

Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

January 1985

Number 1

HUMANISM OR CHRISTIANITY, WHICH?

by Luther A. Bolenbarker

Much to do and thousands of words have been spoken and written lately concerning religion and humanism (a form of religion).

I believe that there are only two general views in the world. There may be many ideas on life's worth and purpose, but they all boil down to just two basic views. One is God's view and the other is man's view! These two views produce two different people, diametrically opposed to one another. The Humanist or worldly person is basic EGOTISTICAL or SELF-ORIENTED. The Christian or followers of God are OTHER-PERSON-ORIENTED.

Humanism says there is no God, and we all are here on this earth by chance or a quirk of nature. Christianity says there is a living God who created us all for His glory and honor. Each of these two views, philosophies or belief-systems comprise their own view. Conflicts of these two opposing views have dominated the world since the Garden of Eden, and in our day and time it seems to be an issue that has come to the forefront. It needs to be dealt with. It cannot just be swept under the rug with the hopes that it will go away, cause it won't!

People everywhere need to be

educated and know that Humanism is a threat to our way of life and is opposed to God. Humanism was around when Paul wrote the Roman letter, observe his words in 1:28-30, *"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness, they are whisperers, back biters, haters of God, violent, proud, boosters, inventors of evil things."* It appears to me that Paul could have well been speaking about the 20th century.

Public education appears to be the greatest ally of Humanism, as they try to discredit and remove God from their thinking. Humanist say, **"every public school is a school of humanism,"** and **"any child who believes in God is mentally ill."** Just how does the humanist view conflict with Christianity? Observe:

BIBLICAL VIEW

Centrality of God, Divine Revelation Roots, God-Supreme Authority, Theistic, God-Problem Solver, Freedom is God-Given, Man was Created by God, Man exists for God, Supernaturalistic (has a soul),

Morality is of God, Salvation is by Divine Edict, God is Good.

HUMANIST VIEW:

Centrality of Man, Human Reasoning Roots, Man's Own Authority, Atheistic, Man-Problem Solver, Freedom is Man-Made, Man is product of Evolution, Man exists for himself, Naturalistic (no soul), Morality is of man's logic, Salvation is by human Science (or non-existent.), God is Bad or non-existent.

As we can see, the Humanist's views are ideological religious, socialistic politically and are robbing America of God's influence. They conflict with Christianity on almost every tenet. To the Humanist there is **no right or wrong**. There is no standard of right or wrong because each man is his own God or standard. Every conceivable circumstance faced by the Humanist is "situational", and what ever decision man makes is the right one. The obvious problem with this philosophy of situation ethics and relativism is that every one is their own law-maker.

Moral-relativism (no right or wrong in man's mind) is the result of Humanism, but to the Christian there is a right and wrong and these are paramount to life and the preservation of mankind. Let us make a more detailed comparison of the two ethics:

CHRISTIAN ETHIC:

Babies are persons with the right to live, Heterosexuality only (man, woman and family), Morality, Chastity, Biblical view, Christian virtues and health, Christian faith and creation, Parental responsibility in raising children.

HUMANIST ETHIC:

Abortion on demand, Homosexuality is normal, Sexual freedom & pornography, etc., Prostitution, premarital sex OK, VD, AIDS, etc. your choice, Atheism & Evolution, Child's rights over parent's.

The Humanist Bible (Manifestos I 1933 & II 1973) are endorsed by the American Civil Liberties Union, and National Education Association. Humanism has been cleverly used with terms of endearment such as "humanness," "humanitarian" and "Humanity." Most people equate "Humanism" with something very human and good for mankind. Humanism is Anti-God, therefore, Anti-Christianity. No Christian, who is seeking "first the kingdom" can em-

brace nor support those who advocate this false doctrine. Karl Marx, the father of communism said, "**Humanism denies the existence of God and affirms the all-sufficiency of man. It is nothing more than communism.**"

The Christian must be Anti-Humanist. We can not allow this blight to infect and kill Christianity and our way of life. Let me suggest to you the following verses for your consideration: I Cor. 3:19, "*For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*"

I Cor. 1:19 "*. . . I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.*"

I Cor. 1:25 "*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men. . .*"

2 Timothy 3:1-9, Read about the character of men as described by Paul. James 1:5 "*If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God. . .*"

Rom. 12:2 "*And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. . . will of*

God."

Eph. 4:14, "*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*"

2 Cor. 4:3-6 "*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world (humanism, LB) hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" Don't let your light be put out or you will be blinded by the evils of humanism.



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KEEP THYSELF PURE

by Raymond Elliott

The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, gave this young man some timely advice which is sorely needed in this 20th century. In I Timothy 5:22, we read, "*Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*" It is the last statement of that verse that we want to emphasize presently. Jesus taught in Matthew 5:8: "*Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.*" Christians are exhorted in Hebrews 12:14 to "*Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification (holiness) without which no man shall see the Lord.*" We conclude from these latter two passages that a pure heart and a pure life are essential in order to see the Lord God. A pure life is the outgrowth of a pure heart. Solomon declared: "*For as he thinketh within himself, so is he*" (Prov. 23:7). It is impossible to think evil and live a good life; likewise, it is impossible to think pure and live an impure life.

