the church or not (Gen. 2:22-24).*

3. *The theory requires one to believe that one can obey the gospel without repentance, because it alleges that one may intend to, and actually continue to violate God's law against adultery and still obey the gospel! Repentance is a change of will regarding one's course; how can one intend to continue the same course and yet repent? (Luke 13:3; Rom. 2:4).*

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Romans 12:2). The apostle Paul is telling the Christians at Rome to take a stand for right. He knew of the efforts of the world to make one fit into its mold and that one so fitted was unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven. The early Christians were referred to as "These that have turned the world upside down..." (Acts 16:6). The church of the first century had a profound influence for good on the world. Apparently they influenced the world more than the world influenced the church. It is a sad time in the history of man when the church has no higher standard than the world, and yet this is exactly what we find today in much of the religious world. The world has almost "squeezed the church into its own mold." The church must stand for the standards, ideals and values of Christ! The world cannot be expected to advocate the doctrine of Christ.

The world has always been moved in the right direction by strong courageous men who took a stand. To say it another way "the world is moved by men whom the world cannot move." With the "church of your choice" concept today, one has no trouble finding a group to fit his already held beliefs. If one group does not conform to his ideas, then he can simply look for another with which he agrees. In this desire to "pack our pews" has come a lowering of standards and conforming to the world. One can believe about anything about everything and stand for nothing, but still be religious. Religion and morality have been separated, and our society suffers as a result.

It is obvious that no great spiritual rebirth is taking place today in America. But, is it any wonder? When the church demands something of people they ex-

4. *It implies that the civil law is the sole standard of moral conduct for people in the world; in which case, those who live in a land where polygamy and concubinage are legal, may practice such and yet not be in violation of God's moral laws! (Col. 3:5-7; Rev. 21:8). Are we ready for this?*

5. *Marriage, being recognized of God, only in the church, is therefore a church ordinance; and, to be consistent, those who hold the theory, ought to insist on having a marriage ceremony performed for all couples who obey the gospel (Matt. 19:5, 6). If the laws of marriage are not applicable to alien sinners, how can marriage itself be?*

Was ever a position more absurd or opposed more obviously to the plain and simple teaching of the scriptures? The consequences of this pernicious doctrine ought to be apparent to all people.

"Unmoveable"



J. Lynwood Mathis

pect something in return. When they see no new life or any real difference they want no part of it. There is a real need for the admonition of Paul today which is found in I Corinthians 15:58. Paul said, "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." God's people today need the courage of Elijah and must resist the "wiles" and advances of the Devil with the strength that comes from Jesus. The "unmoveable" man or woman who is led by Jesus can move many in the direction of salvation.—201 East Main Street, Manchester, Tenn., 37355.

"The Attendance Is Down Because..."

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

All experienced Christians will agree that it is a crucial time for a congregation "between preachers." Also, there can be a general decline in interest if the regular evangelist is away too much for meetings and other activities. And, for the most part, we all accept this as a way of life. We will even say that every thing will pick up when the new preacher arrives.

But, we need to re-evaluate our thinking about the work and position of an evangelist.

(Continued From Page 4)

A Word Of Thanks

PERVIE NICHOLS

I sincerely appreciate the expressions of sympathy from so many brethren and friends in Walker County, as well as other areas, in the loss of my dear wife, Evetyn. I am also humbly grateful for every prayer on my behalf. Please continue to remember me and my family in your prayers.

Rt. 3, Box 420
Jasper, Al. 35501

The Attendance Is Down Because. . . .

Continued from page 3

list according to the Holy Scriptures. An evangelist is one who evangelizes; that is, he announces the glad tidings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul wrote in II Timothy 4:5 for this brother to "do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry." The term preacher defines itself. It means simply a proclaimer of the gospel (Rom. 10:13-15). The preacher is a minister in that he serves his fellowman by the teaching of the Word (Eph. 6:21; II Tim. 4:5; I Thess. 3:2). The office of an evangelist (Eph. 4:11) is a relation that he sustains with other Christians inasmuch as he has set apart himself to the study and preaching of the Word of God.

The preacher is not to do the work as-

signed to the elders by the Holy Spirit. As shepherds of the flock, they are to tend, rule, lead and feed spiritual food to meet the needs of the members (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:1-3). The preacher is not "the leader" even though he is a leader. Neither is the "the pastor." The church and the worship should not be preacher oriented. Everything should not revolve around him. The church should be stronger because of his teaching sound doctrine but should not count his presence as being indispensable.

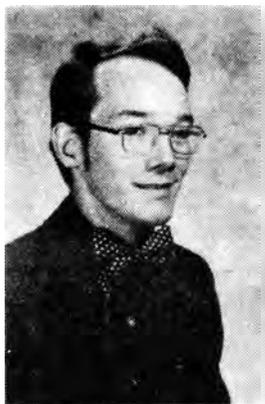
Church members who fluctuate spiritually depending on the presence or the absence of a preacher possess a misconception of scriptural worship and accept-

able Christian living. Their convictions are immature and will not suffice in times of trials. They have built upon the wrong foundation. Their lack of spiritual strength is shown when they absent themselves from worship because a preacher is not present.

As an evangelist, I would love to know that my brethren are like those Christians at Philippi of whom Paul wrote in Philippians 2:12: "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now MUCH MORE IN MY ABSENCE, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."— Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

Remember A Friend With Words Of Truth

No doubt there are many men preaching today because they were exposed to our brotherhood papers when they were young. Our gospel publications have for a long time served the brotherhood by teaching the gospel, standing for the truth, and keeping brethren informed. The *Gospel Advocate* and other papers are remembered for their stand against instrumental music in worship and premillennialism. We owe a debt of gratitude to such publications.



RON HARPER

One such publication is the *Words of Truth*. This paper was begun in December of 1963 by the late and beloved brother Gus Nichols. Through the years this paper has been known for its stand for the truth and its teaching of the gospel of Christ. This has been done with love and without being radical or extreme. This continues to be the case under the present editor, brother Bob Duncan.

One thing that I remember from my youth is that the congregation where we attended subscribed to the *Gospel Advocate* and *Words of Truth* for each family in the congregation. Because of this, I was exposed to the writings of godly men who loved the Bible and were not afraid to teach what it taught. Elders should think of the good they could accomplish by subscribing to a paper for each family in the local congregation. We need to provide good literature for our members to read. Our young people need to be exposed to such literature rather than what they read the majority of the time.

Now you may say that we are just trying to increase our circulation. That is exactly correct. Think of it this way. The more people who are on our mailing list the more people who are being taught the truth. Our purpose is to cause souls to be saved, edify the church, and defend the truth. Every time we increase circulation we are that much more effective in accomplishing our purpose. Ours is a noble motive for increasing our circulation and we are not the least bit ashamed in trying to have this increase.

We ask that each eldership seriously consider subscribing to the *Words of Truth* for every family in the congregation. If you receive the *Words of Truth*, think of a friend

who does not and subscribe for him. I can think of two friends of mine that I intend to do this for. Encourage every member of your congregation to subscribe to *Words of Truth* as well as other good papers. If most people would check, they would find that the amount

of secular literature they subscribe to exceeds the amount of religious literature they subscribe to. It seems to me that we have our priorities in the wrong order. Why not help us in our teaching of the gospel! 1501 6th Ave. Jasper, Alabama 35501

The Bane Of Religious Prejudice

DAVID R. PHARR

Religious prejudice was one of the factors which caused the crucifixion of Jesus. He was so different from what the hierarchy thought the Messiah ought to be that they concluded He must have been an imposter. They should have searched the Scriptures (John 5:39), and considered the evidence with an open mind (John 3:2); but their hearts were closed and in their misguided zeal they said, "Let him be crucified."

The first Christian martyr, Stephen, was a victim of religious prejudice. He preached from Scriptures familiar to his audience, but they had already decided he was a blasphemer and would not accept the truth he spoke. In fanciful rage they stoned him to death (Acts 6:9 - 7:60).

Through the centuries multiplied thousands have suffered persecution from religious bigots who were too prejudiced to examine fairly or tolerate the convictions of others. Religious history records countless instances of people being banished, tortured and murdered because they did not comply with traditional and "orthodox" doctrines and practices.

In America we enjoy religious freedom, which guarantees protection from persecution. While some may be subjected to harsh words and resentment, the more severe forms of persecution are remarkably rare. We thank God that we live in a land where we are free to follow the convictions of our own minds.

Yet, even in this land of liberty and toleration, religious prejudice abounds. Prejudice means to have one's mind closed: to be so bound to one's preconceptions that the possibility of being wrong, or the possibility of another position being right, cannot be considered. A prejudiced person will not objectively consider anything which does not harmonize with his views. For example, certain ones in ancient Athens were so prejudiced against the possibility of a resurrection that they mocked Paul when they heard

him speak of Christ's resurrection (Acts 17:32).

It is not unusual today to find people who are so completely satisfied with their present beliefs that they refuse to give serious consideration to anything which does not agree with what they already believe. They do not want to be disturbed. Even though there may be truth vital to their salvation which they do not know, their prejudice keeps them from listening with an open mind. Such are victims of their own prejudice.

Being unprejudiced does not mean having no firm convictions. One should not accept every new thing he hears, being "carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). Neither should we adopt the ridiculous view that anything and everything is right. One may, however, have strong convictions and at the same time be willing to listen and to study. When one encounters any truth from the word of God which he has not previously known, or which contradicts his present faith and practice, he should not allow prejudice to keep him from changing.—P. O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S. C. 29730.

The Bible Is Being Attacked

Continued from page 2

should say, and what I should speak" (Jno. 12:49,50). His appointed apostles were guided in their speech by the Spirit of Truth (Matt. 10:19,20; Jn. 14:26; 16:13). They spoke "As the Spirit gave the utterance" (Acts 2:4). According to Paul, this gospel was not self-taught but divinely revealed (Gal. 1:11,12). Yes, even the WORDS of the gospel message are God breathed (I Cor. 2:10-13). The Bible is indeed God's book and should be defended as such (Phil. 1:17). — Box 619, Douglass, Ks. 67039



Words Of Truth

"I am not
the Word"

le Festus; but speak forth
rness."

s 26:25

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Is The Bible Reliable?

The integrity of the Bible is the very foundation of the Christian faith. If the Bible cannot be trusted in all its parts, there is no valid reason to trust the whole. When the scriptures speak concerning scientific and historical matters it must be considered trustworthy, otherwise there can be no assurance of accuracy when it speaks of



LARRY CHOUINARD

moral and spiritual things. If the Scriptures err in those places where it can be tested, how can we have confidence in those parts that cannot be tested? Since the historical declarations are bound up with the theological affirmations, both stand or fall together.

The Bible is a unique document in that it has an empirical anchor that opens the door for verification. Because the Bible touches the things of history it can be tested for reliability. The validity of the Sacred Text rests on its historical credentials. While historical accuracy may not prove the Bible to be God's word, it certainly could demonstrate that it is not God's word. The God of truth could not be the author of a document that errs when reporting factual material. The charge that the Bible contains historical and scientific inaccuracies is tantamount to a denial of inspiration.

If the Bible cannot be trusted in all its parts how does it differ from other sacred books. The Koran, Upanishads, the Book of Mormon, and the Urantia Book all claim to speak to the spiritual needs of man. Is the Bible merely a single species in the genus of sacred books? If one denies the historical accuracy of the Bible there is no worthwhile distinguishing feature that stamps the Bible as a unique document. The historical statements in the Bible do not hinder faith, rather they are the grounds for a

confident faith. The sacred books of the East are totally void of meaningful historical content. Other religious documents have been shown to be historically faulty.

The Bible rests its case on its historical accuracy (I Cor. 15:12-19; John 19:35; 21:24). The constant and confident Apostolic testimony was "we are witnesses of these things" (Acts 2:22). Their message was proclaimed before a hostile audience, eager to find even one departure from the facts. The disciples could not afford any inaccuracy when proclaiming the gospel before those who would have been only too glad to expose their error. They appealed confidently to the knowledge of their hearers. The testimony of the disciples is historically unimpeachable and the denial of their reliability leads one into total skepticism with regard to all literary works of the ancient world.

Opponents of the Bible have assaulted its contents in an effort to overthrow its reliability. Many critics delight in dwelling upon difficulties and furiously searching the Bible for problems to hurl at the Christian. Generally the infidel has little more than a superficial knowledge of the Bible. Most of the problems he discovers have long been carefully examined and intelligently resolved. No one denies that there are difficulties in the Bible. However difficulties are not synonymous with errors. Difficulties serve to stimulate the Bible student to deeper study which inevitably leads to greater faith. Considering the past results of historical research in confirming the authenticity of the Scriptures, it would seem that opponents would step carefully before charging the Bible with errors. Many critics of the Bible have a tendency of supporting themselves to be the final arbitrator of truth. Often, no proposed solution to a Biblical problem will vindicate the document in the mind of the antagonist. In order for truth to be persuasive it must be combined with an honest heart. When one uncritically assumes the Bible to be unreliable, and all evidence to the contrary is ignored, the problem is one of attitude not the

insufficiency of evidence.

With respect to difficulties in the Bible, it should not be assumed that because a solution is not immediately perceived there is no solution. Most of the problems in the text have been answered by careful contextual analysis and the application of sound rules of hermeneutics. For other problems we may have to wait until more information can be made available. However, it is a serious mistake to charge the Bible with an error when all the facts have not been considered. Too many critics have had to swallow their irreverent slanders as research demonstrates the Bible's reliability.

It is commonly asserted that the Bible abounds in scientific blunders. While the Bible does not claim to be a textbook on science, we can confidently affirm that the Scriptures are scientifically sound. It was not written in the language of the physicist, but in the popular language of the time. Oriental idioms and poetic language abound with the use of figurative language. Any careful exegesis will distinguish between literal and figurative language. It is often charged that since the Bible speaks of the supernatural it must be unscientific. However the miracles of the Bible are not a matter of scientific inquiry but historical analysis. Science can only tell us what is presently happening, not what is possible or impossible. Explaining *how* the laws of the universe act does not tell us *how* nature must act. One has only to examine Biblical miracles in their prospective context and their genuineness becomes evident. Most of the tension between science and the Bible arises because of faulty theology or unscientific theories.

The Old Testament has often been attacked on moral grounds. How can God be so cruel as to exterminate the Canaanites? How can God tolerate the immorality of some of the Biblical patriarchs? The New Testament doctrine of hell is viewed as the product of a cruel and vindictive Being, undeserving of reverence

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Words Of Truth

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

Acts 26:25

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Unity In Matters Of Judgment

A great dictum of the Restoration Movement is stated in the following words: "In matter of faith, unity; in opinion, liberty; and in all things, charity." We would do well to repeat this from time to time, and to be reminded of its implications. Perhaps it is superfluous to point out that matters of faith are those things believed because they are clearly revealed in the Bible; for



BOBBY DUNCAN

"faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Matters of opinion are those things concerning which one may have formed a judgment, and yet concerning which the Bible is silent. In such cases, of course, each one is free to have his own opinion. It is a tragic mistake to treat matters of faith as if they were nothing more than matters of opinion; and it is also tragic to treat matters of opinion as if they were matters of faith.

And yet there is a sense in which all members of a given congregation must maintain unity, even in matters of judgment or opinion. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10, emphasis mine—BD). This is not to say that we can all

think alike in matters of judgment; it is rather admonishing a harmony and unity of action, even in matters of judgment.

It is easy for us to see why there must be unity in matters of judgment in each congregation. If such did not prevail, it would be impossible to have an orderly worship period or an effective program of work. The hour at which the church begins its worship on the Lord's day is a matter of judgment; but each member of the congregation is not at liberty to begin at whatever hour his own personal judgment dictates. The number of songs to be sung, and the number of verses of each song are matters of judgment; and doubtless there are differences of opinion with references to these in practically every congregation. Even so, there must be unity of action in the singing of the songs. Who is to preach in meetings, and how long they are to last are matters of judgment. What kind of meetinghouse to build, how best to use it, whether to begin a bus program, who is to be in charge of it, what the busses may be used for, etc., are all matter of judgment. Different ones will have different opinions about these matters. And yet there must be unity with reference to each one.

We can be united in matters of faith when every one submits to the word of God. How can we be united in matters of judgment? We can be united in matters of judgment only if all in a given congregation will submit to the judgment of some in that congregation; and the Bible tells us to whose judgment we are to submit. "Obey them that have 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).

It is an established point of history that men worship something or someone. Whatever one adores most and holds first place in his life is properly his god. With many people today, as in Bible times, these are gods many and lords many (I. Cor. 8:5); yet with those who know the Bible there is one God and there is one Lord Jesus Christ through whom we approach God. It is of utmost importance that we know and serve the one true God; for it is folly, empty and vain to serve an idol.

Inasmuch as God made all men, gives them life and breath, and sustains them with all things they have, it is surely proper and right that all men should honor and serve Him. It is the height of ingratitude for any person to receive greedily and devour gluttonously all the good things that God gives him, while ignoring His goodness and refusing to give thanks to Him and to render homage and service to Him.

This is one of the great motives used by the Holy Spirit in urging men to come to God and serve Him acceptably. Nor will God hold him guiltless who ignores His goodness and spurns His mercy: "Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not know-



W.C. QUILLEN

R.C.H. Lenski, commenting on this verse says it refers to the fact that "one yields, gives up, when he has a contrary opinion." Every member of the congregation, even though he has a contrary opinion, is to yield or give up to the judgments of the eldership. Brother R.A. Turner writing in the 1977-78 Annual Lesson Commentary, makes the following excellent observation:

Elders are responsible for church policy. Often murmurings and misunderstandings arise in a congregation over matters of mere policy. The times for meeting on Lord's day or weekdays is a matter of policy. The use that outsiders will be allowed to make of the church building—for funerals, weddings, and public or private school systems—are in the realm of policy. The use of an organ in the building for wedding is a matter of policy. . . . The point of emphasis is that the elders should lead the church in the development of a set of rules relative to matters pertaining to policy.

Needless to say, in practically every congregation there would be those whose judgment would differ from that of the eldership. One may differ with the judgment of the eldership because he does not have access to all the facts in the case. He may differ because he has not taken the time to study and investigate the matter as thoroughly as have the elders, or because his knowledge of the Scriptures and his experience in making such judgments are limited. Or he may differ with the eldership in a given situation because the elders have used poor judgment, and his judgment is better. In any case, however, every member of the congregation must yield to the eldership in matters of judgment. This is God's plan for unity in matters of judgment.

Motivation for Serving God!

ing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath; and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:4-5).

This is precisely what all men at some point in life, have done: despised His goodness, abused His gracious gifts, rebelled against His word, and spurned His mercy. For four thousand years men so behaved.

And then God gave to the world His greatest gift, which when accepted, makes all things right. Jesus Christ, the gift of God's love, heaven's fairest jewel when sincerely believed, lovingly obeyed and faithfully followed, forgives the past, blesses the present, and insures the future. When Christ is accepted and His Word followed, we learn to use our time, talents, and our material resources in such a way as to "lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven," rather than abuse them unto the wrath of God.

Every accountable soul should, therefore, enter the Church of our Lord and the service of God with highest motives and purest purposes. We should be deeply grateful, reverently humble, and devoutly devoted to God, "giving glory unto Him in the church, by Jesus Christ throughout all ages," (Eph. 3:30-21). We should be far more generous with our time and talents, and much more liberal in our material contributions than most of us are. Do you agree?

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 Acts 15:19, 20, forbid the eating of things strangled and blood?"

It does indeed.

Gentile churches were sorely plagued by Judaizing teachers who were seeking to lead the saints back to the law of Moses. The Jerusalem conference was held for the purpose of settling, once for all, whether Gentiles, who obeyed the gospel, were to be required to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses in order to admission to fellowship (Acts 15:6-29). There were matters particularly applicable to Gentiles which also needed to be resolved and the "apostles and elders" in that historic meeting, by the express direction of the Holy Spirit, instructed them to "abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication. . . ." (Acts 15:29). Four things are particularly mentioned they were to abstain from: (1) things sacrificed to idols; (2) blood; (3) things strangled; and (4) fornication.

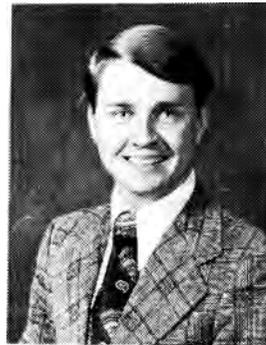
If we are disposed to wonder why these instructions were given only to Gentile Christians, the answer is that there was absolutely no need to instruct the Jews to this end inasmuch as these prohibitions had always been a part of their laws, and with them they were perfectly familiar. It is significant that in every dispensation God has positively forbidden the eating of blood. As Genesis 9, the Holy Spirit forbade this repulsive practice: "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" (Gen. 9:3,4). This instruction God gave Noah and his family many centuries before the law of Moses was given. When, at length, God legislated to Israel, through Moses, this prohibition was solemnly incorporated: "And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that eateth any manner of blood, I will set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood" (Lev. 17:10-12). Hunters, in the field, were straitly cautioned to bleed the animals which they caught and killed: "Even as the gazelle and as the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat there of...only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water" (Deut. 12:22-24). We have seen that the "apostles and elders" at Jerusalem, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, extended this prohibition into the Christian age; in every age God has forbidden his people to eat blood and things strangled. The mention of this along with pollution of idols and fornication evidences the

seriousness of the sin involved.

Dishes, containing blood, are thus positively forbidden; and those who disregard the divine instruction regarding this, and eat them, are in grave sin. Things strangled are prohibited because an animal or fowl which is killed in this manner cannot bleed. A chicken whose neck is wrung only until the neck is broken, but without severing the head from the body, does not bleed, and to eat such falls under the

ban of this edict. Under the law of Moses God ruled that those who violated his instructions regarding the eating of blood should be "cut off from the people,"—sentenced to death (Lev. 17:14). If Jehovah looked with such disfavor on this practice, in earlier dispensations, we may be sure that a "sorer punishment" awaits those who disregard his will in this matter in the light of the present age (I Sam. 14:32,33).

The Sense Of A Kangaroo



RAY DUTTON

Do you have as much sense as a kangaroo? Some people don't. I'm not trying to be rude or offensive, but the fact is that some folks don't even have as much intelligence as an adult kangaroo, and I can prove it.

The giant kangaroo of Australia is a strange looking mammal called a "marsupial". As most people know, the female kangaroo has a special pouch on her abdomen for the purpose of nurturing her young. When a mother kangaroo is about two months pregnant, a strange and wonderful phenomenon occurs. She has a natural "abortion". At this stage the little aborted kangaroo is less than two inches long (which is roughly the same size of a two-month-old unborn baby). After being forced out of his mother's womb he climbs into and through her fur to reach her pouch. There he attaches himself to a special nipple. The astonishing thing is that the mother kangaroo will let him do this while at the same time will not let just any other animal "drop in".

It is a strange thing to me that the poor brain of the female kangaroo can recognize that the tiny creature that crawls into her pouch is a KANGAROO being, while some people apparently do not even have enough sense to recognize that an unborn baby of the same age and size is a HUMAN being. The poor kangaroo has only her instincts to tell her that the little fellow is her baby. Yet, many human adults who have a world of scientific evidence at their finger tips still refuse to identify their little two-month-old unborn child as a living human being.

Aside from the fact that common sense should tell a mother that what is growing and developing inside her is not a kangaroo or a carrot but a baby, there is a tremendous volume of scientific evidence which should prove to any honest person that the unborn baby is just that—a living, growing, developing human being. It is a scientific fact that the heart of an unborn baby begins beating only 18 to 25 days after conception. By the time the child is two months old (the approximate age of 90% of the 4,000 babies destroyed daily by abortion in this country) his heart is pumping so strongly that a doctor can listen to it with a special stethoscope. Though he is very tiny "everything is there — hands, feet, head, organs, brain — all are in place." Even an electroencephalogram can be used to measure his brain waves. If you were to look very closely at

his hands you could see not only his palm creases but even his fingerprints. Scientists also tell us that at this age he will grasp an instrument placed in his hand and "swim freely in the amniotic fluid with a natural swimmer's stroke."

However, in spite of all of these facts some still will not admit that this is a human life. Why? to admit such would mean that abortion is the deliberate killing of a human being. And that, my friends, is MURDER, "and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15). Therefore, many blind their eyes to the facts and continue to speak of "fetuses," "products of conception," and the like. And thus what is truly murder becomes the cold, sterile, and unoffensive act of "terminating a fetus". That sounds so much better than "killing a baby," doesn't it? But the end result is just the same.

Maybe it's not so bad to be less intelligent than a kangaroo. In a society where sex is free, fornication is fun, and unwanted pregnancies are plentiful, men and women who act like animals need some excuse to "justify" (?) the murdering of their little ones. I guess "lack of intelligence" is just as good an excuse as any.—2004 Miller St., Montgomery, Ala. 36107.

Be In Bible School
Sunday
With Your Bible!

My Father In Heaven

GLEND A TERRY

Lord, help me to submit cheerfully to thy will.
So in my heart great love will I feel.
When the way is dark, please give me light.
Show me the way to shun the wrong and do the right.
For in thee we live, and move and have our being.
The stair-way to heaven I'm clearly but, slowly seeing.
Lord, I praise thee that thou art my shepherd indeed.
And to thee thy children are coming to fulfill their needs.

4305 Kendall Avenue,
Adamsville, Alabama 35005

Is The Bible Reliable?

Continued from page 1

and service. One wonders by what moral criterion that critic stands in judgement upon God? It is certainly ironic that these same opponents object to God on the grounds that if He did exist He would eliminate evil men today. Yet when they read in the Bible of God's eliminating wicked, depraved people for the welfare of the whole, they contend that God is a cruel Being. The depravity of the Canaanites would make Hitler look like Shirley Temple (Lev. 18:19-25). Israel was taught not to glory in war, nor to be cruel to her prisoners (Deut. 20:10-11; II Kgs. 6:22; Isa. 10:13; I Chron. 28:3). Her kings had a reputation in the ancient world of being merciful toward their captives (I Kgs. 20:31). Critics love to labor on horror stories of bloodshed and war from the Old Testament, but say little about the fact that these tragic results were the consequences of sin.

Opponents of the Bible fail to see the difference between recording the sins of a people and endorsing those sins. It is unreasonable to judge the Biblical patriarchs by the ethical standards of another age. The weaknesses of Biblical characters are recorded to show the universal effects and deception of sin.

The Biblical doctrine of hell really burns the infidel. He considers the doctrine unbecoming of a good and merciful God. The critic fails to

consider that not only is God loving and good, He is an absolutely just Being. Would justice be served if both the wicked and good received the same reward? In the eyes of the infidel man could never do anything deserving of punishment. If man chooses to separate himself by rebellion from God in this life, is God obligated to force heaven on him? Since God created man to glorify and enjoy his glory forever is He to be charged with injustice if some reject him and choose to irretrievably miserable? It cannot be consistently affirmed that God's love and mercy necessarily excludes the doctrine of hell.

Most often the Christian is confronted with the claim that the Bible abounds with contradictions. The charge usually reveals the ignorance of the proponents of what constitutes a genuine contradiction. Two statements are contradictory not when they differ, but when they both cannot be true. In order to know that both statements cannot be true one must know that all explanations have been exhausted and found insufficient. It is proper to begin with the assumption that both writers are telling the truth until it is obvious that there is no means of reconciliation. What is often charged as a contradiction is usually an example of a different emphasis by one or more writers. For example consider the following statements

made by three individuals: (1) I saw Bill Smith at Bible class. (2) I saw Bill and Nancy Smith at Bible class. (3) I saw Nancy Smith at Bible class. Do any one of these statements necessarily exclude the others from being true? It is easy to see how that all three statements, though differing, may be accurate. Several things should be remembered when examining alleged Bible contradictions: (1) differences of authorship, (2) truth is many-sided, (3) purpose of the author (Chronological, topical, poetic or historical), and (4) the original language. A careful examination of the text in the light of these principles reveals that while there may be problems in the text genuine contradictions exist only in the mind of the critic.

Certainly we should not close our eyes to the fact of difficulties in the Bible. Most of the genuine problems relate to chronology and the recording of names and numbers. It is significant that no element of the faith rests on a passage that presents a chronological or numerical problem. With the work of Textual Criticism and the spade of the archaeologist many of these problems are being resolved. We may not get all the answers we would like, but we can have confidence that our faith is on solid ground when we trust the reliability of the Bible. — Larry E. Chouinard 148 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

Does God Damn A Man's Soul?

Infidels and skeptics often ask the question, "Why did God create man in His own image, then turn around and damn him? It is true that God created man in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:27). There are many things in the Bible which clearly indicate that it was the will of God that man should be extremely happy, and thus occupy a lofty, honorable and influential position in the scheme of creation. No greater honor could be bestowed on any creature than this.



TOMMY VERNON

But what of the question, "Why did God create man, then damn him?" First, God damns no man. Men damn themselves when they transgress God's divine law (I John 3:4). God does not desire the destruction of the souls of His creation. God made man upright, holy and righteous as an individual. It is the devil, not God, who is in the damning business. It is also clear that God allows temptation to befall us (no more than we can bear, I Cor. 10:13), but God does not do the tempting: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15). It logically follows that: (1) God tempts no man. (2) Men are responsible for temptation because they are drawn away by their own lust. (3) They are

enticed by lust to sin. (4) Lust takes hold (conceives). (5) Sin comes forth. (6) Death is the price that is paid. You may ask, "Who then brings about temptations which befall men?" The "Tempter" (I Thess. 3:5). He is a "Deceiver" (Rev. 12:90). The tempter deceives men into thinking God created man, then damns him. Men listen and heed the deceits of the devil, then sin. God is true and honest in dealing with His creatures. God, in His Word, tells men exactly what to do to be saved from "wrath to come." The reason why the majority follow "cunningly devised fables" of Satan in comparison with the few who follow God, is because the Evil One is a liar and he uses lies to deceive men (John 8:44).

God does not damn men who are found in transgression of His divine law. Men, themselves, allow the devil to lead them into sin so as to be damned by their own sins! God did not send Christ to damn the world; rather, Christ came into the world to save it (John 3:17). A provision was placed in the laws of some governments of by gone years whereby an offender could be set free, providing a substitute could be found. An individual could suffer torture, rot in prison or die for another. If a person was found guilty of a crime and another offered himself to die in his place, would it be possible that any one could rightfully blame the government for executing the law by taking the life of the criminal if the refused to let another die in his place who so mercifully made the offer? The answer is no! God is infinitely just, hence He must enforce justice and carry out the law. The penalty of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). You need not die, however, if you will obey Christ (Heb. 5:9). Christ died for you (Heb. 2:9). God accepted the blood of Christ (poured out in His death) as just atonement of all sinners who love,

accept and obey Christ. He will receive you if your sins are buried beneath the blood flowing from Calvary. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: *turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die* (Ezek. 33:11). God "will have all men to be saved" (I Tim. 2:4). God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9). With great sorrow, God will have to say to many: "ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). What about you, dear reader? — P.O. Box 135 Bear Creek, Alabama 35543

Why Fire Trucks Are Red!

Do you know why fire trucks are red? Well, fire trucks have four wheels and eight men. Four and eight are twelve. There are twelve inches in a foot. A foot is a ruler. Queen Elizabeth is a ruler and her ship is the largest of the seven seas. Seas have fish and fish have fins and the Fins fought the Russians who are red, and fire trucks are always "rushin"; therefore, fire trucks are red! Wierdest piece of reasoning you ever heard? You ought to hear some of the reasoning people use when they are asked about their absence from the assemblies of the church! You would then look with much more Favor on the reason given above for the red color of fire trucks. Be present for every service of the church. Spare yourself the invention of feeble and self deceiving excuses.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much more, as ye see the day approaching"

(Heb. 10:25)
Selected

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

P.O. BOX 48086

MARCH, 1978

Dear Friends,

This month we have been very busy packing and making our shipment. I sometimes think people assumes missionwork is as simple as buying an airline ticket and taking off in the wide blue yonder.



Actually there is a great deal of forethought involved in what things are needed and useful over a three year period in a part of the world where replacements are difficult if not impossible. We always take new clothes, especially the harder to get items and sizes (like Berkeley's size 13 shoes). Office supplies, car parts and, especially, the printing equipment make up the bulk of our shipment. Since an ocean shipment is charged by volume rather than weight and since our new presses are rather large, we have room for the first time in our eight years of missionwork to include more personal things and household items. These include such novelties, to Americans, as an ice shaver and a non-electric waffle maker for stove top use to old standbys like cast iron cookware and a Coleman lantern. For our own pleasure we've packed books, music tapes, crafts, some canned foods and, don't ask me why, a 14" ceramic cat. (Hope it gets there in one piece!) If all goes well we should be unpacking the shipment in Africa by September.

This has been a wonderful ten months for us. We can look back and see that with God's help several goals have been met. Not the least is that two new families will join the work in Nairobi within eighteen months. Berkeley will tell more about these families in a future newsletter.

Our work in Nairobi can boast a real print shop this term. Perhaps, among the best four or five operated by Christians in the whole continent of Africa.

The fellowship in the congregations we've visited and the love feasts we've had in so many homes have built us up and strengthen us considerably. Just the memories should get us through our first year and a half in Africa. I think we've mention to different ones how we feel "burnt out" when we return for home leave. Never, unless you've actually experienced living in a foreign country for an extended period of time, could you know what a season of refreshing this has been.

Frances was baptized this year at 6th Avenue, our sponsoring congregation and where I was baptized some 21 years ago. Someone said had we come home only for that it would have been worth it. I agree. Naturally, there are rivers and lakes where we baptized in Kenya, but my western senses were often overcome by the mud, weeds and wondering if there was a water cobra present in what should have been a solemn and beautiful moment.

Our departure is imminent. We've learned from past farewells that it's best for

morale to say our goodbyes before actual departure time. For that reason we ask family and friends to meet us when we return rather than seeing us off. We shed tears anyway, but this way we don't have the added burden of "acting" cheerful and trying to "bear up".

We are leaving the United States from California and flying to Kenya across the Pacific via Toyko and Tehran. We have Christian friends in Tehran, so we are looking forward to that stop.

In Christian Love,
Charlotte Hackett

* * * * *

CONTRIBUTIONS

J. D. Pickard	20.00
Anon.	20.00
J. T. Lauderdale	10.00
Jim Stidham	10.00
Lewis Foster	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Palmer	5.00
James Taylor	5.00
Mrs. J.M. Neill	10.00
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Evitt Walker	20.00
Jan Bureson	5.00
Dale Garrison	10.00
3rd and 4th Grade Class (Midway Church of Christ)	8.56
Hoyt Cochran	5.00
Anon	20.00
Hestor Courington	1.00
Bessie Southwood	10.00

Total Contributions \$339.56

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Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00

Macedonia (Holly Grove Rd)

Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
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Morris Church of Christ	50.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
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West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
Whitehouse Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Zion Church of Christ	25.00
Total Contributions	\$3,115.00

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Barn Creek Church of Christ	50.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central Church of Christ	200.00
Cottdonale Church of Christ	100.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Macedonia (Holly Grove Rd.)	

Church of Christ	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	105.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Morris Church of Christ	50.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ	15.00
Mt. Harmony Church of Christ	15.00
New Hope Church of Christ	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	100.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Ave Church of Christ	1200.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Zion Church of Christ	25.00
Total Contributions	\$2,935.00



At 83 Sister George of the Curry congregation was our oldest hostess. Ever heard of "chunky" coffee? That's the only kind Sister George makes... With high, fluffy biscuits and bacon delicious! Good bacon is one thing that we'll miss for the next 3 years.



Raymond Steadman and crew members, R. V. Panter and Perry Crump, built two large crates for our printing equipment and household effects. This load is now on the docks and set to sail on March 17.



A safari outfitter in Jasper? Ours is a "safari for souls" but we require some of the same tools, Colleen Posey and I are shown in the family's store. We got a great many items from cast iron cookware to a hand winch from this unique store.



WORDS OF TRUTH

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

— Acts 26:25

Evolution for Self-Destruction

A war is raging in our society. At this point it is not a war of guns and bombs. Rather, it is a war of ideologies. Those who love God and honor his law for the home and family find themselves under serious attack by those who reject and repudiate these sacred values. This is a moral and spiritual battle for the minds of men (II Cor. 10:3-5). In Rev.



JOHN WADDEY

12:7-11 a mighty war is described between Michael and his angels and the devil and his angels. This conflict seems to be symbolic of the struggle of Jesus' disciples with pagan Rome. The saints won "because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death." Christians will win in this current struggle when we, like them, hold this threefold attitude.

The current war rages on many fronts. We will notice but two: The Equal Rights Amendment and the International Women's Year Conferences. The latter is the carriage for the former which has not fared too well in recent months.

The issues at stake are crucial and vital. The ERA and its IWY carriage are in fundamental conflict with the following Christian values.

1. The sanctity of heterosexual morality by their promotion of homosexuality (Gen. 1:27;

Rom. 1:26-27).

2. The sacredness of marriage as a divine institution for men and women for life (Matt. 19:5-9), which they view as female slavery.

3. The Christian concept of the home with the father as the head of the family (Eph. 5:22-25), which they vehemently oppose.

4. The Christian concept of womanhood (Gen. 2:18; I Pet. 3:7) by their demands for total equality, while ignoring the fundamental differences of the sexes.

5. The Christian concept of child rearing (Eph. 6:1-4) by their insistence on government child care centers to implant their radical views.

6. The sacredness of all human life including the unborn (Prov. 6:16-17; I Tim. 2:11-12a) by their demands for ordination of women in all churches

IWY - A CHALLENGE AND A RESPONSE

As a husband and father of four daughters I am concerned about the welfare of women in America. As a minister of a church of Christ which is 60% women, I am interested in women's issues. As president of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life, which is predominantly women, I feel a responsibility to be informed on all such matters. As a taxpayer whose taxes funded the International Women's Year, I felt a right to attend the IWY meeting at Clarksville, Tennessee. Last of all, the IWY news releases said that they would not be guilty of sex discrimination and that men were invited. So I was one of the three men who registered. I helped Mrs. Sue Thompson of Chattanooga organize a group of 125 pro-life ladies who participated.

We saw an alleged democratic convention,

that was rigged and stacked from the beginning to end in favor of the radical feminists, pro-abortionists and lesbians. They dominated all the planning sessions, and speakers slots. The resolutions were handed down pre-packaged from Bella Abzug in Washington and they were determined to rubber stamp them. This was the same sorry experience throughout the nation.

I never cease to be amazed at the tyrannical tactics of that radical element of our society who are determined to force the Equal Rights Amendment on the American people. Now the White House is moving to get a seven year expansion to the seven year period for ratification. It is obvious that the women of America do not need or want this blunderbus amendment. Its demise is already in sight. Now the pushers are trying to rewrite the game rules to give them another chance. This is crooked and totally unacceptable.

President Carter has been in hot water on his energy bill, the Panama Canal Treaty and his foreign policy, but he hasn't seen anything yet. If he continues to lobby for the ERA using International Women's Year tactics, he will find a vast ocean of God-fearing American female voters and their mates who will give him their opinion with a negative vote at the polls.

A president who claims to be "evangelical and born again" ought to be able to see "the handwriting on the wall" if he expects to be one of "the elect" in 1980.

A small noisy minority of unhappy females has arrogantly claimed to speak for all U.S. women. The tide has now turned as thousands of intelligent wives, mother and singles are standing up to be counted for God and family, Christian morality and the right to be God's kind of women.



Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble King,
but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness
— Acts 26:25

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Religion Kneels To Style

DEMAR ELAM

The New York Herald referring to the prevailing fashion in female dress says: "The Episcopalians are in a sad quandary. The female communicants have seriously fallen off in numbers because the present style of dress will not permit the wearer to kneel. Who would have thought that a fashionable pullback would become a religious drawback? The omnipotence of fashion is clearly shown in the fact that when religion and dress come to an issue, religion quietly steps up to the wall until the fashion changes. Indeed, we are compelled to believe that one reason why Mr. Moody is at present laying siege to the frontier towns and avoiding the great cities is that he is waiting for the advent of the late fall and winter styles which will allow of great freedom in genuflexion."

should this be!" "Religion Kneels" is a misnomer to begin with. Religion as such cannot yield but rather the religionist, a person adhering to religion, is the kneeler. The statement, "who would have thought that a fashionable pullback would have become a religious drawback?" is weighty in its scope. Who would have thought that the religionist of today would have so kneeled that just about anything today is a religious drawback?

Society moves along today little aware of its greatest need which is a living faith in the living Christ! The followers of Christ will, at least in their own lives, not allow religion to step to the wall. Every person needs truly to develop a viable faith if he is to find the peace that God offers. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

Let each person resolve to help turn the tables and let the world step to the wall while the triumphant church of the Living God goes marching on through this world and out into a rewarding and everlasting eternity! Truly we are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Rom. 8:37). — P.O. Box 412, Hamilton, New Zealand.

The above article, "Religion Kneels to Style" was written on Feb. 25, 1878. I recently read it in the *New Zealand Herald* in the "New Zealand, 100 Years Ago" section. It does cause one to stop and reflect over the past when on other occasions religion has quietly stepped up to the wall and waited for the world. Certainly one is forced to ask, "Why



Workshop In Jasper, Alabama

May 4-6 is the date for the **THIRD ANNUAL DEEP SOUTH SOUL-SAVING WORKSHOP** to be held in Jasper, Alabama. This workshop is shaping into what could just be one of the most significant lecture programs conducted in this part of the country.



BOBBY DUNCAN

The theme for the program this year is, "The Gospel of Light Confronts the Power of Darkness." The schedule for the entire program is as follows:

THURSDAY, May 4

7:00 P.M.

Singing directed by Clifford Smith and Paul Wiley

7:30 P.M.

"The Power of the Gospel of Light" Tom Holland

FRIDAY, May 5

9:00 A.M.

Registration

9:30 A.M.

"The Gospel vs. Instrumental Music" Rubel Shelly

"The Deaf Must Hear the Gospel" Dan Jenkins

10:30 A.M.

"The Gospel vs. Pentecostalism" Arvel Curtis

"Reaching Parents of Bus Children" David Wade

11:30 A.M.

LUNCH BREAK

1:00 P.M.

Keynote Speech.. Don McWhorter
1:30 P.M.

"The Gospel vs. Mormonism" Kelby Smith

"Effective Church Discipline" James Pilgrim

2:30 P.M.

"The Gospel vs. Premillennialism" Harrell Davidson

"Personality Requirements for Personal Workers..." Gene Lindsev

3:30 P.M.

OPEN FORUM

4:30 P.M.

SUPPER BREAK

7:00 P.M.

Singing Directed by Clifford Smith and Paul Wiley

7:30 P.M.

"God is Not Mocked" Willard Collins

SATURDAY, May 6

9:00 A.M.

Registration

9:30 A.M.

"The Gospel and the Authority of Elders" Winfred Clark

"Young People and Evangelism" Jeff Pyburn

10:30 A.M.

"The Gospel vs. Calvinism" Glenn Posey

"Avoiding Problems with Bus Evangelism" Jerry Jenkins

11:30 A.M.

LUNCH BREAK

1:00 P.M.

Keynote Speech.. Don McWhorter
1:30 P.M.

"The Gospel vs. Extremism" Franklin Camp

"Helping Your Husband to be a Better Elder, Deacon or Preacher" (for ladies only).. Jane McWhorter

2:30 P.M.

"The Gospel vs. Evolution" Bert Thompson

3:30 P.M.

OPEN FORUM

4:30 P.M.

SUPPER BREAK

7:00 P.M.

Singing Directed by Clifford Smith and Paul Wiley

7:30 P.M.

"The Power of Darkness" Hardeman Nichols

The design of the program is to help every Christian to become more effective in confronting religious error. As can be seen from the schedule of subjects and speakers, this should be a most outstanding event.

Those attending the program from a distance will be furnished lodging in the homes of Christians in Jasper and Walker County. To arrange for this free lodging in advance, call (205) 384-6446 or 387-1670; or you may write to the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

Those wishing to display Bible related materials or promotional information may do so free of charge. To reserve display space in advance, write us, or call one of the above phone numbers.

All lectures and classes, as well as displays, will be in the spacious facilities of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ.

Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism

On February 3&4 a seminar was held in Memphis, Tennessee to form the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism. The seminar was under the leadership of Dr. Thomas B. Warren, Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Harding Graduate School, Memphis. The entire program of work which will constitute the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism



BERT THOMPSON

(I-ACT) is under the direction of the elders of the Brownsville Road Church of Christ, 3333 Old Brownsville Road, Memphis.

The two-day meeting in Memphis will surely be an historic, landmark occasion in the annals of brotherhood history. It is the opinion of this writer that perhaps the brotherhood as a whole will see more good come from this meeting than any such meeting in the past 50 years. It is the purpose of this brief article to explain in its entirety the I-ACT program.

The Institute has been a long-standing dream of Dr. Warren's. During the past few months, he has seen that dream become a reality. The elders of Brownsville Road have allowed Dr. Warren to step down from his regular preaching ministry in order to accept the position of Director of the Institute. Dr. Warren will, in addition to directing the Institute, continue as a professor at the Harding Graduate School.

Many of the finest minds in the brotherhood were present for the two-day seminar in Memphis on February 3&4 to form the Institute. Among those present were: Dr. Russell Artist, professor-emeritus and former head of the biology department, David Lipscomb College; Dr. Roy Deaver, Brown Trail School of Preaching, Hurst, Texas; Robert R. Taylor, minister, Ripley, Tennessee and staff writer for many brotherhood periodicals; Garland Elkins, minister, Getwell Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee and associate editor, *The Spiritual Sword*; Rubel Shelly, Professor of Christian Apologetics, Freed-Hardeman College; Tom Eddins, Professor of Christian Apologetics, Harding College; Andrew Connally, minister, Fort Worth, Texas; Gary Ealy, Bible Chair Program, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas; Lindsey Warren, Bible Chair Program, University of Tennessee at Martin; Mac Deaver, Instructor, Brown Trail School of Preaching, Hurst, Texas; and many, many others.

Over 55 men attended the seminar to assist in the forming of the Institute. Each of these men was specifically asked to attend by Dr. Warren. These men represent not only some of the finest minds in the brotherhood, but sound doctrine as well. These are *all* men who love the church, respect God's authority, and have dedicated their lives to combatting false doctrine and atheism. Dr. Warren did a tremendous job in leading the seminar, and is a capable man to serve as its Director. He made it clear that the Institute will speak out against atheism, skepticism, agnosticism, positivism, modernism, and liberalism, as well as false doctrines of other kinds.

The purposes and goals of the Institute are perhaps best spelled out in a brochure which was distributed to participants of the I-ACT seminar in Memphis. That brochure stated, in part: "Our society is being undermined in every aspect with the atheistic argument that entices young and old alike to reject Christianity and to feel free to 'do your own thing.' There are few definitive works available to those who would dare question their logic or doubt the authenticity of the theory of evolution and its alleged supporting evidence. School children and scholars alike are being left to grapple with these perplexing questions and interesting theories with only a few articles and a handful of books defending the true theistic position. In an effort to defend God and His creation and to make an attempt to stop the growing influence of atheistic thought, the elders and members of the Brownsville Road Church of Christ are committing their support to the establishment of a theistic center. In establishing the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism, the Brownsville Road Church of Christ plans to provide a reference in combatting atheism. The Institute for the Advancement of Christian Theism will utilize mass media, philosophical journals, seminars, pamphlets, books, and scholarly debates to accomplish these objectives. It is planned that the impact of this work will be world-wide in its scope (Mark 16:15). Material suitable for the various age groups will be prepared. The Institute will function under the supervision of the elders of the Brownsville Road Church of Christ, with Dr. Thomas B. Warren serving as Director."

Members of the Institute are dedicated to opposing false doctrine and to upholding the Truth. An intensive effort will be made during the next few years to produce sound, scholarly

publications under the auspices of the Institute. A directory of men who make up the Institute will be prepared, along with their areas of specialization (i.e.: atheism, positivism, process theology, evolution, theistic evolution, etc.) and will be distributed. In this way, when a speaker is needed in one of these areas, a member of the Institute can be contacted and asked to speak when and where needed. Churches throughout the nation will be made aware of the work of the Institute, and will be encouraged to make use of its reference center and its speakers.

The Institute is *not* an "exclusive club" of any kind at all. It is merely a group of men who have banded together to further the cause of Christ, and to do it *now!* One thing that was stressed over and over again at the seminar in Memphis was that we must work together to push forward—without worrying about that this was the proper attitude to take. It is because of this tremendous attitude among its members that the Institute has such an awesome potential for good in the brotherhood, and in the world at large.

It is the opinion of this writer that this seminar will mark the beginning of something exciting and wonderful—a new era of the church no longer just being on the "defensive", but rather, beginning to take the "offensive" against the false doctrines of atheism, positivism, agnosticism, etc.

If any readers have questions, or would like to know more about the Institute, its members, or its workings, please write me at this address: 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840. Or, write Dr. Thomas B. Warren, I-ACT, 3333 Old Brownsville Road, Memphis, Tenn. 38134. We will be happy to make further information available on request.

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.)

"I have observed that there are several words used in the New Testament to designate those who have the oversight of the church, 'elders,' 'presbyters,' 'pastors,' 'shepherds,' 'bishops,' and 'teachers.' Why does this variation exist, and what is the meaning of each term?"

Each of these words is properly applied to those who are overseers of the church, and all are applicable to the same men; but, these words are not of the same origin, and some differ also in the work and functions which they describe, although others are not of different meaning, differing only in origin. For example, the word "presbyter," is anglicized (given English form and spelling), and taken from the Greek text into English directly. It is from the word *presbuteros*, and is the equivalent of our English word "elder." The word "elder," as the dictionaries indicate, comes into our language from the Anglo-Saxon, where

it meant *old*, though now it designates one mature. It will be seen that the words "presbyter," and "elder," mean the same and differ only in the fact that one comes to us directly from Greek, the other from the Anglo-Saxon language.

Similarly, our English word "bishop," from the Greek *episcopos*, means "overseer," and the words, *bishop*, *episcopos*, and *overseer* all mean the same, differing only in their origin. *Episcopos* is from the Greek language; *bishop* came to us down through early English from the old Anglo-Saxon.

So, too, of the words, "pastor," and "shepherd," from the Greek *poimen*. The word "pastor," is of Latin origin; "shepherd," Anglo-Saxon. Though differing in origin and form, they describe the same functions.

There are thus three pairs of words, embodying three different duties. In studying them, it is helpful to note the following classification:

Presbuteros (Greek) *elder* (Anglo-Saxon) designates *maturity*

Episcopos (Greek) *bishop* (Latin) *overseer* (Anglo-Saxon), *oversight*

Poimen (Greek) *pastor* (Latin) *shepherd* (Anglo-Saxon) *tending*, *feeding*

Occasionally, these words are used interchangeably (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5,7). Additionally, elders are called teachers because of their obligation to impart instruction.

A Great New Book: Theistic Evolution

Readers of WORDS OF TRUTH are deeply delighted to learn that our talented, dedicated and versatile Bert Thompson has authored and had published a new book which is entitled THEISTIC EVOLUTION. We have already come to appreciate the bright scholarship which is his many articles in this weekly journal have set forth time and



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

time again. He has just recently completed a lengthy series entitled "Science And Nature: Two Votes For God." To my knowledge it was the longest series ever carried by WORDS OF TRUTH and that says much for his ability and the importance of that series.

A BOOK WHOSE TIME HAS COME

A noted thinker of the past is remembered for coining the expression of "an idea whose time has come." That is precisely my sentiment relative to this book THEISTIC EVOLUTION. It is a book whose time has come. Bert was kind enough to send me a personally inscribed copy right after it came from the press. I began immediately its pleasant and careful perusal. I have now completed it and have been thrilled with his treatment of a difficult and complicated topic. He did his homework well. The book is excellently written. It is highly documented. It is written with a viewpoint that Genesis 1 says what it means and means what it says. Brother Thompson takes to task some of our own brethren who have been entirely too tolerant and lenient toward geologic infidelity, and that is just what theistic evolution is. Brother Thompson does not descent to the compromising plains of Ono to meet with either atheistic evolutionists or theistic evolutionists. Regardless of the appellation both are EVOLUTIONISTS and worshippers of science falsely so called (I Tim. 6:20). He tells the matter like it really is. I like that straightforward manner whether in a sermon, an article or, as in this case, in a valiant volume.

Brother Thompson is an uncompromising believer in the Bible and especially in the question of origins as stated in crystal clear language in Genesis 1. He also holds a PhD in one of the sciences from Texas A and M with which university he is currently affiliated. From both his broad Biblical and scientific background he was a logical choice to write a truly significant and desperately needed book.

THE BOOK DESCRIBED

THEISTIC EVOLUTION is a paper back and has some two-hundred and thirty six pages. It is published by Lambert Book House of Shreveport, Louisiana. There are twelve chapters in it. By doubling up on just one chapter such as Chapter Eight, which needs at least two study periods anyway, the book easily serve for a quarter of study in Bible Class work. This is a book our young people by the masses need to be taught and to read for themselves. I recommend that elders throughout the brotherhood order this book and have it taught for a quarter to your Jr. High, High School and College age classes. It could well be the bulwark to save the crushing of their faith either by atheistic or theistic

evolutionists in later years.

The chapter headings say much about the book's actual contents. They are:

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION: MAN'S ORIGIN

Chapter 2 ATHEISTIC EVOLUTION, SPECIAL CREATION, AND THE TWO ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 3 THEISTIC EVOLUTION

Chapter 4 THE GREAT COMPROMISE: THE GREAT CONTRADICTION

Chapter 5 GENESIS 1: LITERAL AND HISTORICAL OR MYTHICAL AND ALLEGORICAL?

Chapter 6 TIME WAS NEVER NEEDED SO BADLY

Chapter 7 IF ONE PLUS ONE EQUALS THREE, THEN GEOLOGY PLUS THEOLOGY EQUALS THEISTIC EVOLUTION

Chapter 8 THE DAY-AGE THEORY

Chapter 9 THE GAP THEORY

Chapter 10 MISCELLANEOUS CREATION THEORIES

Chapter 11 PROGRESSIVE CREATIONISM, THRESHOLD EVOLUTION, AND SCIENTIFIC CREATIONISM

Chapter 12 WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEISTIC EVOLUTION?

Brother Thompson has researched vast amounts of material and has produced the cream of the crop in refuting theistic evolution. It would require an immense amount of money to purchase the books and

material quoted in this valuable volume. In this department alone he has rendered a great service to all of us.

I wish this book had been around when I was taking biology, zoology and other sciences in the 1940's and early 1950's and was meeting evolution in so many disciplines of learning. I never believed evolution a day in my life but did not always have the answers I needed in classes taught by evolutionists. Our boys and girls today are having hurled at them the same arguments favoring evolution that you and I listened to some years back. Here is why we as parents need to read this book and make sure also that our young people read it. I regard this book by Bert Thompson as the finest refutation of theistic evolution of anything I have ever read. I prize my copy exceedingly highly.

This volume sells for \$4.95 and can be ordered directly from Bert at 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840 or from Lambert Book House, Box 4007, Shreveport, Louisiana 71104. I recommend this book without reservation. It deserves to go through many, many printings. I predict for it a wide distribution and an appreciative response from every uncompromising lover of the majesty, marvel and magnificence of the stately contents of Genesis 1. This book is a MUST for purchase and then for a serious perusal. — P.O. Box 464 Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Jesus Christ Our Lord

"Who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, even Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:4). The expression "Jesus Christ our Lord" or some variation of it, such as "our Lord Jesus Christ," appears frequently in the New Testament, especially in the epistles of Paul. Possibly we have read such statements without stopping to consider the meaning which is suggested. Let us think for a moment of the key words of this statement and notice some things suggested by it.

The first word is JESUS. This was the name of the one born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judea. He was reared in the city of Nazareth. He developed as any normal child develops (Luke 2:52). He was baptized by John. He was recognized by his contemporaries as a great teacher, but finally he was crucified, although innocent. The name JESUS is simply pointing to the historical person who lived more than 1900 years ago. I know of no reputable historian who doubts the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth. When we utter the name of Jesus, we are simply making a statement of historical fact.

The second key word is CHRIST. This is a statement of faith, whereas the word JESUS was a statement of historical fact. Jesus was his name; Christ was his title. Christ is equivalent to the Old Testament word—MES-SIAH (annointed one). When we speak of Jesus as being the Christ, we are expressing our faith that Jesus is the one who was promised in many Old Testament passages, such as Genesis 12:1-3. It is our faith that Jesus is the fulfillment of the hundreds of prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of his birth (Isaiah 53). It is our belief that Jesus is the Messiah who was promised in the Old Testament, that he has come to set up an

everlasting kingdom as the prophets said he would (Daniel 2:44-45). It is an affirmation of our faith that Jesus is the Son of God, that he came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10), to give abundant life (John 10:10), and to call men out of darkness into light. It is our faith that he will return to give a final reward or punishment (John 14:1-3; Matthew 25:31-46). Thus, when we speak of Jesus as being the Christ, we affirm that in Jesus Deity has become incarnate and dwelt among us.

The third key word in this expression is LORD. This is a statement of surrender. Jesus is Lord of all (Romans 10:12). He is Lord of all because he came forth from the grave and ascended to the right hand of God (Acts 2:36). It is our responsibility to submit ourselves to God (James 4:7,10). Saul of Tarsus is a good example of one who made such a commitment of himself to the Lord. He said, "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith: the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Galatians 2:20). Thomas is another example of one who surrendered himself to Jesus Christ as Lord. Thomas had stated that he did not believe that Jesus was raised from the dead. A week later, Jesus appeared to the apostles, including Thomas, and told Thomas, "Be not faithless, but believing." Thomas' response to this was, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:24-29). Thus, when we use the word LORD in the sense of our text, we are making a statement of surrender.

This expression—"Jesus Christ our Lord"—involves a great deal. In this expression, we make a statement of historical fact, a statement of our faith, and a statement of total surrender. What more is there to say, except to ask ourselves, "Have I?" — Main Street Church of Christ Milan, Tennessee



Words Of



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

— Acts 26:25

The Antiquity Of Human History

How long has man been upon the earth? Does the Bible give any indication? Is there conflict between the assertions of "science" and the Biblical record? These are questions which challenge the attention of many today.

Informed people are certainly aware of the fact that numerous scientists theorize that humanity has a strictly naturalistic origin. More than a billion years ago, it is alleged, life was spontaneously generated in some primeval slime. That initial life force supposedly evolved into man. Since such a gradual and natural process would necessitate vast periods of time, the "scientists" have erected a chronological scheme which suggests that the earth is approximately 4.5 billion years old. The contention is made that man, compared to earth history, is but a Johnny-come-lately.

In 1957 when George G. Simpson (one of this generation's most prominent evolutionary scholars) and his colleagues penned their popular book, *LIFE: An Introduction to Biology*, they asserted that all of man's fossil ancestors could be confined to the Pleistocene era (of the evolutionary geological time table) and that "none of them is at all likely to be more than a million years old, and most of them must be under 500,000" (pp. 796, 797). Well, that estimation was not to survive long. In 1973, Richard Leakey, an anthropologist working in Africa, discovered bones of a creature which he classified as "modern man." Amazingly, he dated them at more than 2.5 million years old! In less than twenty years; and now, in the early months of 1978, Dr. Mary Leakey, working with the National Geographic Society in Tanzania, has



WAYNE JACKSON

announced that homonid fossilized footprints and jawbones have been unearthed that likely thrust man's history back at least 3.6 million years!

How does all of this relate to the Biblical picture of the history of humankind? Does the Bible extend human history into the millions of years? Or has man been on earth but a few thousand years? Or is Scripture silent on this matter? Those who approach the Bible from a strictly conservative viewpoint, trusting in the integrity of Scripture's historicity, know that man's antiquity can only be measured in terms of several thousand years. This is revealed by the fact that the genealogy of Christ, who lived less than 2,000 years ago, is traced all the way to Adam in Luke, chapter 3. While it is conceded that occasionally gaps occur in genealogical lineages, they must of necessity be *relatively minor* or such genealogical records become functionally worthless!

That brings us to this important point. It is a sad fact that some religionists (professed friends of the Bible) are almost totally intimidated by the wild assertions of the scientific community. Hence, they are constantly adjusting their "interpretation" of the Bible to square with the latest notions of academic pronouncement. For instance, when it was announced several years back that man was 1 million years old, some teachers of the Bible concluded that they must either: (a) repudiate Paul's statement that Adam was the first man (I Cor. 15:45); or, (b) accommodate the genealogy of Christ with huge gaps to fit the million-year theory; they chose the latter, never dreaming to question the assumptions of the evolutionists. Now these religionists are forced, if they continue to do obeisance to the god of science, to stretch the genealogy of the Lord to a span of more than three-and-one-half million years! Let us briefly consider their problem.

It can be archaeologically demonstrated that the genealogy of Jesus from Mary back to

Abraham spans, at the most, about 2,000 years (see K.A. Kitchen and T.C. Mitchell, *The New Bible Dictionary*, J.D. Douglas, ed., 1974, p. 213). Hence, from the present to the era of Abraham less than 4,000 years are involved. Now from Abraham backward to Adam, Luke's record lists only twenty persons in the lineage of Christ (and this includes Cainan, who is not mentioned in the Hebrew catalogs of the OT). So, if we are to placate science, 3.5 million years must be squeezed into these twenty generations. It appears, however, that there are no gaps within the first seven generations for the inspired Jude declares that Enoch is the seventh from Adam (Jude 14); now we are left with only thirteen generations to manipulate!

Let us assume (for the sake of simple mathematics) that each of those generations was 500 years: that would consume only 6,500 years of history. Accordingly, of the initial 3.5 million years, we still have 3,493,500 years to serve as gaps between the thirteen names. This is an average of 291,125 years. Each gap, therefore, would be about 582 times a length of each generation mentioned. To see the force of this, imagine a sheet of paper nearly the length of two football fields. Beginning at one end, draw a horizontal line one inch long and followed by a gap of forty-eight and one half feet, then another one-inch line, another forty-eight and one half feet gap, and so on. If *that* is a sensible approach to Bible interpretation, this writer doesn't know the abc's of exegesis! It would further appear that the "genealogies" ought henceforth to be called "gap-e-alogies". Too, since this seems to be the era of a multiplicity of Bible versions, perhaps someone could come out with a rubberized version of the Scriptures which would contain sufficient elasticity to allow further "scientific" discoveries.

Seriously, God's people need to learn that it is the epitome of folly to be seduced by the silly assertions of infidel pseudo-scholars. The Bible is factual in its clear statements, and its implied deductions, regarding the history of man. Let us trust it and study it thoroughly.



Words Of Truth

I am not man most noble
 but speak forth the Words of
 Truth and soberness
 - Acts 20:25

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The Shame Of Nakedness

With the imminent approach of warmer weather, the budding forth of the trees and flowers, the exposure of everything in natural state seems to be a spreading disease that springs even from the bud and bloom to flesh and bone. A word of instruction along this line is most essential if we are going to declare all the counsel of God.



WINFRED CLARK

If Adam and Eve hid because of nakedness after eating of the fruit of knowledge of good and evil, would it not

appear to us today that we who have the knowledge of good and evil should not parade our nakedness before others? Pertaining to spiritual apparel, Jesus said, "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. 16:15). But instead, the modern society seems to glory in its nakedness. Actually, the real appeal of mixed swimming, whether people are aware of it or not, is found not in the water. Every news-photo shows the bathing beauty in some provocative posture on the bank-not in the water. The premium is placed on shamelessness and not on swimming ability. The swimming idea only affords the opportunity for shameless Homosapiens to serve as a gazing stock before the adulterous eyes of the opposite sex: a showcase where the pervert may ogle and lust until opportunity is obtained to gratify his lust more fully.

I defy any sober-minded saint to attempt to justify placing this practice along with the fruits of the spirit as listed in Gal. 5:22-23, instead of placing it with the works of the flesh as listed in Gal. 5:19-21. Christian mothers should have "gumption" enough to know that daughter of three can learn to go naked unashamed, and can continue to do so at thirty-three. A child is never too young to be taught to have respect for his or her person. And "silly women laden with sin, led away with divers lust, ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth," claim that they cannot see anything wrong with the practice of appearing in public practically undressed in abbreviated shorts and halters or something that has been mislabeled a bathing suit. What woman feels no shame when she dons her bathing briefs for the first time in the season, as she prepares to parade her nakedness before the public? At first she does not have to be wearing a polka-dot bikini to be "afraid to come out of the locker." But after she has exposed herself, her conscience becomes seared and she soon forgets what modesty her virtue once consisted of.

Lets not allow our concept of decency to become warped by the popularity of a thing. Nudist colonies are becoming increasingly popular; and those are admitted thereto who claim to be able to "keep their minds out of the gutter." According to the reasoning of some members of the church, a Christian man or woman could attend a nudist colony as long as he or she does not sin with the heart. But modesty consists of more than having pure thoughts-it includes keeping our clothes on in public. P.O. Box 672 Breman, Ga. 30110.



FROM THE EDITOR

Quench Not The Spirit

It is quite obvious from several passages that those who possessed miraculous endowments in the first century were responsible for the proper use of those endowments. Paul gave instructions to the saints at Corinth concerning the proper use of their miraculous powers. He wrote: "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the



BOBBY DUNCAN

other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets" (I Cor. 14:29-32). This shows that those with miraculous powers of the Spirit were in control of the use of those powers.

I Timothy 4:14 shows that one who possessed a spiritual gift might neglect that gift: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee...." And II Timothy 1:6 shows that one with a miraculous gift could and should "stir up the gift of God...." Just as there is a danger that we will neglect the proper use of the written word of God in our time, even so, there was a danger that those in the first century who were miraculously endowed would neglect the proper use of their miraculous powers.

This is precisely what the inspired apostle refers to in I Thessalonians 5:19, 20, where he wrote: "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings." DESPISE is from a Greek word which means to

"set at nought," and it is so translated in Luke 23:11, Acts 4:11, and Romans 14:10. Those who "set at nought" prophesyings would be quenching the Spirit; for the gift of prophecy was a gift of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:10).

It is tragic that the admonition, "Quench not the Spirit," like other statements peculiar in application to the miraculous age of the church, has been misunderstood and misapplied by some in our time. Various so-called holiness or Pentecostal groups have used the passage to justify all kinds of carryings on in their periods of worship. Someone starts shouting, or climbing over benches, or rolling in the aisle, or "speaking in tongues," to the disruption of the entire service; but one would not dare call such an one to order for fear he would be guilty of quenching the Spirit. And now, even among our own brethren some are using the passage in a similarly erroneous way. One brother said, "It means that the Holy Spirit, if you'll let him, will start building up a big old fire; you know, things will start happening."

Now certainly the Bible is the word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit; and when men follow the Bible, things will happen. Certainly to live the life of a Christian, following in the steps of the Master, is an exciting life. But the idea that the Holy Spirit stirs up excitement in a person in some way other than through the written word is an idea that is foreign to the Bible. The Holy Spirit does not lead people to disrupt the worship of God by shouting and clapping and stomping feet, any more that it leads them to jump benches or roll in the aisle or speak in tongues. And it is just as much out of order to use I Thessalonians 5:19 to justify the one as the other.

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 To The
 Words of Truth**

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it correct to speak of an 'elder office,' the 'office of an elder,' in referring to the position and work of one in the oversight of the church?"

It depends entirely on what is meant by the word "office," in these phrases. The older versions have the words, "office of a bishop," in I Tim. 3:1, a phrase which translates the one word *episkopee*. In Acts 20:28, the word "overseers," in the King James' Version, and "bishop," in the American Standard Translation is from the word *episkopos* (bishop), and an *episkopee* is one who does the work of an *episkopos*. The meaning of I Tim. 3:1 is that one who seeks the work of a bishop (elder), desires a good work. The translators, in rendering the word *episkopee* by the phrase, "office of a bishop," used the

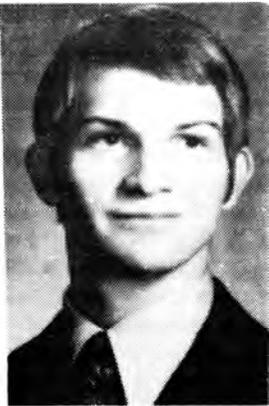
word "office," in its older sense of function, work, duty, a significance now obsolete. The eldership is in no sense an official position into which men are inducted and which they hold for life or for a number of years. Brethren become elders (bishops) for two reasons: (1) they have been appointed to the work with the consent of those over whom they serve; and (2) they are qualified for, and are actually performing the work of the eldership. When (1) they lose the qualifications; or (2) when they cease to perform the functions of elders, they are no longer elders. A man who has been a farmer, but who has ceased to cultivate the soil, and has become a grocer, is no longer a farmer; similarly, a man, no longer engaged in the work of elders, is not an elder, though he may regard himself as such, and those about him may call him one. The eldership is

a *functional* position, not an *official* one. Often, an elder offers his "resignation." If his design is simply to inform the congregation that he will not henceforth be performing the duties thereof, the action is proper; but, if the impression obtains that this is necessary in order to divest himself of the "office," he is under a grossly erroneous impression. He may indeed simply save himself the trouble; if he has ceased to desire to do the work; or, if he is no longer doing the work of an elder, *he is already out of the eldership*, whether he, or others, recognize it or not. Temporary lapses, due to illness, emergencies, etc., are not involved any more than they would be in determining whether we are Christians or not. But one who quits the Christian life is not a Christian; one who *quits* the eldership is not an elder!

The Bible Is Being Attacked

No. 2

The word of God is currently undergoing attack. The affirmation of this simple statement follows after even the most casual glance at today's religious world and the body of Christ. The forces of atheism, agnosticism, pentecostalism, denominationalism, modernism, liberalism, and a host of other equally dangerous



DALTON KEY

and destructive "isms" are battling against the very source and structure of the Christian faith (Rom. 10:17).

We must, as Paul, set ourselves "for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). In adherence to Jude's command, we must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, ASV). We must not and cannot sit idly by as the blessed book of God is maimed, mauled, and mutilated by those who would wish and work it's harm.

I am persuaded that the religious world is divided, torn assunder, and fragmented not wholly as a result of varying interpretations of the sacred text but rather because of different views regarding the Bible's authority. When one of our denominational friends looks at the text of Mark 16:15,16, reads every word, and then denies that baptism is necessary in order to obtain salvation, has he erred in interpretation? No, he has shown his lack of respect for the authority of God's word. When another reads the second chapter of James concerning the futility of a non-working faith, and then affirms, "Faith only is a wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort," he has shown a blatant disrespect for the pure and perfect word of God.

We are sad in admitting that many members of the Lord's church display the same disrespect for basic Bible authority which characterizes the denominational

world.

Those who deny that Christians are under obligation to ANY spiritual law and affirm that all of God's children should be free (meaning free to do as they please, regardless of what God has said) show forth such disrespect. Are we under the Old Testament Law, the Law of Moses? Of course we are not (Col. 2:12, Eph. 2:15; Rom. 6:14; 7:1-7; Heb. 10:9). Are we free from all law, then, since we have been freed from the Law of Old? God forbid. We are under law to Christ and are obligated to fulfill that life-giving law (I Cor. 9:21). We are regulated by the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25). According to Romans 8:2, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

The Bible contains the authority of God, for it is His book (Heb. 4:12; I Pet. 4:11). The whole of man is to "fear God and keep His commandments," yet these commandments are found nowhere save in the Bible (Ecc. 12:12). The Bible contains the authority of Jesus Christ, that divine Son to whom God has given all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). We are to continue and abide in the words and doctrine of Christ, yet these words are found only within the sacred text of God's word (Jno. 8:31; I Jno. 9). We will one day be judged by these words (Jno. 12:48).

There are those among us who say in substance, "Yes, we know the Bible contains contradictions," or, "We must realize that the Bible contains certain scientific errors" and do not blush in so doing. Is not this an open attack upon the Bible's infallibility?

There may be contradictions within a certain translation of the original text, but there are none in the original text itself. Furthermore, a "translation" which contains contradictions ought not to be used as a translation. A good example of translative contradictions may be found in the conflicting renderings of Matt. 5:17 and Eph. 2:15 in many of the newer versions. Such errors are without excuse.

The Bible may indeed disagree with the THEORIES of Science, but never, never, does it contradict the FACTS of that

field. The beloved B.C. Goodpasture once wrote, "There is no conflict between the Bible and the facts of science. There may be many conflicts between the Bible and the theories of so-called scientists, and between the facts of science and the theories of so-called 'Bible scholars.'"

In reference to this point, David proclaimed, "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Psa. 19:7). God's word is referred to by James as the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25). Since God is perfect, and the Bible is God's book, then the Bible must bear the marvelous mark of God's perfection; it must be perfect also, being the product of a perfect personality (Matt. 5:45; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12). - Box 619, Douglas, Ks. 67039.

Your Preacher's Worth

By MICHAEL D. STONE

In this writing we shall attempt to answer the question, "How much is your preacher worth to you?" It is my conviction that there are several things relative to this matter that deserve our consideration.

First, I would suggest that your preacher is worth the Bible knowledge he has acquired through study. It is known fact that some preachers study more than others. Those that study more and know more are certainly worth more to a church.

Secondly, your preacher is worth the life he lives. A preacher should certainly live the life he preaches to others about living. If his life is not consistent with his profession, he will do the church harm and should cease being a preacher. However, we should not expect perfection from any preacher.

Thirdly, your preacher is worth his ability to proclaim the message of God to the people. A man may have the knowledge and yet be unable to convey that

Continued on page 4

Shall We Devalue Our Women

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones" (Proverbs 12:4). In commenting on the above verse Franz Delietzsch said, "...an unhappy marriage gnaws at the marrow of life, it destroys the happiness of life, disturbs the pursuit, undermines the life of the husband."¹



RON HARPER

This passage shows quite a contrast. A wife can be either a crown or rottenness in the bones. It has been accurately stated that "behind every good man is a good woman."

It is tragic that there are those today who would seek to change the role of the woman from that of an help meet for man to a domineering influence in the affairs of the world and the leadership of the Church. Nearly all major denominations have ordained women "clergymen." It is time for us to understand what the Bible teaches about the role of women. Following God's plan is the only way for women to attain their rightful place in the world.

The first passage that show womans place is Genesis 2:18. "And the Lord God said, It is not good for man to be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." In explaining to Timothy why woman was not to have authority over man Paul said, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve" (I Timothy 2:13). To the Corinthians church Paul wrote, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman but the woman for the man" (I Corinthians 11:8,9). These passages teach that woman was placed in the God given position of being an "help Meet for man," not a head over him.

The position of woman in the Church is not one of authority. In I Timothy 2:12 Paul said, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." The word translated "usurp authority" is the Greek word *authentain*. It is the infinitive form of the verb *authenteo* which means "to have authority over, to domineer."² According to Webster the word usurp means, "to seize and hold in possession by force."³ Some have falsely concluded from the word usurp in the King James Version that as long as a woman does not take authority over men by force that it would be alright for her to have it. That is, a man could pass this authority on to a woman. A study of the Greek text will, however, show that such is not the case. The American Standard Version is more accurate in this passage. "But I permit not a woman to teach nor to HAVE DOMINION (emphasis mine) over a man, but to be in quietness." God's plan for the church does not allow the woman any kind of authority over man. Man cannot scripturally delegate his authority to a woman.

The question then is, "doesn't this oppress the woman?" It appears to some that because the woman cannot have this authority she is relegated to the position of a second class citizen. Such is not the case. The woman has certain God given responsibilities. "The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things that they may train the young women to be

sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, KEEPERS AT HOME (emphasis mine), good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:3-5). Godly women are not to adorn themselves with good works that become women professing godliness (I Timothy 2:10). It would be impossible for a woman to have a more noble position than the one stated by Paul in the above passages. To be a godly wife and mother is the highest position a woman could have. It is not one of indignantly, but one of honor. God forbid that Christian women ever loose sight of their God given role. God forbid that Christian women ever loose sight of their God given role.

One of the greatest women in the Bible is Ruth. We can see that she was not one who desired to be in authority over man. She fits perfectly Paul's description in I Timothy 2. She was the very opposite of women's lib today. In spite of this, Boaz was able to say concerning her, "...for all the city of my

people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman" (Ruth 3:11).

Solomon well said, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). Ladies, what is your price? Do not allow yourself to be devalued! — 1501 6th Ave. Jasper, Al. 35501.

1. Franz Delietzsch and F.W. Keil, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, & Song of Solomon*. Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, Vol. 6 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Comapny, 1975) P. 252

2. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. Walter Bauer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957) P 120

3. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, Springfield, Mass.: The G.C. Merriam Company, 1975), P 1289.

Relevancy Of The Bible

We live in an age of great advances in technology. Change is taking place all about us in virtually every area of life. Because of the advances in science, for the most part, our time in history is the best of any preceding nation of people. How does an old Bible fit into our lives in this time of great change? The Bible

is hundreds of years old and has not changed at all during those years. Is the Bible really relevant today? We shall explore that interesting question.

I submit first of all that the Bible is relevant because of the great number of people on this earth. We have now passed the four billion mark. That is a lot of people. The Bible is the only book in the world that teaches that one soul is of more value than every material thing in this world (Matthew 16:26). God knows each individual personally (Psa. 139:1-12). Jesus demonstrated his concern for just one person. He took time to teach Nicodemus in John 3. He took time to teach the woman of Samaria in John 4. We most often think of our Lord as speaking to the masses, which he did; however, he also taught on a one to one basis. Let us never lose sight of the fact that, in spite of the great mass of people, each one of them is most important to God and should be also to us. We may be just a computer number to some, but certainly not to our Lord. The Bible is the only book that can give the masses of people a real purpose for living and a hope in death (I Cor. 15:19).

Secondly, I submit that the Bible is relevant today because of sin. Sin is a reality in our time. To deny the fact of sin in our society is to deny the news reports and the reality of it in our own lives. The Bible deals with this reality



MICHAEL D. STONE

(Rom. 3:23). God's desire is to save men from their sins (John 3:16). God's word reveals what man must do in order to be saved (James 1:21). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). The Bible is indeed relevant today. Is it relevant in your life? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). 503 Plymouth Street, Kannapolis, N.C.

Your Preacher's Worth

Continued from page 3

knowledge to the people. Some preachers try to impress the church with their much learning thus speaking over the heads of the audience. The whole purpose of preaching is to teach the Word of God to people. The man that can do that is worth more than the preacher who cannot get it across as well.

Fourthly, your preacher is worth the experience he has had in preaching. One with more experience is worth more to a church than one with less. It disturbs me no small amount when I hear of churches refusing even to consider a man who may be over fifty years of age. I see no reason why a preacher my age (30) should be worth more than a man of fifty who has had more experience than I. Actually the opposite should be true. One of the great wastes of our day is the shelving of our older more experienced preachers. Certainly young preachers need to start somewhere and I am most thankful for those churches in Lawrence County, Tennessee, that allowed me to try to preach while in Freed-Hardeman College. But the fact still remains that a preacher starting out is not worth as much to a church as one older, more experienced and wiser. Yet many of these older men are being supported with less than many younger.

In summary, a preacher's worth is commensurate with his knowledge, life, ability and experience. What is your preacher worth to the congregation where you worship? 503 Plymouth Street, Kannapolis, N.C. 28081.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mau, ...
the Words of Truth and ...

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1978

NUMBER 19

Church Discipline: A Bible "Command"

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (Thess. 3:6).

Withdrawal of fellowship from those who will not repent is often subject to criticism or condemnation by those unlearned in the Scriptures, or by



FLAVIL H. NICHOLS
Associate Editor

one "interest group" (e.g., relatives, business associates), or another. Regardless of how holy and noble their intentions may be, no matter how prayerfully and scrupulously they observe the scriptures which govern church discipline, no matter how lovingly they proceed, some may find fault. Of this risk, each eldership should be aware.

However, scriptural elders must never let unjust criticism, or the *potential* for such criticism, divert their attention away from their grave responsibility to "watch for the souls" committed to their care (Heb. 13:17). As "pastors" or "shepherds" over the flock (I Pet. 5:1-3), they are duty-bound to lead the church into full compliance with God's law, which includes both PREVENTIVE (Acts 20:28-32) and CORRECTIVE discipline (I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thess. 3:6).

No faithful Christian can afford to shrink back from prayerful cooperation with such withdrawal of fellowship, regardless of which families are involved. Although such "punishment" (II Cor. 2:6) is sadly grievous (verse 4), it is a "command" of God (II Thess. 3:6).

With those who are excluded we are

forbidden "to keep company" or "to eat" (I Cor. 5:1-13). Yet we are not to treat them as "enemies" (II Thess. 3:15). We in love should pray for their repentance, so we can "forgive them and receive them" (II Cor. 2:6-11). Upon their repentance and confession (Jas. 5:16), we will welcome them back into full and complete fellowship in the Lord's church.

Paul's directions for the church at Corinth to exclude from their fellowship a certain brother (I Cor. 5) made the church very "sorry" (II Cor. 7:8). But their "godly sorrow" was not to be regretted or "repented of" (verse 10) because it worked "repentance" on the part of the evil-doer to his restoration and salvation (II Cor. 2:2-11; 7:10).

Paul described the following results of their church discipline:

"*Yea, what clearing of yourselves*" (II Cor. 7:11). In removing the evil from among themselves, they were freeing themselves from blame, and openly showing they do not condone unrighteous living (Jas. 1:27).

"*Yea, what indignation.*" They were highly displeased (indignant!) that a member in their midst should have committed such a sin; they demonstrated righteous displeasure that they had tolerated it so long.

"*Yea, what fear*" may refer to their fear of what the Apostle Paul would do if they did not withdraw from this one, and if Paul had to "come unto you with a rod" as he threatened (I Cor. 4:21). Or, it may refer to the awesome, righteous "fear" instilled in others who were about (or may later be tempted) to "fall from grace" (Gal. 5:4). "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (I Tim. 5:20).

"*Yea, what vehement desire*" (or "longing," A.S.V.). The Corinthians impassionately desired, or fervently yearned for, the salvation of the one in error! They also eagerly desired to keep the church pure so they would have the Apostle's approval when he arrived.

"*Yea, what zeal*" suggests they

promptly got busy in this matter of discipline, and zealously pursued the Holy Spirit's instructions (I Cor. 5), thus 'making up' for their past indifference, "redeeming the time" (Col. 4:5).

"*Yea, what revenge*" (A.S.V.: "*avenging*"). Their "punishment" (II Cor. 2:6) of the wrong-doer was to serve the ends of justice, to vindicate the holiness of the Cause of Christ. It was not done to "get even." This was an action of justice, not characterized by malice, spite, nor vindictive retaliation. "Let nothing..." (this includes church discipline!) — "let NOTHING be done through strife or vain-glory..." (Phil. 2:3).

Because the church at Corinth obeyed God's will in this matter, Paul said of them: "in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter" (II Cor. 7:11). This would not be true of any who ignored and disregarded the Holy Spirit's command to withdraw our fellowship from such.

The Apostolic command was not written solely "for his cause that had done the wrong" (probably the fornicator, I Cor. 5:1); neither was it written only "for his cause that had suffered the wrong" (probably the woman's husband); but it was also written, to use Paul's words: "that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you" (II Cor. 7:12). Today godly elders lead us into such action, not only for the sake of the one who did wrong; but also that their "care" for the church in the sight of God might be made manifest.

Thank God for humble, God-fearing, courageous Elders! Pray for them! Cooperate fully with them in every good word and work. Promote unity and peace under their oversight (Acts 20:28)! "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (I Thess. 5:12-13). — 1000 St. John Road, Route 9, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701.



Words Of Truth

*I am not mad, most noble King,
but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness.*
Acts 26:25

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The Signs Of An Apostle

In defending his apostleship against the attacks of false teachers at Corinth, Paul said, "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (II Cor. 12:12). Paul's argument in defense of his apostleship, if arranged syllogistically, takes the following form:



Major Premise: **BOBBY DUNCAN**
Only those who were genuine apostles could work the signs or an apostle.

Minor Premise: Paul could work the signs of an apostle.

Conclusion: Therefore, Paul was a genuine apostle.

Now what was it that the apostles could do that no one else could do? What is it that is referred to in II Corinthians 12:12 as "the signs of an apostle"? It was not merely the performing of miracles, for it is quite obvious that many during the apostolic age performed miracles. But there was something that the apostles alone could do, and which authenticated their apostleship. What was it?

Perhaps the next verse will give us some hint as to the answer to this question: "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." It seems from this verse that whatever it is that is called "the signs of an apostle," is something that involved the status of the Corinthians themselves. The fact that they were not behind other churches in some particular area proved the apostleship of Paul. In what particular area was it that measured up to the very fines? It was in the area possessing spiritual gifts. They were said to be "behind in no gift" (I Cor. 1:7). The fact that they possessed spiritual gifts, and came behind in no gift proved the authenticity of Paul's apostleship.

The "signs of an apostle," then, involved the ability to impart spiritual gifts to others.

The Corinthian church had spiritual gifts, which they had received through the agency of Paul. This proved that Paul was a genuine apostle. It seems that those who questioned this apostleship made no attempt to reply to this argument, for they knew if could not be refuted.

The fact that the apostles alone could impart spiritual (miraculous) gifts is clearly illustrated in connection with the conversion of the Samaritans in the eighth chapter of Acts. Philip, who was not an apostle, had preached the gospel in Samaria, and had confirmed his preaching by performing miracles. But before the Samaritans who were converted to Christ could receive miraculous powers, it was necessary for an apostle (two in this case) to come down from Jerusalem and lay their hands on them. Why couldn't Philip take care

of that matter? Because he was not an apostle. The "signs of an apostle" were wrought in Samaria and enabled them to receive the Holy Ghost. This is a fact clearly taught in the New Testament.

Now, what are the implications of this fact? There are two very important ones: (1) There are none today who can perform miracles. If there were, then men could have miraculous powers without the agency of an apostle. But if men could have miraculous powers without the agency of an apostle, then Paul's argument (II Cor. 12:12) in defense of his apostleship is a valid argument; therefore, there are none today who can perform miracles.

(2) Those who claim that they are apostles today should work "the signs of an apostle." If they are apostles as they claim, where are their signs? Paul claimed he was an apostle; and then he substantiated this claim by working the "signs of an apostle." The fact that these modern day "apostles" do not work the "signs of an apostle" proves that they are not genuine apostles.

Are You a Pilgrim?

DAN JENKINS

One of the terms applied to the Christian in this world is that of pilgrim or sojourner, Peter says, "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims. . ." (I Peter 2:11). Truly the Bible says that we simply are passing through this world, we are pilgrims. Do we realize just what this idea involves? A study of Hebrews 11:8-17 is most enlightening.

Pilgrims obey the call (v. 8). When Abraham received the call he obeyed. The verse says that he went out not even knowing where he was going. Since Christians today are called (I Peter 1:15; I Thess. 2:12; II Thess. 2:14) to be pilgrims, they should act as Abraham did on this occasion.

Pilgrims never settled down (v. 9). "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles. . ." The Christian today must realize that the things which are seen are temporal (II Cor. 4:18), and set his affections on a much higher plane than the materialism that characterizes most people. Though he dwells in a tabernacle made of clay he longs for the time when it can be laid aside (II Cor. 5:1-7).

Pilgrims look for an eternal city (v. 10). The verse says that this city is one that has foundation. The metropolitan areas of this earth grow old and decay, but for the pilgrim there is an abiding city, one with an eternal foundation. What man erects soon will crumble, but this city has God as its builder and maker.

Pilgrims die in faith (v. 13). "These all died in faith. . ." There is a marked difference between the way men face death. For the one whose life has been wrapped up with this world the end of life is the end of everything for which he has worked. It is ruin, tragedy. But for the one who serves God as a pilgrim the end of life is the beginning of all for which he has labored. Because God is faithful he can approach death knowing shortly he will be with the Lord, victory will be his. Pilgrims face death differently from most men.

Pilgrims embrace the unseen (v. 13). Though the patriarchs had not received the promises, the Bible says they saw them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them. To the pilgrim faith can give reality to

Continued on page 4

Brethren, Let's Get Along!

WALTER BUCHANAN

During last year I had the privilege of working with nine congregations in gospel meetings. There were some encouraging features, but the one thing that distressed me most was the fact that three of the nine congregations had just had trouble—serious trouble. Hopefully, this one out of three ratio does not hold true throughout the brotherhood; but, let's face it—there's more trouble among us than there ought to be. If there's any people on earth who should be able to get along harmoniously, it ought to be God's people!

Our homes and nation need to be united; but there's no place where a peaceable, harmonious relationship is needed more than in the Lord's body. Church trouble is the worst trouble there is! Listen to these scriptures on the subject. Abraham said to Lot long ago, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee...for we be brethren" (Genesis 13:8). David spoke of the desirability of unity: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalms 133:1). According to Solomon in Proverbs 6:16-19 one of the things the Lord hates is "he that soweth discord among brethren".

The New Testament also abounds with instructions to maintain unity. To the divided Corinthians Paul wrote: "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

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What authority may scripturally qualified elders exercise over a congregation?"

A summary of the passages touching the function of this class of laborers in the church the Lord reveals that they are styled "elders" (Phil. 1:1), "bishops" (I Tim. 3:1), "overseers" (Acts 20:28), "pastors" (Eph. 4:11), "the presbytery" (I Tim. 4:14). Other terms indicative of the functions of elders are *hoi proistameno* ("he that ruleth") (Rom. 12:8; I Thess. 5:12), *hoi egoumenoi* ("the ones having the rule") (Heb. 13:7), and *poimenas kai didaskalous* ("shepherds and teachers") (Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:28). It must follow, therefore, that the ideas inherent in these terms must be characteristic of the elders' functions in the apostolic age.

What do these terms suggest? Before we introduce the lexicons which all must concede to be the highest authority in the world today in determining the meaning of Greek words, we ask a candid reading of the following statement from those eminent scholars, Conybeare and Howson, touching the function of elders in the apostolic age. "The office of the presbyters," these eminent authorities say, "was to watch over the particular church in which they ministered, in all that regarded its external order and internal purity; they were to instruct the ignorant, to exhort the faithful, to confute the gainsayers, to warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to be patient toward all. They were to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the church of God which he had purchased with his own blood. In one word, it was their duty (as it has been the duty of all who have been called to the same office during the nineteen centuries which have succeeded) to promote to the utmost of their ability, and by every means within their reach, the spiritual good of all those committed to their care."

The foregoing is, we believe, a fairly comprehensive statement of the duties and obligations of elders in the church today. In discharging these functions, to what extent may they, under God, assert themselves, and claim authority as such? The terms directly bearing on this phase of the question as applied to elders are: "overseers" (Acts 20:28) "pastors" (Eph. 4:11), "the ones having the rule over you" (Heb. 13:7), and the additional injunction to "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). Summarizing, elders, in the discharge of their duties, are to occupy a position of "overseeing;" it is their duty to "shepherd the flock; they exercise "rule" over others, who in turn are admonished to "obey them," and submit themselves to them, because the elders watch for their souls. Conversely, the members of the church are to be ruled, be overseen, be shepherded, obey them that have the rule over them, and submit themselves. In view of these facts, how could one for a moment seriously entertain the view that elders, as such, have no authority, and may exercise their functions only as others may be willing to follow the example they set? A preacher who, in the face of these unequivocal statements from Holy Writ, can yet contend that elders cannot rule in the congregation, should sympathize greatly with

denominational preachers who refuse to accept the plain significance of the passages touching the plan of salvation! They at least have much in common in their attitude toward the Scriptures.

Lest it should be argued that the words above cited as descriptive of the functions of elders are not to be taken in their primary and literal import, we hasten to present the lexical evidence touching this point.

First, with reference to the word "obey." Seeing it is our duty to obey the elders (Heb. 13:17), what is the significance of this term? The word thus translated in Heb. 13:17 is *peithesthe*, second personal plural, of the present imperative *peitho*, defined by Bagster to mean, in the middle voice, "to suffer one's self to be persuaded, to listen to, to obey, to follow." Green defines it in the same manner, while Thayer says it means "to listen to, obey, yield to, comply with," and cites this passage in Heb. 13:17 as illustrative of this definition! It follows, therefore, that there can be no doubt that the word "obey" in the passage under consideration has its ordinary meaning of "assent to, yield to, comply with," etc., in determining our obligation to the elders.

Next, we are to consider the force of the statement, "them that have the rule over you." These words are translated from the participial clause, *tois egoumenois humoon*—literally, "the ones having the rule over you." The words "having the rule" are from *egoumenois*, dative plural of the present participle *egeomai*, defined by Thayer: "to lead, to go before, to be a leader, to rule, command, to have authority over. . . leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel. . . with gen. of per. over whom one rules, so of the meanings, Mr. Thayer cites the following: I Macc. 9:30, a military leader, various references in the Greek classics wherein the word is used to indicate any kind of leader, chief, or commander. Green, in his

lexicon, lists the following as definitions thereof: "to lead the way, to take the lead, to be chief, to preside, to govern, to rule;" and he cites Acts 14:12; Matt. 2:6; and Acts 7:10 as containing the word in signification.

Finally we are to take a glance at the word "submit" as used in the passage under review. Having seen that we are commanded to obey the elders—i.e., listen to them, comply with their requests, and acquiesce in their decisions—we now inquire as to the significance of the word "submit." It is from the word *upeikeye*, second personal plural of the present imperative, *upeikeye*, "to yield, give way; absol. to be submissive, Heb. 13:17." (Bagster.) It will be observed that this eminent authority also cites the passage under study as illustrative of the meaning given.

Much more might be offered; this will suffice to show the position scriptural elders hold in the congregation, and the duty of the membership thereto. Let us be exceedingly careful that we do not find ourselves in the unenviable position of rebellion against God and his servants. Elders, when functioning properly, are engaged in a work divinely authorized, and to oppose them is to oppose God. In matters not involving doctrinal issues one treads on dangerous ground indeed who presumptuously opposes those who watch for our souls. They are overseers; it is our duty, therefore, to be overseen. They are bishops of our souls; it is, hence, our duty to submit our souls to those who thus watch for us. They are shepherds of the flock; and the flock must recognize their leadership and follow them. Finally, they are the ones who rule over us; we are taught to obey such. We cannot do less and be guiltless at the last day. What we are to do when men lacking the qualifications pose as elders is another question. Here we have dealt solely with the duty of the congregation toward scriptural elders.

Body Buried By Believers Who Failed In Bringing Back Preacher's Mother

The *Pentecostal News Journal*, March 13, 1978 issue told of a Daniel Aaron Rogers, evangelist, trying to raise his mother from the dead. It seems he and another person had a vision telling them Mrs. Gladys Rogers, 81, who died on February 2, 1978 would rise from the dead. This would be a sign that the end of all things was at hand. In the March 31, 1978 issue of the *News Journal* a final chapter was written on this episode. Tent evangelist Daniel Rogers buried his mother. The resurrection attempts had failed.

This writer sympathizes with the Rogers family in the loss of his mother. The Bible teaches that all shall die (Heb. 9:27). The end



RAY HAWK

of the body's journey is the grave (Eccl. 12:7). It is always a sad thing to witness a burial, for the survivors must say their last goodbyes. Therefore, we sympathize with the Rogers family and trust that time will heal all sorrow they now share in common.

This event should cause Mr. Rogers and all Pentecostal people to reevaluate their religion. First of all, since Mrs. Rogers was not raised as a sign that the two visions were true, Mr. Rogers and the wife of an associate evangelist received false information. That makes them false prophets involved in a false religion (Deut. 18:20-22). If we were living under the Old Testament Law, Mr. Daniel Rogers and his associate's wife would be taken out and stoned to death!

Second, since Mrs. Gladys Rogers was not raised, I suppose it indicates that the end of all things is not as much at hand as premillennialists believe. I am assuming the Pentecostal faith the Rogers embrace is premillennial in background. Most are.

Third, this should be a clear indication to

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Brethren, Let's Get Along!

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ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." To the Ephesians he said, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." In the sermon on the mount Jesus pronounced a blessing upon peacemakers and said, "they shall be called the children of God." The Jerusalem church should serve as an example

to every congregation. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32).

Whether a congregation consists of ten or one thousand members, the need of unity is the same! Paul, in I Corinthians twelve, likened the church to a physical body. His point is that there should be within a

congregation the same harmony and cooperation that one sees among members of the physical body. There's no strife between the eyes and ears or between the hands and feet; neither should there be among members of Christ's body!

Division is a hindrance! First, division is a hindrance to acceptable worship. There's no way brethren can worship as they should in an atmosphere of strife and contention. The principle Christ stated in Matthew 5:23, 24 still holds true. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Likewise, division is a hindrance to effective evangelism. It would be extremely difficult to convert even one person in any one of those three places mentioned earlier. Jesus prayed that all believers in Him would be one "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

When one analyzes the situation, he'll find that most division is not over doctrinal issues at all; often, it stems from some personality conflict and brethren are too proud to say, "I'm wrong and I'm sorry. Please forgive me." Brethren, there's nothing more serious than dividing Christ's body! The devil must rejoice when he sees strife and conflict in the church. We're brethren. Let's love each other and get along as brethren!

Are You a Pilgrim?

Continued from Page 2

the unseen, and these unseen things motivate him. To embrace these things involves the total man, his life and emotions. Because he lives by faith he can die in faith.

Pilgrims confess their convictions (v. 13). It is impossible for one to live as a pilgrim without others knowing it. His choices in life are unlike theirs. His style of life is unlike theirs. His interests are different from theirs. Pilgrims are not ashamed for others to know what they are and thus they "confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

Pilgrims do not turn back (v. 15). At any time the patriarchs could have returned to the marvelous city of Ur, but they preferred to dwell in tents knowing that God had something far better in mind for them. Of us Jesus says that if we put our hand to the plow and look back we are not fit for the kingdom. The decision to forsake the world is a right one and the pilgrim can live knowing that such is true. "Remember Lot's wife."

Pilgrims desire a better country (v. 16). There are many who become so attached to the world about them that they have no desire to leave. If they could be assured of good health and present wealth they would never leave this earth. I know this is true, for many, even without this assurance, show it by their love of this world. Heaven is far greater, but the materialistic mind has trouble understanding this. It is satisfied by that which moth, rust and thieves destroy. The pilgrim can never be satisfied by these things.

Pilgrims make whatever sacrifices are required (v. 17). The picture of Abraham offering Isaac, his only begotten son, shows just how great his devotion was. Following this event none could question that Abraham knew that the brief existence on this earth was

not what life was all about. He longed for the eternal country and no price was too great to attain it! Pilgrims are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to live as sojourners on this earth.

Are you a citizen of this world or a pilgrim? Your answer to this question affects almost every aspect of your life. Notice Paul's words in Phillippians 3:20, 21. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be confirmed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." Where is your citizenship? — P.O. Box 26156, Birmingham, Al. 35226.

Body Buried By Believers Who Failed In Bringing Back Preacher's Mother

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Mr. Rogers and others that miracles have ceased! It has been this writer's experience that those who claim so much end up doing so little. Their miracles are like those of the Judaizing teachers in the first century. Paul clearly pointed out that the gospel preached by him and others was not like that preached by Judaizing teachers (I Cor. 4:20; I Thess. 1:5). Paul did not come in word only, but in power. Judaizing teachers came with claim after claim, but with no power. They claimed power, but had none. That is like our Pentecostal friends today.

We doubt if this episode will change the minds of the Rogers or others. Most people blame God for the failure and keep right on believing that they can do what they fail to perform. Perhaps some will be caused to think and from this event will see the truth. We hope so.

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Sixth Avenue Church of Christ

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Jasper, Alabama



Words Of T.

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1978

NUMBER 20

Some Queries Relative To The Lord's Supper

A few days ago I received a letter from a faithful reader of WORDS OF TRUTH relative to some correspondence he is having with friends in regard to the Lord's Supper. In the early part of his letter he said, "I have some elderly friends who took the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week for 30 or 35 years. Now they take it on the 14th day of Nisan. They have put



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

a lot of study in on this subject and also through the influence of William Barclay now take it on the 14th of Nisan." Near the end of this good letter he requests, "I would like for you to put an article in WORDS OF TRUTH publication concerning this matter—the pros and cons." This good brother, whom I have known for many years, is desirous of helping to bring back these elderly friends to the truth they once accepted and practiced for a third of a century or longer. In an additional effort to aid in their return to the truth he requested a sermon preached by Tom Holland on The Lord's Supper and which was heard on World Radio—a sermon that is eminently Scriptural, factually accurate and deeply informative on The Bible Doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Upon receipt of the sermon he sent it to his elderly friends. The good brother has favored me with their correspondence back to him and in regard to the sermon preached by the imitable Tom Holland. They suggest they are willing to do additional study on this matter and quite obviously they need it quite desperately. They speak highly of Tom Holland, and rightly so, and say that they hear him every Sunday morning on World Radio. I

appreciate this good letter. Those of us connected with WORDS OF TRUTH appreciate his confidence in having this matter discussed in the pages of this great and faithful weekly journal.

In a consideration of all the correspondence he supplied me the matter can be boiled down to the following points. (1) Were we wrong for some 30 to 35 years in partaking of the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week? (2) Is the 14th day of Nisan the proper time to partake of the Lord's Supper? (3) Is William Barclay an authority on the Lord's Supper? (4) Why should a denominational theologian such as Barclay have this type of influence upon those who profess to be just New Testament Christians? (5) Is the Christian obligated to follow the Hebrew or Jewish mode of counting time in the Old Testament? (6) Can the Supper be observed in daylight hours or must it be observed strictly while darkness prevails outside? These are the basic issues which we are requested to discuss in the pages of WORDS OF TRUTH. I shall number them as I discuss them.

(1) For a full third of a century these people observed the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Was their practice right or wrong? I have now observed the Lord's Supper for more than a third of a century and have missed the Lord's Supper but one Sunday since my baptism in 1944 and that was in 1948. If the Lord gives me another third of a century to live and health to accompany that desired span, I plan to partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week without a single miss. But neither my practice over the past third of a century nor the anticipated practice over the next third of a century determines the authoritative standard of right or wrong. Neither does their having done it one way for so many years and then changing in the middle of their worship stream determine the real rightness or the fatal falsehood of their practice. What does the

Bible say is the crucial issue, the determining factor? Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper the very night of his betrayal and just hours before he traveled to Execution Hill for the supreme sacrifice of the ceaseless centuries. We read about it in Matthew 26, in Mark 14 and in Luke 22. Paul's account occurs in First Corinthians 11: 20-34. It was instituted not as an ordinance for Judaism for within less than twenty-four hours Judaism would be a dead religious movement, it would be nailed to the cross on Calvary. It was instituted to be part and parcel of the gospel dispensation. Paul says, "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). How often was this to be done? They had a day of worship. It was the Lord's Day. They were not to forsake the worship assembly (Heb. 10:25). They were to give on the first day of the week and the Greek there makes mandatory EVERY first day of the week (I Cor. 16:2). They came together on that day to eat the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20). Paul taught against any abuse of the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20ff). Saints in Troas came together to break bread on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). Every week has a first day of the week just as every week under Judaism had its weekly sabbath. The Jew understood he was to keep EVERY sabbath holy not just one out of the whole year. Likewise the Christian is to observe the Supper of the Lord EVERY FIRST DAY of the week just like these people did for a third of a century. The Bible did not change; they did and that without a particle of divine authorization. In observing it on the first day of the week they were eminently right in so doing; they are now in gross error by their fatal change. We therefore plead for them to return back to their formerly right practice of weekly communion on the first day of the week.

(2) The 14th day of Nisan is NOT the proper

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble, for
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Truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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Gus Nichols

Bible Workshop

MARK SAIN

After two years of absence the Gus Nichols Bible Workshop will make a splendid entrance into the brotherhood's program of events. With its beginning in 1970, the workshop continued for six consecutive years of successful operation. This present rebirth will remain as an honor to the esteemed brother who was the foundation of the workshop.

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A \$15.00 deposit is required when reservation is made to our office. If you need any additional information contact our office at: P.O. Box 1072, Enterprise, Alabama 36330; or call 205-347-0111. We will be happy to assist in any way we can. Make your plans now and don't miss this golden opportunity.



FROM
THE EDITOR

Words Of Truth



BOBBY DUNCAN

With this issue we wind up our second year as editor of this weekly publication, which was started by brother Gus Nichols in 1963, and was edited by him until his death in 1975. Brother Flavil Nichols, who serves as associate editor of the paper, stepped in and ably edited the paper after his father's death, and until we moved to Jasper in May of 1976.

Editing *Words of Truth* is one of the most rewarding—albeit one of the most difficult—things we have ever done. Comments received from Christians all across our nation have removed any doubts we may have had concerning the value of such a paper as this. Certainly not all comments we have received have been complimentary.

No doubt we have made errors of judgment during the past two years. We trust we might have profited by them. It is too much to expect that we will not make any more such errors in the future. But we are always trying to improve the paper, and we believe progress is being made. Our publisher is cooperating with us in trying to make the paper more attractive and eliminating errors in typesetting.

We make a genuine effort to know something about those who write articles that we publish. We do not believe we should publish even a good article by one who is unsound in the faith; for some would interpret our publishing one's article as an endorsement his soundness. We might in this manner be opening doors for his teaching of error in other places.

It is our practice to publish good articles from a great number of writers from all across the country, and from some in foreign countries. The fact that a writer may be well known does not necessarily mean that what he writes is always the best. On the other hand, some who are not so well known often write excellent articles. We do the best we can to select for publication the very finest and most needed articles. With rare exceptions, we do not reprint articles that have appeared in other brotherhood publications.

Words of Truth is owned by the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, Alabama. We believe it is the only weekly publication of this nature that is under the direction and control of a local eldership. Perhaps there are some disadvantages to this arrangement, but strictly from considerations of the good to be accomplished, the advantages seem to be far greater. In the first place, we do not have to be concerned about showing a profit or making ends meet. The subscription price for the paper is exactly what the publisher charges for printing and mailing. The Sixth Avenue church pays the publisher for its subscription just exactly like every other church does, and exactly the same amount per

subscription. Not one penny of subscription money goes to pay the editor or anyone on the staff. Editing the paper is a part of our work as evangelist for the Sixth Avenue church, and the church pays us as churches generally pay their preachers.

In the second place, this arrangement makes the selling of advertising space unnecessary. With the exception of occasional notices of things we believe are of special interest to a large number of people, all of our space is used for articles. Though *Words of Truth* is smaller and less expensive than some other publications, the absence of advertising permits about the same amount of teaching space as is contained in some of the larger publications. This is aside from the fact that there is absolutely no enticement at all to advertise anything which we cannot completely endorse.

Words of Truth has a glorious history; and we believe it stands upon the horizon of an even greater future. The circulation continues to grow. We are making friends in many new places where we have not been before. Many words of encouragement are being received.

We are not in competition with any other good paper. For many years every member at Sixth Avenue has received *The Gospel Advocate*, and there are no plans to change that arrangement. But we believe very strongly that *Words of Truth* should also be read. We solicit your help in enlarging our circulation.

If the congregation where you worship does not subscribe to the paper of each family, write us for a bundle of sample copies, and see if the elders will consider sending the paper into every home. Those who preach in meetings may help by speaking a word in behalf of the paper in places where they preach in meetings. It helps to have some sample copies to give away during meeting. Also please pray for us that we might be equal to the task of editing this paper in a way that will be pleasing to Him without whose blessings all our work would be in vain.

God Holds My Future

GLEENDA TERRY

Dear God, my future is held in thy hands. Help me to hear thine answers and try to understand.

May I endure temptation and later receive the crown of life.

For in this sinful world living is such a strife. Bless all who are sick and in great need. And every day let us practice a good deed. 4305 Kendall Ave., Adamsville, Al 35005.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is the doctrine of 'Election and Reprobation,' as taught by Calvinists?"

Some doctrines are so palpably false that they only to be clearly stated to bear refutation on their own face. Such is the monstrous and obnoxious doctrine of Election and Reprobation as taught in the Philadelphia and London Confessions of faith. Those subscribing to this view hold that God, before the creation of the world, entered as immutable decree irrevocably fixing the number of the elect, a decree based solely on the sovereignty of Jehovah, and without regard whatsoever to the character or disposition of those thus elected. It is further alleged that this number cannot be increased nor diminished.

The mere tyro in logic must be able to see that if this be true, the damnation of the non-elect is as much the result of God's decree, as the salvation of the elect, and in exactly the same manner. Logically, if this doctrine be true, the wicked will suffer the tortures of the damned through eternity, not because of sins committed but because God decreed that they should thus suffer. Some Calvinists attempt to avoid this conclusion by contending that all may come to God who desire to do so. Their evasion is that some will not desire to come. But why will they not desire to come to the Lord? The Creed teaches that it will be because they were not elected to salvation. The conclusion then, is the same. They do not desire salvation because God did not plant the desire in their hearts. This, and this alone, according to this doctrine, is the difference between the elect and the non-elect. The responsibility for their condemnation is not their own; it is the Lord's. This conclusion is inescapable.

Were this doctrine true, no man should be punished for his sins, because he cannot help sinning; he is a vessel ordained to sin by immutable decree of God from before the foundation of the world. His acts of sin should not be regarded as rebellious; made a vessel of wrath, he is but pursuing a course outlined for him long before he had existence. Adam, for example, in eating the forbidden fruit, was discharging a decree, determined for him before the beginning of the world. Instead of being condemned for disobedience, he should rather be commended for obedience. Was he not obediently performing an act which God decreed? If he had refused to eat the forbidden fruit would he not have falsified God's arrangement, and have defeated that which God ordained must unchangeably come to pass? The conclusion is irresistible that is God decrees everything that comes to pass as the Calvinistic creed avers, the responsibility for Adam's act was not with him but with the Lord. Every act, whatever its character, must according to this doctrine, be chargeable to the Lord. In this view, man is but an instrument in the hands of Jehovah and deserves no commendation for the good that he does or condemnation for the evil he causes.