It is important that we understand

that our thought process controls our actions. That is why Paul instructed the Philippian brethren to think on things that are pure, true, lovely, honorable, of good report and things that would be worthy of praise (Phil. 4:8). To do such would prevent evil thoughts and evil deeds. Jesus taught: "*For out of the heart comes forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings; these are the things in which defile the man. . . .*" (Mt. 15:18-19). Our thoughts are influenced by what we see, what we hear, what we read, and by our association with other people. Scenes on television and on movie screens which portray nudity, sexual acts, etc. cause one to think impure thoughts. This is also true with pornographic literature. Even scantily attired women can contribute to men's thinking lustful thoughts. Jesus taught in Matthew 5:27, 28: "*Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every*

one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Some men, of course, have "*eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin*" (II Pet. 2:14). However, women professing godliness should be very careful in their actions and dress not to encourage evil thoughts in the hearts of men. Christian ladies are instructed by Paul to "*adorn themselves in modest apparel*" (I Tim. 2:9). When women wear apparel that reveals 80 percent of their bodies, such could hardly be called "modest."

Christian young people should avoid places and people which would encourage impure thoughts. Movies and television programs that are filled with illicit sex, suggestive remarks and dirty jokes will eventually pollute the mind. Petting on dates contributes often to the sin of fornication. It is difficult for one to keep pure in this sexually oriented society, but, the requirement is still to be heeded which was given over nineteen hundred years ago, and that is to "*Keep thyself pure.*" By the strength of the Lord, it is possible.

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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

ANOTHER NEW YEAR

Did you know the month of January was originally named after the Roman god, Janus? Janus was depicted as a man with two faces--one looked back into the year that had passed; the other looked to the coming year.

With mixed emotions, most of us face a new year. Behind us lies the spent moments of the old. In this one we have had joy and sorrow, achievement and failure, good and bad. And as we enter the new year we are led to ask, "What does this year hold for us?"

Of course, no one knows the answer. The future is in the hand of God and, for one, I am content to leave it there. I have no desire to probe the future and fret about tomorrow. Jesus said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matthew 6:34). In other words, it is hard enough to handle the problems of life, the ups and downs one day at a time. Who wants to be saddled down with the worry of tomorrow before it gets here. . . IF it gets here?!

As we look through the shining portals of a new year, the words of Paul to the Philippians are apt: "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

IS THIS OUR LAST YEAR?

There is something rather solemn about the ending of a year and entering into another one. It reminds one of the fact that someday life will end and earth-time shall be no more. We even portray the close of the year as an old man with a long white beard, leaning on his cane, taking the last few faltering steps toward death.

This year will bring each of us closer to death, judgment, and eternity than we have ever been in our lives. It will probably pass quicker than any previous year. As we grow older, each year represents a smaller percentage of our

total experience. One year, to a five-year-old, will represent 20% of his total life; but one year, to a fifty-year-old, represents only 2% of his total experience. So the years seem to pass quicker.

As we begin this new year, let us consider for just a moment how our life might be affected if we knew that our life would end next new year's eve. How many plans would be changed if we knew we just had one more year to live? How many things would assume greater importance than ever before, while others which now seem to find priority in our time would shrink to rather insignificance? Since man is prone to put things off, things just might be different if we knew we had just one more year to live.

The world around us might even seem more important. We might stop and consider the beauty of the handiwork of God that is so often taken for granted and unappreciated in our busy programs of life today. The sight of the sunrise, the color of a rainbow, the beauty of a rose, or the radiance of the clouds overhead would no longer be considered such an insignificant thing. I'm sure all of them would look greater if we knew this were our last year.

Family life in many homes might also change. The little attentions from those we love would perhaps be seen in more of their loveliness. Husbands might for the first time consider all that wives do to add to their comfort. Wives might appreciate the hours of labor that the husbands give to provide the necessities of life for them. Parents might have more time to spend with their children in doing some of the things that they like to do. The softness of the skin to touch, the fun of a "knock-knock" joke, the sharing of a popsicle, or the good night kiss, would be very important. Children might even reminisce of good times gone by and the many sacrifices that their parents made so they could have things better in life than their parents had. Oh, yes, they might even send Mom and Dad that long over-due letter. There just might be more expressions of "I love you," more willingness to help each other, and more hours spent together, if we knew we had just one more year to live. I have never understood why we had to wait until we lose someone before we appreciate them.

What would happen in our relationship with God if we knew our life would end in just one year? Would worship to God become more important than it is to some now? Would that football or basketball game, week-end outing, or business trip seem less important than it does today? Would our prayer life take on more purpose? Would there be more earnestness on our part in teaching our families and our friends the gospel of Christ? Would we open up our homes and extend more hospitality? Would we really work at trying to develop a family feeling with the members of the church? Would money seem less important? Would we be more earnest in overcoming all temptations? Would we be sure we have repented of every transgression against man and God?

Today

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price--\$15.00

Postmaster, Send change of address to:

P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."
— Proverbs 27:1

This may well be my last year and it could be yours. We have no promise of the future. Let us use each day to the glory of God.

A SECOND CHANCE

Can any of you football fans remember the 1930 Rose Bowl game? Roy Reigels of Southern California picked up a Georgia Tech fumble, but began to run in the wrong direction toward his own goal line. One of Reigel's own teammates finally tackled him, but Tech took the ball and scored right before halftime.

Reigels cried like a baby in the locker room. Coach Price quietly said, "The same men who played the first half will start the second."

The team trudged out--all but Roy.

"Coach, I can't do it! I've ruined you. I've ruined Southern Cal. I can't face the crowd."

The coach touched Reigels' shoulder and said, "Get up and go back. The game is not over yet."

Reigels went back and Techplayers say they never saw anyone play football like Reigels did in the second half.

Perhaps some of us are discouraged, confused, or have run the wrong way. But our faith says, "Get up and go back. The game is not over yet." Have you been worried about all of those promises in life that you have broken? Do you look at yourself in the mirror and think you have failed or that you're ruined for life? Put all this behind you now and press forward. The game is not over yet!

BEGINNING OUR SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Twelve issues of *Today* have gone out into all parts of the country and into several foreign countries. The response to our efforts in bringing forth this publication has been most gratifying, and to our many friends who have aided us in getting the paper started we say, "Thank You!" Your words of encouragement and commendation have lifted our spirits and spurred us on to try new and different features in the paper. We feel we are able to look with much pride over the accomplishments of the past year. Our subscription list has continually increased. We hope to see our list of subscribers grow even more and more. You can help us with that! Don't forget to renew (the date of expiration appears on your address label). . and while you're doing that, how about sending in the

money for a gift subscription to a friend?

This issue of *Today* marks the beginning of our second year of publication. Our aim shall remain the same--to publish a paper suitable for today's active family where there will be something in each issue that will appeal to every age group. We want to deal with meat for the stronger Christian, while at the same time contain milk for the new convert and/or the non-Christian. The paper continues to be the sole responsibility of the Buchanon family (Bob, Delores, David, and Deborah). We are not tied to the purse strings of any man or group of men. There is no connection to any foundation or other large amounts of money.

Our second year of publication will see many new features added, while trying to continue many of the favorable features from last year. New names will be appearing from time to time as we are receiving manuscripts from brethren all across the country. But again, our policy will remain the same on our writers--we will not have a staff, per se. Some men will have regular columns and others may contribute only once or twice during the year, but we shall not list men's names on some masthead. Each writer will defend his own writing. Publication of an article does not necessarily constitute editorial endorsement.

A couple of new features will be found in this issue. **Dear Rachel** will be written by a godly Christian woman with a desire to answer complex situations one may find in his or her life. The author of this section lives outside of the U.S. and chooses to write under this pseudonym. Questions and answers to Rachel may be sent in care of *Today's* post office box. A second new feature appearing in this issue is **Thoughts on Phrases**. This, too, will be written under a pseudonym. The faithful brother in Christ simply requests that you consider what is being said and not necessarily who is saying it.

Lord willing, several other features are going to be added in the next couple of months. We hope to start printing short histories of congregations, a clip-art section, sermon skeletons, a new section called **Satire from Zachaeus**, and another one called **Listening To Both Sides of the Issue** in which two brothers will discuss the same subject or issue from two different sides. We hope you will enjoy all of these features. If you have other suggestions, please let us hear from you. We desire to print material that will be helpful to you in your activities in the Lord's work.

THEOPHILUS



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- LOVE

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

In Galatians 5:16-26, we read a contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Nowhere in scripture is the contrast between carnal-mindedness and spirituality more clearly and strikingly presented. In this series of articles we will be focusing attention upon the fruit of the Spirit.

The first fruit mentioned is "love." Though our word "love" is used in many ways, the Greeks had at least four different words that could be translated by the English word "love."

The word "eros" was used of physical love and is never used in the New Testament. It was more associated with lust than love, and would accurately describe much of what men today call "love." When a boy says, "If you love me you will. . ." He is using the word "eros" and is talking about sin rather than the fruit of the Spirit. The word "erotic" comes from this word.

"Storge" refers to "tenderly loving. . . the mutual love of parents and children; also of husbands and wives, loving affection, prone to love, loving tenderly. . ." (Thayer). The negative of this word is found in Romans 1:31 and 2 Timothy 3:3, where it is translated "without natural affection." The positive use of it is found in Romans 12:10: "be tenderly affectioned one to another." W.E. Vine says: "love of kindred, especially of parents for children and children for parents; a fanciful etymology associates with this the 'stork', Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3." The word "kindly" affectioned "gives the real sense, since 'kind' is originally 'kinned;' and kindly affectioned is having the affection of kindred" (Vincent's Word Studies).

The verb "phileo" is commonly used to represent "tender affection."

It is similar to our word "like." It is a love of affection. When Jesus said "He that loveth his life loseth it" (Jn. 12:25), He used this word. If a man likes living, above serving God, he will lose his soul. In I Peter 3:10: "He that would love life and see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips that they speak no guile," the writer used the word "agapao." Notice the contrast between "loving" (phileo) life, and "loving" (agapo) life! The latter word refers to the true interests of life, whereas the former refers to an undue desire to preserve it.

The fourth word, "agape" (noun) or "agapao" (verb) is the word used in Galatians 5. It is the highest kind of love. "The meaning of agape is unconquerable benevolence, undefeatable goodwill. Agape is the spirit in the heart which will never seek anything but the highest good of its fellow-men. It does not matter how its fellow-men are; it does not matter what their attitude is to it, it will never seek anything but their highest and their best good" (Flesh and Spirit, by William Barclay, p. 65). W.E. Vine commented: "Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, I John 4:9,10. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, Rom. 5:8." The same principle is true of the love God commands of us and which is produced by following the Spirit. We are not to love only those for whom some affinity is discovered, but we love because God commanded and expects us to demonstrate active good will.