Those who believe this doctrine cannot consistently pray for the salvation of sinners. To pray that God would save the elect is to imply that there is a possibility of apostasy; and this Calvinists would never do. One elected to eternal salvation, fall? The idea, to a devotee of the doctrines of decrees, is preposterous. how could one who has been irrevocably elected to salvation before he had existence be lost? Neither can they pray for the non-elect, for this would imply that they might be saved, and this, they do not believe. Why pray for the Lord to save one whom he

had immutably decreed should be eternally lost in hell? The attempt, in the eye of an Old School Presbyterian or primitive Baptist, is an impertinence and officious intermeddling with the sovereign will of God. They, therefore, cannot consistently pray for the salvation of either saint or sinner. Yet, Paul, commanded that "prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men" (I Tim. 2:1). This doctrine will not allow a father or mother to pray for their own children!

This obnoxious theory is refuted in hundreds of passages throughout the Bible. The Great Commission was "to every creature" in "all the world" (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16). God commands "all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). The invitation of our Lord was extended to all "who labor and are heavy laden" (Matt. 11:28). Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8,9). The world is to be judged "according to its works," (II Cor. 5:10), and "whosoever will," is the edict of inspiration, solemnly penned just before the end (Rev. 22:17).

Those subscribing to the doctrine herein

examined, should consider carefully the following questions: Why offer a way of salvation to those who are powerless to walk therein? Why urge sinners to seek, strive, etc., when they are helpless under an irrevocable decree? Why preach the gospel at all, to anybody at any time? Sinners, in their view, cannot accept it, and the elect do not need it. What good is the Bible to mankind anyway; and why should there be preachers? Primitive Baptists insist that preachers are for the purpose of "feeding the flock," i.e., the elect. But, would they starve if they are not fed? Does it take human instrumentality to keep them alive? If yes, the doctrine of unconditional salvation is false. If no, then Primitive Baptists preachers convict themselves of being the most useless and necessary group of men on the earth! They often boast that they are paid nothing for their preaching. But, why should they be paid for doing that which, by their admission, does no one any good? They ought to preach for nothing; yea, they ought to pay people to listen to them engage in that which they admit does no good to anyone!

Predictions For Coming TV Season Sexploitation, Sexolatry and Then More Sex

THOMAS F. EAVES

Recent pressure from churches, parents, and concerned citizens have made an impact on the television industry...excessive violence is now a no-no. What is to take the place of violence? According to the most recent reports there is a wave of sexploitation in our T.V. viewing future.

"Want a preview of the coming television season? Well, the small screen will be loaded with shows featuring very well-endowed young women in scanty attire getting into situations that show off their attributes" [Editorial-Knoxville News Sentinel, April 3, 1978].

It seems that the television industry just cannot understand that millions of Americans just want good, clean, moral, entertainment. Not only do they fail to understand our plea, but so far they have not been very sympathetic with the many letters requesting that they help clean up Television programming. It is understandable—they want commercial success (spelled MONEY) rather than the good will of viewers.

"At the same time the industry noticed the commercial success of shows like Charlie's Angels and Three's Company. And since T.V. programmers are nothing if not copycats, a call went out through Hollywood for actresses with 38-D chests and masses of blonde hair" [Knoxville News-Sentinel, April 3, 1978].

Christians have been forewarned concerning what is coming. Let's not wait until it is here. Let's get started NOW writing sponsors expressing our appreciation for their concern and action in helping rid T.V. of excessive

violence and letting them know that we aren't interested in the plans for sexploitation. We can do something about it.

"Fortunately, the public and especially parents do not have to put up meekly with anything the networks want to sell. They showed their clout in getting egregious violence toned down and they can do the same if they find the sexploitation shown offensive" [Knoxville News Sentinel, April 3, 1978].

Let's start our letter writing NOW to the following sponsors and ask them not to sponsor the sex shows which the T.V. industry has planned for next season, and encourage them to make the public's wishes known to those who sell T.V. advertising time to businesses.

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Some Queries Relative To The Lord's Supper

Continued from page 1

time for the Christian to observe the Lord's Supper. Nisan or Abib was the first month of the Jewish religious year. Luke did not say that upon the 14th day of Nisan the disciples met to break bread; he said the FIRST DAY of the week. Paul did not teach in First Corinthians 16 and 11 that their giving and the partaking of the Lord's Supper respectively were to be performed on the 14th day of Nisan. Such a theory calls for partaking of the Supper yearly as there was only ONE 14th day of Nisan in the Jewish religious year. This is fifty-one less times than the New Testament Scriptures authorize. The laws of the Hebrew Passover do not guide and govern the Lord's Supper. These people need to read closely and clearly Galatians 5 and observe minutely what a return to one point of Judaism demands and what the clear consequence of such is. A return for one dogma of Judaism demands a return to it all. The clear consequence is a falling away from grace (Gal. 5:4-ASV). This is exactly their spiritual position right now.

(3 and 4) William Barclay is not an authority on the Lord's Supper. Though a popular and widely read commentator he propagates fatal error in his commentaries, is a full fledged denominationalist and is modernistic in too many of his teachings. Barclay is not even a New Testament Christian. How utterly absurd therefore to allow him to lead Christians away from the truth. Too many of our brethren think more of men like Barclay than they do of the Bible. How utterly sad. Mr. Barclay belongs to a religious group that neither preaches nor practices the truth relative to Christian worship in general and the Lord's Supper in particular.

(5) The Christian is no more obligated to follow the Hebrew or Jewish mode of time as determining when a day begins and ends than he is in using the Hebrew or Jewish mode of monthly or yearly calculations. Do these people number their months from Nisan, the first month of the Jewish year, to Adar, their last month or do they use January, February, March, etc.? Do they use the Jewish mode of calculations? If so, which one? The Jewish religious year began in what we now call March. The civil year began in what we now call September. There is absolutely no precedent in any of these for the Christian to observe. A close study of the entire Bible will reveal that the Jews were influenced in time calculations from time to time. Hence, we have the change from three watches in the night to four watches. We have changes from Hebrew time to Roman time. The latter is the same as ours—that is from midnight to midnight. If people are going to insist that the Christian must count time as Jews did—from sundown—then the Lord's Supper could be observed anytime from 6:00 Saturday evening to 6:00 on Sunday evening. According to this then, the TEV and the NEB are right in their renderings of Acts 20:7 about the Saturday evening time factor. We are NOT under Jewish calculations of time, day-wise, month-wise or year-wise. We surely ARE NOT Judaism ordinance-wise either!!

(6) May the Supper be observed at any time except during the hours of darkness? These brethren who have changed seemed shocked and surprised that Brother Holland would call it a Supper and then eat it at noon! To them Supper means supper and must be eaten when darkness prevails. But supper or the evening meal is eaten in many parts of the world before darkness sets in. When I am on

the West Coast for meeting or lectureship work the evening meal is eaten during the spring and early summer long before the sun sets. I imagine these people also eat supper during June—when our days are longest and nights are shortest—before darkness descends. In Revelation 19:11 we read about the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Yet in heaven there will be no night there (Rev. 21:25). If supper and night cannot be separated, the marriage supper of the Lamb can never be celebrated. If so, HOW and WHEN? Are they ready to accept the conclusions of their own premises? The Supper part of the name does

not limit it to a 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. time zone and no other. The Lord's Supper can be observed any hour that falls upon the first day of the week. That can be the Lord's Day morning, the Lord's Day afternoon or the Lord's Day evening. I once observed the Lord's Supper in Jerusalem about daybreak on Sunday. It is just as Scriptural then as at noon, in the afternoon or just after darkness has descended on the Lord's Day evening.

It is my sincere hope that these answers will be of aid in their coming back to truth. — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Predictions For Coming Tv Season Sexploitation, Sexolatry and Then More Sex

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

Have They Not Heard?

DAN JENKINS

The question asked in the title of this article is found in Romans chapter ten. It is found in the midst of a discussion of why the Jews have not accepted the gospel. God's plan of salvation is simple, available to all regardless of his background. But when one noticed that the Jews had rejected that which was so obvious the response was, "Surely they must not have heard!" There are many truths that appear so obvious that when one observes how they are ignored he is lead to ask, "In view of the fact that truth is so clearly set forth and some do not hear it, have they not heard?"

HAVE THEY NOT HEARD ABOUT MODESTY?

Consider the number of sermons preached and articles written every year on this subject. Let the spring temperatures rise just a few degrees and the "race is on" to see who can expose the most of their bodies the quickest! Unfortunately many Christians will let the world's influence in this area far exceed any consideration of what the Bible says. In fact, some so totally ignore the plain Bible teaching where the word "modesty" appears with the words "shamefacedness and sobriety," that they will affirm that as long as they wear what all others are wearing they can in no way be immodest! Modesty to them is not determined by shamefacedness and sobriety but only by what sinners do! Christian women need to study these three words carefully; their souls are at stake. Christian mothers need to clothe their daughters, even when young, so that they will develop a sense of shamefacedness and sobriety about them. Christian fathers, who understand what effect the immodest dress of wives and daughters have on other males, need to use their authority, given to them from heaven as the heads of families, to see that Christian families are not caught up in this mad race.

The Bible is so plain in regard to the importance of dress that when one considers how some Christians ignore its teaching he

can only ask, "Have they not heard?"

HAVE THEY NOT HEARD ABOUT LASCIVIOUSNESS?

The Bible uses another word which must be considered when one thinks about modesty. In Galatians 5 is found a list of sins of which the Bible says, "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." One of these sins is "lasciviousness." Because this word is not commonly used some may fail to understand its full significance. It means, "tending to cause intense sexual desire." Thus any clothing that by being too tight, too loose, too revealing, causes by its very nature lustful thoughts is sin. This is not "preacher talk" nor "puritanical philosophy" it is Divine truth. Those who are guilty of lascivious actions jeopardize their souls' destiny! The question that ought to be foremost in the minds of Christian women is, "Is the clothing I am wearing designed primarily to appear attractive through sexual appeal?"

The Bible is clear on the subject of lasciviousness. But when one considers how few are affected by its teaching he is lead to ask, "Have they not heard?"

HAVE THEY NOT HEARD ABOUT LUST?

One other factor needs to be considered when one thinks about the dress of Christians. In our age where *beauty* is equated with *sexual appeal* the words of Jesus sound so strange. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). The American philosophy is that women should use the nature of man to attract him, to gain favor from him. The typical office joke reflects just how far the typical American man has given himself over to a life filled with lusting. Jesus makes it clear that such action by men can damn their souls. But what about the woman who dresses in such a way that she invites lusting by others? I Corinthians 8:12 show that one can do a thing that is *right* and sin by doing it when it causes another to do wrong. What about the person who does a

thing that is *doubtful, if not sinful*, and causes another to do wrong??? Something is wrong with the person who can affirm that abbreviated shorts, halter tops, tight pants and modern swim attire does not contribute to lust. What makes one think that the attire used by prostitute does not have the same effect on men when such is worn by "Christian" women?

THEY HAVE HEARD

When the question is asked in Romans 10 the answer is given, "Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." At this time of year bulletins are filled with articles, sermons are preached on this subject, but the problem is not that men have not heard what the Bible says. To far too many of them the problem is though they have heard *they have no desire to do what the Bible says*; the world has far too much influence on them. In reference to this subject, "Have you heard?" — P.O. Box 26156 Birmingham, Al. 35226.

Why They Quit

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The other day I noticed a sign on a wall in a place of business that motivated me to do something of probable points to ponder regarding the why we are losing church members. The sign read as follows:

WHY CUSTOMERS QUIT

- 1% Die
- 3% Move Away
- 5% Other Friends
- 9% Competitive Reasons
- 14% Product Dissatisfaction.
- 68% Quit because of the attitude of indifference of an employee.

Although the reasons given as to the why

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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Baptism A Formula?

There is a prevalent doctrine that is taught and believed and it is: that a person leads a person into a body of water, lifts up his hands and say, "I baptize you in the name of the Lord Jesus." Upon this formula of words the person is saved and if the words are thus spoken, the person is lost. Is this doctrine true? The answer is an emphatic NO.



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

The first reason that this doctrine is not true is that there is no command, apostolic example or necessary inference where a preacher has ever spoken these words to the one being baptized. There is not a book, chapter or verse that illustrates this formula of words being spoken.

The second reason that this doctrine is false is that it puts the power or authority upon the administrator instead of Jesus who is the Saviour of men. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). If a preacher should forget the words of the formula or lose his voice, there would be no way for the one being baptized to be saved, and thus this doctrine puts the power upon the administrator instead of Jesus.

The third reason that this doctrine is not true is that a person is adding to the Word of God. To teach that a preacher must use a certain phrase in administering baptism for the believer to be saved is to teach more than the Word of God teaches. Man is not to add to or take away from the Word of God (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22; 18-19).

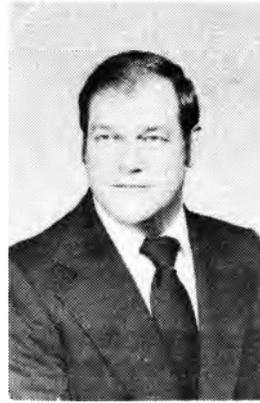
To practice such a formula and to teach that this formula is binding upon the person being baptized is missing the mark of God. The meaning of the word sin is "missing the mark". "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is a transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). When one transgresses the law of God, one is

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How Do You Know God Answers Prayers?

One of the great advantages enjoyed by children of God is the fact that God hears and answers their prayers (Jas. 5:16; I Thess. 5:17). Those who rebel against the will of God cannot expect any good thing to result from their prayers (Jno. 9:31; Prov. 28:9). We believe in prayer; and for a long time have believed that if our requests to God are not complied with, that we can again get down on our knees and thank God that He did not comply with our requests, knowing confidently that God does all things well.



BOBBY DUNCAN

But it is imperative that we keep in mind the fact that all we know about the blessings peculiar to Christians is that which is revealed in the Bible—not what we have experienced or observed. Certainly we can recall receiving blessings for which we had prayed; but this

fact does not argue or prove that God answers prayer. If it did, then it would prove that God answers the prayers of those who engage in every sinful practice under heaven; for what person is there who has not at one time or another seen something come to pass for which he prayed? It would even prove that God answers prayers of false teachers in their efforts to proclaim false doctrine. All of them pray for the success of their various efforts, and all of them at one time or another have experienced or observed what they have considered to be an answer to prayer. Even those who pray to their idols have on occasion seen that come to pass for which they had prayed.

Even so, we sometimes observe our own brethren as they talk about prayer and tell of experiences in their own lives which, to them, proves that God answers prayer. Such reasoning, to say the least, borders on experientialism, and is inconsistent with the fundamental fact that faith is based upon the solid testimony of the word of God (Rom. 10:17).

How do we know that God answers prayer? Because the Bible tells us so! What need we more?

Possessed People, Perhaps?

Does the devil still possess people today? If so, God must still give the signs to believers so demons may be exorcised (Mark 16:17, 18). Yet, two Catholic priests failed in their efforts to rid a young woman of the devil that possessed her and she died of starvation.



RAY HAWK

Many fail to realize that Satan has lost his power to possess people today. When Jesus sent out his apostles on the limited commission they returned and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:17, 18). Before Jesus was crucified he said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). In Rom. 16:20 Paul said, "And the God peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." When Jesus died on the cross he "spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15). The back of Satan had been broken. All that remained of his power was soon to be eliminated by first century believers (Acts 19:12).

Today Satan does not possess people as he did in the first century. If the sign of "casting

out devils" was still being done, so would the signs of taking up serpents and drinking deadly things (Mark 16:18). I haven't seen too many Catholic priests trying to handle snakes and drink poison! Nor others for that matter!

The young German girl who died of starvation had epilepsy, not a demon. The incantations of the Catholic Church for exorcising demons is about as powerful as those used by the sons of Sceva (Acts 19:14-16). In fact all modern exorcists need to realize that if anyone has a devil, it is they for being hoodwinked into believing people are possessed and that they can rid that person of the possession by calling on the name of Jesus and clamping their hand on his head.

We sympathize with the family of the dead woman. It is said that people will believe false doctrines so much that they will give up their life believing in such error. This girl refused food until her devil was cast out and the priests allowed her to continue her twisted belief till death took her. We applaud the German court for prosecuting these two murderers! If we could get our courts here to take the same steps more people could overcome their imagined demons with proper medication!

Many religious parasites feed off peoples' ignorance and superstition today and get rich by claiming to cast out demons and heal the sick. Although many of these have been exposed, the gullible continue to stand by them and line their pockets with gold.

One "faith healer" rose from poverty to immense wealth by claiming "God's power in

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What can be done to counteract the forces of evil and the various forms of unbelief which now threaten to overwhelm us in this country?"

The first thing that ought to be done is for those who love the truth and who are devoted to the Cause of Christ to expose and bring to light every such effort—whether in the church or out of it—in order that faithful disciples may know who are the real enemies of Christ today. Christianity is on the verge of being crucified in the house of its "friends," and tragic though such is, the most appalling thought about the current situation is that so many among us are either utterly indifferent to these developments or what is even worse, acquiescing in them! When men in the church can, and do, launch papers the design of which is to destroy faith in the scriptures by repeatedly raising questions regarding their integrity, and are encouraged and supported in this effort by those who formerly were dedicated to the truth of God's word, it is sadly evident that many have already gone down the road of apostasy.

These assaults on the historic faith, far from being infrequent and hesitant, are now regularly made and in the most direct and obvious fashion. Because they are done under the guise of scholarship and superior learning, many are impressed and being led along the path of unbelief to their eventual destruction. Nothing they present poses any problem for informed people; the "arguments" they offer against the Bible have been answered a thousand times since first they began to be advanced by infidels in the second century since first they began to be advanced by infidels in the second century; and, were it possible to get these men on the polemic platform, short shift would be made of them and of their attacks on God's word. Too shrewd to get into debate, they choose to cloister themselves and to spew out their unbelief from cover, never having directly to answer for their perversions and misrepresentations of the holy scriptures.

It seems not possible, in view of this situation, to exaggerate the importance of periodic reexamination and restatement of the evidences of Christianity and the integrity of the Bible. Gospel preachers ought often to preach sermons on these themes and thus to keep ever before the people the firm ground on which our faith rests.

Those who preach and teach are perhaps justly open to the charge that they have not always supplied their hearers with the materials necessary to the successful resistance of infidelity under its various and often seductive guises. One young man, from a very devout Christian family, after enrolling in an institution of higher learning, commented, "When I went to college, I was totally unprepared to defend myself against the atheistic teaching and atmosphere. I was almost in the position of an Ethiopian nomad who had been trained to protect himself against arrows, spears, and slings, but had been told nothing about machine guns and airplanes. My parents and our minister had given me excellent equipment to down those who use sectarian names, practice sprinkling for baptism, or use instrumented music; but I was totally unprepared to answer the arguments against the inspiration of the Bible and the existence of a personal God, having a real Son (Jesus Christ), which are used so effectively by the teachers of science." This is

truly a serious indictment against us all; and, while it is imperative that we continue to provide our young people with the ability to show the unscripturalness of sectarian names, sprinkling for baptism or instrumental music

in worship, we must also see to it that both young and old are prepared to cope with the unbelief which is being hurled against them in so many forms in the world today.

The Bible Is Being Attacked

No. 3



DALTON KEY

There are various attitudes in regard to the Bible. Some are apathetic toward it, some reject it, some wage war against it, and a very few love, cherish, and respect it. Many today are openly declaring war upon God's Book of Books. Their actions and attitudes are not much unlike those of King Jehoiakim, who had a portion of God's blessed book

burned (Jer. 36:23). The Bible must by all means be vindicated in all such situations.

We are hearing a great deal about the ambiguity of the Bible message. Many among us are claiming that the truth of God's word may be absolute but our understanding of the same must be relative. Can the Bible be understood by the sons and daughters of men? Yes, we believe with all our heart and affirm with all our strength, that the truth of God can and must be known by those who would seek to please Him. If the Bible, as God's word, cannot be understood by us, His creation, then one of the following conclusions must be true: Either (1) God CAN NOT make His will known to man, so that man can understand it, or (2) He WILL NOT. If the first of these conclusions is correct, God's power is limited. If the second is true, His goodness is limited. The agnostic, in attempting to prove the proposition, "The truth of God unknowable," must deal with these two obviously false conclusions which arise logically from his reasoning. We may assume, then, that since both of these conclusions are totally and unmistakably false, then the position to be proved is and must be false as well.

God expects all men to know His truth (Acts 17:30; Jno. 8:32). His will is for all men to come to know the truth, and obey it (I Tim. 2:4). We are certain that we can know God's will, the truth, for Christ plainly and pointedly said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jno. 8:32). Would God expect out of us the impossible? Christ invites men with the words, "Take my yoke upon you, and LEARN OR ME" (Matt. 11:28-30). Once again we inquire, would God ask men to do the impossible? We think not! God, through John, said, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son" (II Jno. 9). It seems quite obvious that our Lord not only WANTS us to know the truth, but He EXPECTS and DEMANDS it as well.

According to the apostle Paul, we can know the truth. He urged the Ephesian brethren,

"Be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). He encourages Timothy with the words, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures" (II Tim. 3:14, 15). Yes, we can and must know the truth of God.

The modern-day Pentecostal Movement, which was limited to denominational realms until a few years back but is now infiltrating the church of Christ in many areas, is one of the chief culprits in attacking the Bible's completeness. By claiming the experience of present day revelations, they imply, and often affirm that the word of God, the Bible, is not completely adequate without these revelations.

According to Peter, God has already given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). Paul states that the inspired scriptures will make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnish him unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16, 17). God, through Jude, tells us that the faith was delivered once for all (Jude 3, ASV).

"But the ancient message of the New Testament," someone says, "just is not relevant today. We need something more up to date; more attuned to today's problems and cultures." If this claim is true, God's word has lost its power. Not only this, but we have no relevant message from God, if His written revelation is obsolete. Is the first century gospel of Christ out of date so as to be non-effective? We think not! While surroundings and circumstances may change, sin and salvation do not. What would you change about God's word in order to up-date it, my friend? Would you alter the changeless God of heaven or His Son? Would you change the fact that God sent His Son to die for the sins of a wrecked and ruined mankind? No, man is still in need of salvation today just as he was in the days of our Lord's earthly pilgrimage. What was sinful then is sinful now. The means whereby men may be saved have not changed. The atonement of our Saviour's sacrifice has not been altered, nor is there a need for such alteration.

If we need a new, more relevant Bible, then by all means we need a new Saviour as well, for He is at the very heart and hub of the Bible message. The scheme of redemption revolves around the Lord Jesus Christ. Without His selfless sacrifice there would be no gospel. Yet Christ does not change, neither is there a need for Him to change (Heb. 13:8). Furthermore, His word is sufficient; it is pure, perfect, and profitable, and as such will not pass away (II Tim. 3:16, 17; Matt. 24:35; I Pet. 1:24, 25).

Yes, the blessed word of God is just as relevant today as it was at the time of its writing. Just as it pricked the hearts of the penitent Pentecostians and caused Felix to tremble, it can produce results in the hearts and minds of men today (Acts 2:36, 37; 24:25). — Douglass, Ks. 67039.

Why They Quit

Continued from page 1

customers quit patronizing a business and the specific percentage of those who do would not necessarily be accurate and applicable to people who 'quit the church,' there are some similarities.

The fellowship of a local congregation is decreased in number often because of the deaths of our brethren. However, there is the promise of eternal life given to those "who die in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13). Therefore, we do not sorrow "even as the rest, who have no hope" (I Thess. 4:13).

Also, there are members who move from one location to another, thus, the necessity of worshiping with another congregation of God's people. These Christians should join themselves "to the disciples" (Acts 9:26) as was the desire of Saul. In becoming identified with the local flock, they can work under the oversight of the elders (I Pet. 5:1).

The next two reasons can be mentioned together. Some members quit the local congregation because of "other friends" and "Competitive reasons." It depends on how you look at these reasons as to your understanding of them. First of all, in areas where there are several "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16), you can find a great deal of "sheep stealing" in evidence. There are members who are much like butterflies as they fly from here to there constantly looking for the perfect congregation, always finding fault with the church where they are presently worshipping. They might be classified as the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." On the other hand, there are Christians who are adversely influenced by their friends in the denominational world. The fifth reason is closely related to the two preceding ones, that is, dissatisfaction in the product. It is sad but true that there are brethren who become dissatisfied with the simple gospel of God and the body of our Lord. They lose their faith and understanding in New Testament Christianity. Because of the lack of real Bible study, they cannot any longer see the difference between the non-denominational body of Christ and human organizations. They have succumbed to peer, social and cultural pressures. In the church, their teaching and practices were too restricted by the Holy Scriptures. They desired greater freedom. They became like Israel of old who committed spiritual adultery by following after other gods and sought other doctrines like the Galatians (Gal. 1:6-9). By not being rooted and grounded in the truth, they are "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error" (Eph. 4:11-16).

Lastly, you will observe that the largest percentage of customers who quit a specific business did so because of "the attitude of indifference of an employee." How many times have you been ignored by an employee when you really needed some help and attention. Have you ever been treated with an air of indifference in a store? What about just plain rudeness served with an "I don't care" attitude by some employee. Have you ever said, "I'm never going back there"?

The consider the congregation where the elders possess the attitude of "We really don't care whether you worship with us or not." Where the preacher lets it be known in an ugly manner that the doors are opened for you to walk back out if you don't intend to do this or that. Where members are cold and stay aloof from new people. Where young Christians are left alone with no guidance and encouragement from older Christians. Where weak members are never visited by the elders,

preacher and the rest of the congregation. Where the elderly are neglected to become discouraged in their loneliness. Where there is no real effort to restore the erring (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19,20) nor to "lift up the hands that hang down, and the palsied knees" (Heb. 12:12).

Baptism A Formula?

Continued from page 2

missing the mark of God.

The practice of saying a certain formula is not necessarily baptism in the name of Jesus at all, but just calling a formula over a person. It reminds me of the Jews in Acts 19:13. The Jews thought the power of healing in the name of Jesus was in calling it "over" the person. Acts 19:15 illustrates the point perfectly: "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are Ye?"

To believe the doctrine that the words "in the name of the Lord Jesus" must be spoken for the baptism to be valid, then the inevitable conclusion would be that Phillip made a mistake and the Ethiopian eunuch was lost because Phillip baptized the eunuch and did not use one word as a formula in baptizing

Brethren, the hard cold fact is that we who are "the faithful" may very well contribute to the problem of many brethren "quitting the church" because of our own indifference and negligence. If so, let us repent and manifest a greater love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. — Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

him so far as is recorded (Acts 8:36-38).

In giving the commission, Jesus said *what to do* and not *what you are to say*. Therefore as you read the conversions in Acts of the 3,000 (Acts 2), the Samaritans (Acts 8:1-24), The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-22), Cornelius (Acts 10), Lydia (Acts 16:13-15), the Corinthian (Acts 18:7-8), the Phillippian Jailor (Acts 16:30-34), and the Ephesians (Acts 19:1-7), you can rest assured that their baptism was scriptural, because the one administering the baptizing did what Jesus said to do, and that is to baptize into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). The efficacy of baptizing is not in what the preacher says but what he does. — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al 35580.

Possessed People, Perhaps?

Continued from page 2

his right hand to heal". Yet recently, the man has put forth efforts to build a 700 bed hospital! I guess his power ran out? Could there be money in hospitals too and what Oral Roberts fails to heal he may send to his hospital? If he cannot bilk them one way he will extract in another!

If demon possession did continue today I am sure many of the exorcists like Roberts, The

Catholic priests, and other Pentecostals would dislike it. Why? Because the evil spirit would say "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" (Acts 19:15). Then he would leap upon them and send them fleeing "naked and wounded" (Acts 19:16). Hummm. Maybe we need devil possession today. It might cut down on all these fakes.—4868 LaVentana Terrace, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

Born Again

WALTER BUCHANAN

A ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. He acknowledged that Jesus must be a teacher from God "for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him". It was here that Jesus told Nicodemus that a person must be born again if he's to enter the kingdom. Nicodemus did not understand; he thought Jesus meant that a person had to enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born. But Jesus explained, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:1-5).

Exactly what did Jesus mean when He spoke of being "born again" and "being born of water and of the Spirit"? We all know that before a birth can occur there must be a begettal, the planting of the seed. Peter wrote of this: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1:23). Thus, when the seed, which is the Word of God (Luke 8:11) is planted in a person's mind, he is begotten, or born of the Spirit.

The birth of water is an obvious reference to baptism, without which one's sins cannot be forgiven. When one hears the Word,

believes it, repents of his sins, confesses Christ as the Son of God, and is baptized into Christ the new birth is complete. He is now a child of God and heir of God. Have you been born again?—Highway 71 North, Bentonville, Ark. 72712.

Come With Us To The Bible Lands

My family and I invite you to join us for a tour of the lands of the Bible, departing New York June 16. We will see Rome, Egypt, Israel and Jordan in this thirteen day tour. Those who desire may extend the tour to include Athens and Corinth. The price of the thirteen day tour is only \$1345 per person. In every place we go, advance arrangements will have been made for hotel, meals, guides, etc. For a full-color brochure write: Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.



Words Of Tr

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

— Acts 26:25

The Last Pronounced Blessing

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (Revelation 22:21). The last pronounced blessing in the Bible is a blessing of grace of Christ upon every servant of His. It is noteworthy that the book of Revelation opens with the same kind of blessing. Rev. 1:4 says, "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you." Thus, this closing book begins and ends with a similar blessing.



TOMMY VERNON

The promise of blessed grace is not peculiar to the book of Revelation. Rather, the New Testament abounds with this same announcement over and over again. It seemed that whenever the apostle Paul wrote an epistle, these words must be included in the message that he wrote even though he was writing but a few chapters. His usual close was, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Let us note the blessing itself. The word "grace" means "favor," and yet the Bible shows that God's favor is undeserved by human kind. Therefore, this pronouncement was a final reminder of our unworthiness and of God's ever abounding mercy toward those of us who fear God's eternal and everlasting Word. Certainly, these are two facts that every child of God need to remember, the one to keep him humble and the other to keep him thankful.

Could one find a better climax to the Bible as the entire Bible is the story of the grace of God as it unfolded upon man? In the study of the Old Testament, we are studying God's preparation for the bestowal of that grace

through Christ. In the study of the New Testament, we are studying how that grace is bestowed and how men have grown strong in that grace. Regardless of where one turns in either part of the Bible, it seems that he is constantly running across the word "grace." Thus, in so many ways, the entire work of God to bring salvation to man can be comprehended in this word "grace."

Keep in mind that it is the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that is mentioned. Even as the whole Bible is the setting forth of the grace of God, so was the grace of God made known to man through Christ. John 1:16, 17 says, "Of his fulness have all we received; and grace for grace. The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Therefore, the Bible concludes by speaking of its central theme (character), and notice what it calls Him. It calls Him "Jesus," His earthly name given by the angel Gabriel and meaning "salvation." It calls him "Christ," His special title as God's anointed Prophet, Priest and King. It calls Him "Lord," which means "Master". He was sending this book to His servants (1:1); therefore, the appropriateness of speaking of Him as "Lord."

Certainly, no greater blessing could be

pronounced upon anyone than this final blessing. What more could one ask for than the grace of Christ to be upon him? It truly reminds us of Christ's words to the disciples contained in the great commission. They were His first servants. He was their Lord. With the message ready to be delivered, He commissioned them for their world-wide work of preaching the gospel. Having designated them their work, He said, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). This is and always has been the promise of Jesus to His faithful servants.

Thus, we reach the "Amen" in these words concerning the closing statements in the Bible. As we have seen, each statement is a tremendous thought carefully selected by Inspiration and much dwelt upon throughout the Bible. Such a compacting together of these statements helps us realize that God truly closed His written revelation to man with the book of Revelation, and they also help us realize what God counts important. May the thoughts presented provoke us more and more as time proceeds, and may these words greatly impress these final truths delivered to us from heaven upon our hearts. — Rt. 1, Box 135, Bear Creek, Alabama 35543.

Lipscomb Opens New Preacher Training Center

WILLARD COLLINS

David Lipscomb College will open the William Anderson Preacher Training Center with the beginning of the fall quarter, 1978. This Center will be directed by Tom Holland, Professor of Bible and Speech.

New equipment with a value of \$15,750 is being purchased for this laboratory. The Center will be housed in what has formerly been known as the Cockrill House on the Lipscomb campus. This house will be remodeled. The first floor will include Tom Holland's office, the preacher training laboratory, and one classroom.

Lipscomb is fortunate to have Tom Holland to direct this work since he is esteemed throughout the brotherhood as a very excellent preacher of the gospel and a very effective teacher of the Bible. Holland is the regular preacher for the English division of World Radio and has been selected to preach for the Crieve Hall congregation in Nashville, Tennessee. He will move to Nashville during the summer. He holds the doctor's degree in speech, and he is loved and admired as are few other preachers in the church today.

Words of Truth

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Be Careful What You Oppose



BOBBY DUNCAN

In practically every issue of this paper we publish articles the design of which is to warn against dangers confronting the church of Christ. We firmly believe the people of God must cry out in opposition to every unscriptural doctrine and practice, both in and out of the church. If the purity of the church is to be maintained, we must have the courage to stand firmly for that which is right and against that which is wrong.

We believe, however, it is imperative that we be careful what we oppose, just as surely as we must be careful what we support. Some have opposed things that really should be opposed is not heard. They are like the boy who cried, "Wolf," when there was no wolf; and when the wolf finally came, no one paid any attention to his cries. There is such a thing as real liberalism, and it is in the church. But if we brand as Liberal every person who differs with us in matters of personal judgment, we are conditioning those who hear us to pay little or no attention to us when it becomes necessary for us to cry out against the real thing.

Take for example those who oppose eating in the meetinghouse as being a practice

belonging to Liberalism. When they begin to cry out against real Liberalism, those who have seen through their arguments against eating in the meetinghouse will be inclined to pay little attention to their warnings against the real thing.

Some have opposed as Liberalism church contributions to feed and clothe innocent children who are not yet old enough to obey the gospel. When real Liberalism has reared its ugly head, the warnings of these have largely gone unheeded by those who have become accustomed to hearing cries of "Liberalism" where there was no Liberalism. When we try to bind upon intelligent people things which God has not bound, we are conditioning them to minimize the importance of our preaching, even when we are preaching vital truth.

In Isaiah 5:20 a woe is pronounced upon those who call evil good; but the same verse also pronounces a woe upon those who call good evil. There are two classes of people in the church who are helping the forces of Liberalism sweep through our ranks: (1) those who have neither the courage nor the inclination to oppose that which is unscriptural, but whose voices are largely unheeded because they have cried out so loud and so often against things which never should have been opposed to begin with.

Our prayer to the Father should be that we will always have the courage, the wisdom, and the inclination to oppose that which is wrong. But we should pray also for patience and strength to refrain from branding as Liberal any thing—our own personal dislikes however much notwithstanding—that is not Liberal.

Preaching Jesus

LEO POWERS

There is a wonderful account of conversion to Christ in Acts 8, the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch. Philip the preacher, had been in a successful gospel meeting in Samaria. Multitudes heard the preaching of the gospel, and there was much joy in that city (Acts 8:5-8). In the meantime, a nobleman from Ethiopia had been to Jerusalem to worship. In all likelihood, this man had been a proselyte to Judaism. Now he was on his way home to Ethiopia. The angel of the Lord called Philip away from the successful meeting in Samaria, in which many men and women were baptized, to preach to this one man as he traveled back home.

After a few opening remarks and a comment on the passage (Isaiah 53) from which the eunuch was reading, Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35). What did Philip preach when he "preached unto him Jesus?"

There are many things Philip could have said. Any gospel preacher preparing a sermon on Jesus could approach it from a number of standpoints. He could begin, as did Philip, with the prophecy of Isaiah 53. He could develop his theme along the lines of the death and suffering of Jesus Christ. He could climax his lesson with an account of the resurrection of Jesus from the grave on the first day of the week. Perhaps, he could relate instances of our Lord's appearances to his disciples following his resurrection and close his lesson by relating the account of our Lord's giving the great commission and then ascending back to the Father.

There are any number of ways we could think of that Philip would use to approach his theme as he preached unto him Jesus. In addition to the above, Philip might have related instances in the life and teachings of Jesus. The account of his miraculous conception and his birth while his mother was abiding in a stable. He could have told the story of Jesus in the temple at the age of twelve. He could have related the account of the baptism of our Lord by John followed by

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How Much Is WOT Worth?



MICHAEL D. STONE

I was not asked to write this article, however, I am respectfully requesting that it be published. Let us consider the question, how much is WORDS OF TRUTH worth?

His great weekly publication was begun some years ago by the late Gus Nichols, former preacher for the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, Jasper, Alabama. How much was Gus Nichols worth of our great brotherhood? One cannot put a price tag on the knowledge and Godly life of this great preacher. The WORDS OF TRUTH paper is worth much because of Gus Nichols. Also, appreciation needs to be expressed to the good elders of the Sixth Avenue congregation who have exercised the oversight of this paper in a fine fashion. Some time back, I wrote them a letter expressing my personal

appreciation for their wonderful service to our brotherhood with WORDS OF TRUTH. And, the current editor, Bobby Duncan, continues the paper after the fashion of Gus Nichols.

WORDS OF TRUTH is worth the timely articles which appear on its pages. There has never been, to my knowledge, any error taught through this paper. That cannot be said of some of "Our" publications. This paper is truly WORDS OF TRUTH! Because of this fact, the elders where I preach send the paper into each home in the congregation. We cannot put a price tag on the influence this publication has had on our lives. Other elders across our great land are realizing the same thing as evidenced by the growth of the paper.

WORDS OF TRUTH is worth its money. It costs only \$4.16 a year to receive this weekly. What other publication can you receive on a weekly basis for only eight cents per copy? Elders, it will cost only eight cents per copy to have WORDS OF TRUTH mailed directly into the homes of every member. Bobby Duncan will be glad to send elders or preachers a free bundle of samples to be passed out to the church or at preacher's meetings, etc.

How much is W.O.T. worth? A LOT! — 503 Plymouth Street, Kannapolis, N. C. 38081.

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

Reprinted by permission from the book *QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS OPEN FORUM, FREEDOM FARMERMAN COLLEGE LECTURES*, by Guy N. Woods.

"Please show by the scriptures that the theory of evolution is false."

"And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" (Gen. 2:18, 21-24). The operation was thus performed while the man was in a state of anesthesia. The verb *slept*, in the original text designates deep sleep—one of such depth that Adam was insensible of what was occurring. While he thus slept, God opened his side, removed one of his ribs, closed the incision, and from the rib thus taken from Adam was the woman formed.

"And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Gen. 2:21-24). This is a significant affirmation, and a thorough refutation of the absurd theories of evolution today being taught. Here is asserted, in the most positive

manner, and by an authority unimpeachable, the unity of the race of man, his descent from one ancestor, and the utter and complete separation of the human race from the lower creation. On the testimony of the Holy Spirit himself, are we privileged to rely for the evidence that man and woman came directly from the hand of God, and though intimately related the one to the other, are wholly unrelated to, and without any organic connection whatsoever with, the animals which God made and Adam named.

Many people today no longer believe the Biblical account of creation as recorded by Moses, and think that all things, including man, resulted from evolutionary processes resident therein, and without any direct intervention by deity. Those who thus do have, of course, repudiated the scriptural record of creation. It is not possible to believe the evolutionary theory as it is taught today, and maintain faith in God and in his word. Those who reject the teaching of the Bible as a complete document, is to be determined by

one's convictions regarding the origin of the world and of man. The Genesis account of creation and the evolutionary theory are in utter variance; it is impossible to harmonize them; one may be accepted only by rejecting the other. Any teacher whether in the church or out, who speaks to leave the impression that one can believe evolution and the Bible is guilty of undermining faith in God and his word. This allegation of harmony is only a sop thrown to those being duped while the destruction of their faith goes on.

The truly great men in the scientific world have freely acknowledged their inability to account for the beginning of life. Sir Oliver Lodge, in his *Man And The Universe* (Sixth edition, London, 1909, page 29), has said that "ultimate origins are inscrutable. Let us admit as scientific men, that of real origin, even of the simplest thing, we know nothing, not even of a pebble." Let them then, be together, with all lesser lights, modestly remain silent when God speaks!

The Father And Son One Person?

The practice of baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus only comes from the doctrine that there is only one person in the Godhead. Or another expression of this teaching is that God the Father and the Son are the same person. Inasmuch as the Father and Son are the same person then baptism must be in the name of the Lord Jesus, according to this doctrine. Does the Bible, the Word of God, teach this doctrine? The answer is an emphatic NO.



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

not sit on the right hand of God for they are the same, and he was just sitting by himself (Mark 16:19). Jesus was not to be about the Father's business but his own business (Luke 2:49). God did not give his Son to the world, Jesus just gave himself (John 3:16). God did not glorify his Son for they are the same and Jesus glorified himself (Acts 3:13). God did not raise Jesus from the dead, Jesus raised himself and Paul is mistaken to teach people to confess that God did something that he did not do (Rom. 10:9) Jesus said I am not a mediator, because I cannot stand between the Father and man because the Father and I are the same (I Tim. 2:5). To accept such teaching would be to accept sheer nonsense.

The Lord's church was built upon the truth

of the confession that Peter made when he confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Upon this great confession by Peter, Jesus said: "Upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). The church was built "upon the rock" that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord's body, the church, will stand forever (Dan. 2:44).

No, the Father and the Son are not the same person, and we should always be thankful to God for His Son, Jesus Christ, and for the privilege of being members of the church that was built upon the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al. 35580.

Freedom Of Speech And Religion

Among the things most cherished by Americans are those freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution and Bill of Rights. These guarantees to personal, individual freedom have made ours the most fortunate nation on earth in every way. Here the Lord's church has flourished as no where else in the world.

The words of Moses to Israel well describe our situation "For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there,



JOHN WADDEY

that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law...Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw..." (Deut. 4:7-9). Surely the Most High that rules in the kingdoms of men hath smiled on us (Dan. 4:25). But those to whom he gives his holy gifts must be careful to protect them lest they be stolen away.

Today dark shadows are being cast over the land of the free. Crime and immorality of all kinds blight our nation and infringe on our personal rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The Supreme Court has arrogantly denied the right to life to the unborn. Now a new assault upon our liberties is seen.

N.B.C. radio has censored a sermon to be preached on the Lutheran Hour radio broadcast. This is the first time in 22 years of

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Freedom Of Speech And Religion

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broadcasting that such has happened to the Lutheran program. This is a bold step toward the denial of the first amendment guarantee of the freedom of speech. That it is directed toward a responsible religious group is all the more ominous. The sermon topic? *Sanctity of Life*, a Biblical study of abortion, concluding it to be sinful. The approach was moderate and restrained.

N.B.C is not pioneering this denial of the freedom of speech to those who hold to the Biblical view of the sacredness of human life. She joins numbers of newspapers which have refused to sell and space to pro-life groups for similar messages.

One wonders why those media professionals who are so sensitive to the very thought of outside censorship (even when one of their peers has been obviously irresponsible) express no moral outrage at this blatant abuse by N.B.C.? Where are the American Civil Liberties lawyers?

On the other hand, if the Supreme Court can deny the "unalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" to 1½ million human lives (unborn babies) each year, it is really a small matter for the media to deny the right of free speech to a church. Does Mr. Carter's campaign for human rights apply here at home or only in Southern Africa? Freedom is a precious commodity held together by fragile threads, easily broken. Those who would preserve their freedom must ever be alert to any threat against it. For once broken it is extremely difficult to mend.

You may respond, but that is the Lutheran

Church, why should we worry? The answer is simple; we are dealing here with principle and precedent. If this denial is allowed, then the same could happen to our own radio television, newspaper evangelistic work. Paraphrasing the immortal words of John Donne:

No Church is an Island, entire of itself,
If England loses its freedom, is Europe not the less?

Any Church's oppression diminishes us, for we are involved in mankind.

Therefore, if someone shall say a church has lost its liberty,

Do not send to find for whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.

I urgently appeal to you to write your

protests immediately and send them to the following:

1. National Broadcasting Company, president, Jack Thayer, Radio Division No. 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10020.
2. Your local NBC radio affiliate.
3. The federal Communications Commission, Chairman Charles D. Farris, 1919 M. Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20554.
4. Copies to your U.S. Senators and Representatives.
5. Letters to your local newspaper editors.
6. Urge all members of your congregation, family and friends to write as well. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

Preaching Jesus

Continued from page 2

his temptation. He might have related some of the great miracles that Jesus performed—the feeding of the 5,000, the raising of Lazarus, giving sight to blind Bartimaeus. He could have told the great story of the sermon on the mount and mention some of the unforgettable parables of our Lord, such as the sower, the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, the rich man and Lazarus. Any gospel preacher could immediately think of different approaches that Philip might have

used as he preached unto him Jesus.

While these are some of the things Philip MIGHT have said, there is one thing that I KNOW he taught the eunuch, and that is the necessity of baptism in water for the remission of his sins; otherwise, why did the eunuch say, "Behold, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (v. 36)? What I have suggested that Philip MIGHT have preached, is only THAT—suggestion. I can suppose that Philip preached some or all of these things and maybe more, as he preached unto him Jesus, but I can be CERTAIN that Philip explained to the eunuch the New Testament teaching of baptism, and his necessity of doing so.

So frequently we hear people say, "Just preach Jesus. Don't get involved in doctrinal lessons. Just preach Jesus." A few years ago, the cry of some was, "Preach the man—not the plan." But it is obvious that Philip, in preaching the Man, preached the plan. And it is to the eunuch's credit that upon this confession of faith in Jesus, he was baptized in water for the remission of his sins and went on his way rejoicing, having his sins washed away and being a new relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are on safe ground, like Philip, we "preach unto him Jesus." We are on safe ground when, like Philip, we include with emphasis the necessity of obedience to the Lord in baptism. Let's have more preaching to Jesus. — 434 S. Main St. Milan, TN. 38358.

Wrong Orders

Jim E. Ealdron

Several years ago there was a disastrous train wreck in New York State. The engineer whose train had caused the catastrophe was found alive, but pinned under his engine. In great agony he took a piece of yellow paper from his pocket and thrust it out to his would-be rescuers saying, "Take this; it will show I was given the wrong orders."

Just so, many people are going to go before the judgement bar of God saying, I was given the wrong orders. The scriptures plainly show that we must all stand before the judgement seat of Christ; even as it is written: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgement-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" (II Cor. 5:10), and again, "for we shall all stand before the judgement-seat of God" (Rom. 14:10).

Many leaders of the people who mould public opinion in religion, politics, science and education, who feel like God will reward them at judgement for their good service to humanity, are going to be sadly disappointed because their service has been according to their own will, or their own traditions, or erroneous philosophy. For God's word says, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy

name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23 A.V.).

Leaders in religion will bear a special responsibility to God for the things they have taught; for God's word warns "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgement" (Jas. 3:1). Religious leaders who have saddled the Christian faith with vain traditions that adulterate its purity and simplicity rest under a curse (Gal. 1:7-9). In other words, the masses who have been led astray with human creed books, hierarchal systems, false baptisms and superstitious rituals that have no authority in the word of God are going to face God and cry, "We were given the wrong orders."

Some often excuse themselves by saying it is not my fault if our leader is wrong; but God's word says "if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:14).

Let faithful men of God everywhere faithfully reject the vain traditions of men and give the right orders to a lost and dying world.

Rt. 2, Beaver Ridge Road
Knoxville, Tenn. 37921

Come With Us To The Bible Lands

My family and I invite you to join us for a tour of the lands of the Bible, departing New York June 16. We will see Rome, Egypt, Israel and Jordan in this thirteen day tour. Those who desire may extend the tour to include Athens and Corinth. The price of the thirteen day tour is only \$1345 per person. In every place we go, advance arrangements will have been made for hotel, meals, guides, etc. For a full-color brochure write: Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.



Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

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NUMBER 23

"In Christ"

The phrase, "In Christ," is the key that unlocks the door to all spiritual benefits. It is the apostle Paul's trademark; over and over he used the expression to indicate the realm for us as Christians to make a study of the New Testament to find out just exactly what we have in Christ. Such a study can be both edifying and comforting.



HUGH FULFORD

RECONCILIATION

"In Christ" we have reconciliation. Paul declared, "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). We were *alienated* from God because of sin (Eph. 2:11, 12); we are *reconciled* (made nigh) to God by being washed in the blood of Christ and entering into Christ. The very purpose for which Christ died was that he might reconcile all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, "in one body unto God" (Eph. 2:16). One out of Christ is not reconciled unto God and thus is still in his sins.

NO CONDEMNATION

"In Christ" we are without condemnation. Paul wrote, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). While yet in sin we were under the cloud of God's condemnation. If we *remain* in Christ we will *remain* uncondemned. We must not only live in the Lord, but we must also *die* in the Lord in order not to be condemned (Rev. 14:13).

NEW CREATURE

"In Christ" we are new creatures. Paul affirmed, "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (I Cor. 5:17). When one obeys the gospel and enters into Christ he is converted (changed) from one

thing (an alien sinner) into something new (a child of God). As a new creature, he is to live in newness of life (Rom. 6:3,4).

REDEMPTION

"In Christ" we have redemption. Paul said, "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). To be redeemed is to be purchased. We are redeemed from our sins by the blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18, 19). Blood-redeemed people constitute the church; thus, the church itself is said to have been purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). As people redeemed by the blood of Christ we belong to the Lord and are to be "a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:11-14).

CHILDREN OF GOD

"In Christ" we are children of God. Again, from the pen of Paul we read, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26). This passage is *not* teaching that Christ is the *object* of our faith, though there are many New Testament passages which do teach that Christ is the object of the Christian's faith. However, this particular passage is saying that we are children of God by a process of faith (the gospel) when we are in Christ Jesus. Without doing violence to the passage we could transpose the clauses of the verse and have it read, "Through faith, ye are all sons of God in Christ Jesus." Unless one is in Christ he is not a son of God, and the process that puts one in Christ is a system of faith—the gospel (Rom. 1:16, 17).

ETERNAL LIFE

"In Christ" we are partakers of eternal life. The apostle John declared, "And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his son" (I Jno. 5:11). Out of Christ one is spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). In Christ, one is spiritually alive and possesses the hope of everlasting life. Thus, John says, "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life" (I Jn. 5:12).

ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

"In Christ" we have *all* spiritual blessings. Paul stated, in a fitting summation of all spiritual benefits to be found in Christ, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). There is not a spiritual blessing to be found anywhere outside of Christ; all such blessings are located only in him. Thus, only those who are in Christ have such blessings as have been discussed in this article.

CONCLUSION

Seeing the importance of being in Christ, surely the important question is, "How do I get into Christ?" Paul explains how. He says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). This statement is made immediately after Paul has affirmed that we are sons of God in Christ Jesus. (See point five above). Having suggested such a noble relationship (that of being children of God), Paul immediately explains how we get into Christ where such a relationship can be enjoyed. He says we are baptized *into Christ!* This, then, is how we become children of God by faith.

Are you in Christ? If not, will you be baptized into Christ today upon a penitent confession of your faith in him as the Son of God? Read, study, and obey the following passages of scripture and know the joy of being "In Christ." (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; Matt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:21; Gal. 3:26, 27; Rev. 14:13). — 101 Dow Drive, Shelbyville, Tennessee 37160.

Be In Bible School
Sunday
With Your Bible!



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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A Greater Trip Than To Go To The Moon

EDSEL BURLESON

There are many great journeys which we take a course of a lifetime. Some will visit points of interest in their own country; some will take a trip to the moon. However, man makes his greatest and most eventful trip when he comes to himself. The most important destination for man in this life is to come to that "port of self."

The prodigal (Luke 15) had made some interesting and "enjoyable" trips while on his way into that far country. It was not until he "came to himself" (verse 17) that he was able really to see what living was all about. "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him" (verse 20). This young man possessed the moral backbone which led him back to his father.

Perhaps, few have traveled as far into the far country as had the prodigal. Yet, any journey which has taken us away from God and our service to him is a "far" country and we should be continually taking that "trip around ourselves."

How long has it been since you really checked up on "you"? A young man walked into a drugstore and asked if he could use the telephone. The druggist gave permission and then heard the boy say: "Hello, Dr. Anderson? Do you want to hire a boy to cut the grass, milk the cow, and run errands for you?" ... "Oh, you already have a boy?" ... "Dr. Anderson, are you completely satisfied with the boy you have?" ... "OK, then. Good bye, doctor."

As the boy thanked the druggist and started out the door, the druggist called to him, "Just a minute, son. If you are looking for work, I could use a boy like you."

"Thank you, sir," replied the boy, "But I already have a job."

"Didn't I just hear you trying to get a job from Dr. Anderson?"

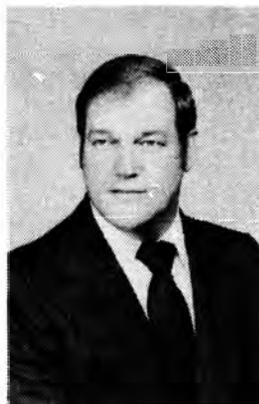
"No, sir," said the boy. "You see, I am the boy who's working for Dr. Anderson, and I was just checking up on myself."

No road leads one so far from God that God will not willingly and gladly receive him back. And no one has taken life's greatest journey until he arrives at the station of himself. — 420 Seventh St. S. W., Birmingham, Al. 35211.



FROM
THE EDITOR

Elders And Miracles



BOBBY DUNCAN

Those who are bent on having their own way will find a way to do it. We cannot help believing that the present controversy over the authority of the eldership has arisen largely because some are discontent to be governed by an eldership; or perhaps it is because some have become disenchanting with a particular eldership, and wanted to shake off its control over the congregation.

There are others who have tried to escape the authority of the eldership in a different way, i.e., by affirming that elders, like apostles and prophets, were peculiar to the miraculous age. It is argued that, in discussing miraculous endowments, Paul mentions pastors (elders) along with apostles and prophets (Eph. 4:11); and since there are no more living apostles and prophets after the cessation of the miraculous age, it must follow that there are no more elders.

Such reasoning as this is faulty for more reason than one. In the first place, it proves too much; and that which proves too much proves nothing. Ephesians 4:11 mentions, not only apostles, prophets, and pastors; but it mentions evangelists and teachers as well. If the passage proves that pastors were limited to the miraculous age, then what about evangelists and teachers? Since the miraculous age has ceased, does this mean we have no such thing today as evangelists and teachers? Why would this verse prove that pastors were limited to the miraculous age, but not evangelists and teachers?

In the second place, the passage under consideration does not teach that one must be miraculously endowed to be an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor, or a teacher. We would grant that apostles and prophets, by the very nature of their work, were of necessity miraculously endowed. But this passage does not teach that, any more than it teaches that evangelists and teachers were of necessity miraculously endowed. What it does teach is that miraculous powers were given during this particular period to enable various functionaries in the church to function as they should in the absence of a complete revelation of the will of God. Some of these functionaries—such as apostles and prophets—were temporary and peculiar to the miraculous age. When the miraculous age ceased, their work was completed, and there was no need for any more apostles and prophets. But some of these functionaries—such as evangelists, pastors, and teachers—performed functions that would continue throughout the Christian age, even after miracles had ceased.

We certainly would not hesitate to grant that during the miraculous age elders, by and large, were men who had received miraculous gifts of the Spirit through the laying on of the

hands of the apostles. But the same could be said about Christians in general during that same period.

The apostles of the first century did their work and completed it. There is no need for living apostles in the church today. The prophets of the first century did their work and completed it. There is no need for living prophets in the church today. The work of evangelists, pastors, and teachers will never be completed as long as the world stands. But it is not necessary for these to be miraculously endowed now that the revelation of God's will is completed and perfected.

Just as long as there is a need for evangelism we will need evangelists. Just as long as there is a need for teaching we will need teachers. And just as long as there are churches that need overseeing there will be a need for overseers.

Man says, "He that believeth AND IS NOT baptized shall be saved" — by faith only, before and without baptism. But Jesus said, "He that believeth AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED." Man puts it (1) Preach the gospel; (2) belief of the gospel; (3) salvation by faith only; (4) Then after salvation be baptized.

But Jesus put it in this order, (1) Preach the gospel; (2) "He that believeth," (3) "And is baptized," (4) "Shall be saved" (Mk. 16:15-16).

If a man is saved by faith before baptism, he is saved out of Christ, for we are said to have been "Baptized INTO Jesus Christ"—"Baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27).

Salvation is not out of Christ, but is in Christ (II Tim. 2:10; Acts 4:11-12; II Cor. 5:17; Rev. 14:13-14). And we are baptized "INTO CHRIST" (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3).

The apostle Peter put remission of sins and the reception of the Holy Spirit after repentance and baptism for or unto remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38). He then exhorted them to be saved (Acts 2:38-40).

The Bible says Christ, "Became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). Men say he is the author of eternal salvation unto those who only believe, and before they obey him

**Subscribe
To The
Words of Truth**

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please show the fallacy of the denominational doctrine of the order of repentance and faith."

Pilate's query, "What is truth?" since so often facetiously asked, has, nevertheless, a sound and satisfactory answer: Truth is "any conception which coincides with fact," and may always be ascertained by a careful collation of all the facts touching the matter, with correct conclusions drawn therefrom. Harmony is of the essence of truth, and is the final test of every hypothesis. Does the conclusion reached coincide with known truth? If yes, the conclusion is irresistible; in no, it is demonstrably false, however plausible it may first appear.

These principles, so obviously true, are, nevertheless, at once the despair and downfall of all advocates of false doctrine. Once a false premise is espoused and adhered to, the espouser finds himself in hopeless and irreconcilable conflict with truth whenever and wherever he meets it. Unwilling to surrender his cherished fallacy, other principles are wrestled to bring them into harmony with his theory; and his error thus becomes progressive, leading him farther and farther from the truth until, pursued to its logical and inevitable end, there is an abandonment of truth, at least in so far as there is contact between the theory espoused and the truth involved.

To illustrate: According to the Baptist view, the order of, and conditions essential to, salvation are: (1) repentance; (2) faith. Repentance is a change of mind, produced by sorrow for sin, and leading to a reformation of life. Essentially, repentance is simply a *change of mind* (for so the word *metanoia*, translated "repentance," signifies), sorrow for sin being merely a condition precedent to the result thereof. What produces a change of mind (i.e., attitude of heart) in the sinner? In a word, all the factors involved in the scheme of redemption. The sinner, through contemplation of his lost condition is led from feelings of gratitude for the provisions made for him to decide to turn from rebellion against God to humble and complete obedience to him. From what source does he derive information touching his lost condition, and where does he learn of the provisions thus made in his behalf? From the Scriptures, of course. What prompts him to act upon the impressions obtained in this manner? *His confidence in the reliability of the facts and principles presented!* But is not this confidence he now enjoys in the sacred writings nothing more nor less than faith? It is indeed, and without it there can be no repentance. Furthermore, it is the acceptance of the facts presented that leads him to *desire to repent!* Faith, then, *must* precede repentance. Faith enables the sinner to repent—in fact, prompts the desire. *Without faith the sinner cannot repent; without faith he would not if he could.* As irresistible and conclusive as these facts are, they are, nevertheless, in hopeless conflict with Baptist doctrine. Why? The basic assumption of their doctrine is the *dogma of salvation by faith only*. They insist that the sinner is saved at the very instant of belief, before and without additional acts of obedience. With such a position it becomes clear that they cannot place repentance *after* faith in their scheme; to do so they would have the sinner "saved" before and without repentance! Thus to get

repentance in their "plan of salvation" at all, they must place it *before* faith! Such an arrangement is illogical, unscriptural, and psychologically impossible. It is, however, but the inevitable consequence of their false theory regarding the plan of salvation. An absurdity growing out of their basic error in this matter, it is the fruit of an effort to be consistent in error while clinging tenaciously to a false premise—viz, that salvation is conditioned on faith only in the Scriptures.

They face a similar difficulty in their position regarding an alien sinner's prayer. While it is a tenet of their doctrine that God will hear and answer the prayer of an alien sinner, their position thereon makes such psychologically impossible. In their view, faith and salvation are concurrent—i.e., the moment the sinner believes, he ceases to be an alien—is saved. Manifestly, then, he cannot pray as an alien *after* faith, for he is, according to their conception, no longer an alien. If therefore, he prays as an alien sinner, it must be before he believes. It is, however, psychologically impossible to pray without faith; moreover, such is displeasing to God (Heb. 11:6). Thus, since an alien cannot pray before he believes, and since Baptist doctrine has it that he is no longer an alien after believing, their doctrine makes it logically and psychologically impossible for an alien sinner to pray *any time!* *Yet it is of the very essence of the doctrine that an alien sinner must pray in order to receive salvation!*

Further, according to Baptist doctrine (followed logically to a conclusion), there can be no such thing as a *penitent believer*. A penitent person is one suffering sorrow for sin. Saved people—those who have obtained pardon—are no longer penitent in this sense. The eunuch, having obtained forgiveness of sins, went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39). In Christ our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience (Heb. 10:22), and baptism, the consummating act of salvation, is the interrogation of a good conscience (I Pet. 3:21, 22). A saved person is, therefore, no longer penitent. The Baptists teach that salvation comes at the point of faith. That is, in their view, the sinner obtains full and complete pardon at the very instant he believes. Thus, in the light of this position, one could not be a penitent *after* faith, for he is then saved. The sinner, in order to be penitent at all, must be so before he believes. It must, however, be *after* he repents, for obviously the sinner cannot be penitent before he repents! Penitence, then, according to Baptist doctrine, must be *after* repentance and *before* faith. But (to avoid other grave difficulties) they teach that repentance and faith are "inseparable graces," and cannot be dissociated—they are always together, and that the sinner believes, the instant he repents. Inasmuch, then, as the sinner cannot be penitent before he repents nor after he believes, and since he believes the very instant he repents, there is positively no place in the Baptist arrangement for penitence! *It would indeed be interesting to hear a Baptist preacher attempt to explain when he thinks the sinner is penitent.*

Baptism is a command (Acts 2:38; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; etc.). In denying that baptism is essential to salvation, Baptists teach that commands are essential to the performance of duty, but not to salvation. Conceding that it is proper and right to comply with the commandments, they,

nevertheless, insist that such obedience is not necessary to salvation. This being true, every command of God is thus ruled out as essential to salvation! Repentance and faith are commands (Luke 13:3; Heb. 11:6). But commands are not essential to salvation, they aver (with reference to baptism). Hence, logically, according to Baptist doctrine, repentance and faith should thus be excluded. True, they do not accept this conclusion; but it is irresistible in the light of their position. If obedience to a command is not necessary to salvation, inasmuch as repentance and faith are no less commands than baptism, why include them and exclude it? The truth is: their rule was designed to apply only to baptism, and is an afterthought brought in to deny the essentially of it because the teaching of the New Testament touching the purpose and end of baptism is in conflict with their basic assumption that salvation is at the point of belief, without additional acts of obedience. Just as "one lie calls for another" and another and another, so a false premise in religion leads the helpless espouser thereof from absurdity to another until he finds himself in conflict with the truth wherever he meets it. Is impossible for adherents of false doctrine to discuss their views in the light of the New Testament without constantly contradicting themselves and it! Listen and see!

Why Not Let A Miracle Take Care Of It?

I preface this article with the observation that I believe implicitly in every miracle of the Old Testament; I believe implicitly in every miracle of the New Testament. I do not believe at all in the so-called miracles of the fake healers and sensational tricksters that we have in vogue today. But there are multitudes of people who



Robert R. Taylor, Jr. claim to have the modern day ability to work miracles. In view of their claims there are some mighty strange inconsistencies of which they are part and parcel. I share with you some of these.

STRANGE THINGS AT ORU

While traveling recently I was listening to the news on radio. An item caught my attention. According to the news item Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma, has some overweight students. I expect that would be true of every college and university in the land. It seems to be the case at ORU that the university requires every person who is overweight to sign an agreement that he will lose weight. If, in a given period of time he has not lost enough weight, he is then subject to dismissal. People gain weight usually

Continued on page 4

Why Not Let A Miracle Take Care Of It?

Continued from page 3

by overeating. Loss of weight comes from cutting down on calorie intake. The thought occurs to me that since Oral Roberts University was built by an alleged worker of modern day miracles, that a quickly performed miracle for each of these overweight students the day of registration could take care of this problem. The young ladies could then replace their size 16 or 18 dresses with a slim and petite size 10. The boys could replace their 42 or 46 waist line with a trim 32 or 34. It should be no harder to do this than to perform any of his other alleged miracles with money, instant prosperity for his poor admirers, the healing of cancer, crippled people made to walk again or any of the numerous incurables he claims to have healed instantly. In fact, it might even be better to perform such a miracle the day the student is recruited. That way only slim and trim students would come to ORU and they would be in line with University weight requirements as soon as they set foot on the campus for the first time. Whether the ORU founder ever sees these students or not should make no difference at all. Jesus did not have to see or be in the presence of the seriously ill son in John 4 in order to heal him. The seriously ill son was in Capernaum; Jesus was in Cana. The lack of proximity did not affect the miraculous power that belonged to the Messiah. Jesus did not have to be in the presence of the centurion's ill servant to heal him in Luke 7:1-10. Paul at Ephesus healed by means of handkerchiefs or aprons. Surely the recruiters at ORU could carry along some handkerchiefs or aprons that have been blessed by the ORU founder to get the job of slimming down prospective students accomplished in a hurry.

Speaking of ORU I wonder why they are spending multiplied millions of dollars in the building of a medical school. I am aware that the ORU founder claims that the Lord has spoken to him about this matter but we need more than Oral's ORAL assertion that such a conversation ever occurred! Can it be now the case that the word of the ORU founder has lost its power to heal any and every malady of humanity? If not, why engage in medical research? Why not take care of obesity among university students without embarrassing them relative to their above average pull on earthly gravity?

Seemingly, if the ORU founder possesses the same powers as did Christ and the apostles, why bother with language courses and especially with foreign languages? Why not lay hands on each language student and do away with the long and drawn out process of mastering other tongues as other less fortunate schools and universities must do?? In apostolic times tongues were imparted by the imposition of hands. The apostles did not establish language labs and depend upon language scholars with their accepted textbooks to TEACH foreign languages. Why should ORU be so different in view of all the miraculous claims they allegedly make? WHY NOT ALLOW A MIRACLE TO TAKE CARE OF THIS MATTER ALSO??

THAT AMAZING ACNE PROBLEM IN THE BOONE HOUSEHOLD

Perhaps every reader of these lines has seen Pat and Debbie Boone in a television commercial singing the praises of Acne-

Statin and what it has done to aid the acne problem around the Boone household. A recent issue of TV Guide-October 22-28, 1977, had a two page spread featuring the picture of Pat and Debbie along with all their glowing testimony relative to Acne-Statin. In bold headlines Pat says, "ACNE? Our girls got lasting help with Acne-Statin." Another significant statement is, "With four daughters, we've tried the leading acne medications at our house, and nothing ever seemed to work until our girls met a Beverly Hills doctor and got some real help through a product she developed called Acne-Statin."

The thought just occurs to me every-time I see this on television or in a magazine that the Boone family must have forgotten what they have been preaching about and claiming for a number of years. For many years they have been walking the route of Neo-Pentecostalism. Both the parents and the daughters claim for themselves Holy Spirit baptism. Pat has a book on A MIRACLE A DAY KEEPS THE DEVIL AWAY. Is not this family that has claimed to have been given the power to talk with tongues they have never studied? Is not this the family that claimed the Lord performed a miracle in regard to one of their dead pets? Is not this the family that has claimed miraculous help in their mounting financial problems of some years back? Pat told about such in his book A NEW SONG. Acne has been somewhat of a problem around our house with teen-agers and I tell you quite frankly that if I believed in a miracle a day, I would reserve one day's miracle for doing away with the acne problem! Surely if the Lord is concerned with a dead mouse, he is more concerned with teen-agers who face the acne problem! Surely it would be more difficult for the Lord to heal permanently four teen-age daughters with acne problems than to bail Pat out of financial trouble as THE NEW SONG claims that he did. I am made to wonder WHY the Boone family had to use

so many medications about this matter when the whole family supposedly has experienced miracle after miracle since their baptism in the Holy Spirit. Did the Lord forget about them in the acne realm? If so, why? The highly publicized and perhaps deeply lucrative commercial about Acne-Statin by Pat and Debbie Boone does not do much for their Holy Spirit baptism claims, their Neo-Pentecostalism doctrine or their miracle a day philosophy. I know Pat claims the miracle a day is designed to keep the devil away but surely the devil could have been withstood just one day in order that just one miracle could have been aimed at that annoying acne problem. Again I say, WHY NOT ALLOW A MIRACLE TO TAKE CARE OF THE MATTER? Imagine Acne-Statin being a thorough refutation of Pentecostalism!!

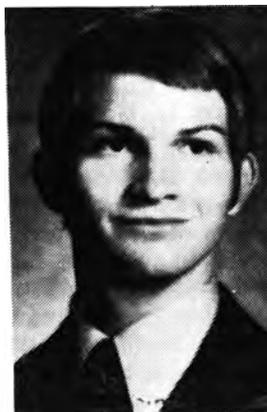
Were I in fellowship with Pat in his Neo-Pentecostalism, I would look with disdain and disappointment upon his and Debbie's commercial and their evident failure to cure such by the daily supernatural means they claim to possess!! In curing one problem Pat may have created another for himself and his family.

Come With Us

To The Bible Lands

My family and I invite you to join us for a tour of the lands of the Bible, departing New York June 16. We will see Rome, Egypt, Israel and Jordan in this thirteen day tour. Those who desire may extend the tour to include Athens and Corinth. The price of the thirteen day tour is only \$1345 per person. In every place we go, advance arrangements will have been made for hotel, meals, guides, etc. For a full-color brochure write: Bobby Duncan, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

The Church Of Christ



Dalton Key

The church of Christ, Christ's church, is that which the prophets of old anticipated and spoke concerning; which our Lord founded, builded, and for which He gave His life; which the New Testament penmen taught and defended; and of which you and I have the precious privilege of being members. The church about which

we read in the New Testament is the only institution for which the Savior shed His blood (Acts 20:28). According to the text of Eph. 5:22-33, Christ loved the church and actually gave Himself for that divine institution. The Bible teaches the church to be a God-purposed, blood-bought institution.

The church is not an after-thought of

God. Neither is it a substitute for an earthly kingdom which could not be established during the course of our Lord's earthly pilgrimage. Such teachings are nothing short of blatant blasphemy, for Eph. 3:10, 11 states that the church is "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Several hundred years prior to the establishment of the church, God, through Isaiah, had prophesied, "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isa. 2:2). God's prophet Daniel foretold, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom ... and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44). Christ, in Matthew 16:18, promised, "Upon this rock I will build my church."

No, the church was no accident. God planned for it, purposed it, and provided for it long before its actual inception. —Box 619, Douglas, Ks. 67039.



Words Of

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

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He That Would Love Life

And who among us doesn't? Two thoughts are contained in the above title: (1) a positive desire to live and to prolong life, and (2) it is both natural and proper that we should so desire. The apostle speaks of love for life without disapprobation and then goes on to tell us the kind of life that is loved and how length of life can be secured.



W.C. QUILLEN

"He that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him avoid evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it" (I Pet. 3:10-11).

Life is a gift from God, and should be regarded as a blessing. Along with all blessing and gifts from God, we have been taught to love life and to thank Him for it. Even if we are prepared to resign our life to God when He beckons, yet we instinctively shrink from death as one of the greatest evils which we must encounter, and have not yet overcome (I Cor. 15:24).

It is proper and right, to a proper degree, and in submission to the will of God, that we love life, and live in confident hope of ultimately defeating this last of enemies through Jesus Christ our Lord who gives us the victory (I Cor. 15:51-58).

The life that we would love and seek to lengthen is filled with good days. The apostle says that he who would love life would also see good days; that is he desires good days, happy days, peaceful days. One would hardly desire his days to be different. A life filled with days of sin, misery and guilt, could neither be desired nor loved. Life is loved and

desired when it is lived in Christ, as new creatures, and filled with good works which God has foreordained for us (Eph. 2:10).

In so living, we must "refrain our tongues from evil, and our lips that they speak no guile." We can never tame the tongue, but we must control it by keeping it chained. "The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." It is set on fire of hell, and not only defiles our own bodies, but sets on fire the course of nature. It is a world of iniquity. It

can destroy the character and influence of others, and bring damnation to its owner. It must be refrained, else there can be no good days nor love of life.

Too, we must avoid evil, and do good. And then we must seek peace and ensue it—practive it. There is no good life in division and turmoil. Jesus blesses the peacemaker, not the troublemaker.—P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.

The Great Salvation

WALTER BUCHANAN

In Hebrews 2:3, the writer asked the question, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Did you ever consider why the salvation of the soul is so great? Here are a few ideas.

This is great salvation because it comes from a great author. About our Saviour the Hebrew writer said, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

This is great salvation because a great price was paid for it. Peter wrote that we are not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold, "but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18, 19).

This is great salvation because it's great in it's scope--it's offered to everyone. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

This is great salvation because it saves that

which is most valuable to man--his eternal soul. Jesus asked, "For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

This is great salvation because it saves from great destruction. Concerning those who neglect this salvation Paul wrote, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:9).

None can successfully deny that the salvation offered by Jesus is great salvation. A person obtains this salvation by faith in Christ (Mark 16:16), repentance of sins (Luke 13:3), confession of Christ (Matthew 10:32), and baptism into Christ (Acts 22:16).—Highway 71 North Bentonville, Ark. 72712.

Be In Bible School
Sunday
With Your Bible!



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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A Drive-In Religion

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The other day, I had some business to transact at one of the local banks. The traffic was rather heavy which caused my having to park at a distance from the bank. As I crossed the street and walked by the drive-in windows, I readily saw a goodly number of vehicles lined up and waiting to be served. I even had to walk around one car that was blocking the sidewalk. I entered the bank and within five minutes, I had finished my business. As I left the bank and walked back by the drive-in windows, I observed that more cars had lined up, wanting to be served. In fact, one car was backed up so far into the main street that it was blocking two lanes of traffic. I just couldn't believe what I was seeing. It would have been easier and faster for an individual to have parked his car and walked inside the bank to transact any business.

This type of convenience has permeated most of our society today. It may even be bordering on mere laziness. Presently, you can drive in to an eating establishment, a pharmacy, dry-cleaners, theaters, etc. The "Come as you are" philosophy abounds everywhere. There is a tendency not to exert any effort for anything. And, this is called "progress."

Religion in general has not been spared from this relaxed attitude. The denominations employ professional singers and athletes to entertain, rather than for people to participate in a religious meeting. Prizes and gifts are offered to those who will attend their services. One religious organization even offered green stamps for motivation.

The church of our Lord is also plagued with this type of reasoning. Some members would probably respond readily to a "drive-in" service where the Lord's Supper could be served in two minutes or less. After all, time is most important so why bother with singing, praying and preaching? This would be so convenient for those brethren who would be on their way to the lake or to the beach on Sunday morning. Also, one could hurry back home for the enjoyment of relatives who have come for a visit.

Continued on page 4



FROM

THE EDITOR

More On Witnessing

Some in the church insist that there is nothing wrong in saying that Christians "Witness for Christ" in this age. They acknowledge that the word WITNESS is used in the Bible to apply only to those who are able to give first hand testimony concerning a matter; and that Christ's witnesses were those who could testify first hand of his resurrection, because they had seen him after he was raised. But they argue that "there is a sense" in which they are also witnesses if they tell others what the Bible says. If this is true, then they are witnesses of the Bible, and not witnesses of Christ. But they also argue that "there is a sense" in which they are witnesses (of the Bible) FOR Christ.

With the same kind of logic these use to justify their use of "the language of Ashdod," one could also "prove" a number of palpably false statements. A case in point is the denominational idea that one must receive Holy Ghost baptism in order to be saved. Please observe:

I Corinthians 12:13 says that it is "by one



BOBBY DUNCAN

Spirit" that we are all "baptized into one body." One may say: "Yes, but this is simply speaking of the fact that the Holy Spirit leads and directs one to be baptized in water; and this leadership of the Spirit is through the agency of the written word. So it is really water baptism that puts one into the body of Christ." We would agree. But the passage says, "By one SPIRIT are we all baptized..." In other words, "there is a sense" in which water baptism is the baptism of the Holy Ghost; i.e., the Holy Ghost, through the word, directs sinners to be baptized in water.

I wonder how long it will be before some who are now talking about "witnessing for Jesus" will be telling people that they must repent of their sins and receive Holy Ghost baptism. After all, "there is a sense" in which the baptism of the great commission is Holy Ghost baptism.

Brethren, we must admit to ourselves that while what we mean by an expression is important, it is even more important what those who hear us think we mean. Those of us who preach are especially obligated to use words in their commonly accepted sense, or else explain the special sense in which we are using them.

Even though "there is a sense" in which it is true, it would be downright deceptive for me to say that one must receive Holy Ghost baptism to be saved. And it would be just as deceptive for me to claim that I am a witness for Jesus.

Words

MRS. C.M. (DONA) KARRH

A word is: "a sound or a combination of sounds, used in any language as a symbol of an idea, and forming grammatical parts of speech; the printed or written letter or other characters, which represent the spoken word."

"Words are incarnations of thought, purpose, and feeling, thus revealing the person."

Christ is considered as the expression of the Divine Intelligence and as the mediator between God and men" (I Tim. 2:5). The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1-4).

Words should be carefully used at all times. Words give color and power, and should be selected and cultivated. Words should never be spoken carelessly. Words can be a wealth of experience, for growth, service and inspiration. "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you" (I Thess. 4:11). Words can enrich other lives and give encouragement. They give comfort and enrich our language. When we are in tune with God, our words have a beautiful way of giving meaning so that they touch the hearts of those we are with. In this way we reveal the

emotions of our heart. "Shall not they teach thee and tell thee, and utter words out of their hearts?" (John 8:10). "My words shall utter the uprightness of my heart; and that which my lips know they shall speak sincerely" (Job 33:3).

Good words are of good will; good will is shown by good works. Good words are upright, forcible, and are of righteousness and godly living. "A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in network of silver" (Prov. 25:11). It is our duty to do good to our neighbors, to strangers, to our enemies, and those of the world. We are to show kindness to all people. We should be more careful to possess a desirable character pleasing unto God. Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38).

Bad words weary the Lord. When we use bad words we sin (Mal. 2:17). "Ye have wearied Jehovah with your WORDS. Yet ye say, wherein have we wearied Him? In that ye say, everyone that doeth evil is good in the sight of Jehovah, and he delighteth in them; or where is the God of Justice?" Bad words show an evil purpose that causes trouble.

Continued on page 3

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Please give a brief history of fasts and fasting, and discuss our Lord's teaching regarding this matter."

Fasting, deliberate abstinence from food for stated intervals, and undertaken as a religious exercise, has long been practiced by man. Traces of it are discernible in the history of most heathen peoples and many references thereto are recorded in the sacred writings. This fact has given rise to much concern and controversy thereon. Is fasting an ordinance obligatory upon children of God today? Should it be observed as a spiritual and religious rite? Are those who disregard it in disobedience to God? These are indeed questions of no little importance, the proper answers involving vital interests of the soul.

The Hebrew word *tsoom*, literally, "to cover the mouth," and by usage, "to proclaim a fast," occurs fourteen times in the Old Testament. The verb or infinitive is used twenty times. There is, however, no instance of it before the time of Moses. It often appears in the historical books, instances of which will be seen in II Sam 12:16; I Kings 21:9-12; Ezra 8:21; and, in the prophets, Isa. 58:3-5; Joel 1:14; Zech. 8:19, etc. Though the word does not occur in the Pentateuch, the idea is there in the phrase "afflicting the soul" (Lev. 16:29-31; Num. 30:13). The New Testament word is *neesteuoo*, some form of it occurring about thirty times, and signifying to abstain from food and drink as a religious exercise (Thayer). If the fast was but for a day, the abstinence appears to have been total; if for lengthy periods, then from choice or special foods (Matt. 11:18). We may, from the following table, obtain an easy view of the New Testament allusions to fasting:

Matt. 4:2: Christ fasted forty days.

Matt. 6:16: When fast, do not be as the hypocrites.

Matt. 6:17: Anoint head when fasting.

Matt. 6:18: Do not appear to be fasting.

Matt. 9:14: Pharisees fasted more than the disciples.

Matt. 9:15: Day coming when Christ's disciples would fast.

Mark 2:19: When bridegroom present, no fasting.

Luke 18:12: Zaccheus fasted twice each week.

Acts 10:30: Cornelius fasted.

Acts 13:2: Fasting when Barnabas and Saul were selected and sent out as missionaries from Antioch.

From the early days of the Israelite commonwealth there are repeated references to fasting in their history. When Israel suffered their disastrous defeat at Ai, Joshua and the elders prostrated themselves before the ark from morning until evening without eating (Josh. 7:6); when the eleven tribes waged war against little Benjamin, they fell on their faces before the ark and abstained from eating all day (Judg. 20:26). When David's son was desperately ill he fasted (II Sam 12:16); Moses, on Horeb (Ex. 24:18), Elijah, in the same area (I Kings 19:8), and Christ, on the mount (Matt. 4:2), all fasted for forty days. The king of Nineveh, in terror at the preaching of Jonah, issued an edict that not only men, but also their beasts, should abstain from eating and drinking and array themselves in sackcloth and ashes-tokens of

great grief and humility-and cry unto the Lord (Jonah 3:5, 6).

Fasts were also observed in the land of Israel when the people were faced with famine, war, pestilence and death. These rituals were conducted on the second and fifth days of the week and lasted through the day, beginning at sunset on the day preceding. Sackcloth (Greek *sakkos*, a mesh), consisting of a loose, coarse, inexpensive material made from goat's hair, and ordinarily used to make sacks, but on these occasions worn next to the skin so that its rough, unpleasant texture might constantly remind the penitent of the occasion, was everywhere in evidence, ashes were sprinkled on the head, and the people neither washed their hands nor anointed their heads during these periods. The synagogues teemed with worshippers uttering prayers mournful and lengthy, and with countenances of sadness and dejection.

It does not appear that our Lord instituted any fast days for the church, nor did he indicate that the disciples were, by divine direction, to continue to observe the regulations touching fasts which obtained during the former dispensation. On the contrary, when the Pharisees levelled a criticism against him because his disciples did not as fast as theirs, or even as those of John the Baptist, he answered, "Can ye make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the bride-groom is with them? But the days will come; and when the bride-groom shall be taken away from them, then will thy fast in those days" (Luke 5:33-39). Then, i.e., at that time, when the bridegroom leaves them, will there be occasion for fasting. May we not, from this affirmation, conclude that (1) fasting was inconsistent with the joy which should characterize the disciples while the Lord was with them; (2) an occasion would come when, because of grief experienced at his leaving, they would fast; and (3) that fasting evidenced an attitude of mind and disposition of heart?

Moreover, immediately following his reply to the Pharisees, he taught the parables of the new and old garments, old and new wineskins: "No man rendeth a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment; else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; else the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be spilled, and the skins will perish. But new wine must be put into fresh wine-skins" (Luke 5:36-39). Is there not here the clear intimation of our Lord that the Pharisees were in error in suggesting that the old patch of Jewish practices should be affixed to the new garment of Christianity; or that the old wine of the ancient order should be poured into the new receptacle of the gospel dispensation?

It is significant that Jesus, in alluding to the practices of the Jews, warned the disciples against the ostentation which characterized the Pharisees. "When ye fast," he said, "be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast... But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou be not seen of men to fast,... and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:16-18). He thus removed

fasting from the realm of public activity and classified it as a matter of private devotion.

We may, therefore, properly conclude that (1) Christ did not enjoin fasting upon the church as a public duty; in his reference thereto, he merely regulated a practice already obtaining among the Jews; (2) he taught that (a) it is to be observed, if at all, in private; (b) without revealing it to others; and (c) for the good of one's own soul. Fasting is not an ordinance of the church; it is not commanded in the Christian dispensation, nor are there penalties given for failure to conform thereto; there is no special virtue in it so that all disciples must engage therein; one may find it a blessing, another may not. When special obligations face us we may, for the time, limit our intake of food; we may, indeed, under the pressure of intense mental and spiritual activity, lose all desire for food. If so, and such abstinence contributes to our well-being, it is good for us so to do. On such occasions it must be done without public notice, eschewing all ostentation, or self-glory, and for the glory of God.

Jesus said that the Pharisees disfigured (*aphanidzousin*) their faces that they might appear (*phanoosin*) before men to fast. The words are of the same derivation. The Pharisees *disfigure* that they may *figure* with men! He said they were of sad countenance (*skuthroopoi*), like people whose livers are out of order!

Words

Continued from page 2

Beautiful friendships have been destroyed by words; homes have been broken, churches have been torn asunder, neighbors have become enemies. But love will protect one from wronging another. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Rom. 13:10). "He that LOVETH NOT knoweth not God; for God is love" (I Jn. 4:8).

Kind words is one of the great needs for today. We need to show kindness to the poor, to those in distress, to brethren, to enemies, to prisoners, to servants, to animals. Jesus showed kindness to little children, to blind, lepers and his disciples. He had compassion on the multitudes. Helpfulness is one of the grandest parts of Christianity. "We love because He first loved us" (I Jn 4:19-20).

The sum of thy word is truth: And every one of thy righteous ordinances endureth forever" (Ps. 119-160). Words of Faith can save our souls, but words of SIN can destroy our lives. "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12).—1002 6th Ave., Jasper, AL 35501

Subscribe To
Words Of Truth

Are Children Born In Sin?

Calvinism has long taught that children are born totally depraved or with Adamic sin tainting their disposition and soiling their soul. It is commonly designated as original sin. Not only do the Calvinistic creeds of the day teach such but some of the modern Bibles do the same. Kenneth Taylor's Bible, **THE LIVING BIBLE PARAPHRASED**, and it is



Robert R. Taylor, Jr. really his book-not God's Book, has David to say in Psalm 51:5, "But I was born a sinner, yes, from the moment my mother conceived me." Here is both birth and conception in sin. Mr. Taylor, in his perverted product-one of the worst ever put out, has Paul to say, "All of us used to be just as they are, our lives expressing the evil within us, doing every wicked thing that our passions or our evil thoughts might lead us into. We started out bad, being born with evil natures, and were under God's anger just like everyone else" (Eph. 2:3). The **NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION**, that has been so highly praised in our brotherhood and that one brother in Texas told me was a word-for-word translation of the original Greek, injects Calvinism and original sin into a number of passages of the epistle section of the New Testament. They take the Greek word *sarx*, which ought to be translated flesh, and render it either as sinful nature or sinful man. Since our nature is derived from God at conception and birth, this is a flare-back to old, depraved Calvinism and original sin at conception and birth. If not, **WHY NOT?** In order to find Adamic or original sin one has to go either to the Calvinistic creed books or to Bibles that have allowed the denominational creed of original sin to become part and parcel of the very text of the Bible.

THE ERROR REFUTED

The Bible nowhere teaches that sin is inherited. Cain and Abel, at their respective births, did not bear upon their souls the sins of which their parents had been guilty sometime before in the excellencies of Eden. Bible students know Abel in life as a righteous person and Cain as an evil, wicked man. But Abel did not inherit his righteousness from his parents. Cain did not inherit his wickedness from Adam and Eve. The Bible never says that Abel was righteous because he borrowed or inherited such from his parents. His righteousness is traceable to what he (Abel) did in life and not to what he might or might not have inherited at birth. The Bible nowhere condemns Cain because of the presence of original sin or Adamic sin on his soul at the time of his conception and nine months later at his birth. The Bible condemns him because of his wicked works, because of the wicked way he walked. John said, "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (I John 3:12). Jude tersely states, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the **WAY OF CAIN**, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 11) **WICKED**

WAYS, not inherited sin, lead to his downfall.

Two significant statements from the book of Ezekiel are worthy of our attention in this crucial matter. The "Star Figure of the Exile" wrote, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20). The word "soul" in this passage stands for the person who does the sinning. Sin is something that we practice; it is not something that is passed on from father to son **ADINFINITUM**. The great prophet of the Babylonian Exile also said in regard to the price or king of Tyre, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:15). It is true that this arrogant Phoenician prince was strongly condemned by God's prophet in this chapter, but he exhibited his arrogance and manifested his sin, not at the time of his conception or birth, but in the years of his arrogant accountability, in the years of what should have been his responsible reign.

The Bible teaches us the nature of sin and not that first definition will fit the demands of original sin or Adamic sin. The Bible says in Proverbs 24:9, "The thought of foolishness is sin:..." Does the child at conception or at birth possess thoughts of foolishness? If so, **HOW?** Paul says in Romans 14:23, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Is Paul speaking of a child at conception, a baby at birth or a person old enough to know about the rightness or wrongness of his actions and how such affects his conscience? The latter by all means!! The inspired and practical James wrote, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Does the Lord's brother have in mind the child at conception, the baby at birth or a person old enough to see good and know the need for his doing good? Obviously, the latter was in mind of the inspired penman when he wrote James 4:17. How many babies do you know who are able to know and do good at the point of conception or at the point of birth? Again Inspiration supplies another definition of sin by saying, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). Just what sin or transgression could the child at conception commit; of what sin or transgression could the baby at birth be guilty? These questions need some answers from the persistent proponents of Adamic sin or original sin. The zealous apostle of love and truth, and that is what John combined in his life, again defined sin by saying, "All unrighteousness is sin:..." (I John 5:17). Is the child at conception unrighteous? Is the baby at birth unrighteous? If so, **OF WHAT?**

WHAT THEN ABOUT PSALM 51:5?

The passage says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." This passage says nothing, **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING**, about David's inheriting Adamic sin. This passage says nothing about David's having original sin soiling his soul and staining his spirit at conception or at birth. David, in this chapter, was confessing his sinfulness as a man, not at the moment he was conceived, not at the moment he was born. The confession of this chapter grew out of his enormous sin with Bathsheba. He did

not commit sin with this bathing beauty the moment he was conceived!! He was not guilty of stealing the affections that belonged to Uriah the day of his birth to Jesse and wife!! He committed this sin when he was accountable, when he was a responsible man. What David confessed in this chapter in the way of sin will fit the Biblical definitions of sin and how accountable man becomes a sinner. David became a sinner by sinning-not by inheritance. David was born into a world where sin abounded. He was born into a world where by the very nature of weak, frail and faltering flesh, he would be susceptible to sin. I do not believe that it was a sin on the part of Jesse and his wife to conceive David and for David's mother to give birth to him. I do not believe David was either a sinner at the time of his conception nor a transgressor at the time of his birth. But he was born into a world where he would become a sinner and such he became by sinning-**NOT BY WHAT HE INHERITED FROM HIS IMMEDIATE PARENTS OR HIS ANCIENT ANCESTORS.**

No, **A THOUSAND TIMES NO**, babies are **NOT** born in sin. People become sinners by what they do-**NOT BY WHAT THEY INHERIT.**—P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

A Drive-In Religion

Continued from page 2

How ashamed Christian ought to be when one considers the cost of our salvation. it was not "convenient" for Jesus to die on Calvary for our sins. But, He suffered the anguish and agony of the cross because He loved us. God the Heavenly Father gave his precious and only begotten son for us. So few of us devote time to prayer, serious reflection on God's grace, meditation on the Holy Scriptures and to the teaching of our neighbors, the way of salvation. We want everything, i.e., the salvation in Christ now and in eternity, but we do not want to give anything. It is just not convenient truly to sacrifice for the Lord in today's world. It is even difficult to get members of the church to attend an hour of Bible study on Wednesday night. There are those Christians who will not visit the sick, the shut-ins, the erring members and the non-members. When was the last time you endeavored to get brethren to teach the unsaved in a home Bible study? Then you know how difficult it is to get brethren to give up their leisure time to work in the interest of the Lord.

In the words of the beautiful hymn, "I GAVE MY LIFE FOR THEE," the question is raised: "I gave my life for thee, My precious blood I shed, That thou might'st ransomed be, And quickened from the dead; I gave, I gave My life for thee: What has thou giv'n for Me?"

In Matthew 16:24, we read: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." It is very doubtful that many of us are "cross bearing" or "denying oneself" in order to please him who enrolled us as soldiers of the cross (II Tim. 2:4).—East Hart Avenue Opp, AL 36467

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

MAY, 1978

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this letter we will be on foreign soil embarked upon our third tour of mission work in Africa. The current effort will see us through to the middle of 1981. It will be three years and three months before we return to America. We ask everyone to remember us in their prayers as so many have done in the past.



BERKLEY HACKETT

The last nine months have been very eventful for our family. The first readjustments to American life over we enjoyed as visit more than our previous one. The opportunity for fellowship with so many American Christians has been a real joy to us. We will miss this kind of fellowship in Africa. There is nothing that can replace association with "home folks". I have reached in 53 different congregations during the last few months. Most of the time I have been speaking on behalf of mission work, but a few have been for gospel meetings. Most of these congregations have been in Central Alabama, but others have been in Tennessee, Florida, Oklahoma, Texas, and Michigan.

The news from the African churches continues to be generally good. The letters that I receive reveal that the church is growing both numerically and spiritually. Our absence has forced the African Christians into a level of maturity that would have perhaps been slower in coming had we remained always close at hand. It is very easy for new Christians on the missionfield to become "missionary centered" instead of Christ-centered. They will often tend to rely on the missionary instead of the Lord. I am happy to report that our Kenyan brothers and sisters have resisted this temptation. The following is a letter I received this week from one of our most educated church members. Daudi Muriuki. He writes in English.....

are having two people who left a spirit church and joined us. They accompany Bro. Muraguri so that they can acquaint themselves with the teaching of the Church of Christ.

We baptized someone by name Obedi Nkyo of Magadi who has studied through the Church of Christ in the U.S.A.

Pass my warm greetings to your family. I wish you every success in your plans to return.

Daudi Muriuki

We have received well over a hundred letters from African Christians and friends since we've been in the States. They have contained for the most part very encouraging news which makes me eager to return to the work.

I am pleased to report that two new families will be coming to Kenya to work with us. Both of these families will be coming within 14 months to work for the Lord in the Nairobi area where we have been working for some time alone. One of these families is the Jerry Sullins family. Bro. Sullins preaches now for the Macedonia Blackwater Congregation at Nauvoo, Alabama. Some may remember that in 1973 this congregation bought the International Scout that we use in our work in Africa. Macedonia will now be sponsoring Bro. Sullins in Kenya. Bro. Sullins will be a great asset. He has been preaching for sixteen years and has already spent seven years in a stateside missionfield in Indiana. The other family is the Joe Jones family. Bro. Jones has spent nine years in foreign mission work. Consequently, he will bring much experience and many skills with him when he arrives in Kenya. Bro. Jones work will be under the sponsorship of the church in Anson, Texas.

It is always good for a missionary's morale to report that financial goals have been met. At this point travel funds are complete, the printing equipment has been paid for and shipping costs are met.

We are looking forward to our return to Kenya and the work there. At the same time it is with heavy hearts that we turn from our family and friends here in the United States. Pray that our period of adjustment will be an easy one. Read the newsletter to keep up with our activities and events in the African churches.

Bro. Hackett

William Miller.....	50.00
Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade, New Hope, Guin.....	28.08
5th and 6th grade, New Hope.....	30.20
Lucille McComb.....	20.00
Feeley Turpin.....	20.00

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MONTH OF MARCH, 1978

Herman King (cash).....	\$ 40.00
Alice M. Applebee.....	25.00
Pearl Dunn.....	5.00
Della Garrison.....	10.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick.....	10.00
Mr. & Mrs. Ben L. Morris.....	20.00
Ellen & Eugene McMurray.....	20.00
Mary Frances Myers.....	25.00
Dale Nunnally.....	50.00
Roy A. Shepherd.....	100.00
Berry Church of Christ.....	50.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ.....	300.00
Barn Creek Ch of Christ.....	75.00
Central Church of Christ.....	150.00
Cleveland Church of Christ.....	50.00
Cottondale Church of Christ.....	100.00
Curry Church of Christ.....	50.00
Earnest Chapel Ch of Christ.....	15.00
Earnest Chapel Ch of Christ.....	15.00
East Walker Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Eldridge Ch of Christ.....	25.00
Goodsprings Ch of Christ.....	25.00
Macedonia Ch of Christ.....	25.00
Midway Ch of Christ.....	105.00
Millport Ch of Christ.....	75.00
Morris Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Mt. Harmony Ch of Christ.....	15.00
Mountain Home Ch of Christ.....	15.00
New Hope Ch of Christ.....	20.00
Northport Ch of Christ.....	100.00
Oakman Ch of Christ.....	30.00
Parrish Ch of Christ.....	100.00
Pleasantfield Ch of Christ.....	30.00
Pleasant Hill Ch of Christ.....	35.00
6th Ave Ch of Christ.....	1200.00
West Walker Ch of Christ.....	20.00
Whitehouse Ch of Christ.....	200.00
White's Chapel Ch of Christ.....	100.00
Winfield Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Zion Ch of Christ.....	25.00
TOTAL	\$3405.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

Ken Smith.....	\$ 5.00
Joe Mack Smith.....	50.00
Hoyt Cochran.....	5.00
Anon.....	20.00
Hestor Courington.....	1.00
Bessy Southwood.....	10.00
Eula Hammack.....	20.00
Ila Crump.....	50.00
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Dennis Robbins.....	20.00
Abe Robinson.....	10.00
Howard Davis.....	100.00
Mrs. Joe Staggs.....	20.00
Derek Crump.....	5.00
.....	5.00

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MONTH OF APRIL, 1978

Berry Church of Christ.....	50.00
Brookside Ch of Christ.....	20.00
Central (Tusc.) Ch of Christ.....	150.00
Cleveland Ch of Christ.....	100.00
Cottondale Ch of Christ.....	100.00
Curry Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Dilworth Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Eldridge Ch of Christ.....	25.00
Goodsprings Ch of Christ.....	25.00
Liberty Ch of Christ.....	77.50
Midway Ch of christ.....	105.00
Millport Ch of Christ.....	75.00
Morris Ch of Christ.....	50.00
Mountain Home Ch of Christ.....	15.00

Dear Brother Hackett,

To begin with I thank the Almighty God for the chance I'm using to reply to your letter dated 3/28. Also I thank God again because he has enabled me to live a Christian life and preach the good news of eternal life in his kingdom.

I'm well with my family. The other brethren are also fine except that I was very upset when I learned from Bro. Mwangi that Gikingo had some men in his house for some guests who attended our brother Wauthaka's wedding. Mwangi discovered that evil deed just by incidence.

As to the printing of the tract headed "Introduction to the Church of Christ", for the time being I have arranged to have 1000 copies of this tract done in Kikuyu, 1000 in Kiswahili and 500 in English. Total cost including stencil cutting adds up to 500 shillings. I have given the tract to brother Wilson to translate in Kihuya.

As to preaching, more effort is being employed to establish churches where they don't exist. We baptized two people at Kasarami. I paid a visit to them accompanying Wilson. The gathering was of nine people. I plan to visit them again in my next visit there.

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New Hope (Oakman) Ch of Christ ..	20.00
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Oakman Ch of Christ.....	30.00
Parrish Ch of Christ.....	50.00
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Pleasant Hill Ch of Church.....	35.00
Robinwood Ch of Christ.....	50.00
New Hope (Guin) Ch of Christ	900.00
Sixth Ave Ch of Christ.....	1200.00
Tarrant Ch of Christ.....	100.00
West Walker Ch of Christ.....	20.00
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Mr. & Mrs. Milas G. Wilder.....	10.00
TOTAL	\$4,137.50



Jerry and Edith Sullins and daughters, Racheal and Tara. Not pictured are son, Ray and daughter, Laurie. The Sullins will soon be going to Kenya as missionaries.



The picture on the masthead of The Newsletter is now 12 years old. Here is an update for those many readers who I cannot personally see while here in the states.

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

"He Lingered"

C. Bruce White

The example from which these words are lifted is found in Genesis 19:16. Lot has chosen the well watered plains around the wicked city of Sodom. He discovers that, while he thought he had moved into Sodom, instead Sodom had moved into him. Now as he reviews the ruins of his home, family, and even his own life he sees the mistakes so clearly. It was all the result of procrastination. How many times had he intended to do better? How often had he thought about getting out? But he lingered.

It all began when he pitched his tent toward Sodom. He saw immediately that these people were not righteous, but after all there was a great deal of water and the flocks and herds would do well. He would just fatten the cattle, sell, and get out. But he is still lingering there when the war lords attack and take him away captive. In the prison camp, the men must talk of what they will do when freed and Lot lingers and listens to the plans. When Abraham frees them, Lot returns to the wicked city and is found sitting at the gate when the angels arrive. He is now so intrigued by the great plans of these men that he sits in the middle of their camp and with their rulers. He still realizes that they are wicked and the things of which they talk are filthy and against all that his uncle Abraham had ever taught him. But still he lingers.

The tragic aspect of lingering is the way that time has of slipping by. When Lot's daughters come in one day and announce that they are going to marry the sons of Sodom, he is enraged. Why, no woman of God can marry men of such character. But Lot's girls have been reared in that environment, and they don't know any better. They grew up away from God,

God's people, and God's law while he lingered. He had intended to teach them. He had planned to move back in a little while but now it was too late.

When his sons-in-law laugh at him for talking of God and mock him, he is aghast. How did it happen? They don't even know he is the nephew of the "friend of God." They have associated him with the crowd around which he lingered. He has no control over them or the rest of his household.

The friends that he had are so wicked they attempt to assault the visitors from God. Lot has been around them so long that he sinks to their level and offers his two virgin daughters to them. Some have suggested this to be the epitome of hospitality toward protecting his guests, but had he not lingered in this wicked city

his daughters and guests would have been safe.

Finally, they are fleeing the city at the warning of God's destruction. His daughters and their husbands die laughing at him. His wife fails to heed the command of not looking back, and is turned into a pillar of salt. Lot escapes with his two virgin daughters into the mountains. The corruption and vice of Sodom had so destroyed the concept of goodness and chastity in these girls that they got Lot drunk and committed incest with him. The last thing that is said of Lot is, "Thus, were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father." All of this calamity and sin because, "he lingered."—2401 7th St. North, Columbus, Ms. 39701.

My Parents Are Short

CLEON LYLES

A few years ago I was in another state preaching in a meeting. After the morning services a little girl shook my hand. I said, "You are seven years old." She said, "No, I'm nine years old." She hesitated a moment and said, "My parents are short." Of course I had committed a crime in guessing under her age, but the crime had already been committed. It was interesting to see how she was trying to fix it up for me. Her statement also got me to thinking about "short parents."

Some parents are short on example. Children see them do things that they know are wrong, and that the parents would not permit them to do. They see in this a certain

amount of hypocrisy which the relationship cannot erase. It is as important to live before a child in a righteous way as it is to teach the child to live righteously.

Some parents are short on the way they use their children. Many times the frustrations and disappointments parents experienced in childhood are fed into the lives of their children. Children are sometimes used by one parent against another so that the one so using them can have his (or her) way. It is not difficult for a father to destroy a boy's respect



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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My Parents Are Short

Continued from page 1

for his mother if the father wants to use him in this way. It is also easy for a mother to destroy the respect of daughters for their father if she wants to do it. And it can be done in such a way as to place the blame on the one being destroyed. Many of the homeless children being cared for today by God's people are homeless because parents just walked away from situations of this kind. Some are unable to stand it until the children are grown. Others can't wait that long, and the child suffers not only from being used but also from being abandoned. It is difficult to understand how a parent would destroy something in the child by using him in his way, but it is being done by many people who can sing, "Oh How I Love Jesus" louder than anybody else. One who would thus use a child loves neither the child nor the companion. The companion soon recognizes it, but the children do not see it until long after they have been hurt for life. What we often fail to realize is that being parents is important business. If we fail here all the pious pretensions we make will not make up for our failures.

Parents are often short on teaching. A child needs to see a good example in the life of a parent, but he also needs to understand why the parent thus lives. We make a big mistake when we expect the Bible School teacher and the preacher to give our children a proper spiritual education. God placed this responsibility in the home and unless the child is taught the word of God at home he will never receive enough to keep him growing in the Lord's service. The Bible does not give all this responsibility to one parent. It belongs to both of them. Fathers often feel that this responsibility belongs to the mother alone, but the Lord said for fathers to teach their children (Eph. 6:4). Neither parent can escape this responsibility.

It is a tragedy, but true, that by a lack of training, by setting the wrong example, or by improperly using a child, we can take away some happiness he will never regain. The day will come when he will see through us; and when that day comes he will lose the respect we were so careful to gain by false living.—100 West Church St, Morrilton, Ark. 72110.



FROM

THE EDITOR

Hardeman-Boswell Debate

This week marks the fifty-fifth anniversary of the Hardeman-Boswell debate conducted in the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee. The subject debated was instrumental music, and the participants were I.M. Boswell and N.B. Hardeman. F.B. Srygley, who moderated for brother Hardeman, wrote a year later in the introduction of the debate in book form: "A



BOBBY DUNCAN

good spirit prevailed throughout the entire discussion. . . . As far as I know, the oral discussion did no harm, but great good, and is to be hoped that the printed book will be of great service to those who would learn the truth on the subject of how of praise God in the songs of Zion."

Practically the whole argument in favor of instrumental music in the debate was based upon the contention that the Greek word *psallo* (used in various forms in the New Testament; means to pluck the strings of an instrument, or to sing to the accompaniment of an instrument. Brother Hardeman readily conceded that this is a correct definition of the word, and then proceeded to show that the instrument which must accompany the singing in worship is the heart (Eph. 5:19). Said he: "The word means to sing—to sing to the accompaniment of an instrument. But the question tonight, and the only one for consideration, is: What, under the New Testament, is the instrument that accompanies the singing? The apostle Paul, in his peerless announcement, settled that once for all. He says we are to sing unto the Lord and 'psallo' with the heart—not with the fingers, not with the plectron, but with the heart; and, therefore, the heart is the instrument that accompanies the singing."

Brother Hardeman also effectively showed the inconsistency of his opponent's insisting that the word *psallo* means to accompany with a man-made instrument, but admitting that one could obey God with reference to singing and leave off the instrument. He correctly pointed out that if Ephesians 5:19 authorizes the playing of a mechanical instrument of music, it also *commands* it; and to leave it of would be a sin.

At one point brother Hardeman's second speech, the audience applauded one of his statements. In response to this applause, brother Hardeman admirably said: "I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that I want to take the liberty, with the concurrence of Brother Boswell and the moderators, to ask of you not to applaud. I am sure that he appreciates your hearty approval, as well as do I; but we are in the midst of a *religious* discussion, and I

believe I will ask that all demonstrations be omitted, lest there be a levity and a lighter strain than ought to characterize our effort tonight. So, then, if that meets with the approval of the audience, it has my hearty concurrence. What say you, brethren, regarding this?"

There were some replies of "Amen," and brother Hardeman continued: "Then may I ask the audience to refrain from all sorts of demonstration, lest we be led astray from the soberness and seriousness of the matter before us."

Many a half century plus later have never learned that kind of seriousness and soberness with reference to religious services. We have been in religious services where a speaker or song leader was introduced, and then the one introducing him would lead the entire assembly in applause as he made his way to the platform. We have seen preachers step into the pulpit, and before beginning to preach, have those in the assembly "practice" their amen's. Could it be that such have been "led astray from the soberness and seriousness of the matter before" them?

Preachers, both young and old, will do well to read occasionally the *Boswell-Hardeman Discussion on Instrumental Music in the Worship*. Not only clearly answer the arguments in favor of instrumental music in worship; he also demonstrated a most beautiful spirit, and upheld the dignity of religious debating. He believed that "truth, and not victory, is the professed object of all honorable controversy."

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS OPEN FORUM.
FREED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES. by
Guy N. Woods

"Is fasting an obligation of children of God today?"

It is not specifically commanded in the scriptures; but, in the Sermon on the Mount our Lord gave instructions to the disciples on how to *give*, how to *pray* and how to *fast*, as if each were of equal obligation (Matt. 6:16-18). In view of the fact that giving and praying are items of *public* worship (Acts 2:42; I Cor. 16:1, 2), and fasting is not, it would appear that fasting is in the area of *private* devotions, and is to be restricted thereto. Jesus said, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou be not *seen* of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:16-18). While this statement clearly shows that fasting was not to be engaged in publicly and with ostentation, it also reveals that it did have an important place in the life of a disciple, and that the Father would reward those who thus engaged.

That fasting is not intended to be observed under all circumstances, and that its chief purpose is to strengthen us in times of trial and adversity, and on occasions of sorrow and grief, is evident from an induction of passages dealing with the subject in the New Testament. (Matt. 9:14; Mark 2:18; Luke 5:33; I Cor. 7:6; Acts 13:2; II Cor. 6:5.) The disciples of John once propounded this query, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then will they fast" (Matt. 9:14, 15). When the joy of the Lord's presence had been turned into sorrow in his absence, the disciples would fast. Does not this teach us that fasting is an exercise designed to strengthen us and to turn our attention away from the desires of the flesh to the nourishment of the soul? And, that it is to be done only in times of adversity, temptation, grief or trial?

Fasting, properly engaged in, can be a source of great spiritual blessing, a discipline of the will and an exercise producing great inward strength, and power. All of us, on occasion, should resolutely put out of our hearts every semblance or worldly desire, and fleshly appetite, and with prayer and fasting, draw very near to God and claim his support and guidance in life. Such an experience would make us all infinitely stronger, richer in faith, and vastly better equipped to live the Christian life. In view of the fact that neither time nor manner of observance is given for fasting, we must conclude that these are matters to be determined in each instance, and by each person participating.