This love involves more than an emotion. God commands us to love our neighbor (Matt. 5:43), our enemies (Matt. 5:44), or wives (Eph. 5:25,28,33),



righteousness (Heb. 1:9), etc. We certainly do not feel an emotional attachment toward our enemies, yet we are to love them. We may not "like" everything about our wives or husbands, but we can "love" them! We may not "like" everything about the preacher, elders, or other brethren, but we can "love" them! Love is what you do, not simply how you feel.

The apostle Paul said: "knowledge puffs up; love builds up" (I Cor. 8:1). In the context, he was talking about what a Christian is to do in consideration for another's soul. One who says: "I'll do as I please," is motivated by selfishness, not by love.

Love is demanding. Jesus said: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15). "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. . ." (v. 21). "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word. . ." (V. 23). The same writer said: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I Jn. 2:4).

The fruit of the Spirit is "agape." This love does not expend itself only upon those we are attracted to, though that "feeling" may follow the "active good will." Try it!

FORGIVENESS

by Denny Diehl

We "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). That is a sad comment about our condition before our God. It is sad because "your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He does not hear" (Isa. 59:2). We cannot be so good as to make up for this sin. No amount of good works can overshadow the stain of sin. We would be completely cut off and separated from God if it were not for "being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

This justification which is found in Christ Jesus, however, has conditions placed upon the reception of it. The Jews who had recently witnessed the crucifixion of this very same Jesus were told about these conditions. "Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins' (Acts 2:38). Salvation, then, comes only through forgiveness on the part of God, being accomplished when the conditions are met.

But what about the Christian after receiving this purification from his former sins? He now has a choice whereby he can live perfectly or, if he cannot do that, he may call upon his God for forgiveness. If you are like me, you fall into the 2nd category. We are not saved because we do x amount of good works; we are saved because we are forgiven of the bad works. The good we should have done anyway, salvation comes and is only needed when we sin, and that is where forgiveness comes in. "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee, and the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for

every one who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:10-14). Jesus said that the tax-gatherer was justified. Certainly the Pharisee had many good works, they were listed for us. However, even though he was a pretty good guy, His salvation was "not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Eph. 2:9). but salvation is the result of being forgiven by God.

Again, this salvation is conditional. Forgiveness by God for sin has requirements for the Christian just as assuredly as for the one not in covenant relationship with God. John says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I Jn. 1:9). What we have to have to be able to sustain our relationship with God is forgiveness on the part of God. John says that "He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins" but it is conditioned upon "if we confess our sins." Conditional forgiveness is just as real for the Christian as for the non-Christian. The non-Christian is told to Believe, Confess, Repent and Be Baptized, not as works to earn salvation, but as conditions to receive salvation. In the same way the Christian is told to confess his sins, not as a way to earn forgiveness, but as a condition to receive forgiveness.

There is, however, another condition placed upon us by God, without the performance of it we will not receive the forgiveness of sins we earnestly desire. The other condition is that we forgive one another.

Jesus, in His example prayer, said, "And forgive us our debts" (Matt. 6:12) which is exactly what the Christian has to have to keep his relationship with his God. But Jesus goes on to say that we are to pray for that forgiveness "as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). He says to pray that God forgives us just like we forgive one another. Paul said, "And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). Paul said that we are to

forgive one another to the same extent that God has forgiven us.

Concerning our forgiving one another, Jesus tells a parable. But it was also in response to a question concerning our forgiving one another. "Peter came and said to Him, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' "(Matt. 18:21). A common teaching in that day was that you could forgive someone up to 3 times, but no more. Peter was being quite liberal in his thinking. "Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven' "(Matt. 18:22). If my calculator works, Jesus said we are to forgive one another up to 490 times. What does He mean by this? Are we to carry a book in which we record every time someone sins against us, keeping a tally so as to keep account of wrongs against us. Certainly not. Jesus was saying that we should be totally forgiving just as He is. Besides, love would not allow us to do such. Paul said that love "does not take into account a wrong suffered" (I Cor. 13:5). When we have God's love as a part of our character, we won't take wrongs into account and be ready to forgive.

Jesus goes on with His parable:

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. And when he had begun to settle them, there was brought to him one who owed him ten thousand talents. But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. The slave therefore falling down, prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything.' The lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt" (Matt. 18:23-27).

We stand in the same position as this slave in the parable. We are forgiven a debt by our Lord which we are unable to repay. That the slave said that he would repay the debt is funny beyond belief. He owed 10,000 talents, a measure of money beyond the means of any man (it would equal in today's

market, silver - \$108,000,000 or gold - \$4,320,000,000). We couldn't pay that any more than the slave could. The only way he could become right with his master was through forgiveness (an obvious parallel to our condition with our God).

Jesus goes on with the parable:

"But that slave went out and found one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' So his fellow-slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' He was unwilling however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed" (Matt. 18:28-30).

After the slave had been forgiven he went and found a fellow-slave who owed him 100 denarii (a denarius was

worth about 18¢, therefore, the total debt was about \$18.00). It was a trivial amount to what the first slave owed the master. Even though the second slave's attitude was right, the first slave was unwilling to forgive the debt and cast him in prison.