Man is prone to fall into sin. His great and constant challenge is to avoid the temptation to do evil. One does not have to engage overtly in an evil deed to be guilty of complicity. There are numerous ways that he can be an accomplice to other men's sins. David condemns certain teachers of God's law with these words.

"When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers" (Ps. 50:18).

One can be an accomplice to another's sin *counsel*. The prophet Nahum spoke of a man that *counseled wickedness* who would be destroyed by God (Nah. 1:11-12). Some folks who would shrink from doing a sinful deed will counsel and encourage others to do so. There are those who would advise us to take an unlawful tax deduction. Some helpful soul would counsel a young wife with a problem husband to leave him. We must never forget that to encourage another to do wrong is to share the guilt of the evil doer.

We can be a party to sin by *command*. David did not lay a finger upon Uriah the Hittite, yet he was fully guilty of his death. When he commanded Joab to set him up for death, David was equally guilty (II Sam. 11:14-17). If a superior orders his servant, employee or his child to do a sinful deed, he then fully shares in the responsibility.

Consent with a sinful practice involves us in its guilt. Solomon warned his sons, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). Paul warns those "who knowing the ordinance of God, that they who practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practice them" (Rom. 1:32). Although Pontius Pilate washed his hands to declare his innocence, he was guilty of consenting to Jesus' murder (Matt. 27:24-26).

We are responsible for another's misconduct if we *provoke* him to sin. Fathers are reminded not to provoke their children to wrath (Eph. 6:4). Husbands or wives often provoke their mates to sin by denying them the sexual privileges of marriage, or by cruelty. Such a partner could not claim innocence even though they stayed at home and did not practice immorality. Sometimes a person so aggravates and agitates another that he provokes him to violence. The provoker will not stand guiltless.

By *praising* or *flattering* the offender we involve ourselves in his guilt. There are those who personally walk carefully but who will flatter and praise those who flaunt the law. In doing this we lend our approval and encourage the rebel in his lawlessness. "A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his steps" (Prov. 29:5).

Accomplice To Sin



JOHN WADDEY

Covering up for or concealing the sins of someone else is wrong. Even the laws of men condemn the citizen who hides the criminal or covers the evidence of his guilt. "He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy" (Prov. 28:13). Not only are we to confess personal sins, we must not be guilty of aiding and abetting others. Achan's family was destroyed with him because they were thus involved in his sin against God and his nation (Josh. 7:24-26).

We share the guilt of another's sin if we are partakers in either the deed or the fruit of it. John speaks of Christians who became partakers of a false teacher's evil by opening their home to him and bidding him *godspeed* (II John 10-11). Of course, if we assist a person in a foul deed we are equally guilty. But we can also be involved by accepting gifts that were ill-gotten or by purchasing at bargain prices stolen merchandise.

Guilt can be incurred by *silence* when justice demands that we should speak up. God's preachers are commissioned to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice and declare unto my people their transgressions" (Is. 58:1). They must preach the Word, whether it is popular to do so or not (II Tim. 4:2). Even elders that sin are to be reprov'd in the sight of all, that the rest may be in fear (I Tim. 5:20). When a preacher sees sin in the lives of people and sits quietly by, fearful of exposing such, he thereby becomes an accomplice to that sin. The same principle is true for all Christians, i.e., parents who cannot bring themselves to correct their erring children.

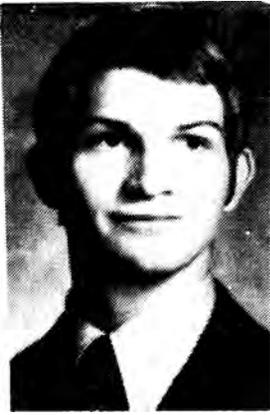
If we *defend* what has been wickedly done we then share in the guilt. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to Jehovah" (Prov. 17:15). A great temptation arises here when the offender is related to us or is our friend. We are tempted to defend our own at any price. The same weakness is seen when one defends a member of his political party or race or church, regardless of the damning evidence against him. May we who are Christians never seek to justify any man in his error no matter what our social obligation to him.

By *compromising* with sin we become involved with it. Compromise usually results from an inordinate desire to please man. We must be more concerned with pleasing God (Gal. 1:10). Faithful disciples will "buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). Elijah's challenge should be ever before us. "How long go ye limping between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him . . ." (I Kings 18:22). Jesus put it bluntly: "he that is not with me is against me; and he that might survive by trading the good and the bad hoping for some gain, the Christian must always be firm against sin and strong for righteousness.

Let us all live soberly, righteously, and godly every day of our lives (Tit. 2:12). Let us resist all temptation not only to sin overtly but even to be accomplice to another's sin.

Our Obligations Toward The Truth

The truth of which we read in the New Testament is equivalent to the inspired word of God. Our Lord declared in prayer to God, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). This truth makes men free from the slavish servitude of sin (John 8:32-34). The truth is that by which men are begotten of God (James 1:18; I Pet. 1:22, 23). The truth sanctifies, cleanses, and purifies the receptive heart (John 17:17; 15:3; Eph. 5:25, 26; I Pet. 1:22). Observe a few of our obligations toward God's truth:



DALTON KEY

WE MUST KNOW THE TRUTH. This may sound strange in light of the many arguments heard today affirming the impossibility of knowing the truth. Can we know—understand—the truth? According to our beloved and reliable Savior we not only may, but we must. To those Jews which believed on Him, Christ declared, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). It is God's will that we "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4). Would God will something which he could not provide? We think not. Furthermore, Paul speaks to Timothy of "them which know and believe the truth" (I Tim. 4:3). Listen to the words of the inspired apostle John: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it" (I John 2:21). Scripture affirms that God's truth can be known. Is it imperative that we know the truth? According to Paul, Timothy's knowledge of the holy scriptures—the truth—played an integral role in his salvation (II Tim. 3:14, 15). We must, then, "come unto the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. 2:4).

WE MUST RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH. Paul instructs young Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (I Tim. 2:15). Peter spoke in his second epistle of those who were wresting the scriptures of Paul (II Pet. 3:16). The Galatians were warned, "There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7). Legion are those today who ignore both the major divisions and the contextual peculiarities to be found within the sacred pages of holy writ. The Bible should be treated with the respect and reverence which it deserves.

WE MUST LOVE THE TRUTH. Paul speaks of those that "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:10). These words of Solomon evidence his deep affection for the truth: "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). Why would one not love that which saved him, freed him, sanctified him, and purified him? (II Thess. 2:10; John 8:32; 17:17; I Pet. 1:22). How could one love God, but not love that life-giving message which God gave? (John 17:17; II Tim. 3:16; I Pet. 4:11). Our sentiments should be as those of Israel's sublime psalmist when he declared, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:97).

WE MUST BELIEVE THE TRUTH. Paul emphasizes the importance of believing the

truth when he pronounces the doom of eternal damnation upon those "who believed not the truth" (II Thess. 2:12). Without faith—belief we cannot be pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6). Our Lord declared, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). The religious world is flooded with pseudo-intellectual skeptics who not only scoff at plain Bible truths themselves, but lead others into their den of delusion as well. Such is sad indeed. My friend, if we can't believe the truth which "God, that cannot lie" has given us, then what can we believe? (Tit. 1:2).

WE MUST OBEY THE TRUTH. While the doctrine of complete obedience is not a popular one, it is both scriptural and reasonable. Observe the inspired question submitted to the Galatians: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" (Gal. 3:1). According to the Hebrew writer, Christ is the author of eternal salvation only to those obedient to His will (Heb. 5:9). It is at this point of obedience that the truth of God makes us free (John 8:32; Rom. 6:16-18).

WE MUST TEACH THE TRUTH TO OTHERS. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). Just prior to His glorious ascension, our Lord commissioned His apostles, "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). Paul charged Timothy, "Preach the word..." (II Tim. 4:2). We should feel within us the same urgency for proclaiming the truth—the gospel—that Paul felt when he exclaimed, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16). My friend, if we, as Christian brethren, don't take upon ourselves the responsibility of "speaking the truth in love", then who will?

WE MUST DEFEND THE TRUTH. The church for which our Savior died is pictured by Paul as "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:14, 15). Those individual members, comprising the body of Christ are exhorted to "Contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, ASV). A child of God should be "ready always to give an answer" to everyone that asketh him "a reason concerning the hope" that dwells within him (I Pet. 3:15). How often do we, boldly stand up for the truth of God's word, when confronted with the erroneous and hellish doctrines of men? Many will "stand" upon the truth when no error is present, but only a few will stand FOR truth when confronted with false doctrine. Those who have committed themselves as "stewards of the mysteries of God" are required to be found faithful in that service (I Cor. 4:1, 2). Are we faithfully executing our obligation of stewardship?—Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

We Are Debtors

In his letter to the Roman Christians Paul said, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome" (Rom. 1:14, 15).

The term "debtor" means "to be under obligation to be something for someone, to owe someone something." Paul recognized his indebtedness to his fellowmen to preach the gospel to them that they might be saved, and he was ready to pay his debt in the imperial city of Rome, the capital of the far-flung political power of his day.

The words, "I am debtor," which Paul applied to himself are applicable to Christians living today. Every child of God is a debtor, and, like Paul, we need to be willing to pay our debts.

To whom are we debtors?

1. WE ARE DEBTORS TO GOD. He gives to all "life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25). He is the source of "every good gift and every perfect gift" (James 1:17). He is the bestower of all spiritual blessings. "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). From him we receive "mercy, and...grace to help in time of need"

(Heb. 4:16).

2. WE ARE DEBTORS TO CHRIST. He is our means of reconciliation unto God. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made high in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). He is our advocate with the Father, the one pleads our case and represents our cause before God when we sin and fall short of the glory of God (I John 2:1). In this connection, Christ is "a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. 2:17).

3. WE ARE DEBTORS TO THE CHURCH. Christ is the means of our reconciliation to God but he reconciles us "unto God in one body by the cross" (Eph. 2:16). This "one body" is the church (Eph. 1:22, 23). Hence we are reconciled unto God in the church. It is through the church that we honor and glorify God. "Unto him be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, work without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:21).

4. WE ARE DEBTORS TO THE LOST Christians are to bear fruit for Christ. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:8). The fruit of a Christian is another Christian. We are to preach the gospel to the lost so that they can be saved. "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). Paul recognized this as being a tremendous debt (Rom. 1:14).

We have only one life to live, only one life to give, to the service of God, Christ, the church, and the lost world around us. Where are we going to pay our debt? — 101 Doy Drive Shelbville, Tenn. 37160.



HUGH FULFORD



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

Dip In Baptisms Seen As Challenge

The above words constituted the title of an intensely interesting article that appeared on the religious journalism. His opening statement was, "Baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention are expected to reach their lowest point in 28 years when 1977 figures are made final, but the denomination's state evangelism director regards the decline as a challenge."



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The article pointed out that the 1977 baptism rate represents an 11 per cent drop from 1976. But 1976 was a drop from 1975, though no actual percentage was listed as touching the drop. According to the article 1972 was its best year with big gains again registered in 1973, '74 and '75 before the decline hit in 1976. Some states such as Texas engaged in very serious evangelistic efforts and yet experienced declines. A dismayed Texas evangelism director was quoted as saying, "If we hadn't pulled out all stops, there's no telling where we would have come out." Many of the co-operating churches of the Southern Baptist Convention during 1976 had no baptisms during the entire year. This was true among 12.5 per cent of their congregations. Both country and city churches went a year without registering as much as one baptism.

How do they account for the decline? The article says, "Speculation on the reasons for the decline have hit on geographical shifts in population, the changing median age of the population, misplaced emphasis, the influence of para-church groups and the decline of the

Jesus Movement.

"Mr. McDow, state post director for Tennessee, says, 'I look at it as an opportunity of getting serious with God.' He says there is sometimes a tendency to 'get a little complacent with God. Sometimes He has to let us know that He's the one who is lord of his work. I view it as a great challenge.'

"C. B. Hogue in New York recently said, 'God is trying to say something to us, but we are like Rip Van Winkle and are sleeping through it. Maybe God is trying to bring spiritual renewal and we are not involved in it.' Hogue thinks it 'is too early to speculate on reasons for the drop in baptisms as well as declines in resident membership, Sunday school enrollment and church training attendance.' Hogue's closing statement was, 'I don't see anything we have to be alarmed about.'"

SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE BAPTISTS

Apparently, their teaching about the total non-essentiality of baptism as touching salvation has finally begun to take root among the potential populace which they seek to proselyte. The chickens, as it were, have come home to roost. For years their preachers have taught either faith only or a combination of repentance and faith with repentance occurring the same moment that faith does. For years they have denied that the believer who is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16). They have contended that the believer who is unbaptized or unimmersed is saved by just his belief. They have long made the passage read, "He that believeth and is NOT baptized shall be saved." They have contended that one does not have to repent and be baptized for or unto the remission of sins, though Peter commanded both acts in crystal clear language in Acts 2:38. Again and again they have sought to make the Greek word *eis* to mean BECAUSE OF instead of retaining its true lexical meaning of a prospective view or "in order to" to obtain the desired blessing of

salvation or the remission of sins. They have denied that the water of baptism of John 3:5 has any connection with the new birth at all. They have sought to connect it with the water of a baby at physical birth from its mother's womb. They have denied the essentiality of baptism in order to be saved in every case of New Testament conversion mentioned by Luke in the book of Acts. They do not believe the eunuch had to be baptized to be saved in Acts 8. They have long contended that Saul of Tarsus was saved on the Damascus Road and not when Ananias baptized him three days later. They deny any link between Saul's baptism and the washing away of his sins. They have long contended that the jailor was saved at the point of Acts 16:30-31 and not at the point he reached in Acts 16:33 when he and all his family were baptized the same hour of the night. They have long denied that people are baptized INTO Christ, yet Paul affirms such in Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27. They deny that baptism doth now save, yet Peter affirmed it in I Peter 3:21. Some years ago I showed this verse to a Baptist lady with whom I was in a serious study of the Bible and seeking to convert her to the truth. She said in essence, "That is what it says. I see that it says that. But I do not believe a word of it." Needless to say the cottage study ended with her still in the Baptist fold.

For years they have been fond of quoting and misusing totally Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17. They ignore totally the ones he mentions in the context whom he did baptize while at Corinth. They ignore the great argument he sets out in that very context that before one can wear the name of another, he must have been baptized into that person's name. That is the only way we can get into that blessed name. That is the only way that will permit our wearing Scripturally his great and glorious name.

Baptists have long denied any and all



Words Of Truth

"I am not made, most noble Fre-
tus, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness"

— Acts 26:25

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Elders As Leaders

NO. 1

STEVE WILLIAMS

[The following is part one of a three part article on a subject vital to preachers and elders at this time. Preachers and elders who are aware of the present controversy with reference to the authority of elders will likely want to preserve this material. The author has done the brotherhood a service through his research in this matter. — Editor].

The term *hegeomai* is used of elders in Heb. 13:17 and 24 and certainly it includes elders in Heb. 13:7. In an attempt to deny the authority of elders, many have tried to empty words such as *hegeomai* of any measurable degree of authority. We have recently been told that the "basic idea of this word is to rule in the sense of *leading* and *guiding* others, not rule in the sense of a king, governor, president, or elected official" (*Firm Foundation*, Nov. 15, 1977, p. 5). Depending upon just what is meant here this may be correct. Again we are told "that every Greek word of that 'rule' family used in the New Testament in reference to elders has a gentler alternate meaning. . . . *Hegeomai*, also translated 'to rule' may also be translated 'to lead' or 'guide' " (*F.F.*, Jan. 31, 1978, p. 6).

What this line of thinking has led to with some is a total denial of authority for elders, ministers, or anyone else. One man wrote, "Authority for anyone in the church, be he preacher, elder, or deacon, is alien to the New Testament concept of the church. . . . Our concept of elders has its origin in the worldly notion of the necessity of decision-making authority, naive biblical scholarship, and the authoritarian-slanted King James Version" (*F.F.*, Jan. 31, 1978, pp. 3, 11). Another brother wrote, "I do not believe that elders have any authority, much less the authority to rule the church" (*The Ensign Fair*, Nov. 1977, p. 4). And another writes, ". . . it is a very risky business to try to claim 'power' and 'authority' for elders or for any other church leaders" (*Integrity*, June, 1977, p. 2).

While all can readily agree that the elders are not to reign as cruel dictators (Mt. 20:26-28), is it true that elders have no authority whatsoever? Is their only power the

Continued on page 3



FROM THE EDITOR

God's Plan To Finance



BOBBY DUNCAN

In order to understand and appreciate God's plan for financing His work, two propositions need to be established in our minds: (1) The matter of worship has always involved some kind of giving, and (2) it is through this giving that God's work on earth is financed.

That worship involves giving may be clearly seen from many Old Testament examples of worship.

It was by bringing an offering unto the Lord that Cain and Abel, sons of Adam, worshipped God (Gen. 4:3,4). The first occurrence of the word *worship* in the Bible is in connection with Abraham's offering Isaac as a burnt offering to God (Gen. 22:5). When the law of Moses was given the Israelite nation at Sinai, instructions were given concerning the matter of worship; and these instructions primarily involved the bringing of gifts and offering sacrifices to the Lord.

In view of the foregoing, it should not be surprising to us to read: "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2). Notice that this contribution was to be taken "upon the first day of the week," which is the same day upon which the disciples came together to eat the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7).

In that same assembly at Corinth in which the Lord's supper was eaten (I Cor. 11:20), the saints also worshipped God by the giving of material possessions, according to their prosperity (I Cor. 16:2). *The matter of worship has always involved some kind of giving.*

Not only is such the case, but it is through this arrangement that God finances His work upon the earth. Numbers 18 makes it plain that it was through the tithes and offerings of the other twelve tribes that the priestly tribe of Levi was to be supported. The tabernacle itself was constructed by means of the willing gifts and offerings of the people (Ex. 35 & 36). When the Jews began the return from Babylonian captivity, and to plan for the rebuilding of the temple of God, all the Jews were instructed to help "with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering. . . ." (Ezra 1:4).

The church we read about in the New Testament financed its work by the liberal contributions of its members. Contrast this with the pancake suppers, car washes, rummage sales, raffles, bingo games, *et al*, not to mention the outright begging from strangers so characteristic of many religious groups in our time.

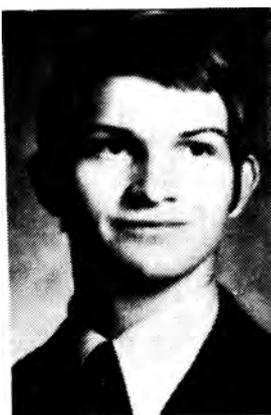
Churches of Christ today support gospel preachers, send out missionaries, build meetinghouses, produce radio and television programs, support widows and orphans, mail out gospel literature, etc.; and all of this is financed through contributions made by members of the church — liberal contributions made largely as they sacrificially worship God by giving upon the first day of the week.

I Just Can't Remember The Bible

Bourdalon, one of France's better known preachers during the time of Louis XIV, made it a habit to deliver his sermons with his eyes closed. Asked why this was, he replied, "Lest I forget." A great many today have the same trouble remembering that seemed to plague Bourdalon. Noted psychologist Carl Seashore has said, "The average man does not use

above ten percent of his actual inherited capacity for memory." Abraham Lincoln once said, "My mind is like a piece of steel — very hard to scratch anything on it, but almost impossible, after you get it there to rub it out."

My friend, do you find it easier to memorize an advertising jingle or a passage of scripture? Why is this so? We remember best what we contact most. That with which we spend the most of our time becomes that



DALTON KEY

which is most deeply etched upon the canvas of the mind. Could this be the reason for the Bereans' searching the scriptures daily, and for David's making the word of God his daily and constant meditation (Acts 17:11; Psa. 119:97)? Because of this constant contact with the word of God, David was able to say, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart" (Psa. 119:11). He had it down; he remembered it.

"Oh", someone says, "I just don't have what it takes to remember the Bible. I don't have the mental capacity for memorizing scripture." Are these your sentiments, friend? If so, can you tell me who served this country first as President? You can? Then, can you remember who served as Israel's first Judge? Can you remember the name of her first King? You can't? Why not? You see, we remember (1) what we HAVE to remember, and (2) what we WANT to remember.

It is just as simple to memorize the Bible as it is to memorize an advertising jingle. If you would sit in front of your Bible every evening with the same attentiveness and interest that characterizes your television viewing, you would be delightfully surprised at the growth in your Bible knowledge. You would find that your memory for the Bible is not that bad after all. Will you not give it a try? — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas, 67039.

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.)

"Was the flood local, or universal, in scope?"

Current liberal religious writers either reject, in full, the historicity of the Genesis Flood, or at best, describe it as an unimportant local inundation limited, in extent, to a small area in Mesopotamia.

Both groups reach these conclusions largely because of the influence of uniformitarian theology — a theory which alleges that all changes in and on the earth have resulted from natural, and not catastrophic, causes.

Here, as often elsewhere, such writers evidence their slavish dependence on "scholars" in other fields for their conclusions which they then pass on to their readers as assured results of scholarly investigation. If these "results" conflict with what the Bible says, they could not really care less! They do not hesitate to set aside plain affirmations of Sacred Writ for the deliverances of their revered mentors.

Currently, uniformitarian theology is "in"; and liberal theologians, like so many sheep, fall dutifully in line. This disposition, long observable in the denominational world is becoming more and more apparent among "us". There are those among us, in ever increasing numbers, who are more impressed by the utterances of radical "scholars" than they are by what the Scriptures plainly assert. Bernard Ramm, a denominational theologian, and a devotee of the "local flood" theory is by many among us today more highly regarded than McGarvey, notwithstanding the fact that Ramm has not real background in geology, and his Biblical learning is greatly inferior to that which McGarvey had.

It is a distressing commentary on the times that a liberal writer such as Ramm is more widely read, and is much more appreciated by some of "our" preachers today than McGarvey who, the *London Times* once said, had the most thorough and profound knowledge of the English Bible of any many on earth! What must the future hold for the cause we love when men, like McGarvey, are ridiculed by some preachers in the churches of Christ, and others, like Ramm (who has never obeyed the gospel), are eulogized? It is later than we think!

The flood, with the sole exception of creation, is the most stupendous event of which man has knowledge. The Scriptures, in the most detailed fashion, tell when it began and ended, how long it continued, and why it came. In no other matters are the Sacred Writings more minute, more particular, and more specific regarding the events described (Gen. 7:11-24).

Moreover, the simple, historical narrative of Genesis is alluded to, and sanctioned again and again elsewhere in the Bible. Of it our Lord said, "For as in those days which were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matt. 24:38, 39). Here the destruction which is to come upon wicked men, at the last day, is compared to that which befell their ancient counterparts, thus necessitating an area of equal extent, in the administration of judgment. Similarly, Peter indicated the world-wide extent of the flood in a comparable allusion when he said, "For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens

from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (II Pet. 3:5-7).

Of special significance here is the apostle's allusion to "the world that then was," which "being overflowed with water, perished." The "world" (kosmos) which "then was", is identified by him as consisting of "an earth compacted out of water and amidst water," obviously, including the whole of it. It was to this fact that Peter appealed in his argument of another catastrophe equal in extent yet to come, the destruction of wicked men. If the flood embraced only a small portion of the earth, and included but few people, comparatively speaking, the apostle's parallel utterly fails.

Certain simple basic facts render the concept of a local flood absurd. If the waters were limited to a small area of Western Asia, (a) why was it necessary to construct the ark at all? Could not Noah, and his family, simply have departed for lands beyond and to set forth on such a journey, since warnings of the flood came to them more than a hundred years

earlier. (b) Why did not all the people proceed over the Caucasian mountains to safety if the flood embraced no more than a small area in the Mesopotamian valley? (c) Animals instinctively move to higher ground as waters rise; why was it necessary to take them into the ark if the flood were local? (d) Could not the birds have easily and quickly flown to drier regions when the rains began?

Does not the size of the ark lead logically to the concept of a universal flood? Because of some uncertainty regarding the length of the cubit of measurement used, it is not possible to determine *exactly* the size of the ark; but it had a capacity of at least a million and a half cubic feet, the equivalent of more than *five hundred* single-decked cattle cars. Are we to suppose that Noah and his sons built a vessel of this size to cross a small valley inundated by a local flood? And, why did Noah and his family feed and store their cargo for nearly a year in the ark if the waters which born them up extended no farther than the horizon?

It is not possible to believe the Bible, and accept the concept of a local, limited flood of waters. Those who thus do have taken leave of faith, and rely on fallacious reasoning, for their conclusions. In so doing, they illustrate well Mark Twain's observation that "It is strange what some men can believe, just so it is not in the Bible!"

Elders As Leaders

Continued from page 2

same power of all Christians, a "teaching function" (*F.F.*, Jan. 31, 1978, p. 3)? If so then what is an elder? To what office was he appointed? We hope that the present controversy is simply a misunderstanding of terms, and that many are only pointing out the way or the manner in which elders are to lead the church; but we fear that there is more to it than this.

Attempts to weaken the definitions of words like *hegeomai* to eliminate authority as a part of being an elder are wrong. We are told that claiming authority for elders, preachers, or anybody else is "naive biblical scholarship." The one who made that statement did not advance proof for his definitions of words like *hegeomai* (for lack of space), so we propose to examine this word from a linguistic point of view, the second step in heremetics, the first being textual considerations. We hope to demonstrate that an elder's being a leader (*hegeomai*) in the church does give him some authority. We will offer proof in the following categories: (1) definitions from lexicons, (2) usage in the New Testament, (3) use in the LXX (Greek Old Testament), (4) use in the Apocrypha, (5) the use in the papyri and other non-literary sources, (6) the use in early Christian writings, (7) uses in classical Greek, and (8) translations of *hegeomai*.

1. *Hegeomai* if defined as "lead, guide, of men in any leading position, ruler, leader" (Arndt and Gingrich's *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 344); "to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over; a prince, governor, viceroy, chief" (Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 276). In reference to Heb. 13:7, 17, 24 where it applies to elders, *hegeomai* is defined as "heads of a Christian church" (A

& G, p. 344) or as "the overseers or leaders of Christian churches" (Thayer, p. 276). These definitions alone show that elders have some authority.

2. Looking at the usage of *hegeomai* elsewhere in the New Testament, it is used of a "leader" in contrast to "one who serves" (Lk. 22:26); of "rulers" of Judah (Mt. 2:6); of Judas and Silas as "leading men among the brethren" (Acts 15:22); of Paul as the "chief speaker" (Acts 14:12); of Joseph as a "governor" in power over Egypt (Acts 7:10); and of Christ as a "ruler" who will govern Israel (Mt. 2:6; quoting Micah 5:2 which has *archonta* in the LXX which is defined in A & G, p. 113, as "ruler, lord, prince, authorities, officials"). All other uses of *hegeomai* in the New Testament fall under the second meaning of "think, consider, regard" (A & G, p. 344). The meaning of "lead" is always found in the participle form which is best expressed in English as a noun. This examination of *hegeomai* as used in the New Testament shows that elders do have some ruling authority. — 103 Audubon Dr., Frankfort, Ky. 40601.

*Attend Church
Every Sunday!*

Dip In Baptisms Seen As Challenge

Continued from page 1

connection between baptism and salvation. Maybe they have at last begun to convince multitudes to listen to and heed their falsehoods about baptism. Baptism is essential toward their getting into the Baptist church. But they turn right around and deny any connection between church membership and one's going to heaven. If people can be saved without baptism and without membership in the Baptist church, perhaps multitudes have now decided to take them at their word and discard both non-essentials as per their theory. I wonder if some of these facts may not have been in the backs of their puzzled minds, their baffled hearts. Again I wonder if there is sufficient challenge to make them begin to teach the truth relative to baptism which would be a FIRST for them.

SOME OBSERVATIONS FOR US

Faithful and sound gospel preachers still sound forth the essentiality of baptism. I never close a sermon where I preach locally or in a gospel meeting without giving the plan of salvation including, the prime place that baptism holds in that precious plan. Yet some among us are getting away from this. More and more of our preachers are getting away from this. A number will simply say "Come"

as they extend the invitation. But the HOW of the coming needs to be spelled out in simple commandment form. Too infrequently we go long periods without preaching on baptism. An editor of one of our fine journals recently requested that I write him an old fashioned article on baptism. He told of preaching in a certain city on the subject of baptism. A Roman Catholic was baptized at the end of the service. The young man had attended before but had never heard the truth presented on New Testament baptism. Vast numbers of other people are in his same boat. They just do not know. They do not know who is a proper candidate. They do not know the proper action of baptism. They do not know its proper element. They do not know its design or purpose. These were the very points that I made in the writing of the old fashioned article on baptism. Too frequently we just assume that everyone knows these matters simply because they are so familiar to us. Not so though!

I know of a congregation where the elders demand that the gospel plan of salvation be given at every service. In this they are eminently right. Their regular man was away in a meeting. Another came to speak in his

place. In the morning lesson he failed to give the gospel plan. One of the elders talked to him about it. That night he did give it, but told the audience that he had been told to do it, was now doing it, and that now takes care of that!! Needless to say he will never again fill the pulpit nor should he. He should not fill any pulpit with that type of attitude. That is not what GOSPEL PREACHING is all about.

We need more preaching to be done about such fundamentals of the faith as hearing, believing, repenting, confessing and especially about New Testament baptism. We need more people who will teach the gospel to the lost on a one-to-one basis within the home setting. Unless we do this there will be declining baptisms of a serious nature among us. And we are not baptizing nearly as many people as we should and as we could if all would turn themselves into soul winners for the Lord. But at least any decline we face is not traceable to a denial of the importance of baptism and church membership. At least this is true with our sound preachers and our doctrinally strong congregations. But we should learn some obvious lessons from what our Baptist neighbors are now experiencing.— P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Let's Evangelize

CLIFFORD DIXON

In Acts 8:4 we read, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." It is said that the persecution of the early Christians led by Saul of Tarsus made Christianity spread like wildfire until it had reached the entire Roman empire. This spirit of going with the gospel should be the watchword of every Christian today, and here are some reasons why.

We have the word of God. Concerning his giving the gospel Paul said, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:12, 13). Here he points out that we have the things freely given to us of God, but we have them because Paul and the other apostles were verbally inspired to give them to us. We have them in the New Testament which is a complete guide for our spiritual well being (II Tim. 3:16, 17). This message of God needs to be taken to every creature in all the world (Mark 16:15).

This word of God is the power of God to save men. "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). Not only did Paul declare the gospel to be God's power to save but he also set about to show that man needs that gospel. He showed the Jews that they were sinners and in need of it in Romans 2. He showed the awful depraved state of the Gentiles in Romans 1:18-32. Then in Romans 3:23 he said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." He did not stop by showing man that he is a sinner and lost, but he also said, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . ." (Rom. 3:24). So by inspiration Paul pointed

out that the gospel is the power of God to salvation, then showed that all men are sinners and so need this gospel. These truths are just as true in this Twentieth Century society as they were in the First Century. So it is urgent to go with this gospel to our neighbors and friends and to the strangers of earth until this good news fills the whole earth in our day.

This word of God is the only saving power. There is no substitute that will work. In fact, if we try to substitute something else the curse of heaven will be upon us. "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). Not only would the curse rest on the teacher, but Jesus said, "And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14). Those blindly led by anything else than the gospel will be lost. We are warned in Col. 2:8: "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." We have obligations of finding the truth and receiving the true gospel, and Christians have obligations of presenting the true gospel to the lost world. When Paul was writing Timothy he said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). He did not tell Timothy to find all the new gimmicks that he could to entice people. Such are empty and deceitful, but the gospel is the sound and true doctrine that will save our souls. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). It is God's will that men be begotten by the word of truth and in no other way. Let's be content to go and evangelize with the word of truth.

This word of God will work in the lives of

men. It worked in the lives of those guilty of murdering the Lord on Pentecost day, because about 3,000 repented and were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:37-41). It worked in the life of the Persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, because he arose and was baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16; 9:18).

It worked on Cornelius, the good moral man, because he was commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and his household (Acts 10:47, 48). It worked on the heathen Philippian Jailer, because he believed, showed repentance and was baptized the same hour of the night (Acts 16:30-34). It worked on the Corinthians, because many of them hearing, believed, and were baptized (Acts 18:8). If it worked on all kinds of sinners then, it will work on all kinds of sinners now. Men have not changed in their basic attitudes and needs. We still need salvation because of sin, and guidance because we are unable to direct our own paths. The gospel still works in the lives of people today.

Dear Christian do not lose faith in the gospel. It is living and active and powerful to save. It is the sword of the Spirit. Do not lose faith in men because the honest ones will still accept the gospel when it is presented to them in love and in truth.

LET'S EVANGELIZE!

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Words Of Truth

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

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 1978

NUMBER 50

Just What Do You Mean — Fulltime?

We have done the Lord's cause a grave injustice by speaking of fulltime elders and preachers. WHY? Because it leaves the false impression that there are part time elders and preachers. Every elder appointed to oversee the flock is a FULLTIME elder. Where did anyone ever get the idea that there is anything in the Bible akin to a part time bishop?



CURTIS R. DOWDY

It is undoubtedly correct to think in terms of fully supported pastors who can give more time and energy to caring for the flock. Paul makes it clear: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward" (I Tim. 5:17, 18). The word translated "honour" means "salary," "stipend," "reward," "wages" (see THE MODEL CHURCH by Brewer, page 55). Nevertheless, where men do the work of pastors, whether supported by the flock or by themselves, elders are fulltime elders or no elders at all.

It would be just as correct to speak of Paul's being a fulltime apostle. There were times when he was supported by some church (Philippians 4:15, 16); there were times when he supported himself (Acts 20:34; I Cor. 9:6). The way his support came had nothing to do with his apostleship, Paul was an apostle all the time.

A friend of mine was attending college when the subject of preacher ordination came up. The teacher remarked that she did not know that my friend was a preacher, and asked just when and where he had been ordained. His reply was classic, "A.D. 33, just outside of Jerusalem." He then quoted

Mark 16: 15, 16); he was neither trying to be smart nor cute. Every faithful Christian has been ordained to preach the "word" (I Timothy 2:2). That is precisely what we find brethren doing when driven out of Jerusalem: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:3).

Some of the greatest work of preaching and teaching has and is being done by men and women who support themselves. However, as the flock supported pastor can give more time to shepherding, just so the flock supported preacher can give more time to preaching.

A problem, however, has developed around the supported preacher in many places. It has happened just as some brethren warned; i.e., "The supported preacher concept will kill individual initiative and will rival the denominational pastor system." The fault, in most instances, is not that of the supported preacher assuming authority which the Bible does not authorize. Like Israel of old regarding a king, brethren have looked around to see what the denominational preacher does and have found him a pastor in every sense of the word. The shadow of the denominational pastor is cast upon the gospel preacher and he is expected to perform the same duties and functions, while the real pastors (elders) and the special servants (deacons) are thought of as not being too deeply involved. It may be that elders have been only too happy about this arrangement, seeing that they were having to busy themselves earning a living, which underscores the need for flock supported elders.

The truth of the above is made readily evident by answering a few questions:

1. Who do you call when some spiritual or congregational problem arises?
2. Who do you call when some member of the church is sick?
3. Who do you call when someone in the church or community dies?
4. How do you answer when asked, "Who is your pastor?"

Now we may think, "Ah, but I know the

difference." What one may know intellectually and what one may do practically are two different things.

Some have suggested that the denominational pastor system works better than "ours" (?), but this is begging the question. The denominational pastor system works for them because they made it and they work it. The question is, are we truly working the system outlined and authorized in the Bible?

This feeble scribe believes that the "preacher is a pastor" idea has been a contributing factor to the movement that seeks to remove from the elders any real decision making authority. In short, if the preacher is expected to do the work of a pastor why should he not have the authority that goes with it?

Too, "the preacher is a pastor" idea has been the cause of some excellent preachers giving up supported works. The stress and strain proved too much. As an example, I heard of one man who had a sore toe and was in bed for three days. When the preacher did not come by for a visit the man became angry and said that he would not go back to church as long as that preacher was there. Surely this gentleman had more problems than a sore toe, but it does prove a point. Notice, please, he was not upset with the real pastors. Why? Could it be that he thought of the preacher as his pastor?

A step in the right direction would be for one or more of the elders to speak to the flock about their work as pastors. They might suggest that if someone has information concerning sickness, death, spiritual problems, etc., they contact the elders.

It is time for elders, whether supported by the church or by themselves, to move back into their God assigned rolls as pastor's of the flock, and to allow preachers, whether supported by the church or by themselves, to make "full proof of their ministry."

P. O. Box 456, Obion, Tn. 38240



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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Elders As Leaders

(Part 2)

STEVE WILLIAMS

(The first part of this article is in last week's WORDS OF TRUTH, and should be read before reading this. Part 3 will appear next week).

3. In the LXX there are about one hundred occurrences of *hegeomai*, most of them in the participle form. Often it is paired with words such as *archon* ("ruler, lord"), or *pioamino* ("herd, tend, pasture" — A & G, p. 690). In II Chr4on. 5:2 the LXX joins "elders" (*presbuteros*), "heads" (*archontas*), and "leaders" (*hegoumenous*) together in one sentence. Other uses of *hegeomai* in the LXX might be listed as follows, realizing that the LXX does not always read like the Hebrew text:

- a. of Joseph as a leader of his brethren (Gen. 49:26).
- b. of God leading the children of Israel with a cloud and a pillar of fire (Ex. 13:21).
- c. of heads appointed over the children of Israel (Dt. 1:13, 15; 5:23; Mal. 1:8) or of various political leaders (II Sam. 2:5; I Kings 16:2; II Chron. 6:5; 11:22; Esther 1:16; Prov. 29:26; Jer. 5:22; Ezek. 23:6, 12; 43:7, 9; 45: 7; Mic. 3:9, 11; 7:5).
- d. of leaders of Gentiles (Josh. 13:21).
- e. of Saul as a leader (I Sam. 15:17).
- f. of David as the leader of an army (I Sam. 22:2) and of Israel (I Sam. 25:30; II Sam. 5:2; 6:21; 7:8; I Kings 1:35; I Chron. 11:2; 17:7).
- g. of Abner as a great prince (II Sam. 3:38).
- h. of other military leaders (II Sam. 4:2; I Kings 16:16; II Kings 1:13; I Chron. 12:21, 27; 13:1; II Chron. 11:11; 17:2, 7, 15; 18:16; 20:27).
- i. of descendants of David and Solomon on the throne (I Kings 9:5; II Chron. 7:18).
- j. of Solomon as king (I Kings 10:26; II Chron. 9:26).
- k. of Maacah as a queen (I Kings 15:13).
- l. of Hezekiah as the prince of Israel (II Kings 20:5).
- m. of Meraioth as the ruler of the house

Continued on page 3



FROM THE EDITOR

Let's Not "Ho-Hum" The ERA



BOBBY DUNCAN

We have now reached the point at which even the proponents of the so-called Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America are admitting that said amendment is in trouble. It now seems somewhat unlikely that this proposed amendment will be ratified by two-thirds of the states within the allotted time. Those of us who are concerned about moral principles can thank God and scores of dedicated men and women (mostly women) for this fact. There is no question that members of the church of Christ have played a major part in the efforts that have been put forth to combat this proposed piece of ungodly legislation.

But the war is not over. While many are optimistic that those in the right have come near to winning this battle, we must realize that the forces of evil are still very much at work. Efforts will continue to be made to extend the deadline for ratification right on up to March 1979. And if this fails, we still have not seen the end of the matter. Our president and a number of other people in high places in Washington are determined that we shall have an equal rights amendment; and so, even though we may have won a battle, the war is not over.

We do not believe it is the function of the church to lobby in Washington for the purpose of influencing legislation. We realize also that no amount or kind of legislation can force those who are determined to abide by God's standard to accept women preachers and women elders in the Lord's church. However, those of who are Christians and are concerned about the moral climate of the society in which we are rearing our children dare not "Ho-Hum" the so-called Equal Rights Amendment. To do so is to demonstrate a lack of real awareness of its terrible consequences. And if the so-called Equal Rights Amendment does finally become law, this one thing—a lack of real awareness of its terrible consequences—will be the thing that allows it to pass.

This is where we preachers come in. People must be taught. Decent people who think they want the ERA to be ratified really do not know what it is all about. They have been led to believe that it would simply guarantee equal job opportunities and equal pay for women. They do not know that there are already laws guaranteeing these. Neither do they know that they are promoting legislation which, if passed, would strike down every law of every state, county, and city which favors women. We refer to laws concerning rape, alimony, child support, etc. And they do not know they are paving the way for their daughters to be

drafted, if and when the draft is reactivated. And when such takes place, there can be no requirement that women who are drafted live in separate barracks from men.

The Communists and the Nazis support ERA. The homosexuals and the lesbians support ERA. And thousands and thousands of good people who do not know what it is all about support it. The greatest weapon to be used against ERA is the truth. Those of us who know the truth about it should be at least as concerned about defeating this evil as the Communists, Nazis, homosexuals and lesbians are about pushing it through.

NICHOLS TO EDIT

For the next two weeks the editor of WORDS OF TRUTH will be out of the country, touring the lands of the Bible. Consequently, the next two issues of the paper will be edited by our very able and beloved Associate Editor, Flavil Nichols. We are confident these two issues will be very special, and that you will profit greatly by reading them.

What Made John Great

Our Lord said of John the baptizer, "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). When Jesus made that profound statement, He was speaking from a personal knowledge of all the great men who had lived before.



MICHAEL D. STONE

Yet, He affirms that none of them was greater than John. What made John the great man that he was? Let us learn and let us strive for the kind of greatness which he possessed.

John the Baptist did not care much about the material things of this life. His raiment consisted of camel's hair, and a leather girdle. He ate locusts and wild honey (Matthew 3:4). Jesus said concerning John, "But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in kings' houses" (Matthew 11:8). Our Lord attested to the fact that John cared little about material possessions. Each of us needs to understand that the clothes do not make the man. Some judge by the clothes. Jesus judges by what is inside a man. What kind of character does he have? May God help us to learn that man does not live by bread alone and that "a man's life consisteth not in the

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it our duty to forgive those who sin against us when they neither ask for nor want forgiveness?"

It is not only *not* our duty so to do, it is an utter impossibility! This question recurs because people persist in disregarding what the Bible teaches regarding genuine repentance, by setting up their own concept of what repentance is and by attempting to conform thereto. Those who do this actually imply, whether they intend it or not, that forgiveness is the cancellation of bitter, revengeful, and uncharitable feelings toward those who sin against us, substituting a disposition of kindness, love and regard for the offending one or ones; and, they urge that such must evermore characterize faithful

Christians. But, (1) many devoted and dedicated disciples of the Lord never experience bitter, revengeful and uncharitable feelings toward those who sin against them; and (2) the attitude of disposition by so many regarded as obligatory in such cases is not repentance, anyway. God never entertains "bitter, revengeful and uncharitable" feelings toward even the vilest of sinners; but, he forgives only those who repent. Jesus prayed for those who hated him so much they sought for, and obtained his death; but, he did not forgive them until they repented.

The words, "remission," and "forgiveness", often translate the same Greek word (*aphesis*) and the meaning is *release*, the *sending of sins away*, and thus the restoration of a peaceful relationship which the offence

interrupted. Unless the offender wants this relationship, it is impossible for the offended to effect it, however much he might desire it and seek it. Our Lord made clear our obligation in such cases when he said, "Take heed to yourselves; if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3, 4). To this the reply is often made, "Well, we must always be ready and willing to forgive," as indeed we must; but, this is not forgiveness and ought not to be confused with it. It is our duty to love all men, even our enemies, and to pray for their wellbeing; but, we can forgive them only when they repent.

Elders As Leaders

Continued from page 2

of God (I Chron. 9:11).

n. of Meraioth as the ruler of the house of God (I Chron. 9:11).

n. of Asaph as a chief minister among the Levites (I Chron. 16:5).

o. of religious or administrative officials (II Chron. 19:11; 31:13; Dan. 3:2-3).

p. of Azrikam as commander of the palace (II Chron. 28:7).

q. of Haman as the chief ruler under Ahasuerus (Esther 5:11).

r. of Pashur the priest as chief officer of the house of the Lord (Jer. 20:1).

My impression of the meaning of *hegeomai* after studying these one hundred verses was a definition simply of a "leader" or "one in authority." The word often took on a meaning similar to "foreman" or "chief administrator". Elders are God's "foremen" or "administrators" within the church. Again to claim that *hegeomai* does not imply that elders have authority is to ignore the evidence. Well did Westcott write, "The word occurs frequently in the LXX. of various forms of authority" (*Hebrews*; on 13:7). Westcott, one of the greatest Greek scholars of all time says *hegeomai* is used of various forms of "authority," yet some would have us believe that elder have no authority.

Before leaving the evidence of *hegeomai* in the LXX, it is very enlightening to note the various Hebrew words which *hegeomai* translates. Hatch and Redpath's *Concordance to the Septuagint* list over thirty words which *hegeomai* translates. Here we will note the five Hebrew words which are the most frequent in this list:

a. *mashal* - "rule, have dominion, reign, ruler" (Brown, Driver, and Briggs's *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, p. 605).

b. *nagid* - "leader, prince, ruler" (Ibid., pp. 617-18).

c. *nasi* - "one lifted up; a chief, a prince" (Ibid., p. 672).

d. *rosh* - "one lifted up; a chief, a prince" (Ibid., pp. 910-11).

e. *sar* - "chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, vassal, noble, general, head" (Ibid., pp. 978-79).

Can anyone honestly look at these words and say that *hegeomai* does not give elders authority? One of these words, *nagid*, literally means "one in front"

(Ibid., p. 617), which some would take (if they reasoned as they do on *hegeomai* and similar words) as the absence of ruling power or authority; but *nagid* is used for kings, foreign rulers, high officials, overseers, and rulers of other capacities. Authority is thus not eliminated.

4. The usage of *hegeomai* in the Apocrypha is the same as the LXX. In the Apocrypha its usage might be summarized as follows, realizing that there is an overlapping in meaning in many categories:

a. of governors of the Israelites (I Esdras 1:49).

b. of family chieftains (I Esdras 5:44, 68, 70; 9:16; Judith 5:5).

c. of prominent men (I Esdras 8:44; Sirach 10:20; 1 Macc. 9:53).

d. of a captain (I Esdras 8:45; 1 Macc. 5:6; 9:35).

e. of Levites ordained for service in the temple (I Esdras 8:49).

f. of Joseph as governor over his brothers (Sirach 49:15).

g. of leaders among the Israelites (I Esdras 8:68; Sirach 49:15).

g. of leaders among the Israelites (I Esdras 8:68; Sirach 41:17; 44:4; 1 Macc. 3:55; 5:18; 13:42; 14:35, 41; II Macc. 10:21).

h. of military leaders (Judith 5:3; 1 Macc. 9:30; 13:8; 13:53; II Macc. 14:16, 20).

i. of foreign rulers (Judith 7:8; 14:12; Sirach 17:17; 39:4; 46:18).

j. of a wise ruler (Sirach 9:17).

k. of the ruler of a city (Sirach 10:2).

l. of rulers of the *ekklesias* (Sirach 30:27).

Again to say that *hegeomai* is used of one who has no authority is against the evidence.—103 Audubon Dr., Frankfort, Ky. 40601.

The Gospel of Christ

G. F. RAINES

A number of years ago, R. L. Whiteside said:

"If the gospel of Christ is not true, then it is the biggest falsehood ever propagated. And yet it has done more to lift people out of sin and corruption, and done more to refine and civilize people, and has made its sincere converts more helpful and considerate toward others, than all other systems of philosophy and religion. The biggest falsehood cannot do the most good. A fair consideration of these things will lead any one to know that the gospel of Christ is from God and not from man."

The apostle Paul said: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16, 17).

The gospel saves only those who obey it. Concerning Christ and his gospel, the Bible says:

"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).

"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" (II Thess. 1:7-9).

The gospel of Christ plainly tells us what we must do to be saved in Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Tit. 2:11-14; II Pet. 1:5-11. Please read all these passages in your own Bible.

Jesus 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. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:48, 49).—Newton, Ms. 39345.

Offended in Christ

DAVID PHARR

Could you be offended by a person like Jesus? To know Him would seem impossible inconsistent with being offended by Him. Yet the ancient Jews did find Him offensive — so much so that they crucified Him. Isaiah had prophesied that he would be a rock of offence. But Jesus said, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matt. 11:6).

One of the things about Jesus that offended men was that he stressed the *spiritual* above the *material*. He urged the laying up of treasures in heaven rather than on earth; and asked: "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?" (Mt. 16:24).

For fear of material loss many were offended. The world places temporal prosperity above spirituality. Like the rich young ruler, they turn away from the Saviour before giving up their riches.

Another way in which our Lord offended people was that He *contradicted* popu-

lar religion. He struck at their traditions and charged: "ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoreth 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" (Mt. 15:7-9).

It is a popular notion that a preacher ought to "preach Christ and leave other people's religion alone." But Jesus did not leave other people's religion alone. He struck at their false doctrines and condemned their traditions. Especially did He rebuke their "clergy." They were *offended* by His words on religion and the same words offend many today.

Another way the Master was offensive was in His *exaltation* of the *lowly* and *simple*. There was an obvious lack of pomp in His life. He was a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. The supposed wisdom and self-exaltation of men find it hard to accept the meek and lowly Jesus.

The *cross*, therefore, stands out as the most offensive thing of all. Paul speaks of the "offence of the cross" in Gal. 5:11. The event of Calvary strikes at the pride of life. It is difficult for men to swallow that a man like Jesus of Nazareth had to die for them; or, that if He had to die that it had to be with the shameful cruelty of the cross; but too few have bowed to the meaning of it. Not many are ready to say, "I am crucified with Christ" and to live their lives in total surrender to Him.

Human nature has changed little through the centuries. The life and teachings of Jesus have offended people in every generation. Even now there are multitudes who rebel when they hear the stress He gave to the spiritual above the material; or when He contradicts popular religious views; and when in Him is seen the exaltation of that which is humble and lowly. But remember His promise: "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."—P. O. Box 988, Rock Hill, S. C. 29730.

The Goodness and Severity of God

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off" (Rom. 1:22). One of the first truths that small children learn is that God is good. A prayer of thanksgiving learned early in life is: "God is great, God is good; let us thank Him for our food." The Bible speaks often of the goodness of Jehovah. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord" (Psa. 33:5). "The Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting" (Psa. 100:5). "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Psa. 118:29). It was said of the seed of Abraham, God's chosen people in ages past: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart" (Psa. 73:1). Truly, God blessed Israel abundantly as long as the people were faithful to him.

Likewise, God's goodness and mercy have been manifested toward all men in the giving of Jesus for the redemption of sins (Rom. 5:8; Jno. 3:16, 17). James declared in his epistle that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17). In order to enjoy the blessings of a spiritual nature in Christ, man has to turn to God in trust and obedience. However, all men, both good and evil, enjoy the temporal and physical blessings (Mt. 5:45). The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God lead thee to repentance?"

On the other hand, God is also a just God, exacting severity upon all those who disobey his laws. Both the Old and New Testaments are replete with examples of God punishing the transgressors. Adam and Eve brought suffering and death to the human family through sin (Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-2). God also drove them from Eden and from the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24). The people of Noah's day were destroyed by water because of the greatness of their

corruption (Gen. 6:5-7). Nadab and Abihu, priests of God and sons of Aaron, were consumed with fire because they dared to violate God's law regarding the fire that should have been used in the offering of animal sacrifices (Lev. 10:1-3, 6:8-13). Jehovah even scattered Israel from off the land of Canaan because of their sins (Lev. 26:33; Neh. 1:8). God is indeed one of

Putting Our Boys Together Right

WALTER BUCHANAN

A little boy and his father were left at home alone one evening. The father wanted to read the paper, watch TV, and relax; but his son kept demanding attention. Finding a map of the United States in a magazine, Father cut it into pieces and suggested that Son occupy his time by putting it back together. In just a short time the boy was back with the pieces all in place. His father was amazed that he had done it so soon, so he asked how he was able to do it so rapidly. The boy replied, "You see, there was a picture of a boy on the other side; I figured that if I put the boy together right, the country would turn out right."

He hit the nail squarely on the head. When we put our boys together right the nation will do just fine. Solomon wrote, "Train up a child in the way he should do; and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Paul teaches, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). It's imperative that this training begin early. There's no time to waste. This is something that can't be redone, so we must do a good job the first time. There's no room for error. Happiness in this life and in eternity depends upon how we put our young people together! Highway 71 North Beutonneville, Ark. 72712

severity.

Today, warnings can be found in the covenant of Jesus concerning punishment for those who live in sin. The Lord taught that they who entered in by the wide gate and travelled the broad way would eventually suffer the consequences (Mt. 7:13, 14). Jesus frequently spoke of a place called hell (Greek, Gehenna, see Mt. 5:22, 29, 30). The wicked will enter this place of eternal punishment (Mt. 25:46). Paul declared that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), that is, an everlasting separation from God. The apostle John mentioned that "the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever. . . ." (Rev. 14:11).

Yes, God is a God of love, mercy, goodness and grace, but, he is also a God of justice and severity. Every sin not requited by the blood of his son must be dealt with and justice must be exacted. May we encourage you now to believe in and obey his son Jesus Christ (Mt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8, 9; Mk. 16:15, 16).—East Hart Avenue, Opp, Al. 36467.

What Made John Great

Continued from page 2

abundance of the things which he possesses."

John was great because of the fine example which he set before others. He was not simply interested in numbers as some preachers are today. His demand for quality sent many people back for the fruit that showed their true repentance. Our congregations today must not be filled with "Christians" who are not worthy of the name Christian. Let us demand high quality in our preachers, elders, deacons, teachers and all Christians. John lived the life he preached to others about living. That cannot be said of some today. Concerning Jesus, John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). This good man had no idea that one day a church would be named after him. Those that have done so have made a mockery of the exemplary life of John and the Lord he worshipped.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101.



WORDS OF TRUTH

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

— Acts 26:25

"Sin Separates From God"

Sin is a universal problem: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:10).

A major problem which we face in converting people is getting them to accept the responsibility for sin from man, to some other source. An excellent example of this is the sin of homosexuality. God views this as an abomination (Romans 1:26, 27). In the eyes of man this has shifted from sin, to "sickness", to something that is "normal". Rather than facing up to the responsibility for sin, many have changed (?) sin to something that is *normal!* Psychiatrists delve into a patient's past in order to find out what influences have caused him to behave as he does. This too, removes(?) the responsibility for sin from the individual.

One of the most blasphemous doctrines in the religious world is Calvinism. John Calvin's idea was that all since the first man, Adam, entered the world "totally depraved"... that *all* humans are born that way. Again, the responsibility for sin is lifted (?) from man. This doctrine, however, places (?) the responsibility on God! No matter how diligent the effort, this cannot be refuted. Genesis one plainly teaches that God made man. If man is inherently evil, then God made something that is evil. This idea, however, contradicts, the Bible: "And God saw every-



RON HARPER

thing that He had made, and behold, it was very good..." (Genesis 1:31). God, after creation, affirms that everything was good, and this includes man. Nothing that God made is evil.

Calvinism further teaches, in this regard, that infants inherit sin. When they are born, they are born guilty of sin! Again, Calvin's doctrine contradicts the Bible: Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18:3). We realize that no one can enter heaven without having his sins being forgiven. This is done through obedience to the gospel. Yet we also know that infants cannot comply with the commands of the gospel (faith, repentance, confession, and baptism). Are we to conclude that infants enter heaven unforgiven? Quite to the contrary, infants need no forgiveness because they have not sinned, neither do they inherit any sin. Almost as if in anticipation of Calvinism, the Bible says,

"Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like, that hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his neighbors wife, neither hath oppressed any, hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, that hath taken off his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgments, hath walked in my statutes; *he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. As for his father, because he cruelly*

oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did that which is not good among his people, lo, even he shall die in his iniquity. Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him*" (Ezekiel 18:14-20).

This reading shows that each individual is responsible for his owns. "He shall not die for the iniquity of his father" stands in direct contrast to Calvin's position that babies are born guilty of sin. Either Calvin, or God, is mistaken at this point. We realize that God's word is true; so it has to be Calvin who is mistaken. How can scripture which is so plain be so mistaken?

We become sinners by sinning. Adam was guilty of nothing until he ate of the forbidden fruit. He, and he alone, was held responsible for his sin. If we enter the world as sinners then God is responsible for sin. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1:13, 14).

If we refuse to accept the responsibility for our sins, we will not take the proper course of action to make amends — primary obedience to the gospel for the

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble Festus: but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. — Acts 26:25

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All Have Sinned

(Note: During the journey of our Editor, Bro. Bobby Duncan, to Bible Lands, I am happy to edit this issue, and the one for next week also. I am grateful to those writers who have cooperated with me in preparing this material. — Flavil H. Nichols.



Flavil H. Nichols, Associate Editor

stated: "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10-12). This was true so "that all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Thank God for "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24)! He is the propitiation for "our sins," as well as for the sins of the "whole world" (I Jn. 2:2). By him the alien sinner is saved, and by him the erring child of God can be restored!—1000 St. John Rd., Route 9, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701.

Salvation By Grace

One of the shortest, sweetest, and most-used texts in the whole New Testament is a statement found in the first part of Ephesians 2:8 which says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith..." These words have served as the basis of many a lesson. They have been the strength and consolation for Christians for more than nineteen hundred years. And, when properly understood, they are the concise expression of the hope of every Christian. Every one who is saved from his sins may properly say that he is saved "by grace."



CLIFFORD M. SMITH

There can be no doubt that our salvation is by the grace of God. This truth is declared over and over again. These eight words of one syllable each, express God's plan for the life of each one of us. Read them again, "For by grace are ye saved through faith."

The deplorable condition of these Ephesians before they became children of God is described by the inspired writer as "dead in trespasses and sins they had "Walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air," and their spirit had been as that which "worketh in the children of disobedience." Their lives had been lived in the "lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind." As lost and condemned people they needed the salvation that can be received only by the grace of God. It is remarkable that God's plan for these lost Ephesians is his plan for each one of us. Let us read again THIS beautiful text:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us

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sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "Sin is the transgression of the law" (I Jn. 3:4). We may sin (1) By doing what is forbidden, as did Adam (Gen. 3:1-15); (2) By refusing to do what is demanded, like those who refused to be baptized (Lk. 7:29-30); (3) By "going beyond" what is written (II Jn. 9-11), adding to what God said, as did Moses when God said, "Speak to the rock" (Num. 20:7-11, 24); (4) By omitting part of what is demanded by the Lord, like Saul who spared the best of the sheep etc., when God said kill them all (I Sam. 15:2-3, 9); or (5) By substituting something else for what God said, as did the Jews in Mark 7:7-13.

The apostle Paul delineated the wickedness of the heathen world — Gentiles — in Romans 1. In the next chapter he indicted his fellow-Jews, saying that the "name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you" (Rom. 2:24) or "because of you" (A.S.V.). He asked, "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" (Rom. 3:9).

The very fact that God sent his Son to die for the "sins of the whole world" (I Jn. 2:2) proves that the "whole world" has sinned (See also II Cor. 5:14-15). Every accountable person on earth has sinned. This was true in the Old Testament, before Christ came to earth. "There is no man that sinneth not" (I Kings 8:46) was as true then, as now. Solomon wrote, "There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20). Man is separated from God by his own sins (Isa. 59:20). From the above facts, note the following: (1) All have sinned; (2) Sin separates man from God; (3) therefore all responsible persons are separated from God.

This is why "God so loved the WORLD..." (Jn. 3:16). — for the whole world is lost! "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (I Jn. 5:19). This point was made by the apostle Paul: "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for how then shall God judge the world?" (Rom. 3:5-6). The reason the "world" shall be judged is because the "world" is lost in sin!

Every accountable human being — from Adam to the present — has sinned! And this will be true of mankind on down to the end of the world — this is clearly

Christ: God's Unspeakable Gift

No other Biblical statement of thanksgiving compares with those given by the Apostle Paul. One such statement is found in 2 Corinthians 9:15 where he says: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." "Unspeakable" as translated in the King James Version is rendered "indescribable; or to describe and commemorate that which words fail" (Thayer). This gift which God has given is so rich and wonderful that it is beyond description. There seems to be little doubt that the "unspeakable gift" here referred to by the apostle Paul is our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely this is a gift, the value of which we as mere mortals cannot in any sense express with words.



J. R. SULLINS

The word "gift" itself implies many important factors. Jesus is an undeserved gift. Man deserves condemnation. Throughout all God's dealings with man in every age, man has proven himself time and time again to be unworthy of God's favor. This very fact did not keep our Father from bestowing on us a most undeserved gift. Paul stated it this way in his epistle to the saints in Rome: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Christ was offered as a "propitiation" or satisfaction for our sins (I John 2:2), according to the justice of the Father (Rom. 3:26).

Christ was a free gift. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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What was the purpose of miraculous gifts in the early church? When did they cease, and why?"

The church of our Lord was established on the first Pentecost following his triumphant resurrection from the dead. Then, and for some years thereafter, the message of inspiration touching the plan of salvation and the divine standard of holy living *was in men*, providing them with instruction essential to the discharge of their duties in the new Dispensation, and enabling them to confirm the truth of their teaching with supernatural and convincing evidence.

Before the first century ended, this inspiration had been transferred *from men, to a Book*—the New Testament—and it was thenceforth the sum of revelation and the exclusive authoritative standard of divine teaching for this age. Pending this transference of inspiration from men to the Book, holy men of God spake and were influenced in what they did by the Holy Spirit, in immediate and direct fashion, apart from any *written* revelation. Those thus endowed were the apostles and other faithful servants of the Lord, evidence of which abounds in the sacred writings. (John 14:16, 17; 16:13; Heb. 2:1-4.)

In the period when inspiration was *in men*, and before it was transferred to *the Book*, this situation necessarily prevailed. It is not conceivable that in any other way could the world have been provided with credible and acceptable evidence of the divine origin of Christianity, or supplied with convincing proofs of the truth of the claims of those who preached it.

Hundreds of years earlier, this plan was perceived by the prophets and announcement made regarding it. (Isa. 2:1-4; Joel 2:28.) The events of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47) ushered in the age anticipated by Joel and were identified by Peter, the apostle, as "this is that" spoken by the prophet (Acts 2:16).

The miraculous endowments supplied by the Holy Spirit enabled the early proclaimers of the gospel, in the absence of a *Book of inspiration* dealing with the functions of the apostolic church, (a) to accomplish their work with speed and ease (Acts 8:4-12); (b) to provide proof of the genuineness of their claims (Mark 16:20); (c) to supply needed edification for the members of the infant church (I Cor. 14:1-3), and (d) to generate the greatest possible interest on the part of the people in the men and message which they preached (Acts 3:1-11).

There are two *recorded* instances of Holy Spirit baptism in the sacred writings. These occurred in the most significant fashion; the first, at Pentecost, involving only the apostles, was on the occasion of the establishment of the church; and the second, in Caesarea, at "the house of Cornelius," prepared the way for the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. (Acts 2:1ff; 10:44-48). *All other miraculous manifestations of power by the Holy Spirit resulted from the bestowal of such gifts through imposition [laying on] of apostles' hands.* It is not of record that any man, in the

apostolic period, otherwise came into possession of such powers! (Paul, *an apostle*, is no exception. Fully equal to the other apostles, he must have received the spirit directly from the Lord, as did they). It follows, therefore, that since there are no apostles to perform this imposition today; and, since there is but "one" baptism available today, the element of which is "water" (Acts 8:35ff), neither the baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor the miraculous manifestations of the third person of the godhead may properly be claimed today (Acts 8:16; 19:1-6).

There were *nine* special gifts bestowed by laying on of the apostles' hands designated in the New Testament. These gifts were enumerated by Paul as follows: (1) word of wisdom; (2) word of knowledge; (3) faith; (4) healing; (5) miracles; (6) prophecy; (7) discerning of spirits; (8) tongues; (9) interpretation of tongues. (I Cor. 12:7-11). It will be noted that among these gifts, in addition to "tongues", are those involving wisdom, knowledge, and prophecy. It follows, therefore, that if any of these powers are promised today, *all of them are*, in which case those claiming the ability to heal and to speak in tongues, ought also to affect supernatural knowledge, wisdom, and the power of prophecy! With such endowments they do not need the New Testament; *they have the ability to write one of their own!* As absurd as this appears, it is, in effect, precisely what the alleged tongue-speakers among us have done: they have repudiated the teaching of the New Testament which we have, and have substituted their own supposed divine revelations, as the basis of the doctrine which they hold. They thus join a motley group indeed; Joseph Smith, of Mormon persuasion, Ellen White, who founded the Adventist church, and Mary Baker Patterson Eddy, originator of "Christian Science", — all made exactly the same professions, and sought to support them with the same type of arguments as do they.

The truth is, the miraculous gifts of the first century were temporary expedients, necessary to the proper function of the infant church, but limited to the period *when inspiration was in men*. In the very context in which they are designated, they are declared to be inferior to the "more excellent way," anticipated (I Cor. 12:28-31), and they were all removed *when inspiration had been fully transferred to the Book!* (I Cor. 13:8-13).

This is made crystal clear in the passage from Paul, the apostle, which follows: "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three: and the greatest of these is love" (I Cor. 13:8-13). It will be observed, from reading I Corinthians

12, particularly the latter portion, that it was the apostle's purpose to designate those gifts which were necessary to the proper function of the early church before inspiration was committed to a Book — the New Testament. Their temporary character is made clear from the fact that they were to be replaced by "a more excellent way!" There is, then, *a more excellent way* than tongues, gifts of healing, etc. (I Cor. 12:31). How vastly different is this character, advanced by Paul, from that characteristic of the tongue-speakers among us, who claim that such powers evidence on their part a vastly greater spirituality, and a closer walk with God than any others!

When were these temporary expedients to be removed? When that which is "perfect" (Greek, *complete*) way, anticipated by Paul, came. Sharply drawn in the context of I Corinthians 13, is a contrast between things to be "done away," and other things to abide, or remain. We have earlier seen that there were nine spiritual gifts, conferred through laying on of apostles' hands. Three of these, as illustrative of the whole, the apostle mentions—tongues, prophecies, and supernatural knowledge—the other six being equally temporary, and to be removed while other matters *abide*, or remain. It should be carefully observed that it was in the period when faith and hope *abide* that tongues, prophecies, and other gifts, were to be "done away." That such is *in this age*, is when faith and hope *abide*. Faith, in the next life, will end in sight; it is the "conviction of things *not seen*" (Heb. 11:1); and, *hope* will end in realization when heaven and eternal life are finally possessed. Paul himself said that one does not hope for that which he has. (Rom. 8:24). It is therefore, in this age, while faith and hope *abide*, that the supernatural powers peculiar to the early church were to be abolished, and the time marked by the appearing of the perfect (complete) revelation. This occurred when inspiration was finally transferred from men, to a Book—the New Testament; and, it is therefore the sheerest folly and the most blinding delusion to claim such powers today. Indeed, to claim such powers of the Spirit today, is to deny the teaching of the Spirit, himself!

Subscribe To The Words Of Truth

Salvation By Grace

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together, and made us sit together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:4-10). Then in verses twelve and thirteen, the apostle reminds them of their former predicament when they were without Christ, aliens, strangers, having no hope, and without God in this world. But, now, because of their being in Christ, though once they were afar off, they were "made nigh by the blood of Christ."

It is in this setting that we have those words: "For by *grace* and are ye *saved* through *faith*." And, from these three words, "grace, saved, and faith" we derive a number of thoughts to challenge us.

Men need to be saved. Like the Ephesians all of us apart from God's grace are "dead in sins" and subject to the wrath of God. Men are lost because of sin. They are not sinful at birth, or by birth. Men do not inherit sin. They are born pure and clean. Man becomes a sinner when he violates the law of God. James explains it, saying, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15).

Each man is responsible for his own lost condition. Ezekiel wrote: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). And, inasmuch as all men commit sin, then all stand condemned who have not appropriated the grace of God to their lives by faith. As you recall sermons you have heard on God's grace, you will remember no doubt the frequently-used definition of "grace" as the "the unmerited favor of God" and surely it is. But, the text teaches man is saved "By grace through faith." Every man's salvation rests upon a proper understanding of this point. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). And "without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Since man is saved by grace through faith, and since it is impossible to be saved without faith, all men need the knowledge of how to be saved "Through faith."

To Titus the apostle Paul wrote, in Titus 2:11, 12, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." It is true that man's salvation depends upon a deep, abiding, faith in God as our creator and in Christ as the savior of the world; but "faith" includes more than this.

Observe please that Paul said the "grace of God" appears bringing salvation to all men, "teaching" them that soberness, righteous-

ness, and godliness determined their salvation. Man's salvation cannot be predicated upon his feelings. Being saved by God's grace is a most intelligent matter, and there are definite reasons which produce the assurance of one's salvation.

Surely, there can be no better example of salvation by grace than the example of Paul, himself, the inspired author of the text of Ephesians 2:4-9. This great man of God wrote to the early Christians and said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain..." (I Corinthians 15:10). Briefly let us again consider the conversion of the apostle Paul, the record of which is found in the ninth and the twenty-second chapters of Acts of Apostles. Now according to Paul himself, Acts 23:1, he lived before God always in all good conscience, having been taught the law, and

was "zealous toward God." He was a very religious man, sincerely devoted to God, but as yet *was not saved by the grace of God*. When the Lord appeared to him, Paul asked the question, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" Christ, the savior replied, "Arise, and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). Although the Lord talked with Saul directly from heaven, he was not saved by some direct manifestation of God's grace. Jesus, our Lord, informed Saul that he would be *TOLD* what he *MUST* do. Salvation by grace does not come through some "better-felt-than-told" experience, as a result of some heavenly vision or direct manifestation from God. Saul was saved "by grace" when he obeyed from the heart that "form of doctrine delivered" (Romans 6:17). He was *TOLD* what he *MUST* do.

Christ: God's Unspeakable Gift

Continued from page 2

2:8). In Romans 5 Paul emphasizes again and again the fact that the gift of God that is in and through Christ is *free*. (See also Rom. 6:23, A. S. V.).

We see in the gift of Jesus *voluntary* actions. Our Father in heaven volunteered — out of a feeling of compassion and love—His Son to die on Calvary (John 3:16; I John 2:2). Only the kind of love our Father could have would cause one to *sacrifice* for such a purpose. Jesus voluntarily left the heavenly abode to live a life on this earth which brought him persecution on every hand, and eventually death for our sakes (Phil. 2:8).

As we continue to look at this passage we will consider what makes this gift of God "unspeakable." Stand at the cross and think back through the ages: consider His one continuous, eternal existence (Jn. 1:1-4), the glory which He had with His Father before the world was (Jn. 17:5) in the bosom of the Father (Jn. 1:18), before all things began to be through Him (Col. 1:16-18); then think forward from the cross to see Christ leave this world (Acts 1:9-11) and go to the Father (Jn. 13:1; 20:17), assuming the throne of the majesty on high (Eph. 1:20-21; Heb. 1:3; 8:1). There we see Him taking the position of authority at the right hand of His Father (Acts 2:32-36) in that great eternal kingdom which at His second coming he will deliver up to God, the Father (1 Cor. 15:20-24).

Consider what God has done in the case of

lost, fallen, mankind to overcome the misery, shame, fear, and suffering brought on by sin. How can anyone express in mere words what He has done through Christ to redeem us? And as we consider how this "gift" has revolutionized the Life, History, Morals, and course of the events, of this world, we need not wonder why we cannot describe it. It is beyond our grasp to comprehend how that the thirty-three years of Jesus' earthly life, ending with Calvary on the Friday afternoon, is the central point around which turns and pivots the history of "the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" and indeed the whole universe (Eph. 3:10).

Through Christ we are pardoned, cleansed, sanctified, adopted! Through Him we shall at last be brought into the great home above! It is no wonder that Paul—as well as we—proclaimed: "Thanks be unto God for His indescribable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15)!

Minister Blackwater Macedonia
Church of Christ

Route 1, Box 178

Nauvoo, Ala. 35578

(This good church will send the Sullins family next year to Nairobi, Kenya, in southern Africa).

"Sin Separates From God"

Continued From Page 1

alien; or repentance, confession and prayer for the erring, child of God.

We need to see our own sins for what they have done to us. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Sin separates us from God!

Our sins caused our Lord to die (I Pet.

3:18). Sin is responsible for all of the trouble in the world today. Sin, if we fail to accept responsibility for it and take the proper action, will finally cause us to miss heaven, and spend eternity in hell (Matt. 25:41).

Thanks be to God that his grace and mercy (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5) have provided us with a way to escape the consequences of sin, the great separator!—1501 6th Ave. Jasper, Al. 35501.



Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, r
the Words of Tru

Worship: The Right Object

The history of man reveals the desire and the need for worship. For man not to worship nor desire to worship is the exception and not the rule. In a 1967 *Life* magazine, Joseph Stalin's daughter is reported as saying, "I believe in God." The need to believe in and worship God is a need of each human being.



NEIL MYERS

"Worship" defined by Webster is "an act of paying divine honors to a diety; religious reverence and homage. To perform acts of homage or adoration; especially religious service." "Worship" defined by Vine's *Expository Dictionary* is "To make obeisance, do reverence to." "Worship" is an act of the heart or mind, but it also has to do with our outward acts.

Men have worshipped the wrong objects and some worship the wrong objects today. Animals of all kinds have been objects of worship (Exodus 32). The sun, planets, and stars are worshipped today. In his book, *The Occults*, brother V. E. Howard describes our own world and how people have turned to astrology, witchcraft, and even to Satan worship. Many today worship the god of ease, the god of mammon, the god of popularity, or the god of recreation. Men are not the proper object to worship (Acts 10:25, 26; 14:11-15), neither are angels (Revelation 22:8,9). Let us be sure that our worship, dedication, and devotion, — inward and outward — are properly directed. It has been said, "Man's religion is that which he considers most important and most real."

God is the proper object of worship. He is worthy and deserving of our worship. He is all wise, all powerful, all present, all loving, and

all righteous. "O, praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us; and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord" (Psalm 117). God desires, demands, and deserves our worship. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). "I am a jealous God." (Exodus 20:5; Joshua 24:19). He has never been willing to accept divided loyalty. "I am the Lord and my glory will I not give to another" (Isaiah 42:8). "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4). Jesus declared when tempted, "...thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8). This is as true today as when our Lord spoke these words. We need to heed the words of the apostle John: "Keep yourself from idols" (I John 5:21). We, like the people in Jacob's day, need to bury our foreign "gods" and get back to the true worship of God (Genesis 35:1-4).

When we make God the object of our worship we shall be richly rewarded (Matthew 6:6). We make ourselves the objects of His providence, place ourselves in a position to be lifted up (I Peter 5:7), enjoy fellowship with the Lord and His people, know the joy of having our sins washed away, and are able to meditate on the promises of heaven in

eternity.

Let us not only be sure that the object of our worship is God, but let us also be sure the manner of worship is right...our items of worship, our actions in worship. The Bible is our standard of measurement. Let us worship God when and where we can do the following: (a) Worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24; Acts 17:24). (b) Study the Bible together (Acts 2:42; 20:7). (c) Pray with and for each other (Acts 2:42). (d) Sing out the feelings of our hearts (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). (e) Assemble around the Lord's table to remember the death for our sins, (Acts 20:7). (f) Give as we have been prospered (I Corinthians 16:1-2).

We need to be careful and never let our efforts to worship just become a habit, motion, or ritual that we go through. We need to be present with the proper attitude, having made preparation for worship and be ready to participate in the worship service from the heart. We need to *keep* ourselves present in *body and spirit*, always maintaining proper reverence (Heb. 12:28-29). The result will be that our lives will be enriched and blessed because we make God the proper object of our worship. — Minister Eldridge Church of Christ, P.O. Box 64, Eldridge, Alabama 35554.

Oops!

The following was the last page of an article entitled "SALVATION BY GRACE" written by Bro. Clifford Smith of Cordova for last week's issue. We regret that it became separated from the rest of that fine article. — FHN.

"Salvation By Grace"

As we listen to the words of Ananias, we

are informed of the requirements which Saul had to meet in order to be a recipient of salvation by grace: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). In the account of this event as recorded in Acts 9:18, we learn that immediately Saul arose and was baptized.

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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FROM
THE EDITOR

We Know What We Worship



Flavil H. Nichols,
Associate Editor

Jesus told the "Bad Samaritan" woman at Jacob's well, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the jew. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:22-24). In the American Standard Version, verse 22 says, "Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know: for salvation is from the jews." The Samaritans had ceased to worship God, in as much as they had forsaken God's *commandments*. Since they were not keeping God's commandments, they did not know whom or what they were worshipping. This clearly illustrated the fact that those who reject God's divine *law*, in so doing forsake God and do not know whom or what they worship.

God is our Creator. "In the beginning God created heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Numerous passages affirm that God created the world and all things therein! Count them as you re-read the Bible the last half of this year. "Know ye that the Lord, he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps. 100:3). For this reason — if for non other! — we should worship God: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing...Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations" (Ps. 100:1-2, 4-5).

We also worship God because he is our HELPER! His interest in man, even after his fall, is one of the wonders of God's "Amazing Grace" about which we sing. More than once David in Psalms 124 contemplated "if it had not been the Lord..." and he closed that Psalm with: "our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 124:1-2, 8). In time of oppression, God's reassuring message was: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." (Isa. 41:10). Again he promised Israel his divine assistance: "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee" (Verse 13).

God's help is ADEQUATE — regardless of our problems. For this reason we should worship Him. After Sennacherib had captured 46 towns, taking 200,000 captives, Jeremiah and Hezeiah reassured the Israelites; "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh: but with us is the Lord our God

to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah" (II Chron. 32:7-8). That same God is our God today — he hasn't changed (Mal. 3:6). This is why we should worship Him!

The help of the Lord is *IMMEASUREABLE!* When the three Hebrews were threatened with the fiery furnace — seven times hotter than usual — they said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us as being "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20). With that same apostle we may exclaim: "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

This God whom we worship and serve is always available, and his help is *IMMEDIATE*. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear..." (Ps. 46:1-2; read also verses 3-11). If an expert mechanic, with an inexhaustible supply of repair parts, followed you in a wrecker, the reassurance his presence gives to his children. He is ever near us, and his help continuously is available to us. Contentment such as the world cannot comprehend should be ours, "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).

WHOM DOES THE LORD HELP?

An old expression runs like this: "God helps those who help themselves." Although these very words are not contained in the scriptures, yet surely this is true. The very word "help" means "to assist, aid, succor; an auxiliary or allied force." God's assistance does not do everything for man; rather, when man does his best, God assists him in his efforts and makes them effective or effectual. To Moses, who had ordered Israel to "Stand still," God said, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Ex. 14:13-15). We should never expect God to do for us that which we can do for ourselves. When Jesus' friend, Lazarus, died, our Lord commanded, "Take ye away the stone" (Jn. 11:38). This was something man could do; but then Jesus did something man alone could not do; he raised Lazarus from the dead! However, man could "Loose him, and let him go," which Jesus commanded (verse 44). From this we conclude that the help of God does not dispense with all exertions on man's part. Just as God multiplied the oil so long as the widow furnished the empty vessels (II Kings 4:1-7), so today God supplies our daily provisions as a "gift" (Matt. 6:11), yet we must exert our own energies to obtain them with God's help.

This principle applies also in our salvation: We are saved by God's grace (Eph. 2:8-9), yet we must do the believing, and by that faith must obey Christ (Acts 16:30-31); Phil. 2:12; Heb. 5:9).

God helps those who seek his help. Man

Resurrection:

Actual And Attempted

Miracles of a real nature occurred in Bible times and that with frequency especially at the time of creation, in the bringing forth of Israel from Egyptian bondage to the freedom of Canaan, the time of Christ and the apostles and when both testaments were being written and confirmed. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

abound in the allusion of their actuality. The miraculous touched many different areas of power such as the healing of the sick, the recovery of lepers, the expulsion of evil spirits, the calming of the stormy sea, mastery over nature in the turning water to wine and walking upon the waters and the raising of the dead. This latter allusion leads to the main gist of this article.

Elijah, the colorful Tishbite, raised from the dead the widow's son in Zarephath (I Kings 17:17-24). This was an actual resurrection that was crowned with success; it was not an attempted one that was flawed by failure. His successor, the energetic Elisha, raised from the dead the Shunammite's son (II Kings 4:18-37). This was an actual resurrection-not just an attempted one. In Mark 5, in Luke 7 and in John 11 Jesus raised respectively Jairus' daughter, the widow's son in Nain and Lazarus. There is a progression of power herein enumerated. Jairus' daughter had just died and the spiritless body was still in the house. The Galilean widow's son in Nain was being carried to the cemetery when Jesus raised him from the dead. In the case of the lovely Lazarus he had been dead four days. He was already entombed; his body had already begun its decomposition. Each of these cases was real and actual- not fakeries

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

Does the Greek Orthodox Church use instrumental music in its worship?"

In discussing the word *psallo*, a form of which is translated "make melody in Eph. 5:19, we have often pointed out that the Greek Orthodox church, (That is, that portion of it consisting of native Greeks), which may properly be presumed to understand the significance of the original language of the New Testament, has rejected the argument that a literal, mechanical instrument inheres in the word, and thus engages in singing, without instrumental accompaniment, in its service.

McClintock and Strong, in their excellent encyclopedia, clearly indicate, in the following quotation, the practice of the eastern Church from its beginning to the appearance of the modern innovation: "The Greek word *psallo* is applied among the Greeks of modern times exclusively to sacred music, which in the Eastern church, has never been any other than vocal, instrumental music being unknown in that church, as it was in the primitive church. Sir John Hawkins, following the Romish writers in his erudite work on the *History of Music*, makes pope Vitalian, in A.D. 660, the first who introduced organs into churches. But students of ecclesiastical archaeology are generally agreed that instrumental music was not used in churches till a much later date: for Thomas Aquinas, A.D. 1250, has these remarkable words, 'Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.' From this passage we are surely warranted in concluding that there was no ecclesiastical use of organs in the time of Aquinas. It is alleged that Martinus Sanutus, who lived about A.D. 1290, was the first that brought the use of wind-organs into churches, and hence he received the name of *Torcellus*. In the East, the organ was in use in the emperor's courts, probably from the time of Julian, but never has either the organ or any other instrument been employed in public worship in Eastern churches; nor is mention of instrumental music found in all their liturgies, ancient or modern." (Volume 8, page 739.)

A man in a midwestern state has attempted a refutation of this by submitting a query to the "Presbyter" of the Greek Orthodox Church of the city in which he lived. The "Presbyter" answered that "The Eastern or Greek church sent an organ to the West in the eighth century. Some Greek churches, as we use the organ, some, as presently in Greece, do not." It will be noted that the "Presbyter" candidly concedes that Greek churches, in Greece, "do not" use the instrument. But, why not? Surely, if the word *psallo* authorizes the instrument, native Greek-speaking peoples would know it, and follow it. The truth is *Liberalism* has befallen the Greek Orthodox Church, and portions of it have abandoned their former practice. These groups use the instruments, not because they believe it is authorized in the word, but because they don't care whether there is authorization for such practices, or not! They have simply forsaken earlier convictions.

Some time ago, I addressed a letter to Mr. Nicholas L. Vieron, who is designated as the "Pastor" of the Greek Orthodox Church in a southern city, in which I asked him a series of questions regarding these matters. I shall list the questions and give Mr. Vieron's answers

in italics:

southern city, in matters. I shall list the questions and give Mr. Vieron's answers in italics:

1. Does the Greek word *psallo*, as currently used by Greek speaking peoples require the use of mechanical instruments of music? "Currently, it does not require the use of instruments of music."

2. Is it the practice of Greek churches in the USA to use instrumental music in their worship? In Greece today? Why? "Yes, in U.S.A. No, for the most part in Greece, where it's considered an innovation. Because the organ of God—the voice—is more sublime than any man made."

3. Looking at the word from the lexicographer's view, do you consider (1) that it (the word *psallo*), has undergone modification of meaning through the centuries? (2) Is it possible to *psallo*, merely by singing without instrumental accompaniment? (3) Does the word *psalmos* (psalm) require the use of an instrument? "Correct in first two. [3] No, to the best of my knowledge."

4. Do you consider that *psallontes*, in Eph. 5:19, is correctly translated, "making melody" in our English versions? "Not exactly; I think it's a poetic sentence structure

of St. Paul, repeating the same with different words—all meaning to sing."

I added, "You will perhaps wonder why I ask these questions. I have long been interested in these matters and have considered that while the verb *psallo*, and its derivatives, originally signified to pluck, to twang, and eventually in early Greek literature, to sing to the accompaniment of an instrument, by the first century it simply meant to sing, and did not necessarily require the instrument." Here, Mr. Vieron inserted the word "Correct!" I continued, "This view has lately been called in question, and I wanted comment from a man thoroughly versed in Greek literature and lexicography to comment. Enclosed is a stamped, addressed envelope. You will confer a real favor by a few moments devoted to these matters. Thank you." Mr. Vieron's final comment was, "Mr. Woods, my pleasure to be a part of this."

It would appear therefore that in recent years some Greek Orthodox churches have introduced mechanical instruments of music into their worship, but not in Greece, where such is regarded as "an innovation." There, they *psallo*, by merely singing. More than this we dare not do, if we respect the will of God.

Resurrection: Actual And Attempted

Continued from page 2

and failures. In Matthew 11:5 and Luke 7:22 Jesus makes a general allusion to his raising the dead. The plural is here employed and seemingly includes more than the widow's son who is mentioned somewhat earlier in Luke 7. The resurrections of the daughter of Jairus and of Lazarus were in the future. Each one of these was actual—not just attempted. Peter raised Dorcas of Joppa from the bed of death in Acts 9 and Paul lifted to life again the youthful Eutychus of Troas in Acts 20. These were real and actual; they were not attempted endeavors that ended in humiliating and agonizing defeat. Not that first one reflected on some alleged power from God that met a dismal defeat.

But like all other fundamentals of the Bible the realm of miracles, which was only temporary in nature and served to reveal and confirm Heaven's message and messengers, has had its multitude of counterfeits.

Three recent articles in THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL of Memphis, Tennessee, during March of 1978, present a sad case in point. They all concerned a Mrs. Gladys Rogers of Harrison, Arkansas, who died February 2, 1978, and the widely publicized attempts by her tent evangelist son, Daniel Aaron Rogers, to bring her back to life.

On March 13, 1978, the headlines read, "Resurrection Try Fails: New Attempt Planned." His mother had been dead some six weeks then and for that length of time he had kept her spiritless tabernacle of clay on dry ice and for a full month had her entombed in a stand-up home freezer. An accompanying picture showed Rogers and the freezer. At that time, March 13, 1978, Rogers and some others prayed fervently for her revival from the realm of the dead. They commanded her to "rise up and live." But she did not do as did Lazarus in John 11. Her spiritless body

stayed intact in its frozen tomb. The prayerful petitioners told an assembled group at the Missouri mortuary that they had done everything Jesus told them to do. In the attempts Rogers claimed that the whole thing was of God. Obviously Jesus had said nothing to him about this matter for the Lord does not fail. The entire matter was of God for Deity does not miscalculate in matters like that. Rogers claimed throughout this attempted service that if his efforts failed, he would depend upon an Indonesian faith healer for aid. According to Rogers the Indonesian had already raised two from the dead. But par for the course, neither names nor addresses were given. This reminds me of the Woods-Franklin Debate in Gadsden, Alabama, in the spring of 1974. The apostate Franklin, at one time a faithful and able gospel preacher, claimed that he knew of people who had been raised from the dead. But he could supply neither names nor addresses. He said that some of them had already died a second time. With great force and powerful effectiveness the inimitable Woods pointed out that it was somewhat difficult to make contact with such people!!

This attempted resurrection had gathered unusual interest from various parts of the world. Various of the media were well represented. Rogers said at the time of this signal failure that he anticipated no failure when the Indonesian faith healer came to take his turn. But he spoke to quickly on this matter.

The second article was entitled "Resurrection Attempt Fail For Second Time" and appeared in THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL on March 27, 1978. The UPI release from Reeds Spring, Missouri, related how that his prayers for the revival of his 80-year-old mother from her freezer-chest coffin were still unanswered.

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We Know What We Worship

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should ever be aware of his need of God's help. I heard Bro. Franklin Camp say, "The loftier our ideals, the more painful will our conviction of our own incapacity to reach them alone!" Jesus tried to get his apostles to understand they needed, and should seek, his help: "Without me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5). Later Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). In prayer we should ever seek or ask for his help (Acts 22:16; I Pet. 3:21). "Seek and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7-8) is translated by Charles Williams as: "Keep on asking, and the gift will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and the will open to you. For every one who keeps on asking, receives; and everyone who keeps on seeking finds; and to the one who keeps on knocking, the door will be opened." Of course, prayers for divine aid must be coupled with obedience (Matt. 7:21; Lk. 6:46); but there are some things we do not have "because ye ask not" (Jas. 4:2). Although Jesus taught man to pray for his daily bread (Matt. 6:11), the Holy Spirit guided the apostle Paul to write: "If any will not work, neither should he eat" (II Thes.

3:10). A poet said:

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour, And back of the flour is the mill; And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower, And the sun, and the Father's will."

Worshippers of God should APPRECIATE God's help. We should ever be grateful for his aid. God often warned his people that they could forget him: "Beware lest thou forget the Lord..." (Deut. 6:12; also 8:17-19). His Assistance is so multitudinous man is not able to remember all of — but we are warned not to "forget ALL" of his blessings. (Ps. 103:2). Great men of God have always been appreciative, and we today should be thankful. "In everything give thanks" (I Thess. 5:18). The Gentiles were given up by God because (among other sins) they were not "Thankful" (Rom. 1:21). Recall the grateful leper (Lk. 17:17-18), Samuel (II Sam. 7:12), Paul (Acts 26:22) I Tim. 1:12, and David (Ps. 95:17-18; also 119:7-8 and 17).

God also gives aid to those who help OTHERS. Solomon said, "Whoso stoppeth his

ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Prov. 21:13). How literally this was fulfilled in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). In Psalms 41:1-3 five reasons are listed for remembering the poor. Learn these, and be more considerate of those who need our help.

God helps those who HELP HIM! — Oh, I know he is all powerful; yet there is a sense in which he expects our help. Meroz was cursed because "they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judges 5:23). What an honor it is to be laborers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9). We "Work out" our salvation, while through his word (II Thess. 2:14) God "works in" us both to will and to do. (Phil 2:12-14).

These are some of the innumerable reasons we should worship GOD! Although his ways are "Past finding out" (Rom. 11:33), we can learn enough about God to exclaim: "We know what we worship!" — Flavil H. Nichols, Associate Editor, 1000 St. John Rd. Rt. 9, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701.

Resurrection: Actual And Attempted

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Health officials had told him he had to raise her by a certain date or else would have to bury her. Rogers had continued to make the trip between his home and the mortuary every few days in order to pray for her. He said he wanted her raised because it would encourage a lot of people to believe in Christ. This strongly implies that there is not sufficient evidence in the Bible for people to believe in Christ. Has he forgotten that a number of people in the Bible did not even believe on Jesus after they had seen, SEEN mind you, the Christ raise the dead Lazarus from his tomb? (John 11:45-46). They still sided with the Pharisees. He said in this article that it was just a matter of faith and that Jesus had promised to grant even the impossible to those who believe. This is taking the Lord's statement out of its very obvious context. Even in New Testament times it required more than faith to perform miracles. The person that did such had to be an apostle or one upon whom apostolic hands had been imposed, and we have neither apostles living today nor those who have had apostolic hands imposed on them. Mr. Rogers said that they had sought to avoid any publicity or notoriety from the beginning. This is a little hard to buy in view of the fact that such as this always draws vast multitudes, and how could such encourage A LOT of people to believe in Jesus unless a lot of people knew about it? This second article closes with this interesting observation. "Rogers had earlier planned to recruit Indonesian evangelist S. A. Makal to aid him in his final resurrection prayers, but the plans fell through when the minister was unable to obtain the \$4,300 in expense money Makal had requested for himself and an interpreter." If Makal really had the power to raise the dead, why did he need an interpreter? Could not the Lord hear Makal from Indonesia? And if Jesus had told Rogers to do it, why were Makal's services needed at

all?

The third article relative to the matter appeared on March 31, 1978. The article bore the title, "Resurrection Fails: Mother Buried At Last." A picture accompanied which depicted Rogers, his wife and a friend as they were leaving the scene at the cemetery. Rogers had promised in mid-March that he would bury her if not successful by March 29. Neither he nor his Indonesian acquaintance succeeded. The one could not do it; the other could not come because of the money factor. Their attempts were flawed by total failure.

It is sad when a preacher understands so little of the Bible as touching God's plan and

purpose of miracles. It is sad when people think they are doing God's will and have been in oral contact with the Lord about such matters. It is sad that some people will actually blame the Lord for such failures, when in reality he had absolutely nothing to do with such attempts. It is sad when people will flock to witness what they think may be a miracle and yet will pay no attention to the message of life in the Bible that was confirmed fully in the first century with actual miracles in general and with real resurrections in particular. This is but another in a long list of occurrences that shows the amazing gullible nature of idle human curiosity and credulity.

Oops!

Continued From Page 1

Rejoicing in his salvation "by grace," he straightway preached Christ that he is the Son of God; and all that heard him were amazed.

This same apostle wrote that God's grace is located "in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 2:1). As a penitent believer that Jesus is the risen Christ, whom he had confessed as "Lord", Paul affirmed that he was "Baptized into Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). His being baptized did not earn, or "merit," the salvation — he was simply baptized "into" Christ, where "grace" is, and was saved "By grace" on God's part through Paul's obedient "faith".

The 'charter members' of the church at Ephesus had been baptized unto John's baptism, evidently after it ceased to be valid (Acts 18:24-28). Upon Paul's arrival, he taught them more accurately, and they were 're-baptized' (Acts 19:1-7). It was to THESE very baptized people — the Ephesians — that Paul wrote. "for by grace are ye saved,

through faith..." (Eph. 2:4-10). Thus salvation "by grace" and "through faith" does not exclude — but, rather includes baptism.

Jesus told how the world can be saved "by grace" — for there is no other way we can be saved! Our Lord said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16). That salvation is "by grace!" Sinful man can never earn, nor merit, a home in heaven. It is by the "Amazing Grace" of a loving God! — Minister Church of Christ, 200 Alabama Avenue, Cordova, Alabama 35550.

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Sunday
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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

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NUMBER 1

What Is Known By The Dead?

In most discussions with Jehovah's Witnesses the topic of the state and condition of the dead usually comes into view. In most of their books I have seen quotations made from Ecclesiastes 9:5

9:5 ("For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing..."). For instance, see *Is This Life All There Is?* p. 98 (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. 1974). How do we reply to this passage and what does it really teach?

Some brethren reply that Solomon had in view what the dead know of those yet living and things "under the sun" (9:6). They reason that the dead do not know what is going on in the material world. However, Jesus said the Rich Man was aware that his five brothers were still living in the world (Luke 16:28); he had some knowledge of those still living in the world. How much knowledge he possessed of them is not stated. But he did know at least they were still living "under the sun."

A quick answer that I have given (and not the fullest or best) to J-W's is this: "You don't believe that passage!" When they reply in the affirmative I ask if they believe their righteous dead have a future reward? Of course, they believe they do. But Solomon said, "neither have they any more reward" (Ecc. 9:5) If Solomon is right in saying that the dead know nothing, is he also right in saying the dead have no more reward? To say that this is no more reward "under the sun" seems overly restrictive to his meaning. He flatly declares they "have no more reward." I therefore affirm that the J-W does not believe this passage and neither do I! If he objects



MARTEL PACE

that I am denying the Bible I swiftly reply that there are several things in the Bible not to be believed (such as "Thou shall not surely die!" and other statements of Satan).

A study of the overall context of Ecclesiastes is in order. The pessimism of the early chapters hardly expresses a Christian view of life and death. In 1:2 the "Preacher explains his conviction that all is vanity. Do you, Christian friend, believe all in vain? I surely hope not. Chapter one explains that everything goes in a dismal circle and that "there is nothing new under the sun" (1:9). Do you believe that is nothing new under the sun in our enlightened twentieth century? Do you believe that what is "crooked cannot be made straight"? (1:15) Surely you believe in the possibility of wretched sinners being converted and straightening out, do you not?

On goes Solomon in his efforts to find full satisfaction in the material and sensual of this world. He seeks to make a test of pleasure to see if one can find happiness through it (2:1, cf. RSV) and finds it to be vain. In 3:21 he asks how can one tell whether the spirit of man goes upward and that of the beast downward; of course from the purely physical observation one cannot. Solomon's conclusion is found in chapter 12 that there is a way for life not to be vain and that is by remembering one's Creator (12:1) and realizing that God will bring every deed into judgment (12:13-14). Therefore, we must live in view of coming judgment.

The most probable interpretation for Ecclesiastes 9:5-7 therefore is that Solomon is simply viewing death as would the materialist. Look at the body in the coffin; ask him for information and what answer does one receive? To the physical senses there is no apparent knowledge and there is none in the dead body. But this says nothing of the spirit after death which Solomon later admits returns to God at death (12:7).

The Scriptures amply teach that there is a conscious state after this physical life is over. The account of the Rich Man and Lazarus is

not parabolical but factual (Luke 16:19-31). Jesus argued from the present tense of the verb *to be* that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are now alive (Matt. 22:29-32). Surely these great men are typical of many others; if conscious, they must be aware or have knowledge. Yes, God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Surely the righteous dead have knowledge!

To take as the final word on a subject of great importance what Solomon wrote as a pessimistic materialist is not to view fairly the overall purpose of the Book of Ecclesiastes. Every passage must be studied in its immediate and general context. — Box 722, Kennett, Mo. 63857

Those Better Than You

By MICHAEL D. STONE

Jehoshaphat was 35 years old when he became king over Judah. He reigned as king in Jerusalem for 25 years. After the death of Jehoshaphat, his first-born son, Jehoram, became the king in his stead. It was not long after Jehoram became the king that he killed his six brothers. He became king at the age of 32 but reigned only eight years because of his wicked ways which God abhorred. Many times a person's life is not as long as it might have been because of the decision to live in sin instead of living for God.

One day, a writing from the prophet Elijah came to Jehoram. It said, "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot, like as the house of Ahab did, and also

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Words Of Truth

"I am not made most noble. Yet thus but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness." — Acts 26:25

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Meekness



BOBBY DUNCAN

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3:12). The word *meek* or *meekness* is used sixteen times in the New Testament; and each time, it is used in a passage indicative of the fact that meekness is a trait to be desired and cultivated by the Christian.

It is obvious that some have not properly understood the meaning of the word. To some, to be meek means to be non-aggressive, non-argumentative, to take a back seat in life, to be of the disposition not to have strong convictions on any subject, or if so, never to voice those convictions very strongly. But not one of these ideas is inherent in the word which appears in the New Testament and is translated "meek."

The Greek word *prautes* 'meekness' is said to consist not in a person's "outward behaviour only; nor yet in his relations to his fellowmen; as little in his mere natural disposition. Rather it is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting..." (New Testament Synonyms, R. C. Trench).

W. E. Vine, in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, says: "The meaning of *prautes* is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used suggest weakness and pusillanimity to a greater or less extent, whereas *prautes* does nothing of the kind... Described negatively, meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all."

Marvin R. Vincent says: "The Christian meekness is based on *humility*, which is not a natural quality but an outgrowth of a renewed nature... As toward God, therefore, meekness accepts his dealings without murmur or resistance as absolutely good and wise" (*Word Studies in the New Testament*).

From the foregoing, it is possible for us to make the following observations concerning the meekness enjoined so often in the New Testament: (1) It has to do chiefly with one's attitude toward God. (2) It is not a natural quality, but one which is cultivated by the Christian. (3) It is opposite self-assertiveness and self-interest, and it, therefore, characterizes one determined to live in harmony with the will of

God. (4) It does not resist God's will or God's dealings, but accepts them as good and wise. (5) It is not related to the idea of weakness, but rather to the idea of strength.

In view of these things we may say that Jesus was no less meek when he rebuked the scribes and Pharisees than when he received the little children. He was no less meek when he was being nailed to the cross than when he drove the money changers out of the temple. In all cases he was humbly submitting to the will of the Father.

Let not the man who stands quietly by while sin and error run rampant flatter himself by attributing his silence to meekness. *Weakness* would be a better word.

Those Better Than You

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hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, who were better than thyself: behold, Jehovah will smite with a great plague thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy substance; and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness, day by day."

Did you notice in the scripture the statement, "who were better than thyself"? He destroyed his brothers who were really better than he was. What a sad thing to do and a sad event in the history of God's people. Regardless of whether it was jealousy or a character difference, he was still not right to destroy those better than himself. Have you ever wished you could destroy another person because that person was better than you? I don't mean to take a life but rather to destroy his character, reputation and his influence with his friends only because you were not right and you knew that person was better than you? My friends, to destroy another or that which belongs to another will never make us a better person. Many of our problems in the church are problems of personality differences and a lack of desire to get along with those of like precious faith. If congregations today split, it ought to be over doctrine and not over personality differences. Not all division is bad and not all unity is good. It depends upon what the division is about and upon what the unity is based.

The challenge before us today is great! Let us all become true Christians by a genuine belief in Jesus as God's Son. Each needs to repent of sins and be baptized for the remission of those sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Let us faithfully serve our God without jealousy of others and never try to destroy those who are better than we. To destroy those better than ourselves is also to destroy ourselves. The events in this writing can be found in II Chronicles 20 and 21. Jehoram destroyed himself by his own wickedness. After he died, there was no mourning his death and he was not buried in the tombs of the kings.—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101.

Saved By The Blood of Christ

Modernism denies the merit and power of the blood of Christ. Modernism does not believe that Jesus laid down his life that he might take it again. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:11-18).



GLANN M. LEE

Blood is frequently pictured in the Old Testament. "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 worshipers 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

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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"What does the Bible teach regarding guardian angels?"

Most scholars believe that the doctrine is plainly and indisputably taught therein Jesus said, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven," (Matt. 18:10). The writer of Hebrews informs us that angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation" (Heb. 1:13), and David declared that "the angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psalm 34:7). Acts 12:15 and 27:23, are also often cited in support of the view that each disciple has an angel assigned to him for guidance, protection and encouragement. Practically all denominational writers defend the doctrine of "Guardian angels," and various brethren among us (though by no means all), endorse the view. B. W. Johnson says that "the doctrine of guardian angels is emphatically taught in the scriptures," and J. W. McGarvey wrote that the phrase, "their angels," in Matt. 18:10, refers to "the angels especially charged with ministering to them individually." A current writer has asserted that "The New Testament teaching of angels and particularly the providential care which they exercise over individuals, is too plain to be disputed by informed Bible students."

In spite of these strong affirmations by great and good men, I can only state that, in my view, the premises do not fully support the conclusions they have drawn and that the doctrine is beset by much difficulty. (1) Neither in the foregoing passages, nor elsewhere in the scriptures, is it said that each person has a guardian angel. (2) Neither here, nor elsewhere is it affirmed that there is actually present with each disciple an angel; "their angels," are said to be "in heaven," where they "always behold the face of" the Father. Inasmuch as angels serve in the administration of God's plan to save (Heb. 1:13), "their angels" belong to all who inherit salvation.

Angels were indeed actually engaged in influencing people in ancient times, but it must be remembered that these were miraculous actions performed in lieu of the inspired written record which we today have. An angel appeared to Philip in Samaria, and to Cornelius in Caesarea, but these were instances of a type not today possible (Acts 8:4, 26; 10:3). Undoubtedly, in the operation of God's marvelous plan to save, angels are participants, but this is far, very far, from saying that they direct, control, and overshadow their earthly wards as the doctrine demands. When Peter was miraculously released from prison, and appeared at the gate of the house where the saints were assembled, the report of Rhoda of the apostle's presence there, was assumed by them to be "his angel" (Act 12:15). But, all this can possibly mean is that they concluded Peter had been killed by Herod and that it was his spirit which had come. There is nothing here to support the doctrine of Guardian angels; indeed, the implication is quite the reverse, inasmuch as the conclusion which the disciples drew was the Peter had been killed.

The doctrine, in my view, involves difficulties which cannot be resolved either in scripture or by experience. (1) It cannot be

reconciled with the clear, explicit teaching of the scriptures regarding the free agency of man. Those who subscribe to the doctrine believe that the angel exercises watchful care and divine protection. Protection from what? Illness, injury, violent death? Many of the Lord's finest people today languish on beds of affliction, their every wakeful hour in agony. Where is the "guardian angel" during these interminable days of pain and lonely sleepless nights? Not infrequently, Christian people, perhaps at the moment on a trip motivated by the desire to be engaged in the service to God, die violently in automobile accidents. How can the theory be harmonized with these recurring and all too common tragedies involving the best of Christians? A theory in conflict with known and demonstrable facts cannot be true.

(2) Matt. 18:10, positions the presence of "their angels," before the face of the Father in heaven - not here on earth. Many scholars believe, and I think correctly, that this is a figurative statement alluding to the Oriental view that those who are deserving of high honors and great favors are most often permitted in the king's presence. The plural form (their angels) is suggestive of all angels who serve for all the saints in God's great plan - not, that each has a separate angel. Taught metaphorically then is the fact that faithful saints, even the most obscure of them on

earth, are honored and highly regarded before the throne of God.

(3) The doctrine of "guardian angels," as popularly believed, involves many of the same errors as the current theory of direct independent operation of the Holy Spirit, apart from the Word - the New Testament. It necessitates the conclusion that there is immediate, personal direction by the angel on his ward. How is this accomplished? By means of the implantation of thoughts in the heart? How can the recipient of such alleged suggestions determine whether they originate with the angel or are prompted by other influences? By the Bible? If so, why may not the Bible be appealed to always and everywhere for such direction, since it is the monitor by which the "leading" of the angel is determined? What possible suggestion could the angel make contributory to the well-being of the disciple which is not already set out in the scriptures? Is the angel's direction irresistible or dependent on the will of the disciple? If the former, is the disciple responsible for his failure to follow the angel's leading? There are many formidable difficulties associated with the doctrine of "guardian angels." We ought to be very cautious about accepting a view which conflicts with both reason and revelation.

Prayer As Worship

Except perhaps for the Lord's Supper, I suppose that no single part of our worship to God can draw us any closer to God and to our brethren than prayer. Before we can acceptably worship God through prayer, we must first understand the meaning of prayer.

Prayer may be defined as the actual outpouring of the thoughts of praise, devotion, desire, and thanksgiving which spring from the heart of the child of God (Gen. 18). Public prayer is a period of joint communion with our brethren and sisters in Christ and with our God.

In this brief study, we have chosen not to remind ourselves of the holy commands of God to pray, nor to try to restate the usual comments on prayer and its efficacy. Instead, may we offer some suggestions to those who lead and to those who follow in public prayer. We do not aim to insult or offend anyone for doing his best to lead in prayer. Rather, our aim is to present some suggestions which, hopefully, will lead each of us to become more effective in leading the church in prayer in worship to God, and to help each of us to get greater meaning and a closer communion with God during our public prayers.

We shall speak first to those who lead in prayer. We have a great need for men who lead effective prayers. It has been said that



Mark W. Trevathan

"preaching moves men, but prayer moves God." And may we add that effectively-led prayers will move both God and men! But, what can we do to become more effective prayer leaders?

First, we may speak loud enough so that all who are trying to follow our prayer may hear and say "amen" (I Cor. 14:15-16). Our brethren cannot intelligently say "amen to a prayer which they have not heard. If your voice does not carry well, (and some do not) or if you cannot speak very loudly, (and some cannot) then by all means use the public address system, or stand, or move to a prominent place so that all may hear! Be not ashamed of your voice if it does carry well or if you cannot speak loudly. Instead, amplify your voice to the glory of God in leading the church in worship through prayer.

Secondly, we may lead more effective prayers by praying for the congregation as a whole. Public prayer is public worship to God, and the heart of the church is to be presented before God in a public prayer. Let us not pray our own personal prayers in public (Matt. 6:5-6); instead, let us present to God the thoughts and desires of the whole church. Let us lead prayers which reflect the heart of the church so that the entire church can agree with our prayer.

Thirdly, to become more effective in leading prayer, let us pray, not preach. Many prayers would be better preached than prayed. In prayer we are talking to God, not the audience (Matt. 6:9; Rom 10:1). Some, often "Grind axes" or "ride hobbies" during their prayers. Let us reserve the preaching for the preacher as he talks to the audience (Acts 2:14,22), with let us pray to God and commune with Him

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Saved By The Blood Of Christ

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should take away sins" (Heb. 10:1-4). Another example of the significance of blood in the Old Testament is the Passover (Ex. 12:11-13). Christ is our passover (I Cor. 5:7).

The gospel is saturated with the blood of Christ. A great gospel song repeats, "There is power in the blood" (Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 1:18ff). Christ "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2). "We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10). As we have seen, Jesus said, "I lay down my life...." (John 10:17-18). Christ shed his blood in his death (John 19:31-34).

Were it not for the blood of Christ, there could be no new covenant. Christ is "the mediator of the new testament" (Heb. 9:15-17). He is "the mediator of a better covenant" (Heb. 8:6; Cf. Jer. 31:31-34). Christ's blood is called "the blood of the new testament" (Matt. 26:28); "the new testament in my blood" (Lk. 22:20); and the "blood of the covenant" (Heb. 10:29).