Jesus continues:

"So when his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow-slave, even as I had mercy on you?' And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him" (Matt. 18:31-34).

And so he will be there a long time

trying to pay back to God something that it is impossible to achieve, all because he was unforgiving. The moral from the parable Jesus says, *"So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart"* (Matt. 18:35). Could it be that we need to be more forgiving; forgive in like proportion as our Father has forgiven us?

Remember what Jesus said: *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy"* (Matt. 5:7). Or perhaps the warning of James is a little more pungent: *"For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy"* (Jas. 2:13). Let us forgive one another.

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Playboy's Appeal

by Roger Shouse



A few weeks ago I received an advertisement in the mail from *Playboy Magazine*. Now I usually discard that kind of JUNK in my reliable round file (better known as the trash can). But for some reason I was really curious as to how they got ahold of my name. I'd tend to think that they were wasting their money trying to get a preacher to subscribe to their publication. Notice what a portion of their letter stated:

"Through careful market research, it's been determined that you are a special kind of man.

"You are a man who. . .has a sophisticated sense of humor, likes to keep up with important issues, is interested in today's notable personalities, wants to know where the action is in sports, finance, fashion, wining and dining. . .and you are a man who appreciates beautiful women.

"For these reasons, it's only natural that you are also a man who would enjoy Playboy."

What I want us to notice is the type of appeal that *Playboy* makes. This is but one of the many fruits of humanism. Humanism is the concept that man should serve himself and

satisfy all his pleasures. Humanism denies the existence of God. It tries to discredit the teachings of the Bible. It indoctrinates man with evolution, abortion, homosexuality, situation ethics, de-criminalization of drug usage, and pornography. Humanism destroys the home by advocating pre-marital and extra-marital affairs. Here are two concepts of humanism brought out in *Playboy's* promotion.

1) *Playboy appeals to the natural man.* Humanism prides itself on the idea that whatever is natural is good. One may have a natural desire to steal, to lie, to be unfaithful to their mate and so forth. Humanism would define these all as "good" acts.

2) *Playboy uses psychological pressures to promote its humanistic attitude toward life.* In other words, the natural man would accept *Playboy*. If you turn down such an offer as *Playboy* then you are not natural, normal, or for that matter a real man. This is the same type of pressure that the breweries use to promote their beer.

There is one basic and fundamental problem with the two above mentioned

concepts. *Humanism advocates no standards.* This philosophy dictates "do what you want to do, whenever you want to, wherever you want to". You are not responsible-not to the government, not to your families, and especially not to God. What standard is to be used to say what is right or wrong, natural or unnatural, and to determine manhood? The prophet wrote, *"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* Man has to follow the teachings of Christ because we have to give an account on judgement day (cf. Jn. 12:48; 2 Cor. 5:10).

If you stop and really think about all this, you will come to the conclusion that humanism is based upon childish mentality. The idea that you can do what you want to as an adult and not be responsible is one of the most stupid ideas ever presented by man. A man can accept responsibility. A man knows how to follow authority. A man knows that he is accountable for his actions. Solomon recorded that the *"whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments"* (Ecc. 12:13).

It is sad to see so many people get sucked down the drain by humanistic reasoning. You can have a better way of life. It is the life that Jesus Christ offers for you. Won't you investigate it further?!

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“REDEMPTION”

Greek Word: apolutrosis

Meaning: paying the ransom

Paul says it is Jesus Christ *“in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. . .”* (Eph. 1:7). He uses the word **apolutrosis** which is **“a strengthened form”** of a word more common in classical Greek, **lutrosis**.

We do not hear the word redemption much these days. Oh, occasionally we will hear of the redemption of an article from a pawn shop. More often we hear sports announcers talking about how some athlete has “redeemed” himself by pulling off a great play that wins a game when he had committed an earlier error that nearly lost it.

But to the Greek-speaking world of Paul’s day the word was a common one, freighted with meaning. It was not at all a religious word, to begin with. Rather, the idea of redemption grew out of ancient Greek warfare.

When one army vanquished another in the field many soldiers lay dead, but many remained alive and the victors rounded them up and took them home to be slaves. But when a particularly important captive was found among them he was not consigned to slavery but held for “ransom” (cf. Matt. 20:28, **lutron**). **“This is the process the ancients called ‘redemption’. They used the verb ‘redeem’ of it and anyone who carried it out was a ‘redeemer’. The sum of money was called the ‘ransom’”** (Leon Morris, *The Atonement*). All these words derive from the same root in Greek.

And there was another use of this word family in the Greek world. Scholars today call it “sacral manumission.”

When a slave, by scrimping and saving, managed to get enough money to buy himself from his master there was a prescribed formula for doing so. The slave would go to the temple or

shrine of some pagan god and deposit the money there. Then his master would come to the same temple and go through a show of selling the slave to the god. Then the slave would be given a certificate showing that he had been bought by the god—usually it included the words *“for freedom”* (cf. Gal. 5:1, A.S.V.). From that time onward the slave was free but owed special allegiance to the particular god in question.

Here is a sample of one of these certificates from between 200-100 B.C.:

“Date. Apollo the Pythian bought from Sosibius of Amphissa, for freedom, a female slave, whose name is Nicaea, by race a Roman, with a price of three minae of silver and a half-mina. Former seller according to the law: Eumnastus of Amphissa. The price he hath received. The purchase, however, Nicaea hath committed unto Apollo, for freedom. Names of witnesses follow” (A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*).

When the New Testament writers used the “redemption” word family they were using words that were among the very few hopeful ones a captive or a slave might hear. And first century Christians could see the importance of the sacrifice of Christ by learning to think of His life as the *“ransom”* paid for them (Matt. 20:28, **lutron**), of His blood as the price paid to *“redeem”* them (I Pet. 1:18-19, **lutroo**), and themselves as the fortunate objects of this process of *“redemption”* (Eph. 1:7, **apolutrosis**).

It is interesting to notice that the “redemption” word family not only deals with those who have lived since the time of the cross, but also with those who lived before it. Hebrews 9:15 tells us that the death on the cross took place *“that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”* And this passage, coupled with Heb. 11:39-40, help us to

see that the redeeming blood of Christ flows back of the cross as well as ahead of it. In other words, those who lived in faith under the Old Testament are no less saved by the blood of Christ than we.

And not only does the concept of redemption reach into the pre-Christian past, but it also reaches into the post-historical future. Paul says that we who are Christians have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God *“unto the day of redemption”* (Eph. 4:30). There is a sense in which our redemption is an accomplished fact but there remains the finalization of this process when the Lord Jesus comes from heaven to effect the *“redemption of our body”* (Rom. 8:23).

“For freedom did Christ set us free. . .” (Gal. 5:1). And let us remember our special allegiance to him. Our response to the price paid ought to be commensurate with its great value.

“VANITY”

Hebrew Word: habel, hebel

Meaning: Vanity

This word is used in one form or another thirty-two times in the Book of Ecclesiastes. The book begins with the observation that *“all is vanity”* (1:2). And it **nearlly** concludes with the same outlook: *“Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity”* (12:8). I say **nearlly** because 12:13-14 brings us to the conclusion of a search carried on throughout the preceding chapters for meaning in life *“under the sun.”*

There is such meaning: *“Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”* (12:13-14; notice the bold italics on the word duty, indicating that we may read “this is the whole of man”). But if this is so, why has the Preacher said some thirty-two times in the earlier part of the book that all is “vanity” and what does he mean by it?

I believe the Book of Ecclesiastes is designed to show us how much a person may learn about the meaning of

life if he or she leaves God out of the picture and confines his world-view only to that which may be observed and experienced "under the sun," which phrase is used thirty-three times in the book. Nowhere in the Bible (nor in all profane literature of my acquaintance) is a more piquant refutation of the hollowness of modern humanism to be found.

Riches, pleasure, power, wisdom, and even human relationships are but "vanity" if sought and enjoyed

without reference to a focal point, a giver of meaning, God. The word "vanity" (**hebel**) refers to that which is "evanescent, unsubstantial, worthless" and speaks in Ecclesiastes "of the fruitlessness of all human enterprise and endeavor" (Brown, Driver, Briggs, **Lexicon**).

I think the pessimism of our times and its attendant self-destructive nihilism (eg. lawlessness, abortion-on-demand, wife-beating, child-abuse, alcoholism, drug addiction, rampant

suicide, hopelessness, lack of purpose in life, et. al.) are due largely to two facts: 1) People have experienced much of the "vanity" the Preacher describes in chaps. 1:1-12:12; and, 2) they have failed to enlarge their view of things by reading and accepting his last two verses (12:13-14).



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Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible No Good, Very Bad Day

by Judith Virost

I went to sleep with gum in my mouth and now there is gum in my hair and when I got out of bed this morning I tripped on the skateboard and by mistake I dropped my sweater in the sink while the water was running and I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

At breakfast Anthony found a Corvette Stingray car kit in his breakfast cereal box and Nick found a Junior Undercover Agent code ring in his breakfast cereal box but in my breakfast cereal box all I found was breakfast cereal.

I think I'll move to Australia.

In the car pool Mrs. Gibson let Becky have a seat by the window. Audrey and Elliot got seats by the window too. I said I was being crunched. I said I was being smushed. I said, if I didn't get a seat by the window I am going to be carsick. No one even answered.

I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

At school Mrs. Dickens liked Paul's picture of the sailboat better than my picture of the invisible castle. At singing time she said I sang too loud. At counting time she said I left out sixteen. Who needs sixteen?

On the way downstairs the elevator door closed on my foot and while we were waiting for my mom to go get the car Anthony made me fall where it was muddy and then when I started crying

because of the mud Nick said I was a crybaby and while I was punching Nick for saying crybaby my mom came back with the car and scolded me for being muddy and fighting.

I am having a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day, I told everybody. No one even answered.

So then we went to the shoe store to buy some sneakers. Anthony chose white ones with blue stripes. Nick chose red ones with white stripes. I chose blue ones with red stripes but then the shoe man said, We're all sold out. They made me buy plain old white ones, but they can't make me wear them.

When we picked up my dad at his office he said I couldn't play with his copying machine, but I forgot. He also said to watch out for the books on his desk, and I was careful as could be except for my elbow. He also said don't fool around with his phone, but I think I called Australia. My dad said please don't pick him up anymore.

I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

I could tell because Paul said I wasn't his best friend anymore. He said that Philip Parker was his best friend and that Albert Mayo was his next best friend and that I was only his third best friend.