Were it not for the shed blood of Christ there would be no remission of sins. Christ's blood was shed "for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22, 12). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18-19). One reaches the benefits of the blood of Christ by obedience to the gospel of Christ. Christ shed his blood in his death (John 19:34); Baptism puts one into the death of Christ. (Rom. 6:3-4). Baptism is commanded in the New Testament which is dedicated with the blood of Christ (Acts 10:48). Baptism is for the remission of sins for which the blood of Christ was shed (Acts 2:38).

Were it not for the shed blood of Christ there would be no significance to the Lord's Supper. In instituting the Lord's Supper, Christ "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28; Cf. Mk. 14:22-24 and Lk. 22:19-20). The apostle Paul wrote, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (I Cor. 10:16). This apostle wrote further, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After

the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (I Cor. 11:23-27). First century Christians came together "upon the first day of the week... to break bread" (Acts 20:7).

Because of the benefits of the shed blood of Christ, Christians are enabled to live dedicated lives day by day. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have no sin, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (I John 1:7-10). Paul reminded Titus that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself

a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:11-14). To the Romans Paul wrote, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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. 12:1-2).

The church is blood-redeemed and blood-brought by the Lord. Paul admonished the Ephesian elders to "take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:18).

There is power in the blood of Christ. It had power to dedicate the new covenant. Through the blood of Christ remission of sins is obtained. The Lord's Supper is made meaningful because of the blood of Christ. The Christian, day to day, is cleansed by the blood of Christ as he walks in the light. Privileges and benefits of the church are made possible by the blood of Christ. Let us continue to sing with great feeling, "There is power in the blood."—3645 Leslie Ann Road, Birmingham, Ala. 35243.

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Prayer As Worship

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during the hour of prayer.

A fourth suggestion we may offer is that we forget our memorized prayers. There is a place for memorizing prayer; but as we become more able in leading prayer, let us do away with our cut-and-dried prayers, as well as trite or overused phrases, cease to pour from the heart of both the leaders and the followers.

A fifth suggestion for leaders in this: the blessed "hour" of prayer does not have to be sixty minutes long. Read the public prayers of the church in the New Testament: all of them are short! (Acts 4:23-30). Long private prayers certainly are good; but let us limit public prayers to the time slot allotted them. For example, a closing prayer does not need to last fifteen minutes! Let us honor the time. (I Cor. 14:40).

A final suggestion would be to lead prayers suited to the occasion. In giving thanks (Matt. 26:26-27; Mk. 14:22-23; Lk. 22:19; I Cor. 10:16; II:24-25), for the communion, we need not pray for the sick and bereaved. Let us focus our prayers on the situation given us, and lead the church as we pray together. The communion is no time for a general prayer.

Now let us give some attention to those of us who follow in public prayer. How can we receive more from prayer in worship and how can we make prayer more worshipful? The apparent answer to our question is to put

more into the prayers than we previously have. Do we not often close both our eyes and our minds during the prayers? Do we not often hear the voice of the leader speaking, rather than the prayer itself?

Make your assume a mental attitude appropriate for prayer by removing from your minds all thoughts of this life; concentrates on the prayer and on our communion with God. Too, listen intently to the prayer and make that prayer *your* prayer! Say "amen" at its conclusion, at least in your heart! (I Cor. 14:15-16).

Also, let us take the liberty to silently add to the stated prayer those petitions and praises which are in our hearts, but were not mentioned by the leader. Make the prayer which is being led our prayer from our hearts to our God.

Both those who *lead* in prayer, and those who *follow* in prayer, have two basic requirements which must be met before that prayer can be true worship. First, each one must have his heart right with God and his brother (Matt. 5:23-24, Jn. 9:31). And, second, each one must have developed his own personal prayer life.

May the Lord help us and teach us to lead—and to follow—prayers from our hearts as we worship our God together in public prayer.—Minister, Church of Christ, General Delivery, Nauvoo, Ala. 35578.



Words Of Truth

"I am not man, nor do I speak forth
the Words of Truth and soberness.

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 15

FRIDAY, JULY 14, 1978

NUMBER 2

Worship Must Be "In Spirit And In Truth"

The word "worship" in all forms occurs about 190 times in the Bible. The New Standard Unabridged Dictionary and Vine's Expository Dictionary define "Worship" as honor, reverence, and homage, in thoughts and feelings and in acts, paid by man to God. The idea of bowing down, falling down before, is in the word "worship" and is found about 500 times in the Bible (1 Sam. 28:20; Num 22:31). To "worship" is to humble oneself before the object of worship (Psa. 95:6; Rev. 22:8-9). It is based upon man's nature and need, and has been a permanent feature in God's service in all dispensations. Since God created man with the inclination to worship, it is as natural for him to worship as it is for him to eat. His worship may not always be acceptable to God; but he will worship nevertheless. God has always told man how to worship so as to be acceptable to Him.



PERVIE NICHOLS

The nature of worship and man's attitude as an acceptable worshipper have remained unchanged through all ages. However, the specific acts have varied according to the laws in force at various times. Since we are under the "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2), our worship is to be according to the New Testament.

Private, Family and Public Worship

Private worship is when the individual Christian communes with God through fervent prayer, Bible reading and solemn meditation

on spiritual things.

Family worship is when the family engages in a period of Bible study and prayer.

Public or congregational worship is when saints assemble to worship God and engage in singing, praying, studying and meditating upon God's word (Col. 3:16-17). These acts of worship are in order at any time Christians may assemble. However, the Lord has designated a certain day of each week upon which Christians are to assemble and perform these acts, plus two additional requirements — (1) eating the Lord's supper and (2) giving of our income as prospered (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 9:7). The first day of the week, the Lord's Day, is the day Christians are authorized to assemble and observe the five items of worship (Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).

Kinds of Worship

Vain worship. The word "vain" means empty, void, mere formality. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for engaging in this kind of worship (Mt. 15:7-9). When one enters into worship without proper heart-preparation, when the lips utter words of praise that the heart does not dictate, all such is vain worship. Such worship is unacceptable to God.

Worship rendered in ignorance. The Athenians were worshipping but Paul said it was done in ignorance (Acts 17:22-23). To worship in ignorance is to worship without an intelligent understanding of what God requires. Understanding can be obtained only from God's word. Ignorant worship is displeasing to God (Acts 17:30).

Will-worship. Paul said there are certain things which "have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (Col. 2:23-ASV). "Will-worship" here is from a Greek word

which means a worship originating in the human will. It involves acts of worship which have no higher authority than the will of the worshipper. Many people subscribe to the view that if worship pleases the worshipper, God will accept it, whether He authorized or not. This is false (Matt. 7:21).

Worship "in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:23-24) is the only kind Jehovah will accept.

Worship "in spirit and truth"

In his conversation with the Samaritan woman, Jesus gave the requisites of acceptable worship: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24-ASV).

God is the object of all acceptable worship. The first commandment forbade the worship of any other being (Deut. 5:7-9; Ex. 20:1-6). Jesus said to the Devil: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Mt. 4:10).

Worship must be "in spirit". It must proceed from a sincere heart and is to be rendered with attention and understanding. As we sing, pray, give, eat the Lord's supper, and study God's word we must exercise mental discipline. We must not permit our thoughts to wander from the spiritual to the material affairs of life, such as business, pleasure, or social activities. We must not permit ourselves to fall into a mechanical, formal, heartless type of worship.

Worship "in truth" means that the worship must be authorized by God. One worships God in truth when every purpose and desire of the heart, and every act of his religious worship is guided and regulated by the Scriptures. Singing, praying, eating the Lord's supper,

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Words Of Truth

I am not made most noble Men
but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness
Acts 26:25

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"Negative People"

There can be on doubting that one of the problems faced by the church in any generation is the problem of negativism—stubborn and unfounded resistance and opposition to good works. There are some who have a disposition to be negative toward everything except those programs which they themselves have started or in which they have a big part to play. This negative tendency may, in some cases, result from ignorance, from an inferiority complex, from jealousy, from a desire for recognition, or from some other inadmirable trait.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Having so said, we would now emphasize the fact that one is not necessarily negative in disposition just because he is discerning enough to recognize sin and error, and just because he is courageous enough to oppose it with all his might. Jesus our Lord, stood in staunch opposition to all kinds of sin, speaking out plainly. The same could be said of the inspired apostles of our Lord. But who would accuse Jesus or his apostles of having negative dispositions?

When we hear the blame for all the problems in the church being laid at the feet of the "negative people," it reminds us of the attitude of the wicked king Ahab toward the faithful prophet, Micaiah. When all of the prophets encouraged Ahab to attack Ramoth-gilead, and assured him of victory, Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him?"

The reply Ahab is classic: "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" (I Kings 22:7,8). Ahab felt that Micaiah had a negative attitude toward him and toward everything he did. But the truth of the matter is that Micaiah was a faithful prophet of God whose duty it was to proclaim the truth even at the risk of throwing cold water upon the plans of the king of Israel.

In modern parlance, Micaiah was one of the negative people. His negativism wrought havoc in the nation of Israel: for before his coming all the prophets were in agreement that Ahab and Jehoshaphat should attack Ramoth-gilead with all haste. But when he came, he opposed such a plan, warning that it would result in the death of Ahab, leaving Israel as sheep without a shepherd. Micaiah was considered a trouble-maker, was put in prison, and fed with bread and water.

But as we look back across the centuries at this incident recorded in holy writ, we do so with great admiration for Micaiah, and for his courage in standing firmly against the proposal of Ahab and his prophets. Regardless of how it may have looked at the

time, it is plan to us that it was not a negative disposition that caused Micaiah to oppose the plan of Ahab. It was rather a disposition to speak the truth plainly, even when it was not popular to do so. Micaiah would not be intimidated by those who said: "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" (I Kings 22:13).

His reply was: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (verse 14).

There are those today who are referred to as "negative people," and who are blamed for all the problems in the church. But in many cases these so-called "negative people" are modern day Micaiah, who are dedicated to the faithful proclamation of truth, even though truth is not popular; and they will not be intimidated by epithets hurled at them by those who, like Ahab of old, are determined to pursue a certain course despite the will of God to the contrary. Furthermore, we do not share the view that those who cry out against sin are the ones who impede the progress of the church. Was it Micaiah who was an impediment to Israel; or was it Ahab and his prophets?

Ask Lynn

About Marijuana

CHARLES COOK

A great deal of debating is now being waged over the question of whether or not marijuana ought to be legalized. However, it appears that the pro-legalization camp will eventually win the case. The consequences of pot smoking are seldom mentioned in the national magazines and media documentaries which purport to be in depth studies of the place of marijuana in today's society. Always there are the pressures being put on the public to favor legalization, but rarely are we exposed to the problems the hellish realities of addiction. In fact, we are being told that pot addiction is impossible, just as that generation behind us was assured that legalized alcohol would bring no problems. The public is being primed to believe that all those old myths about the dangers of smoking marijuana were wrong and that in reality pot smoking will lead to greater happiness and peace among men.

Those in favor of legalized marijuana certainly would not enhance their cause by pointing out any bad effects of the drug on its user. They learned long ago from the liquor industry how to sell their kind of goods. Ernest and Julio do not employ winos to help sell their product. The Schiltz Beer Company does not have a billboard outside Raleigh Hills Hospital where they treat extreme alcoholism. The Hiram Walker people do not solicit endorsements from the ten million hopeless

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"Selected"

One of the best known writers among churches of Christ signs his articles "selected." He has written hundreds of articles that appear in thousands of church bulletins across our land. We have never met the man; he probably is too busy turning out all of those articles.



TOM CHILDERS

While he writes some very good things, we have some what against him. In our opinion, his writings do not accomplish a great deal. Let me illustrate. Recently I wrote an article that dealt with a particular problem. It caused "no small stir." I was told by several people: "What you wrote was good and it was the truth but some people felt like you were referring to them." They continued: "If you had signed the article 'selected' or if someone else had written the article, NOTHING WOULD HAVE BEEN SAID" (Emphasis mine).

The purpose of writing and preaching is to deal with the problems of people. When Jesus spoke his parables the chief priests and Pharisees "perceived that he spake of them" (Matthew 21:45). They perceived correctly, for Jesus indeed was referring to them. Peter addressed his remarks to the sins of the Jews who heard him. He did not say, "Well, someone, somewhere told me that someone here might have done something wrong." But he did say, "Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

It is our view that bulletin articles, regardless of how well written, that are signed "selected" are just like anonymous letters which we pay little attention to. Personally, I would rather write one article with my name signed to it than to run 10,000 articles that are signed "selected." — 624 Ridgeway Bolivar, Tn., 38008.

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Do the scriptures teach that heathen peoples who have never heard the gospel of Christ and consequently have not obeyed the gospel will be lost? If yes, how do we harmonize this with the view that idiots and infants dying in infancy will be in heaven when these have not obeyed the gospel either?"

Jesus said, "He that believeth not shall be damned," (Mark 16:16). The American Standard translation of this portion of Mark's report of the Great Commission reads, "But he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." In my view, the King James' translation, "He that believeth not shall be damned," more correctly translates the Greek clause, inasmuch as the word rendered "believeth not," simply denotes a state of unbelief without indicating whether the unbelief resulted from (a) rejection of the gospel; or (b) lack of opportunity. The American Standard rendering appears to support the view that the one who disbelieves has heard and rejected the truth preached. In view of the fact that the Greek does not make this distinction, it is better to translate it, "he that believeth not..." which may include either (a) or (b) above, but not exclude (b) as the American Standard Version seems to do.

Will the heathen who have never had opportunity to hear the gospel be lost? Paul declares that those who "know not God," and who do not obey the gospel, shall suffer punishment, even everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thess. 1:9-10); and, if we are correct in the assumption that "believeth not," in Mark's account of the Commission is the absence of faith, the destiny of all such is damnation. Jesus said, "except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Luke 8:24), and he also said that those who die in sin cannot come where he is (Luke 8:21). If to this the objection is raised that these passages apply to people who have either heard and rejected the gospel, or at least have had opportunity to do so, and must not be applied to those born in ignorance and in spiritual darkness as the heathen, we can only add what David wrote, "The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, even all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). The gospel was once preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23), and nations now heathen once knew the truth but renounced it: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them: 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: because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart has darkened . . . Wherefore God gave them up..." (Rom. 1:18-24). They gave God up. He then gave them

If the heathen are to be saved, in their sins, without the gospel, then our Lord

died in vain, and his word is not true (John 6:68; Acts 4:12; Rom. 3:9).

It may be said that the heathen, because they have never had the gospel offered them, are not lost. If so, why did our Lord command us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature?" (Mark 16:15, 16). Does not this clearly establish the need of all nations, and of every intelligent creature in them, to have the gospel, God's power to save? If they need the gospel, they are lost without it. If they are not lost in their present state, *without* the gospel, it is certain that they become such when they hear and reject it; and, if they will be accepted of God in judgment because of their ignorance, would it not be infinitely better to keep it from them, inasmuch as, according to this hypothesis, the gospel would only cause some of them to be lost? Moreover, if they are in a saved state without the gospel, they are far more fortunate than are those peoples who have opportunity to hear it, but some of whom reject it, when it is preached to them. Would not the preaching of the gospel to all such simply become the instrument of their damnation rather than their salvation?

Heathen peoples are certainly not in the category of idiots and infants since the

latter cannot understand anything about the gospel, whereas Paul clearly shows that the flickering light of residual truth once held by heathens still feebly shines and those who adhere to this will be judged in harmony with their obedience to the truth which they still have (Rom. 2:6, 14-16, 26). Moreover, infants and idiots, being unaccountable, are not lost (Matt. 18:3). As I have shown elsewhere in answering a question regarding degrees of punishment and reward, men will be punished, or rewarded, according to the light they had and the extent of their obedience or disobedience to it; and, of course, heathen peoples, who never had opportunity to hear the gospel, are not as guilty before God as are those who, for example, in this land, have repeatedly heard it and rejected it. But, men cannot be saved without the gospel; and this includes all men, under all conditions and circumstances (I Tim. 2:3, 4). Paul says, "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).

Let Us Stand On The Word

Dale C. Flowers

Many are the Saints who have blazed the trail, ploughed new ground and sowed the Precious seed in the hearts of man in the past two centuries. The Smiths, Creaths, Scotts, Campbells, Stones, Mulkeys, Fannings, Sewells, Lipscombs, Franklins, and the host of others worked hard, prayed fervently, studied diligently, traveled extensively, and taught constantly in order to preserve for this generation and generations to come the simple order of the faith of the gospel of Christ.

The makers and molders of the restoration movement were men of divergent temperments, humors, intellects, backgrounds and environments. There were the men who "made tents" to support their labors by farming, publishing, teaching, lawyering, and in various other trades. Few were "located." These soldiers which led the battle were in the habit of answering all calls inasmuch as humanly possible. They never asked for large assemblies, nor refused to preach if only a handful were present. They taught under shade trees, in barns, houses, court rooms, meeting halls, brush arbors, or out in the open. They went to the lost. Most of these men had the home support of Godly wives who were willing to share their husbands with an often unappreciative world. What was the common denominator which motivated these saints? That question must be answered and the answer applied, if the church today is to continue to carry the restoration banner of NEW Testament Christianity.

After reading the biographies of these men the answer is clear. When reading their sermons and debates and articles the answer shouts from the pages. These men had taken

II Peter 1:3 to heart. They based their entire lives on the fact that "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue;" as well as I Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." The common denominator of all these pioneers in the faith was their firm conviction of the infallibility and complete authority of God's word. This was true in the case of the cooperation among brethren and churches (from the mission societies down to the present controversies). This was true in the case of the music question, classes, accepting the unimmersed, etc. In fact, whenever any man began, or begins today, to ride a hobby, somewhere down the line he has left the foundation of Christ and his respect or the authority and infallibility of the Scriptures. This has been evidenced historically by those who loose what God has bound or those who have bound what God has loosed. In either case these individuals have set and will continue to set themselves up as superior to God and His infallible and all authoritative word.

Today, in many areas, "book, chapter, verse," teaching is ridiculed. The authority of Elders is being questioned; the sacredness of the home is being violated, and the sanctity of marriage is being ignored. The inspiration of the Scriptures, the necessity of an active faith, the unity of believers, the oneness of God's people, the necessity of obedience and right to life is not only being questioned by denominational hirelings, but is also coming

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Worship Must Be "In Spirit And In Truth"

Continued from page 1

giving of our money as prospered, and studying God's word — these five items of worship — can be done in obedience to God.

All other acts of worship are outside the realm of divine truth. Mechanical instruments of music in worship, or humming the melody of songs, is not "in truth." There is no more authority for humming in worship than there

is for playing an instrument, or whistling. All of these violate the command to "sing" (Eph. 5:19; Col 3:16).

God will accept as an act of worship *only* that which he has authorized in His word. He commands that we worship Him "in spirit and truth." Any worship which does not meet these requirements in "vain worship" and is a

transgression of the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9).

Let us be sure that our worship of the Heavenly Father is "in spirit and truth," "for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers" (Jn. 4:23-24). — Minister Midway Church of Christ, Rt. 3 Box 420, Jasper, Ala. 35501.

Let Us Stand On The Word

Continued from page 3

from the "lectures" of our brethren.

If the church today is to grow, if it is to be the strong force God intends it to be, then the church today must not forsake the basic principle of the infallibility and complete authority of the Word of God. We must, as did the children of Israel, make the choice: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve;

whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

We have received a sacred heritage. We are not more enlightened than the strong men of faith in the past. We have drunk from the wells they dug. Paul told the Romans that he

had a debt to pay to all mankind. So do we. Preachers' today do not complement the past champions of the faith by imitation of style. These men of God can only be complemented when we stand as they stand, and have stood and as their teachers before them stood — squarely upon the infallibility and complete authority of the word of God. — 204 Scott Dr., Jonesboro, Ark. 72401.

Ask Lynn About Marijuana

Continued from page 2

alcoholics now living in the U.S. All the advertisers show us is the glamour, the excitement, the social acceptability of those who drink "Old Crow" or whatever.

Before you decide about the legalization of marijuana you need to hear the testimony of a young man whom we will refer to as Lynn. Lynn is in prison now for crimes he committed to support his marijuana needs. He is 22 years old and has smoked pot since he was 12. He comes from an average middle-class family like most of us. He smoked his first joint on a dare and for curiosity, later he found himself needing it to face life. He has nothing positive to say about the drug anymore. However, the negatives that he can cite are multiple: (1) He lost a good friend who was fatally injured in an automobile accident due to being under the influence of marijuana. (2) He contacted gonorrhoea due to uninhibited sexual behavior under the drug's influence. (3) He suffers from impetigo and other skin disorders due to poor nutrition habits. (4) He suffers from malnutrition which resulted from a loss of appetite and poor eating habits. (5) He often has infections, colds and flu due to poor health care. (6) He has many bruises and scars from being under the influence — addicts fall down a lot. (7) He has often burned his fingers — its hard to light-up when your lit-up. (8) He experiences loss of memory — like liquor, marijuana destroys brain cells. (9) His vocabulary is lacking — all one can think to say is "cool man....right on." (10) He has a poor education from not listening and ditching school — an addict's mind is always on the weed. (11) His friends are all low-life and immoral — responsible, moral people do not smoke pot. (12) Finally he graduated from pot to pills — this is a natural progression, or digression. (13) He is labeled a juvenile offender and drug user which will be on his record for life. (14) He has broken-hearted, guilt-ridden parents and its hard to look into their eyes. (15) He is left with mental disorders like paranoia, insecurities, drug dependency and other symptoms. (16) He lives with a general feeling of restlessness (17) He has no motivation, and life mostly seems stupid and hopeless. (18) He found

himself stealing, shoplifting, robbing, hustling for some grass and running from the law. (19) He ended up in prison on a robbery charge. (20) And now he sits alone in his cell with fantasies about Mary Jane mingled with thoughts of suicide — one's thinking is not too clear under the pressure of mental and physical cravings.

This drug that ruined Lynn's life has many names: pot, Texas tea, locoweed, Mary Jane, hay, grass, Acapulco gold, joints, sticks, reefers...but now Lynn is ready to call it by its real name, POISON! He believes if given a

chance he can leave it alone.

Anyone who is really interested in help to overcome a drug problem can turn to Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30). He is a Lord who cares (1 Peter 5:7). Through Him one can conquer any force that invades his life (Romans 8:37). He can give a life meaning, direction and purpose (Matthew 4:19). He can give a person real peace (John 16:33). He alone can make life abundant here and infinitely abundant in eternity (John 10:10). He is the only way to God (John 14:6). — Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

O Lord, Thou Art My God

STEVE BAGGETT

With a tremendous amount of religious division among denominations today and even a great many individuals claiming themselves to be the Christ, it brings great joy to the hearts of God's people to know, as did Isaiah, that "thou, O Lord, art my God" (Isaiah 25:1). Christians everywhere look upon those who claim to be Christ and wonder just how far away from the divine word of God man will go before he realizes his total dependence upon Almighty God.

From the very beginning of time God has always provided for those who follow after him. He placed Adam and Eve in a garden prepared especially for them. He provided for Noah and his family an ark of safety which delivered them from certain death. He delivered Lot from the destruction of wicked Sodom and Gomorrah. Without a doubt the greatest manifestation of God's providence for His people is the gift of his Son. In Romans 5:8 Paul writes, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jehovah God, our only true God, sacrificed the life of his only Son (John 3:16), in order to save mankind from total destruction. In spite of all the available evidence of God's providential care, many today live as though they need nothing.

Isaiah proclaimed, "O Lord, thou art my

God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Isaiah 25:1). As God's people today we must teach the message of Isaiah, of the one true and living God. We must convince people everywhere to obey the word of God and rely upon him and him alone for care and protection, because it is written, "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world" (Acts 17:31). — Beaver Ridge Rd., Rt. 22, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

Thanks To Brother Nichols

Our many thanks to brother Flavil Nichols for the excellent work he did in editing WORDS OF TRUTH during our recent trip to the lands of the Bible. Thanks also to the writers who contributed articles for those two special issues. There was not room to include all the articles that were sent in for those issue, but we will likely run them in subsequent issues.



Words Of Truth

"I am not ashamed of my testimony; but speak forth the Words of Truth and righteousness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, JULY 21, 1978

NUMBER 32

Observations From Orlinsky (No. 1)

Just who is Harry M. Orlinsky? Those of us who have long called attention to the RSV, a perverted and polluted Bible and the granddaddy of the modern speech versions of our generation, know only too well the name of Harry M. Orlinsky. He served on the RSV committee which produced this new and deeply controversial Bible of 1952. He is now the oldest living member of that RSV translated committee. He is a professor of Hebrew Union University. He is editor-in-chief of the new translation of the Hebrew Bible for the Jewish Publication Society of America. His influence was diabolically dominant in the removal of virgin from Isaiah 7:14 and the irreverent placement of "young woman" in the vacated spot. It is my seasoned judgement that this is the single most deadly mistake made by the RSV of 1952. Some, but not nearly all by any means, of their other glaring errors have been corrected in a subsequent edition, but not this one. It stands now as it has stood for twenty-six long years and that is just how long some of us have opposed the change. And that is about how long some of our brethren have defended it!! Read it and weep! How utterly strange!



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Solael in Canoga Park, California.

Our ever versatile and dedicated Archie Luper was right on hand with his tape recorder to hear this speech. Brother Luper was kind enough to send me the tapes of the Professor's speech both on male oriented languages and his answer to Brother Luper's excellently worded query dealing with *almah* in Isaiah 7:14 and *parthenos* in Matthew 1:22-23. Brother Luper has rendered the brotherhood a great service in making public the current views of the Jewish professor who rejects the Deity of Christ and repudiates the entire New Testament. Professor Orlinsky's Bible is the Hebrew Bible and that alone. He rejects the Greek New Testament as composing any of God's Word.

In this four-part series for WORDS OF TRUTH I want to share with you some of his observations on male-oriented language and what the new Bible makers propose to do about such, his observations about a variety of Biblical matters and then take a look at his totally irreverent and deeply blasphemous attitude toward the virgin birth doctrine.

ORLINSKY ON

MALE-ORIENTED LANGUAGE

I have listened with care a number of times to the full speech as given by Orlinsky. Early in his speech he talked about translations. Quite correctly he suggested that translations of God's Word have been going on since the days of the Septuagint or for some twenty-two hundred years. Significantly, he referred to this early period as so many year B.C. This is BEFORE CHRIST, mind you. How embarrassing it must be to deny the Deity of Christ and yet almost be compelled to employ him as the one who split time into its two major segments—B.C. and A.D. Were I an infidel toward Jesus, as the Hebrew Union University Professor is, each

date written would bother me no end. Imagine not being able to lecture, carry on business or even write a check to pay a bill without acknowledging the paramount influence that Jesus Christ holds over time itself. He is the Great Divider of time.

Professor Orlinsky called attention to the great proliferation of English Versions. He even lists more than did the American Bible Society in a personal letter to me in April of 1977. They listed 340; he lists at least 1,000 either whole or in portions. It was interesting to hear him observe that some must not sleep well and hence they translate the Bible! He assured his audience that he slept well but a look at the RSV prompts me to observe that both he and his translational colleagues suffered much insomnia in the forties and early fifties prior to their coming out with the RSV in 1952. But it was his infidelity-not insomnia-that prompted his highly swaying actions about virgin in Isaiah 7:14. Most of us could have handled that passage better asleep than they did awake!!

The major gist of his speech dealt with the male oriented language. Early in his speech he proposed to share with his audience how the women's movement is making the lives of Bible translators miserable. They have done that to many of us! In recent years the feminist movement has brought much pressure to bear upon Bible translators to rid the Bible of male oriented terms. Women's Lib feels like God should be designated as the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel. Matriarchs and not just patriarchs should be given equal emphasis in the designation. NOW (National Organization of Women) has been bringing pressure to bear upon the RSV translators for

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble
But speak forth the words of
truth and soberness
- Acts 26:25

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Mountain Top Living

CLEON LYLES

Let me share with you a few lines I read recently.

"The beautiful and picturesque lone pine trees we so often see pictured on the on the tops of mountains are known as Limber Pines. They are given this name because their flexibility and resiliency permit them to ride out the winds and storms that destroy other trees.

You can take a branch of a Limber Pine and tie it into a knot...it's flexibility makes this easy to do. Untie the knot and the branch will assume its original shape.

The lesson taught by the Limber Pine is that survival success is not dependent upon strength alone. They achieve victory by bending with the wind but always springing erect after the storm is over.

Triumphant living, too, is achieved by resiliency. The storms and strife of life may bend and buffet us around but if we have a resilient spirit they cannot break us. The supreme test of character and strength is determined by the manner in which we courageously straighten our heads after having been bowed in defeat, disappointment, pain and suffering. People of this spirit will be found leading the less courageous, they are the ones who will achieve the mountain tops in life."

Now let's look at a life of which we have knowledge and see this truth as he found it. The Apostle Paul, who before was Saul, knew what it was to stand on top of the world from the standpoint of learning, zeal and popularity, but when he found the real meaning of life he came to realize that the top of the world he knew could not touch the foot of the mountain on which he learned to stand. He explained what was happening to him by saying, "I die daily," and "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." No doubt had you and I seen Paul we would not have

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FROM THE EDITOR

Exousia And The Eldership

A recent article, widely circulated and written by a well-know and beloved brother, says that a preacher recently ventured a guess that the next division of the church is likely to be over whether or not elders have authority. The brother then suggested that it would be good to give careful examination to the New Testament and see just what it teaches on the ques-



BOBBY DUNCAN

tion. He then proceeded to examine the Greek word *exousia* and its use in the New Testament. He concluded that it is "never once used in connection with either the discharge of the function of an elder or with the attitude the Christian is to have toward the elder." He then added: "Before we divide the church over the implications of a word that does not occur in the Bible in the Context with which we are differing from each other, would it not be rational to give thought to the possibility of the need for a more Biblical pattern in which to express ourselves? If we use Biblical terms we might not find ourselves so far apart after all."

Several observations come to mind that we would like to pass on to our readers who may have read the aforementioned article. In the first place, we certainly do not want to see the church divide. It is both good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1). Those who cause division contrary to the doctrine of Christ are to be marked and avoided (Romans 16:17). Jesus prayed for the unity his followers (John 17:20, 21). We should do all within our power to avoid division in the ranks, and divide only if faithfulness to our Lord demands such.

In the second place, if division comes over the matter under consideration in this article, it will not be the responsibility of those of us who insist that elders should be obeyed. Not only is this the clear command of Hebrews 13:17, but it is also the position our brethren have held and respected down through the years. Some now taking the position that elders do not have any decision-making authority have in times past approached elderships for the express purpose of getting them to make decisions about certain matters.

In the third place, the differences among us over the authroity of elders is not merely a matter of semantics. Too much has been written too plainly for it all to be passed off as a mere play on words. There are some of us who are naive enough to believe that "rule" means rule and "obey" means obey; but others deny that elders are to rule and the rest of us are to obey. To argue that the Bible does not use the expression "authority of elders" reminds us of statements we have heard made by those who opposed orphan homes and Sunday schools. They argued that these were unscriptural because they were not specifically

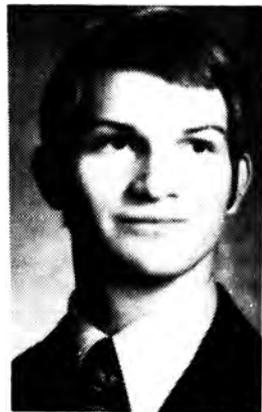
mentioned in the Bible.

Finally, but not of least importance, is the fact that the absence of any passage using the Greek word *exousia* in connection with the elders does not argue or prove that elders have no authority, or that members have no obligation to obey them. Careful reflection will show this to be true. Please note: "The observation which strikes one strongest from this survey of *exousia* and 'authority' is that though the nouns and verbs for 'authority' are used for God, the devil, Jesus, the earthly rulers, the apostles, an evangelist, and even for ordinary Christians, they are never once used in connection with either the discharge of the function of . . ." a parent toward his child or the attitude the child is to have toward his parents. Now, who would say that parents do not have any authority over their children, or that children are not obligated to respect the authority of their parents?

The Bible clearly teaches, the absence of the Greek word *exousia* notwithstanding, that a man is to *rule* his own house (I Timothy 3:5), and that elders are to *rule* the church (Heb. 13:17). It also teaches that children are to *obey* their parents (Ephesians 6:1), and that the church is to *obey* the elders (Hebrews 13:17).

The Divinity of Jesus Christ

All scholars and skeptics admit that almost two-thousand years ago, there lived in Palestine a man named Jesus. The earthly existance of Jesus Christ is a matter of world history. Men are divided, however, as to who Jesus was. Was he a mere prophet? Many of his contemporaries so thought (Matt. 16:13, 14).



BY DALTON KEY

Was he in fact John the Baptist risen from the dead? This was Herod's tormenting theory (Matt. 14:1, 2). Was he a mere mortal man, son of a lowly carpenter, claiming for himself divinity which he did not possess? This was the light in which his own countrymen saw him (Matt. 13:35). Was Jesus a mere man, or was he more than a man? The following proofs should firmly establish the case for Christ's divinity.

1. His name, Immanuel, is interpreted "God with us" (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23).
2. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS

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Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is the difference in meaning, if any, in the words, 'Hebrew,' 'Israelite,' and 'Jew?'"

The word "Hebrew," was first applied to Abraham and his family when they came to Canaan. The origin of the word is obscure; some think it derives from *Eber*, an ancestor of Abraham (Gen. 10:21; Num. 24:24); others, perhaps with more reason, believe that it is from the Hebrew word *abar*, "to pass over," thus, from *beyond the river*; and, inasmuch as Abraham and his family first came from distant Ur of the Chaldees, "beyond Jordan," this fact became a name for them (Heb. 14:13.) Abraham, and all of his descendants, are Hebrews.

The term "Israelite," derives from *Israel*, the name given to Jacob by the angel at Peniel (Gen. 32:28). It means literally "having power with God." Jacob and all of his descendants are Israelites. It is the usual name given to the twelve tribes; and, following the division of the kingdom, in the reign of Rehoboam, 975 B.C. it was applied to the ten tribes who rebelled.

The appellation "Jew," means a descendent from Judah, one of the sons, of Jacob. Later, it came to signify a member of the tribe of Judah; and afterwards, following the division of the kingdom when Judah and Benjamin, the only two tribes of Israel which remained faithful to God, were joined in civil and religious relationships, it designated one from this union-i.e., identified with either of these tribes. Some Levites who refused identity with Jeroboam's rebellion were likely embraced in the designation along with any others of Israel whose chose to remain faithful to God (II Chron. 11:3). Basically, however, the term signifies only a member of the tribe of Judah or Benjamin.

It will be seen, therefore, that the words, *Hebrew*, *Israelite*, and *Jew*, though related, differ in scope: *Hebrew*, is the most comprehensive of the three, and includes all who are described by the words *Israelite* and *Jew*; the word *Israelite* designates one descended from Jacob; and, the word *Jew* a descendent of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

To put the matter in proper perspective, we may look at it this way: All Israelites were Hebrews, because all of them were descended from Abraham; but, not all Hebrews were Israelites. Only those Hebrews which descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob are Israelites. Abraham has many other descendants. The Arab world, for example, is descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob are Israelites. Abraham has many other descendants. The Arab world, for example, is descended from Abraham, through Ishmael; hence, the Arabs are Hebrews, but they are not Israelites. Keturah was another son of Abraham, and from him descended "many nations." These are also Hebrews, though not Israelites, because they are not the progeny of Jacob.

All Jews are Israelites, because all Jews have their ancestry from Jacob (Israel), but not all Israelites are Jews - only those descended from Judah and Benjamin. Paul was a Hebrew because of his ancestry in Abraham; he was of the "stock of Israel," because he descended from Jacob, and he was a Jew because he was from the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:1-5).

It should be noted that after the Babylonian captivity, the exiles, though principally from

Judah, reclaimed the name "Israel" as the designation of their nation, though they chose to be called Jews individually. This must be regarded as a figurative use of the word *Israel*, as is also Paul's use of it ("the Israel of God") in Gal. 6:16, where the phrase denotes spiritual Israel-the church.

Also, it appears from Acts 6:1-6, that in the New Testament period the name *Hebrew* was exclusively used of those Jews who spoke in the Aramaean language, and who read the Hebrew Scriptures in the original tongue, in contradistinction to the *Grecian* (Hellenists) Jews who usually spoke Greek, who had imbibed the culture and manners of the Greeks, and who used the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Old Testament. Thus, the *Hebrew* regarded themselves as *pure Jews*, not because they were native to the land of Palestine (Paul, a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," was born in Tarsus), but because they believed themselves to be more loyal to the religion of their fathers.

Things Money Cannot Buy

Jesus told his disciples to carry the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Several years after the church had been established, there seems little progress had been made to carry out this command. After the death of Stephen, there was great persecution leveled against the church. It is sad, but they went everywhere preaching the word, only after persecution came (Acts 8:4).

Luke selects one of these preachers and traces his activities. Philip goes to Samaria and preaches Christ. He is very successful and even converts Simon who used sorcery as a money making scheme. We are sure that Simon's conversion was real for Luke says he believed, was baptized and continued (Acts 8:13).

When the apostles heard that Samaria had received the gospel, Peter and John, two apostles, came from Jerusalem to lay their hands on the new converts so they could receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17).

Simon had the wrong view of money before he became a Christian. He faced the same temptation after his conversion. "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-19). Peter's stinging reply was basically: "There are some things that money cannot buy." In Peter's reply are found some important lessons for all of us.

It is certainly true that money will buy some things. Money will buy the necessities of life. Even Jesus and his disciples had to buy their food (John 4:8). Money will buy the luxuries

of life (Luke 12:15). Money will buy improper things. The soldiers were paid great sums of money to say, "His disciples came by night, and stole away his body while we slept" (Matthew 28:13). Money will buy disloyalty. Judas sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Mark 14:10-11). Money will buy the sexual services of a human body (Hosea 2:5). Money will buy unqualified elders. Elders of the church can be greedy for money in their own pockets. Such men often do not stop there but will be greedy with the church treasury (1 Timothy 3:3). Preachers can be bought with money. In some cases Paul refused to receive support to prove he was not preaching for money. (Acts. 20:33; 1 Corinthians 9).

There are some things money cannot buy. Money will not buy the gift of God (Acts 8:20). It will not buy security. Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts 8:20). His money would perish but because he had the wrong attitude toward it, Simon would also perish with it. Simon's money, regardless of the amount, could not buy authority in the church. Peter said, "Thou has neither part nor lot in this matter" (Acts 8:21). It is the elders who have oversight of a local church - not the man with the most money. Simon's money, even if he could heap it to the sky, could not buy him a pure heart in the sight of God (Acts 8:22). Simon was probably regarded as a very powerful and important person in the church because he had money. But in the sight of God, his money meant nothing and his heart was impure. Money could not buy righteousness. He could not substitute his money for repentance. Peter told him his sinful attitude would follow him to judgment unless he repented (Acts 8:22). With all his money, Simon was still a slave to iniquity and his actions were bitterness to endure by God and any righteous thinking person.

Money did not buy Peter then, and it will not buy faithful preachers today. Peter could have reasoned, "This money could feed the hungry and carry the gospel to a lot of people." But he did not give into money-toting schemer who wanted to buy his way into the church. Financial pressure and blackmail will not silence the lips of God's preacher who is determined to speak the truth in love.

Money will not buy faithful elders of the church. They can have a lot of pressure on them concerning the budget and meeting the obligations. Some church members who have a lot of money and have the wrong attitude toward it know this and in some cases will attempt to blackmail the elders to have their petty ways. Sometimes it will be indirect by withholding their contribution. At other times it will be a direct approach like Simon. Such brazen people will tell the elders, "I don't like the decisions you men have made, so I am cutting my contribution." Godly elders will tell such depraved people exactly what Peter told Simon. No Christian has the right to withhold his contribution because he does not agree with the decision of the elders. We are to give every first day of the week according to how we have prospered-not according to how we have been *pleased!* (1 Corinthians 16:1-2.)

The uncontrolled desire or the improper use of money can destroy us. Our attitude should be like Balaam's who said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more (Numbers 22:18). — 624 Ridgeway, Bolivar, Tn. 38008.



TOM CHILDERS

Observations From Orlinsky (No. 1)

Continued from page 1

nearly five years. Some of the RSV translators felt they had to do something about male oriented language, not just to please the feminist movement, but because they were bringing to possess similar thoughts. But why should this be, if their product were as reliable as some of our preachers and professors have told us it was?

The RSV translators met in June of 1977 at Princeton. They met for two weeks instead of the customary one week. High on their agenda was what to do about the growing pressure from the Women's Movement. He said there was quite a battle among the RSV translators as to whether they should listen to this movement or not. They struggled with the whole ideology of the Women's Movement. He stated their intent not to change one iota of male bias in the Hebrew text, and that where the Hebrew text did not show any male bias neither should they. Too bad they did not feel a kindred loyalty toward the Hebrew text of Old Testament predictive prophecy and New Testament fulfillment, and especially Isaiah 7:14!!

They began with Psalms. He feels that Psalms is a most popular and important book. He affirmed immediately the difficulty of translating the books of Psalms. As they began their study they ran into problems with the very first chapter and with the very first

refer to either man or woman. He and his translational colleagues realized there are some places where male oriented language cannot be changed. Passages that talk of a MAN who has defiled his neighbor's wife obviously fall into this category. Again it is the MAN, not the WOMAN, who begets; it is the WOMAN not the MAN, who is with child and will bear it at birth.

He says that *ISH* does not refer to a male person. In Hebrew scholarship Adam Clarke does not have to take a backseat to Orlinsky any day of the week. The eminent Clarke wrote this on pages 45-46 of his learned verse. The Psalm states, "Blessed is the MAN." Psalm 1 is filled with masculine terms. He feels like an improvement would be, "Blessed are THOSE." Psalm 1:1 needs no improvement except in our emulation of what it says!

"Bridegroom" in Psalm 19 presented another problem. It appears to me that they will have trouble all the way through the Bible. Not only will there be a problem with nouns but also with pronouns. Talk about a person who does something and what pronoun will be used as its antecedent? THEY could not be used for the number in the pronoun has to agree with the number in the noun. Such is utterly ridiculous, for we readily understand that if HE is used in a general sense, it can

commentary, "ISH signifies MAN, and the word used to express what we term WOMAN is the same with a feminine termination, ISHSHAH, and literally means she-man."

What will an attitude like this produce in the New Testament? Just how far will the matter go? Will men in First Timothy 2:12 become persons? Will Jesus cease to be called the Son of God and be just the Person or the child of God? Will the masculine pronouns used to describe the Holy Spirit become feminine or just left in the neuter? Many of us are wondering what the feminist RSV edition of the early 1980's is going to be like? Some of us are wondering if our brethren who have been squarely atop the RSV bandwagon over the years will embrace the new RSV with equal relish and with an adamant defense. Is this what superior scholarship is about to produce? Is this what a superior manuscript base is about to bring out? I have been predicting for years that we would soon have a feminist Bible. How did I know this was coming? Because society is now molding Bible-making instead of the real Bible, molding and remaking of society. Whatever is dominant in society will soon appear in one or more of the new Bibles. Now just who wishes to take issue with this statement and what will you use for supporting evidence in the denial?

The Divinity of Jesus Christ

Continued from page 2

GOD...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:1, 14).

3. He was born of a virgin, just as Isaiah had prophesied more than five hundred years before (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:21-25). He was not begotten of Joseph, but of God (Matt. 1:16; John 3:16, 1:14; 1 John 4:9).

4. His existence did not begin with his birth to Mary (John 8:58). He was with the Father before the world was created, and aided the Father in this creation (John 1:1-5; Heb. 1:1-3; John 17:5; Gen. 1:26 - "Our image"). He was and is eternal in nature (Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8).

5. God (speaking of Christ) said, "This is my beloved son" (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). What better

testimony could one have than that supplied by the very voice of God?

6. He was declared to be the son of God with power (Rom. 1:4; John 1:33, 34; Matt. 16:16, 17; 27:54; 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:1).

7. He was raised from the dead never to die again (Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:18-21; 1 Cor. 15:1-10; Matt. 24; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20). The Bible records that others have been raised from the dead, but they all had to die again (1 Kings 17:17-23; John 11). Christ was raised, never to die again (Rev. 1:8; 1 Pet. 3:22).

8. He performed many signs and miracles in

proof of his divinity (John 3:1, 2; 20: 30, 31). The purpose of miracles was always to prove, to produce faith, and to confirm (John 20:30, 31; Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3-5).

9. Both Old Testament prophecy and New Testament scripture refer to him as God (Isa. 9:6; John 1:1, 2; Titus 2:13, 14; Matt. 1:23; 1 John 5:13).

10. He came down from heaven to live among and die for man; he ascended back into heaven, and there sits upon the right hand of God (Heb. 2:9; John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-10; Mark 16:19; 1 Pet. 3:22). — Box 619, Douglass, Kas. 67039.

Mountain Top Living

Continued from page 2

thought of him as one good to look upon. For though he may have been a very handsome person physically before he found Christ, it is doubtful we could have found many places on his body where there was not an ugly scar of some kind, made by the stonings, and lashings that he had to take. Within his big heart were many memories of his countrymen, and even some of his own brethren who became false, who had turned their backs on him. Yet when we read the writing of this man, who spent so much time in a prison cell, we find a note rejoicing. "Rejoice in the Lord and again I say rejoice" come ringing through

the years. He spoke of no regrets. As he looked back over the path of blood in which he had walked he had to admit he would have gladly walked it again. And out in the midst of all this pain and disappointment he sings a song of joy and thanksgiving. How could he do it? He had the strength to bounce back. They could not separate him from his Saviour. The storm could toss the boat in which he was riding, the waves could wrap their wet fingers around it, and the deep could open its mouth as if to swallow him, but he could rock with the boat without any fear in his heart of him who holds the world in his hands. And when

the storm was over, regardless of what nature it was, he could stand erect again because it was God who was holding him up.

We all pass through a certain amount of troubles. They come to the best of people. Just because we belong to Christ does not mean that he is going to place us on a pillow and carry us around. But because we do belong to him, if we are willing to rely on his strength, we can stand on the mountain and spring erect after the blowing of every wind, and his rainbow will always span the sky when the storm is over.—100 West Church Street, Morrilton, Arkansas 72110.

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

KENYA, NAIROBI

JULY, 1978

Dear Friends,

We are finally getting settled into our African mode of life. Our months in America slip further and further back in our consciousness. Once more I am beginning to "think African" and fall into the local routine. Our house is finally liveable again. Just this week we'll be putting in the finishing touches.



BERKLEY HACKETT

These are the cool, gray days in the Kenya highlands. We have had a fire in our fire place all day today. Somehow it just doesn't seem right to be sitting only sixty-five miles south of the equator wearing a sweater and backed up to the fire. Such is the case here in the Nairobi area. We won't have any really pleasant weather until September.

The shipment arrived last week. It had been in the country a month earlier, but had been seized by customs at the port of entry. We had to make the 650 mile round trip to the seaport city of Mombasa and wade through two days of red tape before the printing equipment was released for the 300 mile trip by railway to Nairobi. It seems that someone at the Custom's Department was intrigued by the size of the crates that we shipped and decided to have a look inside. They were not to do this at all since the crates were shipped under "bond" all the way to Nairobi. That means that only the customs department in Nairobi had the right to open the boxes. Well, anyway things just don't operate that way all the time here. It was decided that I should be made to pay the local customs officials at the seaport a certain amount of money for their trouble. It took a lot of talk to get out of there without paying what would have essentially been a bribe. As it turned out the whole escapade "only" cost gas, hotel and wear and tear on the car and missionary. It could have been worse. When the equipment finally arrived in Nairobi I cleared the boxes through the proper channels in only one day. The total cost for customs and local delivery was steep, but worth it. The printing equipment up to this point has cost a total of \$6769.38. This includes original cost of equipment (all original equipment cost was met by the Wear Branch church near Chattanooga, Tenn.), shipping overseas and local customs, taxes, and cartage. Even at that cost we have a real bargain. We have three printing presses, a paper cutter, a head er, a folder and various odds and ends. To buy all these items locally would cost an unbelievable \$40,000.00. You can understand my pleasure in having gotten by so cheaply. I am looking forward to getting the printing operation underway. That in itself may take a couple of months more. Our primary goal is to get one

million tracts in circulation. The local churches are all short on printed material. Everyone is excited about getting new tracts out and reprinting some of our old ones. Several of the brothers have translated some of our tracts into the various African languages during the last year in expectation of the arrival of the printing presses. We thank God that this equipment is finally in our hands.

I continue to be pleased with the progress of the native churches. I have yet to visit everyone of the churches for a Sunday service. My practice is to be at a different congregation each Sunday, and it takes a long time to go around. It wasn't very many years ago when visiting all the churches was only a two or three Sunday task. Now it takes months! We praise God for this increase. People are continually coming up to the house for fellowship and discussions. For a period of two weeks or more there was someone waiting for me every time I pulled up into the yard. Today has been the first day without visitors in a long string of days.

I have two long preaching trips planned for this month. Next week-end I am going to a new area one hundred and twenty-five miles north of Nairobi. Two years ago we baptized a young woman named Tabia. She attended a congregation about seventy miles north of Nairobi. After six months or so of affiliation her husband bought a farm fifty miles further north and they moved there. Ever since that time she has been asking us to come up and help her teach her neighbors. She has already laid the ground work, so we are assured of a good welcome. Pray that the Lord will give a good increase there and that a new congregation might be established where Tabia can worship according to the New Testament pattern. The name of the place is Mwega. Then at the end of the month we will be going to the far western part of Kenya where a new congregation has been planted by some of the Nairobi Christians. This location is over two hundred and fifty miles from us here, but it happens to be the "home area" of several of our Nairobi church members. These Christians while growing in faith here in the city have not failed to share their Savior with friends and relatives back home in the farming community where they grow up. A church was started and they are nearly finished with their building. The brethren there are very anxious for us to come and spend a couple days there with them. One of our faithful Nairobi preachers has recently moved to within 10 miles of the new church. He will be staying here one year and should be a great help to those brethren. For my part I'm looking forward to offering some encouragement to these children of the Master.

I thank God for each of you, for your love and steadfastness. Whatever successes are achieved here are in large measure due to you.

In Him,

Bro. Hackett

FINANCIAL REPORT

Total work fund received	
via 6th Ave., Jasper	\$1800.00
Travel (auto & gas)	\$250.00
House & utilities	300.00
General expenditures and supplies	
(not including printing)	450.00
Printing and supplying of	
literature (including Bible	
Correspondence School)	800.00
Total	\$1800.00

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO AFRICAN MISSION FUND FOR MONTH OF JUNE 1978

Louis & Ethel Burkett	\$10.00
Herman King	20.00
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A fancy new hairdo for Sunday School.



In East Africa it is the custom for the wife to carry the loads and the husband to walk ahead unencumbered.



A neighbor giving Frances a "welcome back" stalk of sugar cane.



A happy greeting from one of the Nairobi church members.



Worship service out under the sky. That's James Maina doing the preaching. Yes, that's a chicken in the picture. We often have chickens in church.



Words of Truth

"I am not a Jew; but speak forth the Words of Truth and earnestness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, JULY 28, 1978

NUMBER 33

Observations From Orlinsky

(No. 2)

In early January of 1978, Harry M. Orlinsky, a professor at Hebrew Union University and the oldest member of the RSV Committee, spoke for two hours at Canoga Park, California. In the previous article I made mention of some of his observation on male oriented language. He had a number of observations that are worthy of our notice. In fact many of the things he said simply underscore with ascending emphasis what many of us have said in our critiques of the RSV and other Modern Speech Versions of this current century.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

In my judgment he paid a high compliment to the King James, the English Revised of 1881 and the American Standard of 1901 by saying they followed a word-for-word approach. This is really a gigantic plus for these three versions. He said that was all right for their day to pursue the word-for-word approach. It was a sign of the times, he declared. Now it is no longer all right as a sign of the times. The sign of current times now demands an idiom-for-idiom approach. Thirty-two years ago in the initial edition of the RSV they told us why they were rejecting the word-for-word approach that older versions had employed. They have not changed in attitude or action over the past third of a century. If anything, they have but crystalized this injurious attitude.

In comments relative to the name of Jehovah he expresses nothing but disdain. He says the name should be Lord. In this he speaks a truly Jewish attitude. I, for one, am not going to allow any infidelic Jew to eliminate the majestic name of Jehovah from

either my preaching or writing vocabulary.

Some of the greatest displeasure exhibited in the professor's whole speech was directed toward the news columnist, Harriet Van Horne. In June of 1977, Horne had written that the Women's Lib movement should keep their clumsy, meddling hands off the Holy Bible. He referred to Horn as being so wrong, so prejudiced and so very unfair. Yet it is all right for him to be prejudiced and unfair with Christ and the New Testament!! The Hebrew Union professor denies that we have a Holy Bible in any version or translation. He affirms that the Holy Bible is the Hebrew text for the Jew and that plus the Greek text for the Christian. As a Jew he has no love for the Greek text of the New Testament, yet he worked on the committee to give the world the RSV of 1952. He particularly denied that there is anything holy about the King James Version. Reader friend, according to this infidelic Jew you and I have no Holy Bible in our native vernacular. The very name on our Bible covers is misleading, according to him. Any version that is true to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament is God's Word, his inspired word, his holy word. Unless that is so, we have no Sacred Scriptures for the English reader who neither reads Hebrew or Greek. If so, HOW??

Professor Orlinsky only confirmed what many of us have known and stated across the years. He said in unmistakably clear terms that the RSV is the official, OFFICIAL mind you, Bible of the LIBERAL Protestant world. He says the RSV has been adopted by the Liberal Protestant world both in the U.S. and in Canada. Yet this NCC (National Council of Churches) Bible has the endorsement of many professors and preachers among churches of Christ. Read it and weep? How can one fight liberalism and at the same time recommend a reliable Bible what one of its own translators called a liberal product and which was confessedly responsible in its production to

liberal Protestant forces? This he admitted in his West Coast speech. Professor Oswald T. Allis was so right in suggesting that the success of the RSV would be a signal triumph for liberalism. It has been!! Relative to the King James Version, the Hebrew Union professor says it is so terribly inaccurate, yet he is not critical of it!! He affirms that one needs a course in Old Bible English to understand the old versions. He sounds just like what I hear from some of our intellectuals. I think I know where our brethren picked up such propaganda? It is obvious whom they are seeking to parrot. Yet he says he is not critical of the older versions. I wonder what he might have said had he planned a deliberately critical approach.

Professor Orlinsky's speech did not overflow and abound in deep reverence for the Bible. Time after time his remarks bordered on the side of outright irreverence. For instance he likened the man in the Bible with two wives to a modern man with two cars! Some of us fail to see humor in such as this. A display of dignity in the approach of his subject was frequently conspicuous by its utter absence.

Relative to the TEV, a modern child of the RSV legacy, he says it is more free in its idiom approach than the RSV has been. He also says the TEV is more racy than the RSV. Is this what superior scholarship and alleged superior manuscripts produce that our brethren have told us about again and again? He recommends the TEV to his students.

Relative to the word *nephish*, a Hebrew word for soul, he denies that it should be rendered as soul. He says there is no soul in the Bible until near the end of the Old Testament. He got a laugh when he said there were lots of HEELS in the Bible but no SOULS till about the second century B.C. He attributes Daniel to the second century. Such is modernism to the very core. He says the

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Success Can Ruin Your Life

After the death of King Amaziah, Uzziah became the king in his stead. Uzziah became king over Judah at the age of sixteen. He reigned from about 787-735 B.C., a period of 52 years. Things were going pretty well for him until near the end of his reign when he became haughty because of his success and might. This haughty spirit led him to his own destruction.



MICHAEL D. STONE

King Uzziah, one day, entered the Lord's temple to make an offering on the incense altar. He had no right to do so since only the priests, Aaron's descendants, had been consecrated for such service. Azariah, the priest, came in after him with eighty priests of the Lord who were courageous men. They all stood up to Uzziah and told him to get out of the holy place. At this request, Uzziah became very indignant and full of rage at these priests. The Lord caused his forehead to break out with leprosy while he was holding the censer for burning incense which he should not have had in the first place. To the day of his death, King Uzziah remained a leper and lived in a separate house as a leper. His son, Jotham, had charge of the royal palace and of the judging of the people. Later, Jotham became the king.

Uzziah sought the Lord and as long as he did that which was right, he prospered. The Philistines were defeated. The Ammonites paid an annual tribute to him. He dug wells and had many cattle. Instruments of warfare were developed to defend his people. He prospered so much that "his name spread far abroad!" Yet, in later life, he was a failure.

Problems and temptations do not only come to those who are young. Sometimes, a person may serve the Lord well in his youth and depart from Him in later life. Uzziah had been blessed by God but his heart grew haughty to his own destruction. My friends, are there not in this lessons for us all to learn? Success can ruin your life! The events of this writing can be found in II Chronicles chapter twenty-six. — 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101.



Lord's Over God's Heritage

In connection with the controversy over the authority of the eldership to make decisions for the congregation, there is one passage which we believe has not received enough of the right kind of attention. We refer to I Peter 5:3, which says, "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." This passage has been used by some in an effort to show that the eldership of a congregation has not the right to make decisions, and then expect the members of the congregation to abide by those decisions. In denying (rightly so) that this is the thrust of the passage, others have said that the verse should give consideration to the thinking of others in the congregation of making their decisions.

While we are sure that the passage forbids the abuse of authority, we believe a careful study will reveal that the passage is defining the authority of the eldership; i.e. it is telling something of a nature of this authority.

The expression "being lords over" translates the Greek word *katakuriueuo*, which Thayer defines: "to bring under one's power, to subject to one's self, to subdue, master....to hold in subjection, to be master of, exercise lordship over."

An examination of some passages in which the word is used will reveal the kind of lordship the word conveys. In Matthew 20:20-23 the mother is Zebedee's children requested that her sons, James and John, might be granted positions on the right hand and on the left hand of the Lord. When the other apostles heard this, they were "moved with indignation against the two brethren" (verse 24). "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them" (verse 25). "Exercise dominion over" is translated from *katakuriueuo*. The parallel passage in Mark (10:42) contains the same Greek word, and there it is translated "exercise lordship." It is obvious that the exercising of dominion or lordship under consideration is that which characterizes a king with reference to his subjects, or a master with reference to his servants. In such an arrangement the master's thoughts are not concerning the general welfare of his servants, but his own service is performed to please his master, and not for his own personal well-being.

Now, in view of this, when Jesus taught his apostles that they were not to exercise lordship over their brethren, what did he mean? Did he mean that the word of an apostle was not authoritative? Oh, no! In II Corinthians 10:8 Paul spoke of "our authority." No one would argue that the



BOBBY DUNCAN

apostles were not endowed with authority just because they were not to exercise lordship over their brethren. They were not to exercise lordship, but their word was to be obeyed. In II Thessalonians 3:14 Paul said, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."

But if the word of an apostle must be obeyed, why is he not then exercising lordship? For the simple reason that obedience to the word of an apostle is not the same as service to an apostle. It is rather service to the Lord as is prescribed by an apostle. To obey the commands of the apostles is to serve the Lord. To reject the authority of the apostles is to reject the will of the Lord who gave them their authority.

We might add that the apostles had authority to give commands and expect obedience, though they had not previously consulted with those to whom the commands were given. Yet they were not to "exercise lordship over" their brethren.

From the foregoing it is plain that (1) the apostles were endowed with authority to command and expect their brethren to obey; and yet (2) the apostles were not to exercise lordship over their brethren. These two ideas are not incompatible. There is no inconsistency between them.

Why, then, do some insist that I Peter 5:3 strips the eldership of all its authority, simply because it forbids "being lords over God's heritage"?

To submit to the eldership is not equal to serving the eldership, any more than submitting to the apostles is equal to serving the apostles. In both cases it is the Lord whom we serve. To reject the authority of apostles or elders is to reject the Lord who gave them their authority.

What I Owe The Church

Paul wrote the saints in Rome that he was a debtor (1:14-15). Every man who fills a pulpit in a local congregation is also a debtor. He has a number of fundamental obligations to his brethren. The following lines suggest some of those duties which this preacher has gleaned from God's word.

I owe my brethren a full week's work for a week's pay. "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (I Tim. 5:15). The opposite is also true,



JOHN WADDEY

Continued on page 4

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What are Hedge's 'Rules of Controversy?' Please list them."

Hedge's Rules of Controversy are a summary of those principles believed to be necessary to well-ordered and effective debate. Controversy, properly conducted, and rightly regulated, contributes much to the advancement of truth and is a very powerful method of convincing the gainsayer. To enable controversialists to be as effective and as efficient as possible in the presentation of their respective views, certain rules have evolved which, by general acceptance, are recognized as essential to honorable and fair controversy.

Hedge's Rules, by common consent, have come to be recognized as standard, and have often been reprinted. Usually, the reprints are abridgments of the original rules and do not fully indicate the principles involved as originally presented by Mr. Hedge. I shall transcribe the rules in full, as given in my copy of "Logick; or a Summary of the General Principles and Different Modes of Reasoning, by Levi Hedge, LL.D., Professor of Natural Religion, Moral Philosophy, and Civil Polity, at Harvard University, Oakley and Mason, New York, 1868." Only the "rules" are given, in limited space not permitting his introduction to the rules, or his discussion of logic and related matters.

Rule 1. The terms in which the question in debate is expressed, and the precise point at issue, should be so clearly defined that there could be no misunderstanding respecting them. If this be not done, the dispute is liable to be, in a great degree, verbal. Arguments will be misapplied, and the controversy distracted, because the parties engaged in it have different apprehension of the question.

Rule 2. The parties should mutually consider each other, as standing on a footing of equality in respect to the subject in debate. Each should regard the other as possessing equal talents, knowledge, and desire for truth, and should be equally desirous to be right, and his adversary in the right. In the heat of controversy, men are apt to forget the numberless sources of error, which exist in every controverted subject, especially of etymology and metaphysics. Hence arise presumption, confidence, and arrogant language; all of which obstruct the discovery of truth.

Rule 3. All expressions, which are meaningless, or without effect in regard to the subject in debate should be strictly avoided. All expressions may be considered as meaningless, which contribute nothing to the point of the question; such as desultory remarks and declamatory expressions. To these may be added all technical, ambiguous, and equivocal expressions. These have a tendency to dazzle and bewilder the mind, and hinder its clear perception of the truth.

Rule 4. Personal reflections on an adversary should in no instance be indulged. Whatever his private character, his foibles are not to be named nor alluded to in a controversy. Personal reflections are not only unproductive of effect, in respect to the question in discussion, but they are productive of real harm. They obstruct mental improvement, and are prejudicial to public morals. They indicate a mind who uses them, a mind hostile to the truth, for they prevent even solid arguments

from receiving the attention to which they are just entitled.

Rule 5. No one has a right to accuse his adversary of indirect motives. Arguments are to be answered, whether he, who offers them, be sincere or not, especially as his want of sincerity, if real, could not be ascertained. To inquire into his motives, then, is useless. To ascribe indirect ones to him is worse than useless; it is harmful.

Rule 6. The consequences of any doctrine are not to be charged upon him, who maintains it, unless he expressly avows them. If an absurd consequence be fairly deducible for any doctrine, it is rightly concluded that the doctrine itself is false; but it is not rightly concluded, that he, who advances it, supports the absurd consequence. The charitable presumption, in such case, would be, that he had never made the deduction; and that, if he had made it, he would have abandoned the

original doctrine.

Rule 7. As truth, and not victory, is the professed object of controversy, whatever proofs may be advanced, on either side, should be examined with fairness and candor; and any attempt to ensnare an adversary by the arts of sophistry, or to lessen the force of his reasoning by wit, cavilling, or ridicule, is a violation of the rules of honorable controversy (Pages 157-162).

To the extent that controversy is conducted in harmony with the foregoing rules great good must inevitably result; to the extent that such rules are ignored and disregarded, the disputation must fail of the only proper purpose for which it should be engaged in—the edification of the listener or reader. Those who engage in any form of disputation—and all of us do so to some degree—should consider carefully these rules and adhere to them insofar as it is possible.

Bad Habits Are Like Chiggers And Cockleburs



EDSEL BURLESON

Bad habits can get such a hold on one that he cannot break them except through the guidance of God's word and the great strength that comes in obedience there-to. Thoughts and desires need to be wholesome, for by these our habits are formed. James wrote: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:25).

If one places a large stone in the hand of a monkey and then throws it into deep water, it will hold on to the stone and drown, rather than let loose and swim out. When a bad habit gets a firm hold on a man, he will cling to it and fail, rather than give it up and succeed.

Someone has written: "I am a weed. It is fun to grow beside a flower. It is fed, you know, and it's cultivated. If I'm not pulled out I steal its food, and grow tall and stout."

I'm a bad habit, I can grow stronger each day that you let me go. All the good resolution you may make I can surely, swiftly break."

Look for the weed beside the flower! Break that habit's evil power! Do not wait till they grow so strong you must hurt the good to kill the wrong."

A wise old man was once taking a stroll through a forest with a shiftless youth by his side. The man suddenly stopped and pointed to four plants close at hand. The first was a tiny sprout, just coming out of the earth. The second had rooted itself quite firmly in the fertile soil. The third was a small shrub. And

the fourth had grown into a well-developed tree.

The old man said, "Pull up this first plant." The youth pulled it up easily with his fingers.

"Now pull the second," said the old man, "With slight effort the plant came up, roots and all."

"And now the third," continued the man. The boy pulled with one hand, then the other, but it would not come. Then he took both hands, and the plant finally yielded to all his strength.

"And now," said the man, "try the fourth." The youth grasped the trunk with all his might, but hardly a leaf shook. "I cannot move it," he exclaimed. "Just so, my son," said the wise old man, "with our bad habits. When they are young and small, we can cast them out; but when full grown, they cannot be uprooted."

A habit cannot be tossed out the window; it must be coaxed down the stairs one step at a time. And, like chiggers and cockleburs, bad habits are easy to acquire but difficult to shake off.—420 Seventh St. S. W., Birmingham, Al 35211.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

Observations From Orlinsky

(No. 2)

Continued from page 1

Bible recognizes no other life than this one till the very end of the Old Testament. He says the Bible recognizes no part of the human personality that would be immortal till the second century. Hence *nephish* is "person" not "soul". In view of this, how shall we treat the twin translation of Enoch and Elijah, both of which occurred long before the second century B.C.? How shall we treat the various accounts of where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were gathered to their people at death? (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:33). Not that first one was buried among his ancestors in Ur of the Chaldees. Each was buried in the Cave of Machpelah, a sepulchre located in Southern Palestine. How shall we account for the fact that David spoke of going to be with his departed son in Second Samuel 12:23? This was hardly an allusion to the grave for the dead bodies in Mother Earth find neither a reunion of relatives nor a crumb of comfort in its cold confines. Quite obviously Professor Orlinsky would reject the New Testament in general and the book of Hebrew in particular

Hebrew 11 takes an eloquent look at the Ancient Worthies of the Old Testament. Such is an inspired commentary on how the patient patriarchs felt toward a future life. Abraham looked for a city which has foundations whose builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10). They spent their lives desirous of a better country, that is an heavenly estate (Heb. 11:16). Abraham was a firm believer in the reality of the resurrection (Heb. 11:19). Moses knew there was a recompense of reward for him in the future if he cast his lot with heavenly-minded Israel instead of with Pharaoh and earthly Egypt (Heb. 11:25-26). The book of Daniel is much older than the modernistic second century date ascribed to it by the infidelic Orlinsky. Daniel 12 cannot be understood except upon the beautiful basis of a widely held faith in the existence of the soul and the firm reality of another world. Had Orlinsky lived in Inter-Testament times he would have been right at home in helping to found the Sadducean movement. His position is Sadduceism at least till near the first

century B.C. The immortality of the soul is much older than Mr. Orlinsky imagines it is. This, in reality, is why God promised humanity a ray of hope before Adam and Eve forfeited forever the earthly Eden (Gen. 3:15). This is what gave meaning to Abel's sacrifice, to Noah's ark, to Abraham's sojournings, to Moses' intercessions for Israel, to David's hope at the departure of a treasured son and to the martyrdom of Zacharias near the end of the Old Testament era.

I am doubly delighted that the Bible I use was not put out by men like Professor Orlinsky and his infidelic positions. Is the RSV your preferred Bible? If so, why, Why, WHY??? - P. O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

**Attend Church
Every Sunday!**

What I Owe The Church

Continued from page 2

the loafer is not worthy of his paycheck. Paul's admonition applies to preachers as well as others. "If any will not work, neither let him eat" (II Thess. 3:10). There is a great temptation to a preacher to get a late start in the morning, to linger at the coffee shop, to take off early, and to take an extra day for golf.

I owe my brethren adequate hours of study in preparation for each sermon and class lesson I deliver. Stale, warmed over, hastily prepared sermons are an insult to the intelligence of an audience. If my hearers number 250 at a given service, that would mean that approximately 125 man hours of time will be consumed by my sermon. How much time did I invest in the lesson? Paul's instruction is, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Some men would blush at their lessons if the Lord happened into the audience.

I owe my brethren sound doctrine in my instruction. Titus was taught to "Speak...the things which benefit the sound doctrine" (2:1). A congregation has the right to expect me to abstain from speculative ideas and rules of human origin. The pulpit is no place for personal opinions and obsessions. A casual look at the denominational world will reveal how difficult it is for a man simply to "preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2). This is a sacred duty that must be constantly worked at.

I owe the congregation consideration in the message delivered and the manner of presentation. I must preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). I cannot afford to pass by needed lessons on pertinent issues. My preaching must meet the needs of the flock. Powerful declarations against idolatry in India will not solve the problems of a brother in America. The toughest test of a preacher's loyalty to God is whether he can deal with the immediate problems of his people, when such a lesson is unwanted. At the same time I am obligated to preach the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). We have produced some preachers who use truth like a Roman scourge. There is great wisdom in the old maxim, "It's not what you say but *how* you say it." A brother may work

for months to bring a neighbor or family member to worship and then I assault and insult him with a hateful verbal attack. They deserve more consideration than that. Also, I owe the church a balance in the content of my lessons. There must be milk for the babes and meat for the full-grow (Heb. 5:12).

I owe my elders my respect and cooperation. Beside being utter ingratitude, it is sinful to work against God's shepherds of the flock (I Thess. 5:12-13). Rather, I should be a willing helper in every good work. I should back every decision they make that is in harmony with God's work. If they are young in their office, weak or untaught, I should work in a positive way to help them grow up in all things unto Christ (Eph. 4:15). Since every preacher would expect as much from his elders, the golden rule would demand this in return (Matt. 7:12).

I owe my brethren an example of positive Christian activity... in all things showing thyself an example of good works..." (Tit. 2:7). I must be faithful in attendance and loyal to God and the church. I must show, as well as teach them how to give (Acts 20:35). Toward every good work I must be zealous (Tit. 2:14), if I would be a faithful leader of God's people.

I owe the church a wholesome and pure moral life. Every man must be "an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12). Nothing can wreck a church quicker than a preacher who is guilty of sexual impropriety. Intemperate speech or worldly habits likewise are totally out of place in a preacher's life.

I am obligated to be patient with my brethren. Some preachers seemingly have no patience at all with the immaturity and failures of their brethren. Patience is a cardinal virtue for any full-grown disciple (II Pet. 1:6). Preachers need all the patient understanding the brethren can afford. Equity would demand as much from us to them.

I owe my brethren a compassionate, listening ear. Because we are full-grown men

in Christ, and because of our knowledge of the scriptures, brethren will look to us for counsel and advice. They have the right to expect us to help bear their burdens (Gal. 6:2). Like Paul, we should be gentle as a nurse who cherisheth her own children (I Thess. 2:7). We should be responsible to hold in strict confidence the problems they bring unto us. The preacher who is too busy to help his brethren is really too busy to serve a local congregation.

Observation suggests that too many preachers demand first class treatment for themselves while being unwilling to honor their duties to their congregation. I would remind such thoughtless men that the path of kindness and duty is a two-way street. Honor your duties to the brethren who support you and in nearly all cases they will meet you commitment. "Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry" (II Tim. 4:5). - Route 22, Beaver Ridge Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

**Attend Bible
Study Each
and Every
Sunday!**



Words Of Truth

...testus; but speak forth
...ness."

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1978

NUMBER 34

Observations From Orlinsky

(NO. 3)

In early January of 1978, Harry M. Orlinsky, professor at Hebrew Union University and the oldest living member of the RSV Committee, gave a two-hour speech on the West Coast relative to male oriented terms in the Bible and a variety of other matters as touching Biblical attitudes and translational procedures.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Brother Archie Luper was on hand to hear this speech and recorded the Jewish Professor's remarks. This four-part series is taken from this speech. The two final installments will deal with Orlinsky's observations about the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and an adamant defense of what he denies along this line. This discussion was triggered by an excellently worded question from Brother Luper: "Professor Orlinsky, do you see any violence in the Hebrew word 'almah' in Isaiah 7:14 and in Matthew 1:23, the Greek word 'parthenos'? This is a two-part question; that will be the first."

Professor Orlinsky responded immediately by quipping, "That's a three-part lecture." The professor spent a few moments in supplying the context of Isaiah 7:14 in regard to Isaiah, the prophet, and to Ahaz, the king of Judah. He detailed something of the crucial danger that frightened and besieged Judah faced from the smoking firebrands of Rezin and Pekah, kings respectively of Syria and Israel or the Northern Kingdom, and what God planned as proffered aid. Then he dealt briefly with *almah*, the son and the sign in Isaiah 7:14. Quite specifically the

Jewish Professor detailed how the RSV came to inject "young woman" in the place of the virginal rendering and to drop the virgin to footnote status. He stated that anybody who desired could read the alternative which they placed in the footnote and not what they preferred for the actual text. He stated that the Committee preferred the "young woman" rendering over virgin. This was not surprising in the view of the fact that is what they used initially and have not changed in more than a quarter of a century in any subsequent edition! Again he called the RSV "the official Bible of the liberal Protestant community in this country." It was rather revealing that he could not remember whether the Hebrew text demanded *A* before or *THE* before *almah*. The definite article belongs in Isaiah 7:14. Some of us who have never tampered with this verse do not have any trouble remembering whether the indefinite or the definite article attaches to *almah* in the Hebrew text. Isaiah spoke of *THE* virgin.

Professor Orlinsky then went into a long discussion about the uproar that this change created in the religious community and the various persecutions the committee endured as a result.

Professor Orlinsky next denied that the *almah* and her conceived child have any future reference at all. He affirmed that she was very much pregnant at the initial giving of the prophecy and perhaps was already in her seventh, eighth or even her ninth month of expectancy right then. In fact he says she "is good and pregnant already and is 'about to bear.'"

He denies that there is any virginity at all in the term *almah*. Furthermore he says, "There is no element of chastity in there at all." He next associates the term with a naughty past. He says, "We now have the word *ALMAH*, by the way, also in Canaanite

literature, used as a parallel to prostitute."

Pertaining to the word *OTH*, Hebrew word translated sign in Isaiah 7:14, he said, "Now, on the basis of the Hebrew, there isn't the slightest evidence of any kind that, philologically, anything there involves any kind of a miracle or anything out of the ordinary, or that a virgin was involved, or that it's a future action of becoming pregnant or anything."

Professor Orlinsky next denies any connection between *parthenos* in classical Greek and virginity. He says that "parthenos does not mean virgin in classical Greek. Parthenos means 'young woman.'" By the time he finished with *parthenos* he had her a temple prostitute and her male offspring as a bastard. He says, "As a matter of fact, in normal classical Greek, if you want to refer to a boy as a bastard, one who is born out of wedlock, of a relationship that a woman gave birth because of an affair she had, not with her husband, but somebody else, you refer to the boy as a parthenios. The parthenios, the one who is born from a parthenos."

By the time he concluded his answer he had denied that *almah* meant virgin; he had denied any virginal tone to the term *parthenos*; he claimed that political power imposed on the term *parthenos* its virginal aspects; he claimed that *parthenos* was a temple prostitute and her offspring by another other than her husband was simply a bastard. He denied any predictive or future aspects to the passage in Isaiah 7:14. He denied that *OTH* has any supernatural connections at all. He said that the new Jewish translation, soon to be off the press, will render Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, the young woman has conceived or is pregnant and is about to bear." Will

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble Men, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness — Acts 26:25

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Let Us Face Our Nineveh

Jonah was a prophet and, also, the author of the book that bears his name. The historical events of this book took place about 800 years before our Lord lived on this earth. The believer in Christ and the Bible accepts the book of Jonah as a historical fact and not a myth or a parable. There are many great lessons one can learn from a careful study of this wonderful book.



MICHAEL D. STONE

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, a city of 120,000 souls (Jonah 4:11). He was to preach the gospel to these people. Jonah, at first, did not go; however, after his incident with the great fish, he later went. Have you ever wondered why he did not go the first time God told him to go? I have, and I shall suggest an answer to that question.

I submit, first of all, that it was not because of the distance. Nineveh was located in Assyria. It was the capital of Assyria. This was northeast of his home in the village of Gath-hepher in the tribe of Zebulun. After God told him to go to Nineveh, he started on a longer journey in the opposite direction. He went southwest to Joppa where he caught a boat going to Tarshish. Tarshish may have been Spain; however, we do not know. Wherever it was, it represented to Jonah a place of ease, of doing as he pleased, of having his own way.

Secondly, perhaps, he did not want to go because he was full of prejudice.

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The Twelve Or One Hundred Twenty

When the Holy Ghost descended upon the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), did he descend upon the twelve apostles or upon the one hundred twenty disciples? A large number of those in the denominational world say it was upon the one hundred twenty. But as is true concerning so many things believed by those in the denominational world, there is absolutely no basis for it; and the Bible is abundantly clear to the contrary. Please observe the following conclusive arguments which show that the Holy Ghost fell upon the twelve apostles only on Pentecost day.



In the first place, the antecedent of the pronouns *they* and *them* (used seven times in Acts 2:1-4), is the plural noun *apostles* in Acts 1-26. A simple rule of grammar states that a pronoun refers to its nearest possible antecedent. The noun *apostles* is the nearest noun which agrees with the pronouns *they* and *them* in number and in gender. The nearest mention of the one hundred twenty is twelve verses before as *they* of Acts 2:1; the apostles are mentioned in the verse immediately preceding. The most natural conclusion would be, therefore, that the Holy Ghost came upon the twelve apostles.

In the second place, Acts 2:14 says

that Peter stood up "with the eleven. Note, it does not say that Peter stood up with the one hundred nineteen, but with the eleven. Now, if what took place on this occasion actually took place in connection with the one hundred twenty, why does the inspired record plainly say that Peter stood up with the eleven?"

In the third place, those who were "pricked in their heart" as a result of the preaching done on that occasion, asked the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" of Peter and the rest of the apostles (verse 38). Now that seems quite strange, if the Holy Ghost had fallen on the one hundred twenty disciples. Why, if such be the case, did these people address their question to the apostles only? In fact, we might ask, if the Holy Ghost had fallen on the one hundred twenty, then how did those of the multitude which had assembled know which ones were the apostles, and which ones were not, so that they could address their question to the apostles?

Aside from these verses in Acts 2, there is one in the first chapter of Acts which shows who was to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Speaking to the apostles (Acts 1:2), Jesus said, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (verse 5). There is no promise anywhere that the one hundred twenty would ever be baptized with the Holy Ghost. The apostles were promised the baptism of the Holy Ghost and they are the ones who received it in Acts 2.

Will You Go?

Garland M. Robinson

The kingdom of Christ, as spoken of in the scriptures, is a universal kingdom. Isaiah, speaking of it in prophecy, said: "...the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nation shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2). It is world wide, universal! But how is it that all nations saw God "high and lifted up" sitting upon a throne. And he heard "the voice of the Lord, saying, 'whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'" Isaiah answered and said, "here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:1,8).

The call of the great commission of Jesus our Lord is plan: "go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). Of course, this charge was given to his apostles, but was also given to us in the fact that they were to teach "them to observe all things" whatsoever Jesus had commanded them. But how man today are saying, "here am I, send me?"

The Holy Spirit has admonished us by saying, "be not conformed to this world:

but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2a).

Yet many times soldiers of the cross get involved in the affairs of this life. Have you sung the hymn, "Lord, Send Me?" Have you ever stopped to think what you are saying? Look at the song, "There is much to do, there's work on every hand, Hark! the cry for help comes ringing through the land; Jesus calls for reapers. I must active be, What wilt thou, O Master? here am I, send me."

Mourning souls are distressed; the only rest they can find is in Jesus. Hung'ring souls cry aloud for bread, yet a feast is free. Will these people hear? "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few" (Luke 10:2). Why? Because so few are saying, "here am I, send me." Will you accept that challenge? Continual blessings are your now and forever if you will go, for Jesus said, "and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:20b). — Route 16, Tipton Station Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37920.

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Why is the third Person of the godhead sometimes called 'the Holy Ghost,' and at other times, the 'Holy Spirit'?"

The variation, "Holy Spirit," and "Holy Ghost," appears in the King James' Version, but not in the American Standard Translation, where the Greek phrase *to angion pneuma* is uniformly rendered the "Holy Spirit." The word "ghost," when the King James' Version appeared, in 1611 A.D., conveyed much the same significance as the word "spirit" does today. The word "ghost," is derived from the anglo-saxon *gast*, which meant spirit, soul or seat of intelligence. Inasmuch as one of its meanings was *spirit*, it adequately

translated the Greek word *pneuma*, spirit. The King James' translators again and again so rendered the word in those passages where the reference is to the immortal nature of man (Matt. 27:50; Acts 5:10; see also Gen. 49:33; Job 10:18; Jer. 15:9). By 1901, however, when the American Standard Translation was made, the word "ghost," had lost its earlier meaning and had acquired the significance of a spook or specter, thus no longer indicating the significance of the Greek word for spirit (*pneuma*).

Meantime, the word "spirit," which earlier had signified *breath*, and then life (from the Latin *spiritus*, breath), had come to mean that part of man not subject to death—the immortal nature, and it thus found its way into

the American Standard Version. Any "argument" that attempts a distinction between the phrases, "Holy Ghost," and "Holy Spirit,"—and such on occasion has been made—is absurd, in view of the fact that both phrases are translated from the same Greek phrase. Indeed, in the King James' Version of John 7:39, both terms appear, yet both are translated from the Greek word *pneuma*: "But this spake he of the Spirit (*pneuma*), which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost (*pneuma*) was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." This indicates the absurdity of the claim today made by some Holiness sects that one can have the Holy Spirit, and later "get" the Holy Ghost!

Jesus' Use Of The Scriptures

Should we use book, chapter, and verse preaching? Is it right to back up what we say with scripture? Must our message be in harmony with the word of God? The best way to answer these questions is to see how the Son of God used the scriptures.



RAY HAWK

Jesus was born into a Jewish family. Therefore he would have been taught the scriptures from a youth even as Timothy was (2 Tim. 3:15). Mary, the mother of Jesus uttered no less than twenty-three passages of the Psalms in Luke 1:46-55. This indicates that she knew the scriptures. Her knowledge would have been passed on to Jesus. No doubt this was one reason he was capable at the age of twelve to amaze the temple teachers (Luke 2:47). We read that "he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read" (Luke 4:16). It was Jesus' habit to attend the synagogue and to read the scriptures.

In Matt. 4:1-10 Jesus went into the wilderness and was tempted of the devil. Each time the devil would tempt him Jesus would answer the temptation with, "It is written" (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). Temptation is answered by one's knowing the Bible and applying its precepts to his life. Jesus knew the scriptures well enough that he went directly to the passage best suited for the temptation at hand. So must we. When the devil used scripture himself to deceive, Jesus showed the devil's perversion of that scripture by using another (Matt. 4:6, 7). Those who try to tempt us by perverting the scriptures and leading us astray must be met with scripture! It is interesting to note just here that although the Old Testament of Jesus' day was not divided into chapters and verses, Jesus knew where each verse was found. Since it is easier for us

to find things today with our chapters and verse division of the Bible, we should take advantage of this and remember where things are found so we can use the Bible to aid us in our daily living.

In Matt. 21:23-25 Jesus was confronted by the chief priests and elders who asked him, "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" Jesus' classic reply was, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" They refused to give him an answer, for Jesus actually left them none. If they admitted John's baptism was from heaven then he would ask why they rejected it. If they said from men, the crowd would mob them because they believed John was a prophet. Jesus' reply to them was "Did ye never read in the scriptures...?" (Matt. 21:42). Jesus' authority was from God and he used the scriptures to establish that fact.

When Jesus cleaned the temple, he began his work with these words, "It is written..." (Matt. 21:13). When the priests and scribes asked him about the cleansing of the temple and why the people were praising his entrance into the city, his reply was, "Yea; have ye never read...?" (Matt. 21:16). In the twenty-second chapter the Sadducees asked Jesus a question they thought he could not answer. He disappointed them by replying, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures..." (Matt. 22:23-29).

When the crowd came to take Jesus at the garden he replied, "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled" (Matt. 26:56). He used the scriptures as his authority and we may do no less!

Jesus had a confrontation with the Pharisees who said, "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day." The disciples had broken the traditions of the Jews, not the Law of Moses. Jesus proved this WITH SCRIPTURE when he replied, "Have ye not read what David did...?" How we need to do the same. Many need to READ what the SCRIPTURES say rather than give their opinion! (Matt. 12:1-9).

Again, in a discussion with the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus was asked, "Why do

thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Jesus' reply was, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying... Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying..." (Matt. 15:1-9).

Jesus used the scriptures to answer man made tradition. If we are to be effective today in laying aside human tradition, we must go to the scriptures.

Jesus used the scriptures when he began his ministry and continued to do so as it was being brought to an end. Since the Son of God so used the scriptures to teach, defend himself, and put others who were in error to silence, so must we. He is our example (1 Pet. 2:21). — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Florida 32506.

Let Us Face Our Nineveh

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This may have had something to do with his decision to flee. The Assyrians were a people who for the most part did not get along at all with Israel. Prejudice today against some people and races of people hinders us in being as effective as we could and should be in the service of our Lord.

It seems to me the real reason for his not going was because his heart was not right. He had no love or concern for those people in Nineveh. A lot of evangelism is not accomplished today for this very reason. Jonah did finally go after God caused him to be three days and nights in the belly of the fish. After he went and preached in Nineveh, the entire city heard him and repented before God.

God has commanded you and me to go to our "Nineveh" and preach the gospel to them. Are we fulfilling our responsibility? I learn from the book of Jonah that life is more than pleasure. It is purpose and duty. Let us face our Nineveh! — 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101.

Observations From Orlinsky

Continued from page 1

such a poisonous rendering have its defenders among us? Again he affirmed that there is "no future action at all" in Isaiah 7:14. He closes with the observation that the RSV, the official Catholic translation of the Bible and the official Jewish translation of the Bible all three "recognize that the word in question means young woman and not virgin." There you have his modernism spelled out in crystal clear and unmistakable terms.

If I have any discerning powers at all, then here are the consequences of the Hebrew Professor's modernistic and infidelic views. (1) Almah does not mean virgin. (2) Parthenos does not mean virgin. (3) Hence, there is no virgin birth in the Bible. (4) There is no predictive prophecy in Isaiah 7:14. (5) The woman of Isaiah 7:14 was already pregnant and was about ready to bear her child. (6) There is nothing supernatural or miraculous about the Hebrew word OTH in Isaiah 7:14 which

is translated as sign in our English versions. (7) Isaiah did not have his eye fixed on a virgin and a virgin-born son at some indefinite time in the future. (8) The angel who spoke to Joseph in Matthew 1:22-23 lied when he connected Isaiah 7:14 with what was about to happen to Joseph's espoused but not yet his official wife-Mary-in Bethlehem. (9) Matthew lied when he penned Matthew 1:22-23 as a minute and straight-line fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. (10) The Spirit of truth became the Spirit of falsehood in prompting Matthew to record these words in Matthew 1:22-23. (11) God the Father and Christ the Son practiced falsehood in prompting the Holy Spirit to record Matthew 1:22-23. (12) There is no virgin-born prophecy in the Old Testament. (13) Mary was neither a virgin at Jesus' conception nor at his birth. (14) Mary was with child either by Joseph or by some unnamed and unknown man. (15) Jesus Christ was not virgin-conceived.

(16) Jesus Christ was not virgin-born. (17) We have no Son of God in Jesus of Nazareth. (18) We have no Saviour or Redeemer in the Galilean Prophet. (19) Unless Jesus Christ is virgin-born and thus a Saviour there is neither redemption for the Jew nor salvation for the Gentile. (20) The virgin birth doctrine has been totally, TOTALLY MIND YOU, destroyed from our beloved Bible. (21) The RSV can never, never extirpate itself from the inexcusable position of paving a portion of the very groundwork for the destruction of this cardinal concept of the Bible. The chickens have now come home to roost as far as the RSV of the liberal Protestant community is concerned. Why that THING has ever had one SINGLE, SOLITARY defender among us is more than I can fathom. Yet some of our best known preachers and college professors have favored it with their recommendation. Toward this I say, shame, Shame, SHAME!!!

The Name

When the Bible speaks of doing something in the name of Jesus Christ, what does it mean? Many people have taken the phrase "in the name of Christ" to mean that whatever act one performs, the words "in the name of Christ" must be spoken in order for said act to be scriptural. Is this doctrine true? No! Why? When a



Jerry T. Bramlett

person performs an act in the name of Christ it is by the authority of Jesus Christ. Let us now study some verses to help explain the meaning of the phrase "in the name of Jesus Christ".

Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). If a person believes one is saved at the point of faith then is baptized, he would contend that baptism is because he has already been saved. One could speak the words "in the name of Jesus Christ" a thousand times, and yet it would not make this baptism scriptural. Being baptized by the authority of Christ is being baptized "for the remission of sins". Thus Peter says baptism is in the name of or by the authority of Jesus Christ, and no other baptism would be scriptural.

There are many doctrines taught contrary to God's Word that are said to be "in the name of Jesus." According to those who believe such teaching these doctrines are true, not because the Bible teaches them, but because of the words being spoken "in the name of Jesus". When Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), he meant by the authority of Christ. How do I know this is what Peter meant? If every person believed that salvation is only by the authority of Christ, then no one would accept any teaching that could not be supported by a "thus saith the Lord". To realize there is none other name

or authority would eliminate all human teaching on salvation. In this manner there could be religious unity; for all people would only practice what they had authority for from God's Word.

Colossians Chapter three, verse seventeen is a pet verse used by those who teach that one must speak the words "in the name of Jesus". Suppose that for the Lord's Supper instead of using the fruit of vine, Coca Cola is substituted and the one praying should pray using the words "in the name of Jesus". Would the words spoken make the element in the Lord's Supper scriptural? If you partake of the Lord's Supper by the authority of "the

Lord Jesus" you will have the right element. When Paul said, "and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." he is saying that we should do so by the Lord authority.

If whatever we do in religion we do by the authority of Jesus Christ, then we will always have the right religious name "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, all authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). Are you following the authority of Christ? — P.O. Box 118, Parrish, Al 35580.

If Any Man Be In Christ

W. C. QUILLEN

The expression "in Christ" is frequently found in the New Testament, and broad distinctions are made between those who are in Christ and those who are not in Christ. Our of Christ men are "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

"No hope, and without God!" What an awful condition. But such is the picture painted by inspiration divine of every accountable person who is not in Christ. Entering into Christ erases this ugly scene, and replaces it with a beautiful portrait.

"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).

Upon entering into Christ, one is not a new creature in physical form or features. The change is not in the flesh, but in the spirit which manifests itself in physical behavior. Lustful works of the flesh are put away and the fruit of the Spirit becomes evident.

One is not a new creature in that he is given physical strength that he did not have before; but spiritual strength and moral courage which he receives from Christ by faith in His Word (Rom. 8:37; Phil. 4:13).

Nor is one a new creature in that he is given miraculous powers which destroy all temptations and inclinations to sin, or to live

above sin. Neither does his being a new creature give one a license to commit sins without condemnation. Such would betray the fact that he is not a new creature in Christ, but is of the devil (I Jno. 3:8), living the same old life as before.

In Christ one is a new creature because he has new thoughts, new affections, new desires, new aspirations, new aims, new purposes, new resolutions, new goals, new environment, new relationships, new hope. "All things are become new." He is born anew, born again from above of water and the Spirit (Jno. 3:3-8). He has left the world of sin and has been added to the church of Christ (Act. 2:36-47). The Lord has saved him "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5). Christ who loves him has sanctified and cleansed him with the washing of water by the word; washed him from his sins by his own blood (Eph. 5:26; Rev. 1:5).

"God hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his own dear Son; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14).

However, if one is not in Christ, he is not a new creature, and none of these blessings are his.—P. O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee 38464.



Words Of Truth

"I am . . .
the Words of

cus; but speak forth
ess."

— Acts 26:25

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NUMBER 35

Observations From Orlinsky

(No. 4)

In three previous articles I have depicted some of the observations that Professor Harry M. Orlinsky of Hebrew Union - University and the oldest living translator of the RSV made regarding Bible translations and a host of other matters. The last article in particular set forth his infidelic views relative to the great and imperative virgin birth doctrine of Jesus Christ. Up-to-date modernism now denies that the virgin birth can be found in either of the Hebrew words *almah* or *bethulah* or in the Greek term *parthenos*. If the virgin birth cannot be found in Biblical words, then the doctrine is not found in the Bible-period. We have lingered long enough and sadly enough at the feet of the Jewish infidel. In this fourth and final segment of our study I desire that we hear from some real Bible scholars both among us and those not among us and yet who believe in the virgin birth of our Saviour.

R.C. Foster was an internationally recognized Bible scholar in his day. He belonged to the Christian church. He was a fierce foe of the modernistic RSV that Orlinsky and his infidelic colleagues spawned upon the world of Bible readers in 1952. In Foster's classic work, *STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST*, he devotes Chapter Six to The Virgin Birth. He quotes Isaiah 7:14 and in an early section deals with the meaning of *almah*. He says, "But it is certain that the word does not mean virgin in this passage and that the full significance of this prophecy, like many



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

others of the Old Testament, was not understood at the time it was spoken. Note, as to the meaning of the word, that Matthew affirms it is a prophecy of the virgin birth; the other six times *almah* is used in the Old Testament it does mean virgin; the Jewish scholars who translated the Septuagint version of the Old Testament in 285 B.C. rendered *ALMAH* (Isa. 7:14) by the Greek word *PARTHENOS* which can only mean virgin. Professor Willis Beecher says: "There is no trace of its use to denote any other than a virgin." Martin Luther declared: "If a Jew or Christian can prove to me that in any passage of scripture *almah* means a married woman, I will give him 100 florins, although God alone knows where I may find them." James Orr in his great book *THE VIRGIN BIRTH* quotes Luther and adds the significant comment that the 100 florins have never yet been claimed" (pp. 246-247). Foster had real Bible scholarship behind these sage statements. He was writing as a believer in and a defender of the virgin birth-not an infidel and a blasphemer toward such, as was true with Professor Orlinsky in his West Coast speech in January of 1978.

Edward J. Young is a Bible scholar of first and foremost caliber. He wrote a three volume commentary on Isaiah. In Volume I he deals with the word *almah* and says on pages 288-289; "In the light of these considerations it appears that Isaiah's choice of *almah* was deliberate. It seems to be the only word in the language which unequivocally signifies an unmarried woman. No other available Hebrew word would clearly indicate that the one whom he designates was unmarried. Consequently, no other word would have been suitable for fulfilling the requirements of the sign such as the context demanded. None of these other words would have pointed to an unusual birth. Only

almah makes clear that the mother was unmarried.

If, however, the mother is an unmarried woman, a question arises. Was the child illegitimate or not? If the child were illegitimate, would the birth be a sign? The whole context, indeed the whole Biblical context, rules this out. On the other hand, if the mother were a good woman, then the birth was out of the ordinary, an unusual birth. The mother is both unmarried and a good woman. When this fact is understood, it becomes apparent that in all history there is only one of whom this can be predicated, namely, Mary, the mother of the Lord."

Why should Young have the truth on this passage when so many of our college professors and preachers have missed it a country mile and then some? Such is significantly strange to say the least!!

The magnificent McGarvey wrote, "When the people of Isaiah's time saw the fulfillment of part of the prediction they should have looked forward with confidence to the fulfillment of the remainder; and so should the succeeding generations of the Jew down to the time of Jesus. Had they done so they would have been more ready to believe the story here recited by Matthew" (*COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW AND MARK* pp. 24-25).

In the *GOSPEL ADVOCATE*, May 15, 1941, the late and lamented H. Leo Boles wrote on *MODERNISM-VIRGIN BIRTH*. He wrote: "The prophecy which begins with Isaiah 7:14 is not finished until the close of Isa. 9:6. We know that Isa. 9:6 refers to Christ as is evident from Matthew 4:14-15." Brother Boles considered it modernism to deny that Isaiah 7:14 is a prediction of Christ's virgin birth and did not hesitate to label such advocates as modernists.

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it scriptural for a congregation to hum while partaking of the Lord's Supper?"

It is not scriptural for a congregation to engage in humming during the Lord's supper, not at any other time during public services. Humming is not an acceptable substitute for singing, and is wholly unauthorized in New Testament worship. (1) It springs from improper motives. People who engage therein do so for the express purpose of producing an emotional situation which they prefer to the Lord's own arrangement. Those who thus do are more interested in aesthetics (which pleases them), than in following the New Testament (which pleases God). The desire for such innovations evidences an abandonment of any real desire to do exactly what God says, for the reason that he says it. In so doing, exactly what God says, for the reason that he says it. In so doing, they follow their own wills, and not the will of God.

(2) It is utterly without divine sanction. There is no hint of such practice in the records of the worship of the New Testament church, and it is

a human device intruded into divine service, the design of which is to please man, and not God. If humming may be engaged in without his approval, what about whistling and handclapping? Some Pentecostal groups find the clapping of their hands a very effective and potent device in creating volatile and emotional situations in their services. If it is in order for each group to determine the aesthetic level of its services, on what ground may any such devices to be excluded?

(3) The divine will is clearly and unequivocally expressed in these areas. Paul wrote, "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19); "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:16, 17). "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the

understanding also" (I Cor. 14:15). Singing is thus specifically enjoined; to sing in the meaning of the word here used (*aduo*) involves lyrical participation (cf. Thayer), whereas, humming is "to sing with closed lips and without articulating" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary); the obligation which these passages set out requires words; therefore, it is not possible to discharge the duty they enjoin by humming.

(4) In our singing, we are commanded

(4) In our singing, we are commanded to participate in praise which enables us to *speak*, to *teach*, and to *admonish*; none of these duties is possible in the exercise of humming; therefore, humming, in our worship, is wrong. To add humming to the observance of the Lord's supper is to compound the error, such being wholly unauthorized. There is as much justification for the addition of instrumental music to the observance of the Supper as there is for humming. Neither has New Testament sanction, and both ought and must be vigorously opposed if we are to maintain a pure faith and a faultless practice.

God Is Dying

MARK BASS

You are probably wondering just what kind of heretic would make such a blasphemous statement. So, before going any further, let me clarify. I am not referring to the literal death of God, nor am I implying that God is going out of existence. Anyone with an ounce of Bible knowledge could show the fallacy of such an idea. David wrote: "But the Lord shall endure forever" (Psalms 9:7). God proclaimed: "I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever" (Deut. 32:40).

I use the phrase, "God is dying," in another sense: I refer to the idea that God is dying in OUR LIVES. Does this statement shock you? It should. It seems that God is slowly slipping from our grasp. Is it because God is moving? No, Malachi 3:6 tells us that God doesn't change. But the tragedy of it all is that most people don't even realize what's happening; and those who do don't seem to care.

There was a time in history when people lived their Christianity; they lived it seven days a week. In the second chapter of Acts we read concerning the early Christians: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers...And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple..." (Acts 2:42, 46). But times have changed; the church is full of tendertoed, fair-weather Christians. These are the ones who are faithful as long as no one offends them or says anything about the way they are living. They are ever so faithful, as long as everything is going well; but at the first sign of trouble they draw back

into their worldly shell.

Then there are those I like to call our "weekend warriors." In II Timothy chapter 4 Paul refers to Christianity as being a warfare. And so it is. Our battle with Satan is never ending; it is continuous! But so many "Christian Soldiers" go A.W.O.L. from God every Monday morning. They put on the whole armour of God, but only on Sundays. As soon as church is over, their breastplate of righteousness is hung in the closet, their shield of faith is stood in a corner along with the helmet of salvation. As for their sword of the spirit, it's hung on a mantle or some other rather obvious place. They want everyone to know of their righteousness. At church they are the most righteous people alive. Oh, they are so dedicated...until they get home. Then they become as worldly as the next fellow. In fact, one would never even know

they were Christians unless they told him so.

These two groups of people can hurt the church more than all the infidels in the world. They tend to drag the entire congregation down with them. Of course, this process takes place over a period of months or even years. In fact, the change is so gradual that it is rarely noticed. Brethren if we don't wake up we're going to find ourselves facing the reality that God is dying in all OUR LIVES! When this happens our worship to God will only be a mockery, a poor facsimile of the real thing. We are to glorify God seven days a week. We are to live as Christlike as we possibly can all of the time. Our Christianity is not a suit we can put on or take off at our convenience. It's a full time occupation. Unless we fully discharge our responsibilities we will live to regret it. — P.O. Box 84, Rives, TN 38253.

Cancellation Announced

MARK SAIN

It is with much regret that we must announce the cancellation of the Gus Nichols Bible Workshop. We are compelled to make this unpleasant decision due to circumstances that no one could have foreseen or avoided.

We are soliciting your help in communicating this message to all who

may be affected by this announcement. If you are in an editorial position, would you please consider running it as a news release item, so that the most amount of people possible may receive this important news. — Box 1072, Enterprise, Alabama 36330.

Observations From Orlinsky

Continued from page 1

TARY, 1973, the brilliant Thomas B. Warren wrote: "That this prophecy (Isaiah 7:14-RRT) referred to the birth of Jesus Christ of the virgin Mary is very clear both from the text here and from the New Testament account in Matthew 1:15-18" (p. 11). Brother Warren then quotes Alan E. Highers as saying, "Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would conceive and would bear a son whose name would be Immanuel, meaning 'God with us.' Matthew quoted that statement of Isaiah, saying it was fulfilled in the birth of Christ" (Ibid., p. 11).

In a series of lectures on the Versions at Gates, Tennessee, April 10-12, 1978, the scholarly Noel Merideth said in regard to Isaiah 7:14: "This is a straight-line prediction of the virgin birth of Christ. In Matthew 1:23 this is quoted and applied by an inspired writer - Matthew - to Jesus Christ." He said Matthew settles this issue once and for all!

The courageous and competent Wayne Jackson has well written: "Some have contended that the word *almah* is mistranslated 'virgin,' whereas it really means only 'a young woman.' The truth is, *almah* is the only word in the Old Testament that is consistently used of a virgin; it never refers to anything else. It is true that another word, *bethulah*, is also rendered virgin, but *bethulah* is used of a married woman in Joel 1:8, and Prof. Solomon Birhbaum declares that *bethulah* is used in Jeremiah 18:13 'in a state of marriage relation ship with Jehovah, from whom she had gone astray. Here is a 'wife' who has left or lost her husband, and is yet called a *bethulah*."

Almah is the feminine of *elem* which occurs twice in the Old Testament. In 1 Samuel 17:56 Saul referred to David as an *elem*. The latter had just returned from fighting Goliath and was unmarried. After he married Michal, he was never again called *elem*...When all has been said about *almah*, though we ought to let Matthew settle the matter for us. He makes it perfectly clear (to those who refuse to let unbelievers do their interpreting for them) that Isaiah definitely had a virgin in mind." (THE LIVING MESSAGES OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, editors, Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren, pp. 252-253).

The brilliant and ever scholarly Guy N. Woods has said 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 in which *almah* (translated 'virgin' in Isaiah 7:14) appears-reveals that the term is never applied to a married woman, never designates a non-virgin, never alludes to an impure woman.. 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" (GOSPEL ADVOCATE, Vol. CXV, Number 8, February 22, 1973). Toward this remarkable statement I add an enthusiastic Amen and AMEN!!

In the great book THE LIVING MESSAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, Brother Woods has an exceedingly fine chapter dealing entirely with Isaiah 7:14. In its marvelous contents he refutes, clearly and concisely the RSV as a reliable Bible. He shows that "young woman" is an inaccurate and dangerous rendering. He show that *almah* does not mean anything but virgin and he present a clarion challenge for our school to remain true to their original calling along these lines. He calls upon advocates of academic freedom to practice academic HONESTY.

I have heard Brother Goodpasture tell a number of times how he heard the infidel Clarence Darrow speak in Atlanta many years ago. Relative to Mary and the Virgin Birth account the arrogant agnostic said it was just a case of a Jewish girl who got herself in trouble and that this was the best story she could concoct. Will someone tell me wherein Orlinsky's attitude toward Mary and Jesus differs one particle from Darrow's harangue? Again will someone tell me why a man like Harry M. Orlinsky was ever chosen to be on a Biblical translational committee? In the third and final place, will someone tell me why our brethren endorse what a Jewish infidel consistently calls the "liberal official Bible" of Protestants? - P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Family Problems

Continued from page 2

cal body of believers.

Please pardon the personal reference, but, the other day, a dear sister in Christ was expressing her love to this writer when she said, "You seem like kin to us." She really didn't know how much truth was in that statement. The passage of scripture found in Eph. 4:32 came to mind which reads: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you." Please observe that the first three letters of the word "kind" spells 'kin'. The Holy Spirit teaches that all those who have been "baptized into Christ" are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26, 27). Since we are all "children of God" that makes us brothers and sisters, spiritually speaking. We constitute the "family" of God one earth (Eph. 3:15). The Hebrew writer declared that we are the house of God (Heb. 3:6). The apostle Paul informs us that "the house of God" is "the church of the living God..." (I Tim. 3:15). This spiritual blood relation in Christ should be of the closest nature ever known to mortal men.

What if Abraham had gone among the heathen and spread the news about the

problems existing between the herdsmen of his nephew Lot and his own herdsmen. Somehow, we cannot contemplate this great man of faith being guilty of doing such a thing. Rather, we remember the beautiful and meaningful words of Abraham as he endeavored to solve the matter: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren" (Gen. 13:8). Oh how we need to

imitate this Christ-like attitude today as family members in the house of God.

We need to think more of the church as being our family, consisting of our brothers and sisters. If problems arise, the family should solve the same with the help of God's word, good brethren and good judgment. It is of no business whatsoever of the world—East Hart Avenue, Opp, Al 36467.

Honesty Pays

Continued from Page 2

came in and asked for a chicken. He reached down and pulled his last chicken out of the cooler and placed it on the scale. When she said she wanted a little larger one, he simply put it back into the cooler, brought it out, and placed it on the scales again and quoted a heavier weight. Imagine his embarrassment when the lady said, "I'll take both of them."

Listen to the Scriptures: "Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts" (Psalms

101:6). "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Romans 12:17). "wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor" (Ephesians 4:25). Paul admonishes in Philippians 4:8 that we are to think upon whatsoever things are true; and John warns in Revelation 21:8 that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." — Highway 71 North Bentonville, Ark. 72712.



Words Of Truth

stus; but speak forth
ess."

— Acts 26:25

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NUMBER 36

Methuselah's Age

What does one do when he is confronted by a problem which suggests a disagreement between historical statements recorded in the Bible and current "scientific" interpretations of historical data. Well, there are several approaches that may be taken. First, one may recognize that the Bible, being inspired as the Word of God, is absolutely correct in its historical statements and therefore any disagreements it may have with "science" are due either to the limitations of the scientific information or to a misinterpretation of the available data. If one is sure that he has correctly ascertained the Biblical position on a subject, he will stay with what the Scriptures say regardless of the claims to the contrary. Secondly, one may simply dismiss the Bible as a patchwork of mythology and do homage to infidel "scientists" who are forever seeking explanations which will undermine the divine record of the origin of things. Such a stance is thoroughly saturated with the spirit of absolute rebellion against the Creator and Sovereign of man. Then, there is a third posture. It is the anemic lukewarmness of pseudo-intellectual compromise. This is the attitude of those who vocally profess their confidence in the integrity of the Bible but who constantly betray it. Whenever such people read the Scriptures they do so with an eye cast back over their shoulder to see if "science" agrees; and whenever "science" asserts that which is different from what the Bible says, in desperation they are ready to append, delete, stretch or constrict the sacred narrative to make it conform to the latest notions of the "scientific community." Such a disposition is thoroughly reprehensible and evinces a pitifully sick faith.



WAYNE JACKSON

compromise is seen in an article entitled "The Question of Methuselah" which appeared in the June 1978 issue of the *Does God Exist?* bulletin. The article was authored by the bulletin's editor, John Clayton, of South Bend, Indiana. Brother Clayton, whose writings frequently contain compromising error, wrote:

"One of the most frequently asked questions that we receive in our lecture series is 'How did men live so long during early Biblical times?' The Bible indicates ages of 969, 950, etc., years for early men. From a scientific standpoint we cannot verify this figure. By studying the bones of the oldest of men we get ages of ten to thirty-five years usually, and only rarely an age as high as fifty."

It is important to notice at this point that the foregoing paragraph reveals that brother Clayton is obsessed with the opinions of science; for him, the question is not: Does the Bible affirm it?, but: Can science confirm it?! If the latter query is answered negatively, then exegetical surgery must be performed upon the sacred text.

In his article, Clayton outlines several possibilities for explaining the great ages of men in the patriarchal world. First, he suggests that God could have "miraculously changed man's life expectancy." However, he says "since no skeptic would accept" such a view, other possibilities should be considered. Secondly, he surveys the view held by many creationists which suggests that human longevity was greatly curtailed by environmental changes resulting from the cataclysmic flood of Noah's day. It is a fact that the ages of the patriarchs sharply declined after the flood. Again, though, he concludes that this view "is an unacceptable explanation" since, according to him, "there is absolutely no evidence" of such an environmental change "in the rocks, or in the atmosphere." Let us pause here to observe that even from a scientific point of view, brother Clayton is grossly mistaken here. There is much evidence to indicate that vast environmental changes occurred in ancient

times. Of the many examples which could be cited, only a few will be mentioned: (1) In the frozen north of our own continent, where little vegetation survives today, discoveries have been made of fossilized palm trees, banana trees, magnolias, breadfruit, grape vines, etc. Clearly, this reveals there has been a dramatic climatic change at some point in the past. (2) Coal is the end product of vast quantities of decayed plant life. Where great coal deposits exist, therefore, there must at one time have been luxuriant vegetation. Though the South Pole region of Antarctica is void of such growth today, the Byrd expedition of some years back discovered a whole mountain of coal there! (3) Fossilized corals have been found in the waters of Alaska. Since "corals can not live in water colder than 68 or 70 degrees" this suggests that these icy waters "were once warm like those now in the tropics" (G. M. Price, *God's Two Books*, p. 126).

Thirdly, brother Clayton mentions that some have concluded that "environmental pollution" precipitated a shortening of man's years. But again, he opines that this is in "not a viable answer."

Finally, he declares:

"The guess that appeals to this writer is that the methods of measuring age are not the same today as they were when men lived so long. We know that some primitive people measure their age not from the time of their birth, but from the time they produce offspring or are accepted as an adult by the community in which they live. We also know that many cultures use the moon as a measure of age (such as many American Indian tribes). If Methuselah were measured on such a system his age would be 80 years, plus the time till he became a father. This doesn't change anything as he would still be phenomenally old - especially for the day in which he lived, but it would give a modern comprehension of how such an

A notable example of this spirit of

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Words Of Truth

... am not man most noble ...
 ... but speak forth the words of
 ... truth and soberness ...
 Acts 20:35

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Modern Times and Modest Apparel

We are aware of the fact that it is neither fashionable nor popular to speak out against women's wearing shorts; and some will even say that those who so speak are evil-minded for even thinking that a young lady in scanty attire might incite impure thoughts in anyone except the very vilest reprobate. Since we have never competed in any



BOBBY DUNCAN

fashion or popularity contests, and since we are not intimidated by accusations of the above-mentioned sort, we think it in order from time to time to remind Christians of the teaching of the Bible along this line.

It is worthy of note that the instruction about "modest apparel" in I Timothy 2:9 is directed toward women. The remarks made by the apostle in I Peter 3:3 concern themselves with the adorning of women. And it was a woman who might become the object of a lustful look in the statement of our Lord recorded in Matthew 5:28.

We are living in a time when some have

convinced themselves that there is no longer any such thing as either immodest apparel or a lustful look. Their reasoning is that the wearing of scanty attire has become so common that no one even notices it any more. Such simply is not the case, and those who say that it is are being unrealistic. If such were the case, majorettes and cheerleaders would wear something warmer and more decent to ball game in the dead of winter. But the attraction of partly nude bodies keeps them in their standard uniforms even in the coldest weather. If the partly nude body had lost its attraction for the opposite sex, the style of uniforms for these girls would quickly change.

We realize that the sight of a man's partly nude body does not stir up within most women the kind of thoughts provoked in many men by the sight of a woman's partly nude body. This is probably the reason male cheerleaders and drum majors are usually attired in full length trousers. It also accounts for the fact that many young ladies and their mothers do not believe what we are saying about this matter. But husbands and fathers should tell their wives and daughters the hard, cold facts of life with reference to this matter. And wives and daughters should listen. It so happens that, whether anyone wants to admit it or not, this is one area in which the man knows more than the woman.

"I Could Care Less"

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Recently, while in a conversation with a brother in Christ, the subject of pioneer preachers was discussed. This brother was hyper-critical of a detailed study of the lives of such men as Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, John Smith and others. This brother exclaimed, "I could care less what Raccoon John Smith did." To that, I replied, "you probably don't care for the history of the Restoration Movement." He agreed with my assertion.

Since the time of our discussion, I have pondered over the statement, "I could care less" with reference to our rich heritage, religiously speaking. In making such a statement, this brother exemplified an attitude that is so prevalent among many members in the church today.

First of all, there is a lack of gratitude for those who have gone before us. Even in secular history, we have learned to appreciate such men as George Washington, Patrick Henry, Abraham Lincoln and scores of others who were instrumental in the forming of our nation. Should we think less of our fore-fathers who sacrificed for the cause of Christ? Certainly, we should be thankful for our laws that provide for us liberties and freedoms in our great country. More than these, we should be anxious to learn of those men and women who gave of themselves in order that we might learn of the freedom that is in Christ Jesus. Such awareness of the pioneer preachers can motivate us to be more faithful to our Lord.

Secondly, such a negative attitude as "I could care less", implies willingness to remain ignorant of the search for the ancient order of New Testament Christianity of generations now past. We need so much to possess an attitude of love for the truth and honesty of heart that permeated those disciples of the nineteenth century. It should thrill our very souls to read of men and women who willingly cast away doctrinal errors upon learning the truth. We can learn so much from their efforts in diligently seeking the gospel of Christ, free from the

Continued on page 4

Does It Make Any Difference?

What does it matter that preachers are teaching things that are not just like the Bible teaches? Is accuracy in one's religious beliefs and practices so important? The average person seems convinced that sincerity and faith in God are the only things necessary in religion. This is reflected in the theory that "one church is as good as another" or "it's not what you believe its what you feel" or "we are all heading for the same place just traveling different roads."

It is only religion that men would make such ridiculous statement. In what other field is it true "That it doesn't make any difference what you believe as long as you are sincere"? Should your doctor prescribe a medicine for you, would you tolerate a druggist who filled prescriptions on the principle that it doesn't make any difference what ingredients one uses as long as he is sincere?

What if a carpenter built your house on this



JOHN WADDEY

theory? Does it really matter how one measures the pieces, fits the joints or levels the floor, just as long as he is sincere? Believe it who will.

What space scientist would argue that one need not to be concerned about details? What astronaut would risk his life under the supervision of such a thinker?

The illustrations could be multiplied a thousand times. IT DOES MATTER that we be absolutely right in our religion.

De we have a choice? Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:4-5 that there are a number of things in Christianity about which there can be no difference of opinion. He says that there is:

1. ONE BODY which is the ONE church (Eph. 1:22). It is the church of Christ (Rom. 16:16), for he built it (Matt. 16:18), and purchased it with his blood (Acts 20:28). You have no more choice of which church to be a member of than of which God to believe in.

2. ONE SPIRIT that gave us God's revelation (Eph. 3:2-5).

3. There is ONE HOPE. The Same hope is held before all men. It is heaven and eternal life therein. (John 14:1-3). Do we really have a choice? There is only one way to heaven (John 14:6). Our only choice is to be accept Christ and obey his commands, or refuse him, thus choosing hell.

4. ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST: He can only

Continued on page 4

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

(Reproduced by permission from THE BOOK QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: OPEN FORUM, FRED HARDEMAN COLLEGE LECTURES, BY Guy N. Woods)

"What is meant by 'idle words' of Matt. 12:36, and 'foolish talking...jesting' of Ephesians 5:4? Does this include joking?"

An examination of the context, as well as a study of the phrase "idle words", is necessary to the understanding of Matt. 12:36. Jesus had just rebuked the Pharisees, saying to them, "Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:34-37).

Those Jewish partisans had accused the Lord of casting out demons by Beelzebub, "the prince of demons." Their words

evidenced the attitude of their hearts; and, since their hearts were evil, the words which they uttered were wicked, pernicious, corrupt. The word "idle," in the phrase, "idle words," is from the greek *argos*, denoting that which is not productive of good and is, therefore, useless, worthless, and wrong. It is of interest to note that in classical and secular Greek it was used of abandoned land, money hidden away not producing interest, and of fallacious arguments which cannot convince. The context shows that our Lord used the term to denote not only the worthlessness of the words involved, but the fact that they proceeded from hearts of corrupt people whose intentions were malicious.

Similarly, the "foolish talking or jesting," mentioned by Paul (Eph. 5:4), involved suggestive, provocative, impure speech designed to inflame the passions and to corrupt the heart. Christians must

never participate in such; and it is their duty to refuse to listen to such conversation when it begins in their presence. Paul warned, "Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33), and he admonished the Colossians to "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one" (Col. 4:6). To the Ephesians he wrote, "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear" (Eph. 4:29).

There is no prohibition of light and lively conversation here, or elsewhere, in the scriptures. Witty exchanges, by Christians, when their hearts are happy and their spirits are elevated, violate no divine instructions, and bring joy to them and to all who listen. Solomon said, "A cheerful heart is a good medicine: but a broken spirit drieth up the bones" (Prov. 17:22).

Is Gay OK?

CHARLES COOK

I have little regard for those who practice graffiti, but when I read about a certain statement written by some unknown spray-can artist on an alley wall in the heart of San Francisco, I almost blurted out an "amen." It read, "If God had intended for homosexuality to be, He would have created Adam and Fred."

Being over thirty years of age I can remember when the word gay described happy people, but now it is used solely to describe the immoral and perverted. I can remember when it would have been considered "stupid" to write an article about the Scripturality of homosexual behavior. There was no question but that it was immoral. Now there seems to be a pressing need for such a study. Many people are not sure, so committed Bible students everywhere must speak out no matter how disgusting the subject.

Homosexuality has been in the news more and more lately. It has been the theme for movies, books and television programs. Like a spreading malignancy it has permeated our society, even into our living rooms. The media want us to believe they are morally neutral, while in truth they are the prime advocates of the Gay Liberation Movement. This fact is proven by their treatment of Anita Bryant's anti-homosexual as an upright, normal person in our society. To that we must react: **GAY IS NOT OK!**

What the secular world approves the liberal theologians try to justify, and so they are beginning to speak out on this issue. The basic argument from their camp is that homosexuality is neither sinful nor sick but just an alternate life style. They argue that just as most people are right-handed and others are left-handed, most people are heterosexual and others are homosexual. In their view homosexuality is sinful only if one's own pleasure is sought, without consideration of others. But if it is an expression of love, then it is no more sinful than heterosexuality. This is just more new morality trap used by liberal forces to justify anything and everything in the name of love. It is used to condone sex outside of marriage.

now it supposedly condones perverse sexual activities. What will it justify next?

While sympathy should be extended to those who have homosexual propensity, we cannot but show God's disdain for homosexual behavior. Like God, we are to love the souls of these perverse people and hate their sins. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness (I Corinthians 13:6), in spite of what the new morality proponents teach. We are sympathetic also to those with propensity for rape, wife beating, child molesting, violence or any other perverse tendency. But we must adamantly be opposed to their behavior and name it for what it is — SIN!

IS GAY OK? Let us examine God's Word for an answer. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were the original gay cities. In Genesis 13:13 it says, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord EXCEEDINGLY." Whatever their sin was, it was excessive and an abomination to God. Later, in Genesis 19, the Lord sent two angels to warn Lot and his family to flee from these wicked cities because of God's impending judgment against them. While these two men (who were really angels) were in Lot's home the wicked men of Sodom gathered outside and called to Lot: "Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may KNOW THEM" (Genesis 19:5). Earlier in Genesis we are told, "And Adam KNEW Eve...and she conceived" (Genesis 4:1). From the beginning God placed sex within the boundaries of a Scriptural marriage and judgment is promised to all offenders (Hebrews 13:4).

When the men of Sodom asked that the visitors come out that they might "KNOW THEM" they specifically meant to have homosexual relations with them. For their atrocious conduct God sent fire and brimstone from heaven and completely destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Throughout the remainder of the Bible when God wanted to picture sin at its lowest ebb He always pointed back to Sodom and Gomorrah (Deuteronomy 32:32; Isaiah 3:9;

Jeremiah 23:14; Revelations 11:8). Jude 7 confirms that they received God's vengeance because they gave themselves over to "fornication and going after strange flesh...."

After God formed the nation of Israel He gave them certain laws to protect them from the spreading influence of homosexuality. It was a common practice among ancient societies. Leviticus 18:22 specified it as a sin, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination (sin)." Leviticus 20:13 made the sin of homosexuality punishable by death, both for men and women.

Paul's strongest statement against this perversity is in Romans 1:18-32. With reference to the Old Testament Gentile world, Paul says their vanity and foolishness lead to a complete rejection of God and that lead to greater and greater degradation. Their most degrading behavior is described in verses 26, 27: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another: men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." In verse 32 he concluded that they are "worthy of death...." In verse 28 he shows that God cannot tolerate such behavior, but gives them over to a "reprobate (worthless, rejected, thoroughly bad) mind."

Homosexual practices today have caused many to have reprobate, warped minds. Among the homosexuals some claim to be "servants of God," ministering to other homosexuals and establishing gay churches. Their sick minds have caused them to discard all shame. Facing the fact that they cannot reproduce, now they openly recruit. They want laws to allow them to marry and adopt children to promulgate their cause. This is the ultimate in reprobate thinking. It can only end with the homosexuals'

Methuselah's Age

Continued from page 1

age was calculated."

Concerning the above paragraph, several things can be said. First, there isn't a shred of evidence that the ages of the patriarchs were counted only from the time of their first-born. The Genesis record calls attention to the fact that Abraham was 75 years when he departed from Haran (Gen. 12:4), and this was 21 years before the birth of his first son, Ishmael (Gen. 16:16). Secondly, the notion that the ages of Methuselah and others were not measured in terms of actual years but rather in "moons" (i.e., months), so that their true ages can be determined by dividing by 12, is utter nonsense! Moses, the writer of Genesis, certainly knew the difference between a month and a year. He employed both terms in Genesis 8:13.

Further, brother Clayton's theory of Biblical mathematics (i.e., dividing the patriarchal ages by 12), if consistently followed, allows for some strange conclusions indeed. For instance, when Abram departed Haran, along with his wife Sarai (Gen. 12:4), he was barely past six years of age! When Ishmael was born (Gen. 16:16), the patriarch was a shade past seven! And then Abraham died at a "good old age" of fourteen and a half (Gen. 25:7,8). The folly of such a theory hardly needs further elaboration.

Finally, there is the clear testimony of Jacob. After traveling down into Egypt, Jacob addressed Pharaoh saying: "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the day of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in

the days of their pilgrimage" (Gen. 47:9). He could not have been speaking of his father Isaac, who lived only thirty-three years longer than he, nor of Abraham, who lived only twenty-eight years longer than he (cf. Gen. 47:28; 35:28; 25:7). He was obviously contrasting his "few" years of one hundred thirty with the great ages of Adam, Methuselah, and others of that day.

We must accept the Bible for what it says. We do not need to ask the "scientists" how to interpret it. Such theories as the one reviewed and refuted above do not reflect a "modern comprehension" of the problem; they suggest a modernistic miscomprehension of Biblical information. — 3906 East Main Street, Stockton, Cal. 95205.

Does It Make Any Difference?

Continued from Page 2

save you.

5. ONE FAITH or system of doctrine that must be accepted, believed and followed. This faith is the Word of God which is able to save our souls (Jas. 1-21). There is but one source of the ONE FAITH, the Bible (Rom. 10:17). Hence there can not be different creeds and beliefs to choose between. We must accept the scripture as the only authority in Christianity.

6. ONE BAPTISM which is a burial in water (Rom. 6:3-4; John 3:23), for the remission of

sins (Acts 2:38). There being only ONE baptism, then we cannot choose concerning a sprinkling or pouring, or Holy Ghost baptism.

7. ONE GOD? You must believe in Him exclusively.

It does make a difference what we believe and practice in religion. If not, why would the Lord warn us so often against error in religion? Galatians 1:8-9 says: "Though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel

other than that we preached unto you, let him be anathema..."

Be sure of your faith. Demand Bible, book, chapter and verse for that which you are asked to accept and practice! It does make a difference. For your being right with God now will determine where you will spend eternity. — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tenn. 37921.

"I Could Care Less"

Continued from page 2

teachings of men.

Thirdly, the attitude manifested by the statement, "I could care less" implies an indifference as to where we have come from, with all our successes and failures. History has a way of repeating itself. Those brethren grounded in a knowledge of the Restoration Movement are most apt not to make the same mistakes as did our fore-fathers. Such lessons as what constitutes authority in religious matters, the nature of the church, the need to worship God acceptably, etc. are needed in the body today. These early disciples in this country

had to study their way out of denominational dogmas in order to learn the truth with reference to these subjects and others. We can profit from their sincere efforts. Also, we can learn of the many groups who have turned aside from the narrow way into "splinter" groups, such as is found in those brethren who bind laws where God has not bound. We can learn of the early efforts to practice "open membership" and the creeping in of modernism and liberalism within our ranks. Knowledgeable brethren in these and other matters will not be

easily disturbed by the modern day movements, either to the left or to the right.

Brethren, we are warming by fires that we have not built. A host of Christians today are ready always to receive but are unwilling to give in return. Each generation needs to study minutely our rich history of efforts to restore New Testament Christianity. It will be a sad day in Israel when the attitude of "I could care less" about the Restoration Movement fills the minds of our brethren. — Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Alabama 36467.

Is Gay OK?

Continued from page 3

repentance and obedience to God's Word...or their destruction!

Paul declares in I Corinthians 6:9, 10 that the "effeminate and abusers of themselves with men shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Let the homosexuals read and heed! Paul made it very clear that they can be sanctified and justified in the name of Jesus and live a life of virtue (I Corinthians 6:11; Philippians 4:13).

It must be faced, there is a strong similarity between ancient Sodom and modern America, and sadly it is the rampant practice of homosexuality. Jesus warned that immoral conditions like those in Sodom will be present at His coming judgment (Luke 17:28-30). In that day gay liberation will take on a whole new meaning! One commentator remarked, "If God

doesn't judge America soon, then He's going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah." — P. O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii, 96766.

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I Am Important

GLENDA TERRY

I know I am one of God's
priceless treasures,
Although at times I feel worthless
and have few pleasures.

Sometimes I feel I only jumble
up the land,
Then I remember I am important
to God, as the ocean is to the sand.

It is not my goodness that causes
God to love me,
It is his promise and his greatness,
you see.

I will always put my faith in Christ,
one who has proven himself,
Until I grow old, tired, weary
and a little deaf.

Adamsville, Ala. 35005



Words Of Truth

"I am...
the Words

but speak forth

— Acts 26:25

Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 1)

Sometime ago a good reader of WORDS OF TRUTH in Alabama sent me a letter with the request that some information be presented on the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians and especially the opening sixteen verses. I am happy to honor that request but have decided to write some articles dealing with the entire chapter and not just the first sixteen verses alone. But I do plan to cover the verses he has requested first. Then we will cover the last eighteen verses or the material that Paul presents on The Lord's Supper.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The book of First Corinthians is largely a study of problems that affected the Lord's church at Corinth in Greece in the first century and the apostolic solutions to those problems. I propose to write a number of articles over the next few weeks relative to a study of two of the Corinthian problems and the two apostolic solutions which are mentioned in First Corinthians 11. The first part of the chapter deals with the veiled woman and the latter part deals with the Lord's Supper. We shall discuss them in that order since that is the order the apostle discusses them.

I now invite your reading attention to the first sixteen verses of this chapter. Paul says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth and prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven. But if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven,

let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the church of God" (1 Cor. 11:16).

A number of significant questions are raised by a contemplation of this passage. (1) In what sense were the Corinthians to follow or imitate Paul? (2) What were the grounds of his praising them in this passage? (3) What is the correct understanding of authority or proper headship? (4) How shall one's headship be properly honored? (5) What is proper and what is improper when men and women pray and prophesy? (6) What about the veil or the artificial covering for the woman? (7) Why should man have his head uncovered in his worship? (8) What is the proper relationship between man and woman in God's sphere of action for them both? (9) Why is long hair on a man a dishonor or shame to him and long hair on the woman honor and glory to her? (10) What is Paul's counsel if any man seems to be contentious over this matter? (11) Is there one or are there two coverings mentioned in this chapter for the woman? (12) Is such binding on the Christian woman in America during the decades of the 1970's? (13) Are there principles set forth in this passage which are very applicable for our day? In our investigation of the first half of this controversial chapter we shall seek answers to all these questions and perhaps touch on some other crucial matters as well.

Paul begins the chapter with the inspired imperative that the Corinthian Christians be followers or imitators of him. In what sense? To the extent that he followed the Christ. Paul sought to be a follower of Christ in every situation. To that extent

he desired his children in the gospel to be of likemind. Is it not wonderful when a man is following Christ so very closely that he can command others to follow him even as he follows the Lord Jesus? In any area where Paul might have been deficient, if such existed, then to that extent he did not want them to follow or imitate him. This is one of the most admirable attitudes reflected in all Sacred Scripture.

Early in this chapter Paul finds just cause to praise his Corinthian brethren. Paul knew that the warmth of deserved praise, and that is the only way he ever used such, would be a powerful motivator in their Christianity at Corinth. He possessed two grounds for his praise of them: (1) the Corinthians remembered him in all things, and (2) they were holding fast the traditions as he had delivered them while there. These traditions were not the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees that Jesus condemned so heatedly time and time again in the four records of the gospel. They were not the traditions and commandments of men and especially of paganistic people that Paul condemned time and time again in his epistles such as in Colossians 2. Apostolic reference is here made to the traditions of inspired truth. He was praising them because they were holding fast the gospel of Christ. That is what he had preached to them; that is what they were holding fast. Needless to say, that is what we should be preaching today and precisely what we should be holding fast.

It was essential that they understand God's established order of authority or headship if they were going to accept the exhortations and apostolic counsel he was about to set forth. From top to bottom it reads like this: (1) God is over Christ; (2) Christ is the head over man; and (3) the man is head over the woman. There is not question about the fact that Jesus Christ, during his entire early sojourn, honored his head, namely his Heavenly Father. That precious truth is vouchsafed for us upon nearly every page of the New Testament and constitutes the very warp and woof of the four gospel records. Predictive prophecy in the Old Testament had indicated such. Paul is concerned in this chapter that man honor his head who is Christ. He is concerned in this chapter that woman honor her head who is man. It is absolutely basic that these fundamental ideas be kept firmly

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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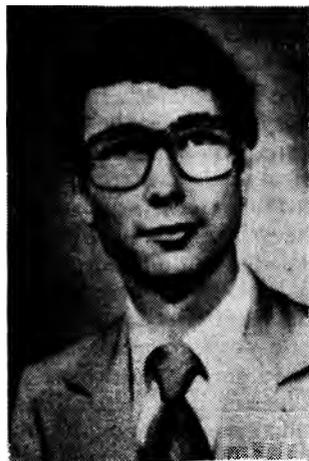
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The Most Important Institution

The church of our Lord is the most important institution in all the world. This truth does not, however, diminish the sad fact that far too many have little respect and love for the church. Some even contend that the church is not needed in the scheme of redemption and that we, therefore, should not emphasize in our teaching the organized church that so many of us have loved and cherished for so long a time.



MICHAEL D. STONE

"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church..." This passage of scripture found in Matthew 16:18 has Jesus saying, "I will build my church". The church was built by none other than Jesus. My dear friends, would you say that Jesus would build something that was not important, or essential to the scheme of redemption? I certainly think not!

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it..." (Ephesians 5:25). The husband is to attempt to love his wife as much as Jesus loved the church. How much love did Jesus have for the church? He loved it enough to die for it. It is most ridiculous for one to think that Jesus would die for something that is not important to our salvation. How much love do you have for the church? Do you love it enough to be a member of it? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16:16). This most important institution was bought with the blood of our Lord, (Acts 20:28). How important is the church to you?

"And he is the head of the body, the church..." (Colossians 1:18). Jesus is the head of the church. The Pope is not the head of the Lord's church. Furthermore, Peter could not

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FROM

THE EDITOR



Things Which Make For Peace and Unity

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19). This passage sets forth a vital principle, and yet one which is so very often overlooked, i.e., that the desired end may be reached only by following after (literally, *running swiftly in order to catch*) the things which lead to that desired end. Certainly we must keep our eyes upon the goal; but keeping our eyes upon the goal is of little benefit if we ignore or neglect the things which lead to that goal.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Perhaps this principle is overlooked most often in connection with those much to be desired conditions, peace and unity. The psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). The apostle Paul speaks of "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). All are agreed that peace and unity are conditions to be desired; but some have set these as their goals while ignoring the "things which make for" peace and unity.

Suppose, for example, that a man recognizes the desirability of peace and unity. He wants peace and unity in the home. He wants it in the church. He wants it in the nation and in the world. But he is a self-willed, high tempered, impatient overly critical and super sensitive individual who refuses to correct or recognize his own shortcomings. Despite his desire for peace and unity, it would be difficult to conceive of a peaceful situation, with unity prevailing, where that person is present. On the other hand, if he would recognize these faults in himself and set about to correct them, he would be following after the things which make for peace and unity.

The so-called ecumenical movement has been and will continue to be a failure, not because its aim was not worthy, but because its leaders refuse to follow after the things which lead to their worthy goal. In order to have unity, they propose a sort of merger of all creeds; and though these creeds contradict one another, no one will be required or even expected to give up a single tenet of his own creed. This would unite the liberal with the conservative, those who believe in the virgin birth with those who do not, those who believe in the plenary verbal inspiration of the Bible with those who say the Bible is a collection of Jewish fables, etc. But such a proposal is unrealistic. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). In I Corinthians 6:14-16 Paul appeals to the common sense of his readers to show the impracticality of such an arrangement: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with idols?..."

Real peace and unity can be obtained only by discarding the names and creeds of men, which cause division, and by following the teaching of God's word, which produces unity. The contention of faithful preachers of the gospel has ever been that religious people can be united and at peace with one another if all will "walk by the same rule" (Philippians 3:16). To seek peace and unity on any other basis is to set one's eyes upon a goal, and then ignore the only thing which

can make that goal a reality.

Many among our own number have never learned the lesson involved in this principle. They seem to think the only thing necessary to the realization of their goal of peace and unity is simply to ignore division. Instead of marking those who cause division contrary to the doctrine of Christ and avoiding them as we are commanded (Romans 16:17), they become oblivious of their error, and participate with them in what they even refer to as "unity meetings." But the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" is not obtained by ignoring division; and all would do well to examine the inspired formula for unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:4-6. The one body is the church purchased by the blood of Christ. The one Spirit is the Holy Spirit who guided the writers of the Bible so that we might have the perfected revelation of God's will. The one hope is the hope of eternal life in heaven. The one Lord is the Lord Jesus Christ who died and arose again. The one faith is the gospel of Christ. The one baptism is the baptism commanded by our Lord in the great commission, which is a burial in water for the remission of sins. The one God and Father is, of course, the great Creator of our universe, and the Architect of the scheme of redemption. Those, and only those, who commit themselves to these fundamental facts are following after the things which make for peace and unity.

Please Pardon Our Oversight

The fine article, "Family Problems" (WORDS OF TRUTH, August 11, Page 2), was written by Raymond Elliott. Brother Elliott is the evangelist with the church located on East Hart Avenue in Opp, Alabama. We regret our failure to give him credit for the article. If you did not read the article, we suggest you look up that issue of WORDS OF TRUTH and read it.

Pure Worship

The following notice appeared in a newspaper announcing services in a local denomination: "The Dance Ensemble will participate in an 11 a.m. worship service Sunday. The twenty member company will perform to the music of Leonard Bernstein, Stravinsky, Brahms, and contemporary composers, Tim Weisberg and Loggins and Messina." Do you suppose this is what our Lord had in mind when He said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth?" (John 4:24). What is the purpose of worship? Is worship entertainment, on the same par with concerts, movies, and theatrical productions? No,



DALTON KEY

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What do the scriptures teach with reference to their inspiration?"

Ours is predominantly a skeptical and questioning age. It is true that infidels have appeared to preach their unbelief in each generation since the beginning of the Christian era; but, in times past they have been comparatively few in number, and largely ostracized from respectable society. Today, in many circles, it is regarded as the smart and sophisticated thing to appear skeptical; and, in many instances, unbelief has arrayed herself in the robes of priestcraft, and now preaches from the pulpit.

To all of us who accept the Bible as the infallible and inerrant word of God, matters touching its character, contents, and origin are of superlative importance. We cannot be indifferent to, or silent about the persistent efforts today being made to discredit it and thus destroy its influence among the people. Modernism seeks to create the impression that the Bible merely contains the word of God along with a large admixture of error; judgment in setting out the matters which it teaches; and that the only inspiration it possesses is its ability to "inspire" its readers!

Immediate results of such concepts is to prompt people to regard the chronicle of Adam and Eve as an ancient Jewish myth, without historical significance; to believe that the stories of Daniel and Jonah are fictitious; to deny that there is any such thing as prophecy—the New Testament writers merely applied, in arbitrary fashion—matters referred to in the Old Testament; to consider the story of the sun standing still as unscientific, unhistorical and hence incredible.

These results of modernism we unhesitatingly repudiate and reject. Though the instruments by which it was delivered to the world were human beings such as we, they were protected against any possibility of error in delivering their message; and, the Bible is, therefore, an inbreathed, inspired, divine document which, as originally given, is absolutely inerrant, infallible and true.

(1) Such is the claim which it makes for itself: "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). "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21). "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11).

(2) More than 2,000 times the Scriptures assert the fact that they issued from God. Instances are, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue" (II Sam. 23:2). "And the Lord said unto me, Be-

hold, I have put my words in thy mouth" (Jer. 1:6-9). "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me" (John 17:8). "Be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye" (Mark 13:11). What shall be thought of one who affects to believe the Bible yet asserts that it has a fallible human element to be sifted by "sanctified common sense" from the divine, in the light of these affirmations?

(3) Nothing short of verbal inspiration will meet the demands of the case which the Bible presents. History affords manifold instances of the difficulties which men face in determining the meaning and intent of documents which were written by seasoned and scholarly writers, men who wrote under the conviction that their words would be subjected to the most minute and searching examination, and who were, nevertheless, unable to avoid the litigation they had diligently sought to circumvent. Such is a common occurrence in the matter of wills, though written by legal experts; the Constitution of the United States of America, though penned by the ablest statesmen and lawyers which the land afforded, has been and remains a source of greatest difference of opinion regarding its meaning; and the translators of the King James' and American Standard Versions, though among the world's ripest scholars, were unable to select words to convey the mind and meaning of the Holy Spirit in every instance satisfactory to students today. It is significant that the authors of the Constitution of our land, the ablest legal minds of the day, and the most profound scholars of the time could not have received a divine message and then *in their own words* have delivered it to the world in such unambiguous fashion that the meaning was always and everywhere apparent. But, if such men could not have done this, are we to suppose that a group of ignorant fishermen, insignificant and uneducated peasants of Palestine, shepherds and herdsmen, could have succeeded where they failed?

(4) The Law which issued from Sinai, a limited, temporary and confessedly inferior law in the light of the one to follow, was handed to Moses from the hand of God, written by deity, on tables of stone. Are we to conclude that, though this law was, by its manner of deliverance, protected from the possibility of error, the law of Christ was vouchsafed to the world through the weak and fallible minds of uneducated, untrained and unscholarly fishermen, tax collectors, etc.? It is admitted that the only way we have of ascertaining the truth and accuracy of the word of God is through the record by which it has been delivered to the world. Must we rely on the judgment of such men who wrote according to the wisdom which they possessed, and this without divine guidance?

(5) Near the close of the Revelation, a solemn warning against any addition, subtrac-

tion or modification is appended: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of this 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 books of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and 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). It will be observed that here the *words* are of such divine significance that they can neither be added to, or subtracted from. Are we to conclude that the description of heaven is set out in a fashion more sure than the conditions essential for us to comply with in order to get there?

On the occasion of the birthday of the New Testament church — on the first Pentecost following our Lord's resurrection—the apostles, though without formal education in the schools of higher learning, spoke fluently and intelligibly in languages hitherto unknown to them. Who would be so naive as to believe that the words which they uttered were of their own choosing and that they addressed themselves to the multitude in languages unknown to them but which they spoke without divine dictation? When Peter, the spokesman of the occasion, delivered the words of Acts 2:39, regarding the inclusion of the Gentiles, he had no conception of the significance of what he was saying; and, was later to require a miracle to convince him of the truth of that which he here spoke. This fact argues irresistibly for verbal inspiration; indeed, no other conclusion is possible. Our Lord said to the apostles, "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak; neither do you premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11). Observe that the apostles were not to *think* what they were to speak; this would be supplied them by the Spirit. There is but one way in which one can speak—that is to utter words! The Holy Spirit would perform this through the apostles. The words, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost," we may paraphrase as follows: *It is not you who give utterance to these ideas in words, it is the Holy Spirit which gives utterance to these ideas in words through you.* (See I Cor. 2:13).

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fixed in mind else we will never understand the opening half of this controversial chapter.

Paul next discusses both man and woman as they pray and as they prophesy. We learn from 1 Timothy 2:8 that man may pray everywhere, that is, if he prays without wrath and doubting. Paul would not approve of a mad man or an infidel engaged in the leading of prayers for the children of God. But the woman may not pray just anywhere or everywhere, that is, lead a prayer. To do so would place her in the role of usurping authority over man, and she is strictly forbidden to do this by Paul's apostolic authority in 1 Timothy 2:11-12. Likewise there is an area where she is to teach; there is an area where she is not to teach. She may teach her children and another's children as we learn from 2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:14-15. She may and must teach other women as we learn from 2 Titus 2:4-5. Thus the praying and the prophesying she is commanded to do in this chapter does not go

contrary to what Paul commanded her in other places. The man who prays and prophesies may do so under every set of right circumstances without dishonoring his head who is Christ. It is quite likely that the apostle is discussing those with miraculous powers for both praying and prophesying are mentioned here. Such gifts were available and were enjoyed in Corinth. The man with these gifts could pray and prophesy anywhere. But he was not to do so with his head covered. Why? Because in doing so he would dishonor his head who is Christ. In places where the woman did her praying and prophesying she was not to be uncovered or unveiled there at Corinth? Why? Because in so doing she would dishonor her head, namely man. Paul says that if the Corinthian woman were uncovered or unveiled, it would be the same as if she were shaven. Paul reasons that if she is going to be unveiled, she might as well be shorn. But if it were a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, and it

was, then let her be veiled. It is quite obvious here that he is talking of an artificial covering or veil-not her hair. In this context what she is to have one, the man is forbidden to have on. If he is speaking of literal hair here, then the man could only honor his head-the Christ-by being bald. The man with hair could not honor him at all!! If not, WHY NOT? The woman is to have this veil on at Corinth Paul affirms; the man is not. The man is forbidden to have it on during his worship because he is the image and glory of God. The Corinthian woman is to have it on because she is the glory of the man. Without successful argument there Paul argues that the Corinthian woman must have this artificial veil or covering and that the man be without such a veil or covering in the worship in which he engages. (More to follow.) — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tn. 38063.

The Most Important Institution

Continued from page 2

have been the first Pope as some claim since he was a married man (Luke 4:38-39). In Galatians 2:11, Paul stated concerning Peter, "But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he was at fault" (Berkeley Version). Paul said he opposed Peter. Now what right did Paul have to oppose the Pope? Paul further stated that Peter was at fault. It seems strange indeed that the Pope made a mistake.

Friends, the fact of the matter is that Peter was never a Pope or the head of the church. Jesus is the only head of the one church. He would not be the head of an institution that is not essential for our salvation.

In Acts 2:47, the Bible states that the saved are added to the church. Saved people are added to the Lord's church. Does it seem logical that the Lord would add people to something

that is of no importance or significance? I certainly think not! Are you a member of the most important institution? "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins..." (Acts 2:38). Is the church an important part of your life? If not, make it so! — 4763 Skyline Drive Ashland, Kentucky 41101

Pure Worship

Continued from page 2

worship consists of acts of reverence and homage performed before and toward God (Webster). These acts must be divinely authorized (in truth), and must originate from a pure and sincere heart (in spirit) (John 4:24; Col. 3:17; 2 John 9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 Cor. 13:1-3).

All worship is not acceptable worship. Many have been guilty of sincerely worshipping false gods (1 Kings 18; Acts 17:16-23). The one true and living God of heaven must be the sole object of our worship (Matt. 4:10). The worship of any other object is blasphemous and, hence, unacceptable. Others, like the Pharisees, have worshipped the right object, yet done so in an improper fashion. Of these Pharisees, Christ said, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"

(Matt. 15:9). They worshipped God, the proper object, yet did so in an improper fashion. They failed to worship "in truth," or according to the authority of God's word (John 4:24; 17:17; Matt. 15:9).

What should be wrong with inviting a Dance Ensemble to perform during one of our worship services? Such could not be done "in truth" (John 4:24). Such would not be authorized by Christ (Matt. 28:18; Col. 3:17). Such would be "going onward" from the revealed doctrine of Jesus Christ (2 John 9, ASV). There is not one shred of divine truth to support or authorize such a dancing service.

What is wrong with using instruments of music in worship to God? In view of the above, the answer is obvious. They are not authorized by God, hence can not be introduced and used "in truth." In fact, for

every verse in the New Testament you can find authorizing instrumental music in worship to God, I will show you two passages COMMANDING Christians to perform the modern dance in the public assembly. Yes, you show me the one, and I will show you the other. What would be the difference in introducing a DANCE ENSEMBLE and introducing the MECHANICAL INSTRUMENT OF MUSIC in our worship to God? In both principle and precept, there is no difference whatsoever. One has just as much divine approval and authority as the other.

Let us ever strive to remain pure in doctrine and practice, having a "thus saith the Lord" for all things done in word or deed (1 Pet. 4:11; Col. 3:17). — Box 619, Douglass, Ks. 67039.

Far From Wasted

CLEON LYLES

A reporter called on Thomas A. Edison one afternoon to interview him about a substitute for lead in the manufacture of storage batteries that the scientist was seeking. Edison told him that he had made 20,000 experiments but none of them had worked.

The reporter asked, "But aren't you discouraged by all this waste of effort?"

"Waste!" exclaimed Mr. Edison, "There's nothing wasted, I have discovered 20,000 things that won't work."

There are times when all of us feel that some good action of ours has borne no fruits. But we should not be discouraged. It is the person who refuses to give up who finally wins. We may have become somewhat discouraged because of the lack of interest on the part of some person we have been trying to bring to Christ. Or we may feel that our efforts have all been in vain when we were trying to develop loyalty in the life of someone who has obeyed the gospel. It is easy to stop because under such circumstances it is so difficult to go on. But we never know how much we

may have already influenced the person. All of this will be lost if we give up.

In the Lord's work we never are able to know just when we are succeeding. Some particular work does not seem to be producing fruit. Some lessons seem to have no effect on the lives of those to whom they are being taught. Some advice seems to be unheard or soon forgotten. But the person who refuses to quit because of what he does not know is the one who finally succeeds in helping others. We see disappointment demonstrated in many ways. Preachers become tired and move to another work. Some teachers feel they are doing no good and give up teaching. Some leaders do not feel that others are following, so they stop trying to lead. This attitude always ends in failure. But those who are willing to continue to try, although their efforts may have seemed in vain, are those who finally find a way into the hearts of others and are able to help them.

The only cause on earth in which we are assured of success is the Lord's work. There can be no failure if we are willing to do his will. The reason is found in the

fact that the Lord does not look at things the way we are prone to view them. He does not demand that I be as good or successful as others. He only asks for my best. If it does not measure up to that of others he will not hold me responsible. Also he is able to see success where sometimes I can only see failure. He can look into the hearts of people and know what certain words or actions will produce later in their lives. He will not measure my success by the number of souls I have converted, but only that I have converted as many as I could. Of course he expects me to be honest when I decide what is my ability.

No effort in behalf of that which is right is wasted effort. Somewhere and sometime it will produce the fruit the Lord wants. Who could ask for greater assurance than that? Sometimes that which seems to be failure produces wisdom that makes it possible for us to succeed. If we will determine to continue to do as good as we know how, the Lord will take care of the success. — 100 West Church Street Morrilton, Ark. 72110.



Words Of Truth

"I am not
the Words of

Weak forth

Acts 26:25

Sound Doctrine

The apostle Paul instructed the young preacher Titus, "But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). Such an injunction gives rise to such questions as: "What is sound doctrine?" and "What are the things which befit, or are becoming to, sound doctrine?"



HUGH FULFORD

"Doctrine" is from the Greek "*didaskalia*" and means "the collection of specific things taught." In this case, it refers to the total teaching of Christ and his apostles, and is synonymous with "the gospel" (Rom. 1:16) and "the faith" (Gal. 1:23; Jude 3). It is a term used to indicate total divine truth in the objective sense and it stands for that which is to be believed in religion and that which is to serve as the true standard of religious conduct (John 8:32; 17:17; II Tim. 3:16, 17).

"Sound" means "healthful or wholesome." It is used to describe and identify the doctrine that Titus was to proclaim. Titus was to teach the things becoming to healthful teaching which was teaching that would contribute to the health and eternal salvation of the soul — not to the hurt and eternal damnation of the soul.

The importance of "soundness" of doctrine is seen by the emphasis given unto it in the letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus. (1) Nothing contrary to "sound doctrine" is to be preached (I Tim. 1:10). (2) Nothing but "sound words" are to be spoken (II Tim. 1:13). (3) "Sound doctrine" will not always be appreciated but it still is always to be preached (II Tim. 4:1-5). (4) Elders are to be able to exhort in the "sound doctrine" (Titus 1:9). (5) Unruly Christians are to be reproved sharply that they may be "sound in the faith" (Tit. 1:13). Let that person who denies the importance of sound doctrine — for speaking exactly as the oracles of God — take careful heed to the above passages, along with the solemn admonitions of I Pet. 4:11, Isaiah 8:20; Galatians 1:6-9; and Revelation

22:18,19.

Yet, contrary to the thinking of some, "doctrine" and "duty," "preaching" and "practice," cannot be separated. Truth and duty are always linked together. Too many people seemingly try to rotely learn truths as if there are not duties attached to them, and some try to perform duties as if there were no body of truth behind the duties to determine the correctness of them.

Those who minimize the importance of doctrine by saying, "Give us something practical," remind this writer of the mother of James and John — "they know not what they ask"! "Practical" means "that which is capable of being turned to use or account; useful." Note: (1) False doctrine renders worship vain (Matt. 15:8, 9); so sound doctrine is practical! (2) False doctrine keeps one from having God (II John 9); so sound doctrine is practical! (3) One must heed to himself and this doctrine to save himself and other (I Tim. 4:16); so sound doctrine is practical! (4) Adding to or subtracting from the word of God will cause on to be lost (Rev. 22: 18, 19); so staying with just exactly what the Bible says is practical! (5) Indoctrination is "the faith" will keep one from being carried about with every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14), so "indoctrination" is practical!

In the context of Titus 2:1ff, Pauls shows that the

"practical" is rooted in, and springs from, the "doctrinal." Notice how he categorized "the things which befit the sound doctrine." Concerning the conduct of aged men, they are to be temperate, grave, sober-minded, and sound in faith, love, and patience.

Aged women are to be reverent in demeanor (behavior), not slanderers, not enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good, and instructors of the younger women.

Younger women are to be lovers of their husbands and children, sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, and in subjection to their own husbands that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Younger men are to be sober minded.

Servants are to be subject to their own masters and well-pleasing to them in all things, not gainsay (contradict their masters), not purloin (steal either time or money from their master), and show all good fidelity (trustworthiness to their masters), and thus "adorn the doctrine of God."

All of these matters are eminently practical, yet they are what inspiration classifies as "Sound doctrine"—the things enumerated above—it needs such today. As the people of God, let us resolve both to preach and to practice "the things which befit the sound doctrine." — 101 Dow Drive, Shelbyville, Tennessee 37160.

The Promise Of The Father

W.L. TOTTY

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven after his resurrection, he assembled with the apostles and "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me" (Acts 1:4). The definite article THE preceding "promise of the Father" shows that it was the baptism of the Holy Spirit which the apostles were to receive in the city of Jerusalem.

This was not the first time the apostles had heard of this "promise," as Jesus reminded

them, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7). Prior to this (in the 14th chapter of John) Jesus had told them that he was going away, and that troubled them. He encouraged them by telling them that he would send them the Comforter, "the Spirit of truth" (John 16:13). Then just before his ascension, he told them to wait in Jerusalem for "The promise,"

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, must noble fees, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness -- Acts 26:25

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Announcement Of Interest

Dr. W. B. West is Moving to Montgomery to become associated with Alabama Christian School of Religion. He began his work when school opened on September 5. Dr. West will serve as dean of the graduate department, and will be teaching courses this fall on Revelation and the New Testament World. During the fall quarter his classes will be on Monday night and all day Tuesday. The addition of this capable man to the staff will be a great asset to the school.

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FROM THE EDITOR

“Preacher Talk”



BOBBY DUNCAN

A good many years ago in a Bible class at Freed-Hardeman College the instructor, a gospel preacher at the time, told of an incident that occurred in his home. He was having a serious talk with his children. When he had finished, his very small son said, “Daddy, are you telling the truth, or just preaching?”

Unfortunately, these words of a small boy seem to be expressive of an attitude characteristic of many in the church. They seem to think that a great deal the preacher says is just “preacher talk,” and really should not be taken seriously. After all, preachers are expected to hold positions that are just a little stronger than the average person can swallow; but that’s his job, and we respect him for his firm conviction in connection with it. So don’t get angry with him for preaching what he thinks is the truth. Just take all that “preacher talk” with a grain of salt.

In connection with this attitude we would make it quite clear that we have never even suggested that one accept anything we have preached just because we preached it. We have, contrariwise, urged those who heard us preach to search the Scriptures to determine whether we were preaching the truth (Cf. Acts 17:11). From time to time one will ask our judgement about a matter; and we are not reluctant to

give our judgment, especially when asked. But we have tried to make it plain that no one is required to follow our judgment in order to go to heaven.

But in order to go to heaven one must be governed by the word of God; and one cannot with impunity simply pass it off as being nothing but “preacher talk.” Jesus said; “he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48)

It is amazing and appalling that so many members of the church have so little conviction of the truth with reference to such things as being present for all the services, liberal giving, divorce and remarriage, wearing shorts, public swimming, social drinking, dancing, etc. True, many preachers have not the courage to preach what they know to be the truth with reference to these matters. Others are so worldly in their thinking that they do not know how to preach the truth on these matters. But we are here discussing the fact that many church members do not allow their practice with reference to these things to be governed by the word of God simply because they feel the word of God faithfully preached from the pulpit is just so much “preacher talk.”

Dearly beloved, if your preacher is preaching the truth, the only right thing to do is obey it. If what he preaches is not the truth, the only right thing to do is to stop him from preaching what he is preaching, even if you have to fire him. Only the faint-hearted, the weak-kneed and the spineless will pass off what the preacher preaches — regardless of what he preaches — as being nothing more than “preacher talk.”

Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 2)

Two primary topics occupy Paul’s literary efforts in the penning of the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians; the veiled woman and the Lord’s Supper. The chapter is divided almost equally in setting forth Paul’s inspired counsel relative to these vital topics. We are making a study of this chapter as a result of a request from one of our faithful readers in Alabama. In the previous lesson or article we gave the opening sixteen verses of the chapter, raised some fourteen questions in regard to those introductory verses, took note of Paul’s opening request and his extended praise of the Corinthians, set forth Jehovah’s proper order of established authority and wrote briefly relative to both men and women in regard to prayer and prophecy.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Paul next explains what is the proper relationship between man and woman in God’s sphere of service for both of them and especially why the woman is obligated to exhibit man’s glory. Remember man is her head just as Christ’s is man’s head and God is

Christ’s head. Man did not come for the flesh and bone of woman at the beginning of creation in Genesis 2. The woman was made from the flesh and bone of the man. God did not create Adam for Eve but he created Eve for Adam. For this cause the woman is to have a sign of authority on her head, as conditions and customs then prevailed, because of the angels. Yet there is a marvelous interdependence between man and woman. Neither can exist without the other. Every man has been born of a woman; every woman has had a father. In the Lord both man and woman in their relationship and fellowship with the Lord are exactly alike. He is a son of God; she is a daughter of God. Both are heirs of life if they are faithful Christians.

Paul makes a strong and stirring appeal to their own sense of what is proper and right in what he is setting forth. That is what he meant when he asked them to “Judge ye in yourselves.” He reasons very cogently here that nature even teaches that if the man have long hair, it is a shame or dishonor to him. But long hair on the woman is given her for glory. Here he is no longer discussing the artificial covering or the veil but in this verse in discussing her long hair.

Reader friends, permit me to write some things at this very point that need to be said and need to be said often in our day of critical events and crucial happenings. They need to be said frequently because we are living in a time when efforts are being made by

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is the theory of 'thought' inspiration and is it in keeping with the teaching of the New Testament?"

This "theory of inspiration" alleges that all the Holy Spirit did for the New Testament writers was to supply them with the content or thought of the message, leaving it to them to determine the form in which it would appear, and the words by which it would be expressed. I regard it as clearly false and dangerous in tendency. 1. It fails to take into account that it is simply impossible to engage in "thought" without the use of words! Words are vehicles of thought — the instrument by which they are both entertained and expressed. We can neither think, nor express thoughts, without words, any more than we can work mathematical problems without figures or write musical scores without notes.

2. Further, the view raises serious questions regarding the integrity and accuracy of the message itself. We are solely dependent on words which the writers penned for the *thoughts* which they delivered. If they were dependent on their fallible, human judgment in the selection of these words, in any instance in which their judgment was in error, it is not possible for us today to discover what the Holy Spirit intended. One wrong word might obscure, or strike out, a truth essential to our salvation! The words are all *we* have. If there is no guarantee that the words of the Bible are the ones the Lord intended, then we have no way of determining what the thought is. If the words of the bible are the words of men, and not the words of the Holy Spirit, then it is not possible to know which of the thoughts therein expressed are the thoughts of God and which are the thoughts of men, since any error of judgment, in the selection of a word, would extend to the thought, thus corrupting it. Professor Einstein could dictate to a secretary his exceedingly profound theory of relativity; and the secretary could transcribe the message accurately, word by word, though she knew little or nothing about the theory itself or the significance and meaning of the words expressed. Suppose, however that the secretary were left to herself to select the words by which to express Einstein's theory, how accurate would her effort be???

3. Must we believe that a group of unlearned fishermen, a Greek physician, and a Jewish religious leader were left to their own resources to express, in their own words, views which they neither fully understood, at times, themselves (Acts 2:39), and which, on occasion, they diligently studied in an effort to ascertain what that which was in them "did point to?" (I Pet. 1:11). Must we suppose that God made the supreme sacrifice of his Son to provide salvation, revealed the plan by which it is appropriated through the agency of the Holy Spirit, and then left its deliverance to the whims and fallible judgments of men who were for the most part without formal training in recording such efforts? It is difficult to see how thoughtful and knowledgeable persons can, for one moment, entertain such a view.

Those who subscribe to "thought" inspiration cannot properly ascribe inspiration to THE BOOK at all. They are logically stopped from referring to the Bible as the "inspired WORD of God," inasmuch as they did not believe that it is inspired in WORD at all. The truth is, if it is not inspired IN WORD, it is not inspired at all, since it is composed of words. Those who hold this view of inspiration in order properly to express their concept of the matter, should identify it as *"the uninspired words of men attempting to express, through exercise of human judgment, the inspired thoughts of God."*

Because of the ambiguity often associated with words, it is most difficult to be precise and accurate in the expression of thought. Evidence of this is to be

seen in the crowded calendars and huge backlog of court cases resulting from obscure statutes, incorrectly written deeds, and improperly drawn wills. It is said that Lord Tenterton, an eminent English lawyer, was one of the most skilled men of his day in the law of wills. This area of law was his speciality; and his wide and thorough knowledge of every aspect of this complex and difficult subject was recognized and respected. Moreover, he was a talented writer, being fully conversant with the English language; and his legal opinions were considered to be unequalled in that day. Shortly before his death, Tenterton prepared a will disposing of his own possessions. It was quite brief, being only about a page in length; but it was declared without force and void by the courts, when probated, because of one ambiguous word! Greatly skilled though he was in the law, and highly talented as a writer he could not have written the last will and testament of Christ without the possibility of error, since he failed in the attempt with his own will. Were unlettered Jews, a Greek physician and a former Pharisee able to select words *without divine guidance* which would, *in every instance*, correctly reflect the meaning of the Spirit? We must either conclude the likely inclusion of errors on the part of the writers or argue for verbal inspiration. The former we unhesitatingly reject; the latter we must and do accept. It follows that any "theory" which does not guarantee absolute

accuracy of the *substance* (the thoughts) and the form (the words) cannot and must not be accepted as the correct one. Paul taught verbal inspiration (II Tim. 3:16, 17), as did David (II Sam. 23:2), and our Lord (Matt. 10:16-20). The matter is settled in I Cor. 2:13, when Paul said, "Which things also we speak, not in words which men's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words." Thus, the "words" were not the words of men, but *the words of the Spirit*. This is verbal inspiration.

On the foregoing assumption, how do we account for the distinctive and differing styles of the various writers? Style, in writing, results from the manner in which thought is expressed; and, it exhibits itself in arrangement, in vocabulary, in sentence structure, etc.; but, it is grounded in forms of thought, and only finds expression in word. The objection thus weighs as heavily against so-called thought inspiration as verbal inspiration. Is it unreasonable that God, speaking through his creatures, should do so in harmony with the natural and normal operations of their minds? Is there anything remarkable about the fact that the writers were led to express the dictates of the Spirit in their usual and distinctive fashion? Style has nothing to do with the *truth* expressed but the selection of the correct words definitely does, and this could have been done only by the type of inspiration herein described.

Are Your Sins Covered?

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psa. 32:1).

The word "covered" is variously used in the Bible. It is sometimes used to signify protection. In a very beautiful and highly figurative expression, the Psalmist says, "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust" (Psa. 91:4). As a mother hen spreads her feathered wings and gives protection to her baby chicks, the passage pictures God as lending protection to those who trust him.

Then again the term is used to describe destruction of Tyre, God said, "I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee" (Ezk. 26:19).

But in the text chosen, "cover" does not mean destruction: it is used in a different sense. It signifies forgiveness. Figuratively, when one's sins are forgiven, they are said to be covered, hidden from view, put away, buried out of sight. Other figures used to illustrate the forgiveness of sins are the remission of sins, the blotting out of sins, the washing away of sins. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, "is the same as he "whose sin is covered."

Are your sins covered? There is always the possibility of a person's thinking his sins are covered when they are not.

Some deny they have sinned and think this is sufficient coverage. To them the fact that

they deny their sins ends the matter. Of course it doesn't. They simply deceive themselves and make God a liar (I Jno. 1:8, 10). In fact, they sin when they say they have no sin. Actually, there can be no covering of sins that are non-existent.

Some think their sins are covered when they seek to hide them well. But no one hides his sins that well. Adam, Achan, David, Ananias and Saphira are prime examples of total failure to keep secret sins secret. The Lord says, "he that covereth his sins shall not prosper" (Psa. 28:13). And again, "Be sure your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23).

Others imagine that if they refuse to think of their sins and forget about them, they are covered. So they take a sleeping pill and go to sleep to forget. Or they might take some stronger drug and, "go on a trip." Or maybe they seek to wash away their sins with a beer can, or a whiskey bottle.

Still others think time and distance cover sins. So they move away from the scene of their sins and among people who do not know about it, and wait for time to erase all memories and cover all sins.

But until God forgives our sins they are not covered from his sight. Though the sin was committed a thousand years ago, God remembers it as of yesterday (II Pet. 3:8); that is, until he forgives it. Then he covers it and forgets it (Heb. 8:13).

Learn how God covers your sins in Christ!
P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, Tennessee 38464



W.C. QUILLEN

The Promise Of The Father

Continued from page 1

and said, "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5).

"The promise of the Father" does not mean they would receive the Father himself, but something which the Father had promised them, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There are people today who think that when the apostles on the day of Pentecost told the people to be baptized and they would receive "the gift of the Holy Ghost," it means the Holy Spirit in person. But no one would conclude that the "promise of the Father" is the Father personally. It is plainly seen that "the promise" referred to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, just as "the gift of the Holy Ghost" refers to something to be given by the Holy Ghost.

The apostles did not fully understand, however, what Jesus meant, for they asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" (Acts 1:6). It is evident that they expected Jesus to restore the temporal kingdom, over which David and others had reigned, to them. There are people in the world today, even in the church of Christ, who teach that Jesus is going to come to earth to set up an earthly kingdom, with headquarters in Jerusalem, and reign for a thousand years; but that is not what Jesus taught. His answer to the apostles was, "It is not for you to know

the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..." e.i., power to preach his gospel without error, not to rule over a kingdom.

When the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost, as the Father had promised, they were fully qualified to speak by inspiration the words of the Lord. God's purpose of giving the apostles the baptism of the Holy Spirit was so they could be witnesses for Jesus Christ in all the world. The Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all things that Jesus had taught them and inspire every word which they would speak in their teaching. When they went into a country which spoke a language they did not know, the Holy Spirit equipped them to speak in that language without having studied it.

There are people who claim to be witnesses for Christ today; however, no person can be a witness for Christ today. When the apostles appointed Matthias and Barsabas from whom was to be chosen one to take the place of Judas, they said, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his

resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22).

We see, therefore, that in order for one to be a "witness" of Jesus Christ one must have associated with him personally before and after his crucifixion so that one could testify that he had done all the things which were claimed of him. We can only relay the testimony of those witnesses today, believing that what they witnessed is true because of the many miracles and signs which are told us of him and the apostles in the Bible. Their testimony gives us faith even though we haven't seen Jesus.

No man without the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit could do the things the apostles did. If it had been left to their memory, they would have forgotten many things that were necessary to be taught. Jesus told his apostles upon one occasion, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). The word BEAR means to retain or remember the things which Jesus had said. Thus, he was not going to leave it to their memory to teach his gospel throughout the world, but said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth..." (John 16:13).

When we are teaching the Bible today, we are relaying that which was made known unto the apostles by "the promise of the Father." 4915 Shelbyville Rd. Indianapolis, Ind. 46227

Studies In I Corinthians 11 (No. 2)

Continued from page 2

both men and women to make ours into an unisexual world. This is being done by the Women's Liberation Movement with all its clever and highly disguised machinations. It is being done by the strong and determined ERA movement that faces the state legislatures of our fifty states during this decade and that is so very close to passage right now. At the time of this writing they only lack three states and they have till March of 1979 to get these three into the ERA fold. This desire for an unisexual world is being pushed by both those who know exactly what they are doing and those who know what it is all about but have climbed aboard the bandwagon as naive devotees to what appears to them to be an inevitable occurrence and a succeeding movement.

Since the very beginning of time God has always placed strong and crystal clear lines of demarcation between man and woman. Biologically, men and women are different. Emotionally, men and women are different. Psychologically, men and women are different. A man does not have to possess a college degree to be well aware of these vital differences! God has always intended for there to be a clear distinction between them as touching the garments they wear. Yet now we have men who want to dress like women and be effeminate in their overall disposition. We have women who want to ape men in all they do. They are not satisfied in being women. They want to dress just like men, talk just like men, curse just like depraved men do, drink liquor just like abandoned men do, smoke just like men do. etc. If such mass emulation is considered to be successful, then they have reached the very pinnacle of success. "Baby, you've come a long way," a smoking advertisement featuring a smoking woman, has now arrived in full, infamous bloom.

The God of heaven has always expected there to be a clear cut difference between the hair styles of man and woman. The man is to have short hair; the woman is to have long hair. This does not mean she can never cut it; it just means that she is not to have it short as a man's should be and as most men at one time wore theirs. It means the man should not have his like a woman's. Yet in our day it is difficult to look at the back of two heads and determine whether they are both boys, both girls or one of each. Such cannot

be pleasing to the God of heaven who inspired the writing of I Corinthians 11:14-15 about the shame of long hair on men and the glory of long hair on a woman, we have no word to that effect. If so WHERE is it to be found? This modern day oddity, and that is about the kindest thing I can say in its regard, is underscored by three or four observations. (1) The situation is getting pretty ridiculous when the presence of a beard is about the only way one can tell a boy from a girl, at least from some distance removed. (2) A preacher is performing a marriage ceremony between two equally long-haired people. When he has trouble keeping in mind which one is which the situation is anything but amusing!! (3) The situation is quite bad when it takes a panel of preachers nearly forty-five minutes on a question and answer program of a lecturship to decide whether long hair on men and boys is wrong or not. I can answer in one word—YES! (4) A young person was recently causing some commotion in a public place. A man who was viewing the scene just remarked to the person sitting nearby, "That young man is causing a great deal of trouble isn't he?" Quite indignantly the other person responded by saying, "Sir, I will have you know that you are talking about my DAUGHTER! The man quickly apologized by saying, "I am sorry, Sir. I did not know you were her father." The person became even more indignant by saying, "I am not her father; I am her mother!" I just refuse to be embarrassed anymore for mistaking boys for girls and girls for boys. Not long ago I mistook a ten-year-old boy for a girl. He was indignant but his "girlish" haircut did not look very "boyish" to me! Not being old enough to shave yet there was not that distinguishing feature about him to aid me.

It was a shame or dishonor in Paul's day for men to have long hair that made them look like women. It is still a shame or dishonor for boys and men today to have long hair that makes them look like girls and women. Long hair on the woman in Paul's day was a glory to the woman; it is still a glory to the woman today. She should not attempt to ape what is approximately a man's hair style. He should not attempt to ape what is approximately a woman's hair style. Hair styles should present a cellar line of demarcation between the two sexes. If not, WHY

NOT?

It is simply a dodge of the basic issue at stake to raise such smokescreens as: (1) The Bible only says it is a shame or a dishonor for the man to have long hair; it does not say such is sinful. (2) How long is long? (3) Christ wore long hair didn't he and therefore such could not be wrong for boy and men to emulate in our era? (4) We will look odd and be out of style with short hair.

The very fact that the bible says such is a shame or a dishonor means that it is wrong. Show me a passage where the Bible says it is a glory and honor for a Christian man to have long hair and I will apologize for everthing I have written more on it than any other staff writer.

How long is long? When it is long like a woman's ought to be it is too long; when it is not short like a man's ought to be it is not short enough. This quibble, and that is all it is, deserves but little consideration.

Jesus Christ did not wear long hair: he was masculine in appearance. No one ever took him for a woman in his day. Surely he would not have violated the very precept that he had Paul write into the Sacred Canon just a few years after his sojourn on earth ended. The pictures of him are artistic imaginations and very poor ones at that since nearly everyone differs and no two ever have him looking alike!! We have no inspired portraits on canvass of what Jesus Christ looked like but that he was a man - not a woman - masculine - not feminine - we can rest assured.

We had better be concerned as to how we look in the sight of God and whether we are in proper style with his law as to do much worrying about the fickle styles designed by those who care nothing at all for anything the Almighty says or commands.

Paul recognizes that some would be contentious relative to these matters of the woman's being veiled. Yet he does not disallow the practice simply because one or more might be contentious in regard to this matter. The situation and background conditions at Corinth demanded that what Paul taught in this chapter should be observed. We will say more about this matter in our next article in these interesting studies in First Corinthians 11



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

Courtesy Is Required

While there is some controversy concerning the derivative of courteous as found in I Peter 3:8, it was recognized by the translators or the authorized version as belonging to the list of positive qualities Christians should possess: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion of one another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:..." The chief man among barbaric islanders lodged Paul and his shipwrecked



R.W. GRAY

companions, treating them "courteously" (philophronos-Acts 28:7). Thus, whether we think of the quality as lowliness of mind, kindness, or thoughtfulness, we are certain it is an ingredient essential to true Christian character. Even barbarians felt compelled to treat with kindness and courtesy those who visited in their midst (Acts 27:3; 28:7).

The current English definition of courtesy accords with the biblical concept: "Polite behaviour; thoughtfulness of others" (World Book Dic.). Who does not appreciate courtesy when he is on the receiving end? Those who travel among the churches on behalf of some good work know what it means to be rebuffed and what it means to be treated with thoughtfulness. It is true we seem unable to assist every project that seems worthy, but we are always able to treat with courtesy those who seek our aid. And if we fail to encourage them by receiving them with kindness we need not expect any better reception when we attempt to present our hopes and aims to others.

The attribute should be demonstrated in word and in deed. Those seeking opportunity to present their cause to another congregation are as obligated to act with courtesy as are those who receive them. It is unworthy of our calling, as well as the project we wish to impress upon others, when we display a spirit of arrogance, failing to seek an appointment with the realization we may impose upon the desires and

wishes of someone else.

This writer recalls the time when all who came into our midst as "guest" speakers, and especially those who had sought and obtained such a privilege from their brethren, demonstrated their appreciation for the opportunity afforded them. They seemed to realize that the elders willingly set aside their regularly planned activities, postponed the sermon prepared by their regular evangelist, and had invited the flock to "hear our visitor."

They seemed to sense, also, that their brother preacher had extended them a courtesy deserving of their response in kind. He was due no high sounding praise for having relinquished his time, but was due the common courtesy of the man speaking in his stead. One short sentence, whether privately or

publicly spoken, will usually satisfy the need to be courteous under such circumstances.

We are witnessing today, and I'm afraid detected often among our young men, a tendency to assume that the courtesy extended is deserved and therefore no reciprocal act or word is required. We ought to realize that we harm our benefactors less than our own cause if we fail to express appreciation to and for them.

Courtesy should be a two way street among Christians. While still in the "card class" we should have committed to memory and had stamped upon our souls the admonition of Paul who said, "...be ye kind one to another..." (Eph. 4:32). Think on these things. — P.O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30344.

Our Nation: Wise Or Foolish

BY DALTON KEY

Even the most casual glance at modern civilization will reveal that ours is perhaps the most elevated, educated, and sophisticated of all cultures, past or present. The United States, though unlike by many of her sister nations, is nevertheless respected in terms of achievement and advancement. We have become wise, as the world sees wisdom, but we have also become egotistical and conceited.

While wasting our time basking in the glory of our own temporal accomplishments, we ignore the giant steps backward which we are taking in the more important moral and spiritual realms. As a nation, we are busy educating minds. We seem oblivious to the fact that, in the process, we are also damning and damaging a good many souls. To be quite plain, we now have the smartest lost people the world has ever known. Is this a feat for which to show pride?

While wisdom may best describe our scientific and cultural plateau, we are indeed foolish spiritually. Men which the world view as wise are, for the most part, fools in the eyes of our God. The atheist who audaciously affirms, "I know there is no God," is

elevated upon the pedestal of intellectualism by the world of pseudo-science, yet God calls him a fool (Psalms 14:1; 53:1). Those who deny the existence of sin, and contend that one's conduct should best be determined by the circumstances in which he finds himself, are applauded and lauded as the wise men of our age. God, in no uncertain terms, has said, "Fools make a mock at sin" (Pro. 14:9). The world says, "If you would succeed, you must follow your instincts; do that which makes you feel good." God has decreed, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Pro. 28:26). The rich farmer in the twelfth chapter of Luke, who found comfort in his accumulation of worldly goods, would be seen by most of those about us today as a wise man indeed. Yet God calls him a fool (Luke 12:20).

How does God see you, my friend? I had much rather be a fool in the eyes of the world, than a fool in the eyes of my Creator. Remember, the hope for our spiritually corrupted nation lies in her acceptance of and adherence to the safe and sure standard of God. — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas, 67039.

Mailing Only to School



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Salvation By Grace

JOHNNY RAMSEY

In Ephesians 2:8-10 we have one of the most famous of all Bible passages. We learn that salvation is by grace through faith and that Christians are "created in Christ Jesus for good works." For years many have believed that the only ingredient in redemption is the grace of God. Such religionists misuse the context of Ephesians, chapter two. If a man is saved by "the unmerited gift of God" without any action on man's part why then are not all men saved? God's grace "hath appeared unto all men" (Titus 2:11), but millions are not saved (Matt. 7:13). Why? Because they will not accept the terms set forth by the Lord. In Hebrews 5:9 we find that Jesus saves those "who obey Him." Heaven is for those "who do His commandments" (Revelation 22:14). Christ said in Matthew 7:21-28 that not everyone who professed to be under His grace would be saved but only those who did the will of God.

Some would counter by saying: "If we do anything (or have to obey something in religion, we can no longer be saved by grace." But, friends, let us look at Ephesians, chapter two, once more. We shall notice the following points:

- (1) Who said it?
- (2) To whom was it written?
- (3) Where is God's grace found?

Paul is the one who was inspired to write that we are saved by grace. That was the way he was saved. But, how was Paul released from sins? When we find the answer to this question, we shall know what it means to be saved by grace! In Acts 9:6 Paul asked the Lord, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Jesus told him to go into the city of Damascus and there it would be told him "what thou must do." Years later, as Paul tells a great audience of his conversion, he relates in Acts 22:16 exactly what he as told that he must do: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

According to Paul's own testimony this is how he was saved. And he is the one who said that we are saved by grace. This is the way to be saved by grace. Incidentally, for those who almost call it blasphemy when baptism is mentioned in regard to salvation, please read again the clear message of Acts 22:16. Parallel passages are Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, and I Peter 3:21. Never forget: The very one who wrote that

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FROM

THE EDITOR

Imputed Righteousness



BOBBY DUNCAN

"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also" (Romans 4:11).

It is unfortunate that the idea of imputed righteousness has been misunderstood by many in the denominational world, and by some of our own number. It is erroneously believed by some that to impute something to one is to credit him with something that is not really his or which belongs to another. And so when we read that righteousness is imputed to one some get the idea that this means that God gives us credit for being righteous even though we are not righteous. Some believe that God takes the righteousness of Christ and transfers it to our account, thus giving us credit for righteousness which in reality belongs to Christ.

Such an idea of imputed righteousness is not taught in the Bible. A careful reflection upon this idea of righteousness will reveal its error. In the first place, as R.L. Whiteside has well said, this doctrine "discredits the gospel of God's saving power, and belittles the merits and efficacy of the blood of Christ, for it teaches that some corruption remains in the

regenerate, but he is counted righteous because he is clothed with the righteousness of Christ. That is 'play like' theology" (*A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome*, Pp. 98-99). In the second place, if the word *impute* means to credit to one that which belongs to another, then the implication from verse eight is that God charges some with sin who are not guilty thereof: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

An understanding of the meaning of two words, *impute* and *righteous*, will go a long way toward clearing our thinking with reference to this matter. To impute something to one does truly mean to credit it to his account; but the idea of crediting something to his account which is not really his is certainly not inherent in the word. When God imputes sin to one he simply charges one with sins he has actually committed. When God imputes righteousness to one he simply credits him with being what he actually is, i.e., righteous.

One who is righteous is one who is not guilty of any unrighteousness. Those who have been saved by the gospel of Christ are not guilty of unrighteousness. Their sins have all been taken away by the blood of Christ, and they are righteous. Since they are righteous, God imputes righteousness to them, or gives them credit for being righteous.

Mind you, the Bible does not teach that Christians are righteous because the righteousness of Christ has been transferred to their account. It rather teaches that they are righteous because the Son of God died upon the cross and shed his blood so that sins might be forgiven; and those who are forgiven of sins are just as guiltless as if they had never done a single wrong.

Studies In. I Corinthians 11

(No. 3)

We are now engaged in a timely series of articles regarding a portion of Sacred Scripture that has given much difficulty to Bible students for many, many years. It deals with the covering for the woman in I Corinthians 11. In our previous two articles I set the verses before you that touch this theme and raised a number of questions along with the answers that naturally come from this controversial chapter. Now we are ready to raise a question about what the particular situation was in Corinth and the exact nature of the problem as it touched the Corinthian people.

It is quite evident that Paul is dealing with the teaching and praying situation at Corinth. How do we know this? Because he mentions prophesying and praying in the context. He says, "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

shaven" (I Cor. 11:4-5). Preaching or teaching in the regular worship assembly of necessity involves authority. Where both men and women are present authority over man is involved. In the work of preaching and teaching gospel preachers are told, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit. 2:15). Hence no restrictions are thus placed upon the man as to whether he can or cannot teach with women present. He can. That point is settled beyond any point of controversy. There is a kind of teaching that the Christian woman is commanded to do. In Titus 2:3-5 Paul commanded the older women to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." But there is a kind of teaching that the woman is prohibited from doing. Paul states in I Timothy 2:12, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." It is quite obvious and exceedingly plain that the type of teaching the woman is not to do is the type or the kind that would involve her in exercising authority or dominion over the man. Were she to preach in the regular worship assembly or teach a mixed class of both men and women she would be doing the very thing that Paul forbade her to do.

In addition to Paul's instructions relative to
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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).

"A 'campaign' was conducted in our area this past year, in connection with which an open forum was conducted. The evangelist was asked the question, 'To what extent or limit can a man be used in areas of service in the church who advocates the use of instrumental music in the worship of God,' and he answered, 'To the extent of limit of an elder or deacon.'"

The answer is as false as it is ungrammatical! It grieves me, beyond expression, that men of influence among us today are not only tolerating error, they are encouraging it by such remarks at the querist quotes above. Instrumental music in Christian worship is wholly without sanction in the New Testament; its introduction is as officious intermeddling with the will of God: and its use

involves grave sin; yet, this "evangelist," by his answer, encouraged not only the use of this man by the church, he declared that this advocate of error might properly serve as an elder or deacon! I am simply unable to fathom such madness; I can only conclude that, in this instance, the brother has taken leave of his senses.

Either the brother himself no longer believes that instrumental music in Christian worship is sinful, in which case he ought to be disciplined; or, he thinks it is in order to put the sheep in care of wolves who will "devour" them in short order. Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose won the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them..."

(John 10:11, 12). The "evangelist" alluded to above is more guilty than the hireling; the hireling flees when the wolf approaches; but, the evangelist would turn the sheep over to the wolf. A man who *advocates* the use of instrumental music in Christian worship *ought to be withdrawn from*, not appointed an elder, or deacon! And, an "evangelist," or anybody who teaches that such an advocate of error may properly be put over the affairs of the congregation is himself a dangerous and false teacher. If God looked with such disfavor upon Jeroboam "who made Israel to sin," by the use of false teaching and teachers, what must he think of men who would similarly corrupt the worship of the New Testament church? (I Kings 12:25-31; 15:34; 16:26; 22:52).

The Blood Of Christ

Central to the concept of salvation by grace through faith is the theme of the vicarious suffering of Christ, the innocent dying for the guilty, the doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:28; Rev. 1:5; 5:9, 10; I Pet. 1:18, 19). Yet the contemporary attitude of modernists toward the blood of Christ is a rejection of the necessity of a blood atonement. The religious modernist thinks



HUGH FULFORD

that it is degrading to man as a rational intelligent being to suggest that he needs any such thing as redemption or salvation from sin. In fact, the reality of sin (in spite of the testimony of the Scriptures) is being denied by modernists. The "salvation" of the human race is being attempted by statesmen through moral legislation, by educators through learning, by philosophers through speculation, and by scientists through research and discovery. These things are good in their own places for they bring numerous benefits into our earthly life, but they only build up and embellish the "outward man" and leave the "inner man" untouched, unchanged, and consequently, unsaved!

Furthermore, the vacarious atonement of Christ for man's sins is repulsive to the modernist because he does not like to think that someone else had to suffer in his behalf and that he is therefore eternally indebted to that one. Yet the Scriptures are bold to affirm that "apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). God has always required a blood sacrifice for sin — from the sacrifice of Cain and Abel to the time of the supreme sacrifice for sin of Christ on the cross. Animal blood was used to consecrate and dedicate the services and ceremonies of the Old Testament tabernacle (Heb. 9:19-22). The blood of animals was used in the Old Testament as a sacrifice for sins though it was "impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). It remained therefore for Christ, through his own blood, to enter into the holy place and obtain eternal redemption for us

(Heb. 9:12).

The blood of Christ is essential to all Christ's body "walking in the light" or the Old Testament received their cleansing from sin by the blood of Christ. "And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the inheritance" (Heb. 9:15). Alien sinners today can be cleansed of sin only by the blood of Christ. "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). The child of God can be cleansed of his sins only by the blood of Christ. To such individuals the apostle John said, "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" (I John 1:7). Just as the blood in the human body flows to a cut or an injury, cleansing it and purifying it of all foreign substances, even so the blood of Christ ever flows to the members of his spiritual body — the church — to cleanse and remove all particles of sin. This blessing, of course, is conditioned upon members of Christ's body "walking in the light" or living according to the truth. Now, since the blood of Christ touched those who lived under the first covenant to take away their sins, and since the alien sinner today has redemption only by the blood of Christ, and since the child of God can be cleansed of his sins only by the blood of Christ, then it follows that **EVERY PERSON WHO IS SAVED WILL NECESSARILY BE SAVED BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST!**

But, the redemptive power of Christ's blood is confined to his body, the church. Unfortunately, the world has never recognized the astonishing value placed by Christ upon the church. Some who say that salvation is by the blood of Christ place no emphasis upon the church or body of Christ. People are heard to make such statements as, "O, I'm just as good as many church members. There are so many hypocrites in the church. I'll just take my chance outside the church." Others try to depend on their own morality, their own goodness, to save them. Some will depend on their lodges and fraternal orders to save them. "If I live up to the demands of my lodge, I'll be saved. Our standards are high; they will make a good man out of anybody." Whether intended

or not, such attitudes as these show utter contempt for the blood of Christ. These attitudes say, in effect, "The death of Christ, and the shedding of his blood were unnecessary; I can be saved without them."

The truth is that one can appropriate to his life the benefits of Christ's blood only by being members of his spiritual body, the church. The church is the blood-purchased number, those who have been cleansed of their sins by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:38). Those outside the church are not yet in contact with the blood of Christ and are thus still in their sins. If I buy a suit for \$100 it is obvious that I must wear the suit to get my money out of it. The same is true of the church and the blood of Christ. Christ purchased the church with his blood to get any spiritual benefit out of the blood of Christ one must become a member of the church.

How then, specifically, does one reach the blood of Christ? Let it be emphasized that man can never earn or merit his salvation; he can never so work as to put God in debt to him. There are, however, certain conditions with which one must comply in order to receive the benefits of the blood of Christ. It should be noted that Christ shed his blood in his death (John 19:33, 34). Thus, one must enter into the death of Christ to reach his cleansing blood. Paul explains that this is done by being baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3, 4). Baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), washes away sins (Acts 22:16), and saves (I Pet. 3:21) because it brings one into contact with the blood of Christ which alone has the power to remove the guilt of sin. This is why baptism also is said to be into the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:12) where, as we learned earlier, the blood of Christ is now contained.

*The world should rejoice to know that,
There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins.
And sinners plunged beneath that
flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.*

Have you been "plunged beneath that flood" by being buried with Christ in baptism? Only by doing so and continuing to walk in the light can the blood of Christ cleanse you from all sin.
— 101 Dow Dr., Shelbyville, Tenn.

Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 3)

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teaching in this context we also observe that he spoke of praying. In I Timothy 2:8 Paul willed that men (obviously men who were on praying grounds and pleading terms) are to pray everywhere. They can and must pray whether both men and women are present, when only men are present and when only one man is present with a number of women present. There is a kind of praying that the woman can do. Both men and women are to pray without ceasing as we learn from I Thessalonians 5:17. There is a kind of praying the woman is not to do. Paul says in I Timothy 2:8, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." The kind of praying the woman is forbidden to do is the type where she would exercise authority or dominion over the man. As long as she is not doing this, then she may lead or direct the prayer without going contrary to I Timothy 2:8. This would include meetings where just women are present or one woman is present with a number of children—either her own or the children of others.

A few words need to be said in regard to prophesying. None of the spiritual gifts are mentioned in I Corinthians 12. In the first and tenth verses we learn that prophecy is one of these nine gifts. Prophecy demands a direct revelation from God. Prophecy is just as much a miracle as healing the sick, stopping a storm at sea or raising the dead. Through the miraculous gift of prophecy God revealed his will to mankind. Prophecy therefore has to do with the very words of the New Testament as they came from God's mind and were being conveyed to humanity. Those who prophesied at Corinth, whether men or women, had the miraculous gift to do so. Since prayer and prophecy are so closely connected in this context it is altogether possible and very probable indeed that the prayers herein mentioned were also miraculous prayers. Since we have a number of prayers recorded in the New Testament as in Acts 4 and in various of the epistles, would they not be inspired prayers? Surely no one will say that the recorded prayers we have in the Bible lack inspiration to undergird them!! A great student of the Bible has well said, "The original prayers of the early Christians were likely the products of the spiritual gifts. In fact, miraculous spiritual gifts were probably (originally) related to every phase of Christian work and worship (Cf. Rom 12:6-8)" (Roy Deaver).

The learned Deaver again says in a section that deals with "Special Gatherings" and again I quote from him as he writes: "These verses (4,5) clearly show that SOME Christian women in the church in Corinth were in position to exercise the gifts of prayer and prophecy. But 'prophecy' was God's spiritual gift for edifying the CHURCH (I Cor. 14:4,22). But, the Christian woman could not exercise her gifts of prayer and prophecy in the regular public worship assembly, for such would assume the very authority which she was forbidden to exercise. Therefore, there had to be another kind of gathering in which her gifts could be exercised—meetings with Christian women (and children, perhaps). These Christian women would receive edification, and thus a contribution would be made to the edification of the whole church."

WHAT THEN WAS THE PROBLEM AT CORINTH?

Brother Deaver again says and I quote from him: "What was the special problem in Corinth (so far as concerns the verses under consideration)? Some of the Christian women who possessed the gifts of prayer and prophecy were appearing in these special gatherings (of women and children) *unveiled*. Such would not be the proper example; such would not be the right kind of influence for the other women. They had not cut their hair; they had simply put aside their veils. The fact that no men would be present in these gatherings perhaps contributed to their disposition to case off the veil. In view of the general situation in

Corinth, and in view of the significance of the veil, it would be difficult to accept the view that the Christian woman of Corinth would even *think* about leaving off the veil in assemblies in which men would be present. THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA has this interesting comment (page 3047): 'In N.T. times, however, among both Greeks and Romans, reputable women wore a veil in public and to appear without it was an act of bravado (or worse); Tarsus, St. Paul's home city, was especially noted for strictness in this regard. Hence, St. Paul's indignant directions in I Cor. 11:2-16, which have their basis in the special proprieties of the time.'"

Did Paul then command the veil for Corinthian women? In somewhat greater detail the question would read, did Paul thus command the Christian woman at Corinth to be veiled when she appeared in public places, in the worship assembly and in the places where she might teach and pray with only other women and children present? Indeed he did and for very strong reasons. It was a custom then and Paul commends it as being good within itself. In view of

such it would have been an exhibition of disrespect toward her head (man) had she refused to have worn such. It would have shown her obvious lack of proper submission and subordination to man as her head. In doing this she also was disrespecting man's head who was Christ and Christ's head who was God. In going without the veil she would be showing disrespect toward the angels that are mentioned in verse ten. The removal of the veil would show her evident lack of propriety. Quite obviously her going without the veil or the covering would be contrary to the practice of the churches in that day and to the set of instructions that Paul gave in this section.

(Note: For those who would like to read the entirety of Brother Deaver's material on I Corinthians 11, it appeared in two installments in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE for October 21, 1971, and December 23, 1971, under the heading, "Christian Women And Red Purses" Part One and Part Two. I am grateful to have fine material like this available and from which to draw in this series of studies in I Corinthians 11. RRT.) — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Salvation By Grace

Continued from page 2

salvation is by grace was himself immersed in water to wash away his sins!

To whom was Ephesians 2:8 addressed? To the Ephesians, of course. The first time Paul entered Ephesus, the first thing he did was to baptize twelve men into Christ (Acts 19:1-6). They formed the nucleus of the church in Ephesus to whom Paul wrote: "Salvation is by grace."

Where is God's grace found? In Ephesians 2:13-18 we read three different times that salvation is in or

through Christ. In Titus 3:4-7 we find the same thought. Yes, salvation by grace is found in Christ. In Galatians 3:27 we learn how to get into Christ:

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Friends, it comes out the same way every time because the Bible does not contradict itself. We must be obedient to Christ in order to be saved by God's grace. — 8900 Manchaca Rd. Austin, Tex. 78745

To My Brethren Who Smoke.

MARK BASS

Smoking is a filthy habit! Most smokers wish they had never developed the habit. Many realize that it is detrimental to their bodies as well as their souls (1 Cor. 6:19). And yet they refuse to give up their "weed". Obviously their pleasure means more to them than their bodies or their souls!

To those of you who do smoke, I realize that if you have your heart set on a gradual suicide, then I cannot stop you. But let me make one request. . . .

Please don't smoke before or after church or Bible study. Why? For one thing, someone has to come along behind you and pick up your litter. Would you appreciate someone's throwing garbage in your yard or driveway? I'm sure God doesn't like it any more than you would.

Another thing, we have many young children present for services on Sunday. They are very impressionable. Do you want them to develop your "problem"? Read the following verses relating to one's example: I Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7; Matt. 5:16.

Tell me, would you entice your child (or any child for that matter) to drink arsenic? Of course you wouldn't; then why teach them to inhale the deadly poison of nicotine?

But one other reason: How do you think it looks to our visitors and to those passing by? Not too impressive to say the least. I realize that babies and small children need bottles or pacifiers to make it

through Bible study and worship. But it appears as if we have some adults who need pacifiers too! Maybe some of you mothers have an extra at home. . . — P.O. Box 84 Rives, TN 38253

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Studies In First Corinthians 11

(No. 4)

Since the veil was a part of the Christian woman's clothing a few words might be in order as to the purpose of clothing. We wear clothing for the purposes of decency (at least a few still do), comfort, and for the sake of ornamentation. For the Christian woman all garments worn while she appears in public should be decent and totally void of lust-provoking attempts. The wearing of clothing for comfort has to do with



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

protection against elements-for purposes of warmth and coolness. Garments should be of a conservative nature relative to decoration and should avoid that which is excessive or lavish.

Garments can also be directional as touching the attitude or feeling the wearer may wish to leave upon the beholder. Absence of one or more garments can do the same. Such was very true in Paul's day and especially in Corinth. The veiled woman left one impression upon the beholder; the unveiled woman left an entirely different impression upon the beholder. Corinth in the first century was wicked, sinful, corrupt and dissolute city. It was the capital of vice and sensuality in its age. Corinth in the first century was home to the temple of Aphrodite Pandemos and the sensualized worship that such encouraged. This paganistic temple had 1,000 women who served as religious harlots. When they appeared on the streets of Corinth they went unveiled. They also had inscribed on the soles of their sandals the words that were left for each man to see written in the dust or sand: "Follow me." When I was in the remains of ancient Corinth on a trip to Bible Lands in the winter of 1970 our Grecian guide told us of this practice by these morally abandoned women as a description of this type of fleshly worship was given. It should also be kept firmly fixed in mind that the

punishment for harlotry in that day was the shaving of the head. This will explain much that Paul said in the context of this chapter. It should be obvious to every reader why Paul forbade the Christian women to go without their veil. When they did so, they left the impression upon beholders that they belonged to the temple of Aphrodite Pandemos. For that very same reason it would have been extremely sinful for any Christian woman to have left in a departing footsteps the words inscribed, "Follow me." This also would have branded her as belonging to these sinful and wicked women who sold their bodies to lustful men in the name of religion. Such surely would bring shame and reproach on the church.

In the second place, and this is quite vital also, the absence of the veil added up to the woman's defiance of her proper role of being in subjection to man. The veiled woman exhibited the fact that she was in subordination to man as her head just as the man who worshipped with uncovered head showed his subordination to Christ, his head. The unveiled woman showed her insubordination to man as her head just as the man who worshipped with a covered head exhibited his insubordination to his head, the Christ. When Christian women laid aside the veil they were sure to bring shame and reproach on the church of the Lord.

The veiled Christian woman in Corinth eloquently exhibited the fact that there was no connection at all between her and the ordinary prostitutes who belonged to the temple of Aphrodite Pandemos. The veiled Christian woman in Corinth evidenced the fact that she was in proper subjection to man as her divinely authorized head and wanted to know of this submissive role in her part. She, that is the veiled Christian woman at Corinth, wanted all to know that she desired to be in perfect harmony with a deeply meaningful custom of that day-one that was inherently right-and did not intend to be offensive to others. The veiled Christian woman at Corinth showed she did not wish to bring any measure of disrespect to the Lord's church in the city of heathenism and paganism. She did not wish to be offensive either to God or to his angels.

What about a woman's wearing a veil or a covering on her head in our day? What about the wearing of a

hat in our day: Let us deal first with the veil. The wearing of a veil by a woman today would not ordinarily or customarily be done in America in the twentieth century. Let us remember that WE live in America in the twentieth century-not in Corinth of the first century. The wearing of a veil in our day would give no indication at all about whether the woman was pure or impure. Either its being worn or not worn would not brand her either as a prostitute or a pure woman. The wearing of the veil gives no indication as to whether the wearer is in submission to man or out of submission to man as her proper head. The wearing of the veil gives no indication at all about whether the wearer is concerned or totally unconcerned about being offensive to God, to angels or to human beholders. The wearing of the veil gives no indication as to whether the wearer is concerned or unconcerned about bringing shame and reproach upon the Lord's church.

What about the hat for our day? First of all it should be observed that Paul talks about a veil-not a hat-in 1 Corinthians 11. Before this chapter could be made applicable to the woman's wearing a hat in worship, it would have to be proved that Paul has in mind a hat. Such is to read too much into the passage. In the next place it would have to be proved that our society attaches the same significance to the woman's wearing of a hat that ancient Corinth and other places of the first century did to her wearing of a veil then. We cannot tell from looking at a woman with a hat or without a hat whether she is impure or pure, whether she is in submission to man or insubordinate to man, whether she is concerned about the Lord's church and its reputation or totally unconcerned, whether she wants to be offensive to God and to angels or inoffensive to them. Reader friends, the hat in our Western society just does not have that significance nor has it ever had. McGarvey and Pendleton have well said: "In Western countries a woman's hat has never had any symbolism whatever. We see nothing in Paul's argument which requires us to make it symbolic...The principle, however, still holds good that the woman is subordinate to the man and should not make any unseemly, immodest.

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Words Of Truth

I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness. -- Acts 26:25

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The Heinous Sin Of Hypocrisy

JOHN G. SHAVER

All forms of sin are ugly and detestable in the sight of God, and His children. Hardly a day goes by when one does not hear a preacher denounce sin in a general way. But seldom do we hear specific sin denounced as it should be. All people know that murder, theft, rape and drunkenness are contrary to God's wishes just to mention a few. Many times over we read of these sins being committed, and voice our displeasure and contempt for them. But often, we fail to see the forest for the trees. Some among us are quick to denounce, but slow to see. We seem to live good Christian lives outwardly, but are filled with dead men's bones. A sin that many are afflicted with in our day and time is hypocrisy, and we seem to be complacent and indifferent in reference to it.

Hypocrisy is denounced in God's word, and is grievous in His sight. This sin is often found in God's word describing ungodly men. Jesus, God's Son, denounced hypocrisy in Matthew 23. Peter, by inspiration, warned that among other things, hypocrisy should be laid aside (I Pet. 2: 1). Paul warned that some would depart from the faith speaking lies in hypocrisy (I Tim. 4:1-2). On no other class of people did Jesus pronounce such severe condemnations as he did on the hypocrites of his day. Yes, the sin of hypocrisy was a great problem among religious people in the days of Christ and his apostles, and it is just as great a problem in our day and time.

A hypocrite is one who plays or acts a part, assumes a counterfeit character, hence is acting or pretending. The hypocrite is one who is content to wear his Christianity as he would a coat. He can put it on at any time, or just as easily take it off. He goes along with the crowd, and has little or no conviction, moral or doctrinal. He wears the name of Christ, but serves his master, Satan. One who is in this condition does the church more harm than good. He cannot "walk worthy of the vocation" where-with he was called (Eph. 4:1), nor does his light so shine that God is glorified (Mt. 5:16). A

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FROM THE EDITOR

We Need To Be Specific



BOBBY DUNCAN

There seems to be a calculated effort on the part of some to renounce error in general without ever giving a hint as to the identity of any specific error. Sin in general is renounced; but specific sins are seldom named. With such renunciation of sin and error one may preach the truth forcefully without ever incurring the displeasure of any of his auditors. Unfortunately, however, he will preach the truth without any of his auditors ever learning the truth with reference to any specific sin or error.

No one ever gets into trouble or loses any of his popularity by pointing out that people should not sin. The trouble comes when one begins to name specific sins. One can get by without any difficulty preaching against drunkenness; but he is likely to have trouble if he condemns social drinking. Abusing one's body is admitted by all to be a sin; but every preacher knows things are more peaceful if he never mentions smoking cigarettes. It is all right to preach against immodest apparel; but to preach against public swimming or wearing shorts may create a furor. To preach against lasciviousness is very much in order; but it may be dangerous to mention dancing. Every preacher should warn against the dangers of false doctrine; but some get excited if the preacher

identities any specific doctrine as being false. It is interesting to observe that Jesus indicted certain ones of "teaching of doctrines the commandments of men" only after he had cited a clear-cut discrepancy between what they taught and what God commanded (Matthew 15:4-9). Is it not in order for us to cite discrepancies between what some practice today and what is taught in the word of God?

When Paul rebuked immorality in the church at Corinth he did not merely point out that immorality is sinful. He made it very plain that he was talking about a specific kind of immorality: "...that one should have his father's wife" (I Corinthians 5:1). When he condemned division in the church at Corinth, he made sure there would be no misunderstanding concerning that of which he wrote: "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" (1:12). Should faithful preachers of the word in our generation not be specific when condemning sin and error?

Peter made it plain to his hearers on Pentecost that they were guilty of the sin of crucifying the Christ. He said: "Him...ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). In Acts 4:10 he referred to "Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified," and in Acts 5:30 he referred to him as "Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree." You see, Peter was specific in naming the sin he was condemning in his hearers. Can we afford to be otherwise in our preaching?

Brethren, we must be specific in our teaching of the truth and refutation of error. Certainly we should not be unkind or rude. But to fail to be specific in condemning sin is a demonstration of cowardice.

Who Cannot Sin?



CURTIS R. DOWDY

The apostle John wrote in the first epistle, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he CANNOT sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9). This passage has been used by some religious folk in an effort to prove the Calvinistic doctrine commonly known as "once saved, always saved." Their reasoning (?) looks like this:

- 1. One born of God cannot sin.
- 2. If one does sin,
- 3. He was never born of God!

or

- 1. One born of God cannot sin.
- 2. If one does commit adultery, murder, etc.,
- 3. It in no way affects his salvation!

Nevertheless a question must be raised, does John teach what some have reasoned from the above passage? When one is a student of the Bible and has no creed (written or unwritten) to

uphold, that person can be objective to the point of accepting truth when and wherever it is found. With that in mind a quick survey of the previous chapters of First John will enlighten our understanding.

CHAPTER ONE TEACHES

- 1. To walk in darkness (sin) is to forfeit fellowship with God (v. 6).
- 2. To walk in light (obedience) is to have fellowship with God and cleansing from sin (v. 7).
- 3. To say we have no sin is a lie (v. 8).
- 4. To confess our sins is to receive forgiveness (v. 9).
- 5. To refuse to confess our sins is to call God a liar (v. 10).

CHAPTER THREE TEACHES

- 1. It is the desire of God's Child not to sin (v. 1).
- 2. Should God's child sin there is an advocate and propitiation, Christ (vs. 1,2).

CHAPTER THREE TEACHES

- 1. Sin is the transgression of the law (GOSPEL

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What do you regard as the best and most informative published discussion on Instrumental Music in Worship?"

The greatest debate ever held on the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, was conducted in the huge Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, Tenn., May 31-June 5, 1923. The disputants were N.B. Hardeman, representing the churches of Christ; and Ira M. Boswell, of the Christian Church. There were five sessions of the debate; each session was of two hours' length; and from six to seven thousand people were in attendance at each of the sessions.

F. B. Srygley, who wrote the introduction to the published debate, says, "There was, perhaps, more interest shown in this debate, especially by those who do not use the instrument of music in worship, than has been shown over the discussion of any other religious question which has ever been held in the city of Nashville."

Dr. Boswell, who attempted to defend the use of such instruments in Christian worship, represented the highest type of scholarship available to those whom he defended. He came to Nashville with a great array of scholarly evidence, the design of which was to show that the Greek word *psallo*, translated "make melody" in Eph. 5:19, includes the idea of an instrument.

Brother Hardeman gave a brief resume of word, traced its history through the centuries and showed that it once signified the twanging of a bowstring, then the twitching of a carpenter's line, later the touching of the strings of an instrument; and, finally, in the New Testament, to *sing*. He conceded that, metaphorically, the instrument is in the word. Then said he, "But the question tonight, and the only one for consideration, is: What, under the New Testament, is the instrument that accompanies the singing? The apostle Paul, in his peerless

announcement, settled that once for all. He says we are to sing unto the Lord and '*psallo*' with the heart—not with the fingers, not with the plectron, but with the heart; and, therefore the heart is the instrument that accompanies the singing" (Page 43).

The effect of this, in the Boswell camp, was nothing short of catastrophic. Rendered utterly useless was the vast array of Lexicographical evidence designed to prove what no one questioned—that *psallo* had, in ages past, embodied a number of meanings, one of which included the plucking of the strings of an instrument. With irresistible logic Brother Hardeman said, "The word *psallo*, like the word *baptizo* carries with it always the idea of pluck or twang an instrument. No question about that. The point at issue with us is: What is the instrument as used in the New Testament? The word '*baptizo*' doesn't carry the precise instrument with it. It might be a baptism of the Holy Ghost; it might be immersion of suffering; it might be a baptism of fire. The precise element used in baptizing must be learned from the context. Just so with reference to '*psallo*.' The idea of pluck or twang the instrument is in the word, but the precise instrument that is necessary to the fulfillment of it in each case, depends on the context. If you refer to the hair, the hair becomes the instrument; if you refer to the bowstring, the bowstring is the instrument. But in the New Testament, when you refer to singing, God said the heart is the instrument; and that is the position, if you please, that the word demands tonight" (Pages 57, 58).

From this logical and irresistible approach Boswell retreated in obvious and conscious defeat. Pathetically, he continued to use his prepared material to prove what no one doubted; and he continued to disregard, because he could not answer, Brother Hardeman's sole contention—the instrument is not in the word, the word does not designate the type or kind of

stringed instrument, which must always be supplied; and, in the New Testament Paul declares that the instrument is the heart.

In corroboration of this, Brother Hardeman produced lexical evidence of the highest type that the word "*psallo*," in the New Testament, means simply to *sing*. (So Thayer, Bagster, Sophocles, etc) Even more significant, the forty-seven scholars who gave to the English-speaking world the most influential translation ever published (perhaps, ever shall be) in our tongue (the King James' translation), excluded the idea of a literal mechanical instrument, rendering the word, "make melody." Nearly three hundred years later, the one hundred one scholars who gave to the world the Revised Version, generally conceded to be the most accurate translation into the English tongue ever made, saw no reason to dissent from their illustrious predecessors. And, commented Brother Hardeman: "Most of these belonged to churches which use mechanical instruments; and yet when they rely upon their scholarship, they translated '*psallo*' to sing to make melody in our hearts!"

The impact of this debate in Nashville and Middle Tennessee was far-reaching. Today the Christian Church, in this area, has drifted farther and farther away from the Bible and toward *modernism* until its constituents have lost practically all regard for, and knowledge of, the Restoration movement, while more than one hundred churches of Christ in the Nashville area alone, continue to advocate a pure faith and faultless practice in all matters religious.

The "Hardeman-Boswell Discussion" is an indispensable handbook to those who would acquaint themselves with the issues involved in the use of instrumental music in the worship. It has recently been reprinted and is available from the Gospel Advocate Company, P.O. Box 150, Nashville, Tennessee 37202.

Who Cannot Sin?

Continued from page 2

LAW) (v. 4).

2. One who abides in Christ cannot abide in sin (v. 6).
3. To hold on to sin is to remain with the Devil (v. 8).
4. To be born of God means that one cannot sin (v. 9).

From the above we learn that one who is born of God IS NOT to sin (the mind has changed toward sin, one doesn't want to sin), but when he sins and it is confessed through the advocate, Christ, upon the merits of His blood, sins are forgiven.

There was in the minds of some a question that related to the grace of God and to sin. Paul had made the point that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20), and that where sin had reigned grace now reigned (Romans 5:21). Since God's grace was such a wonderful and powerful thing this led some erroneously to conclude that sin was good because it provided fresh opportunities for grace to operate. Paul quickly came to grips with the problem when in Romans chapter six (read the entire chapter), he wrote in

verses one and two: "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Note carefully please the contrast in verse two, "dead to sin" and "live therein." In short, when one does die to sin he cannot go on living in it, and when he commits sins he confesses unto God and God forgives on the merit of THE blood.

Little wonder that John says that God's CHILDREN cannot sin. Surely he would not say to go ahead and sin. When I say to our children, "You cannot go out to play," does that mean they don't have the ability? Suppose that after I had said you cannot go out to play one did anyway. That would prove ability, but it would also be disobedient. When John said "CANNOT" he was not writing of ABILITY, but of RESPONSIBILITY. As God's children we have the responsibility not to sin; yet, when we do sin God has provided for cleansing. John correctly shows that God's people will not live in sin as long as the seed remains in them. The contrast is between living in sin and falling into sin. This contrast is illustrated by the

following:

Once upon a time a man dug and prepared a large mud hole into which he moved all his belongings. There he lived his life reveling in the mud. One day a stranger passed that way and stumbled into the mud hole. The man who lived there invited the stranger to move in and stay with him, but the stranger refused and said, "I CANNOT." He immediately climbed out, took a bath and dressed in clean clothing.

Now, you make the application and you will understand WHO CANNOT SIN.—P.O. Box 456 Obion, Tenn. 38240.

Subscriber To The Words Of Truth

Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 4)

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vaunting display of an independence which she does not possess."

Do these verses have significance for us today? Indeed they do! (1) God is still the head of Christ; Christ is still the head of man; man is still the head of woman, the women's liberation and ERA movements to the contrary notwithstanding!! (2) Man is not to do anything that will dishonor his head, the Christ, but should do all to honor and glorify his head, the Christ. (3) Woman should not do anything that will dishonor her head, the man, but should do all that will bring honor to him. (4) It is proper and right to be in harmony with customs that are right. We should always avoid the unnecessary offense of breaking these good customs when they prevail. (5) We should not bring reproach upon the church of the Lord by the violation of customs that are good. (6) We should never dress in any fashion that will identify us with impure people or that will bring offense to God and his hold cause on earth.

Just suppose in some city of our country that on every Wednesday every loose and lax woman in that town wore a bright red blouse with a white carnation attached. This she did to let it be known that she was lewd and lascivious in her moral make-up and one with whom an interested male could be successful with a carnal conquest. Upon the basis of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 I would argue and argue forcefully that it would be a sin for any Christian woman in that town to wear on any Wednesday a

bright red blouse with a white carnation attached. The principle would be the same as that for which Paul argued so strongly in this very context. If not, WHY NOT?

It has long been my understanding of this passage that it falls into the same exact category of saluting one another with a holy kiss. (Rom. 16:16). Paul did not originate the kiss as a manner of greeting; he did regulate it though. Paul did not originate the custom of the veiled woman in his day; he did seek to make sure that no Corinthian Christian woman violated this custom in view of what it would do for the church's reputation in the community and for her own reputation. I am very pleased to note some sage words from the scholarly Guy N. Woods and his great classic books on QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS OPEN FORUM. Brother Woods says on page 96: "Did Paul intend that this practice (of women covering their heads in worship) should be always and everywhere observed: I once thought so, but upon more mature study and much reflection on this matter I now believe that (a) Paul did not originate the custom of covered heads for women BUT SANCTIONED A PRACTICE ALREADY RECOGNIZED; and, (b) that while the HEADSHIP relation continues, the manner by which it is indicated does not, and that Christian women who sit in public assemblies today with uncovered heads, do not thereby evidence insubordination to men.

"I believe this matter is in exactly the same category as the instruction of the same apostle regarding the kiss as a mode of greeting (Rom.

16:16). 'Salute one another with a holy kiss.' Here is an edict addressed to the church in Rome. It bade them salute (greet) one another; and the method designated is by 'a holy kiss.' Are we to suppose that it was the intent of the Holy Spirit to fix this mode of greeting upon the church henceforth; and, are all of us today who do not follow this mode of greeting in rebellion against God? I do not think so; it was not a method of greeting which the apostle originated; he simply took what was already done and sanctified it-made it a HOLY form of greeting. Similarly, the 'covering' to which Paul alludes in 1 Cor. 11 was established and recognized widely and he ruled that Christian women were not to veer from a practice which would subject them to the criticism of the people of that day.'" (All emphases-his.) To this I say amen and amen!!

Today, if a Christian woman feels better by the wearing of a hat to worship, then let her do so. But the woman without a hat today is no more in violation of Corinthians 11:2-16 than is the preacher at the church building door who does not greet every person with a holy kiss. If not, WHY NOT

(Note: With deep gratitude I acknowledge aid for this material to my two warm friends Brethren Roy Deaver and Guy N. Woods. They have helped me much in the major points that have been set forth in this four part study. RRT.) — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

The Heinous Sin of Hypocrisy

Continued from page 2

Christian should be Christ like and follow in the steps of his Saviour (Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:21), rather than playing a game. If Christ were to come and spend some time with us, would we be comfortable in our role as a Christian, or would we be playing the role as a hypocrite?

The hypocrite is one who wants to stay in the middle of the road regardless of the situation. He is a man who is ready to jump either way. We would normally say that he is wishy-washy, but in reality he is spiritual coward. The sad thing is that not only are some members of the church in this situation, but also elders, deacons and preachers. There are many ungodly pretenders placed in the leadership of the church who are not standing for the right. There are many men serving as deacons in name only. There are more than a few who call themselves gospel preachers, who will not take a definite stand on doctrinal and moral issues such as divorce, social drinking, immodest apparel, and gambling. One cannot stand in the middle of the road and serve God (Matt. 6:24; Matt. 12:30; Rom. 6:16).

The hypocrite is insincere and unconcerned concerning the souls of mankind. He is one who cares little for the Lord's church and it's work of carrying the gospel to a lost and dying world. He is lukewarm, indifferent, and just religious enough to be miserable. He is not zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14), nor is he fervent in spirit (Rom. 12:11). The hypocrite, of course, wants all the enjoyment and blessings of Christianity, but doesn't want to burden of bearing his cross (Lk. 9:23; Rom. 12:1-2). Rather than live as a true, faithful Christian he would render lip service to God, and doesn't seem to realize that his actions condemn him (Matt. 15:7-9; Matt. 7:21-23).

Hypocrisy has cursed every phase of work in the Lord's church. It is like a cancer slowly spreading to snuff out the spark of life. How

can it be stopped? How can we eradicate this deadly disease? By becoming more committed to the work of the church, and giving ourselves wholly to the service of God. Elders will have to assume the responsibility that is theirs. Deacons will have to start serving in the area of their responsibility. Members of the church will have to come to the realization that Christianity involves more than attending services. And

Preachers will have to start preaching the gospel again, rather than preaching what some of the brethren want to hear. Brethren, let us commit ourselves to God and His service, and hypocrisy will decline. If we are not willing to commit ourselves fully to His service, then we must be prepared for "Woe unto you hypocrites."—Rt. 10, Box 186B Jasper, Al. 35501.

Walker County School Of Biblical Studies

PERVIE NICHOLS

The Midway Church of Christ would like to announce the opening of a school of Biblical studies. The first evening of classes will begin on September 19, 1978, at 7:00 p.m. There will be three classes each using 2 35 minute sessions with a ten minute rest period between. The classes will then meet each Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m. for a period of thirteen weeks. These classes will have no fees charged. Of course, no credits can be earned by these classes, but attendance certificate will be awarded.

The subjects that will be studied in this first session will be as follows: "How To Establish Biblical Authority" taught by Pervie Nichols; "How To Do Personal Work" taught by Lacy Taylor; and "Christian Evidences" taught by Mark Upton, this class being particularly designed for teenagers, but all are welcome.

If you wish to attend one of these classes please fill in the information below and send to: MIDWAY CHURCH OF CHRIST, Route 3, Box 420, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

Name _____
Class _____ Date _____

These classes will be under the oversight of the elders of the Midway Church of Christ.

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EVERY SUNDAY



Words Of

Truth

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

— speak forth

— Acts 26:25

International Gospel Hour Moves To Brown Trail

WENDELL WINKLER

As of August 5, 1978, the International Gospel Hour came under the oversight of the Brown Trail Church of Christ, Fort Worth, Texas. In transferring the program, the elders of the Nash, Texas, congregation, who for some time have been overseeing the International Gospel Hour Broadcast, stated, "We, the elders of the Nash Church of Christ express our appreciation to you for taking the oversight and sponsorship of the International Gospel Hour. This ministry has grown greatly the past three years and now needs the sponsorship of a congregation which can devote more time and effort to the work than we have personnel and resources to commit. We are glad to have been a part in this great work in the past, and please be assured that our prayers and support continue with you in the future. May the Lord bless you in this new work in His kingdom."

In response, the elders of the Brown Trail congregation stated, "The International Gospel Hour is a great work. Brother V.E. Howard has done a magnificent service to the brotherhood and to his vast listening audience through the years. The elders of the Brown Trail congregation feel the tremendous impact of the International Gospel Hour to be of utmost importance, and accepts the oversight of this work with a keen sense of privilege, humility and responsibility. The Nash congregation and its fine eldership is to be congratulated and commended highly for the great progress the International Gospel Hour has experienced under its direction. The Brown Trail elders are convinced that the sound doctrinal position of both brother Howard and the Nash eldership has provided for the Gospel Hour the foundation for continued success in reaching the hearts of men with the true gospel. Much work and much financial support is needed now and will be needed in the future to insure the spreading of the gospel through the broadcasting medium. The elders at Brown Trail solicit the continued support of a gracious brotherhood in the quest for the souls of men."