I hope you sit on a tack, I said to Paul. I hope the next time you get a

double-decker strawberry ice-cream cone the ice-cream part falls off the cone part and lands in Australia.

There were two cupcakes in Philip Parker's lunch bag and Albert got a Hershey bar with Almonds and Paul's mother gave him a piece of jelly roll that had little coconut sprinkles on top. Guess whose mother forgot to put in dessert?

It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.

That's what it was, because after school my mom took us all to the dentist and Dr. Fields found a cavity just in me. Come back next week and I'll fix it, said Dr. Fields.

Next week, I said, I'm going to Australia.

It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. There were lima beans for dinner and I hate limas. There was kissing on T.V. and I hate kissing. My bath was too hot, I got soap in my eyes, my marble went down the drain, and I had to wear my railroad-train pajamas.

I hate my railroad-train pajamas.

When I went to bed Nick took back the pillow he said I could keep and the Mickey Mouse night light burned out and I bit my tongue.

The cat wants to sleep with Anthony, not with me. It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. My mom says some days are like that. Even in Australia.

--Original source unknown--



Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

A WEEPING PROPHET

(Chapter 6)

The sixth psalm is dedicated "To the Chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith" and is "A Psalm of David" (Comp. Ps. 4). Neginoth is thought to refer to a stringed instrument. Sheminith is a word we have not met before. It is said to literally mean "the eighth." Some suggest that an eight string instrument is in view. Others, that this is an ancient reference to the octave. Gesenius, the Hebrew lexicographer believed that it denoted "the lowest and gravest notes as sung by men; the modern bass." Such would be appropriate for this melancholy lamentation. . . Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet, but the title would fit David well.

This is the first of seven "penitential" psalms, or psalms of repentance. The others are: 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143. David is being chastened of the Lord. Chastisement is common to all children of God. James said, "Is any merry, let him sing psalms; is any afflicted, let him pray." David's not merry, but he does both, nevertheless. And though he begins in a minor key, he closes on a major chord.

HIS CRY(1-5)

"O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure." He doesn't plead that God not rebuke or chasten him at all. He realizes that one who sins is in need of such. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:7). But he begs that such may be accomplished with mercy and not in anger and hot displeasure.

"Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed." David knew that he needed more than justice, as we all do. May we ever be thankful that God's justice is tempered by mercy.

He needed to be healed. His bones were vexed or shaken. He was physically sick and needed God's mercy. Upon what grounds did he plead for such? Because he was a great man? Or because he was mighty? Or did he refer to his goodness? No. None of that. He made supplication on the basis of his weakness. Such was not given as an excuse for sin, but as a basis for mercy. There was a limit to what he could stand. But bodily pain was not his greatest problem:

"My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?" Spurgeon said, "Soul trouble is the very soul of trouble. It matters not if the bones shake if the soul be firm." David's problems were both without and within. "How long" is ever the cry of the suffering saint. We shall see it often in these psalms. In Revelation 6, it is the cry of saints under the altar who had been beheaded for their testimony.

"Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: Oh save me for thy mercies sake." Apparently he felt alienation from God. He longed once again for fellowship with His Maker. Note once more that he pleads God's mercy.

"For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" The graveyard is a silent place. David does not deny consciousness after death, though it

may be open to question as to how much was revealed to the Old Testament worthies on that matter. But his point here is that death closes our opportunities to serve and praise God in this world (Comp. 30:9; 88:10; Isa. 38:18; Job 7:9,10). Even Jesus spoke of this as he said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn. 9:4).

HIS COMPLAINT

"I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears." Bereavement had left him weak and weary. He had wept so much that it seemed his very bed would be carried by the flood of his tears. David was a man of sorrows. But he was unique in this by no means: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22).

"Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all mine enemies." As eyes grow dim with age, his was dim through affliction and weeping. In Psalms 3 and 5, David's enemies occupy center stage. Here they are mentioned as adding to his afflictions.

HIS CONFIDENCE

"Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping." A great transition takes place in David's attitude. Suddenly he throws off his sackcloth and arises from his bed of ashes. With boldness he orders his enemies away, and with confidence he speaks of the Lord hearing his cry.

Did you know that tears have a voice? Yes, tears are a universal language, understood in every tongue. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

"The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly." The word "ashamed" carries with it the idea of disappointment. If David was vindicated and blessed, his enemies would be disappointed. David prays for such mercy from God.

"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 exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11).

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

I KINGS

by Aude McKee

The title of the book under consideration in the Hebrew is simply "Kings." Originally there was only one book but when the Septuagint version was made in 280 B.C., it was divided into two. There was a very practical reason for this. No vowels were used in the Hebrew during the Old Testament period, so one scroll could contain both books, but the Greek translation in which vowels were used, required almost twice as much space. The author of the book is unknown. We might observe that it doesn't make a great deal of difference who God used to pen the book, but that it is vitally important that we recognize that the book is a part of the inspired Word of God!

As the book begins, David was "old and stricken in years." Adonijah, who was perhaps David's oldest surviving son, decided to rebel against his father and take over the rule of Israel before Solomon could be anointed. Nathan and Bathsheba learned of the usurption, informed David, and reminded him of his oath to sit Solomon on the throne in his stead. This David did and so Solomon became King over Israel before David's death. David gave instructions to Solomon, and charged him to "show himself a man, walk in God's ways, and see that his children walk in truth."