The International Gospel Hour is now on 175 different radio stations. Three hundred programs are being aired each week. The program is being broadcast in 34 states, with additional programs being aired from Monterrey, Mexico, Radio Cayman in the British West Indies, and Hamilton, Bermuda. In addition to the broadcast being beamed from the

powerful 100,000 watt station, XEG, in Monterrey, Mexico, the International Gospel Hour is also being broadcast from nine different 50,000 watt stations. The mail response, with requests for Bible correspondence courses, printed sermons and questions being asked, has been encouragingly good. With the addition of several 50,000 watt stations within the last few weeks, the mail has picked up considerably.

Brother V.E. Howard is the speaker on the weekly broadcast (also the fifteen-minute daily programs). Brother Thomas B. Warren is the speaker on the Five Gospel Minute section of the International Gospel Hour, with programs being broadcast daily, five, six and seven days per week.

NEEDS

(1) ASSISTANCE WITH LARGE STATIONS. As previously noted, the International Gospel Hour is now being broadcast on several 50,000 watt stations. As a result, the gospel is being broadcast, with a number of the areas being effectively criss-crossed, over the entire continental United States, throughout Canada, over all of Old Mexico and down into a measurable section of South America. Funds are desperately needed to keep the broadcast on all these 50,000 watt stations. Incidentally, the broadcast is heard over WLW in Cincinnati from 8:30-9:00 p.m. each Sunday evening, with the other powerful stations carrying the programs at excellent times each Sunday evening as well.

Contributions may be sent to the International

Gospel Hour; Brown Trail Church of Christ; Box 18069, Fort Worth, Texas 76118.

(2) LOCAL CHURCH SPONSORSHIP. The International Gospel Hour and Five Gospel Minutes are produced with a format allowing for announcements of a local sponsoring church at the beginning and close of the broadcast. To have one or both of these programs on your local radio station: (a) secure time and contract on your local station (you may pay for your contract directly on your radio station); (b) the International Gospel Hour will furnish you the program you want; (c) programs are taped and mailed directly to the radio stations on schedule (the local church need not become involved in getting the programs to the stations); (d) the local preacher may make local announcements by recording for each program, if desirable (we recommend this to be done when possible, and will even assist in the production of these announcements); and, (e) local announcement may be changed from time to time for meetings, special events, etc. Again, write to us concerning these marvelous opportunities.

THE OVERSEEING CONGREGATION

The Brown Trail congregation is overseen by seven elders; Joel Amyett, Howard Barnum, Ed Clark, Roy Deaver, Bob Lauderdale, O.B. Powell, and Eddie Whitten. Wendell Winkler serves as pulpit evangelist.

Brown Trail is the Home of the Brown Trail Preacher Training School, Roy Deaver, Director.

Announcement Of Interest

Dr. W. B. West is moving to Montgomery to become associated with Alabama Christian School of Religion. He will begin his work when school opens on September 5. Dr. West will serve as dean of the graduate department, and will be teaching courses

this fall on Revelation and the New Testament World. During the fall quarter his classes will be Monday night and all day Tuesday. The addition of this capable man to the staff will be a great asset to the school.



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Is There Life Before Death

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

One morning, while viewing the "Today Show" on television, I became quite interested in an interview that the host was having with a noted author who had written a book about the civil strife in Northern Ireland. The author's wife, who was a professional photographer, had taken many pictures in the city of Belfast and the surrounding areas which depicted the physical destruction caused by the bombings. One scene was of a building which had only one wall standing. I could not help but be over-whelmed with a sign painted on that wall. It was painted in large letters and asked the question, "IS THERE LIFE BEFORE DEATH?" Such a question reflected the remorse of a person's heavy heart. It is difficult to imagine circumstances being so deplorable that one could not enjoy life, at least to some degree. But here was a person asking if one could live before one died. How sad! This is so different from the usual question asked by the masses of people, and that is, "Is There Life After Death?" This is the all consuming inquiry of persons seeking hope beyond this earthly pilgrimage. But, the question remains utmost in our minds: "Is There Life Before Death?"

First, one must understand that all people outside of the spiritual relation with Christ are dead (lost) presently. The basic meaning of death is the absence of life. Physically, death occurs when the spirit of a man departs from his body (James 2:26). And in the moral and spiritual realm, a person is dead (lost) when he is in the world of sin. Christ is life (John 1:4). Therefore, when a person is outside of Christ, he is dead, spiritually speaking. Often, the statement is made that a sinner is going to be lost unless he obeys the gospel. That is only partially true. The fact of the matter is, the disobedient person is dead (lost) presently. Please observe the following passage: "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). The sinner is "dead" outside of Christ. Paul declared that the widow who gave "herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Timothy 5:6). How can a person be dead while living? We must understand that Paul was speaking of the spiritual condition of the widow who gave herself over to the lusts of the flesh. Please

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Is estimated that the average person is happy only about one-fourth of the time. About one-fourth of the time he is very unhappy; and the other half of the time he is neither happy or unhappy. God never intended his children be unhappy any of the time. One Greek word which refers to happiness is used more than fifty times in the New Testament. Paul, the apostle, tells us that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6). But why is it that people are not happy; and what is the secret of happiness? The happiness we are considering is not merely the superficial, slap-on-the-back, outward happiness; it is rather the genuine, inward happiness of the spirit. This happiness depends not on what one has, but what he is. The following may serve as keys to happiness:

Rid yourself of covetousness. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). With a promise like that, how could any child of God be covetous? In Romans 1:29 covetousness is listed with the very worst of sins; and in Colossians 3:5 it is called idolatry. One of the reasons covetousness is such a terrible vice is the fact that it always robs its victim of real happiness.

Trust implicitly in the promise of God. God's promises are always, one hundred per cent reliable. And yet his very best promised blessings are reserved for those who are his faithful children. God has promised those who serve him faithfully that he will (1) overrule all things for their good, (2) provide all the things they really needs, (3) not suffer them to be tempted above the ability to overcome, and (4) hear and answer their prayers. In connection with these promises, read Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:33; I



BOBBY DUNCAN

How To Be Happy

Corinthians 10:13; James 5:16. No doubt, most of the unhappiness among God's children would be alleviated if they would only trust God's promises.

Let God's will become your will. Please observe that we are not suggesting the mere submission to the will of God, but rather the allowing of God's will for us to become exactly what we desire for ourselves. Since we know that God desires the very best for his children, and since we know that he knows what is best, then we should be determined that what we want for ourselves is the very same thing God wants for us. If doing the will of God is not pleasant at first, then continue to do his will, study the Bible, pray, sing, worship regularly, associate with Christians. The first thing you know you will be finding great joy in doing and being just exactly what God wants you to do and to be.

Forget about yourself. The most miserable people in the world are the ones who continually dwell upon their own welfare, and are very little concerned about the welfare of others. Jesus pointed out that even the Son of Man did not come into the world to be ministered unto, but to minister (Matt. 20:28). The happiest people in the world are those who are giving themselves over to the task of serving others.

Live one day at a time. Jesus said: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). In Dale Carnegie's book on *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*, he mentions the fact that large ocean-going vessels are made up of many water-tight compartments, so that if one should be punctured and fill with water the vessel would still stay afloat. He then points out that our lives should be made up of "day-tight compartments," i.e., that the worries of one day should never be allowed to filter over into another day. He also suggested a simple, three point formula for ending worry: (1) determine the exact nature of the thing causing you to worry, (2) decide what is the very worst thing that could possibly happen in connection therewith, and (3) set about to avoid the very worst, which you are already prepared to accept if necessary. Worry is a great robber of happiness.

Even the things we call tragedies cannot keep one from being happy if he will follow these suggestions.

Of One Heart And Of One Soul

Such is the description of the church of our Lord in Jerusalem at a time when its members totaled more than five thousand. The inspired historian said, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32). In verse 24, we are told that "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord."

This oneness had characterized the church since its beginning on Pentecost. The three thousand souls, whom the Lord added to the church, had all heard and believed the same gospel, and had



W.C. QUILLEN

gladly received it in the same way (Acts 2:36-41). Thus they started in the Christian life as one, and they were all added to the same thing.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers . . . and all that believed were together, and had all things common . . . and they continuing daily with one accord in the temple . . ." (Acts 2:42-47).

In all that they did, in worship and works, they were together, of one accord, and in fellowship. The secret is simple: They gladly received the word of God by obeying it; and then they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. This formula resulted in the salvation of thousands of other souls and the numerical growth of the church, and produced and preserved unity and fellowship among all its members. "The multitude of them that believed

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

Is it correct to quote Col. 2:20-22, as applicable to the question of indulging in intoxicating liquors?"

Col. 2:20-22: "Where if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which are all to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" The words, "touch not; taste not; handle not," form a very favorite text for prohibition speakers, who see in them a clear prohibition of the use of intoxicating liquors. Forbidden to *touch, taste, or even so much as handles* it must be admitted that this is indeed a useful passage to that end if it can be shown to be pertinent to that question. Unfortunately, however, it lacks pertinency to that

issue. Its meaning is this: "If indeed you really died to this world, as you profess to have done in your baptism into Christ, at which time you renounced all ordinances, why is it that you continue to subject yourselves to worldly ordinances which forbid you to touch this, and handle that, and taste the other? All such are to perish with the using, and are nothing more than the doctrines and commandments of men. Hence, as free men in Christ, who have died to all such carnal ordinances, allow no one to tell you that you must not touch this, or taste that, or handle the other, all such being but ordinances of men."

It must follow, therefore, that if the passage refers to intoxicating liquors (which it does not in the remotest sense), Paul is urging that children of God

are not to allow others to set up restrictions forbidding them to use of such liquors!

We firmly believe that the Scriptures forbid the use of intoxicating liquors; but this passage was not designed to teach it, referring, as it does, to matters not remotely related to the liquor question. The passage has, therefore, no place in any discussion touching the use or non-use of strong drink. The Scriptures abound with passages which do apply to that question, and recourse should be had to them, and not to Col. 2:20-22, in any study regarding such. Here, then, is an excellent example of the improper use of a passage growing out of a failure to note the contextual significance.

Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 5)

We now continue with our studies into one of the great chapters of the First Corinthian epistle. As previously pointed out the first epistle to the Christians at Corinth deals with various problems that beset the Grecian saints and the inspired solutions that Paul supplied for their acceptance and practice. This particular study is centered in I Corinthians 11.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The first part of the chapter deals with the veiled woman. Thorough attention, we trust, has already been given that segment of the chapter's contents. The second part of the chapter deals with the Lord's Supper and some of the abuses they were making of its observance at Corinth in their worship assemblies.

Before he actually gets around to a discussion of the Lord's Supper he has this to say in I Corinthians 11:17-19: "But in giving you this charge, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be factions among you, that they are approved maybe made manifest among you" (ASV).

To what charge does Paul here refer? Some Bible students think he goes back to verse two of this chapter. But that does not seem likely for an obviously strong reason. In verse two he praises them that they remember him in all things and in the holding fast of apostolic traditions or teachings. Yet in verse seventeen he refuses to praise them in the charge he is setting before them. In view of this it seems much more likely that the charge does not refer to the first part of the chapter but to what he is about to say in the latter part of this chapter.

Their coming together for worship as a congregation of devoted Christians—at least they should have been devoted—should have been for their edification, for their being built up in the faith most holy. Yet such was the nature of

the abuse of their worship assembly that they came together not for the better but for the worse. Has it occurred to you that people today can do that very same thing? Yea, WE may do that very thing. We may come together for what we call the worship of God Almighty. Yet if we abuse one or more of the acts of Christian worship, then our assembly fails in its stated purpose of real edification doesn't it? Specifically the Corinthians were abusing the Lord's Supper in their worship. They were perpetuating the spirit of division. Now when religious minded people come together and abuse the Lord's Supper in any fashion, why are they not in the very same category as were the Corinthians of the first century? When people today further the spirit of division among them, why are they not coming together for the worse and not for the better? The worship assembly has to be in full and perfect harmony with the demands of Sacred Scripture if real edification results and definite injury to the faith is avoided.

Paul says, "first of all, when ye come together in the church..." (I Cor. 11:18). For the next few verses he is going to be dealing with a real problem among them in their religious assembly. This was their divisive spirit and their abuse of the Lord's Supper. In chapters 12, 13 and 14 he dealt with the troublesome problems of a divisive nature over spiritual gifts. In chapter 11 they abused the Lord's Supper. In the three chapters dealing with spiritual gifts he exhibited their widespread and shameful abuse of spiritual gifts both in attitude and in action.

It was the practice, an apostolically approved one I might add, on New Testament Christians in the first century to come together for their public worship. They did not divide into two or more worship assemblies at the same time. This practice is gaining ground in our day. In many churches there is NEVER A TIME when all come together to engage in worship. Young people are kept in one place for their worship; older people are kept in another place for their worship. And like the proverbial east and west, never shall the twain meet! I believe this to be wrong. I believe it to be lacking totally in Biblical authorization. Paul spoke of the whole church at Corinth as they assembled together or came together INTO ONE PLACE (I Cor. 14:23). But with divided or parallel worship assemblies there is no coming together at

the same time. If so, WHEN and WHERE?

Paul next suggested, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper: for in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken" (I Cor. 11:20-21). Though they had assembled to eat the Lord's Supper, yet it was impossible for them to do that. Why? Because of their grave and glaring abuse of the Lord's Supper. They had turned the Lord's Supper into a regular meal or else had mixed and mingled their love feasts with the communion of their worship. Peter in II Peter 2:13 and Jude in verse twelve of his terse epistle both call attention to the love-feasts—a practice quite common in that day where Christians shared in a common meal. This is quite common in our day in the form of "dinner-on-the-ground," "covered dish" or "pot luck" meals where Christians enjoy a period of food and fellowship together either before there is a worship or after one has been concluded. The mistake that Corinth made was not in the love-feasts but in a failure to keep the Lord's Supper and the love-feasts separated from each other. Paul details exactly their manner of sin. One with a bountiful supply of food was eating and drinking till he was filled to capacity. Another who did not have was a hungry spectator. By the way, the word drunken is not to be understood in this context as being intoxicated or inebriated. The word drunken is placed opposite the word hungry. The word hunger here does not mean a lack of that which intoxicates; it means a lack of the food and drink that the affluent person in his presence possessed in abundance and consumed plentifully. Therefore the use of the word drunken here would refer to the person who ate his meal to the fullest and did not share with the one who had nothing. Some have sought to suggest from the use of the word drunken in this context that they must have been using an intoxicant at the Lord's Supper or had such present. I do not believe this for a moment! That is to read something into the passage that is just not there. The words hungry and drunken describe two opposite conditions that prevailed in their midst.

That is why they could not eat the Lord's Supper. They had turned it into a meal where

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Of One Heart And Of One Soul

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were of one heart and of one soul," when the membership of the church had reached five thousand.

In view of the known tendencies of men to strive and disagree, this perfect unity of the church is truly marvelous. And it is in obvious contrast to the condition existing in many congregations today, not to consider Christendom, so-called.

In the long ago, the Psalmist said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133:1). The saintly T.B. Larimore commented on this passage: "There are some things that are good, but they are not pleasant; and there are some things that are pleasant, but they are not good; but unity among brethren is both good and pleasant."

Let us keep on teaching aliens to believe the

gospel of Christ, to repent and confess Jesus as the Christ, and to be baptized into Christ. The Lord will then save them and add them to the church.

Then let us all, as members of the church, continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. We shall continue to have that which is both good and pleasant. — P.O. Box 212 Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464.

Studies In I Corinthians 11 (No. 5)

Continued from page 3

some ate to their hearts' content and others were without anything at all! How pathetic that this condition prevailed among saints of the most high God! This showed total irreverence for the Lord's Supper which was their purpose for coming together, along with the other acts of Christian worship, and a total degree of selfishness for those who were poor and unable

to bring anything of their own. Corinth stood in double need relative to this matter. They needed to restore the Lord's Supper to its approved position in their worship and they needed desperately to be concerned about each other's physical needs in the way of food. But the need to share food with each other and especially with those who had nothing was not

to be done in connection with the Lord's Supper. Their regular meals were not to be mixed and mingled with the Lord's Supper. Their serious disorder at the Lord's Supper needed an immediate correction, a prompt solution which he then suggests for their speedy execution. — P.O. Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

Is There Life Before Death

Continued from page 2

note also the description given by Ephesians 2:11, 12 of the Gentile brethren prior to their conversion to Christ: "Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, were made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world." There is, therefore, the absence of spiritual life in the lives of all those persons who have never been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:7). A person can be "dead" while he lives and before he experiences a physical death. One might appear to be healthy and possess all the vital signs, but, as far as salvation and spiritual life is concerned, be dead (lost).

Secondly, those persons in Christ are really living, spiritually speaking. Notice again these two passages of scripture in Ephesians 2:1,5: "And you did he make alive..." He emphasized this point again when he said that he "made us alive together with Christ..." Those obedient believers who have been buried with their Lord in baptism have been raised to "walk in newness of life." Thus, being "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:4, 11). Jesus spoke of this abundant life for his followers (John 10:10). The apostle Peter refers to Christians as being a "holy priesthood" and a "royal Priesthood" (1 Peter 2:5,9). John wrote that Christ has "made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and father" (Revelation 1:6). All these expressions denote the spiritual wealth and position of the children of God. This is truly living, but not according to the world's standard.

Thirdly, let us observe the various aspects of this rich, abundant life in Christ. All spiritual blessings are to be found in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3). This implies that none are to be enjoyed by those people outside of a spiritual relation with the Lord. It is wonderful to know that our God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or thing..." (Ephesians 3:20). We mention now several of those favors bestowed upon all followers of the

Lord.

1. Forgiveness of sins through the blood of the Lamb (Ephesians 1:7). This fact alone should cause us to rejoice greatly (Acts 8:36-39; 16:34).

2. In Christ, we become children of God. He is our Father. This stresses the family relation we sustain with God (Galatians 3:26,17).

3. We become members of the great spiritual body of Jesus which is his church (1 Corinthians 12:13,27; Colossians 1:18).

4. We have a clearness of conscience and peace of mind in Christ Jesus (1 Peter 3:21; Philippians 4:7).

5. God is truly our provider and protector. He has promised to be with us always and never to forsake us (Matthew 6:33; 28:20; Hebrews 13:6).

6. In Christ, we have the hope of eternal life (Romans 8:24,25; John 3:36; 1 John 5:11).

In Matthew 25:31-46, we are given a glimpse of the

coming judgment. On that day, there will be some who will be granted by God's grace a "Deathless life." Jesus has promised, "he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25,26). In heaven, "death shall be no more" (Revelation 21:4). However, those on the "left hand" shall depart into a place of a "Lifeless death." This will be final "wages of sin" for the disobedient. All those who have lived according to the flesh must die and experience eternal corruption (Romans 6:23; 8:12,13; Galatians 6:7,8).

Several years ago, a prominent religious cult predicted that Christ was soon returning to the earth. The date was even set by this group. A slogan was coined which claimed that "Millions Now Living Shall Never Die." But, Christ did not come as they had promised. But the same fact is that "Millions Now Dying Shall Never Live" - eternally.

My friends, you can enjoy true living now in Christ Jesus and in the World to come, eternal life. Believe in Christ with all your heart. Repent of your sins and confess his precious name. Submit to his will by being baptized for the remission of your sins (Romans 10:9,10; II Peter 3:9; Acts 8:37; 2:38) A "crown of life" will be given to all Christians who live faithfully to God (Revelation 2:10). — Rt. 1 Box 13, Opp. A 36467.

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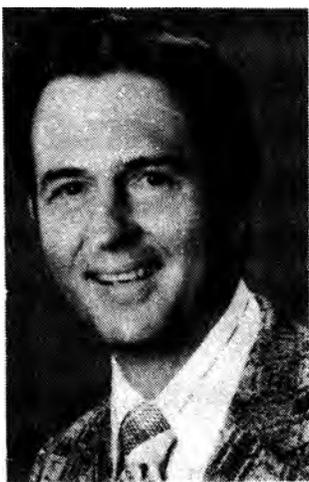
"I am not mad, most no.
the Words of Truth and sob

— speak forth

— Acts 26:25

Conquering The Fear Of Death

The Hebrew writer tells us that Christ died that "He might destroy him that had the power of death, that, is the devil; and deliver them who through *fear of death* were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:14-15). "King of Terrors" and "Grim Reaper" are but two of the many appallations given to deaths. Such bespeaks the fear and dread which men have attached to the event of the spirit's leaving the body (James 2:26). But, how can the sting of death be relieved; how can the fear of death be overcome?



WENDELL WINKLER

(1) *We must come to realize that death is inevitable.* There is a time to die as well as a time to be born (Eccl. 3:2). Death is an inevitable appointment we will unquestionably keep (Heb. 9:27). God said to Job, "Thou shalt come to thy grave..." (Job 5:26). Paul affirmed that in Adam we all die (1 Cor. 15:22). Someone said, "There is nothing more certain than dying; and, nothing more uncertain than the time of dying."

(2) *We must come to realize what death is.* Death is spoken of as a sleep in I Thess. 4:13-17, as an embarking in II Tim. 4:6 and as a taking down of one's tent in II Cor. 5:1 ff. Now, what is so dreadful about any of these?

(3) *We must come to realize that death is the gateway to bliss and association with Jesus.* How beautiful are the words of the apostle Paul in Phil. 1:21-24 where he affirms, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain... For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

(4) *We must come to realize that there will be a resurrection morning.* Though in Adam we all die, in

Christ we shall all be made alive (I Cor. 15:22)! On the morning of the resurrection, the trumpet of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise, after which the living saints will be translated (I Thess. 4:13-18). Yea, on that day, "All that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn. 5:28, 29). Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10).

(5) *We must come to realize that Jesus will be there*

to take us by the hand. All who are sheep in the Lord's fold can join with the Psalmist of old and confidently affirm, "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 men" (Ps. 23:4). Indeed, we will not have to cross Jordan alone!

Accordingly, upon the basis of these eternal verities, we can exultantly question, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victor" (I Cor. 15:55)? — P.O. Box 865, Hurst, Texas 76053.

He Refused Just One Beer

DAN JENKINS

Following a recent Friday night football game many high school students were having a "victory party". The air was full of laughter, the victory had been so sweet! Some Christians were present and when offered a beer *they did not refuse.*

A bill was before the state legislature, it would allow wine to be sold at a much cheaper price by the removal of certain taxes upon it. Another bill was also presented that would allow billboard advertising of liquor. Christians, who were members of the legislature were asked for their support, *they did not refuse.* In fact they led the fight to get both passed.

A Christian had helped his neighbor with some yard work in the hot afternoon sun. They had known each other for such a long time and had often fished and golfed together. When they finished they went into the neighbor's house to cool off. The neighbor

offered the Christian a cold beer. *He did not refuse.*

A report from Jim Petty, missionary to South Africa arrived recently. It says, "One of our former graduates from Umtali Bible School, Douglas Dabangana, was killed by the terrorists where he was preaching in the Southwest of Rhodesia the last part of June. A group of terrorists tried to force him to drink beer, *but he refused,* saying he was a Christian and couldn't, so they shot him right then, killing him."

One day the Christian young people, the Christian legislators, the Christian businessman, the Christian neighbor and Douglas Dabangana will stand before Christ to give account for the deeds done in the body. Which of these would you want to be? — P. O. Box 26156, Birmingham, AL 35226



Words Of Truth

I am not made most noble free
tuo, but speak torth the Words of
Truth and soberness
— Acts 26:25

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Studies In I Corinthians 11 (No. 6)

The previous article in these studies on 1 Corinthians 11 detailed to some extent the perversion of the Lord's Supper at Corinth. They had turned the communion into a common meal where the affluent ate sumptuously and those who were poor did without food and drink. This was a crucial matter and needed their immediate attention by way of correction.



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Paul states in 1 Corinthians 11:22, "What? have ye not

houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." Is Paul condemning the eating of a common meal at the same location where the church comes together? Not in the least. The point he was condemning was the eating of the common meal at the very time they should have been partaking of the Lord's Supper. They had turned that portion of their worship into a common meal. Those who were affluent were eating to the full; those who had not were the hungry spectators. Paul is simply saying that there were other places and other times for the consumption of their common meals, and not while they were worshipping and supposedly were partaking of the Lord's Supper, and the eating of common, ordinary meals. In this grievous matter the Corinthians had erred and had erred greatly. This was the major abuse that Paul was correcting.

That our position relative to the word drunken, as stated in the previous article, in verse 21 is the correct one, i.e., a reference to full and bountiful eating, is made all that more sure by Paul's statement here in verse 22. He asks if they did not have houses in which to eat and drink? Whatever the drunken part in verse 21 refers to, Paul's allusion to drinking at home also has reference to in verse 22? If not, WHY NOT? If the

Continued on page 4



FROM THE EDITOR

A Belated Congratulations

Earlier this year my father and mother celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. The celebration was with such little fanfare that I allowed the day to pass without even realizing it was their anniversary. As a rule we do not on the pages of this periodical discuss people; but there are exceptions to rules, and we believe some profit will come to our readers who read this short tribute.



BOBBY DUNCAN

I do not remember a day of my life when my

mother was not a member of the church; but my father was not baptized until I was ten years old. He was a good man from a moral standpoint, and one well respected in the town where he lived. From the day he became a Christian I never knew him or my mother to do a single thing which they believed to be wrong. Christ became the center of our family, and the activities of the church dominated our time.

There were only about a half dozen congregations of the Lord's people in the county where I grew up; but when one of those churches was having a meeting we would load the entire family in the truck and attend nearly every service. For a period of several years there probably was not a gospel preacher who preached in Calhoun County or any of the surrounding counties that I did not hear. We were taught to love and respect the gospel and those who preached it. Had such not been the case I am sure I would not be preaching today.

All my life my father was employed by the college in the town where I grew up. We lived literally on the campus of what is now Jacksonville State University. When I graduated from high school times were rather hard and money was scarce. I could have attended the local college for practically nothing, compared to what it would cost to go to one of our Christian colleges; but having lived and worked on the college campus, my father had seen enough to know that it was no training ground for one who would, he hoped, preach the gospel. He borrowed the money to send me to Freed-Hardeman College, and took on additional work to pay it back.

During gospel meetings when I was a boy, the visiting evangelists often stayed in our home. I grew up loving, admiring, and respecting faithful preachers of the word. I learned early in life that preachers are just people, and that, generally speaking, they do not want or expect to receive any special treatment. They are certainly not to be dreaded; and as a rule are more tolerant of the imperfections of other than most people realize.

My mother has always supported and encouraged his father. Needless to say, she has been called on to make many personal sacrifices, which she has gladly made, so that her children might receive whatever was best for them and for the cause of Christ. Four of the five children my parents reared are still living. Two sons are gospel preachers. A third serves as an elder in the church. The daughter is a faithful Christian and is married to a fine Christian gentleman. The son who is dead died in the Lord.

I am thankful to God for my beloved parents; and I am thankful to my parents for the heritage they have given me. Congratulations, Mother and Daddy--not just for being married fifty years, but for being the kind of people this old world sorely needs!

Is There Any Justice

The Bowling Green, Kentucky Court found her innocent for performing a self abortion because she was judged temporarily insane. The young woman was between twenty and twenty-four weeks. If found guilty, she could have been sentenced to from ten to twenty years.

When the jury delivered a "not guilty" verdict, women's rights groups lauded it as a great victory for the rights of women to control their own bodies. Of course they forgot to mention the lost rights of the dead infant. It did not have the right to be born. Its rights to grow up in a free society and choose its life's work were denied it by a plastic knitting needle. The advocates of women's rights overlooked the fact that this infant was murdered, not because the young woman in question thought the Kentucky law was



RAY HAWK

unfair and she wanted to test its legality, nor because women's rights were at stake, but because her boy friend did not want the responsibility of being a father! She murdered her baby because of an irresponsible, selfish, immature, illicit lover's pressure to abort the baby. The poor baby was conceived in their sin and died by the insistence of a man and the fears of a woman. It was murdered without any recourse to fight back or protect itself. Not even our courts will protect it. Of course we hold back multi-million dollar projects to protect a small fish called the snail darter, but we allow the horrible deaths of hundreds of thousands of infants each year. Is there any justice in the land?—4850 Saufley Rd. Pensacola, Fl. 32506.

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Words of Truth

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Is it correct to say that the name of 'Jehovah' in the Old Testament often refers to the second person of the godhead, Jesus Christ our Lord?"

Yes.

Jehovah is the name of God most often appearing as the designation of deity in the Old Testament. It appears in this form in the American Standard Version; it was translated *ho Kurios* in the Septuagint (Hebrew to Greek translation used in the first century), and likely, for this reason, translated Lord generally in the King James' Version. It derives from the Tetragrammaton, the four consonants forming the name, JHVH which when vowels are added, becomes Jehovah.

It is often referred to as the "ineffable name," unpronounced, and unuttered by any faithful Jew. The proper pronunciation of this name, by which deity was known to the early Hebrews, has been lost in antiquity, because the Jews with great scrupulousness, for centuries have avoided its pronunciation. This practice, of never pronouncing it, which originated from an incorrect interpretation of Lev. 24:16, continues to this day. A Jewish friend and

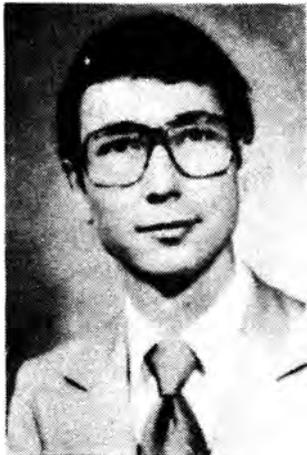
teacher of mine, following the usual Jewish practice, would always substitute the word *Adonai*, in reading, when he came to this word "Jehovah" in the text. There is a tradition that when the temple was yet standing, the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, and while in the most holy place, solemnly uttered the word once each year; but, with the destruction of that sacred structure, and the consequent termination of Jewish worship on Moriah, this ceased, and no one today knows what the proper pronunciation of the ancient form is.

The word *God*, which is the name of the divine nature, is often used under the figure of the *synecdoche* to stand for each member of the Godhead. Because there is but one divine nature, there is but one God, though this nature is possessed by three distinct personalities, the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit, and each of them is called God in the scriptures (John 3:16; 1:1 Acts 5:3,4). Similarly, the word *Jehovah* is occasionally used, in the Old Testament, in prophecies which are said to be fulfilled in the Person of Christ. For example, Isaiah anticipated the coming of the Messiah seven centuries before he appeared and described the work

of John Baptist, as his forerunner: "The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain an hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain: and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it" (Isa. 40:3-5). In verse 3, the one for whom the way was to be prepared to called both *Jehovah* and *God*. Malachi identified the one for whom the way was to be prepared as "the Lord" (Mal. 3:1), and Mark applied the prophecy of Isaiah to *Christ* (Mark 1:1-3). Thus, he whom Isaiah identified as *Jehovah* in Isaiah 40:3, is Christ in Mark 1:1-3.) The allegation of "Jehovah's Wilderness," that Jesus is created being and did not exist before his birth of Mary, is obviously and palpably false. And, while is *not* correct to say, as some do, that in every instance where the word Jehovah appears in the Old Testament, it refers to Christ in the New (see Psalm 2:7, and compare with Heb. 1:5-9, and often elsewhere), such is frequently the case, and this clearly establishes the deity and eternal character of our Lord.

Do You Say "Corban"?

Some of the Pharisees and Scribes had come from Jerusalem and had met jointly with Jesus concerning some matters they wished to bring before the attention of our Lord. It seems that some of the disciples of Jesus were not keeping a tradition of the elders, i.e., that of washing their hands before a meal. The motive of these Pharisees and Scribes was probably to find some



MICHAEL D. STONE

fault whereby they might bring an accusation against Jesus. Please notice that his disciples were being accused of not keeping a *tradition*. They were not being accused of breaking the law of Moses since the law did not demand that one wash his hands before a meal. However, there was a *tradition*, which had been handed down through the years, that stipulated hand washing before one ate. As you and I should know, there is a difference between law and tradition. Some of our brethren today evidently have not learned the difference as evidenced by a number of problems regarding certain matters in the church. In reality, these Scribes and Pharisees had elevated their traditions to the same level as the law. According to them to break a tradition was to break the law. Such should not have been the case at all.

Our Lord realized what they had done and the seriousness of it and, therefore, showed the folly of their craftiness. Jesus said, "full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition". Furthermore, He said to them, "For Moses said, Honor thy

father and thy mother, and He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death: but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given to God; ye no longer suffer him to do ought for his father or his mother; making void the word of God by your tradition." Jesus was telling these religious pretenders that they were using their traditions actually to get around or to keep from doing that which was really a law and not merely a tradition. The law of Moses stipulated that one was to provide for his parents in their old age and during distress. I believe this is a part of what is implied in the word "honor." However, they were getting around this important law by a tradition which

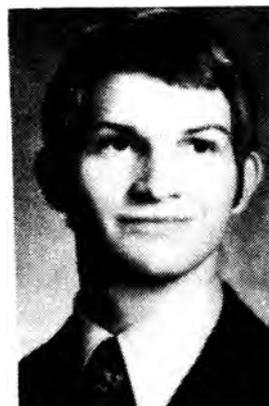
said if what one has had "Corban" said concerning it (meaning dedicated to God), then one was not obligated to use these material possessions for his parents. This was making a mockery of the law and showed how far they were from being really religious.

Beloved, today we get around the New Testament law by various traditions. We use our possessions on ourselves when we ought to be sharing them and the gospel with a lost world. But we say "Corban" meaning I'm not obligated to help in that regard since I have a family to support, house payments to make, car payments, etc. My friends, you and I need to think again! Do you say "Corban"? The events of this writing can be found in Mark seven. — 4763 Skyline Drive Ashland, Kentucky 41101.

Dead In Sins Or Dead To Sin?

According to Paul, we, as Christians, "were dead in trespasses and sins", but now "are dead to sin" (Eph. 2:1; Rom. 6:2). Many nominal Christians have perverted these inspired prepositions. Instead of being dead TO sin as they should be, they have again become dead IN sin. In so doing, they crucify the Son of God afresh, and bring him to an open shame (Heb. 6:6).

They would have been better off "not to have known the way of



DALTON KEY

righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (II Pet. 2:21; and "the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (II Pet. 2:20).

Those who cease being dead to sin, and again become dead in sin, are compared by inspiration to a dog's turning to his own vomit again, and to a freshly washed sow's returning to her wallowing in the mire (II Pet. 2:22). A sickening sight, you say? Friend, are you making God sick? Backsliders, like Simon, are "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:23). Their hearts are not right with God (Acts 8:21). Christians who again become dead in sin fall from the grace of God (Gal. 5:4). They no longer have God's Fellowship (II John 9; I John 1:6, 7). Because of their sin, they have again become separated from God (Isa. 59:1, 2).

Christians living in sin are guilty of spiritual

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Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 6)

Continued from page 2

word drunken in verse 21 refers to intoxication or inebriation, as some have contended, then the word **drink** in verse 33 has reference to the same thing. According to this it would be permissible for the Christian at Corinth to drink alcoholic beverage at home!! But it is sinful for the Christian, or anyone else for that matter, to drink alcoholic beverages anywhere and that gets home situations as well.

Some have read Paul's statement here in verse 22 and concluded that Paul is teaching it is wrong for Christians to eat in the same place where their worship was usually centered. The crux of the problem at Corinth was not THE SAME PLACE but at the SAME TIME their worship was going on. Since the church often met in the homes of its members in those ancient times, as many apostolic allusions in Paul's epistles exhibit quite fully, how did they avoid eating their common meals in the same place, say Monday through Saturday, where they met on the Lord's Day for th Christian worship? Did the host and hostess to the church that met in their house have to tell their children the next Monday morning, "Now family, we met on these premises yesterday for worship to our God. At that time we observed the Lord's Supper. Therefore beginning today we may no longer eat food upon these same premises. We will have to talk all of our meals over to a neighbor's or just beyond where our property line ends." Such would have been absurdity gone to seed and them some!! Quite obviously they ate their meals in the same place during week days where they assembled for their worship on the Lord's Day. Paul was not condemning their eating a meal either before they had their worship or eating one when the worship was concluded. He was condemning what they were doing WHILE the worship supposedly was in progress.

A number of brethren have sought to take Paul very literally relative to the statement about their having houses in which to eat and drink. Yet many who do are guilty of gross inconsistency between their own theory and practice. To take the position that one could not eat and drink except in his own house would mean that it would be wrong at dine at a public restaurant. They could not go to a brother's house to eat and drink for that would not be their own house. They could not take their meal on the job for that would not be eating and drinking in THEIR OWN houses. They could not go on a picnic or eat a meal with a number of others in a park for such would not be their houses. They could not take an extended vacation for then they would not be eating and drinking at their OWN HOUSES. This but exhibits fully the absurdity of this error and the deceitful manner in which Paul's word are handled.

Others who take the view that it is a sin to eat in the same place where worship occurs, such as a meetinghouse basement or upon the grounds owned by the church, are equally inconsistent as the previous group we depicted. They will put a water cooler in their building and even slake their thirst between Bible classes and the assembled hour of worship in the auditorium. But Paul mentioned both EATING and DRINKING. If the one is wrong, the other likewise would be wrong. If not, WHY NOT? If wrong to eat in the place where worship occurs, why would it not be equally wrong to drink some cool water in the same place? Why just object to the eating of food and offer no objection to the water cooler?

Inconsistency has really gone to seed in this matter when a brother will call those who eat on church premises and sinners and yet will step outside the door between Bible Study and the worship hour for a quick smoke and will be blowing out the last breath of his polluting smoke as he steps back into the building. He vociferously contends it to be grossly sinful for brethren to eat some nourishing food on church premises but perfectly all right for him to smoke that which harms the body, soils his soul and bring reproach upon the church.

Is it wrong for brethren to eat together in the church building: Is it wrong for them to have a covered dish meal in one of the large classrooms? Is it wrong for them to have an old fashioned dinner-on-the-ground on the first Sunday of a gospel meeting or when they have an annual homecoming? Are these activities anywhere closely akin to what was occurring at Corinth and that prompted Paul's adamant censure: Not in the least. In fact before it would be wrong the following would have to be the case with these long practices customs among us. The covered dish meal would have to be spread by the Lord's Supper and would have to be eaten either instead of the Supper of the Lord or along with the Supper of the Lord. It could not be eaten before the worship actually began or after it was concluded and be like what was occurring among the Corinthians. The dinner-on-the-ground would have eaten either in place of or at the same time that the Lord's Supper was eaten. To be fully like the situation at Corinth the affluent would have to eat to the full and those who did not have would have to be hungry spectators. Is this what we see in such situations as the pot luck meal in the basement, the covered dish meal in a large classroom or the old fashioned dinner-on-the-ground? Not in the least!! As a gospel preacher for nearly thirty years I have participated in such things as these with joy and have done so throughout the country. At no time has the pot luck been spread by the side of or in the place of the Lord's Supper. At no time has the covered dish meal taken the place of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day. At no time have brethren suggested that the dinner-on-the-ground be observed either with or in the place of the Lord's Supper. In cases where this is done the meal is served before the worship is begun if it be a meal after the Sunday evening service there is a meal planned for some part of the building. Then the worship service is OVER, FINISHED and CONCLUDED before the eating of the common meal is begun.

Beloved readers, I hereby make you a promise. If I ever go to a place to preach in a gospel meeting or to engage in local work and while there they make a common meal out of the Lord's Supper and some eat to the fullest of the capacity and others are hungry, then I will condemn such just like Paul did and will use his very arguments in this passage in First Corinthians 11. But in all my preaching life I have never one time observed such. Surely I have never seen anyone go away from a dinner-on-the-ground with a hungry countenance. Without exception there is always food in abundance left over and all may eat to their hearts' content. From my observation it is exceptionally fine for brethren to have such fellowship over delicious food. It warms hearts and melts hard feelings that should not exist in the first place. It is hard to eat with a person and despise that

person isn't it? We need far more of this wholesome practice among us and not less. And that is just what it is-WHOLEsome. People who oppose such are pretty hard pressed to find things against which to raise their objections!

Dead In Sins Or Dead To Sin?

Continued from page 3

treason. They wear the name of the Saviour while working in Satan's camp. Like Judas, they appear to be one of Christ's own, yet are busy working for the Devil's cause.

Christian friend, don't again become dead IN sin; remain forever dead TO sin by the grace of a loving God, the cleansing blood of Christ, and your determined and dedicated faithfulness to their cause. May God help us all to this end. — Box 619, Douglass, Ks. 67039.

Back Issues Needed

WORDS OF TRUTH began publication back in 1963. Unfortunately it seems that no special effort was made to preserve a complete file on the paper. Consequently we do not have access to a copy of all the early issues. We need your help in obtaining a complete file on WORDS OF TRUTH.

Twice recently we have been approached about finding something that brother Nichols had written in the paper many years ago. Once, after a longsearch, we were successful in finding the article requested. In the other case, we spent several hours looking, but were not able to come up with the article desired. If our file were complete, it would not be so very difficult to keep an index. Then when an article is requested, we could locate it in short order, make a photostatic copy of it, and make it available to the one requesting it.

If you have issues of the paper published in the early Sixties, we would appreciate your help in completing our file.

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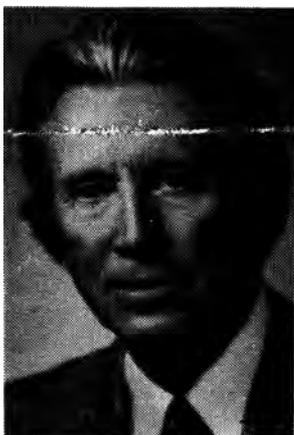
Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

Pentecostalism

It used to be upon hearing the word "Pentecostal" one automatically pictured some small sectarian group meeting in a run-down store front building in the poorer section of town and practicing wild, outrageous things in their services. In those days some Pentecostals went so far as to scream, shout and roll on the floor, hence, they came to be called "holy-rollers." This movement started around the turn of the century, as did a number of other American cult movements, and emphasized the possibility of tongue speaking, miraculous healing and other direct operations of the Holy Spirit on men today. It was claimed that the Holy Spirit was operating directly and apart from the Holy Scriptures.



CHARLES COOK

The influence of Pentecostalism is now felt in a much wider sphere of the religious community. Daily we read of Catholic Pentecostals, as well as Baptist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Methodist and Presbyterian participants. The movement has permeated virtually every main-line denomination, and sadly its influence has infiltrated deeply into the Restoration Movement.

So, what is this mystical, appealing practice that threatens to sweep the whole of Christendom? It is a style of worship based on emotionalism. It is a religion of experiences where people found their faith on feelings, not facts. Its authority is emotional subjectivism, the practices of being led and motivated by one's feelings. Its practitioners judge eternal truth by whether or not it feels right in their own hearts. Thus, God's will is discovered subjectively, in one's own heart, and not objectively from the Word of God. While it is true that the Pentecostals openly declare that unless they can support their case Biblically they have no right to exist, in practice they contradict themselves by being guided by their emotions.

The Pentecostal proclaims, "I feel saved, therefore, I am saved and my better-felt-than-told experience directly with the Holy Spirit is my proof." With him the inerrant, authoritative Word of God holds a secondary place. His real religious authority comes from within himself and he reminds us of

Jeremiah's admission: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Conversely, the genuine believer can say, "I know I am saved because God said so, and I trust God's Word." The Bible was given that we might believe in Jesus Christ and thus "know" that we have eternal life (John 20:31; I John 5:13). The inspired writer, Jeremiah, declared that it is impossible for man to direct himself subjectively and the Pentecostal says just the opposite.

As the Pentecostal Movement has progressed from its shabby storefront beginnings into the mainstream of denominationalism it has taken on new names like neo-Pentecostalism or the Charismatic Movement, but it is still subjective emotionalism. It is estimated that 250,000 Catholics and a countless number from all the major denominations have had a "Pentecostal experience." These experiences (i.e., tongues, prophecies, faith healings) are claimed to be "visible holiness" or manifestations of the Holy Spirit's working directly in individuals today.

The issues raised by this artificial fellowshipping between Catholics and Protestants are valid: Can Pentecostalism embrace Catholicism simply because many Catholics have had alleged Holy Spirit experiences? Can they ignore their major differences over cardinal doctrines like justification by faith, infallibility of the Pope, and so forth? Can the basis of Christian unity be whether or not one has had an alleged personal experience with the Holy Spirit? The answer to these questions must be "No!" The New Testament Church was united because of "the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). The boundaries of fellowship can only be determined by fidelity to Bible doctrine and not alleged experiences.

If fellowship is to be extended to everyone who claims to have had a Holy Spirit experience then it must also be extended to the Mormons who insist that hundreds of their people spoke in tongues at the dedication of their temple in Salt Lake City. The Mormons claim a history of direct workings by the Holy Spirit. Their leader, Spencer Kimball, announced only recently that he had received a direct revelation from God saying that now Blacks are allowed into the Mormon priesthood.

If fellowship is to be extended to all who speak in tongues and display other phenomena, then it must be given also to those who do not even claim a part in Christianity. There are records of pagan worshipers

who speak in tongues and Hindus perform all kinds of unexplainable feats under the influence of their religion.

In short, Pentecostalism has no basis of authority except alleged experiences, and this is chaos! It accepts testimonies regarding tongues, dream, visions, fantasies and just about any wild story as equal authority with God's Word. In effect, they do what the Bible forbids! Their extra-Biblical testimonies are tantamount to additions to God's Word which are specifically forbidden (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18, 19).

When called in question on this matter they justify themselves by saying, "but who has a right to limit the Holy Spirit? Don't you believe God can work in any way he chooses?" The answer is an absolute "Yes." God not only can, but does work in the manner of his choosing. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into "all truth" (John 14:26; 16:13). God caused them to record this truth in the form of the New Testament and men are to listen to the words of God's Son as revealed therein (Hebrews 1:1, 2). This "faith" was delivered once for all time (Jude 3). It is complete, authoritative and capable of making all mankind acceptable before God (II Timothy 3:16, 17). Therefore, those who claim to be empowered by the Holy Spirit apart from God's Word must be mistaken. The instrumentality of the Holy Spirit is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). The Holy Spirit would not contradict himself!

The Bible warns that the last days will bring great deceitfulness and that because there will be many spirits at work we are to test them to see if they are true (II Timothy 3:13; I John 4:1-3). Paul said there will be "power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thessalonians 2:9-11). Pentecostalism is dangerous because it seems good and feels right to so many people, but under the careful scrutiny of Scripture it proves to be one of the deceitful practices that lead men away from truth. If one takes a bottle of poison, removes the label and replaces it with an attractive label saying "good for human consumption," the content is even more dangerous than before. The same applies to Pentecostalism. It professes to enlighten men with truth and give them a closer walk with God when in fact it is poison, a lie, and ruins men's relationship with God. The label reads good, but its content is deadly! — P.O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Studies In I Corinthians II

(No. 7)

First Corinthians, as a whole, is directed largely to the setting forth of troublesome problems plaguing the Corinthian congregation and the providing of apostolic solutions to the same. In First Corinthians 11 Paul deals with two rather touchy problems - the veiled woman and the various disorders that prevailed around the Lord's Table. In our previous article we took particular note of what Paul said relative to the



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

fact that they had turned the Lord's Supper into a common or ordinary meal. Some were eating to their heart's content while the poor among them were looking on as hungry and thirsty spectators. Such showed an amazing disregard for the Lord's Supper; it brought shame and disrespect to the church of the Lord; it showed or exhibited an amazing lack of brotherly love for the ones they were depriving. There was a double problem and called for a double solution. They needed to manifest proper respect of the Lord's Supper and observe it properly. In the second place they needed to have proper regard for their brethren who did not have sufficient food. Because of their total disregard of respect for the Supper of the Lord and the amazing disrespect they exhibited to their poorer brethren, Paul said he could not praise them in such. Paul never failed to praise either an individual or a congregation when it was unworthy and undeserving of praise.

Paul next gives them some much needed instruction as touching the Lord's Supper, and this is a subject relative to which much instruction needs to be given today. Without exception every major facet of the Lord's Supper has been corrupted by some religious group. This is true of the elements that compose it, the time of its observance, the purpose behind it and the manner in which it should be observed. Some have thought it was the only act of

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Confusing Tact And Dishonesty

It is one thing to be tactful in telling people the truth; but it is another thing altogether to make an ambiguous statement which, properly understood, is true, but is certain to be improperly understood and leave a false impression. The late beloved brother Gus Nichols used to illustrate this point by telling the story of the little boy who was selling lemonade for ten cents a glass while his competitor across the street was selling it for five. When asked why he thought anyone should buy from him instead of his competitor, he replied: "No cat has fallen into my lemonade." The implication is clear; yet he said not one word about a cat's falling into his competitor's lemonade. It is neither fair nor honest to make even a true statement which is certain to leave a false impression.



BOBBY DUNCAN

A statement which seems to us to fit into this category is: "We do not claim to be the only

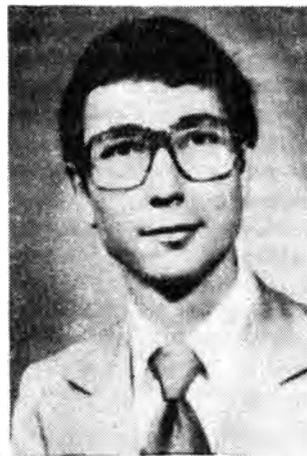
Christians; we claim to be Christian only." Some who make this statement are referring to the possibility that one might conceivably obey the gospel and become a Christian, but because of lack of instruction become associated with a denominational body. Granting that such might possibly occur, does this justify the statement under consideration? We do not believe it does, because this is not the impression the statement leaves on those who hear it.

The message the statement conveys to those who hear it is this: "We are not the only Christians. The various denominations are also made up of Christians. However we are Christians only, while they are Christians in addition to being Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterian, etc." Now if this is what one believes about the matter (and some of our brethren obviously do), then the statement convey precisely what one believes. But if this is not what one believes, then it is not being completely honest to make such a statement.

Now before someone responds telling us who made the statement and when, let us add that we know that; and we are not accusing him or anyone else who may have made the statement of being intentionally dishonest. We do believe, however, that the statement is misleading in that it leaves an impression that is not true. Christians should always be truthful.

What Kin Are You To God?

The Apostle Paul said in II Corinthians 13:5, "Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves". Let us keep in mind that this was written to the Christians in the church at Corinth. Yet, they were admonished by the apostle to give themselves an examination to test whether they were really "in the faith". So, it is indeed possible for one who is supposed to be a Christian not to really be "in the faith" like he should be. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12). There are some today in the church as well as those outside the church who profess to be kin to God when in reality they are not in God's family. Let each examine himself.



MICHAEL D. STONE

How does one become kin to God? How do we become a member of God's family? We become a member of God's family by the same means by which we become a member of our earthly family. My name is Stone because I was born into the Stone family. If a person today is a child of God, it is because he was born into the family of God. How are we born into God's family? Our Lord told Nicodemus in John 3 that he needed to be born again in order to be in God's family, not from the womb as

Nicodemus thought at first, but of the water and of the Spirit. What does this mean? It means that after one is taught by the Holy Spirit through the written word (New Testament), he then complies with that teaching and is baptized in water as the Spirit commanded. "Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). Baptism is a burial in water (Col. 2:12). One comes out of that water born anew of water and of the Spirit. Baptism is important to salvation notwithstanding the claims of many of the contrary I Peter 3:21 says that baptism saves us. The water does not save us. Our Lord saves us through our obedience to His command to be born again of the water and of the Spirit.

My friends, what kin are you to God? Have you been born into the family of God? Remember, God has no children outside of His family just as my parents have no children outside of their family. If you at one time were born into God's family but did not remain "in the faith", then you are not longer kin to God. What kin are you to God? — 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Growing out of the 'bus ministry' in some places is the practice of having 'Junior Church', and 'Youth Worship Assembly' while adults worship in the auditorium. Is this in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures?"

I should like to be clearly understood at this point. I am in favor of, and believe the effort is entirely scriptural to get as many people, old or young, to services as possible; and, to the extent that this is being achieved through the "bus ministry," I heartily endorse it. Many brethren and sisters are devoting long hours in finding, and persuading people to attend our services who have never done so before and this is a laudable and worthy work. In some places after they get them to the church building, however, there are practices being followed which raise serious questions regarding the propriety and divine sanction of such. In any instances where such procedures as conducting a *separate* worship service of *special* groups is being done, the elders ought very carefully and seriously to consider the following questions:

Are they aware that these practices were engaged in more than fifty years ago in the Christian church and that ultimately they actually selected, in many instances, *junior* elders and deacons for their junior churches? Do they know that it was in such services that instrumental music was often used and that it made its way into the *adult* auditoriums when these "juniors" became adults? Are we assured that no

such actions are planned in our "junior" church assemblies? Neither did the promoters of these departures in the Christian church intend such in the beginning of the effort, and this followed the original departures. The first step away from apostolic procedure is the fatal one, because it is the premise on which all others rest.

Do the brethren realize that it was this very practice in the denominational churches which resulted in isolating the young from the old, and in consequences of which many denominational church buildings have only a small auditorium for the adults and the young people feel no interest in, and take no part in their activities?

Where is the New Testament authority for conducting separate worship assemblies? It is crystal clear from I Cor. 11:20, that the church was required to assemble (a) *together*, (b) at the same *time* and *place* for the observance of the Lord's Supper. Moreover, in coming together to partake of the Supper, they were to "tarry one for another" (I Cor. 11:33). These necessitates the conclusion that all present are to assemble together. The nursery is not in violation of this because those capable of worship can both see and hear and thus participate in auditorium activities. Do multiple services, resulting from overcrowded auditoriums, conflict with this principle? No, because the three requisites to acceptable assemblies are met, inasmuch as an

assembly *at another time* does not provide opportunity to come *together* in one place. Christians are commanded to assemble (Heb. 10:25), they are to do this "in one place" (I Cor. 11:20); it follows that other assemblies may meet (as in the case of multiple assemblies from overcrowded conditions), at other times and places, but any group of Christians *met to worship* must do so "together," at the same time and the same place. If the brethren feel they can abandon this apostolic example, with impunity, on what basis do they urge the acceptance of any other?

Does not the attempt to justify a separate assembly for "juniors" provide the precedent for separating all possible groups in the church? Why not separate assemblies for old men, old women, young men, young women? The black and the white? The educated and the uneducated? Those with high school diplomas, those with bachelors degrees and those with doctorates? Indeed, what would forbid one to separate himself into a class of his own, on the allegation that his feelings, desires, and moods of worship differ from all others? Absurd, do you say? Don't be too sure. As a matter of fact, that is the very argument some are today using to justify alleged "home" worship thus justifying absence from the worship of the church. Brethren who love the Lord will seriously consider these matters and will avoid any course resulting in the deterioration of the church of our Lord.

"Who Will Get Your Vote"

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Recently, the main discussion in most conversations has centered upon the them of politics. It seems that everyone is talking about his or her favorite candidates for the various offices in the local and state government. One cannot help but to wonder how much good could be achieved in the cause of the Lord if the same amount of time, money and influence were exerted in the spreading of the gospel. Nevertheless, the freedom to vote as one pleases is certainly a great liberty offered by this nation of ours. The Lord God made man to be a creature of choice. From Adam on down, man has had to make choices, morally and otherwise. But, the greatest decisions are to be made in the spiritual realm and not in the political circles. We mention now some of the momentous occasions wherein decisions had to be made, either for the Lord or Satan.

First of all, we read in I Kings 18 where Elijah the prophet met the prophets of Baal in a direct confrontation on Mount Carmel. Elijah was set to prove who was truly the God that all people should serve and worship. The party of indecision, of all nations, was Israel. The great prophet inquired of the double-minded congregation: "How long go ye limping between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (V.21). Israel as a whole had held Baal to be Lord and God, prince of Nature, source of life, not to the exclusion of God, but along with him. But, man cannot serve two masters. It is better to be cold than lukewarm (Revelation 3:16). If there is a God, serve him. If there is a judgment, then prepare for it. Decision of character is necessary for a great change. Faith without works is dead (James 2:17, 26). A heavy condemnation rests on those who "profess that they know God; but IN WORKS they deny him" (Titus 1:16). It is a fatal

inconsistency to believe in God and yet not follow him. The majority of the Athenians were indecisive and told Paul that "We will hear thee concerning this yet again" (Acts 17:32). Israel, like Felix and Agrippa was moved by transcendent feelings (Acts 24:25; 26:28). Indecision on the part of Israel was characterized by the words, "And the people answered him not a word."

Secondly, a choice had to be made in regard to Jehovah or idols as found in Joshua 24:14, 15. Here speaks the sturdy old warrior, who had led Israel to victory in many a battle. Joshua invites Israel, as did Elijah, to make their choice between the false worship and the true, between the present and the future, between the indulgence of their lusts and the approval of their conscience. But, as for himself, his choice is already made. It is wonderful to see in the day of the lack of faith in the children of Israel, a leader as Joshua making his decision known to the people. Presently, there is an urgent need for Christians to dedicate themselves to the service of God. Its necessity arises from the proness of man to settle down upon his lees, neglecting the watchfulness observed when he first believed; enthusiasm cools; men sleep and tares are sown among the wheat; the Christian athlete rests content with the laurels already gained; the warrior, having defeated the enemy, allows him time to gather his forces for another battle; and, the temple that was beautifully cleansed has been left unattended and has been allowed to grow filthy, necessitating a thorough renovation. The question needs to be raised: "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord" (I Chronicles 29:5)?

Neutrality and compromise are each impossible. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me..." (Matthew 12:30). God will not accept a divided allegiance. Joshua had already made up his mind. He

did not wait to see what the majority of the people would approve before he committed himself to a particular course of action; but boldly stated his intention to cleave with full purpose of heart unto the Lord. The Ephraimites, slow to come to the rescue in the hour of danger, but swift to claim a place of honor when a victory had been won, have found many imitators in every age (Judges 12:1, 2). There are always men who wait to see in which direction the current of popular feeling is setting ere they risk their reputation or their safety by taking a decided step.

Thirdly, a choice has to be made between God and mammon. Our Lord declared that "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). The Aramaic word "mammon" denotes riches or wealth. Here in this text, mammon is personified as a kind of god of this world. Mammon which was meant to be an instrument for the accomplishment of our stewardship, is apt to assume the bearing of a master. At first it is the slave, the most obedient, until by constant trafficking with it and by taking it into the region of our affections, it becomes our love; and when it is the love of man, the consideration which to him is first, it claims him as its own. Mammon-rule, mammon-worship, is one of the most distinct features of the day, and few of us know how deep is its mark in our souls. God will command a scattering when mammon will urge to a further keeping and gathering; God will require spending on others when mammon or the world will urge a spending on one's own lusts. Therefore, the two lords have characters so different, it will be impossible to reconcile their services.

Fourthly, men have to choose between Christ and Barabbas (Matthew 27:17). Pilate had great hope that the people would favor releasing Jesus. It would have

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Studies In I Corinthians 11

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Christian worship that mattered; others have thought that it was so unimportant that it made but little difference whether it was observed faithfully or not. Paul's teaching relative to the Lord's Supper in the remainder of this chapter is very much to the point and so needful in our loose and lax religious era.

Paul continues by saying, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:23-25).

The Lord's Supper did not belong to the Patriarchal or the Mosaic Dispensation. It was not an Old Testament ordinance. It was to be part and parcel of the New Covenant, the Christian Dispensation. Jesus instituted it the night of his betrayal and just a few hours before he went to Calvary for the sins of a world that was lost and wrecked and ruined by Satan. Paul was not present for its initial observance in the Upper room there in Jerusalem; at that time he was not an apostle-not even a believer in Christ. But the other apostles, except perhaps Judas, were present. Paul later received a revelation from the Lord relative to the Lord's Supper. Paul had been faithful and diligent in delivering to the Corinthians just what the Lord had revealed to him regarding the Lord's Supper. He had not added to what he had heard; he had not subtracted anything from it. He had not sought to substitute something else for the unleavened bread or the fruit of the vine. He had not attempted to alter the Bible Doctrine of the Lord's Supper. He had not added to what he had heard; he had not subtracted anything from it. He had not sought to substitute something else for the unleavened bread or the fruit of the vine. He had not attempted to alter the Bible Doctrine of the Lord's supper in any fashion or form. What if every disciple had been this loyal and diligent in his practice of this wonderful and worthy worshipful ordinance? Then there would have been no change of names for it. The Bible refers to this ordinance as the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20), the Lord's Table (I Cor. 10:21), the communion (I Cor. 10:16-17) and the breaking of bread (Act 2:42; 20:7). But men prefer to call this ordinance by most any designation other than what the Spirit of truth calls it in Holy Writ. There would have been no change in its design or purpose. Jesus said do it in remembrance of him. It is a commemoration of him. It points backward to his death and forward to his second coming. We are to look inwardly as we partake and make sure that we are partaking in a worthy manner. But men have so relegated it that it is the forgotten part of their worship and very seldom do some ever engage in it. Men have made it into a mass or sacrifice. In the VOICE OF FREEDOM I have recently written five lengthy articles in an examination and thorough refutation of the Roman Catholic sacrament known as The Holy Eucharist. This Catholic sacrament is not a forty-second cousin to the Lord's Supper about which we read in the New Testament. The Corinthians made it into a common or ordinary meal.

Its elements would have never been changed if people through the centuries had delivered just what Paul did about the Lord's Supper and nothing more. Yet men have not been content to do this and the elements have undergone serious change. Jesus used bread; he used fruit of the vine. But now men have changed the elements to Girl Scout Cookies, to hamburgers, to Coke, to water, etc., in their so-called observance of the Lord's Supper. Had the Lord desired something beside unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine he would have chosen other elements. Other elements were available. But he did not choose them did he? He chose the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. That should be our choice also for making his choice our choice is the only one that offers

any hope for the future and any real acceptance now in our worship.

Had all religious leaders delivered just what the Lord revealed relative to the Lord's Supper then there would have been no change in the time of its observance. But now we have people who observe it on Thursday night. We have people's observing it monthly, quarterly, yearly or even less on one side of the extreme and others who believe it should be done daily on the other extreme of the matter. It seems that most any frequency is preferred to the weekly observance which was the Lord's choice of frequency. In New Testament times the saints observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

Paul reminds the Corinthians of what Jesus did in the initial institution of the Supper. He instituted it the night he was betrayed. He took the bread and gave thanks for it. He broke it. He said, "Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:26-29). It is quite obvious that our Lord was using figurative speech here and did not have any intention of their understanding him literally. This just has to be metaphorical language. The bread did not become his literal body. He did not institute something in the Upper Room that would turn his disciples into a group of spiritual cannibals either that night or at any of the future times in which they would partake of that bread. This represented or was symbolic

of his body. His literal body was still very much in their presence the night of this institution. Again it is quite obvious that he did not command that they drink his literal blood. That would have violated the very law under which he and the apostles were still living at the time this Supper was instituted. Furthermore, it would have violated what was to become part and parcel of the New Testament law. We are informed in Acts 15 that Christians likewise are strictly forbidden to partake of blood. If Jesus intended for this fruit of the vine to become his literal blood, then it could not have been partaken of either that Thursday night or any during the Christian Dispensation without violating another law. But again Jesus is using figurative or metaphorical language and simply meant to leave the impression upon them that this fruit of the vine represents or is symbolic of his blood. His blood was still coursing his veins when he told them to drink of the cup. What they drank was not blood; it was fruit of the vine. That is what it was when he first took it; that is what it was prior to his blessing it; that is what it was subsequent to his blessing it; that is what it was when they drank it. As they partook of the bread they were to do so in remembrance of Christ. It is a commemoration; it is a memorial; it is a reminder; it is a weekly sermon that proclaims his second coming; it is the golden chain that connects Calvary with the second advent. Each weekly observance forms a lovely link in the ever lengthening chain. The Lord's Supper is not a mass; it is not a sacrifice; it is not a magical device that will cleanse one from sin. That is not its function and never has been. But one more article and this requested series will be completed.

"Who Will Get Your Vote"

Continued from page 3

seemed that when it came to choosing between a vile robber and murderer and a benevolent moral teacher, common sense would have guided the choice favorable to the Lord. But, their decision was to release Barabbas. Such a decision was indicative of the people's hatred for Christ, and a sign of the people's blindness to the merits of Christ. This choice still has to be made today by each of us. "Not this man, but Barabbas" is still the cry of everyone who hates good and loves evil. What will you do with Jesus? It is you that are standing there with your sins. It is you that have been released. It is Christ that has died for our sins. Each of us must cast his influence either for the Lord or Satan.

Last of all everyone must decide between two leaders, two gates and two way (Matthews 7:13, 14).

Our decision will determine the direction we will follow in this life and also our eternal destiny. The term "strait" demand the best in life. This narrow way is the way of the cross, the church, the blood of Christ, the truth and the life (John 14:6). It is broad enough for all the redeemed, yet it is too narrow for the way of the world. Few people choose this way to travel. The "broad" way is the choice of the majority. This is the way of sin, sorrow, death and eternal destruction.

The most important election in life is choosing between light and darkness, good and evil, righteousness and sin, the Saviour and Satan. Each person must decide for himself. The question remains, "Who will get your vote?" — Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Alabama 36467.

An Important Correction On The Orlinsky Articles

Four articles entitled OBSERVATIONS FROM ORLINSKY recently appeared in WORDS OF TRUTH from my pen. The fourth installment of that series appeared in the August 11, 1978, issue. In the quotation from R. C. Foster there is a word added that should not be there. It read, "But it is certain that the word does NOT mean virgin in this passage and that the full significance of this prophecy, like many others of the Old Testament, was not understood at the time it was spoken." The first NOT should not be there. The statement should have read, "But it is certain

that the word does mean virgin in this passage and that the full significance of this prophecy, like many others of the Old Testament, was not understood at the time it was spoken." The presence of that NOT in his statement makes Foster sound like a modernist or Isaiah 7:14 and that he was not. Men like Orlinsky not Foster, have put the NOT into Isaiah 7:14 and robbed the passage of any virginal connections. This but proves how important just one word is either when added or omitted. I am happy to make this correction.



Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

The Mystery

ARNOLD SEXTON

Since words are the keys to understanding, it is essential to know their meaning and the manner in which they are used if they are to enlighten us. The word "mystery" has a unique use in the New Testament, and it is necessary to know its meaning and how it is used to receive the full value of its instruction. The use of this word in the New Testament many times refers to the hidden plan (the church) of God spoken of by prophecy in the Old Testament. According to Thayer, the word means: "1. a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding... 2. a hidden purpose or counsel; secret will..." God's purpose or plan (the church) was prophesied in the Old Testament. Yet, it was in the form of a mystery until this mystery was revealed. The apostles were the instruments through which this "mystery" was revealed.

The Lord informed the apostles that they would be the vehicles of the mystery revelation. In Mark 4:11, he said: "...Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables." In other words, inspiration would reveal unto them the nature of the kingdom or the church. In contrast to that, those who were "without" would not receive the revelation. This passage should be equated with what the Lord said in John 14:17: "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive..." The Lord had just promised inspiration (the Spirit) to the apostles. They were the ones who would reveal the "mystery." The world would not be inspired (receive the Spirit). This privilege was given to the apostles; and, they were set in contrast to the world. The apostles would not be enlightened by the world, but the world would be enlightened by the apostles.

The use of the word "mystery" in the book of Ephesians makes it plain that it refers to the church which was the hidden purpose of God. In Ephesians 5:32, Paul said: "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In this context Paul is explaining the relationship of the church to Christ by pointing out the relationship that exists between the husband and the wife. The real lesson

was not the relationship that should exist between the husband and the wife; they already knew that. The real lesson was about this "mystery," the church.

To help us see this more clearly, let's take a look at Ephesians 3:9-10:

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The subject matter in these verses is the revelation of the hidden "mystery" mentioned in verse 9. Verse 10 explains that the church is that revealed "mystery" by the "wisdom of God." Verse 11 shows that God planned it in the Old Testament, but it was hidden until the establishment of the Church.

It should be pointed out here that the expression "wisdom of God" refers to the church in much the same manner as the word "mystery" does. Beginning in I Corinthians 1:17 Paul sets in contrast the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God. He continues this discussion into chapter 2. He points out that worldly wisdom is from man, but God's wisdom is made known through revelation. Let's look at I Corinthians 2:7-10:

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. 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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Verse 7 shows that the "mystery" was the hidden "wisdom of God" which was concealed in the Old Testament. Verse 8 is not a compli-

ment to "the princes of this world." It shows the reason God's plan was hidden from them. God kept it a secret so his purpose could be fulfilled. Verse 9 is not a description of the unseen beauty of heaven, but it is a quotation of Isaiah 64:4. It is an application of this prophecy to the "mystery" which Paul said (in verse 10) had been revealed to the apostles. The rest of the chapter contrasts the "natural man" (uninspired man) with the "spiritual man" (inspired man); and it should be studied in the light of our introductory passages of Mark 4:11 and John 14:17.

Now, let's go back to "the mystery" in the book of Ephesians. The statement in Ephesians 3:3-5 is very plain. Concerning this "mystery" it says:

"How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

This simply states that God's church or mystery was concealed in previous ages, but it had been made known by Paul's revelation and others. It was no longer a mystery after this revelation, because they could now read about it and understand it.

Since we have seen that this mystery is the church, let's go back into the Old Testament and notice that it was in the mind of God all along. The church is not an after thought. It is not what God decided to do when his main purpose failed. The church was his main purpose. Please read carefully the following verses in Isaiah 28:14-18:

"Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have hid ourselves:

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Words Of Truth

"I am not mad, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness."
— Acts 26:25

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Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 8)

This will be our eighth and concluding article in a rather extensive examination of the eleventh chapter of the First Corinthian epistle. In this chapter Paul discussed the veiled woman at Corinth and some of the ramifications that grew out of that controversy. We spent some four articles in a consideration of what these verses mean to us today. In the latter portion of the chapter Paul deals with the abuse the Corinthians had



Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

made of the Lord's Supper. We are spending four articles on it as well. Therefore we pick up right where we left off in the previous study.

Paul continues by saying, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (I Cor. 11:26-29). The Lord's Supper serves as a powerful proclamation. It proclaims the Lord's death till he comes again. Hence it looks back to the scenes of Calvary or Execution Hill; it looks forward to the second coming of Christ. The Lord intended his Supper to form a golden chain that would reach all the way from Calvary to his second coming. Each weekly observance forms one of the golden links that composes this ever lengthening chain.

Reader friend, are you a Christian? If not, you need to become one by hearing the gospel of Christ, believing in him as the only begotten Son of God, repenting of your sins, confessing faith in Christ and being immersed into him, the Father and the Holy Spirit for the remission of your sins. If you are a

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FROM

THE EDITOR

A Shameful Perversion Of Power

The thirteenth chapter of Romans clearly points out that "the powers that be are ordained of God" (verse 1), and that the civil ruler is "the minister of God ... for good" and "a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (verse 4). In other words, it is God's intention that civil rulers punish evil doers and protect the innocent; that they should be a terror to evil and a minister of God for good to the Christian.



BOBBY DUNCAN

God for good to the

What a shame it is that this God-given power of civil rulers has been so perverted that the very opposite of what God intended has become characteristic of our rulers to such a great degree. Instead of promoting good and discouraging evil, in a large measure those in power have promoted evil and discouraged good. Take for example the fact that a few years ago, by a ruling of the Supreme Court of the United States, prayer and Bible reading in public schools became illegal. The same law that guarantees the atheist the right to teach his atheistic theory of evolution in the public school room denies the believer the right to teach that God created the heaven and the earth. Who can believe that this is what God intended civil rulers to do?

Look also at the many laws now protecting the rights of criminals, while the rights of law-abiding citizens are becoming fewer and fewer. Unborn babies are being legally murdered by the thousands; and in many cases it is at the expense of decent and upright tax payers. Pornographic movies and books are produced and distributed under the protection of the law. A burglar breaking into a house occupied by a man and his family can do so with the assurance that he is legally (at least) protected from all physical harm by the occupants so long as he does not indicate that he intends to harm them physically. We are reminded of a statement Governor George Wallace made some time ago to the effect that one might get knocked in the head by a criminal, and the criminal would be arrested and set free before the one knocked in the head could get to the hospital.

Now take a look at the present status of the proposed so-called Equal Rights Amendment to The Constitution of the United States of America. The proposed amendment itself is probably the most ungodly piece of legislation ever to be considered by the congress, including the repeal of the eighteenth amendment. It would automatically strike down every law of every state which is in any way designed for the protection and special welfare of women. If the time should again come when the men and boys of America are drafted into the armed services, then the women and girls of America would also be drafted without any consideration's being given to their sex. The law would forbid that any consideration be given to sex in the barracks they would occupy or the jobs

they would be doing. They would live in the same barracks and occupy the same foxholes and use the same bathrooms with the men.

Our congress passed this piece of legislation nearly seven years ago, and sent it to the states for their ratification. In order for it to become law three-fourths of the state legislatures would have to ratify it. But the allotted time for ratification by the states is almost gone, and the states have refused to ratify it; and all this is despite the fact that congress appropriated several millions of dollars to promote its ratification, and all the lesbians and homosexuals in the country were behind the movement (along with President Carter). Righteous and sensible people who were informed have fought valiantly to defeat this ridiculous piece of legislation, and have succeeded up to now.

Last week, however, the "powers that be" in Washington said, "The ballgame is not nearly over. We have decided to play another quarter if need be; but the minute President Carter and the lesbians score enough points to go ahead, then the game is over immediately." This is essentially what has been done by extending the deadline for ratification of ERA until June of 1982.

But what has been done is also a demonstration of contempt for the Constitution of the United States on the part of those who have sworn to uphold it. This action seems to be a way of announcing to every American that the majority of those in Washington, including President and Mrs. Carter, are determined to have their way — by due process of law if possible, but if not, by mocking and setting aside the constitution. This scribe would like to know what reason we have to believe that June of 1982 is really the deadline for ratification of ERA. If it is not ratified by then, what is there to keep congress from extending the deadline another three or five or ten years?

Those fighting for the right should not give up. We should rather take courage in the fact that ratification was staved off for seven years; perhaps it can be staved off for three or four more. And who knows but by then we may be successful in electing to Washington those who have greater respect for our constitution. If all of us will do what we can we can rest assured that God will not forget us.

A Tragedy

MARK BASS

Heartbreaking tears appeared in the young child's eyes as he knelt beside the bloody, mangled corpse of the once beautiful woman who had been his mother for seven short years.

Across the road a man lay face down in a shallow ditch; choking in his own blood. He was unable to lift himself, to raise his head and fill his lungs with life sustaining oxygen. The entire episode was nauseating to the now mute bystanders.

As flames engulfed the crumpled wreckage the child could see the look of confusion on the drunken man's face. His bloodshot eyes reflected the hellish flames of death; but showed no remorse for what he had just done. But why should they? He had only had a few drinks; he only wanted to be sociable. Who would dare say that he was responsible for this tragic night? — P. O. Box 84, Rives, Tn. 38253.

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 your view of the theory now being advocated in some areas of the brotherhood that 'law is the antithesis of grace', and where there is grace there is no law?"

Essential to the understanding of this matter is a clear apprehension of James 1:25. To this end I offer a brief treatment of this passage. Those interested in a more detailed discussion of this particular verse and its context, should see an expanded discussion in my commentary on James, published by the Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee.

But he that looketh into the perfect law. Here begins the application of the illustration of the man who looks but forgets his reflection in the mirror, set out in verses 23, 24. It is presented as a contrast, as evidenced by the word "but" with which the verse begins. Actually, the illustration of the mirror is mingled with the lesson and the figure is dropped. A man looks into his mirror and for a moment sees his reflection, but passes on, forgetting what he saw. Such is characteristic of one who hears the word of truth, but soon forgets it, and this thus wholly uninfluenced by it. The genuine listener is far more interested. The verb "looketh" clearly indicates this. It is from *Paralupsas*, aorist active participle, from *parakupto*, to stoop and look, to gaze intently. It is the term used to describe the actions of Peter and Mary as they peered into the empty tomb of Christ on the morning of his resurrection (John 20:5, 11). It describes, in vivid detail, one who stoops down, as it were, in order to get the closest possible look; and, as used in our text, denotes one who is highly interested in the word of truth. It is a stronger term, and indicates a much more minute look than that suggested by "beholding" in verse 24. It reveals (a) an abiding interest on the part of the viewer; (b) a recognition that there is something vitally important to see. It is this disposition which characterizes the interested listener.

That into which such a one intently looks is the "perfect law". It is well to observe first that it is *law* into which one is to look. James would be utterly without sympathy with that school of thought which alleges that the Old Testament wholly of grace, but no law! *Law* is "a rule of action;" to insist that there is no law in the New Covenant is to urge that there is no rule by which we are to walk today. In complete contrast with such a view, there is a "law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2; I Cor. 9:21); a "law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2); a "law of liberty" (James 1:25; 2:12), a "law of love" (Rom. 13:10); and, to insist that there is no law in the New Testament is (a) in conflict with these plain affirmations of inspiration; (b) implies that we are without an enforceable standard of conduct; and (c) disregards the significance of the word *law*.

But did not Paul declare that children of God are not under law, but under grace (Rom. 6:4)? The statement, "Ye are not under law, but under grace," is either (a) limited by the context; or, (b) it is not. *If it is not*, Christians are a lawless people. Those who are under no law are lawless. It is foolish to affirm, in one breath, that children of God are not under law, any law, law of any kind, and then to concede that they are under law. Where there is no law there is no restraint. Moreover, those who are without law are without sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. "Where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (Rom. 4:15). Where there is no law, there is nothing to

transgress; where there is nothing to transgress, there is no sin. Hence, where there is no law, there is no sin. This conclusion is irresistible. What is sin? It is lawlessness (I John 3:4). What is lawlessness? Lawlessness is an offence against God. But, where there is no law, there can be no offence against it. Those incapable of offending are either (a) perfect, thus *above* law; or, (b) they are wholly *without* law. How can one transgress that which does not exist? We are under some law; or, we are not. If we are not, then it is impossible for us to sin; if we are under some sort of law, then those who affirm otherwise, are in grave error.

That Paul, in the passage above alluded to (Rom. 6:14), did not intend to affirm that children of God are wholly without law of *any kind* is evident from (a) the fact that he himself said that we are under the law to Christ and to God (I Cor. 9:21); and (b) from the context in which the statement appears. The *thesis* of Romans is that justification is through the system of faith which originated with Christ, and not by means of the law of Moses (Rom. 1:16, 17). In much detail, and with many contrasts, does he pursue this argument from Rom. 1:13 through 8:25. The law which the Gentiles did not have (2:12-16), was the law of Moses. That upon which the Jew rested, in which he found instruction, gloried in, and often transgressed (2:17-24), was the law of Moses. The ordinances of the law (2:25-28), were the law of Moses. The works of the law (3:19, 20), which could not justify, were the works of the law of Moses. The righteousness, in Christ, apart from the law (2:21-26), is that which is apart from the law of Moses. The law of works, contrasted with the law of faith (Rom. 3:27, 28), was the law of Moses. The law which issued in, and was

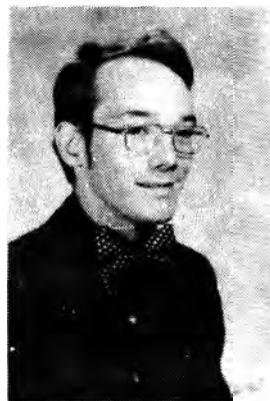
established by faith (4:31), was the law of Moses. The blessing pronounced upon Abraham, because of his faith (cited by the apostle to sustain the view that justification was not by the law of Moses), which was exercised anterior to the giving of the law (4:9-14), was declared to be apart from, and before the law of Moses. The law to which the Jews were made dead, in order that they might properly be joined to Christ (Rom. 7:1-6), was the law of Moses. The law which said, "Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7), was the law of Moses. The commandment, which Paul found to be death to him (Rom. 7:7-25) was the law of Moses. The law which was weak, through the flesh (Rom. 8:2), was the law of Moses.

It is therefore an exceedingly careless and confused exegesis which would take from a such context a statement which says, "For ye are not under law, but under grace," and deny that the law referred to is the law of Moses! Here, the contrast intended is exactly the same as that of John 1:17: "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." The conclusion is irresistible that the statement (Rom. 6:14: "For ye are not law, but under grace") is limited to the contextual significance of the term; and, that Paul, continuing his thesis that Christians are not under the law of Moses, but are, in this dispensation, wholly answerable to Christ, meant by the statement, You are not under the law of Moses; you are amenable to Christ through the system of grace originating with him. This is, however, far from affirming that, in consequence, Christians are not under any law today (Gal. 6:2; James 2:12; I Cor. 9:21). (More on this next week.)

"Perfect Attendance At Wolf Creek"

Just recently this writer held a meeting for the Wolf Creek congregation in Hickman County, Tennessee. There was something most unusual about this meeting. Every night in the meeting, except two, every member of the local congregation was present. Fellow preachers, when is the last time you have had an experience like that?

It is not our purpose to brag, but we do feel that there are several points that we could learn from this example. 1. There are no excuses that are acceptable to God. There is a vast difference between an excuse and a reason. We define an excuse as "a lazy man's crutch." Webster defines a reason as "a statement offered in explanation or justification." How many times today do we hear the same old excuses offered by those who forsake the assembly? "I had a hard day at work." "I have small children therefore I cannot get out at night." "I am so tired I just must stay at home." Brethren, these just will



RON HARPER

not work. The members of the Wolf Creek congregation could have offered the same excuses but they did not. There were members with jobs, members with small children, and members who were tired, but they came just the same. Some people will let anything keep them away while others will make every sacrifice to worship God. The only absences in the meeting were due to illness. Such is a valid reason. Surely we should worship God whenever the local congregation meets (Heb. 10:24-26). This will help us to grow spiritually.

2. The day of the meeting is not over. It is a shame that in many places meetings are no longer held. If the congregation will put forth the necessary effort a successful meeting can be held. Gospel meetings offer an excellent opportunity to build the local church as well as reach those in the community. However, there must be adequate preparation and sound preaching of God's word. With those two ingredients our meetings will produce much fruit. However, without them no program of work in the church will pay dividends. Let us use every means at our disposal to preach the gospel of Christ (II Tim. 4:1, 2).

3. We will do just exactly what we want to do. No one makes anyone attend the services. We do that because we want to. When we all decide that we want to serve God our buildings

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Studies In I Corinthians 11

(No. 8)

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faithful Christian, then of course you worship God acceptably and regularly. This means upon every first day of the week without fail that you come together with people of like precious faith and together you partake of the Lord's Supper and engage in other acts of Christian worship. This you do regularly unless it is just impossible for you to assemble. Each time you partake of the Lord's Supper you proclaim that the Christ died and that he is coming back the second time. This is the stately and significant sermon that every faithful child of God proclaims each time he partakes of the Lord's Supper.

By their abuses of the Lord's Supper the Corinthian Christians were not partaking of it in a worthy manner. To partake of it in an unworthy manner means to fail to give the proper respect, the proper reverence and to engage in it in the right manner. This has reference to the WAY we partake and not to whether we are worthy of partaking of it or not. Many have misunderstood Paul at this strategic point. Hence, they look at their lives and decide they are unworthy to partake of the Supper. But Paul is describing the manner of our engaging in this portion of our worship. A failure to partake in a worthy manner means that a person is guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. He eats and drinks judgment or condemnation to himself by his signal failure to discern the Lord's body and the Lord's blood. Therefore it is a serious violation to partake of the Supper in a spirit of levity or irreverence. This portion of our service is solemn and serious. Paul also counsels the Christians at Corinth and all of us who would later read these instructions to prove or test or examine ourselves. This calls for a looking within. We are to make sure that we are partaking of it in the proper attitude and with the proper respect exhibited toward it at all times. This testing or proving or examining is to be done personally and upon self. This does not mean that one is to become a committee of one to decide on who is and who is not to partake. That is the Lord's prerogative and not ours. The Lord's Supper is for Christians and for those who will partake of it with the proper discernment of the Lord's body and the Lord's blood. The Lord, not man, does the OPENING and the CLOSING as far as communion participation is concerned.

Paul closes the chapter with these words, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come" (I Cor. 11:30-34).

Because of their abuse of the Lord's Supper some of the Christians at Corinth were weak; they were sickly; they were asleep. Do these various designations refer to physical maladies? Some have so concluded but I am not of the number. They were used to refer to spiritual maladies. They were weak spiritually as a result of their signal failure to partake of the Supper. They were sick spiritually because of these abuses in the worship generally and especially in regard to the Lord's Supper. They were asleep spiritually because of these abuses in their worship generally and especially in regard to the Lord's Supper. They were asleep spiritually. They were lacking in spiritual alertness, in true vigor of the soul. The clearing up of the problem would remove any apostolic judgment from their shoulders. Paul had judged and condemned these sinful practices because they had been judged and failed in the proper observance of the Lord's Supper. Paul had done this for their own good for their salvation in order that they might not be condemned with the world for its sins. This was the purpose of their chastening of the Lord.

How they received it would touch eternal interests.

For those Corinthians who wished to correct these grievous and glaring problems Paul had the inspired solution. When you come together to eat the Lord's Supper, eat it with all assembled instead of some eating at one time and some at another time. Such apostolic counsel will not allow for the divided assembly or parallel worship that many are practicing and condoning currently. All things should be done decently and in order as Paul expressed a little later in this very epistle (I Cor. 14:40). There should be a set time in which they do this on the Lord's Day. Brethren should be aware of these set times for worship and should be prompt in getting there. Straggling Christians is hardly a commendable combination of terms. Paul further suggests that if any person be hungry, let him eat at home in order that his spiritual hunger may be his only desire when he comes together with fellow saints to worship in song, in sermon, in prayer, in the contribution and in the Lord's Supper. This will keep them from turning the Lord's Supper into a common, ordinary meal that would bring judgment upon them. Again Paul is not suggesting that it is wrong to eat upon the meetinghouse premises. The families in those days who had the church to meet in their homes had to eat their meals in

the places or upon the premises where the church met for its worship. If not, WHY NOT? Paul is placing a sharp difference and drawing a decisive line of demarcation between the observance of the Lord's Supper and their eating of common, ordinary meals. Those who take Paul literally about eating only at home would be sinning if they ate at a local restaurant, in a park, at the home of a friend or brought a sack lunch to eat on the way provided they had a great distance to go and only a slow means of transportation to arrive there. The way some people have examined and understood (though misunderstood is a better term) this passage would even make it impossible for a gospel preacher to eat a meal while far from home in a gospel meeting. After all, does he not have a home to eat and drink in and another home is not his home?? How utterly ridiculous some are in matters like this!!!

Their minor disorders that need appraisal and correction "will I set in order when I come," Paul informs the Christians at Corinth. He expected to see them face to face and these other matters could be corrected then.

It has been a joy to present these lessons. I sincerely trust they have been helpful to the one who requested them. — Box 464, Ripley, Tenn. 38063.

"Perfect Attendance At Wolf Creek"

Continued from page 3

will be full. They will be full of restored backsliders and converted sinners. When we all decide to do God's will there will be more personal workers in the church. When we all decide to do God's will our contributions will increase and we can send more men to preach the gospel in foreign countries. When we all decide to do God's will there will be fewer churches split over petty differences and hurt feelings. When we all decide that we want to do

God's will we will have more love shown.

We do exactly what we want to do. Why can't we want to serve God? If we want to we would. "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years. . . So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:10, 12).—1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Al. 35501.

The Mystery

Continued from page 1

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."

Verses 14 and 15 speak of the plan the "scornful men" of Jerusalem would put in motion to murder Christ. The Jewish rulers made an agreement with the Roman ruler to crucify Christ, claiming "his blood" would be upon their conscience (Matthew 27:25). There is no doubt that the prophecy refers to Christ, because Peter quotes verse 16 and makes such an application of it in I Peter 2:6. Verse 16 shows that the one they would put to death would become the foundation of the church (I Corinthians 3:11). Verse 17 demonstrates the authority of judgment that God would exercise through Christ (John 12:48). Verse 18 is a prediction of the resurrection. The "scornful men" thought they would destroy the work of Christ by putting him to death. God disannulled their plans by the resurrection. Christ refers to this very thing

before his death in Matthew 16:18. He said, "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The rock upon which the church is built is the same as predicted in Isaiah 28:16. The "covenant with death" in Isaiah 28:18 is the same as the "gates of Hades" in Matthew 16:18. When God "disannulled" the "covenant with death," he opened the "gates of Hades," and Christ won the victory over Hades by the resurrection. Therefore, death did not prevail over Christ. He conquered it and established the church. It is no longer a mystery because it has been revealed. The "mystery" which is the church has always been God's plan to save man. — 1751 Damon Street, Birmingham, AL 35217.

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

— Acts 26:25

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The Church And Meeting Houses

GUS NICHOLS

[We recently came across this article by the late beloved brother Nichols. We do not know whether it has ever been published or not, but we do not believe it has. Regardless, it is a fine article and discusses some principles that must be emphasized time and again. — Editor]

Christ built the church, and men build meeting houses (Mt. 16:18). Christ is the head of the church, but he is not the head of the meeting house (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). Many speak of the meeting house as the church. By a figure of speech called metonymy, the house is put for the church meeting therein, just as Jesus put the cup for its contents when telling his disciples to drink the cup when instituting the Lord's supper (I Cor. 11:23-24). Hence, some speak of being "baptized in the church," meaning in the baptistry in the meeting house. Some speak of a wedding in the meeting house as a "church wedding," and speak of "painting the church," "air conditioning the church," and of "covering the church," "going to church," "eating in the church," "church suppers," "church funeral," etc. But the church mentioned in the New Testament is not the meeting house.

Members of the church are not the same as members of a meeting house. Christ purchased the church with his blood (Acts 20:28). But members buy and build meeting houses with money. Paul was a wise and master builder of the church, not of meeting houses (I Cor. 3:5-13). Before his conversion, Paul persecuted the church, but he did not destroy meeting houses (Gal. 1:13-14; I Cor. 15:8-9; Gal. 1:13-14, 23).

We know of no New Testament congregation which bought a lot, with clause in the deed, appointed trustees, obtained a city building permit, was incorporated so as to borrow money, constructed and owned a meeting house. Furthermore, there is no specific command to the church to own a meeting house. If there were such a command then all congregations would have to own a meeting house, and could not rent the house, could not borrow the house, worship in a school house, etc.

God commanded Christians to assemble, and that

the whole church come together (Heb. 10:25; I Cor. 14:23; Acts 11:26; 20:7). But there is no such command concerning the place for the assembly. The command to assemble is a generic command. It does not require any certain and exclusive place for the assembling of ourselves together. It leaves us free and with the liberty to choose the place for meeting, and to provide such a place as will expedite the purpose of the meeting. The authority for the church to own a meeting house is only generic authority.

We must obey the command to assemble (Heb. 10:25). All who assemble do the same thing—they assemble. In this respect there is uniformity of practice. But as regards the place for the meeting, there may be diversity in obedience. While having uniformity in doing the thing commanded, there may be diversity as to the place of meeting. One church may own a meeting house, and another may meet in a synagogue, temple, or in a borrowed building.

When God commands us to assemble for worship,

without telling us where, or in what sort of building, who is to own it, be over it, etc., it is a necessary inference that he has left the place to our judgment; and it is a matter of choice or option, or opinion. Hence, the meeting house is authorized by necessary inference. While a church owned meeting house is not commanded, and is not essential, some place is essential, for we could not assemble without a place to assemble. A church owned meeting house is an expedient; it aids us in doing the very thing commanded, which is to come together for worship and service to God, and without adding anything to the command. Under generic law there may be a plurality of ways, means, and methods between which God has given us the right to choose. All churches are to be uniform in obeying the commands of God, but they may very much differ among themselves under generic law giving them a choice as to how to do what is commanded.

The Hawk-Sutton Debate

RAY HAWK

On July 24-27, 1978 a debate between Carrol R. Sutton and this writer took place in the Hobart-Lake Station, Indiana area. The first two nights of the discussion were on the proposition, "The scriptures teach that the church may arrange, oversee and provide the needs for those who are its obligation in the field of benevolence, and this arrangement is not a benevolent organization (institution) such as Paragould Children's Home, Shultz-Lewis Children's Home, and Homes for the Aged." Brother Sutton affirmed and I denied this proposition. On the last two nights I affirmed and brother Sutton denied: "The scriptures teach that churches of Christ may contribute (transmit money) to orphan's homes such as the Paragould Children's Home, Shultz-Lewis Children's Home, and Homes for the Aged."

In *Truth Magazine*, September 14, 1978 issue.

brother Dorris V. Rader reviewed the discussion. I wish to follow his review and reply to it. I agree wholeheartedly with the following paragraph:

"In my judgement, the spirit which prevailed throughout the debate was above reproach. Brother Hiram Hutto served as Sutton's moderator and Jim Bullington served as Hawk's moderator. They had little to do as far as keeping order was concerned and all connected with the debate are to be commended. It was one of the best along that line I have attended."

This should be true of any debate, especially those which are conducted between brethren. There is no

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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"The Old Rugged Cross"

By RONNIE LOWE

As we sing that old favorite, "The Old Rugged Cross," we do so with a look to the past. We do so in thankfulness as we reflect upon that day when the Savior was crucified for us. It was for you and me that Christ suffered this cruel, inhumane means of death. Our Lord suffered much pain that day, both leading up to and during his crucifixion. Yet, he did it willingly and with joy (Hebrews 12:2). Was Calvary's cross rugged simply because of the physical pain he bore or was there much more to it than that? Psychologists tell us that mental anguish can also be very severe, and it is to this type of suffering that we direct this article.

For Jesus, the cross was rugged because he had no sin, yet he was dying in order to pay the price for the sins of all mankind. He died to set man free from the power of sin and its consequences (Romans 6:23; James 1:12-15). We can plainly see how damaging God regards sin in that he gave his Son to remove its burden. We should share this view of sin; yet, so many times we make no effort whatsoever to flee from sin and its control over us.

The cross was also rugged because he had been rejected by the very people he came to save. We live as though we are trying to win a popularity contest; but have you ever imagined what it would be like to be totally rejected? Yet, our Lord was rejected numerous times and finally even deserted by his closest friends and his Father (Matthew 27:46). Imagine the strain it must have been to know that he was completely alone.

Furthermore, the cross was rugged because it was one he could have avoided. Whenever disaster strikes our lives, it is made far worse by knowing we could easily have avoided it. Jesus knew he could have avoided his captors with ease (Matthew 26:51-53), but he also knew that in doing so he would thwart God's eternal purpose. So Jesus boldly and voluntarily stood before his captors to be taken and killed for the sins of man.

To us, the cross is rugged because it is one we must also bear (Luke 9:23; Matthew 10:22). "Must Jesus bear the cross alone and all the world go free?" If I am not willing to bear the cross then I am not worthy to

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FROM

THE EDITOR

Can One Be Lost For Whom Jesus Died?



BOB DUNCAN

The five major tenets of Calvinism are: (1) the doctrine of Total Depravity--the idea that all are hereditarily totally depraved and cannot believe the gospel without a direct operation of the Holy Ghost upon them; (2) the doctrine of Unconditional Predestination--that God has unconditionally and arbitrarily elected certain individuals to be saved; (3) the doctrine of a Limited Atonement--that the death of Jesus was for those only who had already been unconditionally predestinated to eternal salvation; (4) the doctrine of Irresistible Grace--that a direct operation of the Holy Ghost will come irresistibly upon those already predestinated to eternal salvation and regenerate them; and (5) the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints--the impossibility of apostasy.

It can readily be seen that these five doctrines depend to a large extent upon and necessarily grow out of each other. If all are hereditarily totally depraved, then a direct operation of the Holy Ghost would naturally be necessary for one to be saved. And if certain ones are already unconditionally elected to eternal salvation, and all others to eternal condemnation, then why should Christ die for any

save the elect? And since the death of Christ was for the elect only, it follows that all for whom Christ died will be saved. And since all those and only those predestinated to salvation will ever be saved, it follows that all those who are born again will persevere unto the end. After all, how could one unconditionally elected to eternal salvation ever become a backslider and be lost?

While there are many passages of scripture which abundantly disapprove the Calvinistic theory, a large number of passages is not required. If it can be shown that one single person for whom Jesus died can be lost, then the whole theory is exploded. Two verses will suffice to show that those for whom Christ died can be lost.

I Corinthians 8:11 says: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died." The latter part of Romans 14:15 says: "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." These verses show clearly to all who may be persuaded by plain language that some for whom Christ died may be destroyed--actually perish. The only way to avoid this conclusion is to refuse to believe the plain statement of the Bible. But if one for whom Christ died may perish, then Christ did not die only for those unconditionally predestinated to eternal salvation. And if Christ died for some who will be lost, then the grace of God is not irresistible. If the grace of God is not irresistible, then saved people may turn back from following Christ and be lost.

If the five tenets of Calvinism are true, then these verses of Scripture we have cited are not true. But these verses are true; therefore the five tenets of Calvinism are not true.

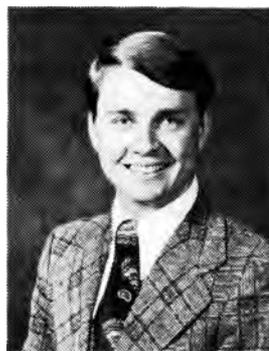
"Women Professing Godliness"

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Tim. 2:9-10).

When a gospel preacher writes or speaks on the subject of "modest apparel" his message is often ignored as being only "preacher talk." Since this is often

the case I would like to write this article from the viewpoint of a "brother talking to his sister." Though my sister, Brenda, and I used to fight like cats and dogs as children, we still loved each other and tried to protect each other. The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy that he treat younger Christian women as his sisters (I Tim. 5:2). Thus I would like to talk to my younger sisters in Christ just as I would talk to my sister, Brenda.

First of all, just as I know my sister loves the Lord and wants to do what is right, I will assume that those who will read this article also love the Lord and



RAY DUTTON

want to do what is right. Women who deliberately dress (or undress) so as to be CHASED and not to be CHASTE will not listen to what is said here anyway. They know exactly what they are doing to those of the opposite sex when they wear revealing clothes. Their desire is to be SEXUALLY attractive. They crave men's attention to such a degree that they will appeal to even the basest desires in order to get it.

Buy my sister is a woman who "professes godliness." She wants to please God more than anything else. Though she always tries to look her best, she is not willing to sacrifice her virtue on the altar of other men's lusts and lewd imaginations (Matt. 5:28). Sometimes, though, even the best of my Christian sisters allow current style and fashion to dictate what they wear at the expense of spiritual considerations.

In the late 60's this happened to many of my younger sisters who found that almost the only dresses available were "mini-skirts." Dress stores carried few dresses that came lower than 6 to 8 inches above the knee. The result was that many unthinking girls found that it was easier to switch to this new fashion than fight and find longer skirts. The sad fact is that skirts coming 6 to 8 inches (and more) above the knee carried much more spiritual significance than whether to wear an A-line or full skirt. It meant more than whether or not to wear "bobbie socks." It

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is your view of the theory now being advocated in some areas of the brotherhood that 'law is the antithesis of grace,' and where there is grace there is no law?"

(Continued from last week)

Children of God have been, by the precious blood of Christ, redeemed from the curse of the law (of Moses), and are privileged, in Christ, to share in the blessings of salvation available through conformity to "the law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2). Through the freedom from the law of Moses children of God today enjoy, they may pursue their obligations under the law of love, realizing that the law by which they shall be judged (James 2:12), is not one of slavery, but one of freedom. By this rule (of law), let us ever walk (Gal. 6:16).

The law, into which Christians are to look intently is a *perfect* one. "Perfect," in the passage, is from *teleion*, from *telos*, end, thus indicating completeness, fullness, wholeness. The law of Christ is full, complete, embodying all that is necessary to accomplish its purpose.

The law of liberty. This statement is further explanatory of why the law is designated as perfect in the statement preceding. It is *law*, it is a *perfect* law, it is a perfect law of *liberty*. It is law, because it is a rule of action the design of which is to govern our lives; it is a perfect law, because it is (a) without defect; (b) it is all-sufficient to accomplish the purpose for which it was designed. It is a law of liberty, because obedience thereto sets one free from the bondage of sin and Satan, and spiritual death.

The view obtains with some that *law* and *liberty* are

contradictory terms. The Holy Spirit, through James, envisioned no such difficulty. With him it is perfectly consistent to speak of law and liberty in the same breath, and to join them in the same phase. Indeed, there can be true liberty only where there is law; law is restraint; where there is no restraint, there is the most hopeless and abject slavery. A dope addict, for example, defies law, and thus operates without restraint, and thereby suffers the most rigorous bondage. Denominational theologians, laboring under the prepossessions of their creeds, seek to eliminate all law from God's plan today, and in this fashion attempt to avoid the essentiality of baptism, and other acts of obedience, as conditions precedent to the forgiveness of sins.

It is by such contended that law excludes grace; and that to insist on adherence to law, as a condition of salvation, makes the redemptive plan a system of works instead of faith. It is strange that those who thus reason (and who place such great confidence in the efficacy of faith, apart from all work), fail to observe that on this hypothesis, faith itself is excluded! "They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28, 29). Belief itself is thus declared to be a work of God. It is, therefore, highhanded presumption on the one hand, and a denial of the plain affirmations of scripture, on the other, to insist that there is efficacy in one work of God (faith), but none is another (baptism) in order to salvation. The truth is, neither is efficacious in obtaining salvation for us; we are saved on the merits of Christ's blood shed on our behalf, but

appropriated on compliance with the conditions which the Lord himself gave. These are belief in his deity (Mark 16:15, 16); repentance from every sin (Luke 13:3); confession of him before man (Rom. 10:9, 10); and baptism in water (Acts 2:38). The Lord saves us; but he saves us only when we believe, repent, confess, and are baptized in water for the remission of sins!

To allege that such is legalism is to level the charge against the Lord himself who is the author of the plan of salvation applicable to us today. To object to this on the ground that it involves a *plan* is absurd; a "plan" is "a proposed method of action or procedure" (Webster); the Lord requires of us the foregoing "method of action, or procedures" in order for our salvation. To charge that emphasis on the *plan* is to minimize the *man* is opposed to common sense; we magnify the man in exact ratio to the respect we exhibit for his plan. The confidence we have in our physician is indicated by the degree of faithfulness which characterizes our adherence to his instructions. We evidence our respect for Christ in the care we exercise in *doing what he said. We honor the man in respecting and obeying the plan!* The effort to draw attention away from the plan on the allegation that such should be focused on the man usually has as its aim de-emphasis of the commands of Christ, particularly baptism. We implore our readers to avoid and repudiate this hurtful and dangerous heresy. If it is legalism to insist that every command of Christ should be equally respected and faithfully obeyed, then let us all be legalists! Far better this than to deny the plain affirmations of his word and thus, in effect, to become infidels.

"Your Marriage Can Be Great"

April of 1978 will be remembered in the history of great books as marking the literary debut of YOUR MARRIAGE CAN BE GREAT. Definitive sounds its literary tone; classic sounds its literary tenor; scholarly plumbs perfectly its unique approach in content and the mastery of its marvelous material. Multiplied thousands have eagerly anticipated its completion and its availability for purchase and then a rich, delightful and profitable perusal.



Robert R. Taylor Jr.

I remember well sitting in the living room of the Thomas B. Warren home a couple years back as brother Warren unfolded the dream he had of bringing such a book to the light of printed day, to the reality of a literary production. Then it was a developing idea. Now it is a definitive reality. Over these two years my anticipations for the book have been great; now that I have it in hand and have already read much of its fine material it has far exceeded my anticipations of it.

A BOOK WHOSE TIME HAS COME

From era to era there is an occasional idea whose time has come. Here is a book whose time has come. It is a book whose time has come due to the million plus divorces that plague our nation annually. It is a book

whose time has come due to a million plus separations that afflict our country annually. It is a book whose time has come due to the low repute in which the majesty of marriage is currently considered by the masses of men. It is a book whose time has come due to the unhappiness, disharmony and personal conflicts that attend many of the marriages that are barely staying together. It is a book whose time has come due to some twenty to thirty serious errors that are held toward marriage, divorce and remarriage by our own brethren. It is a book whose time has come because it answers the fundamental fallacies that the proponents of marital error are now propagating.

THE MECHANICS OF THE BOOK

The book is published by the National Christian Press of Jonesboro, Arkansas. It is printed by McQuiddy Printing Company of Nashville, Tennessee. Both the publisher and printer have established fine reputations for turning out high quality books and easy to read material. An excellent, durable grade of paper has been used in this volume.

The book contains ninety-seven chapters which develop twelve major areas of consideration. Sixty-one writers have worked together in the writing of this magnificent and monumental volume. There are 692 pages. Some forty chapters deal directly or indirectly with the critical and crucial topics of divorce and remarriage.

The book sells for \$12.95 plus postage and handling. Each page therefore costs you less than two cents. Yet the material on each page cannot be evaluated in a monetary manner. Who can evaluate in money what a book can mean if it aids his having a truly great marriage?

THE MESSENGERS AND THE MESSAGE OF THIS BOOK

Brother Thomas B. Warren is the editor of this valiant volume. He is the author of many of the crucial chapters that compose this book. Aiding him in this Herculean endeavor have been sixty men who touched all basics of marriage, divorce and remarriage. Each contributor to this book believes in the permanency of marriage. Each one believes that marriage can be and should be great. Each one believes that there is but one lone ground that permits divorce and remarriage and that is fornication. Each one believes that the innocent one who has put away a fornicating partner and for that very cause is alone free to contract another marriage with some one who is eligible. No person who contributed to this book believes the guilty party is free to enter another marriage while the former partner yet lives. The men who wrote this material come from a variety of backgrounds. They are preachers, professors, marriage counselors, medical doctors, campus ministers and one Christian lady who researched their assigned topics and wrote with an overall view of making marriages what God would have them be and warning what divorce and remarriage can do to homes, to lives and to immortal souls.

Throughout the book the Bible is held up in every message. Every facet of marriage should be patterned after Biblical authority and in holy harmony with Scriptural guidelines. The messengers in this book in their respective messages write in unison that the Bible has the answer, that God alone has the solution to sagging marriages and to floundering

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The Hawk-Sutton Debate

Continued from page 1

place for discourtesy on the part of either side.

Brother Sutton introduced as his main passage during his time to affirm, I Timothy 5:16. I continually asked brother Sutton for other passages showing details for his "arrangement." He would give none. The reason I asked for such was because I knew he would be asking me for details and scriptures for each one on Wednesday and Thursday nights. I wanted to show the audience that if he would and could not give me details or scriptures for those details, he had no right to expect of me what he himself would not supply. True to form, he asked me for details when I was in the affirmative, and he was somewhat disturbed when I gave him over and over again I Tim. 5:16 as a generic passage authorizing child care in orphan's homes.

At one point of the debate I mentioned a ten year old orphan boy who is a Christian and asked Sutton a number of questions about the arrangement he would have for providing for him. In the course of my illustration, I asked brother Sutton who would diaper the boy. This was amusing to Sutton and he continually made a joke of diapering a 10 year old boy. I explained in my next speech that I had a 15 year old nephew who was at that time in a coma. He had to be diapered. If he was the charge of the church, who would diaper him? The elders? Brother Sutton completely ignored my reply on this and my question and continued to make a joke about a 10 year old being diapered. Brother Rader also forgot my reply when he reviewed the debate. I wonder why?

During the debate I asked brother Sutton, who makes the covering of I Cor. 11:2-16 a matter of faith, how he could have fellowship with the Hobart Church when they made it a matter of opinion and refuse fellowship to me on this question? He replied on Wednesday night with a chart showing differences between me and others on the homes being divine or human. The thing brother Sutton failed to see is that I do not make the matter of the home's being divine a matter of fellowship. Therefore, I can differ with my brethren on matters of opinion! Why do these brethren fellowship some when they disagree on matters of faith but will not fellowship others? Why split the church on this issue but not over the hat question? These brethren are inconsistent. Perhaps that is the reason they have their Edward Fudges, Arnold Hardin, and others.

Brother Rader referred to a question brother Sutton gave me on Monday night: "Do you believe the following proposition: 'The scriptures teach the church may arrange, oversee and provide for the preaching of the gospel and this arrangement is not

an evangelistic organization (institution) such as the United Christian Missionary Society?'" On Monday I replied "No," and on Wednesday "Yes." Brother Sutton naturally called my attention to this contradiction as I would expect him to do. The way the negative was arranged in the question it confused me and I answered it wrong on Monday. In expanding Wednesday night, I said, "I don't believe the church can utilize it (the United Christian Missionary Society, RH); don't believe it has any place in preaching the gospel; and so that is the way I would answer that. So, I answered it wrong in one or the other, I'll not take time to see whether I misanswered it Monday night or tonight, but which ever one was correct, that's the way I believe it. Anyway, I've explained what I believe on it." Brother Rader had me saying, "I don't know why I answered both ways. I don't have to explain. Which ever one is correct is what I meant." Brother Rader misrepresented me, put words in my mouth, and has me saying something I never stated.

Brother Rader stated that I confused the "who" and the "how." No, I clearly pointed out, from my charts as well as brother Sutton's, that the same "who" he had relieving, I had. The same "how" he had, I had. Brother Sutton apparently felt the force of

my charts on Wednesday and Thursday nights, because he waited until his last speech on both nights to reply to either series that I presented. In fact, it took him 5 speeches finally to reply to a series of charts I introduced in my second affirmative speech on Wednesday evening. We each had three speeches each night!

We plan to print the debate. The honest reader may then compare the arguments and see the truth presented in the discussion. — 4868 La Ventana Terrace, Pensacola, Fla. 32506.

The Old Rugged Cross

Continued from page 2

wear the crown. We must meet him at the cross. We must live in its shadow and allow his immortal words to rule our lives (John 12:48).

The cross can be viewed in two ways. It can be viewed with great lament because he had to suffer and die for sin. But it can also be viewed with great joy because he loved us so much that he was willing to die. In return, Christ asks that we meet him at the cross and allow him to rule our lives. — P.O. Box 3, Joshua, Texas 76058.

"Women Professing Godliness"

Continued from page 2

meant more than deciding whether to wear colorful prints or pastels. The "mini-skirt" was more than just the latest fashion. It was a style specifically designed to arouse the sexual passions of the opposite sex.

In this respect the "mini-skirt" was quite successful. I was an older teenager during the "mini-skirt" years, and I well remember the effect of having a lovely girl sit down beside me in the car and then see her already short skirt go even higher. No normal young man, regardless of how spiritual he was, could have remained unaffected by that kind of a situation. Yet, even at that age when I tried to encourage my Christian sisters to lengthen their skirts, my advice was ignored by most.

Today, the problem is not the "mini-skirts," for styles have changed. Rather the problem today is one of shorts, halters, low-cut dresses, and swim suits.

Since these types of clothing are "in style" many of my good Christian sisters are wearing them. Let us take swim suits as an example. Swim wear today is briefer than ever. As a matter of fact, most swim wear for women available today exposes more flesh than even women's undergarments.

When I was in my mid to late teens my folks owned and operated a recreational resort on Lewis Smith lake near Jasper, Alabama. Every summer thousands of young men and women came to swim and ski there. There is no way to describe in a religious paper the things that went on there. And as a participant (I was not a Christian then) I can give expert testimony to the strong sexual desire aroused by young girls wearing so little over their bodies. And I was not alone, because all of my other male friends confessed privately that they were affected in the same way.

Though what I have said may sound crude and may be judged as "in poor taste," it seems to me that the truth needs to be openly expressed so that good Christian women can understand what they are doing in wearing such clothing. I would to God that my Christian sisters would believe me when I say that shorts, halters, low-cut dresses, mini-skirts, swim suits, majorette uniforms, cheerleader outfits, and such like are not proper and fitting for "women professing godliness."

Therefore, as a brother to his sister, please do not dress in such a way that men will be drawn to you on the basis of lewd and lustful desires stirred by your revealing clothes, but rather "let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (I Pet. 3:4). — 2004 Miller St., Montgomery, Ala. 36107.

"Your Marriage Can Be Great"

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family frameworks. This volume is a book, chapter and verse book. The day of the proof text is not gone from its developing and dynamic message. A great book about a great institution and edited by a great and godly Christian gentleman and scholar can now be your prized possession. Outside the Bible there is nothing comparable to this definitive, classic and scholarly product. It is a masterpiece in literary pursuits.

HOW MUCH DO I THINK OF THE BOOK?

Enough that I am pushing it wherever I go. I have already sold some twenty-five to thirty copies in the five weeks it has been out. Enough that I am putting a copy of it into my personal library. Enough that I have given a personal copy to my wife for our home library. Enough that she and I have given a copy to our daughter as one of her graduating presents from college this spring. Enough that she and I have given a copy to our son as one of our gifts to him for high school graduation this spring. We want them one day

to have a truly great marriage and the Bible and this book in that one-two order can show them how to achieve such. Here is a book that no amount of money could buy my copy unless I could replace it. This book is worth vastly more than gold and silver for gold and silver are impotent in producing a truly great marriage and a happily rewarding homelife.

CONCLUSION

Without doubt or debate this volume will be one of the greatest accomplishments in the dedicated life of Thomas B. Warren. I rise up and call him blessed because he saw the desperate need for this book and was willing to spend and be spent to make it a reality. Here is a book that is a must for every person who wants to know the truth about marriage, divorce and remarriage. I recommend it without reservation.

It may be ordered from National Christian Press, P. O. Box 1001, Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401. Please add sales tax if applicable and allow about 7 per cent for postage and handling.

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Words of Truth



Words Of Truth

the Words of Truth are

to speak forth

Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1978

NUMBER 46

Obstacles To Eternal Life

Jesus tells us that the road to heaven is a straitened and narrow way (Matt. 7:14). The word straitened suggests something that is hedged in and filled with obstacles. To reach successfully the soul's reward, we must strive diligently to do those things that will encourage and help us and avoid every thing that might hinder our journey. Paul urges us to "run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).



JOHN WADDEY

He exhorted the Philippians to stretch "forward to those things which are before" and to "press on toward the goal of the high calling of God. . ." (Phil. 3:13-14).

In the 17th century an English teacher named Richard Baxter wrote a book entitled *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*. In it he discussed several obstacles on heaven's road. We will consider some of these obstacles in the following lines.

Living in any known sin is a major impediment. "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment. . ." (Heb. 10:26). Willful sin is presumptuous. We could plead for mercy and hope for grace if we sinned through ignorance, but to continue knowingly in sin is to invite disaster. The Christian must put to death those earthly vices such as "fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness." We once "lived in these things" but now that we follow Jesus they must be driven out (Col. 3:5-7).

An earthly mind hinders our progress and must be avoided. "Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). We are taught by John to "love not the world,

neither the things of the world." "If any many love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," he says (I John 2:15). Of course this includes all those sinful things of this earth such as "the lust of the flesh," "the lust of the eye" and "the pride of life." In addition it warns us not to be inordinately attached to even those innocent things of this life. Since "we brought nothing into the world" and since we can carry nothing out, we must learn to be content with food and covering (I Tim. 6:7-8). "But they that are minded to be rich, fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition" (vs. 9). The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word of God in our lives so that we become unfruitful (Matt. 13:22). Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20), therefore we must concentrate our interests and energies on that immortal home. We are reminded to set our affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are upon the earth (Col. 3:2). Excessive concern with the here and now will adversely affect our heavenward progress.

Intimate fellowship with the ungodly will rob one of the soul's reward. Observation as well as revelation tells us that "evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33). That man is blest and happy who does not walk "in the counsel of the wicked" or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of scoffers (Ps. 1:1). Of course we cannot escape all associations with people of the world. To attempt to do so would necessitate our leaving the world of people (I Cor. 5:9-11). We can, however, choose our intimate friends and companions from God's children and those whose moral and spiritual interests are wholesome. A friend who would interfere with our pursuit of immortality is one we can well do without. We must do good unto all men including the sinful (Gal. 6:10) and surely we must teach them the gospel (Mk. 16:15). While never slackening in our duties here, we must be concerned to preserve our souls in other areas already mentioned.

We should avoid quarreling and disputes about matters of little consequence. The apostle warns us against "doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil

surmising and wrangling. . ." (I Tim. 6:4-5). Again he says, "foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gender strifes" (II Tim. 2:23). He urged Titus to "shun foolish questions and genealogies and strifes and fighting about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus 3:9). There is something inimical to and destructive of spiritual attitudes in bitter quarrels. We cannot afford to jeopardize our faith with such.

When one's religion is primarily opinions he will most often be promoting opinions; whereas he whose religion is firmly founded on the promises of God will delight to talk about the Lord and heaven and be concerned to save a soul. It is interesting that those least acquainted with the great principles of Christianity are usually the most vocal and vociferous in disputes about its details.

We must take heed of a proud and haughty spirit for such is a serious obstacle to salvation. We are instructed to "gird ourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5). False pride is a barrier between man and his God. It annuls all his efforts at holiness. Solomon actually says that *God hates "haughty eyes"* (Prov. 6:16-17). The proud Pharisee's worship was disgusting to God, but the humble publican went down to his house justified (Lk. 18:9-14). Jesus laid down the rule that "whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:4). Let us daily pray for divine assistance to drive the destructive pride from our hearts and learn the humility of the little child.

A slothful attitude will hinder our heavenly trip. The road to heaven is up hill all the way. Jesus pointed out that we must *work* for the food which abideth unto eternal life (John 6:27). Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:26). The man who is lazy about life in general will find it difficult to be zealous about religion. Jesus died to redeem a people "zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

Satisfaction with the first principles of Christianity and corresponding neglect of the solid food of



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Unity Or Union

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Concerted efforts are made from time to time by religious leaders to encourage all churches to lay down their differences and join hands in special efforts as crusades, unity meetings and the like. It reminds us of two boxers who stop fighting for a spell to refresh themselves and then begin battling each other once more. We are encouraged by many to have union with each other in religious affairs and overlook the distinctive doctrines and dogmas that really separate us. But, when this is done, unity is neither achieved nor experienced. It is just agreeing to disagree. The various ecumenical movements are seen on different levels. Some are international in scope while others are on a local level. However, the principle is the same. It is the desire for supposedly being united on the premise of forgetting the differences that separate us and joining forces for a brief time and later to go back fighting each other. Sometimes, even brethren are caught up in such movements, thus, giving encouragement and moral support to religious error. In doing so, these brethren become partakers in the works of darkness (II John 1:9-11).

Since the beginning of the Restoration Movement in this country during the first part of the Nineteenth Century, New Testament Christians have worked for unity based upon the Word of God. We have asked our religious neighbors to leave all denominations and forsake the dogmas of men and join practice. Our Lord prayed that all who believe in him through the apostles' doctrine might be one (John 17:20, 21). This is possible if we will all walk by the same rule in matters of faith (Philippians 3:16). The Holy Spirit has given us the platform for unity, not union, if followed by men and women today (Ephesians 4:1-6). Doctrines originating in the minds of men divide us rather than unite us. The Lord's way is the best because it is the only way. Or, it is the only way since it is the best way, because it has its origin in the mind of God.—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

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



FROM

THE EDITOR

Don't Charge God Foolishly



BOB DUNCAN

The first chapter of the Book of Job tells about Job's loss of his five hundred yoke of oxen, his seven thousand sheep, his three hundred camels, his seven sons and his three daughters - all in one day. "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.)

The expression that Job "sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" should catch our attention. Many there are who foolishly blame God for all their problems and hardships. Often one bemoaning his troubles may be heard to say: "What is God trying to do to me?" Such language certainly borders on charging God foolishly. While there is a sense in which God may be said to do what he allows to be done, it was Satan, not God, who was responsible for the troubles Job was having. Read the account for yourself, and see if such is not the case.

Satan is responsible, either directly or indirectly, for all of our suffering and heartache. But there is also a sense in which many of the difficulties we encounter are difficulties we have brought upon ourselves. The heavy smoker whose health is impaired by smoking, the drunkard who is injured in an automobile wreck caused by his drunkenness, the wife who loses her

family because of her unfaithfulness to her husband, the parents who are heart-broken because of the straying of a son whom they failed to restrain—all these are examples of those upon whom the blame for their troubles may be placed squarely upon their own shoulders. How foolish it would be to charge God with the responsibility for such troubles by making such statements as, "Why did God do this to me?"

Some of the hardships we experience in life are inflicted by the hands of others. Our friends and family members—those we love—often become the source of troubles. Certainly they do not do so intentionally as a rule, but inadvertently, because we are sympathetic toward their sorrows and troubles, or because of hardships we are willing to suffer and sacrifices we want to make to assist them in their difficulties. Sometimes our enemies are the source of our troubles, by virtue of the fact they are our enemies and want to harm us in one way or another. But let us be careful not to charge God foolishly by blaming him with troubles that are actually brought upon us by others.

If we are faithful Christians, an implicit trust in God's word will guard against the danger that we will charge God foolishly. Note the following: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercise thereby" (Hebrews 12:7, 11). Note also: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

Trouble is the common lot of those who dwell upon the earth. When it comes, let us, like Job, neither sin as a result thereof, nor charge God foolishly.

Gospel Preaching



CHARLES COOK

Thanks to our Heavenly Father for the fact that the power of salvation is in the message itself and not in the messenger (Romans 1:16)! While Paul was extremely grateful to be a preacher of God's powerful gospel, he clearly realized that God does the saving and that we are called "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace. . . ." (II Timothy 1:8-11). Wishy-washy preaching has never been vogue with the Lord. His angel told the apostles, "Go, stand and speak. . . ." (Acts 5:20). They were not to consider consequence or personal harm. Neither are God's preachers today. Timidity has no place in today's pulpit. Let every preacher "go, stand and speak"

without regard for the consequences.

We read of a certain timid preacher who was told by one half of the congregation to preach the good old-fashioned gospel with all his might. But the other half encouraged him to be mild and more broadminded. So, he preached like this: "Unless you repent, in a measure, and are baptized, so to speak, you are, I am sorry to say, in danger of hell-fire and damnation, to a certain extent. . . so perhaps it would be safe for you all to be baptized." My God save us from such "niceness" by raising up leaders and preachers who will "speak the truth in love" and be willing to pay the price for doing so.—P. O. Box 3049, Lihue, Hawaii 96766.

Subscribe To The Words of Truth

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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"Is it proper, in officiating at the Lord's table, to use the word 'loaf,' in referring to that which Jesus called 'bread'?"

This question, and all similar ones, is of a type that is inevitable in view of the fact that we have the scriptures in *translation*, and not in the languages in which they were originally penned. Were Paul present in one of our assemblies today, and we were permitted to ask him this question, "When the Lord delivered to you the details of the institution of the Supper which you, in turn, passed on the church in Corinth in one of your letters to the disciples in that city, you wrote that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you; this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:23-25). In view of the fact that the Lord told you he took *bread* (and did not say *loaf*), ought we not to use the word *bread* and avoid the word *loaf* in our references thereto?"

Paul would doubtless answer somewhat as follows: "My dear fellow-Christians, I commend you for your faithfulness, your dedication to the word of God, and your obvious concern to say and to do only that which the Lord approves. Your zeal to be correct in this matter and in all others touching your duty to God, is of the highest order, and deserving of commendation. But, you are overlooking a very significant and important fact which, when properly understood, will resolve this matter and all similar ones. Neither the Lord nor I used either the word *bread* or the word *loaf* in the references to the institution of the Supper, since neither of us spoke or wrote in English. The word which the Holy Spirit led me to use in conveying to the Corinthians the message which the Lord gave me is *artos*, a Greek word — not an English one — and the meaning must therefore be determined by it and not by any alleged or supposed difference between the English words, *bread* and *loaf*."

Suppose we were privileged to meet up with Luke and, desirous of knowing his impression of the matter, we asked, "Brother Luke, does your copy of Paul's letter to the church in Corinth use the word 'bread,' or the word 'loaf' in describing the institution of the Lord's Supper?" Paul's private physician would answer, "My copy of the inspired apostle's writings has neither 'bread' nor 'loaf,' but the word *artos*. Thus, when I refer to that which represents the body of my Lord I use neither bread nor loaf, but *artos*, since this is the word the Holy Spirit directed Paul to write."

Finally, suppose we journeyed to some Greek-speaking land today and should have occasion to talk with a native Christian there who also understands English, and we should say to him, "Tell me, my brother, do you people, in the observance of the Lord's Supper, use the word 'bread,' or the word 'loaf.'" His answer would be "Neither. Our services are conducted in the Greek language, the language which Paul used to write the epistle to which you refer, and in it he used the word *artos*. Inasmuch as this is our native language, this is the word we use to designate that emblem which portrays the body of our Lord."

It is obvious, therefore, from the foregoing, that the answer to our question depends on the significance of the word *artos* and not on any supposed distinction between the words "bread," and "loaf." In the imaginary instances cited herein, for illustrative purposes, all involved spoke Greek; all, therefore, would simply use the word *artos*, in their reference to

this part of the Supper. In our land, and in many others throughout the world. Greek is not used; the Bible is read in translation, and the word *artos*, must be translated. It will be seen that the answer turns on the significance of the word *artos*, and that any English word or words which correction convey the meaning of this original term, are entirely acceptable. A simple induction of passages where the original word is used will show that it is translated into English by both "bread," and "loaf." It is translated "bread" in Matt. 4:4; "loaves" Matt. 14:17. where it

is plural in number; "bread" in Mark 6:37, "loaves" in the verse follow; "bread" in Mark 6:37, "loaves" in the verse following; "bread," in John 6:5; "loaves" in John 6:9. Thus either term defines the original term and either may properly be used. And, what ought forevermore to settle the matter is the fact that in Matthew's account of the institution of the Supper, the American Standard Version has a footnote from the word "bread," in the text saying, "or, a loaf" (Matt. 26:26).

Sound Words

By JOHN G. SHAVER

The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy, his son in the gospel, to "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:13). Timothy has been taught the scriptures from childhood (II Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 3:14-15), and as a result, was prepared to do the work of an evangelist (II Tim. 4:5). The primary work of an evangelist is to preach the word (II Tim. 4:2), and therefore, the letters to Timothy abound in exhortations to loyalty to the gospel message, and also warnings against those who would be disloyal in their rendering of that message (I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:13-14; II Tim. 4:1-4). Paul guarded the gospel as zealously as a mother guards her children from harm (I Tim. 6:20-21; Gal. 1:6-10), and this is the attitude that we must appreciate and apply to our teaching today.

The admonition of Paul to "Hold fast the form of sound words" means to speak as the Bible speaks. Departures came as a result of some's not giving heed to Paul's exhortations. A distinction was made between the bishops and presbyters. The word "presbuteros" translated from the greek means "elder or presbyter," and refers to those who oversee the congregation with whom they serve (Acts 20:17). The elders or presbyters were also referred to as bishops (Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:1), and because of their being called bishops a distinction arose in name as well as position. The office of the "president of the presbytery" was formed, and because of the pre-eminence of his office he was designated as "Bishop," thus distinguishing him from the other presbyters. This distinction in rank led to the distinction in authority and function of the Bishop. The territory over which a bishop ruled or presided was called a diocese, which sometimes covered a large area and required more than one bishop. This led to the creation of a new class of officers known as "Country Bishops." Synods and conferences came about in the second century resulting in further departures from "sound words." Conflicts soon arose between the newly formed systems of church government because of the contentions between fallible men tampering with God's infallible word. In 588 A. D. John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, assumed the title of "Universal Bishop of the Church." In 606 A.D., the title was taken from the Bishop of Constantinople, and bestowed on the Bishop of Rome. At this time Boniface III became the universally recognized Pope of Rome, and head of the Roman Catholic Church. All of this could have been avoided had these men paid heed to "hold fast the form of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13), and "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

The secret, of course, is not to take the first step. A tendency toward the development of unscriptural names, phraseology, and titles had been taken. One would think that we could learn from the mistakes of

those in the past, but this is not the case. We too, have taken steps in the wrong direction in our day and time. Departure from scriptural phraseology indicates a departure from scriptural words and principles. This we must not do under any circumstances. Why be wrong, when it is so easy to be right? We must let the Bible be our standard of authority in all matters.

A departure has been made from "sound words" concerning names and titles as to individuals. Many today refer to preachers as "reverend." This is completely unscriptural. The purpose of this title is to elevate the preacher above the other members of the church. Realizing that Ps. 111:9 is not relating specifically to a title used by man, but a name that is attributed to God, I would like to set forth a thought for your consideration. Ps. 111:9 states, "... holy and reverend is his name." Matt. 6:9 relates, "... Hallowed be thy name." If His name is "holy and reverend," and is to be "hallowed," then those who apply the title "reverend" to anyone other than God are infringing on that which is applied to God. Mortal men, worms and dust of the earth, when will you ever learn?

Many preachers refer to themselves as "pastor" in our day and time. This title was never applied to a preacher in the New Testament because of his being a preacher. The word "poimaino" is translated "shepherd or pastor," and always refers to the elders of the church (Acts 20:17-28; I Pet. 5:1-4). The title "Bishop" is misapplied in the religious world today. It is translated from the word "presbuteros" meaning "overseer or bishop," and always refers to the elders of the church (I Tim. 3:1-2; Tit. 1:5-7). The title of "priest" as applied to a specific group of men is misapplied and dangerous. All Christians are priests (I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6), and are served to God. The title "father or Pope" is denounced by Jesus himself (Matt. 23:8-9). The denominational concept of a "Board of Stewards" is false and dangerous. All Christians are stewards (I Peter 4:10; I Cor. 4:1). Many in the Lord's church today are making a mockery of, and denominationalizing the word "brother." They refer to denominational preachers as "Brother so-and-so." The word "brother" should show the love, devotion and respect that one has for another member of the same family. Is a denominationalist your brother in Christ? Are you members of the same body? Is he a part of the household of God? Whom did Jesus refer to as brothers and sisters? Those who do the will of God (Mk. 3:35). Many in the church today introduce the preacher in this fashion, "This is our preacher, Brother Smith," but in introducing any other brother in Christ they say, "This is Bill Smith." Brethren, can you not see the inconsistency in our thinking? We are unconsciously exalting the preacher by referring to him as "brother" while referring to

Continued on page 4

Calling On The Name Of The Lord

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said, "and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). Many people have taken this verse spoken by Peter out of context, and have taught some doctrines that are contrary to what Peter taught. Some use this verse to teach "faith only," while others use it to teach that a person must pray through at a mourner's bench. Still others say one must



JERRY T. BRAMLETT

speak the name of the Lord to validate whatever doctrine he teaches. What did Peter mean, and does it correspond with what the Bible says in other passages concerning this important subject?

Peter, after making the statement to "call on the name of the Lord," spoke the truth concerning the Lord's death, burial and resurrection. The people hearing this powerful sermon believed, repented and were baptized for the remission of sins; and the Lord added them to the church. Calling on the name of the Lord is obeying the commands of the Lord. Peter did not tell them to pray through; for there is not a command, apostolic example or necessary inference of an alien sinner's ever being told to pray through at a mourner's bench to obtain salvation. Peter did not say "faith only" was calling on the name of the Lord, for it is impossible to be saved by faith only (James 2:24). Peter did not "call the name of the Lord" over these people, but preached by the name or authority of Jesus Christ. To be saved one must have the remission of sins, and to obtain such he must repent and be baptized by the authority of Jesus Christ. Thus to be saved one must hear, believe, repent and be baptized; and in so doing he will be calling upon the name of the Lord.

What Peter preached in Acts 2 is the same as that Paul preached in Romans 10: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:13-14, 17). When a person has biblical faith, this faith will motivate him to submit his life in humble obedience to Christ. We know that faith only will not save because of the teaching in James 2:19: "Thou believest that there is one God: thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." The devils believed but they won't be saved (Matt. 25:41). Therefore faith only will not save.

Paul did not say to pray through because he knew that he was not told to do so when he obeyed the gospel. Ananias told Saul to "arise and be baptized, and wash away their sins," and in doing this he would be "calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Saul in obeying the gospel and having his sins remitted would be "calling on the name of the Lord." Saul or Paul did not pray through, because he prayed prior to the time he was told what to do (Acts 9:11). If Saul had been saved by prayer, Ananias would not have been instructed by the Lord to tell him what he must do to have his sins remitted. Saul was not saved

by faith only, for he said, "What shall I do Lord?" (Acts 22:10).

"Calling on the name of the Lord" is not saying Lord, Lord verbally; but one must submit his life by the authority of Jesus Christ in obeying the gospel. "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6:46). "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). Have you, dear reader, called upon the name of the Lord by obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ? — P. O. Box 118, Parrish, AL 35580

Rhodesia

By CURTIS DOWDY

Most of us are only too aware of the complex problems faced by the African nation of Rhodesia. Hatred and suspicion have led to the murder of thousands; among those killed have been some twenty-six missionaries. One of those murdered by terrorist was brother Douglas Dabangana, a gospel preacher and a native of the Methebele tribe. I certainly appreciate the courage and faith of those who remain to work under the dangerous circumstances described above.

The grave plight of a missionary working in certain areas of Rhodesia was pointed up in a recent TV broadcast, in which a Baptist Church missionary was shown carrying a machine gun for protection while he was out teaching. I can and do appreciate the courage and conviction of this man, although I do not

believe the Bible supports his doctrine. Nevertheless, I was somewhat shocked when we was shown baptizing a man. Oh, the shock was not over an adults being immersed, rather by a statement made by the missionary. He said, "By the authority of the Rogers Baptist Church I now baptize you. . . ."

Brethren, we ought to be thankful that our authority to baptize comes from the Lord himself (Matt. 28:18-20), not from anybody's church. This underscores again the value of "speaking where the Bible speaks, and being silent where the Bible is silent." Had the gentleman above followed Peter's teaching, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11), he would of necessity left off "Rogers Baptist Church." — P. O. Box 456, Obion, Tn. 38240.

Sound Words

Continued from page 3

our brethren as plain old so-and-so. Many other points could have been made, but these should suffice to show the importance of "sound words." I realize that many people will refer to us as narrow minded if we adhere to God's word explicitly. Really though, who is narrow minded? Those who adhere to God's will, or those who adhere to the will and whims of

man? In the eyes of liberals, modernists and atheists the believer in God's word in narrow minded. In the eyes of the religious world we may appear narrow minded. But this question I must ask? "How do those who follow God's will explicitly, using only His word as their guide, appear in the eyes of God? To ask is to answer. — Rt. 10, Box 186B, Jasper, AL. 35501.

Obstacles To Eternal Life

Continued from page 1

advanced spiritual living and service is a dangerous delusion. We can never be content with being a child in the faith. Our goal must be to become a full-grown man capable of teaching others (Heb. 5:12-14). In view of this the Hebrew author charges us? "Wherefore leaving the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection..." (6:1). Studying maps and reading about a far land is not to be compared with actually going there. We must daily "grow in the

grace and knowledge of Christ" (II Pet. 3:18), "that we may grow thereby unto salvation" (I Pet. 2:2).

Nothing is more important than saving our soul in eternity. To achieve this grand goal, every sacrifice must be made and every obstacle avoided. May all of us set our eyes on that lovely abode where Jesus waits and run with patience the race before us. Nothing of whatever value is of sufficient worth to turn our hearts aside for even a fleeting moment.

**ATTEND BIBLE STUDY
AND WORSHIP SERVICES EVERY SUNDAY**



Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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The Forgotten Invitation

When we invite someone to some function, we are asking him to be present and to participate with us in that endeavor. Our lives are literally filled with invitations to many functions. Invitations are extended asking us to attend baby showers, weddings, hunting and fishing trips, and golf outings. Many of the acts we perform in our everyday living are in response to invitations offered us by friends and neighbors, and we don't have to think twice about accepting because these invitations appeal to us. Did you know that the Bible is filled with invitations? They are not invitations from human to human as our invitations are, but they are from divine to human, from infinite to finite, from God to man. Some of the greatest, most meaningful invitations ever known are extended from God to man (Matt. 11:28-30; Lk. 14:16-17; Rev. 3:20; Rev. 22:17). All of these invitations are inviting man to be present and participate spiritually in the blessings that God has prepared for those that love him. We have many invitations extended to us in God's word, but I would like to discuss with you the "forgotten invitation" for it has been overshadowed.



JOHN G. SHAVER

In Matthew, chapters 5-7, Jesus the Christ laid down the principles of discipleship in the Sermon on the Mount. Near the end of this astonishing revelation, Jesus issued the following invitation: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be which find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

The strait and narrow way is a crowdless way, for Jesus plainly contrasts the number that will choose

the broad way with the number that will choose the narrow way. We are living in an atmosphere that has become crowd conscious. We are living in a society where the system of government is based on majority rule, and many have let this philosophy affect them in their religious convictions. I am convinced that there is a movement afoot in the church today to promote numbers rather than Christianity. We have become "number conscious," and it seems that it is being stated as "the ends justifies the means." There is a great danger in this sort of thinking. The quest for great numbers has weakened every phase of work in the church today and especially the pulpit. This can be summed up one word, and that one word is **COMPROMISE**.

We are being caught up in the "crowd psychology" more and more each day. Many congregations have quit having gospel meetings because they don't attract the large crowds. Many will not become involved in personal evangelism because the majority of the congregation will not get involved. There is a great danger in the "crowd psychology." I wonder how many would have believed the preaching of Noah had it not been for the smallness of the crowd? I wonder how many would have said "Crucify him" had it not been for the crowd? Let me assure you, dear friend, that the majority has never dictated religious policy to Almighty God (Acts 10:35). Can you imagine how the "crowd" felt during the days of Noah when the doors of the ark were shut? Noah preached for 120 years, and the crowd didn't dictate to God in all that time. What would indicate that there has been a change in policy today? How would you have liked to have been a part of the "crowd"? It was a crowdless way then, and it is a crowdless way now. Israel had disregarded God's covenant and his authority, and the multitude fell in the wilderness. It seems that the evidence is mountain high and indisputable that the way of the crowd is frowned upon by God. Consider the day of Pentecost. Scholars estimate that there were approximately one million people present in the city of Jerusalem that day. It was only fifty days after the death of Jesus, and they would have been familiar with what He had done, and

what happened? Twelve men spoke in languages they had never studied, the gospel was preached for the first time, and three thousand souls obeyed that gospel. Approximately three percent were saved that day, but ninety seven percent, the "crowd," rejected the gospel. God's way has always been the "crowdless way."

There are three basic reasons why this is so. First, it is a way of agony. There is pain in turning away from sin to God, because we are giving up something that we have loved. But when we give ourselves to God we realize that pain was a false pain, for the blessings of Christianity far outweigh anything the world has to offer. A man will not change his way of living until he is afflicted with the misery of knowing that he is lost, and that he is grieving the great heart of his Creator. I am convinced that repentance is the hardest command given for man to obey. It may require one to give up wealth, his job, his friends, his family, and the so-called pleasures of life. But we must repent regardless of the cost (Matt. 10:37; Lk. 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30; II Pet. 3:9; Acts 3:19).

The second reason is that the "crowdless way" is a way of loneliness and isolation. Many friends, relatives and loved ones will reject one when he becomes a Christian. Many want the prestige that comes from being recognized as a part of the crowd. This is a particular problem with young people today, but the Bible furnishes us with the answer (Eccl. 12:1; Ex. 23:2). The question "Will this harm my influence as a Christian" will lead to the correct solution.

The third reason that God's way is a "crowdless way" is that it is a costly way. The young ruler was not willing to pay the price (Mk. 10:21-30). The disciples were astonished because they saw the force of the Lord's teaching. Man is not willing to pay the price. Notice Peter's statement: "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk. 10:26).

How many of us can truthfully say this? The narrow way is a way of commitment, and unless we can say that we have left all we have not really accepted the invitation of Jesus. Jesus lost a convert, but he

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Please Read This

ARNOLD SEXTON

[Editor's Note: We personally know the subject of this appeal, and something of his circumstances. Though our endorsement of this appeal is implied by its very publication in WORDS OF TRUTH, we wish to add a personal word of encouragement for every reader and every eldership to give serious consideration to the needs of this courageous family.]

I believe our brethren to be the most compassionate and tender hearted people in the world. Because I believe this, I am making a special appeal on behalf of a preaching brother who desperately needs your financial consideration. Brother David Davidson, who preaches for the Lord's church in Opelika, Alabama, has been a gospel preacher for about twenty five years. About 18 months ago his wife was stricken with acute leukemia. She has been hospitalized seven times so far for treatments. The total cost for these treatments has been \$43,371.30. His hospitalization insurance, savings and other resources have paid all but \$5,871.30 at this writing. How much more expense he will be out only the Lord knows. It would mean so much to brother Davidson if all the congregations who receive the *Words of Truth* would send a contribution to help him. Elders, would your congregation please consider sending a hundred dollars (more if you are able or less if you are not) to help him in his great need? Also, many individuals who receive this good paper may want to help. Any amount will be helpful. If you can help, please send your contribution to Opelika Church of Christ, Tenth Street and Fifth Avenue, North, Opelika, Alabama 36801. Brother Davidson will be eternally grateful. I thank you for reading this appeal. — 1751 Damon Street, Birmingham, Al. 35217.

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FROM
THE EDITOR

Does *Aner* Include Women?

I Timothy 2:8 says: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." It is argued, and correctly so, that the word *aner* "men" means men as opposed to women. If the writer had intended to include women in the verse, he would have used the more general word, *anthropos*. Paul is being specific in verses eight through twelve as he states first an admonition to men, and then two admonitions to women. Men are to pray; women are to adorn themselves modestly and be subject to men.



BOBBY DUNCAN

These verses obviously embrace only those occasions when both men and women are present. The very nature of the instructions given demands this conclusion. On such occasions, men are to pray, i.e., lead the prayers. Women are to learn in silence, not usurping authority over the man. And certainly in the presence of men they should be modestly adorned.

In efforts to justify allowing women to lead prayers in mixed groups it is argued that the word *aner* may include women as well as men. A passage such as James 1:8 is used: "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." The word *man* in this passage is from the Greek word *aner*. It is argued that a double minded woman is also unstable in all her ways; therefore the Greek word *aner* may include women. Or James 1:12 may be used: "Blessed is the man

(*aner*) that endureth temptation. . . ." But doesn't the same blessedness rest upon the woman who endures temptation? Therefore the Greek word *aner* may include women.

Arranged syllogistically, the argument would look like this:

Major Premise: Men who endure temptation are blessed.

Minor Premise: Women who endure temptation are blessed.

Conclusion: Therefore the word *men* means "men and women."

Now, in case you don't recognize it, this is the same kind of logic(?) one would use to prove that the word *mice* includes buffaloes. Please observe:

Major Premise: Mice have four legs and a tail.

Minor Premise: Buffaloes have four legs and a tail.

Conclusion: Therefore the word *mice* means "mice and buffaloes."

Quite obviously, the conclusions do not follow from the premises. While it is true that certain things which may be said of men may also be said of women, and certain things which may be said of mice may be said of buffaloes, it does not follow that the word *men* means "men and women," or that the word *mice* means "mice and buffaloes."

The word *aner* occurs a total of 215 times in the Greek New Testament. The word *man* translates it 156 times, *husband* 50 times, *sir* 6 times, *fellow* 1 time, and twice it is not translated. It is never translated by the word *women* or by the phrase *men and women*.

I Timothy 2:8 says not a word about the apostle's will concerning women. What it says it says about men. Since men are told to pray (i.e., lead prayers) in a context where women are told to "be in silence," the conclusion is inescapable that women are not to lead the prayers.

Spiritual Dropouts

By BILL HUGGINS

Because of the human element within it the church of Christ has had numerous problems through the centuries of its existence. Among the myriad of problems troubling the beloved family of God is the problem of "Spiritual Dropouts." If this problem is not at the top of the list it cannot be far from it. It has created a great mission field among us and imposed upon elders and all who are spiritual a task which only love for lost souls, courage to do the right thing, and strength from God can accomplish (Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19, 20).

While engaged in a gospel meeting in 1965 I was reading the Quarterly Report on Public Welfare in that State. It showed that in the previous year there had been 27,577 dropouts from that State's public schools. Twelve major reasons were given and the number in each category. If the percentage of dropouts has decreased in public schools in that State since that report it would imply that certain measures have been taken by those in responsible positions to lower the rate. Generally, they may have improved the quality of education. They may have raised the standard of requirements for teachers. They may

have employed new approaches and new methods. We can be certain that something was done. Surely, they did not ignore the problem.

Schools are not the only institutions faced with dropouts. Jesus experienced it among his disciples before the church was established (John 6:60, 61, 66). The stark fact is: Some of his disciples dropped out! They quit! The above passage says so. The church of our Lord is plagued with a high rate of dropouts. This was true during the days of the apostles as seen in such passages as Gal. 1:6-9; 3:1; 5:7; II Tim. 4:10; Rev. 2:5.

One evening in a past vacation Bible school it was so very noticeable as the children filed out of the auditorium to their classes that the first and second grades were very large. But as the grades went higher the classes grew smaller and fewer in number. There were hardly enough to have a class by the time they reached grades ten through twelve. That ought to tell us something.

Regarding conditions in the church in almost every

Continued on page 4

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"What is true marriage, and what are its requisites?"

I have never seen a finer or more accurate definition of marriage than that given many years ago by brother H. Leo Boles in a series of articles which were published in the *Gospel Advocate*. Said he, "Marriage is an institution ordained of God for the honor and happiness of mankind, in which one man and one woman enter into a bodily and spiritual union, pledging each to the other's mutual love, honor, fidelity, sympathy, forbearance, and comradeship, such as should assure an unbroken continuance of their wedlock so long as both shall live." It is (1) ordained of God. "It was not good that man should be alone," and thus woman was made as a help meet (a help suited) for him (Gen. 2:18). Thus, "Male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:27, 28). (2) It is for the honor and happiness of

mankind. The blessings which attend it are without number; it has sanctified and blessed mankind from its beginning; but, its blessings are realized only when it is honored, respected and sanctified to its high and holy calling. (3) It is a union in which one man and one woman enter into a bodily and spiritual union, pledging each to the other's mutual love, honor, fidelity, sympathy, forbearance, and comradeship throughout life. It is a legal contract; but, it is vastly more, it is the welding of two personalities into one—the merging of interests into an insoluble union which ought not to be broken except in death (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:3-9).

The requisites of a valid, scriptural marriage, *in our day*, include the following: (1) There must be the *intention* to enter into such a union. An adulterous relationship engaged in for the moment or, for that matter, over a period of years, is not marriage. (2) Each party thereto must be capable, mentally and physically and psychologically, to effect such a union

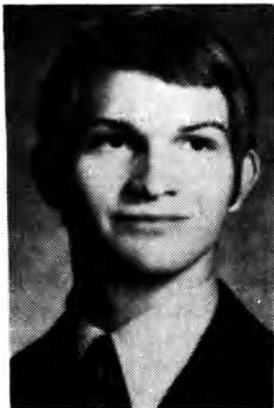
and to consummate it. (3) The agreement to enter into marriage must be unrestrained; it must be freely entered into, and with full consent of both. (4) Each must be scripturally and legally free to marry; obviously, one already married, *in God's sight*, is not free to contract another marriage (Matt. 19:9).

There are many aspects of marriage, all of which are important, but which do not constitute the whole of it, nor fulfill its purpose. It involves a physical union, and it is also the fusing of two souls in a spiritual and inner relationship far beyond any fleshly relationship. It is tragic that its physical aspects are about all many people realize from it, and it is not surprising that it is so lightly regarded, and so easily terminated these days. Marriage is for the good of the race. When it is used for any other purpose its participants are the ones who suffer because they are depriving themselves of the blessings which God intended for them to have in it.

God's Desire For Unity

God's desire has always been that his people be united, for "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace" (I Cor. 14:33). Because of this desire, he took great pains in planning and preparing for his kingdom, the one church about which we read in the New Testament. In prophecy, this kingdom was foreseen as a singular institution (II Sam. 7:16; Dan. 2:44; Isa. 2:2-4). In preparation, this kingdom was promised as a singular institution, for Christ said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). In presentation, upon the first day of Pentecost following our Lord's resurrection from the dead, the kingdom was revealed as a singular institution. Those responding to Heaven's call upon this occasion were added to "the church", and were united together upon "the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42, 47). In proclamation, the kingdom was heralded as a singular institution. Inspiration affirms the church or kingdom to be the body of Christ, and says, "There is one body" (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:4). If God intended and wished for the religious world to be fragmented and divided as it is today, why do you suppose he prophesied, prepared, presented, and proclaimed only one church? No, the Father wants men to be united upon Christ and upon his doctrine (Gal. 3:28; II John 9).

Christ also desires the unity of his people. Within his beautiful prayer to the Father in John 17, he said: "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 has sent me" (John 17:20, 21). In his death upon the cross, Christ offered himself "once for all" (Heb. 10:10). His death provided salvation and unity for all those obedient to his will, "for all (are) one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). If



DALTON KEY

Christ desired our division, why did he live, labor, and finally lay up his life for the unity of all men within his one body?

The Holy Spirit, through the inspired word, reveals his ardent desire for unity. He inspired Paul to write the Corinthian brethren, admonishing them to "speak the same thing, that there be no division among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10). Again, he urged the Ephesian church, through Paul, to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). The Philippians were commanded to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. . . .being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 1:27; 2:2). Because of the Spirit's desire for unity, he revealed and confirmed

only one inspired message (Gal. 1:7, 8; Heb. 2:2-4; Jude 3, ASV). In this one, harmonious standard we can all find unity; we can all be one. If division has been the Spirit's intent for man, why did he reveal and confirm but one word, and why has he made such urgent pleas within this word for unity?

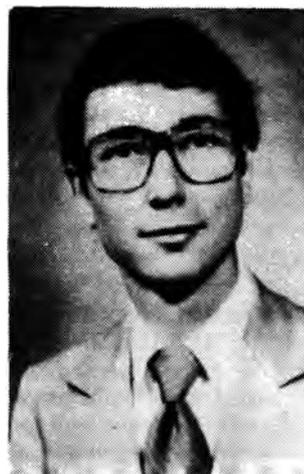
No, the Godhead does not desire the division which plagues the religious world today. God's feelings are the same today as they were when he inspired David to write, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1). The only way we will ever please God in this respect, and establish unity among brethren, is by uniting not upon diversity, but upon the written word of God. — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas 67039.

The Highest Expression of Love

There is a lot of talk today about love. Yet, it is my conviction that not many of us understand what love is since the true expression of love is often missing from our lives.

Let us understand that love is something that is not expressed in words alone. Just because someone may express words of love does not mean that the love is really there. Some of our brethren, today, contend that the subject of love is not accentuated enough in the church while they, at the same time, neglect the highest expression of love in their own lives. Love is not just words alone; it is action as well. Let us notice some examples of what we mean.

The great love that God had for mankind was



MICHAEL D. STONE

expressed in actions. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). God, indeed, did love the world. Just how much did God love mankind? God loved enough to send Jesus to die on the cross. This is a prime example of love expressed in actions. Love is giving!

Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my word. . . ." (John 14:23). This means that we will keep his commandments if we love him. Our lack of love for him is manifested when we fail to keep his commandments. Love is giving ourselves in compliance with the word of God!

It has been my observation that some of these brethren who do the most complaining about a lack of love in the church practice very little love themselves. There is a strong relationship between love and giving. The one who truly loves will give of himself. He will give liberally of his money on the first day of the week when the church meets. His time will freely be given in helping the church. The poor and

Continued on page 4

Jacob's Ladder And The Gate Of Heaven

VIRGIL BRADFORD
Sermon Outline

Introduction:

I. Through the deception of Rebekah and Jacob, Esau lost his birthright and was threatening to kill Jacob (Gen. 27).

II. Isaac used the occasion to send Jacob to Paddanaram to find a wife (Gen. 28:1-5).

III. In the night Jacob dreamed of a ladder from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it. God was at the top and spoke to Jacob in a dream.

Discussion:

I. ABRAHAMIC PROMISES RENEWED TO JACOB.

A. The land promise (Gen. 13:14-17).

B. Abraham's Descendants to become a great nation (Gen. 22:16-18).

C. The promised "seed" to bless the world (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:16).

D. All these promises have been fulfilled.

1. Israel had become a great multitude in the time of Moses (Deut. 1:10).

2. The promised land had been given to Israel (Josh. 21:43-45; 23:14ff; II Chron. 20:7; Neh. 9:22ff).

3. Christ, the promised seed, has come.

E. The Lord promised to be with Jacob (cf. I Chron.

28:9; II Chron. 15:2; Matt. 28:20).

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A LADDER.

A. We use a ladder to reach a higher level.

B. Christ is our "ladder," the way to Heaven.

1. Christ alludes to this scene in John 1:51.

2. Christ is the way, the truth and the life: the only way to Heaven (Jn. 14:6).

3. Christ descended, then ascended up on high (Eph. 4:8-10; Phil. 2:5-11).

4. In none other is there salvation (Ac. 4:12).

III. NOTICE THE WIDTH OF THE LADDER.

A. It is wide enough for "whosoever will" (Matt. 7:13-14; Rev. 22:17).

1. God always blesses those who are "willing and obedient" (Isa. 1:19).

2. No honest seeker is turned away (II Chron. 15:2; Isa. 55:6-7).

B. It is narrow enough to exclude all unrighteousness.

1. "The way" is for the redeemed, not for those who continue in sin (Isa. 35:8).

2. No unsaved person has ever been added to the Lord's church (Cf. Ac. 2:47).

3. The redeemed have been "washed in the blood of the Lamb" (I Pet. 1:18-19).

IV. "JEHOVAH IS IN THIS PLACE AND I KNEW IT NOT" (Gen. 28:16).

A. Jacob was at Bethel. Bethel means "house of God." Hence, God is in his house.

B. Many suppose that God and truth may be found in denominations, parents, families or lodges. Not necessarily so (See II Cor. 6:17-18; Eph. 5:11).

C. God's house is God's church (I Tim. 3:15).

1. The church is not a material building (Ac. 17:24).

2. God's house is God's family, God's children (Eph. 2:19-22; Heb. 3:6).

3. Therefore, to be with God and Christ we must be children of God, members of his body, the church.

D. All "in Christ" are in Christ's church.

1. We are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27).

2. But we are baptized into the body of Christ which is the church (I Cor. 12:13).

3. All who are in Christ are in one body, the church (Rom. 12:4-5).

4. No one can be in Christ and not be in his church.

5. Hence, Christ and the church form the gateway of Heaven.

(All denominations hold that one may be in Christ and saved but not be in the church. The following

scriptures prove this to be false: Ac. 20:28; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; 5:25-27. Since Christ is the Saviour of the body, the church, how can one be saved apart from that which Jesus saves?).

V. CLIMBING THE LADDER OF SALVATION.

Note: This sermon may be continued by use of a ladder drawn on a chalk board. Begin at the bottom with the first round representing "faith." Let each succeeding round add repentance, confession, baptism, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.

Show the danger of leaving out a single round (II Pet. 1:5-11).

Conclusion:

1. Come to Jesus, he will save you.

2. Being saved is like climbing a ladder, one step at a time.

3. Each individual must follow this way or be lost.

4. Don't waste your strength with unnecessary things.

5. Don't go to sleep and fall off the ladder (Cf. I Cor. 11:30).

6. Beware of false teachings and winds of temptation that might sweep you away.

7. Look up, keep your eye on the Lord, check up, climb up and wind up in heaven above (Col. 3:1-4). — Franklin, Tenn. 37064.

The Highest Expression of Love

Continued from page 3

oppressed will receive much of his attention if he really knows what love is. I challenge you to make note of those where you worship who talk the most about our not having enough love and observe just how much love they have. When a sermon is preached on giving, observe who does the complaining about it. Is it not the religious pretenders among us who would teach us the love story when all the while they lack the virtue of giving, which indeed is the highest expression of love? — 4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Kentucky 41101.

Spiritual Dropouts

Continued from page 2

place there are some possible implications and analogies in the causes given for the dropouts from the public schools in the above named report. We shall list each cause given for the 27,577 dropouts and the number in each category and allow the reader to draw conclusions and make applications that are analogous to the dropout problem in the church. (1) 5,226 dropped out because of a lack of interest. (2) 1,546 dropped out because of Marriage. (3) 1,236 said they were needed at home. (4) 1,215 dropped out to find a job. (5) 989 dropped out because of illness. (6) 778 had academic difficulties. (7) 427 dropouts stemmed from behavioral problems. (8) 372 wanted to enter the armed services. (9) 339 had physical disabilities. (10) 271 were mental cases. (11) 134 were committed to correctional institutions and (12) 271 died.

We need to admit that the dropout rate is high in the church and that it really is a problem. Yet, admitting that we have a problem is not enough. We need to see the problem for what it is—Sin. Sin has a solution! Remember, the Bible is our guide — God is our strength and helper. — 601 North First Street, Booneville, Mississippi 38829.

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

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

The Forgotten Invitation

Continued from page 1

refused to accept anyone with reservations. Many are trying to follow Jesus today with reservations.

When one invests all that he has in service for the Lord, interest will be paid on that investment (Mk. 10:29-30). When has anyone ever lost anything that

he invested in the Lord? "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58). — Rt. 10, Box 186B, Jasper, AL 35501.

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Words Of Truth

"I am
the Words of

us; but speak forth
the truth."

— Acts 26:25

Luke, Theophilus, And The Pope

You might wonder just what if anything these three have in common. I would think that there would be nothing, for neither Luke nor Theophilus ever heard of a Pope. Nobody could read what Theophilus read from the pen of Luke and ever conclude that Peter was a Pope and was to have successors.

Luke 4:38-39 gives no hint of Peter as a Pope. Here is the first time Theophilus would read of Simon Peter from the pen



WINFRED CLARK

of Luke. What does it say? Notice: "And he arose out of the synagouge and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her." Did you notice what this said? Luke said Peter had a wife. He was not an unmarried man. Now would Theophilus conclude that he was a Pope by the Catholic Church's standard today? By no stretch of one's imagination could this be concluded. Take the Pope of today and put him back into Luke 4:38 and he would not fit. You would have to have a different man. Can you conceive of the Cardinal's selecting a married man recently? They departed from their normal procedure in selecting a non-Italian.

No, Theophilus had no hint that Peter was a Pope by Luke's first mention of him. But just think of a modern Catholic writing to a fellow Catholic and making mention of the Pope in this way. Giving no hint that he was the Pope, but rather showing that he would not fit into such a mold. Neither Luke, Theophilus, nor Simon was of Catholic persuasion.

Acts 1 gives no hint that Peter is Pope. When one was to be selected to take the place of Judas, Peter acts in concert with the eleven and not as one over them. Note that they prayed (v. 24), then gave forth their lots (v. 26). All of the apostles are acting

together. All are having equally a part in the selection of Matthias. Can you think that Theophilus could conclude by the reading of the first chapter that Peter was the Pope and chief of the apostles?

Acts 2 does not support the idea of a Pope. Acts 2:1-4 records the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. They were all together. The cloven tongues like as of fire sat upon each of them. No mention is made that the one like fire on Peter was larger or glowed more than on the others. All were filled with the Holy Spirit and all began to speak. There is no hint of Peter's being above any of the rest of them. Where is the Catholic writer that would not seek to elevate Peter above the others? Since Luke did not do it he was not of that group and he would not have Theophilus think such either.

Even in verse 14 where Peter stands to speak, the eleven stand with him. He is not placed on a higher level. In verse 37 they ask all the apostles what to do.

Even they did not have the impression that Peter was above the rest. In verse 42 we find their continuing in the apostles' teaching—not just in one apostle's teaching, for all had a part in teaching and they taught the same thing. In verse 43 we read that many signs and wonders were done by the apostles—not just by Peter, but by all.

Add to this Acts 4:35, 37. Here many are selling their property and laying the price of it at the apostles' feet—not just at the feet of Peter.

Acts 6 has no Pope. When the problem arose the twelve called the multitude (Acts 6:2). Peter did not act alone. He had no more right than any other apostle so to act in solving that problem. How would that fit the modern situation of the Pope?

No, Luke would never leave the impression on Theophilus that Peter was Pope. In fact, his writings to Theophilus explode the whole idea.—P. O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

"Christian Commitment"

By RONNIE LOWE

"Commitment" is an often heard word in society today. But do we really understand what it is? Many times we define it as something we have decided to do, or something we have decided to believe (as in religion). Webster defines commitment as "to bind as by a promise, to do, to pledge, to bring together." These and any other definition we could offer for commitment involve action.

A commitment, then, is much more than a promise, but is also the actions that accompany that promise in order to make it a reality. We live in a time when making a commitment is very commonplace. We buy a car, take out a loan, and in doing so we make a commitment that we will pay back the loan. We buy a house and commit ourselves to paying off a huge mortgage over a period of several years. We

readily commit ourselves in these areas but often fall short when we notice that Christ wants us to make the same type commitment to him (Matt. 16:24, 25). When one becomes a Christian, he signs a blank note and says, "God, you fill out the rest of the conditions. I will do whatever you require." This is true commitment. This is the attitude all must have.

We must be committed like those of days gone by. As Abraham, we must be willing to forsake all if need be and live by faith. We must possess the same type of commitment he exhibited as he moved to take the life of his son (Genesis 22). We must have the commitment of Isaiah, for when the Lord asks, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us,"

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

I am not made, most noble Jesus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness

— Acts 26:25

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“A Very Conservative Church”

In the June 17, 1977 issue of *Words of Truth* our editorial was entitled, “The Evolution of a Liberal Church.” The article had to do with the Cahaba Valley Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama which had its beginning in 1973, and which was known to some of us from the very start to be composed largely of those who were and are liberal in their views concerning such things as instrumental music and fellowship.



BOBBY DUNCAN

What some of us knew and warned of from the very start was finally confirmed to the satisfaction of nearly everyone when Leroy Garrett came for a series of lectures at the Cahaba Valley church in May of 1977.

It is interesting to observe that the minister of this church does some writing for *Ensign Fair*, a liberal publication published in Alabama. And in the September 1978 issue of that publication he has an article about the Cahaba Valley Church of Christ, entitled, “What Are We Like?” The article tells of a visitor, a staff member of a congregation “in full fellowship with other Churches of Christ,” who was “amazed to find out how conservative” Cahaba Valley is. He even said that Cahaba Valley stands “to the right of his congregation by some distance.” The article goes on to say: “We are definitely a very conservative church.”

A note in the October 3, 1978 bulletin from this “very conservative” church shows how “very conservative” it really is. The note reads as follows:

NEW SUNDAY EVENING STUDIES: We need to understand as much as possible of the various expressions of the Christian faith. We are inviting a different speaker one Sunday evening per month to tell us about his belief.

FATHER JIM MULVANEY will speak this Sunday evening (8th) at the regular service. He will speak

about a half hour followed by a period of discussion.

FATHER MULVANEY is priest for Our Lady of the Valley Catholic church and is well known to many of us. It is not possible to know him and not love him. Do not miss this great session.

Now can you picture a Roman Catholic priest standing in the pulpit of a church of Christ, and a “very conservative” church of Christ at that? And can you believe that the bulletin published by this “very conservative” church of Christ would actually refer to a priest in the Roman Catholic Church as “Father”? What did the minister of this church mean when he wrote: “We profoundly believe the Bible to be the Word of God and the authority in life”? If this statement is true, then he must have a different Bible from ours; for our Bible says: “And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven” (Matthew 23:9).

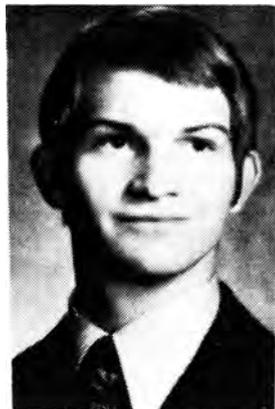
The truth of the matter is that this is just another example of the blatant liberalism which characterizes the Cahaba Valley church. It is an offensively conspicuous demonstration of the fact that the above statement concerning profound belief in the Bible as the Word of God and the authority in life is nothing more than hypocritical lip service.

Can it really be that the bulletin from a “very conservative” church of Christ has actually stated implicitly that Roman Catholicism is simply one of the “various expressions of Christian faith”? The person responsible for that statement is either dishonest, or else knows very little about the Christian faith or Roman Catholicism. Those who are familiar with the teaching of the New Testament and with the annals of history know that, if the Roman Catholic Church had her way, primitive New Testament Christianity would have been destroyed from the face of the earth centuries ago.

How long can good people who have their roots in the Restoration Movement continue to be brain-washed by those who have not one whit of respect for the Bible or the church for which Jesus died? “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Corinthians 6:17, 18).

Living In And For Time

The man who lives only for today ignores the possibility of life tomorrow, the responsibility of life tomorrow, and the certain consequences tomorrow of his actions today. While it is true that we can only live within the present allotment of time, we should live presently, based upon both the past and the future. In a literal sense, no one can live in the past; yet we all should lived based upon the



DALTON KEY

experiences encountered, the mistakes made, and the lessons learned during those by-gone times. He who ignores the past has no future, for what we will be and what we will do depends at least in part upon what we have been and what we have done. Our past is but a rough draft of our self-made book of life. If we will, we can gaze back upon it in our memory and make mental corrections so as to enhance the worth and beauty of the finished and polished final copy. If you have nothing to correct, nothing which needs altering, blessed are you indeed! I have always wanted to meet with you and hear your secret of success. But if you, like the majority of us, have made mistakes, don't just fret and fume. Do something! Be something! Or at least strive to become something! Mark your mistakes, and remember them only for the purpose of self improvement. An error made once, and noted by the “errist,” need never be made again.

The future is coming. It is that time for which we should live. Our near future contains our remaining days within the body. Our far

Continued on Page 3

This Woman Is A Church Bum

About the middle of summer I received a phone call from Eva Carter, a lady in her 60's who said she was stranded in Birmingham, on her way to Houston, Texas, and needed help. Such calls for help are turned over to Joe Thomas, our deacon in charge of benevolence. However, being unable to reach him or his wife, I answered the call myself.

Eva Carter was at a phone booth in east Birmingham after having been put out of a motel because she was unable to pay, according to her



GLANN M. LEE

story. She stated that she had a job waiting for her in Houston Texas, in a motel where she would be working for the wife of an elder of the church and insisted that I talk with this lady, Grace Midgett. Eva Carter called Grace Midgett from the phone booth and I talked with her. Grace Midgett “confirmed” Eva Carter's story. Both Eva Carter and Grace Midgett stated that if we would arrange accommodations for Eva Carter that they would send the money from Texas to pay more than the bill. Arrangements were made for her accommodations. About two months passed and not having heard from them further, although the bill had been sent, I called Grace Midgett who denied that she had received the bill. I gave her the bill on the phone and also mailed her another copy. After about three weeks had passed, and having heard nothing further from them, I again called Grace Midgett at the number that had been given me, 512-883-2951, and talked with her

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Who were the Masorites, and what contribution did they make to the study of the Old Testament?"

Centuries ago, (the time cannot be definitely determined), Hebrew scholars, in an effort to preserve the integrity of the original text of the Old Testament scriptures, formulated a system which they call the *masora*, a word meaning tradition. They contended that when Jehovah gave the law to Moses at Sinai he revealed not only the *true* text, but also the *correct* interpretation; the text they designated as the *Masora*; the interpretation they called the *Mishna*, both of which they believe were preserved orally for centuries, and then committed to writing. On these documents their scholars did an unbelievable amount of research and their efforts provide us with a remarkable example of scrupulosity and concern for comparatively unimportant details without parallel. It is an interesting study in ingenuity and infinite

patience to note the extent to which they carried their endless investigations into the nature and characteristics of the sacred text.

Any good Bible dictionary will provide instances and the various Introductions to the Old Testament will offer details. I shall list a few from such sources indicating the extent of their labored and often useless efforts. They determined, for example, how many times each Hebrew letter appears in the original text. *Aleph* is found 42,377 times. *Beth* 38,218, *Gimel*, 29,537 times, *Daleth*, 32,530, and so one, letter by letter, through the whole text of these ancient writings; they searched for and found the middle letter of the books of the law, the middle clause of each book, the number of divisions in each, these details being placed at the end of each book. They indicated the number of times that the same word occurs at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of a division, its various meanings, and its relationship to other words of the same or similar

its relationship to other words of the same or similar meaning. While much of this labor was unproductive, it does evidence the fact that the scriptures were the chief concern of those people and that they believed them of such great importance as to justify the most detailed and labored analysis.

This concern for detail has not been limited to the Jews, nor to the Old Testament documents—others have done much the same for the New Testament, and have compiled their researches for both portions of God's revelation to man.

It is good to learn all we can about God's wonderful message to the world, but mere mechanical details and simple curiosities will not make us better or save our souls from sin. It is far better to be wholly ignorant of these matters, and to be familiar with our responsibility to God as taught therein, than to possess a great storehouse of information regarding these subtleties and be ignorant of the real purpose for which the scriptures were given.

Why You Should Be A Christian

Man, being a rational creature, seeks for reasons when he is challenged to do something. May I suggest eleven good reasons why all responsible people should want to become Christians. You should want to become a Christian:

(1) To please your Creator. This is the whole duty of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13). All normal people feel a responsibility to those that they love, to those who have been their benefactors. God has given us our very lives and daily sustains us (Acts 17:25). He has blessed us with our families, our health and a good earth. As a child seeks approval of his beloved parents, so should we seek to please our God.

(2) To express your appreciation to Jesus for what he did for you. He died for you (Romans 5:8). He will save you (Luke 19:10), if you love him and keep his commandments (John 14:15). Ingratitude is the most heinous of all man's sins (Luke 17:12-19). No good man who truly understands the price Jesus has paid for us will refuse to obey him.

(3) To lay hold on the abundant life now (John 10:10). Christ gives us peace (Philippians 4:7), joy unspeakable (I Peter 1:8), security (Matthew 6:33). Ours is a world of miserable, unhappy people. Sin has tainted and spoiled every life it has touched. Jesus the great physician can cure our malady and give us a new life that is truly worth living.

(4) To prepare your life for eternity. "Lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (I Timothy 6:19). From ancient times men have pondered "If a man die will he live again?" (Job 14:14). Christ drew back the curtain to show us life and immortality (II Tim. 1:10). He invites all men to be this guests in eternity (Matt. 11:28-30).



JOHN WADDEY

You must decide to accept or reject his invitation.

(5) To escape the judgment of hell (Matt. 23:33). "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40). Just as you would exert every effort to save yourself from a burning house, so you surely should want to save your undying soul from torment (Luke 16:19-31).

(6) To strengthen your home against the ravages of disruption caused by sin (Psalms 127:1). Never has the home been under such heavy attack as in our generation. To save our family, to rear our children successfully, we need God's help. "If God is for us, who is against us?" (Romans 8:31).

(7) Because you love your mate and want to be the best marriage partner possible. No finer gift could be offered than a Christian life. Solomon says of a righteous woman, "Her husband also...praiseth her" (Proverbs 31:28). Husbands must love their wives even as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25).

(8) Because you love your children and want them to have the best home possible... because

you want them to have the best example to follow (Prov. 20:7; Eph. 6:4). Your children can have the best of food, clothing and shelter, medical care and education and yet be neglected and deprived if you do not give them a Christian home environment.

(9) So that you might be in a better position to help preserve our country and maintain our freedom. "Righteousness exalts a nation (Prov. 14:34). Our nation is deteriorating morally at a frightening pace. But a nation is only the sum of its people. A better world begins with you. with me. Christians are the salt of the earth that will not only flavor a society for good, but also preserve it from moral decay (Matt. 5:13).

(10) To stop being just a spectator and to become a participant in the greatest cause in the world. All that is needed for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.

(11) For the personal satisfaction of knowing you have done the right thing, the noble thing, the best that you could do. You can then walk in your integrity with a good conscience (Job. 27:5).

Living In And For Time

Continued from page 2

reaching future deals with the boundless realm of eternity, a realm which we all will one day inhabit (Ecc. 12:7). If you don't wish to live for the future, you have no right to live in the future. To those of our number who live only for today, and the delight of the present, pleasant moment, we offer the inspired advice of ancient Amos: "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). Who is so foolish as not to plan for his old age? Yet many never begin their preparation for death, and for the eternity to follow. I had rather prepare for my death than for my old age, for one lasts much longer than the other.

Eternity is too long and life is too short for us to neglect our spiritual preparation for eternity. May we all learn to live within today, but not wholly for today. — Box 619, Douglass, Kansas, 67039

Subscribe To The
Words of Truth

This Woman Is A Church Bum

continued from page 2

again about the bill. She again denied having received the bill, though neither of the letters was returned to us. Again I gave her the bill on the phone and mailed another copy. By now I knew that they were church bums.

While in a meeting with the Kannapolis, N. C. church, the local preacher, Bob Pritchard and I along with our wives planned to tour Cannon Towel Company. Upon arriving at Bob's house, he told me he would be unable to make the tour since he was working on a benevolence case of a woman who was passing through and stranded at a motel in Kannapolis. He indicated the woman had a job waiting for her in Houston, Texas, with the wife of an elder who ran a motel there. I asked, "Is the name of the woman who is asking for help, Eva Carter?" He said that it was. "And is the name of the elder's wife in Houston, Grace Midgett?" Again the answer was

yes. I then told Bob of my contact with her and requested that he let me accompany him to the motel so I could confront Eva Carter. I requested that he let me do the talking.

Upon arriving at the motel, Eva Carter did not recognize me from the Birmingham experience. She gave the usual story with some changes, and then said she would call the wife of the elder in Texas for confirmation. When the party on the other end answered, I requested to talk with her. Upon taking the phone, I asked, "Is this Grace Midgett?" "Yes," came the answer on the phone. "I am Glann Lee of Birmingham, Alabama. You recall that we have talked several times before. When Eva Carter passed through Birmingham several months ago, she told me about the same story she has told us here today. However, she now denies having ever been in Birmingham." By this time Eva Carter was really

getting excited and turning various colors and was strongly urging that Bob and I leave. I continued my conversation with Grace Midgett on the phone. I learned that Grace Midgett's husband is not an elder of the church, that Grace Midgett knew nothing of the church and I told her that the two of them had a racket going. After hanging up the phone, I preached Eva Carter a rather strong sermon. After the sermon Eva Carter said, "I'm going to get out of this church of Christ. I don't like y'all anyway." After I had further reproved Eva Carter, Bob and I left. I have since learned that she is travelling all over the country telling this same story, with some variations, and begging money from the churches. Don't help her. She and Grace Midgett are church bums.—3645 Leslie Ann Road, Birmingham, Al. 35243.

Studies In First and Second Timothy

--A Great New Book

Readers of WORDS OF TRUTH will be delighted to learn that our talented, dedicated, and sound Robert R. Taylor, Jr. has recently authored and had published a great new book entitled *Studies in First and Second Timothy*. Brother Taylor comes as no stranger to readers of WORDS OF TRUTH. His articles have graced the pages of this fine publication for many years—and we hope will continue to do so



BERT THOMPSON

throughout many more years. Only this past summer brother Taylor was awarded the honorary Doctor of Literature degree by American Christian Bible College for his outstanding Christian journalism and dedication to the Lord's work. The citation, given to brother Taylor with his doctorate, noted the many books he has written, the hundreds of articles he has published, and the more than one thousand radio scripts he has written for brother V.E. Howard.

This new book, *Studies in First and Second Timothy*, is what I would call in the highest complimentary sense "typical Taylor!" We have already come to appreciate the bright scholarship and pungent pen of Robert R. Taylor, exhibited through his many fine books and articles. This new book exhibits more of the same—which is certainly to its credit. Robert was kind enough to send me a personally inscribed copy after its publication. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading through it, and have gleaned much from its pages. I think readers of this fine journal need to know of its availability, and of the wealth of information which is contained therein.

Studies in First and Second Timothy is a paperback book, consisting of some 126 pages. It is published by Lambert Book House in Shreveport, Louisiana. There are thirteen chapters in this book, so that it can easily be used as a classroom workbook in adult classes in Bible School curricula throughout our great brotherhood.

Each chapter is "meaty" and filled with thought-provoking material. It is not a sketchy outline, but instead well-written, well-documented,

well-thought-out paragraph after paragraph of instructions, explanations, and admonitions gained from an in-depth study of these two marvelous books.

The entire book is laced with the author's immense knowledge of God's word, and his reverence toward it. Paul's admonitions to Timothy "come alive" as brother Taylor helps the reader identify with the young evangelist in so many of life's situations.

The book sells for \$1.50 plus 50 cents for postage

and handling and can be ordered either directly from Robert at Box 464, Ripley, Tennessee 38063, or from Lambert Book House, Box 4007, Shreveport, Louisiana 71104. I wholeheartedly recommend this book and feel that every person who reads it will put it down, only to walk away from it with a deeper love for God in his heart and a greater love for Jesus as Savior. 1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

"Christian Commitment"

Continued from page 1

we must willingly reply, "Here am I; send me." To be a Christian it will take a lifetime of commitment. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. . . and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Paul wrote, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your la-

bor is not vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Let us follow the examples of those who have gone before by being totally committed to the cause of Christ.—P. O. Box 3, Joshua, Tex. 76058.

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Words Of Tri

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— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1978

NUMBER 49

Luke, Theophilus, And The Pope

(No. 2)

Last week we noted some things under the above caption. We asked then as we do now, what these three might have in common. Surely this is a legitimate question if Peter was the first Pope. If Peter was the first Pope, then some things must be assumed. One is that Luke was a Catholic writer. A second is that he was writing to a Catholic by the name of Theophilus. A third is that he was writing about Peter, a Catholic Pope



WINFRED CLARK

when he made mention of Peter. All these things must follow if, indeed, Peter was the first Pope.

We found in our first study of this that Luke in no way gave the impression that he was of the Catholic persuasion. He did not write of Peter as a Catholic would write. In fact, his writings reflect a doctrine to the contrary. He does not hold up Peter as the Pope. Let us note some things that Luke said to Theophilus.

Peter is mentioned with the twelve in Acts 6:2-6. In the solution of the problem in Acts 6 the apostles act in concert. Peter is given no prominence over the others. Now think a moment: Can you conceive of a similar situation's arising today and the Pope's acting with the others without being the prominent character in the event? If such had been the case with these in Acts 6, Peter would have been the one they would have had to listen to. Peter would have called the multitude. He alone would have had the authority to do so. No, Acts. 6 gives no thought that Peter was the Pope.

Acts 8:14 gives no hint that Peter was the Pope. The context of this verse tells of the gospel's being carried to Samaria. The gospel was obeyed by many who heard the preaching of Philip. Now notice verse 14: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God,

they sent unto them Peter and John." Can you think that Luke was a Catholic writing to a Catholic about a Catholic Pope here? Notice that word of the success of the gospel is said to have come to the apostles. Peter is not set out from the others as Pope over them. Also the apostles sent Peter and John. Can you conceive of such being done if Peter were Pope? He would be the one sending, not being sent. Who would send the Pope anywhere today? What group of Catholics would dare try to send the Pope on a mission? Yet the apostles sent Peter and John. Would Theophilus think that Peter was more prominent than the others after reading this verse? Not at all.

Acts 10 and 11 give no support to the idea that Peter was the Pope. These two chapters record the conversion of the household of Cornelius. Peter goes to carry the gospel to them. After he returned to Jerusalem there were those who were Jewish brethren that contended with him (Acts 11:1-4). Can you think of the Pope's action's being called into question like that today?

Acts 12 gives no support to the idea. In fact,

something happens here that would be of the opposite nature. Notice that Herod would vex certain of the church. He killed James (Acts 12:2). Later he took Peter and would kill him. Now if you had been Herod and Peter was the Pope, and you wanted to strike a real blow against the church, who would you kill first? The Pope, of course. Even Herod knew Peter was not a Pope.

Acts 15 gives no support to the idea. Here the apostles, with the elders in Jerusalem, meet to discuss the matter of what place the Gentiles are to have. Peter is again acting in concert with the rest of the apostles. His words are no more important than the words of James. Also it is worthy of note that Luke's last reference to Peter finds him in Jerusalem, and not in Rome. In fact, Luke shows Paul's going to Rome, not Peter's.

We must conclude that Luke was not a Catholic writing to a Catholic, Theophilus about Peter, a Catholic Pope. Truly none of these were of the Catholic persuasion.—P.O. Box 672, Bremen, Ga. 30110.

Why Should Women Be Silent In Worship

GLENDA WILLIAMS

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."— I Corinthians 14:34-35.

The scriptures above seem easily understood to the average reader; yet we find in many denominational churches today women are being called on to lead in prayer, lead the singing, teach adult classes, and some are even found in the pulpit preaching. Others

can be found standing in the audience testifying.

This practice had puzzled me for some time about its continuation, but perhaps I received my answer when a close friend told me one day that she directed the choir in her church. I said, "You do? What about the scripture that says, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches for it is not permitted unto them to speak?'" She quickly responded, "We don't go by that scripture."

Is it enough to say to our Lord, there are some of your scriptures that we "go by" and others that we do not? The Father speaks to us through the word. We

Continued on page 4



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Repentance

JOHNNY RAMSEY

Repentance is far more than just an arbitrary "step" in the plan of salvation. It is, in many ways, the key that unlocks the door of conversion. In Acts 17:30 we learn that "all men everywhere must repent." This command, in the gospel age, began to be preached in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38). Even though we shall perish unless we do repent (Luke 13:3) and even though proper obedience enjoins upon us due penitence (Acts 3:19) still so many people do not understand the scriptural definition of repentance. What is repentance? How is repentance brought about? What is the result of true repentance? What about "death-bed repentance"? We shall strive scripturally to answer these important questions immediately.

In Matthew 21:28-30 we find the best clear cut example and definition of repentance in the Bible. "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went." What is penitence according to the Bible? A *change of decision*. A man has decided to serve Satan and Sin. He learns of the love of God, the terrible nature of sin, the hopeless condition he is in and the joys of serving the Lord. He changes his mind (decision) in regard to sin. He thus repents. No wonder we believe *repentance* is the real obstacle in the scheme of redemption. Show me a man who will genuinely repent and I'll show you a man who will not quibble over baptism.

Repentance is brought about by the love of God, the wrath of God, and godly sorrow for sin. In Romans 2:4 we learn that "the goodness of God leadeth us to repentance." In Romans 11:22 and II Corinthians 5:11 we learn that the wrath of God should cause us to obey Him in this as well as other commands. In Luke 15 the prodigal repented when "he came to himself." He realized just how sinful he was and how wonderful his father was. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of" (II Corinthians 7:10). What is the result of true repentance? Acts 2:38 and 3:19 show us that the result is a reformed life. Repentance is not turning from sin. It is the *decision to turn*. Repentance is not a reformation of life but it produce such! Faith changes our affections; repentance our will; baptism changes our relationship.

Death bed repentance upon the part of an erring Christian—if genuine—would be acceptable. Only

Continued on page 4



FROM
THE EDITOR

Cheerleaders Fired



BOBBY DUNCAN

We recently read in the newspaper about the firing of certain cheerleaders for posing in the nude for a magazine, the name of which we will refrain from calling, lest we help advertize that which is obscene. About the same time we read of an interview with Jaclyn Smith (one of "Charlie's Angels"), in which she is represented as having refused to pose in the nude for such a magazine, turning down an offer in the neighborhood of a million dollars. Another article tells of three housewives whose husbands loved to attend all the home games of their local professional football team. These three wives had, in recent years, foregone buying things they needed around the house (such as vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, etc.) so that they might buy their husbands season tickets. But the wives themselves decided to attend a game and, upon seeing the scanty attire of the cheerleaders, resolved that they would go ahead and buy the things they had been needing, and let their husbands stay at home and watch the games on television.

As one ponders these developments recently in the news, several questions and observations come to mind. (1) Why should any one be shocked to learn that a cheerleader for a professional football team has posed in the nude? After all, isn't she paid to parade her nearly nude body before thousands of people every weekend during the football season? The uniform she wears to the games (admittedly more revealing than that worn by most high school and college cheerleaders) demonstrate a serious lack of modesty on her part. Since money could entice

her to go nearly nude to the ball games, why should any one be surprised to learn that money—enough of it—could entice her to be photographed completely nude?

(2) Why can't Christian people see that the uniforms normally worn by cheerleaders are designed to appeal to the lust of the flesh? Can there be any question that the girls who were fired were approached by the magazine to pose in the nude because they were cheerleaders? Indeed, for a magazine that appeals to the lewd, the sensual, the lascivious, what could possibly be more attractive than a cheerleader who has taken it all off?

(3) Is it not strange that three non-Christian housewives are able to see what some Christians either cannot or will not see—that there is danger in looking at those improperly attired? While they likely over-reacted in stopping their husbands from attending the games, we do indeed admire their ability to recognize what thousands of Christian men and women have not recognized about the evils of immodest dress.

(4) Is it not refreshing to read of one's being praised for having strong convictions with reference to modesty? We do not know anything about Jaclyn Smith's religious background; and we would not say that we consider to be modest all of the costumes she has worn on "Charlie's Angels." But the fact that money could not buy her own convictions with reference to modesty says a great deal about her. Some have been bought by the devil for a great deal less than a million dollars. Some are bought by the desire for popularity or prestige.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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" (Romans, 12:1, 2).

Preacher-Itis

ALTON HAYES

Looking around one sees a great number of spiritual diseases. One such disease is known as Terminal Preacher-itis. "Terminal" denotes that this disease will cause one to die spiritually. "Preacher-itis" is simply an inordinate love for a preacher—a love that causes the one with the disease to follow strictly after anything taught or even thought by the preacher. Another symptom is that, when the preacher is gone on a trip, to a lectureship, to a meeting, on vacation, etc., the one diseased does not attend services of the Lord's church. Another symptom is that, when the preacher moves to another work—whatever the cause—the diseased one goes with the preacher or gets angry and goes to another congregation.

Preacher-itis is not a new disease, but rather an old one. The congregation of the Israelites did pretty well until the preacher, Moses, went away. They then built and began worshiping a golden calf (Exodus 32:1-6). The church at Corinth was diseased with preacher-itis. Paul wrote: "Now this I say, that every

one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (I Corinthians 1:12). Holy Writ shows by precept and example that we should not put our total confidence in men, but in God.

A cure for this disease is quite simple. First, respect the proclaimer of the gospel; but do not become overly infatuated with any preacher. To do this one must be a student of the Bible. He must accept things taught because God has said them, and not because the preacher has said them.

Second, remember that men have "feet of clay." All sin and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). If we do this, we do not become disheartened when the preacher shows his human traits.

No preacher worth his salt would cause division in the body of Christ. Therefore, if you are a very close friend to any preacher, accept his teaching to the extent that it agrees with the Bible; but never develop the deadly disease of preacher-itis.—Munford, Alabama 36268.

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Who was Melchizedek? How could he have been 'without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life...'"?

Melchizedek was "king of Salem" (Jerusalem), and a "priest of God Most High" (Heb. 7:1). He is first introduced to us in Gen. 14:18-20, when he went out to meet Abraham and to congratulate the illustrious patriarch for his successful encounter with Chedorlaomer and his allies. To Abraham's weary warriors Melchizedek brought bread and wine and pronounced a blessing on their commander. In return, Abraham gave the kingly priest a tenth of all the spoils they had taken from their enemies. The payment of tithes by Abraham to Melchizedek was a recognition not only of his priesthood, but an acknowledgement of the obligation to present an offering to deity.

The next mention of Melchizedek is in Psalm 110:4, where the prediction is made that the Lord was to be "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," by which it is meant that Messiah was to be like Melchizedek in official dignity and to possess an unchanging and ageless priesthood. Psalm 110:4 is cited by the Hebrew writer in chapter 5:4, and applied to

Christ.

Heb. 7:1-17 is a lengthy and detailed discussion of the relationship existing between Christ and Melchizedek, which may be summed up under the following heads: (1) Neither Christ nor Melchizedek was of the Levitical tribe, yet both were priests; (2) both were superior to Abraham, and hence greater than the priests which descended from that famed father of the Hebrew race; (3) both were *royal* priests, i.e., they were both kings and priests. (4) Their priesthood and royal functions were inherent in their positions and not obtained solely by ancestral relationships as was characteristic of the priests of the Levitical order.

It is affirmed of Melchizedek that he was "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God," a priest continually. We must be careful to observe that this passage does not say that Melchizedek never had a father or mother, or that he was never born and never died; what is affirmed is that these details were not recorded on any list of Levitical priests. The statement, that he was "without" father, mother, genealogy, etc., has reference to his official position, not to his physical being. He came suddenly into view, in his meeting with Abraham, when

the father of the faithful was returning from the slaughter of the kings, and he vanished from the historical scene just as abruptly leaving behind him no details whatsoever of ancestry, descendants, father or mother, place of birth or circumstances of death. These omissions of details, by the Holy Spirit, through the writer of Hebrews, were designed, so the sacred text informs us, as indisputable evidence of the superiority of the priesthood of Christ to that of Levi. Because of these omissions Melchizedek was a type of Christ—his priesthood a preview of the priesthood of Christ.

Priests under the law of Moses were required to be of the tribe of Levi, of the family of Aaron, and to have reached the age of thirty before appointment to the priesthood. Original legislation provided that they were to serve until they were fifty years old (Num. 4:3, 21-23, 46-49). Thus their ancestry, their age and their physical abilities were essential characteristics of their appointment. The priesthood of Melchizedek, a type of the priesthood of Christ, resulted from exceptional moral excellence, not fleshly descent, and was thus infinitely superior. Christ is priest after the order (likeness) of Melchizedek, not Aaron.

The Authority of The Bible

"My friends, in the religious world today, as well as in the political and social, there is much disturbance. A spirit of restlessness prevails. I may not know the cause of it, but, in my humble opinion, very much of this disturbance and chaotic condition everywhere in evidence is due to the fact that we are lacking in the recognition of the right standard of authority to govern us in our respective affairs"



RON HARPER

(N.B. Hardeman, *Hardeman's Tabernacle Sermons*, Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee) p192.

The above quotation, from one of the greatest preachers of this century, is a very fitting statement of the cause of religious division. Men fail to recognize and respect the proper authority in religion. However, before we determine what the proper authority is, we must establish the need for authority. In this regard perhaps the following quotation will be of help:

"All religion involves certain ideas or beliefs about God, and conduct corresponding to them, but ideas may be true or false, and conduct may be right or wrong. Men need to know what is true, that they may do that which is right. They need some test or standard or court of appeal which distinguishes and enforces the truth; forbids the wrong and commands the right" ("Authority", *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. I, p. 334).

There must be a standard to determine what is true and what is right. The problems that confronted Israel can be traced directly to the statement "...every man

did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). Chaos results when a standard is not followed.

Authority in religion comes from God. He has this authority because He is eternal in being and He is the creator of all that is (Psalm 90:2; Genesis 1:1). As creator He has the right to rule in this world and as His creation we have the obligation to submit to His rule. However, in order to make his will known to his subjects, a ruler must communicate with them. God has made His will known to us. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son..." (Heb. 1:1,2). There has never been an age in which God did not make His will known.

Notice that this message comes to us today by his Son Jesus Christ. Before leaving this world Jesus said, "all authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). Authority comes from the Greek word *exousia* which means "authority, absolute power, warrant" (*A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Arndt & Gingrich). All authority had been given to Jesus. He could make known the will of God, therefore God was speaking "by His Son."

This revelation of the will of God, given through the Son, was passed on to us by men inspired by the Holy Ghost. Jesus told His apostles that, "the Holy Ghost...shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn. 14:26). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (Jn. 16:13). The inspired men of the first century had the assurance that when they spoke under inspiration the message came directly from God. Jesus had told them that they were not to worry about what they would say when delivered up "for it is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which

speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:19, 20). In speaking about the gospel that he preached, Paul said: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12).

In view of these passages we must conclude that when we read the Bible we are reading the inspired, infallible, and authoritative word of God. The Bible is to serve as our authority and guide in religion because of what it is. It is the inspired word of God. It is His will revealed to man. As his creation we are bound to follow His authority. "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Col. 3:17). For all that we do in religion we must have a "thus saith the Lord." In fact, we are warned that if we reject this authority we shall not escape (Heb. 2:1-4).

When we want to learn how to become God's children we go to his word. When we want to learn how to worship God we go to his Word. We learn how to live pleasing to God from the word of God. The standard is neither our feelings nor what we like. Neither is it tradition or some man or group of men. The only standard is the word of God. When we say that we would not trade our feelings for all the Bibles in the world we are saying that our feelings have more authority than the inspired word of God. When we say we do what we do because that is the way we like it we are saying it does not matter what God says, I am going to have it my way. When we do what we do because men have commanded it we exchange that which is infallible for those who, in the eyes of God, are no better than ourselves. When, however, we follow the Bible we stand on the only safe ground. When we do what God has said we can know that what we do is approved of God.

We must see the necessity of following the proper authority. There are those who say that it matters not what we do in religion as long as we are trying to

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Why Should Women Be Silent In Worship

Continued from page 1

are the only tools he has to spread the gospel! Does it not behoove each of us to "go by" all He has given us and obey it?

In Acts 17:11 the Bible says, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scripture daily, whether those things

were so." In this scripture Paul and Silas had come into the synagogue of the Jews in Berea. They found the Jews were not prejudiced as those had been in Thessalonica. They had open minds and tested Paul's message by the scripture to decide whether or not what he was saying was true. How wonderful it would be if more people had the desire to prove what they

are being taught and what they practice by the scripture.

It must sadden our Lord when he sees a scripture so easily understood being taken so lightly by those who claim to be his children.—744 Heflin Ave., E., Birmingham, Al. 35214.

The Authority of The Bible

Continued on Page 3

please God. If such were true we would have no need for the Bible and every man could do that which is "right in his own eyes." To reject the word of God places us in grave danger. "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).

The inspired word of God is our authority in religion. Let us follow it in all that we do.—1501 6th Aven., Jasper, Al 35501.

Repentance

continued from page 2

God knows, however. It takes more than repentance on the part of one out of Christ to remit sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16). Too many people squander off a life time of opportunities and then call on God when it is too late.

II Peter 3:9 tells us that God is longsuffering to usward; not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. Have you complied with this command yet? John the Immerser would not baptize men until they manifested their repentance

(Matt. 3). This thought magnifies the importance of a genuine attitude toward God's holy will. May we always strive to have a humble, penitent nature.—8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, Tex. 78745.

Child Abuse Of Another Sort

There is much talk today about the abuse of children in our society. The attention this problem is achieving is needed and long overdue. Our hearts go out to those precious little ones who are physically abused by adults. Some of the reports we have heard are almost impossible to comprehend. How can adults in a so-called civilized nation commit these crimes against the defenseless? This writing involves child abuse of another sort that is not often mentioned today. It involves child abuse in many Christian homes.



MICHAEL D. STONE

I wonder how many children must live day after day in homes where the parents are always murmuring and complaining about the affairs of the Lord's church. Such children can develop a dangerous attitude about the church if they are often subjected to such grumbling. It is no wonder, then that we lose many of these young ones to the world and the world's religions. Brethren, is this not a form of child abuse that is as serious as physical abuse?

We must understand that there are two sides to the church. One is the divine side and the other is the human side. Only the divine side is perfect. To leave the impression of nothing's being right with the church is a most serious charge and a flagrant misrepresentation of the truth. On Sunday, in many homes, the church is picked apart as is the chicken, and this in front of those precious little ones who we hope will be the right kind of leaders in the church of tomorrow provided, of course, they don't give up before then. Those who continually "run-down" the church and her leaders in front of impressionable

children are certainly no better than those whom they criticize, and are probably worse off. Perhaps we need to read Philippians 2:14 more often. When was the last time you read James 5:9? To try to undo the damage done by the tongue is like trying to put the

toothpaste back into the tube. Not likely, you say. Neither is it likely that the child abuse of another sort mentioned herein will do a child any good—4763 Skyline Drive, Ashland, Ky. 41101

The Goodness And Severity of God

WALTER BUCHANAN

We need to have a proper concept of God. Some think of God as good and kind and loving, and He is! That's one side of God; but there's another side. Listen to Paul in Romans 11:22; "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God." So, God is good, loving, and kind when He can be, but severe when he has to be.

The goodness of God is clearly seen in the Bible. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7). "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). So, God's goodness is seen in His creating us and in supplying our physical and spiritual needs.

But the other side of God is also clearly evident.

God's severity can be seen in His driving Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3), in His sending the flood (Genesis 6-9), in his destroying Nadab and Abihu for offering strange fire (Leviticus 10), and in His punishing Ananias and Sapphira for their lying (Acts 5).

We're further impressed with God's severity when we read of the eternal punishment of the wicked: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:8, 9).

Don't overlook either side of God. Remember, God is good when He can be, severe when he has to be!—Highway 71 North, Bentonville, Ark. 72712.

The Empty Seat

The absentee church member met the preacher on Monday morning. Said Bro. Ab, "Well my seat was empty again yesterday, wasn't it?" "No" replied the preacher, "It wasn't." "What?" said Bro. Ab. "I wasn't there, who was in it?" Said the preacher,

"The Devil was in it, just grinning up at me and saying, 'I've got him again!'" Bro. Ab was in his place next time.

Selected



Words Of Truth

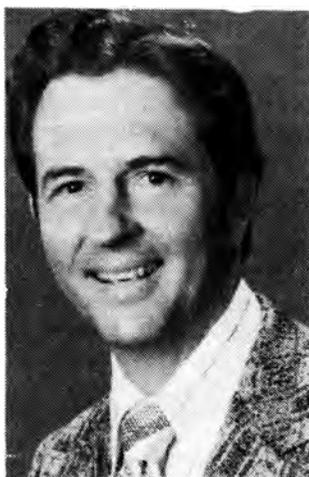
"I am not
the Words of Truth..."

...k forth

...ts 26:25

The 1979 Fort Worth Lectures: The Holy Scriptures

For years, the Fort Worth Christian College lectures and books were considered to be among the very finest in our brotherhood. When the college closed, the lectures, as such, ceased. After several intervening years, though the college is no longer in operation, these lectures have been revived under the caption, "The Fort Worth Lectures," with the lectures being conducted by the Brown Trail congregation in Fort Worth (Hurst, Bedford), Texas (which operates the Brown Trail Preacher School). The annual event had as its theme last year, "Premillennialism--True or False?" In spite of inclement weather, the crowds were large, with brethren attending from 27 states, and 2 foreign countries, and many brethren attending from the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.



WENDELL WINKLER

I. PERTINENT DATA

(1) *Date.* The date of the annual lectures is always the third week in January. Accordingly, the date for the approaching lectures is January 14-18, 1979. This time has been selected in as much as it did not conflict with any other college or schools of preaching lectureships.

(2) *Place.* The lectures will be conducted in the very spacious meeting-house of the Brown Trail congregation, located at 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford (greater Fort Worth), Texas.

(3) *Theme.* The theme for this year's lectureship will be, "The Holy Scriptures." A more relevant and timely theme could hardly have been chosen. The topics listed elsewhere in this article illustrate how informatively and captivatively the theme will be

developed.

(4) *Oversight.* The lectureship will be conducted under the supervision of the Brown Trail eldership, with Wendell Winkler, local evangelist at Brown Trail, being the director. Sister congregations of the area are being asked to cooperate in this effort.

(5) *Future Themes.* The theme for 1980 has already been selected: "What Do You Know About the Holy Spirit." In subsequent years we will be discussing "The Evangelistic Church," "The Person and Life of Christ," "The God of the Bible," "The Christian in Today's World," "Morals In An Immoral Age," "The Home As God Would Have It," etc.

II. EVENING SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

On Sunday, Tom Warren will discuss "Thy Word Is Truth," and Eldred Stevens will discuss "The Inspiration of the Bible." Then, on Monday evening, John Waddey will speak on "What about Translations and Versions?" and Tom Holland will speak on "The All-Sufficiency and Finality of the Bible." On Tuesday evening, Ed Wharton will speak on "The Incarnate Word and the Written Word--You Cannot Separate Them," and Wayne Jackson will preach on "The Bible and the Genesis Account of Creation." Wednesday night we will have Foy Smith discussing "The Lost Book," and Johnny Ramsey discussing "Let Us Speak Where The Bible Speaks and Be Silent Where The Bible Is Silent." The lectureship will conclude on Thursday night when S.T.W. Gibbs, Jr. preaches on "Can We See The Bible Alike?" and Willard Collins preaches on "The Word That I Have Spoken, The Same Shall Judge Him In The Last Day."

III. DAILY SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

Sunday: "The Authority of the Bible," Goebel Music; "II Timothy 3:15-17--Paul's Classic Text on 'The Holy Scriptures,'" Wendell Winkler; "My Heart Standeth in Awe of Thy Word," Neil Pryor.

Monday: "Internal Evidences of the Bible's

Inspiration--Unity, Simplicity, Impartiality, Brevity," Hugo McCord; "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth," V.E. Howard; "How To Study The Bible and Tools of Bible Study," Doy Deaver; "Preach The Word," Abe Lincoln; "The Bible and Other Sacred Books (Koran, Vida, Tripitaka, Cofucion Texts, etc.)," Bill Cline.

Tuesday: "Internal Evidences of the Bible's Inspiration--Predictive Prophecy, Style, Beauty, Rationality," Hugo McCord; "The Symbols of the Bible (Lamp, Sword, Mirror, Food, Fire, Hammer, etc.)," Leroy Brownlow; "Thy Word Have I Hid in Mine Heart," George Stephenson; "The So-Called Immoralities of the Bible," Roy Lanier, Jr.; "How To Study The Bible and Tools of Bible Study," Roy Deaver; "Wresting The Scriptures," Andrew Connally.

Wednesday: "Internal Evidences of the Bible's Inspiration--Perfection, Ethics, Power, Scientific and Historical and Geographical Accuracy," Hugo McCord; "Alleged Contradictions of the Bible," Roy Lanier, Sr.; "The Relevancy and Modernity of the Bible," Noel Merideth; "The Bible and Miracles," Flavil Nichols; "How We Got Our Bible," Neil Lightfoot.

Thursday: "The Influence and Power of the Bible," Robert Taylor; "The Preservation and Indestructibility of the Bible," Frank Dunn; "The Bible and Family Devotions," Harold Taylor; "Did The Cathloic Church Give Us The Bible," Joe Malone; "Are The Right Books In The Bible," Furman Kearley; "External Evidences of the Bible's Inspiration--Archaeology," Bill Humble.

IV. OPEN FORUM

There will be an Open Forum conducted daily, with the discussions being limited to given thrusts. On Monday, Hardeman Nichols will be the moderator fielding questions from the floor on "Questions on

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Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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The Outer Trappings

CLEON LYLES

Externals naturally express the internal. If therefore the outward action is to be right the heart must be right. Only those things that are internal will remain. Paul taught that though the outward man perishes the inward man is renewed. As the outward man perishes all that this part of man depends on for satisfaction will naturally perish with him. When the spirit leaves the body there will no longer be any need for houses and lands. Bank accounts will be given to someone else. All stocks and bonds will be transferred to the keeping of others. The deeds we hold to property will bear the name of someone else. Even all wisdom that has to do only with this world will vanish when the time comes for us to depart this life. Some day, according to the Bible, the entire earth with all that it contains will be burned up. That which is external shall perish. Since our greatest concern seems to have to do with things external, and since the external is produced only by that which is within the heart we should be keeping the heart right. How can we do this?

First we must control our thinking. "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). We cannot allow our minds to feed constantly on thoughts that will destroy us, whether they be concerning things that are wrong within themselves or things that are right within themselves, but can absorb us and remove our minds entirely from that which is spiritual.

If we are to control our thinking we must exercise control over those things that create our thoughts. This calls for good reading habits. We must fill the mind with thoughts that have to do with spiritual matters. We need to read the word of God much more than most of us do. We need also to read good magazines and books that deal with Bible subjects. We cannot feed our minds only on what we read in what is commonly called "Best sellers," or the information that comes to us on television, and expect the spirit to grow. If our minds only consume what we read, see or hear, that has to do with gratifying the flesh, the soul will eventually die. When, by filling our minds with proper information, the thinking becomes what it should be, the heart will produce proper action. — Morrilton, Ark. 72110.



FROM THE EDITOR

No Drinking On The Premises

Recently while passing through a small town in Southeast Georgia, we observed what we consider to be somewhat of an inconsistency. A small place of business near the highway was conspicuously flashing its neon signs advertising various kinds of alcoholic beverages. Another sign in the window of the same business, obviously handwritten by a non-professional, said: "NO DRINKING ON THE PREMISES." Why would those who make their living selling and promoting the sale of alcoholic beverages post such a sign? The reason is obvious. Even though they make their living through the sale of alcoholic beverages, they are not ignorant of its evil effects upon those who drink it; and they are not ignorant of what it causes those who drink it to do.



BOBBY DUNCAN

Even though they sell alcoholic beverages, they do not want those who are drinking them in or around their place of business. To have those who are drinking hanging around the place of business would be a hindrance to business itself. People simply do not want to do business where those who are drinking are hanging around. They do not want to buy their booze in a place like that.

Those who drink do not make good advertisement for that which they drink. The advertisement we see of alcoholic beverages on television and in magazines would leave the impression that drinking is generally done by those who are cultured and refined. One would even get the impression that drinking helps make one cultured and refined. If this were true those who sell alcoholic beverages in their retail businesses would not only allow, but would encourage those who buy their product to drink it on the premises. But the

"finished product of the brewer's art" is not as pretty a picture as the magazine and television ads would imply. That is why there are signs that say, "NO DRINKING ON THE PREMISES."

Perhaps the business under consideration is owned and operated by a married man whose wife sometimes comes into the place of business. For this reason he wants "NO DRINKING ON THE PREMISES." One who drinks is likely to act in a manner to which no decent man wants his wife exposed. The language he may use and the things he may do could be extremely embarrassing to a woman of decency. Or maybe the man who operates this business has some children who occasionally come in. No man who loves his children wants them to have to be around those who are drinking alcoholic beverages.

Those who drink should be highly insulted by signs such as this one. The alcohol industry wants you to think it is smart to drink. Those who sell alcohol in their retail businesses display the signs to indicate that they also think you should drink. But signs such as this particular one let you know what the retailer really thinks about your drinking. He is, in effect, saying to you: If you are stupid enough to give me your good money in exchange for the accursed product which I sell, then so be it. But don't think I'm stupid enough to let you hang around my place of business while you drink the product I have sold you."

The wholesale beer people sometimes can be inconsistent also. We remember a few years ago when there arose quite a labor dispute between the breweries and the men who drove the beer trucks over whether the drivers could have a beer or two while on the job. The breweries were adamantly opposed to their doing so. Why? Because they also know the evil effects of the product which they make and palm off on those who are foolish enough to buy it. This latter case should say something to the thousands of good people who contend that there is nothing wrong with just a beer or two now and then. Those who make and sell the stuff know better!

Fishers Of Men

By JOHN G. SHAVER

One of the greatest invitations ever extended was extended to a group of lowly fishermen, busy in their every day tasks of their livelihood (Mk. 1:16-20). This invitation was not extended to the proud, haughty, or mighty of that day. This invitation was not only great because of him who gave it, but because of the response to it. The invitation was immediately accepted without reservation. According to the plan of Jesus these lowly fishermen became "fishers of men." Their acceptance of this invitation cost these men something. They left their father, friends, worldly possessions, and the only livelihood they had ever known. They turned their attention from fish to men, and in doing so exhibited a trait later taught by Jesus of seeking first the kingdom of God (Mat. 6:33). They had been invited into partnership with the Lord and Saviour of all mankind to become involved in the fascinating and rewarding art of "fishing for men."

Jesus will teach, train and prepare through

the gospel all who wish to be involved in "fishing for men." His teaching will prepare us for this momentous task, and not the doctrines of mankind that he condemned (Mt. 15:9). His word is all-sufficient to prepare us for this all important vocation (II Pet. 1:3; II Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 3:16-17). The Great Commission is just as significant today as it was in the long ago. The gospel must be taught and preached to a lost and dying world (Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16), or many precious souls will be lost. Jesus gave himself freely for the needs of mankind in "seeking and saving that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10), and this is the all-important charge of the church today.

The attributes of Jesus were a constant drawing power. None will deny that he demonstrated meekness, humility, mercy and kindness while on earth. But often we forget that he demonstrated great strength, courage and

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Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Are individuals and nations, who have only 'the light of nature' to guide them, disposed to move toward, or away from God?"

Methuselah, at Adam's death, was approximately two hundred years old. When Methuselah died, Shem was nearly a hundred years old. At Shem's death Abraham was one hundred fifty years old. Thus through two persons only was it necessary for tradition to pass from Adam to Abraham, yet within this period the world generally lapsed into idolatry, and the idea of one true God was almost extinguished. We have here a demonstration, often repeated in the subsequent history of man, of the ease with which people lapse into idolatry and forgetfulness of Jehovah, the only true God, in the absence of a written revelation.

A review of man without the Bible reveals two remarkable facts:

First, man's very worship makes him more wicked. One has only to delve into the history of Greece and Rome to find unmistakable evidence of this fact. The worship of heathen deities often was attended by the most enormous crimes, and consisted of the vilest and most shameful rites. Purity, chastity, and morality in general are unknown. Hence, the very worship men engaged in contributed to his further degeneration. The more a man honored the gods, the worse he was himself; the oftener he served them, the more wicked he became. This moral corruption reached its zenith in the sacrifice of human beings. Diodorus Siculus, an ancient historian, gives an account of two hundred children of the best families of Carthage being burnt to death in

sacrifice to Saturn (the Moloch of the Old Testament). From a warning given by Moses to the Israelites (Deut. 12: 31) we learn that this practice was common among the nations of the land of Canaan.

Secondly, civilization, in the absence of true religion, has offered no check to idolatry, thus demonstrating the truth of Paul's observation: "The world by wisdom knew not God" (I Cor. 1:21.) A careful study of the history of nations reveals that in the earlier stages of their development religion is less degenerate than in the more advanced stages. From Plutarch we learn that Numa, an elderly Roman ruler, forbade the Romans to represent God under the form of a man or a beast, and that for one hundred sixty years her temples were without images. But in afterages, and during the period of her greater "refinement," Rome adopted the gods of almost every nation she conquered, and opened her temples to the grossest superstitions of the most barbarous people, persecuting none but the Jews and Christians, who alone possessed the light of truth.

The first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans accurately describes man's views of God, and what their own character is when they have lost the knowledge of divine revelation. He describes them as "vain in their imaginations," having their "foolish heart darkened," "professing to be wise, they became fools," "who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." (Let the reader turn to

Rom. 1 and read especially verses 18-32.)

Those who are without the knowledge offered through divine revelation are without information on two vital and fundamental matters; first, they are ignorant of the one true God; secondly, they are ignorant of themselves. The Scriptures not only reveal to us God—his love, justice, and holiness; they also reveal man to himself. Were it not for the information vouchsafed to mankind upon its sacred pages, we would not know where we came from, why we are here, or where we are going when we pass through the scenes of this existence. Hence, the Bible unfolds to man his origin, purpose, and destiny. It lifts the origin of man from the accumulated dust of the ages and offers him the only sensible, plausible account of his beginning; it unfolds a system of ethics superior to that offered by earth's wisest philosophers; and it permits him to peer into the future and see outlined his destiny when he shall have shuffled off his present mortal coil. Whenever, in the long history of the past, man has ordered his life thereby, it has been on an exalted plane; in its absence he has quickly descended into the most corrupt paganism. Facts everywhere illustrate the truth that in proportion to man's ignorance of its sacred teaching they become "vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts are darkened." Yet, so far from being aware of their folly, they "profess themselves wise," although they "are without understanding," glorying only "in their shame."

God's Message To The Mormons

On June 10, 1978 the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints made a momentous decision. They decided to admit Black folks to the "lay priesthood." This was a long and difficult decision for the Mormon hierarchy concerning those of African descent.

Beginning with their allegedly "inspired" prophet, Joseph Smith, they were told that the Blacks were not



JOHN WADDEY

worthy of the gospel. For years no efforts were made to evangelize them at all. In his book *The Way To Perfection*, Elder Joseph Felding Smith, one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Latter Day Saints, gives us a good summary of their doctrine:

"Cain became the father of an inferior race. A curse was placed upon him and that curse has been continued through his lineage and must do so while time endures. Millions of souls have come into this world cursed with a black skin and have been denied the privilege of Priesthood and the fullness of the blessings of the Gospel" (p. 101).

"What evidence do we have that the

negro of the present day is the descendant of Cain... There is no definite information on this question in the Bible, and profane history is not able to solve it. From the *Pearl of Great Price* and the teachings of Joseph Smith and the early elders of the church who were associated with him, we do obtain some definite instructions... (p. 103).

Mormon president Brigham Young is quoted as saying, "Any man having one drop of the seed of Cain in him cannot receive the Priesthood..." (Smith, Elder Joseph F., *The Way to Perfection*, 3rd edition, p. 107).

Only when Mormon George Romney began campaigning for the presidency of the nation did the Negro begin to rise in Mormon estimation. The precipitating factor was that Blacks were furious at the thought of a possible Mormon president who would not even consider them of equal human worth. At that point the presiding council of the Utah sect claimed a revelation from God to let the Blacks in as members only. Now some 15 years later they claim God gave the poor Blacks another goodie—admittance to the Lay priesthood. No word on the higher priesthood and offices as yet.

This earthshaking, newsmaking event prompts a few questions: Since both Joe Smith and President Spencer Kimball are said to have received their contradictory messages from God, which one are we to believe?

A. If the allwise, unchanging God changes

his mind about such important issues, how can we be sure about any other Mormon doctrine? Will he change them too? B. Would changing social-political pressures to accept Blacks as equals have anything to do with a change of doctrine? C. Do Mormons pray for God to change his will on other unpopular doctrines? D. Now that "God's will" allows Blacks to be priests, does that mean that Joseph Smith's teaching was in error? E. Will the holy books of Mormonism now be revised to teach the new doctrine? (Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price).

Is this really a blessing to the Negroes of the world? Now they will be subjected to the proselyting attempts of yet another false religious cult. Some will actually fall for this dry morsel tossed out by the Mormon leadership, viewing it as a chance to move across formerly forbidden boundaries.

How grateful every child of God should be that we have a "faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Our creed (the new covenant of Jesus) needs no revision. The Lord's church gladly accepts that ancient faith as its complete and final authority in all matters moral and religious (II Tim. 3:16-17). Never are we embarrassed by a foolish or contradictory teaching such as Mormonism's "Black doctrine." This is a good example of the defectiveness and deficiency of human doctrines and alleged revelations. They are obviously inferior to the Holy Bible in quality and character.

It is of interest that Joseph Smith, Jr.,

Continued on page 4

The Holy Scriptures

Continued from page 1

Difficult Texts of the Bible." On Tuesday, Roy Deaver will be the moderator on "Questions on Leadership (Authority of Elders, etc. Church Discipline, etc.)" on Wednesday, Flavil Nichols will moderate the Open Forum dealing with "Questions on Difficult Texts of the Bible." On Thursday, Roy Lanier, Sr. will be the moderator with the theme being "Questions on Moral Issues, Grace and of a General Nature." The Open Forum will be conducted daily from 3:30-5:00 p.m.

V. SPECIAL EVENTS AND FEATURES

(1) *Leadership Dinner.* On Tuesday, from 5:00-7:30 p.m., a Leadership Dinner will be enjoyed by all (elders, deacons, preachers, Bible school teachers and their wives) with Jim Bill McInteer, of Nashville, Tennessee, speaking on the theme: "Holding Fast the Faithful Word." Also, at this dinner the famed Gospelaire Quartet will sing.

(2) *Luncheons.* The Gospel Advocate luncheon, with Associate Editor, Guy N. Woods, being the

speaker, will be held at noon, Monday, January 15, 1979. The preacher's luncheon will be held on Tuesday. Then, on Thursday at noon, brother J.M. Powell of Nashville, Tennessee, will speak on "Great Preachers I Have Known--N.B. Hardeman, G.C. Brewer, Gus Nichols, B.C. Goodpasture."

(3) *Displays.* A large area in the building is being reserved for displays from various publishers, periodicals, benevolent homes, Christian colleges, mission endeavors, etc. Those desiring space in this area are invited to write to us immediately.

(4) *Ladies Class.* There will be a special class designed for ladies conducted daily, 11:00-12:00. The theme will be "Teaching Our Children Basic, Indispensable Moral Values." This theme will be developed as follows: on Monday, Deanne Beauchamp will discuss "Honesty, Frugality, Hard Work;" On Tuesday, Betty Muns will speak on "Chastity, Purity, Modesty;" on Wednesday Alice Hendrickson will speak on "Obedience, Respect, Honor;" and on Thursday Mary Oler will discuss "Wisdom, Courage."

VI. LODGING

Free lodging will be provided in the homes of the members of the Lord's church in this area for all of those who request the same. However, a number of very nice, moderate, motels are located very near the meetinghouse. If this type of lodging is desired, we will be happy to forward information concerning the motels. Restaurants and sandwich shops are very numerous in the immediate area. However, one main meal per day will be served at the meetinghouse.

Brethren, we would like to take this opportunity of extending a very cordial invitation to one and all to be a part of this great lectureship at the Brown Trail congregation. If there is any other information that you would desire to have, please write us at the following address: Brown Trail Church of Christ, 1801 Brown Trail, Bedford, Texas 76021 or call (871) 282-3911.

The lectures will be printed in book form.

Fishers Of Men

continued from page 2

boldness also. Not one time did he ever repel men by being proud or arrogant. He invited all men to come to him, and proclaimed that his yoke was easy and his burden light (Mt. 11:28-30). Opposition came from the religious leaders of his day as a result of envy and jealousy. The elders, scribes and priests resisted him at every turn, seeking to retain their places of leadership among the Jews, but the common people gladly heard him, and came to him in crowds and multitudes. He gave his time, energies, sympathy and love to these people. He fed, taught and comforted them on more than a few occasions.

Jesus, being the Master Fisherman, knew the nature of men. He knew how to fish for men as fishermen know how to fish for fish. He knew that men yearn for security, comfort, joy and pleasure. He uncovered the glories of heaven for man's enraptured gaze, and encouraged him to go there. He taught that earth's treasures are of a fleeting nature, but the treasures of heaven are eternal (Mt. 6:19-20). Jesus also

knew that as fish search for food, men search to satisfy their own desires. He knew that fish are not always selective in what they eat, and man is not always selective in what he desires. Men are constantly searching for forbidden pleasures, and carry on all kinds of evil. Jesus recognized the need for "fishers of men" being trained in this fascinating art. His disciples learned from him, and we may learn from them. In his letter to Timothy, Paul related that the gospel should be committed to faithful men who would be able to teach others also (II Tim. 2:2).

The seas are full of fish hungry for food to sustain their life. The world is full of men in search of spiritual food, hungering for the gospel. As the fish belongs to the one who catches him, man belongs to him who "fishes for men" most effectively. The fish is sometimes fooled by the various types of bait used by fishermen today. There are baits of all different sizes, weights, shapes and colors. It mat-

ters not whether the fish is fooled or not, he is still caught. Like the tackle box of the fisherman, the religious world is full of many different attractive baits to lure and catch men. Faith alone, once in grace always in grace, do your own things, go to the church of your choice, you're all right if you feel right in your heart, etc. A man may be caught by sorcery, sophistication, or other evil contrivances, but he is still caught by the one who gives his time, efforts and talents in "fishing for men." Will he be caught by the Lord, or some man?

Brethren, are we "fishing for men" effectively, using the gospel of Christ, or are we sitting complacently by, letting good men be caught by the evil contrivances of mankind? Have we lost sight of our mission? It is imperative that we become "fishers of men," and catch precious souls for Christ. One cannot catch fish if he doesn't GO fishing, and one cannot "fish for men" if he doesn't GO. Brethren, let us GO.—Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, Al. 35501.

God's Message To The Mormons

Continued on Page 3

founder of the Mormon Church, found a nucleus of early followers among a group of unstable members of the Lord's Church in Ohio. Sydney Rigdon, an apostate preacher of the church who had already wandered into Pentecostalism became one of Smith's chief supporters and confidants. A valuable lesson of warn-

ing can be drawn from this experience.

Last, if a religious group with such bizarre and changing doctrines can attract the members it does and grow, surely the pure gospel of Christ preached by the Lord's people will make his church grow even faster. The reason for their growth is obvious, i.e., the sending out of

their young men by twos for a missionary tour. We need to utilize this great source of evangelistic power in our youth. We must be as wise as the sons of this world (Lk. 16:8).—Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tenn.

**Does Your Congregation
Receive The Words of Truth**

Sentence Sermons

Any church which is satisfied to hold her own is on the way to the cemetery.

The quickest way to get the church on its feet, is to get on its knees.

A lot of trouble in this world is caused by combining a narrow mind with a wide mouth.

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

NAIROBI, KENYA BOX 48086

NOVEMBER, 1978



BERKLEY HACKETT

Dear Friends,

First, I'd like to share some good news with you concerning our living situation. We have some white neighbors with a car! The Johnsons are an older couple who have lived in Kenya for many years. Most Europeans and Americans have no interest in living in our area because of security but the Johnsons needed a house and have taken one near to us. It's a very ramshackled old place which needs fixing up and has mostly remained vacant. Mr. Johnson doesn't go out at night or over the week-ends, so this means that someone with a car will be in our area while Berkeley does these things. We feel very light-hearted and we feel that God has provided this extra security for us. We have never had one minute's trouble, but we've often been concerned about accidents or illness occurring when Berkeley is far away and us with with no telephone or transportation and on a bad road.

Idi Amin, "Field Marshall for Life" Idi Amin, who hasn't heard of this Ugandan despot whose antics range between the clownish and the psychopathic? The following is the true life story of Bro. O (as we'll call him to protect his family still in Uganda) and how he escaped death at the hands of the State Security.

DELIVERANCE

The Teso tribe has for generations lived on the land that now comprises the troubled border between Kenya and Uganda. As the herders grazed their cattle, they passed freely between the two countries, one day in Kenya, the next in Uganda, never concerning themselves with such nebulous affairs as national boundaries or citizenship.

One such family consisted of a man, his two wives and several children. The only son of the first wife was a thin, thoughtful boy. The second wife and her several sons would taunt his old mother saying she must wait upon them. Perhaps, for this reason his thoughts often turned to God and he wondered why life couldn't be happier and people kinder.

The boy was quick in school and eventually got a government job with the Uganda Coffee Board. During this time he was studying his Bible and simultaneously taking Bible corresponding courses from South Africa and the Church of Christ in

America.

Possibly, had he taken only one of the courses the young man would never have come to a decision about Christ, but the two courses often differed which puzzled him and caused him to search his Bible for the truth. In 1970 he was baptized for remission of sins and soon after married a Christian girl (whom he had taught). The next year another event occurred in Uganda which very soon effected him and many others. Idi Amin took control of the country at the point of a gun or rather several large tanks and immediately banned six Christian churches. The Church of Christ was among the first proscribed.

As small bands of Christians continued to met secretly from house to house, things were becoming increasingly difficult at Bro O's job. All coffee in Uganda was to be sold through the coffee board, but Bro. O's superior began to steal coffee and sell it on the blackmarket. Bro. O knew about the thefts, but he would not participate. The climax came one day when Bro. O was given a truck to clear supposedly containing 100 bags of coffee, but actually containing 110. The truck could not pass without his signature, but the papers affirmed the truck contained only 100 bags of coffee. What could a Christian do? Clearly his superior intended to smuggle the extra 10, but this time he was demanding Bro. O's cooperation in the form of his signature upon the release papers. Bro. O counted them once, then twice, but each time the offending 10 bags remained. What was he to do? If the truck had just driven on, or if someone else was asked to sign, he could honestly say it was nothing to do with him. But here it was before him and his signature demanded on a lie. Bro. O refused to sign the papers or release the truck until the 10 extra bags were removed. From that time his superior sought to have him killed or removed.

In a totalitarian government there is a crime far worse than murder, that is to recognized the imperfections of the government. Bro. O's superior denounced him to the State Security calling him an enemy of the state. The next day the State Police were outside the gate of the coffee board. Ignorant men from the Sudan drunk on liquor and unchecked power, they would ask no questions, make no investigations. They killed for the sport and relished a denunciation.

First they tried to lure Bro. O beyond the compound in order "to check his papers". Knowing that he would never be seen alive if he left the security of witnesses, he returned to his office and secretly exchanged his suit for working clothes. At closing time one extra workman walked through the gates as the police searched in vain for the man with the suit. Through the gates, through the streets of Kampala, Bro. O kept moving first by buses then by back roads and finally through the bush over the border to Kenya and freedom.

The life of a refugee is difficult. Jobs are scarce, wife and children remain behind, property and status are left. Where is God's hand in all of this? Surely it's too much to bear? Since Bro. O has been in

Kenya he has helped established two congregations and has strengthen many more. It is interesting to hear how someone has succeeded in business or won on the playing field, but how we all listen as Bro. O tells how God defeated his physical enemies and preserved his life. It makes us determine to fight out Spiritual Enemy all the harder.

Bro. O has an infant daughter born after he fled Uganda. He has never her, but he sent word that she's to be called a special name "Deliverance". "Suffering without bitterness" what a beautiful lesson his life teaches.

Until next month,
Charlotte Hackett

FINANCIAL REPORT-WORK FUND	
Travel (auto and gas)	\$250.00
House and utilities	300.00
General expenditures and supplies (not involving printing)	450.00
Printing and supplying of literature (including Bible correspondence course)	800.00
TOTAL WORK FUND	\$1,800.00
Via 6th Avenue, Jasper	

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO AFRICAN MISSION FUND FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1978

Louis and Ethel Burkett	10.00
Herman King	20.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurray	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurry	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Pearl F. Odom	5.00
E. L. and Wanda Short	20.00
Eric T. and Linda F. Sipco	125.00
J. E. and Goldie Terry	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	15.00
Ladies Bible Class-Tubbs Church of Christ	12.00
Adamsville Church of Christ	50.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ	75.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central Church of Christ (Tuscaloosa)	150.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	100.00
Cordova Church of Christ	25.00
Cottondale Church of Christ	100.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	50.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Liberty Church of Christ	77.50
Macedonia Church of Christ (Holly Gr. Rd)	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	150.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Morris Church of Christ	50.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ ..	15.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ ..	15.00
New Hope Church of Christ (Oakman)	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	100.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00



Berkeley and our new assistant from Abilene Christian, Louie Vesel, building a print shop behind our house.

Pea Ridge Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Quintown Church of Christ	25.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Avenue Church of Christ	1400.00
Tarrant Church of Christ	50.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ	100.00
Whitson Place Church of Christ	60.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Zion Church of Christ	25.00
TOTAL	\$3,904.50



This is one of the "bush" Christians who came to Nairobi to stay a "few" days with us. He kept putting off his departure as one "exciting" thing after another happened. Berkeley killed 3 huge deadling poisonous snakes, a panga gang attacked a house nearby and he and Berkeley chased robbers, he went on a preaching trip many miles away with Berkeley and he ate lots of strange American food. When he left he said he was going to come back soon! The tree is a papaya tree in our yard.



A meeting of the church in Embu. Those little saplings are the auditorium seats. We balanced on those for over three hours. Can you wonder that we get "culture shock" when we return to the States?



Words of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1978

NUMBER 51

If God Is For Us, Who Is Against Us?

This searching question follows the oft quoted, and oft misapplied, statement that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord (Read Rom. 8:28-31). Following verse 28 is a brief statement concerning foreordination or predestination which teaches us that those who love God are predestinated to "be conformed to the image of his Son." Then in verse 30 the apostle makes a broad, sweeping statement showing that those who are foreordained and called are to be glorified. Then the question: "If God is for us, who is against us?" The King James version reads, "who can be against us."

It is my purpose here to show that Paul is not denying that some are against us, for it is all too evident that some are. Let us notice some that ARE AGAINST US.

We can be our own worst enemies. When Paul preached in Corinth there were some who "opposed themselves and blasphemed" (Ac. 18:6). And when he wrote to Timothy his second epistle he urged him to correct and gently teach those who OPPOSED THEMSELVES (II Tim. 2:24f). Those who oppose Christ and the gospel are surely opposing themselves and working against their own best interest.

"He that is not with me is against me," said the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 12:30. This surely sets forth the idea that there is no such thing as a "no man's land" in which we can be neither for nor against the Lord. The poor Laodiceans thought they were rich and needed nothing and did not realize that they were poverty stricken in soul. They were trying to do the impossible in treading the middle ground between total commitment to the Lord and total rejec-



VIRGIL BRADFORD

tion. They were lukewarm and for this cause God said, "I will spew thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16). Jehovah God prefers absolute rebellion rather than this lukewarm state. How important it is that we examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith.

The devil is against us, for he is against God and against every thing that is decent and good in this world. According to Jesus he was a liar and murderer from the beginning. See Gen. 3 and John 8:44. He is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). The world as such, not doing the will of God, is following after Satan and becomes with him an adversary of God. Every responsible person is on the Lord's side or on that of the devil. No middle ground exists in the sight of God. He is a destroyer of men and the robber of every soul who is willing to submit to him. His name in Abaddon and Apollyon which names mean DESTROYER (Rev. 9:11).

Who is against us? Atheists, every one of them. Furthermore, the Lord says they are fools: "The fool hath said in his heart. There is no God" (Ps. 53:1). We see and read the effects of atheistic endeavor on every hand. It is difficult to find an article in a magazine that does not weave some point of evolution into it as if the hypothesis were a proven fact.

Evolution is in school books both in high schools and colleges. (Just here I wish to recommend a splendid book entitled, *The Other Side of Evolution* by Jon Gary Williams. This book has only fifty-five pages and may be ordered from brother Williams at LaVergne, Tenn. 37086). It is most difficult to understand how highly educated men and women can be so blind and foolish as to shut God Almighty out of their lives and sink into such depths of materialism characteristic of every evolutionist. Of course they don't believe that "in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth" because they don't believe there is really an Almighty God as the Bible teaches and that all nature declares such to those not blinded by their own exalted ideas. Evolutionists are against Christ and are therefore against his people.

Who is against us? Every false teacher on the top side of the earth. Jesus warns us concerning them,

saying, "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Mt. 7:15). To this everyone will agree, but not all may agree as to what constitutes false teaching. Those claiming to be God, Christ, apostles and such like are false to the core. Both Jesus and the apostles warn of this as in Matthew 24:5, 10 and in II Corinthians 11:13. Others are there who are "uttering great swelling words of vanity...entice in the lusts of the flesh...promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption" (II Pet. 2:18ff).

Those forming cliques and factions in the church are false teachers blinded by their own ego and evil designs as they rend asunder the church of our Lord. Such are in Paul's warning to the elders of Ephesus. After reminding them that they are to feed the flock of God's people he says, "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Ac. 20:29ff). This is a sad, prophetic utterance showing that the very shepherds of the sheep can be found devouring the flock instead of nurturing and feeding them. This is another type of false teaching.

But there is another type which we find in Jeremiah 23:30-32: "...I am against the prophets, saith Jehovah, that steal my words, every one from his neighbor.... They cause my people to err by their lies, and by their vain boasting: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; neither do they profit this people at all, saith Jehovah."

It is a serious crime against God and man to withhold the teaching of God's word from men. During this century a number of men have risen to great heights of popularity carrying away multitudes by their sensational preaching and personality. Such men as Billy Graham are false teachers because, among other things, they steal God's word from the people. Who ever heard of one of this type telling us

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

I am not in a most noble festus, but speak forth the Words of Truth and soberness
— Acts 26:25

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Luke

Luke was the author of two New Testament books. He penned the Gospel account which is called after his name, and he also wrote the book of Acts (Acts 1:1). Unlike some of the other NT writers who were without formal scholastic training, Luke was highly educated in numerous areas. A close study of his writings reveals that this NT pensman was a marvelous depository of talent, and God utilized that knowledge and ability in giving us the verbally inspired documents of the Gospel of Luke and Acts.



WAYNE JACKSON

LUKE THE PHYSICIAN — By training Luke was a doctor. Paul refers to him as the "beloved physician" (Col. 4:14). Throughout the Gospel account and Acts there is a keen interest in sickness and the sick. In 1882 W. K. Hobart published his work, *The Medical Language of St. Luke*, in which he attempted to show that the author of Luke-Acts used phraseology "which from habit and training a physician would be likely to employ" (p. xxx). Though H. J. Cadbury somewhat weakened the force of Hobart's argument ("Style and Literary Method of Luke," *Harvard Theological Studies*, VI, 39ff), there is much evidence of medical interest in Luke's writings. For example, compare Luke's precise descriptions of afflictions (Lk. 4:38; 5:12; 8:44) with the parallel accounts by other NT writers. Also, it is interesting to note that when Paul and his companions departed from Philippi on the second missionary trip, Luke remained behind as indicated by the use of the third person, plural "they... departed" (Acts 16:40). There might be a logical reason why Luke was chosen to remain. Philippi "had a famous school of medicine, which was connected with one of the guilds of physicians which sent its adherents throughout the Hellenistic world" (*Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia*, IV, p. 762).

LUKE THE LINGUIST — Luke was the most literary of the Gospel writers. In those narratives
Continued on page 4



The Law Of Exclusion

In discussions concerning the authority of the Scriptures the impression is sometimes left that when God commands a certain thing that command in and of itself excludes the doing of everything not embraced in the scope of that command. Hence we say that commands of God are both inclusive and exclusive; they include everything embraced in the scope of the command, and exclude everything not embraced in the scope of the command.

While we are reluctant to say that these statements are not true, we believe it needs to be pointed out that they do not convey the complete concept of the law of exclusion. For example, we sometimes hear it argued that God commanded singing in worship, and that the command to sing excludes playing a mechanical instrument. Technically, this is not true. It is wrong to play a mechanical instrument in worship because God has not authorized the playing of a mechanical instrument in worship. Technically, the command to build the ark of gopher wood did not exclude the use of any other kind of wood. The thing that made it wrong to use knotty pine is the fact that God did not authorize the use of knotty pine in building the ark.

If commanding one thing excludes everything not included in the scope of the command, then the command to sing would exclude giving; and the command to pray would exclude preaching; and the command to preach would exclude eating the Lord's supper. We have no trouble understanding that the command to worship God by singing does not exclude giving; and the command to pray does not exclude preaching; and the command to preach does not exclude eating the Lord's supper.

We can correctly say that the command to



BOBBY DUNCAN

sing does not include giving; but it doesn't exclude it either. The command to pray does not include preaching; but it doesn't exclude it either. The command to preach does not include eating the Lord's supper; but it doesn't exclude it either. Each of these is right because each is authorized. The authorizing of one does not exclude or include any of the others. Playing a mechanical instrument in worship is not wrong merely because God commanded singing; it is wrong because God did not authorize it.

It is, indeed, correct to point out that God has authorized the specific kind of music we are to make in worshiping Him, i.e., singing. But it needs to be made plain that singing is the kind of music God wants exclusively because it is the only kind he has authorized.

There is an inspired argument of this nature located in Hebrews 7:14: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." The context of this statement reveals that the writer is pointing out that the priesthood of Christ necessitates a recognition of the fact that the law of Moses was no longer binding; for Christ could not be a priest if the law of Moses were still binding. The reason he gives to clinch his argument is that Christ sprang out of Juda, "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Please observe that the argument is not that God specifically forbade one of the tribe of Juda to be a priest. Neither is it merely that the Levites were to be priests. It is rather that Moses said *nothing* concerning priests from the tribe of Juda. Since Moses said *nothing* concerning priests from the tribe of Juda, one from the tribe of Juda simply could not be a priest under the law of Moses.

The argument against mechanical instruments of music in worship is not that God has specifically forbidden them. Neither is it in the mere fact that God has commanded that we worship him by singing. It is rather that God has said *nothing* in the New Testament about worshiping with mechanical instruments of music. Since God has said *nothing* in the New Testament about worshiping with mechanical instruments of music, one simply cannot be loyal to the New Testament and worship God with mechanical instruments of music.

The Sixth Avenue

Church Of Christ Presents Seminar

Dr. Bert Thompson, professor at Texas A&M University, will conduct a seminar entitled "Science and Nature: Two Votes for God" on January 27th and 28th. The Seminar will be held at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ. Dr. Thompson is a faithful Christian who is dedicated to the defense of the gospel and the Genesis account of creation. The topic to be discussed is one of supreme importance to the church today. The proponents of evolution are not silent in their attack on the Bible and God. We must be outspoken in our defense of the truth if we are to offset the ungodly heresy that is being taught our young people today.

You will find that Bert does a masterful job of dealing with the subject in a way that can be understood by the "common man." Mark this event on your calendar and plan to attend.

**Subscribe To The
Words of Truth**

Open Forum

By Guy N. Woods

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

Are judicial oaths forbidden in the scriptures? Specifically, is it wrong for a Christian to swear to tell the truth as a witness in court, or to take oaths in other civil and legal matters?"

Two passages of scripture, one from the sermon on the mount, the other from the book of James, and obviously related in thought and application, are pertinent to the consideration of this question. In the former, Jesus said, "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. But let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one" (Matt. 5:33-37). James, in what is undoubtedly an allusion to the words of the Lord above, wrote, "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).

To *swear* is to invoke the names of Deity, or other sacred persons or things; to utter an oath. An *oath* is a "solemn appeal to God, or to a sacred or revered person or sanction (as the Bible, the temple, the altar) by way of attesting the truth of one's word, the inviolability of a promise, etc; also, the affirmation or promise supported by the oath, or its form of expression" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary). Thus, there are two elements involved in an oath: (1) an affirmation or promise; and (2) an appeal to God who knows all things, and punishes those who lie. The basis on which an oath is regarded as binding on the conscience is seen in Heb. 6:16, as an appeal to God to ratify or confirm the affirmation or promise.

Oaths were common to the Old Testament period. They involved agreements to perform certain acts (Gen. 14:22; 24:2, 8, 9); allegiance to a superior (Eccles. 8:2; I Kings 18:10); promises of a ruler (I Sam. 14:24); vows made in the form of oaths (Deut. 23:21, 22); public and legal vows and oaths (Lev. 6:3; Deut. 19:6-19). This list is by no means complete and may be greatly extended by means of a concordance.

Oaths, among the Jews, took many forms, among them being, "God do so and more also. . ." (I Sam. 14:44); "As Jehovah liveth..." (I Sam. 14:39); "Jehovah is between thee and me for ever..." (I Sam. 20:23); "The God of Abraham...judge betwixt us" (Gen. 31:53). At various periods in Jewish history the sanctity of oaths was regarded with the greatest respect; laws involving their performance were strictly enforced; and, often, there was assigned to the false witness the punishment due for the crime about which he testified (Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Deut. 19:16-19; Zech. 8:17). Inasmuch as such was a common practice under the Jewish order, it is not surprising that their descendents in the outset of the Christian era should be often disposed to engage in such. The view obtained among the Jews that the third commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Deut. 5:11), forbade any profane or flagrant use of the names of God, but they often resorted to technicalities and illogical reasoning to justify oaths where there was no specific mention of the name of Deity.

Some rabbis held, for example, that one was bound to tell the truth only when the names of God were

mentioned, on the ground that God became a party to the agreement when thus involved; but that if his name were not included in the oath any promise made one did not have to keep! Thus, by mental reservation, by trickery and by the use of evasive methods, many in the first century in the Jewish religion callously broke their promises and violated their oaths. Others avoided the use of God's name in their oaths by swearing by the handiwork of God, the heavens, the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars. This, of course, did not excuse their lapses because all of these objects are the works of God; and to swear by them is to invoke God. For this reason, the inspired writer said, "Swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth. . ." Thus, all oaths, of this nature, are forbidden. God has always regarded with the greatest displeasure any use of his name which is flippant, frivolous and profane.

It is a *profane* use of the names of God to use them in an irreverent and flippant fashion. The word *vain* in the third commandment of the Decalogue is translated from a Hebrew word which is violated by such use. It is of serious consequence that many members of the church today have allowed to creep into their conversations words and phrases which are definitely and unmistakably profane. Others, who would not dare use the holy names, God, Christ, Jesus, or Jerusalem, Heaven, Hell Hades, as interjections (an ejaculatory word or form of speech, usually thrown in without grammatical connection, *Webster*), or to emphasize the truth of what they are saying, will, nevertheless, use *euphemisms* (substitute words or phrases less objectionable), whose derivation goes back to one of the foregoing forms. Were those who thus do aware of the origin of many of these common by-words they would be shocked and mortified by their use! It is important that we have a clear conception of the meaning of such words and phrases and to avoid all of this character. Among them are such words as Gee Whiz, Gosh, Gad, Egad, Golly, Good Gracious, Good Grief, My Goodness, and many others. See my commentary on James, published by the Gospel Advocate Company, P. O. Box 150, Nashville, Tennessee, for a list of these words and their origins. A look into the etymology of these terms will show that they are directly traceable to sacred names and things, and that their use is profane. It is serious sin to sully the names of God by using them or their derivatives as curse words. Many "Christian people" are doing this without realizing it.

We are not to conclude from this that it is wrong to use the names of God in our conversations when such usage is reverent, respectful and sober. There are, indeed, numerous such instances in the New Testament. Such expressions are, "God forbid" (Rom. 6:2), "If God wills" (Acts 18:21), "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy. . ." (II Tim. 1:18). It is the *profane* use of such names which is prohibited.

Nor, are judicial oaths, legal oaths, statements before notaries public, and the like common to the business world, forbidden. But, did not James include, among the prohibitions, "any other oath?" Would this not include oaths of *every* type and kind? It is significant that an oath, in the name of God, is not mentioned; it would seem that if it were the purpose of the sacred writer to forbid all oaths, including judicial ones, this would have been the first mentioned. But, as a matter of fact, this type of oath, in contrast with others, was specifically commended under the law (Deut. 6:13; 10:20). "Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; and him shalt thou serve, and shalt swear by his name." That it was not the purpose of

our Lord or of James to forbid all oaths seems to follow from these considerations: (1) Jesus, before Caiaphas, testified under oath (Matt. 26:63, 64). (2) Paul often asserted things in the form of an oath: "For God is my witness, whom I serve..." (Rom. 1:9; see, also, II Cor. 1:23; Phil. 1:8; Gal. 1:20). (3) God, when he could swear by no greater, "Swore by himself" (Heb. 6:13). The ancient prophets often invoked the name of God in their solemn affirmations (Isa. 65:16.)

James said, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay. . ." This appears the key to the understanding of this matter. In all circumstances, we are to say "Yes," when *yes* is the correct answer, and "No," when *no* is the true one. We are to tell the truth without the necessity of binding ourselves with an oath. The Jews of that day were addicted to the vice of constant and continuous profanity; of calling God to witness the most common and frivolous matters, a practice which prostituted the names of God to the level of the most insignificant things. Men ought to tell the truth for truth's sake, and not simply because they are under oath so to do.

Additional evidence of the correctness of this conclusion is to be seen in the word which the Holy Spirit used to designate any other oath. Had James intended to assert that any oath, all oaths, every oath, must be refrained from, he would have used for the word "other" the Greek *heteros*, which means another of a *different* kind, instead of *allos* (which he did use), another of the *same* kind (James 5:12). It seems clear, therefore, that the sacred writer intended to include only such oaths as were of the type under consideration and to which the people of that day were specially addicted.

Some today seek to avoid "taking an oath," when called to the witness stand in court to testify by resorting to an *affirmation* which the law allows. Those who thus do, though they do not follow the form of oaths usually administered in such cases do *bind* themselves to tell the truth, and they can be convicted for perjury for failing to do so. **Perjury is false swearing--lying under oath!** So, there is really no difference.

Gethsemane

W.C. QUILLEN

Along the slope of the Mount of Olive,

Filled with pretty flowers and trees

There's a large and lovely garden:

It is called Gethsemane.

In a sad and fateful evening,

One in which He was betrayed,

Jesus Christ when sad and lonely

Entered in this place and prayed.

To disciples he most trusted,

He said, "Please watch for me":

Then He went a stone throw further

On into Gethsemane.

When alone He prayed His Father.

"Let this cup pass from me:

Yet not my will, but thine be done"

He said in Gethsemane.

Two or more times these words He uttered.

While His disciples slept all three;

He arose and rebuked them sharply.

"Can't you watch one hour for me?"

He prayed until His perspiration

Continued on page 4

If God Is For Us, Who Is Against Us?

Continued from page 1

what to do to be saved? Not one to my knowledge. And why not? Assuredly the answer lies in the fact that if one of them should preach the same truth that Peter preached in Acts 2 it would close shop for them, and they know it.

Now we all have responsibility toward all such false teachers. The Scriptures have this to say: "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not THIS TEACHING (the teaching of Christ), RECEIVE HIM NOT INTO YOUR HOUSE, AND GIVE HIM NO GREETING: for

he that giveth him greeting PARTAKETH OF HIS EVIL WORKS" (II Jn. 10-11).

This is "the spirit of Christ." What is your attitude toward false teachers?—Rt. 9 Franklin, Tn. 37064

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.

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.

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 of 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 Roman 6. Each must be understood and explained separately.

Baptism is like the *purification and preparation* of a bride for her wedding. In Ephesians 5 Paul speaks of the love 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" (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



JOHN WADDEY

Christian worship?

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 circumscion 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 when we are buried with Christ. God, not a physician, administers the spiritual surgery when we are baptized to wash away our sins.

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 have 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 the New Testament salvation, church or worship is 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).

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 saves 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 the 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.

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.).

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 shows this to be in baptism.

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 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). — Route 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tn.

Luke

continued from page 2

where he writes independently as a historian, he uses a pure Greek "which compares favorably in style with the prefaces of Herodotus and Thucydides, and surpasses them in combined modesty and dignity" (Philip Schaff, *Theological Propaedeutic*, pp. 132, 133). He had a tremendously rich vocabulary; he employed a great number of words (about 312 in Luke and 470 in Acts) that are not used elsewhere in the NT.

LUKE THE HISTORIAN — Sir William Ramsey declared that Luke "should be placed along with the very greatest of historians" (*Luke the Physician*, p. 222). This companion of Paul was a careful and meticulous historian. For instance, in Acts he mentions thirty-two countries, fifty-four cities, and nine Mediterranean islands. He also mentions ninety-five persons in Acts, sixty-two of which are not named elsewhere in the NT (Bruce Metzger, *The New Testament, Its Background, Growth, and Content*, pp. 171, 172). He is familiar with political conditions (Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius Caesar, Quirinius, the Herods, Felix and Festus are named). The final two chapters of Acts are said to furnish more information of ancient navigation than any single document of antiquity (Schaff, *loc. cit.*). Truly, this man who authored more than one fourth of the bulk of the NT was an instrument in the hand of the Lord. —3906 E. Main St., Stockton, Calif. 95205.

Gethsemane

Continued from page 3

Exuded from His flesh as blood;
Then to comfort and assure Him,
An angel sent from heaven stood.
He had won life's greatest battle,
'Tis for you and me to see,
Resignation to the will of God;

This is real Gethsemane.
In our trials and work and suffering,
And all ahead which still may be,
We'll o'ercome if we are faithful
To our own Gethsemane.

P.O. Box, 212, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. 38464



Words Of Truth

Fastus; but speak forth

26:25

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O Worship The King

“And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7). These words, simply written, contain the climax of a series of providential events which had been in development since God’s promise to Satan that sin would be defeated: “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). Christ, made of a woman, was the fulfillment of that promise (Gal. 4:4).



R. W. GRAY

Two events of human history stand out like tall peaks of a mountain. One is the sin and subsequent fall of man and the other the giving on the part of a merciful God a Redeemer. Satan seemed to triumph in the first. God is seen to be in control of human affairs in the latter.

Many great nights and events are described in the Bible. Some of them laden with tragedy while others shine bright with hope and assurance. The glorious night of Jesus’ birth is equaled only by the bright Sunday morning of his resurrection. He was born to be a Saviour, to die for sin; born that we might be reborn; born to bear us upon angels’ wings to that Celestial City of eternal delights. Of him Isaiah had written, “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the prince of peace” (Isa. 9:6). His name denotes his offices. He has filled to the fullest measure each office ascribed to him.

At this season of the year we need to be reminded that the Bible makes no reference to a festival in celebration of Jesus’ birth. All who reverence the silence of the scriptures in obedience to King Jesus omit the religious pageantry and ostentatious displays so much in evidence throughout this season.

But the remembrance of the true account of our Lord’s lowly birth brings thoughts of praise and thanksgiving to God for his unspeakable gift.

Christmas, as a religious festival, owes its origin to Rome. “No one knows definitely when the Christmas festival was first celebrated as the day of the Nativity, but in 354, by order of Bishop Liberius of Rome, December 25 was adopted. It was noted later that this date would fall within the rainy season in Palestine, so that the shepherds would hardly have been in the fields at night as they were when Jesus was born” (World Book Ency. Vol. 3, p 1425-1959). The Catholic encyclopedia states “Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church. Irenaeus and Tertullian omit it from their lists of feasts” (Vol. 3, p. 724).

It shall be remembered that the angel of God announced to Mary, “therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35b). Men should know that Christ is Saviour to whom the whole world owes unfaltering allegiance (Phil. 2:8-11). He is not a babe cooing but a lion roaring (Prov. 19:12; Rev. 5:5). He is “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 17:14). He is to be praised and

adored because he is “altogether lovely” (Song of Sol. 5:16; Rev. 4:10-11). Yet as a mighty King and Judge he is to be feared and obeyed (Heb. 5:8-9; 12:25-29). “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb. 13:15).

Let us put Christ back into our lives, our thinking, our goals, our doctrine and worship. Let us leave him out of those things which have no higher authority than the commandments of men (Matt. 15:9).

“O worship the King, all glorious above,
And gratefully sing his wonderful love;
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.
Thou bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.
Frail Children of dust, and feeble as frail;
In thee do we trust nor find thee to fail;
Thy mercies, how tender! how firm to the end!
Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend!”

-Robert Grant

P.O. Box 90236, East Point, Ga. 30344

The Value Of The Church

GUY F. HESTER

Some time ago, just after I had preached a sermon on the value and importance of the Lord’s church, I was approached by a sister who said, “I think you over-emphasize the importance of the church. I think you should preach more about love and Jesus and leave the church out of it.” I then asked her, “How can I preach about love and Jesus and not preach about the church that he ‘loved. . . and gave himself for’ ” (Eph. 5:25)?

I do not believe that it is possible for us to over-emphasize the value of the church. The church of Christ is valuable because of what it cost. The Bible tells us that the church cost God his Son, and it cost

the Son his blood (Acts 20:28). We determine the importance and value of things by the price paid for them. Thus we should look upon the church. When we consider the great price paid for the church we can understand and appreciate the importance of it.

The church is valuable because salvation is in it. There is no salvation outside of Christ and to be in Christ is to be in his church (Acts 4:12; 2:46, 47). The same process that saves us makes us members of the Lord’s church.

The church is valuable because it wears the name of

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Rejecting The Counsel Of God

G. F. RAINES

Concerning the baptism that John administered, Jesus said: "And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him" (Luke 7:29, 30).

E. G. Sewell wrote: "Do you suppose it will be a less matter to reject the baptism commanded by the Savior than that preached by John? If the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God in refusing to be baptized by John, do you not think you would also reject the counsel of God against yourself if you were to reject the baptism commanded by Jesus and practiced by the apostles everywhere they went and preached? And do you think you could have the promise of pardon and at the same time reject the counsel of God against yourself by refusing a positive command of God?"

When Jesus says, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5), who has the right to stand between the Savior and the sinner and say he can? And when the Lord says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), who has the right to say, "He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved?"

Peter says: "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).

Ananias says: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

Paul says: "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

The word of Christ is the word of God (John 3:34); "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and

Continued on page 4



FROM
THE EDITOR

The Uniqueness of The Bible

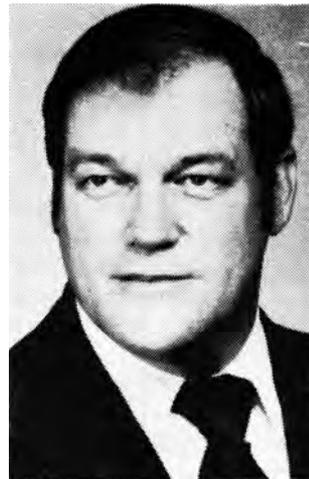
To say that the Bible is unique is to say more than that it is an unusual book. In its absolute sense, the word *unique* means "the only one of its kind." This is precisely what we affirm of the Bible—that it is the only book of its kind. There is not, never has been, and never shall be another book like the Bible.

The Bible is unique in that it is given by inspiration of God. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16). I Corinthians 2:13 affirms that the very words of the Bible were supplied its writers by the Holy Spirit; and Paul clearly stated that the things he wrote "are the commandments of the Lord" (I Corinthians 14:37). There are many internal evidences of the inspiration of the Bible which we cannot discuss in this article. It is sufficient for us to say that, while there are some other books for which divine inspiration is claimed, the Bible is the only book which can and has withstood the scrutiny of skeptics, and whose claim of inspiration is abundantly substantiated by evidence.

The Bible is unique in that it tells of the origin of man and the earth upon which he lives. Some have erroneously thought that the question of human origin is one to be settled by science; and many scientists have sought by means of their laboratories information about the beginning of our earth. Many theories concerning the origin of the earth and man have been concocted; and many books have been written to set forth these theories. But one does not have to be a scientist to learn about the origin of man and the earth upon which he lives. One who reads and believes the Bible can know as much about the origin of the earth and its inhabitants as the most brilliant scientist; for the Bible—not the laboratory—is the only source of information concerning our origin.

The Bible is unique in that it tell us our purpose for being upon this earth. Frustrations arise because some can see no real purpose in living; and some have complained because of the very fact that they were born into the world without their permission. The evolutionary theory, which gives the lie to the Bible and makes mankind nothing more than a sophisticated breed of apes, destroys man's purpose for living. Since, to the atheist, we exist by mere accident or chance, he cannot possibly talk about a purpose for our existence. What happens by accident does not happen on purpose. But the Bible, which clearly reveals how we came to be here, clearly reveals also why we are here: "(God) hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; *That they should seek the Lord*, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:26,27). Seeking the Lord is a noble and lofty purpose for living, and it gives direction and meaning to our lives. Separate from the Bible life is without purpose and meaning.

The Bible is unique in that it tells us our destiny. It is said that the famed skeptic, Robert Ingersol, spoke the following words over the grave of his dead



BOBBY DUNCAN

brother: "Life is a narrow vale 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 sound." These are the words of a man who thought of death as the ultimate tragedy—the final and complete end of one's existence. Contrast this forlorn wretchedness with the confident statement of the apostle Paul when he wrote: "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" (II Timothy 4:6-8). Paul was able to speak so confidently because of such sweet promises as are contained in the following words of our Lord: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

However not all will enter into the blissful destiny alluded to in these passages. Those who refuse to appropriate to themselves the provisions of the gospel of Christ will be consigned to eternal punishment. Read I Thessalonians 1:6-10. Upon the Bible, and the Bible only, can we depend to tell us of our eternal destiny.

Finally, the Bible is unique in that it tells us how we may be assured of a home in heaven. Other than what is contained in the Bible, there is not one single, solitary thing known about Jesus or his teaching. The Bible contains it all. There is not one single thing that pertains to life and godliness that is not found in the Bible (II Peter 1:3). All that it takes to make one perfect in the sight of God is found in the Bible, and nowhere else (II Timothy 3:16, 17). This being the case, is it not strange that some lean so heavily upon the theories and schemes devised by men?

The Bible is indeed a unique book—the only one of its kind. Its real value, however, lies not in the fact that it is unique, but in the fact that it alone is the book which can truly enrich our lives here on earth and then take us home to heaven.

Errors

Have you found errors in the church bulletin? If so surely they were no worse than the following.

After the death of a deacon in the church, his wife was mortified to read the announcement which follows in the church bulletin: "Deacon Brown has gone home to roost."

Upon calling the preacher she was assured it was an error in typing and it would be corrected in the next issue. The announcement should have read — "Deacon Brown goes home to rest."

Anxiously, the distressed widow waited for the next week's bulletin and hurried to read the correction which read...

"DEACON BROWN GOES HOME TO ROAST".

— 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 comment on James 1:27. Some say that this passage is directed to individuals only and that it is not an obligation of the church to provide for the fatherless and widows."

James 1:27 reads: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." (1) If this is not an obligation of the church, then the church cannot practice pure and undefiled religion, because the way to practice such, so James rules, is to "visit" (with the view of assisting) the fatherless and widows. (2) Moreover, if this passage is applicable only to individuals, then in order for individuals to practice "pure and undefiled religion," each person must provide for the fatherless and widows, and thus those unable to do so are not able to exhibit such religion before God. (3) Further, the words, "fatherless," and "widows," are plural in number; and hence, each individual in order to practice "pure and undefiled religion," would be obligated to provide for at least two widows, and two orphans—a married couple would require at least four widows and four orphans in order to qualify! Such is the absurd conclusion to which the "anti" position leads—a position unheard of, until some among us began to oppose the

establishment and maintenance of such homes a few years ago.

Let us examine the contention that James 1:27 is applicable to individuals only. It is of significance only if it is intended to be so restrictive as to *exclude the church* from any participation therein. There is no point to the argument whatsoever if it be conceded that the passage is applicable to the church and to individuals; this is agreed. The argument, to be significant at all, must *exclude* the church from all such activity. The work of providing for the fatherless and widows, if it is done at all, on the basis of this contention must be done by individuals. This interpretation, placed on this passage by those who oppose orphan homes today, puts Paul and James into hopeless conflict. For, Paul actually commands the church to do this type of work! In I Tim. 5:16, he establishes the obligation of a daughter to a needy mother. She is to provide for her mother that "the church be not charged." Were this all the apostle said, we might properly conclude that the duty involved is indeed individual and that the church is not involved. But, this is not all the inspired writer left us on the matter. Why is the daughter to assume such responsibility? In order that the church—the church, mind you—"may relieve them that are widows indeed." Who may do this? *The church!* Thus, if

James excludes the church, Paul certainly includes it here, and is in conflict with James. Of course, the conflict is not between these inspired writers: it is in the doctrine which anti-orphan home advocates hold with the teaching of both of these New Testament authors.

Actually, James informs us *what is to be done*, and Paul designates *who is to do it*. When it is urged that this passage (James 1:27), is applicable only to individuals, the assumption is, of course, that the church, as such, cannot do such work. But, how else does the church act, except through its members? Whatever the church does, it does through individuals. The church is empowered to preach the gospel; but, it performs this work through individuals. Brethren who oppose the homes admit that the church does act through individuals but they deny that individuals can act through the church, i.e. matters of benevolence, particularly to those not members. But if the church acts only through individuals, and it is *church work* when individuals carry it out, why then deny that it is the church acting when individuals carry out James 1:27? The truth is, James simply designates what is to be done, without indicating who is to do it, and Paul makes it clear that in such work the church may indeed participate.

"If God Is For Us, Who Is Against Us?"

This question in Romans 8:31 follows the statement that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, who are called according to his purpose. According to this epistle, as well as the rest of the New Testament, those things that work for the good of those who love the Lord are the gospel, the grace of God, the love of God, the blood of Christ, justification by faith in his blood, and the intercession of Christ. So



VIRGIL BRADFORD

the chief point is that it matters not who is against us God will never forsake us or leave us. He will lead us on to eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing under these circumstances can EFFECTUALLY work against us.

In review from the first article on this question we pointed out that we can oppose ourselves; if we are not for Christ we are against him; the devil is against us; the atheists are against us; and all false teachers whether in the church or out are against us.

In addition to all these we can say that those who are immoral are fighting against Christ and the church. David declares that the wicked shall be turned into Sheol and all the nations that know not God (Ps. 9:17). Two examples will here suffice:

Ananias and Saphira, a man and his wife in the church in Jerusalem, sold a possession and kept back a part of the price while they left the impression on the brethren that they were giving it all (Acts 5). Peter said to Ananias, "You have not lied unto men but unto God." Here is an elliptical expression which says that you have not merely lied to men, but you have done something far worse; you have lied unto God. In a short period of time Ananias and his wife

were struck dead by the Lord, and as a result great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. This act of discipline was never repeated, neither is there the need of repetition, for in this case is clearly shown the attitude of the Lord against all such.

The second case to which your attention is called is found in the church in Corinth. A man had taken his father's wife (I Cor. 5). The Scripture says that such a one was to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. In the effort to save the brother and to sound a warning to the whole church the inspired apostle closes his instruction by saying, "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves" (Vs. 13).

Again, consider the former state of the Corinthians set forth by the following: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9f). Some of the brethren had been characterized by such but by the power of the gospel they had been washed, sanctified and justified in the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God (Vs. 11). (See Acts 18:8 for the time of this cleansing from sin.)

Who is against us? Every liquor peddler, every dope pusher, every pornographer, every homosexual or lesbian in the world. All immorality is against us because all such is against Christ.

Every LUKEWARM MEMBER of the church is against us. Lukewarmness is nauseating to the Lord. Some lukewarm members of the church in Laodicea thought that they were rich and had need of nothing but knew not that they were "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (Rev. 3:14ff). What was their problem? They were lukewarm, making an effort to be neither for nor against the Lord. Jesus would rather we be completely cold or completely hot than try to straddle the fence. The Christian who is "hot" will save his own soul and others who may be influenced by him. The one who is "cold" will be less

injurious to the Cause of Christ than one who is trying to be neither for nor against.

Some in your own family may be against you, or you against them. Jesus says "Think not that I came to send peace upon the earth: I came not to send peace but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother. . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. 10:34-36). Wherever families are divided against one another in matters pertaining to religion and service to God we find those who are foes of Christ and of us.

But there is a brighter side, for some are altogether FOR US. God the Father is for us. Christ Jesus the Son is for us. The Spirit of God and all the holy angels are for us. Furthermore every earnest, consecrated elder in the church is for us, as also all who serve faithfully as deacons, preachers, and dedicated teachers of God's word.

Every loving father and mother engaged in bringing their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord is on our side for good. And faithful children as they honor fathers and mothers by their faithfulness to them and to Christ are for us, regardless of all the rest who are against.

Concluding these observations on Romans 8:28-31, let us remember that everything the Lord God has provided for our salvation, for our good, will be effective in our lives in spite of all the enemies who work against us. And in spite of the efforts of the devil, the atheists, the false teachers, the immoral and the lukewarm, God will never allow his decrees to do good to those who love him to be set at naught. All our enemies can never change his mind or his will. Blessed Assurance!—Rt. 9, Franklin, Tenn. 37064

Subscribe To The
Words of Truth

The Value Of The Church

Continued from page 1

Christ. The Lord called it "my church" (Matthew 16:18). Then Paul, speaking of the different congregations, called them "the churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16).

The church is valuable because it is the only kingdom that will stand forever. The Bible tells us that "the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). When Jesus announced that he would build his church, he said, "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). Then the Hebrew writer said, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God

acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28).

The Bible teaches that Christians are now in the kingdom—notwithstanding the fact that so many teach that the kingdom of Christ has not yet been established. According to the Bible the Kingdom has been in existence for more than nineteen hundred years. Paul wrote to the Colossian brethren, saying, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13). I'm sure we understand that it would not be possible to translate one into a kingdom that did not exist. So the kingdom had

already been established in the days of Paul, and Christians were in it, and being translated into it. John was in the kingdom (Revelation 1:9). Hence the kingdom was in existence in his day.

When Christ comes again he is not going to establish a kingdom but will deliver up the kingdom that he has already established and will then "put down all rule and all authority and power" (I Corinthians 15:22-26). Yes, the church is the most valuable institution in all the world.—Route 1, Box 120, Tuscumbia, Al. 35674

Established In The Faith

JERRI MANASCO

"And so were the churches established in the faith" (Acts 16:5). There had appeared in the church a segment that taught the Gentiles that unless they were circumcised according to the law of Moses they could not be saved (Acts 15:1). In order to counter this heresy "the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter" (v. 6). After "much disputing," with comments by Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James, it was agreed that sending letters to the Gentile churches, assuring them that the Mosaic law was not binding on them, was the most profitable procedure (Acts 15:19-23). These letters having been delivered, the error was met and the "churches were established in the faith." That is, they were made firm and strengthened in the faith.

Churches today need to be "established in the faith," or they will fall into apostasy. The ever increasing threat of liberalism, neo-pentecostalism, modernism, worldliness, and related heresies, demands a firm resolution to maintain a strong defense of the truth (Jude 3; Phil. 1:17). "Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pet. 3:17). This is summons to spiritual caution that is as timely now as when first penned.

Churches are not "established" through entertainment. They are not made steadfast by gimmicks that appeal to the flesh. These things, when placed in the context of the work of the church, appeal to the carnally minded and are not suited for the spiritual welfare of the church. Congregations are not strengthened by weak, meaningless sermons that aim at no object but to satisfy the crowd and insure that the preacher will hold tenure in "his" pulpit. The admonition to "preach the word" (II Tim. 4:2) continues to be the preacher's working order.

Brethren are made firm in the faith when they hold fast the form of sound words (II Tim. 1:13). The churches of Galatia had begun to depart from their soundness when they began to heed unsound words. They were following another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). They were asked by Paul, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" (Gal. 5:7). They had forgotten what they had been taught by the apostle. The Colossian brethren were encouraged to be "rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught" (Col. 2:7). They were urged to guard against substituting anything in the place of the gospel (Col. 2:8).

When brethren grow in knowledge, the church is strengthened. If many of our congregations today are less prepared to meet error and avoid apostasy, it is because we have for too long been content to receive the milk instead of the meat of the word of God (Heb. 5:12-14). It is very easy in such case for the religious world in general, rather than the word of God, to dictate what position we shall take on various issues. This is a far cry from being "established in the faith."

How can one tell if the local church where he worships and works is established in the faith? An

established church is one that is both *constant* and *consistent*. It is **CONSTANT** in its fight against sin and error, never yielding to Satan's advances (Eph. 6:10-12). It is **CONSISTENT** in its attitude toward sin and error, never wavering, never showing partiality, but standing against every error that hurls itself

against the church. A church is established in the faith if it will not allow even the hint of compromising with error (Gal. 2:5). NOW is the time for us to determine to be "established in the faith." — Rt. 2, Haleyville, Alabama 35665.

"How's The Family?"

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

Some time ago, I was visiting in another city when I met up with a friend whom I had known for several years. We exchanged customary greetings and each of us asked the other in one fashion or another, "How's the family?" After all, we were interested in the welfare of each one's family. However when I asked him the question, "How's the family?", he paused and then he answered, "physically, they are doing fine". He had answered well. He was being truthful but he limited his reply to one area of the state of affairs of his home. You see, this man has experienced many difficulties maritally, financially and spiritually because of sin. I was aware of many of the perplexities and problems that had plagued his family.

All of us might stop and ponder over the question, "How's the family?" Some could answer "fine" when considering the physical and material realms of life. But, "How's the family?" spiritually speaking. The problems existing in our colleges (Christian and secular), our high schools and in our society can be traced back to the disintegration of the home. Parents are no longer exerting the proper authority, thus the children do not respect any authority. Immorality and rank carnality can be found among family members. Jesus Christ is neither known by a study of his word nor revered. The church of our Lord is a matter not discussed nor investigated. Recreation and leisure time are gods to be served and emphasized. Children are permitted to roam the streets with destinations unknown. These gifts from God are not brought up in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. When the same children become adults and bring the shame and disgrace upon themselves and others, it is generally too late to ask, "What can we do?" No doubt, parents will have to answer to God on the judgment day for their failure in one of the most important responsibilities in life—the training of their off-springs in the way of the saviour.

"How's the family?" is a most solemn question which you must deal with and not shun. If we seek his divine wisdom and help, God will provide his

guidance in the rearing of our children to be Christians and useful servants of Jesus Christ.

Incidentally, "How's the family?"—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467

Rejecting The Counsel Of God

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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: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).—Newton, Ms. 39345

**Does Your
Congregation
Receive
The Words
of Truth**



Words Of Truth

estus: but speak forth

acts 26:25

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Why Preach The Word?

Paul commanded Timothy: "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (I Timothy 4:2). In giving such a command, the apostle set forth both the subject of preaching and the boundaries of preaching. The word of God is the only thing that is to be preached, yet the preacher has the full field of God's word in which to do his work. He is to be as narrow as the word of God and as expansive as the word of God. While he is to preach *only* the truth (which is God's word—John 17:17), he is to preach *all* of the truth, the *whole* truth—not just some favorite text or topic of truth!



HUGH FULFORD

But *why* preach the word? Why is such so important? Consider the following reasons:

1. *The word is a divine revelation from God and is therefore a light to man's pathway.* David said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). Without the light of God's word, one is destined to remain in the darkness of sin and spiritual ignorance. A special revelation from God was needed to identify God, to answer the questions of man's origin, duty, and destiny, and to enable man to know God's will. The word of God, the Bible, is that special revelation; hence, that word must be preached.

2. *The word is the medium through which the Holy Spirit exerts his power in the conviction and conversion of sinners.* That such a power must be exerted by the Holy Spirit is evident from the Lord's statement that "except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Yet the Spirit's begetting work in the new birth is accomplished through the word of God. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God,

which liveth and abideth" (I Peter 1:23). James declares, "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). In the light of these truths (of the necessity of being born of water and the Spirit and the fact that the Spirit works through the word) we see *why* the word must be preached.

3. *The word is the seed of the kingdom.* "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Thus, if the kingdom is to exist the seed which produces the kingdom must be planted. In the natural realm we know that seed must be planted if fruit is to be produced. The same is true in the spiritual realm. There can be no children of the kingdom (Christians) unless the seed which produces such is planted. Furthermore, when *only* the seed of the kingdom (the word of God) is preached, *only* Christians will be produced—not some type, kind, or brand of

Christian. The sameness of the seed insures the sameness of the fruit!

4. *The word will be the standard of divine judgment.* Jesus declared, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I speak, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). If in school a student is told he will be tested on the contents of a particular text it behooves that student to become thoroughly acquainted with that text. Similarly, if man is told that he will be judged by the word of God, it behooves him both to learn and do that which the Sacred Text teaches. This therefore means that those who preach for the salvation of men's souls will preach that by which man will eventually be tested and judged—the *word of God!*

Brother, *preach the word!*—101 Dow Dr., Shelbyville, Tenn. 37160

The Ridiculous In Religion

RAYMOND ELLIOTT

A statement of truth that should always be remembered is, when people no longer believe in the all-sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures in matters religious, there is no end to their ridiculous beliefs and practices. To illustrate this point, I refer to a statement written by Pat Boone in his book, *My Brother's Keeper?*, page 146: "There must be an interaction between the revealed word and the Revealer of Truth. Though we have access to the Holy Spirit, we still must cry out to that same Spirit to INSPIRE OUR UNDERSTANDING, TO OPEN OUR EYES SPIRITUALLY! He is not confined to the printed page! The Bible demonstrates to me so vividly that God wants His Spirit to be a continuing dynamic force in us. Though we have the Scriptures, which are able to furnish us into perfection, yet He knows our imperfections and ragged intellects, AND HOOVERS NEAR

THE BELIEVER TO PERSONALLY GUIDE AND PROTECT AND CAUTION. He'll do it, Himself, in Person. Doesn't Jesus say, 'I am with you always, even to the end of the world'!?" (Emphasis mine, R.E.).

This author of the above statement is simply saying that objective truth (The Holy Scriptures) is not enough. One must experience the subjective (the direct leading, miraculous working of the Holy Spirit) in order to understand and know the will of God. Thus, there is the opening of the flood-gates for all manner of doctrines and practices.

It is no surprise therefore that in Boone's book, *A Miracle A Day Keeps The Devil Away*, he gives us the ridiculous extreme in religion. Though he relates the various "miracles" that

Continued on page 4



Words Of Truth

I am not made, most noble Fee-
ture, but speak forth the Words of
Truth and soberness
— Acts 26:25

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The Silence Of The Scriptures

The view is quite generally held that men are at liberty to introduce anything into the worship of God, provided God has not explicitly said, "Thou shalt not." Men acting on the premise that nothing is forbidden in the worship of God unless God has named the act, and then related, "Thou shalt not," have introduced many innovations into the worship services. I sincerely believe the scriptures to be the inspired, all sufficient, complete and infallible word of God (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:3).



JOHN SHAVER

We are living in the New Testament dispensation, and therefore are governed by the precepts therein, and not the precepts of the Old Testament law (Heb. 7:12; Heb. 9:15-17; Heb. 10:9-10). Peter, by inspiration states that we have been given "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (II Pet. 1:3). The scripture should be honored by us as it was by the Thessalonian brethren (I Thess. 2:13). By virtue of having all power and authority, Jesus commanded his disciples to go, teach, baptize and teach (Mt. 28:18-20). The apostles of the Lord were given the power to loose or bind (Mt. 16:19; Mt. 18:18), and therefore, the first century church understood the delegated authority of the apostles (Acts 2:42).

It must be pointed out that there are two types of commands in the scriptures, generic and specific. A generic command is one which authorizes some act without giving specific directions as to the method of its performance. Jesus said, "Go" in Mt. 28:19. Any expedient

Continued on page 4



Denominations Put Disclaimer On Guyana Incident

Recently the United States and the civilized world were shocked by an incident in Guyana which took the lives of nearly a thousand men, women, and children who had followed their leader perfectly as he led them to their death. The leader of this group had cast such a spell over his followers that many of them had given him everything they owned, and had followed him to South America where they all died what they considered to be a martyr's death.

A great deal has been said in the newspaper, on radio, and on television about this tragic incident. Preachers of the denominational world have spoken with one accord in saying that what happened in Guyana should not be confused with Christianity. One leader of a particular theological seminary spoke out emphatically to make the point that the group which died in Guyana was in error religiously. He further emphasized the fact that it is erroneous to say that it makes no difference what one believes in religion, just so he is honest and sincere.

We could not be in greater agreement with these sentiments. Certainly it was not Jesus Christ or his gospel that led this group of people to die in Guyana. It was not he who led them to give their allegiance, their farms, or their money to Mr. Jim Jones. We would certainly agree that these people were in religious error, and that it does indeed make a difference what one believes and practices in religion.



BOBBY DUNCAN

But it would be interesting to hear these denominational preachers, who have so unhesitatingly put a disclaimer on Mr. Jones and his unfortunate followers, explain just why and by what standard they have determined that this was not a genuine and legitimate sample of Christianity. Will they say it is because these people committed suicide, and that Christianity does not lead one to commit suicide? If so, we would ask: Cannot a religion be judged as false until it leads its adherents to commit suicide? Would this not mean that, had they not committed suicide, there would have been absolutely no way to know they were adherents to a false religion? And is it not also a fact that, had this group not committed suicide, the preachers who are speaking out so boldly in renouncing them now never would have dared speak a word against them?

We submit that the denominational attitude toward the Bible created the conditions which made it possible for a man like Mr. Jones to lead so many to their destruction. And every preacher who has tried to justify denominationalism by the Bible has made his contribution to this situation. Preachers in the denominational world and our own brethren who call themselves "free," and spread the umbrella of fellowship over every ilk and ism, should feel soberly rebuked by the Guyana tragedy. Putting a disclaimer on what happened may salve the consciences of those who helped create the conditions which brought it about. But those who are perceptive will see a need to re-assess their contentions that, if one believes in God and Christ, and is honest and sincere in his religious activity, nothing else really matters.

Either the New Testament is our standard of authority in Christianity, or it is not. If it is, then all who deviate from it are in error. If it is not, then by what standard does one determine that the followers of Mr. Jones were in error?

There's No Place Like Home

Home is one of the sweetest words in the English language. To all right thinking people it is the dearest place on earth.

There was a time when it was said that the American people were more considerate and appreciative of home than any other nation of people in the world. Doubtless this is one reason that these United States developed and adopted the best and greatest system of government in the world.

The home is the unit of society, and no society is better than the homes that make it. This fact was impressively expressed by Mr. Henry Grady, who visited Washington to see the Capitol of the United

States. He viewed the Capitol building from the North, East, South and West. From each viewing point he exclaimed, "So this is the Capitol of the United States!" Each time his guide assured him that it was, and that it was the only Capitol the United States has.

On his way home he spent the night with a farm family of modest means. The family assembled around the table for the evening meal, and the father gave thanks to God for the food. After engaging in friendly conversation for awhile, the family gathered for Bible study and prayer before retiring for the night. In this Mr. Grady was asked to have a part.

Later Mr. Grady wrote, "I have been to the Capital of the United States of America, but it is not in Washington. Rather the Capital of these United States is the American home, where father and mother are God-fearing; who read their Bible and pray with their children, and thank God for what they have."

A little known incident in our Nation's history

Continued on page 4



W.C. QUILLEN

Open Forum By Guy N. Woods

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

"Why do you believe that it is scriptural for the church to support another organization—the orphan home—yet, oppose the support of the missionary society—another organization, in the field of evangelism? If such is right in evangelism, why not in benevolence? On what grounds may the church support 'another organization' at all, whether in evangelism or benevolence?"

The orphan home, is indeed, *another* organization; it is not the church; but, this is what makes its support right! There are three divine institutions, at least, three institutions existing by divine decree: the *home*, the *state*, and the *church* (Gen. 1:3; Rom. 13; Eph. 3:9ff.) Though their functions often overlap, in some areas they are sharply distinct; and one may not properly or scripturally perform the obligations of the others. Those who oppose orphan homes among us allege that when children become homeless, the church, acting in its own capacity, and with no further organization whatsoever, may take them and perform every function requisite to their need. If this is so (which, of course, it isn't), when the home breaks down, the church may take over *and operate as a home!* This, in principle, is Catholicism. That ecclesiasticism argues that when the state fails, the church may assume its functions; anti-orphan home advocates urge that when the home fails, the church may assume its responsibilities. If the church may properly operate as a home, as these brethren allege, why cannot it operate as a state as the Catholics claim? *If a church home, why not a state church?*

It is just as sinful for the church to attempt to assume or usurp the functions of the home, as it is for the church to seek such usurpation of the functions of the state. We have ample evidence in medieval history of the terrible tyranny of church officials who

exercised "state" powers from "church" positions.

The church is not designed for, nor is it capable of performing the needs of children. It is not its function to (a) teach secular subjects or manual trades, (b) administer discipline, (c) provide recreation, etc.; these are the obligations of the home—not the church. True, the church may, and must provide financial support from its treasury in support of the fatherless and the widow (James 1:27; I Tim. 5:16), but it is the responsibility of the home to engage in the performance of those needs earlier mentioned which the church is not designed to do. I believe in the all-sufficiency of the church to do what God intended it to do; and I *also* believe in the all-sufficiency of the home to discharge its functions, as well!

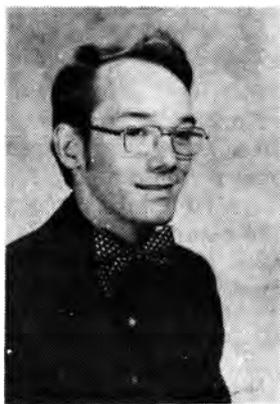
Every child has, or is entitled to have a home in this world. Some, through no fault of theirs, lose their homes. In such instances, faithful Christians may supply a home for them—to take the place of the home they lose. It may be a foster home, it may be somebody's private home, it may be a legal home, set up, in harmony with state regulations, and such is characteristic of the orphan homes among us. What is the orphan home? It is a home; it is designed to operate in the place of the home the child had, but lost. If the child has a right to a home to begin with, the child has a right to a home to end with! Such is the orphan home; and it exists by the same divine right as yours does. Because God ordained the home to perform home functions, it follows that those who oppose orphan homes have arrayed themselves against divine institutions, and not human ones.

But, if it is right to support orphan homes—other institutions—in the field of benevolence, why is it wrong to support missionary societies—other institutions—in the field of evangelism? The church

was established to perform the functions which the society usurps and performs in its stead. The church, in turning over its work to a missionary society, shirks the work which God gave it to do. When the missionary society operates, it does the work of the church; it is indeed, a super church. When it finishes, there is nothing more to be done by the church. The society exists for the purpose of doing the work which God gave to the church to do. Were it possible for the church to perform the functions of the *home*—the duties and obligations associated therewith—the orphan home would usurp its duties in exactly the same way the missionary society does in the areas of evangelism. But, as noted already herein, there are many needs of children (recreation, discipline, secular training, etc., etc.) which the church does not engage in. The proper and legitimate actions of the home are not a part of the functions of the local congregation. God never intended that the church should serve as a home. The church is not an orphan home: it is indeed, not a home of any kind, and it was not designed to do the work of the state. But, the church is a *divine missionary society*. When the humanly organized missionary society does its work, nothing remains for the church to do. When the church, in its organized capacity, does what it is authorized to do for the needy, supply money from its treasury, the work, *all the work*, of actual care must yet be done. This work, God assigned to the home. Thus, the brethren who oppose orphan homes are illogical in attempting to parallel the missionary society with the home, and they are in grave error in opposing the home for the fatherless and needy among us.

"He That Is Greatest"

"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. . ." (John 1:40-42). Very little is said about Andrew. It is not always, however the ones about whom the most is said who do the greatest works. Simon



RON HARPER

Peter, who preached on Pentecost, was led to Christ by Andrew. No doubt Peter was more active in the spread of the early church, at least more is recorded about him and his preaching in Acts, than Andrew. That is not, however, to say that Andrew was not very important. It is very possible that Peter would not have been led to Christ if Andrew had not done it.

There are many Andrews in the church today. They may not have the ability or knowledge that some people have but that does not stop them from doing what they can to advance the cause of Christ. You see, just because someone does not have as much ability as someone else does not relieve him of the responsibility he has to use his ability no matter how small it may be.

Let us not consider anything we may do for Christ a small insignificant deed. Jesus taught that one who

gave a cup of water in his name would be rewarded (Mark 9:41). No matter how small it may seem to us if a deed is done in his name God will reward it. Paul taught that the church is the body of Christ. He also taught that *every* member of the body is important (Eph. 1:22; I Cor. 12:14-15). Every member is important and has a function to carry out. Some may visit the hospitals or nursing homes. Another may be able to teach the lost. One may be able to preach publicly. Others may be able to give a cup of water. Regardless of where our ability lies, what we can do is important to the body of Christ.

Even though people have different abilities we must be careful not to underestimate our abilities. It may be that we can do more than we think we can. One never reaches his full potential by standing by with folded hands and saying "I can't." One may say "I can't teach my neighbor." That may be true but we need to be sure we can't before we say we can't. The way to be sure we can't is not to say so but to find out by trying to do. It may be that we can develop the skill to do things that we cannot do at the present. Remember that you could not read before you learned how to read. We would think it strange indeed for a child to say there is no use in going to school because I can't read. He goes to school to learn to read. When properly taught he develops the skill to read. It may be that some of us can do more than we think we can do with the proper study and exercise.

The church in the New Testament grew because the gospel was preached. The church today will not grow if the gospel is not preached. Not all of the conversions in Acts came as a result of "pulpit" preaching. Cornelius and the jailer were converted in their homes. The Ethiopian was converted in a

chariot. Many today have attended the services for years only to obey the gospel when someone paid them a visit and talked to them about their soul. Perhaps more people have the ability to do personal teaching than we realize. We need to be sure we can't do a thing before we refuse to do it.

It is between us and God to be sure that we do what we can for his cause. Regardless of what they may be or how small they may seem we must use our abilities. The one talent man was not condemned for having one talent, but for not using the one talent that he had. If we do what we can that is enough for God. Concerning the woman who anointed his head Jesus said: "Let her alone; why trouble ye her: She hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. *She hath done what she could*: she is come aforehand to anoint my body for the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (Mark 14:6-9).

Service to Christ is the greatest thing that we do. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). Let us all strive to be servants but remember a servant is not one who is idle; rather he is one who serves. —1501 6th Avenue, Jasper, Alabama 35501.

Subscribe To The
Words of Truth

The Ridiculous In Religion

Continued from page 1

have occurred in his life and in the lives of others, the one about the "Miracle of the Mouse" (PP. 27-31) takes the cake. His second daughter's pet mouse had taken seriously ill. He called the vet for help but none was given. Boone was inclined to bury the poor rodent but as he stated, "another part of me was reaching desperately to God, asking Him for a miracle—now!" So, he and his daughter ran upstairs and began praying for the healing of the mouse. Boone prayed, "...And right now, we're not concerned

with a mountain. It's this little mouse. Nobody can help it but You, Lord. The pet store man can't, and the Vet can't, and we can't. Only You, Lord. And you made this little animal—you must love it more than we do. Please, heal this little thing, give it life." As he and his daughter praised God with uplifted hands and tears of joy, the mouse moved and began to rub its face with its front feet. The rodent refused seeds but did nibble a little lettuce and drink some water. Before long that mouse was running all over the

place. Boone named it the "Miracle Mouse." God had performed the miracle of mouse healing for that day—enough to keep the devil away?

Ridiculous you say? But, what can we expect from those people and organizations who do not believe in the all-sufficiency of God's word. When one relies on the subjective and the miraculous in religion, there is no end to the ridiculous. Besides, such miracles as mouse healing could be a tremendous blow to the exterminators.—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Al. 36467.

The Silence Of The Scriptures

Continued from page 2

method of transportation is therefore scriptural in taking the gospel to the lost. Specific commands are those commands contained in the scriptures, but the methods by which they are carried out are also specified by the scriptures.

The child of God must in all cases walk by faith. Our manner of life, worship and deeds must be according to God's instructions (Rom. 10:17; II Cor. 5:7; Heb. 11:6). Therefore, it follows that any religious act whatsoever in which we are not directed by the word of God we are neither "walking by faith," nor being "well pleasing" to God. It is presumptuous sin for man to offer something to God as worship that God has not authorized. Nadab and Abihu lost their lives because they offered to God "strange fire"

which he had not commanded (Lev. 10:1-2). Many would contend that the bringing in of unauthorized fire was a very little matter. It may well have been in the wisdom of man, but God did not tolerate a new element in his worship, and since he had not commanded it, to use it was sin, and the penalty was death. This example alone should dissuade mankind from tampering with the worship of God, and bringing into his worship that which God has not commanded. We should all pray as David of old, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression" (Ps. 19:13).

If the silence of the scriptures authorizes a

religious practice, then everything in the Old Testament from the burning of incense to animal sacrifice would be permissible. I know of none who argue the silence of the scriptures as a justification for their particular innovation, who will accept the conclusions from their premise in all areas. The scriptures do not say, "Thou shalt not wash hands as an act of worship," but Jesus condemned such as "vain worship" (Mt. 15:9). The Bible does not say, "Thou shalt not sprinkle a baby with water as a religious act," but this is in rebellion against the word of God (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12) because only accountable people are subjects for baptism. The Bible does not say, "Thou shalt not count beads as an act of worship," yet we know that such an act is sinful (Acts 2:42? Acts 20:7; Eph. 5:19; I Cor. 16:1-2).

In the final analysis, whether people obey or disobey God is a matter of regard or disregard for the word of God. In the days of the apostles, the Lord's church existed as one united body, following the divine pattern as it had been revealed by God. The seed of the kingdom (Lk. 8:11) was sown, and wherever honest hearts received this seed the fruit was always the same—Christians. It is high time we awake from lethargy, indifference and lack of conviction, and in the spirit of faithful brethren of the past who have fought so many battles that we might have a pure faith and a faultless practice, oppose all subtleties and sophistications that now combine to pervert the right ways of the Lord. In the divided religious world of today, the distinctive plea of the true churches of Christ everywhere is for a complete restoration of the Lord's church. We plead for people to go back over all the dark ages of corruption, to discard all of the man-made creeds, names, doctrines and barriers that divide men, and go back to the pure and sweet principles of God's infallible word. Brethren, back to the Book.—Rt. 10, Box 186 B, Jasper, Al. 35501.

A Great New Book:

"The Parables In Profile"

Readers of *Words of Truth* will be happy to learn that our own talented, versatile, and dedicated Wayne Jackson has recently authored and had published a great new book entitled *The Parables in Profile*. Brother Jackson comes as no stranger to readers of *Words of Truth*. His articles have appeared in this fine journal for many years, and hopefully will continue for many years to come. Wayne is not only a contributor to many brotherhood journals (*Christian Family Magazine, Gospel Advocate, Gospel Vidette, etc.*) but also serves as editor of the *Christian Courier*, published by and available from the East Main Church of Christ, 3906 E. Main, Stockton, California 95205 (free of charge). Those of us who are familiar with the name of Wayne Jackson know that the mere mention of his name stands for sound doctrine and outstanding scholarship.

This new book, *The Parables in Profile*, is yet another work from a man who loves God and stands uncompromisingly on His inspired word. We have already come to appreciate the bright scholarship and pungent pen of Wayne Jackson, exhibited through his many fine articles and through some of his previous works such as *Fortify Your Faith in An Age of Doubt* (one of the best books available on Christian Evidences



BERT THOMPSON

in my opinion!) This new book exhibits more of the same—which is certainly to its credit. Wayne was kind enough to send me a personally inscribed copy upon its publication. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading it, and know that readers of *Words of Truth* will enjoy it as well. I think readers of this fine journal need to know of its availability and of the wealth of information which is contained therein.

The book sells for only \$1.95, and can be ordered directly from Wayne at 3906 E. Main St., Stockton, Ca. 95205 (each reader would do well to order a copy of *Fortify Your Faith in An Age of Doubt*, which sells for only \$1.50, and to request a free subscription of the *Christian Courier* at the same time!). I wholeheartedly recommend this book, and feel that every person who reads it will have his love for the Master increased and his Bible knowledge broadened.—1004 Hereford, College Station, Texas 77840.

There's No Place Like Home

Continued from page 2

shows the esteem with which the home was held by our fore-fathers. In 1851 an American consulate was sent to Africa by his government. In 1852, he died, and was buried in Tunis. In 1883, his body was brought back to his home land and was interred in his native soil. The day of his interment was proclaimed a national holiday, and was so observed by all Americans, from the White House to the school-house.

Why? What had this man done to receive such recognition? Answer: When he was thirty years old he wrote a song, which gradually attracted the

attention of the people of America. Everybody loved it and sang it. It was still popular when I was growing up and we frequently sang it as a family.

The man who wrote it and was posthumously honored some thirty years later—John Howard Payne. The song: "Home Sweet Home: Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam; Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

Ah, how we need these sentiments today. And how we need homes that will inspire such sentiments.—P.O. Box 212, Lawrenceburg, Tn. 38464



Words Of Truth

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

— Acts 26:25

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Some Sins of Sons and Daughters

In the book of Ecclesiastes 11:9-10, the Preacher wrote an exhortation that is much needed today for our young people: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." There are some prevalent and prominent sins to be seen among some young men and women that need to be exposed and examined. We mention a few of such transgressions.

Generally speaking, there is a lack of reverence and respect for parents. Piety (respect) should be learned and practiced first in the home (1 Timothy 5:4). The apostle Paul taught that children should "Honor thy father and mother" (Ephesians 6:1-3). This lack of respect for parents will bring on another transgression, that is, a failure to obey parental authority. However, before there can be obedience, there has to be the recognition of the father as being the rightful head of the home. If this relation is not properly understood, children will not obey their parents. Of course, there would be exceptions where the father was dead or where the father would absolutely refuse to discipline the children. In every age, God has placed the husband (father) as being the rightful head and leader of the family unit. This is, no doubt, the reason why Paul specified the father in Ephesians 6:4 when he wrote: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The Bible teaches that children are to obey their parents. "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

right" (Ephesians 6:1). Even Jesus was in subjection to his earthly parents (Luke 2:51). The sin of being "disobedient to parents" is listed among such sins as "fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder" (Romans 1:28-32).

There is a great need today for proper discipline in the home. Certainly there is the positive aspect of discipline which involves teaching and training. Yet, there is the corrective side which should be administered when disobedience occurs among sons and daughters. This may come in various forms, nevertheless, such disciplinary actions must be taken in order to maintain the respect of the home. The wise man wrote in Proverbs 13:24: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." There is still a need for some "hickory tea" to be applied to the lower part of a child's anatomy today in our modern age. The Lord God chastises his children out of love, and earthly fathers should do the same to manifest their love (Hebrews 12:5-9). Pity the poor children who never receive any correction from their parents. These same young people will grow up emotionally unbalanced. Likewise, children should recognize that discipline is proof of parental love. The basic reason for the lack of respect for authority in our schools and elsewhere can be traced directly to the breakdown of the proper training in the home. If a child does not learn respect and obedience in the home, it is most unlikely that he will learn it anywhere.

In this age of plenty and prosperity, there seems to be a lack of gratitude for parents among many young people. One of the prevalent sins of the Gentiles as mentioned in Romans 1:21 was "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful..." Parents have unknowingly contributed to this sin of ingratitude. A good number of fathers and mothers were reared when times were hard. The attitude that "I want my child to have all the things that I didn't have" can actually be detrimental in the rearing of children. Too many physical and material blessings bestowed upon children can produce a lack of gratitude among the young people. Certainly, sons and daughters should express both by actions and words their thankfulness to parents who have

provided the daily necessities of life for them.

Some young people are not always honest with their parents. Perhaps, most would not think of it in this light but nevertheless such is often the case. For example, a son may tell his parents that he is going to one place some evening while planning to go elsewhere. A young lady may inform her parents that she and her date were at a place of entertainment when actually they were at a different location. Young people need to deal honestly with their fathers and mothers. The Bible teaches that God hates "a lying tongue" (Proverbs 6:17). Paul instructed Christians to "lie not one to another" (Colossians 3:9). The final abiding place for all liars is "in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8). If young folk demand truth and honesty from adults, they must understand that the same is required and expected of them.

Finally, young people need to understand that the decision to do right or wrong is eventually theirs to make. Sure, parents are to teach and train children in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6). But, in the final analysis, the young man and woman must be responsible for the decision either to stand for the right or submit to sin. Simply possessing the proper knowledge of what is right and what is wrong is not conviction. It is when one is really put to the test and is able to resist evil and to do right that one's true convictions are seen. This is an individual matter. When one has been properly taught and still commits wrong, one should not then blame someone else for the deed done. Also, a young person should count the cost and be willing to live with the decision made, whether it be right or wrong. It is not correct continually to blame parents for mistakes made when the decision was up to the son or daughter.

Of course, the Lord wants sons and daughters to "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..." (Ecclesiastes 12:1, 2). It is wonderful to know of young people who obey their Saviour and dedicate their lives to the God who loved them enough to give his only begotten Son to die on Calvary for the sins of the world—Rt. 1, Box 13, Opp, Alabama 36467.

The Peace Which Jesus Gives

On his final night, Jesus told his apostles, "Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful" (John 14:27).

A world torn by centuries of war and strife yearns and desperately searches for peace. The person whose mind has been embroiled in strife, conflict or fear likewise desires peace. Men form organizations such as United Nations and spend vast sums of money to attain and maintain peace. All of these efforts ultimately fail. People go to doctors, psychiatrists, and counsellors seeking peace. In their desperate search for tranquility they often go to quacks such as palm-readers, spiritual mediums and astrologers. They rush after every new brand of religion or mind control. Witness the vast following of Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, and Zen Buddhism. They gulp down tranquilizers hoping for instant and easy peace. (Sadly this itself may rob them of the very thing they ardently seek by addicting them and making them dependent). In Christ we have peace that passes understanding which guards our hearts and thoughts (Phil. 4:7).



JOHN WADDEY

and in the absence of material comforts, he wrote, "I have all things, and abound; I am filled..." (Phil. 4:18). We ask, "How could this be?" Such seems impossible to the worldly minded. But the saint who knows Christ and his divine peace quickly identifies with the apostle's "strange" response to his difficulties. The good news of it all is that the inspired apostle confidently assures us, "My God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

The Christian enjoys a peace remarkably different from the world. We have the Father who created us and daily sustains our lives (Matt. 6:32a). The poor sinner doesn't know the source of peace. Our heavenly Father knows us and our needs (Matt. 6:32b). Since he adequately provides the needs of the tiniest of His creatures, surely he will supply the same for us who alone are made in His image and endowed with an immortal soul (Matt. 6:25-26).

We trust a trustworthy Lord. Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you..." (John 14:1-3). Note that he assures us that we may confidently believe in him. He is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). David praised our God saying, "Thou hast redeemed me, O Jehovah, thou God of truth" (Ps. 31:5). Our Bible His holy word is solemnly

declared to be *truth* (John 17:17).

The Source of Our Peace. This peace we speak of originates with "the God of peace" (Rom. 15:33). It is a gift bestowed (John 14:27). It is given by the grace of God (Tit. 2:11-13). It is not for sale. No man can earn or deserve it (Tit. 3:4-7). Thank God this is so. If it were for sale only those with great wealth could afford such a costly thing. As it is, all men of whatever station in life are equally able to enjoy the rich blessings of God's peace. Be thankful it is not earned or deserved, for who among us could ever be good enough to merit anything from the righteous God (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

Our peace comes as a part of the package when we are saved from our sins. In salvation we receive *forgiveness* which removes the peace-robbing guilt from our hearts. Thus we can be at peace with ourselves. When saved we are *reconciled* to God restoring that broken relationship so essential to peace. A *renewed heart* which always comes with salvation will make it possible for us to live peaceably with our fellow-man. Thus with three dimensional peace (inward, vertical and horizontal), we can be happy and free from the turmoils of life.

The peace which man himself makes, another man can take away, but the peace which Jesus offers will be as sure and lasting as the Giver himself.

Caskey On "Pastoral" Visiting

Continued from page 2

popularize a church and fill it with the irreligious and worldly minded, but such things will neither convert sinners nor add to the spirituality of the worship. If you can convert sinners and build up churches by humoring spiritual weaklings and flattering whimpering sentimentalists, in pastoral visiting, without preaching the gospel, you may as well throw away the Bible, get a fashionable preacher, and rent hell out for a calf pasture. People who attend the

meetings of the Saints from the love of pastoral visiting and who neglect their religious duties unless coddled by the 'pastor' have neither faith or piety and their pretended worship is but hollow mockery that will militate against the piety of any church and prove a stench in the nostrils of God. The best way to build up a church, therefore, is to return to the apostolic order of preaching and worship."—503 Plymouth St., Kannapolis, N.C. 28081

"Where God Ain't"

He was just a little lad, and it was on the Lord's day,
Wandering home from Bible School and dawdling on the way,
He scuffed his shoes into the grass, he found a caterpillar;
He found a fluffy milkweed pod, blew out all the filler,
A bird's nest in a tree o'erhead, so wisely placed and high,
Was just another wonder that caught his eager eye.

A neighbor watched his zig-zag course and hailed him from his lawn.
Asked him where had he been that day, and what was

going on.
"Oh, I've been to Bible School." (He carefully turned the sod
And found a small snail beneath it). "I've learned a lot of God."

"M'm a very fine way." the neighbor said, "for a boy to spend his time;
If you'll tell me where God is, I'll give you a dime."

Quick as a flash his answer came, nor were his accents faint;
"I'll give you a dollar, mister, if you'll tell me where God ain't!!!!"

— Author Unknown

The peace of the world is often deceptive while Christ's peace is always *real*. Many a person thought he had a happy peaceful home, not realizing his mate was at that very moment planning to break the marriage.

Freedom from outer strife describes the world's peace. Jesus gives freedom from inner strife. A man can live in what appears to be an ideal situation in life and yet be so unhappy within that he cannot endure to live, thus destroying himself. In Christ one can be so content within that he can survive the most hostile kind of environment.

The world can give one peace for the *here and now*, leaving the recipient in danger of eternal torment. Christ blesses us with peace for *now and eternity*.

The world's peace is often *induced by pills or the hypnotist* and is as uncertain and transitory as they. Christ endows us with peace as a free gift from the everlasting God in heaven.

In the world, peace results from the *possession of certain physical* things. In Christ it is a condition of the soul based on its *new relationship* to the God of the universe.

"*Peace that passes understanding.*" These words from Paul to the Philippians beautifully describe what we have in Christ (Phil. 4:7). Paul himself had found this marvelous peace. He was *content* even when in prison (Phil. 4:11). He had learned the secret of being happy and at peace under all circumstances, even the most adverse (Phil. 4:12). His secret was expressed thusly: "I can do all things in him (Christ) that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). While under house arrest in Rome, separated from home and loved ones

"Kindness is a hard thing to give away. It usually comes back to you."

Some minds are like concrete, all mixed up and permanently set.

It is impossible to pitch for the world and bat for God at the same time.

God has a message for you... Open your Bible and read it!

Short Sermons

EAST AFRICAN NEWSLETTER

NAIROBI, KENYA BOX 48086

NOVEMBER, 1978



BERKLEY HACKETT

Dear Friends,

First, I'd like to share some good news with you concerning our living situation. We have some white neighbors with a car! The Johnsons are an older couple who have lived in Kenya for many years. Most Europeans and Americans have no interest in living in our area because of security but the Johnsons needed a house and have taken one near to us. It's a very ramshackled old place which needs fixing up and has mostly remained vacant. Mr. Johnson doesn't go out at night or over the week-ends, so this means that someone with a car will be in our area while Berkeley does these things. We feel very light-hearted and we feel that God has provided this extra security for us. We have never had one minute's trouble, but we've often been concerned about accidents or illness occurring when Berkeley is far away and us with with no telephone or transportation and on a bad road.

Idi Amin, "Field Marshall for Life" Idi Amin, who hasn't heard of this Ugandan despot whose antics range between the clownish and the psychopathic? The following is the true life story of Bro. O (as we'll call him to protect his family still in Uganda) and how he escaped death at the hands of the State Security.

DELIVERANCE

The Teso tribe has for generations lived on the land that now comprises the troubled border between Kenya and Uganda. As the herders grazed their cattle, they passed freely between the two countries, one day in Kenya, the next in Uganda, never concerning themselves with such nebulous affairs as national boundaries or citizenship.

One such family consisted of a man, his two wives and several children. The only son of the first wife was a thin, thoughtful boy. The second wife and her several sons would taunt his old mother saying she must wait upon them. Perhaps, for this reason his thoughts often turned to God and he wondered why life couldn't be happier and people kinder.

The boy was quick in school and eventually got a government job with the Uganda Coffee Board. During this time he was studying his Bible and simultaneously taking Bible corresponding courses from South Africa and the Church of Christ in

America.

Possibly, had he taken only one of the courses the young man would never have come to a decision about Christ, but the two courses often differed which puzzled him and caused him to search his Bible for the truth. In 1970 he was baptized for remission of sins and soon after married a Christian girl (whom he had taught). The next year another event occurred in Uganda which very soon effected him and many others. Idi Amin took control of the country at the point of a gun or rather several large tanks and immediately banned six Christian churches. The Church of Christ was among the first proscribed.

As small bands of Christians continued to met secretly from house to house, things were becoming increasingly difficult at Bro O's job. All coffee in Uganda was to be sold through the coffee board, but Bro. O's superior began to steal coffee and sell it on the blackmarket. Bro. O knew about the thefts, but he would not participate. The climax came one day when Bro. O was given a truck to clear supposedly containing 100 bags of coffee, but actually containing 110. The truck could not pass without his signature, but the papers affirmed the truck contained only 100 bags of coffee. What could a Christian do? Clearly his superior intended to smuggle the extra 10, but this time he was demanding Bro. O's cooperation in the form of his signature upon the release papers. Bro. O counted them once, then twice, but each time the offending 10 bags remained. What was he to do? If the truck had just driven on, or if someone else was asked to sign, he could honestly say it was nothing to do with him. But here it was before him and his signature demanded on a lie. Bro. O refused to sign the papers or release the truck until the 10 extra bags were removed. From that time his superior sought to have him killed or removed.

In a totalitarian government there is a crime far worse than murder, that is to recognized the imperfections of the government. Bro. O's superior denounced him to the State Security calling him an enemy of the state. The next day the State Police were outside the gate of the coffee board. Ignorant men from the Sudan drunk on liquor and unchecked power, they would ask no questions, make no investigations. They killed for the sport and relished a denunciation.

First they tried to lure Bro. O beyond the compound in order "to check his papers". Knowing that he would never be seen alive if he left the security of witnesses, he returned to his office and secretly exchanged his suit for working clothes. At closing time one extra workman walked through the gates as the police searched in vain for the man with the suit. Through the gates, through the streets of Kampala, Bro. O kept moving first by buses then by back roads and finally through the bush over the border to Kenya and freedom.

The life of a refugee is difficult. Jobs are scarce, wife and children remain behind, property and status are left. Where is God's hand in all of this? Surely it's too much to bear? Since Bro. O has been in

Kenya he has helped established two congregations and has strengthen many more. It is interesting to hear how someone has succeeded in business or won on the playing field, but how we all listen as Bro. O tells how God defeated his physical enemies and preserved his life. It makes us determine to fight out Spiritual Enemy all the harder.

Bro. O has an infant daughter born after he fled Uganda. He has never her, but he sent word that she's to be called a special name "Deliverance". "Suffering without bitterness" what a beautiful lesson his life teaches.

Until next month,
Charlotte Hackett

FINANCIAL REPORT-WORK FUND

Travel (auto and gas)	\$250.00
House and utilities	300.00
General expenditures and supplies (not involving printing)	450.00
Printing and supplying of literature (including Bible correspondence course)	800.00
TOTAL WORK FUND	\$1,800.00
Via 6th Avenue, Jasper	

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO AFRICAN MISSION FUND FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER, 1978

Louis and Ethel Burkett	10.00
Herman King	20.00
Roscoe Kirkpatrick	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurray	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. C. Eugene McMurry	20.00
Mary Frances Myers	25.00
Pearl F. Odom	5.00
E. L. and Wanda Short	20.00
Eric T. and Linda F. Sipco	125.00
J. E. and Goldie Terry	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Welch	15.00
Ladies Bible Class-Tubbs Church of Christ	12.00
Adamsville Church of Christ	50.00
Barn Creek Church of Christ	75.00
Berry Church of Christ	50.00
Brookside Church of Christ	20.00
Central Church of Christ (Tuscaloosa)	150.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	100.00
Cleveland Church of Christ	100.00
Cordova Church of Christ	25.00
Cottondale Church of Christ	100.00
Curry Church of Christ	50.00
East Walker Church of Christ	25.00
Eldridge Church of Christ	25.00
Goodsprings Church of Christ	25.00
Liberty Church of Christ	77.50
Macedonia Church of Christ (Holly Gr. Rd)	25.00
Midway Church of Christ	150.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Millport Church of Christ	75.00
Morris Church of Christ	50.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ ..	15.00
Mountain Home Church of Christ ..	15.00
New Hope Church of Christ (Oakman)	20.00
Northport Church of Christ	100.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Oakman Church of Christ	30.00
Parrish Church of Christ	50.00



Berkeley and our new assistant from Abilene Christian, Louie Vesel, building a print shop behind our house.

Pea Ridge Church of Christ	50.00
Pleasantfield Church of Christ	30.00
Pleasant Hill Church of Christ	35.00
Quintown Church of Christ	25.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Robinwood Church of Christ	25.00
Sixth Avenue Church of Christ ...	1400.00
Tarrant Church of Christ	50.00
West Walker Church of Christ	20.00
White House Church of Christ ...	200.00
White's Chapel Church of Christ ...	100.00
Whitson Place Church of Christ ...	60.00
Winfield Church of Christ	50.00
Zion Church of Christ	25.00
TOTAL	\$3,904.50



This is one of the "bush" Christians who came to Nairobi to stay a "few" days with us. He kept putting off his departure as one "exciting" thing after another happened. Berkeley killed 3 huge deadling poisonous snakes, a panga gang attacked a house nearby and he and Berkeley chased robbers, he went on a preaching trip many miles away with Berkeley and he ate lots of strange American food. When he left he said he was going to come back soon! The tree is a papaya tree in our yard.



A meeting of the church in Embu. Those little saplings are the auditorium seats. We balanced on those for over three hours. Can you wonder that we get "culture shock" when we return to the States?



Words Of Ti

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

— Acts 26:25

(USPS 691-760)

VOLUME 14

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1978

NUMBER 55

The "Widow's Mites"

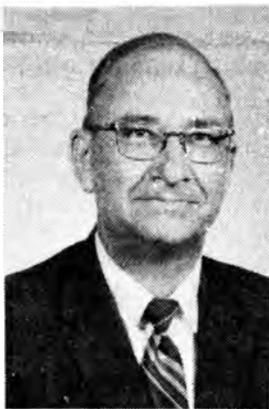
Give as you would if Jesus were the usher who passes the collection plate to you! Remember that our Savior was watching what different people gave into the temple treasury!

Mark tells us that "Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:41-44).

Brother J.W. McGarvey wrote (1885) that the English word MITES is used for LEPTA "which is the Greek name of a coin equal to about two mills of American money." Her "two mites" would equal about FOUR MILLS! That is \$0.004 — a little less than half of an American cent!

Yet Jesus said she gave "more" than "all" the others — although "many that were rich cast in much" (verse 41). How can this be true? Well, three factors are involved in appraising what is given: (1) the need for funds, (2) the ability of the giver, and (3) the spiritual good accruing to the giver. Bro. McGarvey says concisely: "The larger gifts of the rich were the more valuable, because they would accomplish more in feeding the poor and in providing for the expenses of the temple. But ...the gift of the widow was greater than all, because she actually gave more in proportion to her ability, and secured to herself a greater blessing at the hand of God."

God has laid down certain guide-lines for us to



Flavil H. Nichols,
Associate Editor

follow in our giving. Our gifts must be:

1. Liberal (Romans 12:8 ASV). Ten percent (a tithe) is a good place to start!
2. Proportionate to our ability (Acts 11:29-30; I Corinthians 16:1-2). "As he is able" (Deuteronomy 12:17; 14:28).
3. Cheerful (II Corinthians 9:7).
4. Not grudging (II Corinthians 9:7).

Regarding the cheerfulness of her free-will offering, read again what Brother McGarvey wrote of this widow: "She did voluntarily what Jesus had vainly commanded the rich young ruler to do; although poor herself, she gave her all to feed the poor. She did this, too, when she had only her widow's hands with which to earn more; but he refused though he had the strength and ingenuity of

young manhood to guard him against future want" (McGarvey, J.W.: *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, pp. 344-345).

By her liberality in proportion to her ability, this poor widow showed more love for God's temple and his service, than all the others had shown, although their gifts were larger! Question: how much love (II Corinthians 8:24) does *your* giving show that you have for Christ and his church? Does *your* giving (II Corinthians 8:1-5) represent any self-denials! God gave his Son (John 3:16); Christ gave his all (Ephesians 5:25-27).

It is little short of blasphemy for any miserly person to give stingily to the Lord's cause, then claim he is giving "the widow's mites"!!! How much LOVE does *your* giving show???—1000 St. John Rd. Rt. 9 Elizabethtown, Ky 42701

Voice Of Freedom Breakfast

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

The annual VOICE OF FREEDOM Breakfast at the Freed-Hardeman College Lectureship has been set for 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday morning, February 7, 1979. The Blue Room in Gano Cafeteria will be the location. Each person who comes will go through the regular Cafeteria line and will come immediately to the Blue Room.

Our speaker this year will be Noel Merideth. His assigned topic will be "The Battle For The Minds of Men." He will approach this tremendous topic with both Roman Catholicism and Communism in mind. For more than a quarter of a century now VOICE OF FREEDOM has waged a never ending and valiant battle to save the precious minds of humanity from the encroachments of these totalitarian forces of flag-

rant falsehood. Together they control about half the population of the world and influence in no small degree the other fifty per cent they do not control directly.

VOICE OF FREEDOM needs your support. Participation in this breakfast and aiding us with a club of subscribers are two ways you can help. Across the years these annual breakfasts have secured hundreds of new subscribers and many additional helpers for a Cause that too few really believe in supporting.

Please consider this as your special invitation to attend.



Words Of Truth

(USPS 691-760)

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

— Acts 26:25

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Sin In The Camp

In the long ago, the people of God had taken the heathen city of Jericho according to the commandment of God. They had followed the divine battle plan to the letter (Josh. 6:2-5), and had emerged victorious as God had promised. It came to pass that another city was to be taken, the small city of Ai. Joshua was informed that the entire army would not be needed, but only two or three thousand men. This battle did not turn out the way that the previous battle had turned out. The three thousand fighting men of Israel were set to flight by the men of Ai. The very people who had taken the city of Jericho were routed by men whom they should have been able to defeat easily. What had gone wrong? How could this be? Something had gone wrong. As in all things, we must return to the Holy Writ for our solution. Israel had followed the battle plan of God explicitly in the taking of Jericho, but they missed the mark in one thing. They had been informed that they were not to take the devoted thing because it belonged to God (Josh. 6:18-19). Somehow, somehow, someone had gone wrong. The record states that God's anger was kindled against Israel because Achan, the son of Carmi, had taken the devoted thing (Josh. 7:1). The record states that "...the children of Israel had committed a trespass..."



JOHN G. SHAVER

But isn't this unfair since Achan alone had done this thing? Surely God would not hold the whole nation of Israel accountable just because one man had sinned. The sin of Achan had caused thirty six men to lose their lives, the battle was lost, and Israel was held accountable. There was "sin in the camp," and retribution must be made (Josh. 7:12-15), or Israel would not be able to stand against her enemies, for God would not be with her.

Achan had been found out, and confessed his sinful act (Josh. 7:18-21). "I have sinned" was the lamentable cry of Achan (Josh. 7:20). Because of a "Goodly Babylonish mantle, and two hundred

Continued on page 4



FROM

THE EDITOR

The Ant

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise" (Proverbs 6:6). The ant is one of many seemingly insignificant creatures the Bible mentions for our consideration. From this exhortation to consider the ant we conclude that such a consideration would be to our advantage. A good encyclopedia will reveal the following reasons why the ant should be considered:



BOBBY DUNCAN

The ant provides proper care for its young. Immature ants are fed, cleaned and attended by worker ants. Of the ostrich it is said: "She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers..." (Job. 39:16). But not so of the ant. Do we provide proper care for our own offspring? Do we see to it that our children are fed and clothed spiritually? Children are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Any parent who fails to provide spiritual care and guidance for his children is put to shame by the ant.

Some species of ants eat only certain specialized foods. These will not eat just anything and everything that happens to be available. This should be a lesson to the people of America. Each year we feast our minds on millions of dollars worth of trashy, filthy, so-called entertainment. News stands are filled with obscene literature that will poison the minds of those who read it. In the theatres and on television crime, illegal sex, alcohol, and violence are glorified. Yet the American public swallows it all and cries for more. We should be particular in our selection of food for our minds, for "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

A company of ants will utilize every means of working more effectively. For example, in transporting food or materials for building a nest one

ant will drop the load to those below to save time and the effort of carrying. We in the church need to learn to use every available method of carrying the gospel to the lost.

When one ant becomes injured, news is passed and others rush to the rescue. What are our actions when one of our number becomes handicapped and unable to take care of himself? Do we rush to the rescue, or do we waste valuable time and money quibbling and arguing about the best way to effect the rescue? Or when a brother through weakness or ignorance falls, do we rush to his side to lift him up, or do we only criticize him for his fall? Paul said we should "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Ants sometimes become destructive to agriculture. They attack coffee plantations in Brazil, wheat fields in Texas, maize in Africa, and grain storage bins in many places. Of course we all know that no farmer would be afraid of one ant alone; but when thousands of them each do their little bit there is no end to the damage that can be done. Can we think of anything better to illustrate the power of working together—each doing his part? The church can preach the gospel to the world if each one will do his part. Every congregation could double in size every year if each member of the congregation would lead one soul to Christ. One or two working in a congregation can accomplish so very little, but all working together can do so very much.

The ant spends all available time in the summer preparing for the winter to follow. He knows by instinct that summer will soon be gone and the winter will come. He prepares for this coming winter by storing up food to last him throughout the months when he will not be able to come out of his nest. We know that death must come (Hebrews 9:27). Yet so many of us are making no preparation at all for its coming. It behooves us to lay up "treasures in heaven" to prepare for the inevitable. The little ant shows the foolishness of the man who fails to prepare for that which he knows must come.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise..."

The Right To Become Sons Of God

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11, 12). This passage of scripture is dealing with the fact that not all the Jews received Jesus as being the divine Son of God. However, there were many who did believe on Jesus, and to them he gave the right to become children of God.



RAYMOND ELLIOTT

The Bible teaches that God wants "all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:4). God is "not willing that any

should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). But this does not mean that all will be saved. Man is a free moral agent and can choose whether or not to follow the way of the Lord (Matthew 7:13, 14).

Our blessed Lord invited all men to "come unto me" (Matthew 11:24-30). Our text teaches that a man cannot become a child of God unless he is a believer; but not every believer becomes a child of God. Believers have only the "power to become the sons of God." There are Biblical examples of some who believed in Jesus as being the Christ but did not completely obey him. James taught that a man is not justified by "faith only," and that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:24, 26). In John 8:31-44 we read that Jesus addressed a group of Jews "which believed on him." Yet in verse 44, he referred to this same audience as being children of their father, the

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).

"Will God hear and answer an alien sinner's prayer?"

Will God hear and answer an alien sinner's prayer for what? Forgiveness? Sonship? Eternal life? No. These blessings, and all others needed by an alien sinner (one who has never obeyed the gospel), are promised on conditions other than prayer (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3, 4; 10:9, 10). Forgiveness is available only in Christ (Eph. 1:7; II Tim. 2:10; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26, 27). To be "in Christ," one must have believed the gospel, have repented, have confessed faith in Christ, and have been baptized. Prayer does not put one into Christ. One becomes a member of the family of God, by being "born again" (John 3:3-5). The "new birth" is the equivalent of being saved; and is obtained by being born of water and the Spirit. Since things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, it follows that to be born of water and the Spirit is to obey the gospel. It is an abomination in God's sight for one to pray for pardon contrary to his will (James 4:3; Prov. 28:9).

(1) Every blessing needed by an alien sinner is obtained on specified conditions, not including prayer. In no instance, in the scriptures, is an alien sinner instructed to pray for salvation; in no instance is such a sinner promised salvation

on the condition of prayer.

(2) Saul of Tarsus is the only clear-cut case we have, in the New Testament, of an alien sinner praying for forgiveness; and, when Ananias, a gospel preacher, contacted him by divine direction, he immediately terminated Saul's effort to obtain salvation in this way, and instructed him in what his duty was: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

(3) Our Lord does not intercede with the Father at the throne of God for alien sinners. "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). To draw near to God is to come to him in humble and unquestioning obedience to his commands.

(4) God is not the Father of alien sinners. He is the creator of all men, but he is the Father only of his children; and, only those who are in his family are his children (I Tim. 3:14, 15). How can an alien sinner lift his eyes heavenward and say, "My father in heaven...?" His father is not in heaven (John 8:44; I John 3:10).

The man whose eyes the Lord opened, said, "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31). It is often al-

leged that this passage has no bearing on the question of whether God hears and answers prayers of alien sinners on the grounds that (a) he who uttered these words was not an inspired man: and (b) the remark was made about Jews who were not aliens at that time at all. Though the man was not inspired, he gave utterance to truth which is inspired and often stated in the scriptures. He said, "We know..." The truth he uttered was accepted and recognized by all religious teachers of that day. Why? Because it is repeatedly taught in the Old Testament scriptures: "The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of Jehovah is against them that do evil..." (Psalm 34:15, 16). "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psalm 66:18). "Jehovah is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous" (Prov. 15:20). The blind man's statement went unchallenged because it was true. The Jews, though not aliens, in the accepted sense of the word, were unwilling to comply with the conditions obligatory upon them and were thus in the position of an alien who prays for salvation instead of rendering obedience to the conditions of salvation.

Ananias gave the only proper answer to praying aliens (Acts 22:16).

Let Us Go Forward (A New Year's Lesson)

"And Jehovah said unto Moses, wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Ex. 14:15). Our work for 1978 is soon to be history. While we have not accomplished everything that we would like to have, we are greatly encouraged by the things that have been accomplished for the Lord. We cannot go back and redo the old year, but we can build upon that which we did last year.



JOHN WADDEY

We can go forward and excel over what we did in the past.

A new year is a time to review the past, scan the future, and seriously scrutinize the present with the view of forsaking the baser levels of life, lifting our ideals and improving our conduct and character.

At the close of a year, we contemplate what our successes and failures were. How shall we measure life's successes? Being citizens of the heavenly kingdom, we must measure our accomplishments by a different standard from our worldly friends.

Happiness and success are not measured by *fleshly gratification*. Jesus taught us that "the life (is) more than the food and the body than the raiment..." (Matt. 6:25). While worldlings compute success by increase in net income and social status achieved, our life is concerned with the progress of the spirit rather

than of the flesh. "For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit (mind) the things of the Spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace..." (Rom. 8:5-6). Happiness does not consist in simply getting what we want, rather it comes from knowing and doing God's will. Jesus said, "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17). Life's value is not determined by sorrows or misfortunes. Some tend to forget all their blessings from God by thinking too much of their pains and sorrows. Christians can have contentment in spite of the adversities of life. From the misery of his lonely prison house Paul wrote: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content...in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want" (Phil. 4:11-12). Paul tells us that God had taught him the key to seeing life in focus. "And he hath said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness.... Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake, for when I am weak then am I strong" (II Cor. 12:9-10).

Success is not measured by money made. One can conceivably gain the whole world and still lose his most precious possession and thus be eternally miserable (Mark 8:36-37). Paul reminds us that "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (I Tim. 6:6). He then adds, "But having food and covering we shall be therewith content. But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts.... For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (6:8-10).

Rudyard Kipling warns us against over concern for

money, position and glory for "Someday you will meet a man who cares for none of these things and then you will know how poor you are." Really, brethren, it is treasures laid up in heaven that truly count!

Let us measure our progress for the ending year by our spiritual development. Did we "grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ" (II Pet. 3:18)? Are we more knowledgeable of his Word? Have we grown in our prayer life? Is heaven more central in our thoughts? Have we made progress in good done to our fellowmen? We are expected to do good unto all men, especially Christians (Gal. 6:10). What about the jobs we began for God? Looking back over the year, how many of them have we completed? The brethren at Sardis were rebuked because God found none of their works completed (Rev. 3:2). It is not dreams dreamed, nor plans made, neither projects begun that God honors. Only those which we carried to completion are of any ultimate value. Then how many souls did you win for God in the last 365 days? They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever (Dan. 12:3). How many fellow Christians have you aided with their life's burdens? By so doing we fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). Surely one of the best standards of life's success is the blessings received from our Father above. "Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done." All of these could be summed up in this final question: Have we made progress in our preparation for the eternal realms? May we never forget the Lord's directive: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where thy treasure is there will thy heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-20). — Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge Rd., Knoxville, Tenn. 37921

Sin In The Camp

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shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight..." thirty six men had perished, Israel had been defeated, and the anger of God had been kindled against his people. Because of the sin of one man many had been punished, and every member of his family and all that he possessed had been destroyed (Josh. 7:24-26). Why? Because God will not condone sin.

One would think that we could learn something from those who have gone on before, but it seems that this is not the case. As there was "sin in the camp" in the days of fleshly Israel, there is "sin in the camp" of spiritual Israel, the church. As God did not condone "sin in the camp" in those days, neither will he condone "sin in the camp" in our day and time. Sin is a loathesome and terrible thing in the sight of God, and should be as terrible and loathesome in our sight. Many seem to think that they can hide their sin from the members of the church, and therefore, are getting away with something. One would get the idea that they had never read Hebrews 4:12-13. There are those in the church who will not stand for the truth, those who profess to be Christians, but are only playing the part. There are those in the church who are living lives that would make the heathen blush. Rather than be an example to the world by their lives

(Matt. 5:13-16), they are living as the people of the world, and are condemned. Many of the ladies in the church see nothing wrong with the wearing of immodest apparel such as shorts, halter tops, and see-through blouses. One would never suspect that they were Christian women who were professing godliness (I Tim. 2:9-10). Many of the men in the church use profane language, gamble, and see nothing wrong with social drinking. One would assume that they were not godly men, and would never realize that they had ever read Galatians 5:19-21 or Revelation 21:8. When will we ever return to the moral purity of the New Testament church?

Is it any wonder that the church is not growing as it should? Why should one affiliate himself with a body of people who profess to love God, but live as though Satan ruled their hearts? Are we the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and are we letting our good works glorify the God of heaven (Matt. 5:13-16)? Are we seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matt. 6:33), and laying up for ourselves treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:19-20)? Brethren, we are too busy living as the world lives to give our time and energies to the salvation of the world. It is high time we awake out of our sleep and lethargy, and start living as God would have us live

(Tit. 2:12).

The church of our Lord is being mocked, derided, and joked about. How can we stop the tongues of the mockers, the mouths of derision, and the ungodly laughter of the jokesters? By living good, clean, and pure lives as Christians, and by letting the sin-loving, evil-doing, unconverted church members know that we do not condone "sin in the camp" (Rom. 16:17-18; II Thess. 3:6).

The camp of Israel was purged of Achan's sin in the long ago by the commandment of God. Can the church not purge the sin from her midst just as easily? As long as we condone "sin in the camp" the church will not, and cannot grow. Will God hold us all accountable as he held Israel accountable for "sin in the camp?" To ask is to answer. When the "sin in the camp" is removed, and the members of the church start living as those who are devoted to his cause, the church cannot help but grow. Brethren, let us awake from lethargy and indifference, and let us as Paul stated. "...forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before...press onward toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).—Rt. 10, Box 186B, Jasper, AL 35501

The Right To Become Sons Of God

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devil. Here you have believers in Christ who had not acted upon their faith, therefore, they had failed to become children of God. Then in John 12:42, 43 we read that there were some among the "chief rulers" of the Jews who "believed on him" but refused to "confess him". Because they as moral cowards, failed to confess the Sonship of Jesus, the Lord will deny them (Matthew 10:32, 33). Believers in Christ? Yes. Saved? No. In Acts 26 we find Paul reasoning with King Agrippa about Christ's being the fulfillment of the prophets and Moses (Vs. 22, 23). Paul asked Agrippa if he believed the prophets, that is, what the prophets taught about Jesus. Before Agrippa could answer, Paul exclaimed, "I know that thou believest" (V. 27). Agrippa then said, "Almost

thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (V. 28). We have here an example of one who was a believer and yet not a Christian. Jesus simply gives believers "the power to become the sons of God."

On the day of Pentecost, when the gospel of Christ was preached for the first time in its completeness, we find believers who became children of God. In Acts 2, we learn that Peter, along with the other apostles were the preachers (V. 14). They spake of Jesus' being approved of God, having been crucified and resurrected (Vs. 22-24). The evidence was so abundant and clear that Jesus was indeed "Lord" and "Christ" that many "were pricked in their heart" (Vs. 36, 37). As believers, they wanted to

know what to do in order to be saved. Peter instructed them to "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (V. 38). Some three thousand believers were baptized on that day in order to have their sins washed away (V. 41; Acts 22:16). They became members of the Lord's church through this act of obedience (V. 47). Here is an example of believers' obeying the son of God and using the divine, God-given right "to become the sons of God" by faith in Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27).

Today, if we follow this example of conversion, we too can be saved and become children of God.—Route 1, Box 13, Opp, AL 36467.

BLT Should Head The Menu

EDSEL BURLESON

A favorite sandwich of many folk is a BLT. To almost everyone bacon, lettuce, and tomato is an excellent combination for a tasty treat. The BLT we refer to now is also an excellent combination that will produce beautiful results, Believers Laboring Together.

Believers, those who, without reservation, accept the instructions of the Master. Laboring, fulfilling, to the degree each individual is able, the tasks that are his from the Master. Together, each complementing the other by assuming his particular role and realizing his is but a small part of a great effort to obey the Master.

An effort put forth to the glory of God will not return void, but how much greater will be the results when there is togetherness in those efforts. Paul said, "Now he that planeteth and

he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (I Cor. 3:8-10).

There is always strength in togetherness. Once a woman hired a man to prepare an old barn for use. In the process, he performed several tasks. He killed a deadly snake and a poisonous spider, and then he coaxed a huge bull into a stable. One last duty, however, he refused to perform because he claimed it was too dangerous. This task was removing a hornet's nest. Surprised at his fear, the lady asked, "Whv?

You have done everything else I have asked?" He replied, "Madam, I ain't afraid of snakes, or bulls, or spiders, but I am terrified of hornets, 'cause they is organized."

Sometimes one considers himself a part of the action because he happens to be around when the task is performed. An elephant and a flea walked side by side across a bridge. When they reached the other side, the flea said, "Boy, we sure did shake that bridge!" Too many times, we, as the flea, have had very little to do with the end result. May we each determine that when we say "we", we mean "we" did it.

One of the greatest problems in many churches today is willing workers: a few are willing to do the work and the rest are willing to let them do it.—420 Seventh St. S.W., Birmingham, AL 35211.