The Lord appeared to Solomon in Gibeon one night in a dream and asked him what he would like to have. Solomon, at that stage in his life, was a humble man and he said to God that he was "but a little child." He recognized that no man could rule over God's nation without divine assistance, so he asked for wisdom that he might "discern between good and bad." God was so pleased that Solomon had not asked for the things people would ordinarily want (riches, long life, etc.), He not only granted Solomon the wisdom he asked for, but riches and honor as well. The wisdom that God

granted Solomon was put to good use almost immediately. Two harlots obtained an audience with Solomon and told him a weird story. They were living together in the same house and both gave birth to a child three days apart. One of the women laid on her child during the night and smothered it, but both of them claimed that the surviving child was her own. How was Solomon to decide who the real mother was? Blood tests were unheard of in those days and there were no witnesses to the accident. Solomon simply requested a sword, and then he gave the order to cut the living child in half and give each woman her part. One woman was happy with the decision, but the other one said, "O my Lord, give her the living child, and no wise slay it." Solomon immediately knew which one was the real mother. As time went on, Solomon's wisdom became widely known. In 4:34, we are told that "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." In chapter 10, we find the Queen of Sheba coming to Jerusalem to prove Solomon with hard questions. After spending some time there she said, ". . . the half was not told me. Thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame that I heard."

Solomon was a shrewd business man. He organized Israel into two districts with an officer over each one, and each district had the responsibility of providing for the palace expenses for one month each. Just to supply Solomon's table was a huge task. It is estimated that he fed 50,000 people a day. It took 2300 gallons of flour, 4600 gallons of meal, 30 oxen, 100 sheep, plus harts, roebucks and fowl. In addition, he recognized Israel's strategic location in the economy of the middle east and took advantage of it. He had merchant ships that continually brought in riches from other countries.

Solomon was a builder. In the 4th year of his reign, he began the temple. David had wanted to build it but because of the wars about him, this was not possible. In order to accomplish the task, Solomon formed a league with Hiram, king of Tyre, to furnish cedar and fir, and he raised a levy of 30,000 Israelites along with about 150,000 Canaanites to furnish the labor. The temple took seven years to build and it was the first pre-cut structure ever erected. It also was unique in that it was the most costly building in the world. It was estimated to have cost between two and five billion dollars but it was not as large as many church buildings today. In addition to the temple, Solomon built other structures. In chapter 7, we are told that he built himself a house and also one for Pharaoh's daughter. In addition, he made the vessels that went into the Lord's house.

When the temple was dedicated, Solomon offered a moving prayer to the Lord. You can't read his prayer without being impressed with his humility and his faith in God. When he had gotten off his knees, he spoke to the people and admonished them to know that "the Lord is God, and there is none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes, and to keep His commandments, as it is this day." It is interesting that in the book of I Kings, God spoke to Solomon on three occasions. We have noticed in the third chapter and in verse 14, God sounded His first warning. The second followed Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple in chapter 9. At this time, God's warning became more pointed and severe. The third is found in chapter 11. At this time, God was angry and Solomon was told that the larger part of the kingdom was to be taken from him and given to his servant. However, because of David, a small portion would be retained by Solomon's son. There is involved in

this a lesson for all of us today. Sin is progressive and the teaching of I Cor. 15:33 was as true in Solomon's day as it is now. Evil companions will corrupt good habits! In I Kings II, we are told that Solomon loved strange women (by this time he had 700 wives and 300 concubines), and they "turned away his heart." Solomon had everything going for him. He had a godly father, he was wise, he had a close relationship with God, but he allowed evil companions to lead him into idolatry.

Saul, David and Solomon reigned over a united Israel, but with Solomon's death, disaster struck and God's prophecy was fulfilled. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, ascended to the throne at his father's death, and he inherited the consequences of Solomon's excesses. Enormous tax burdens had been imposed on the people and they almost immediately made a plea to Rehoboam to give them relief. He consulted first with the old men and they advised him to grant the people's request, but then he talked with the younger men and they advised just the opposite. "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will make it heavier," was the advice they gave. When the people heard this, they rebelled. God gave ten tribes to the leadership of Jeroboam (in the north), and Rehoboam was given two tribes (Judah and Benjamin). There is no way to exaggerate the devastating effects of sin!

Jeroboam set the tone for the northern kingdom (Israel). Featuring that the tribes might reunite, he did everything he could to make the division permanent. He changed the object of Israel's worship from God to idols, he changed the place of their worship from Jerusalem to Dan and Bethel, he changed the time of their feasts, and he made priests of those who were not from the tribe of Levi. From the time Jeroboam took the throne until the Assyrians swallowed the ten northern tribes, not one king with respect for Jehovah ever ruled over them! Israel fell about 721 B.C. and when this occurred, it fulfilled God's promise to "smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and He shall root up Israel out of this good land. . . and scatter them beyond the river. . ." (14:15).

After the death of Rehoboam, not a great deal of information is given concerning Judah in I Kings.

Rehoboam reigned 17 years in Jerusalem, but under his reign Judah worshipped idols. Rehoboam's son, Abijam, followed in his father's steps but his son, Asa, banished all the perverted persons and removed the idols. He even removed his grandmother from being queen because she was idolatrous. Asa's son, Jehoshaphat, followed in his father's ways but he was unable to keep Judah from worshipping idols. Then in 22:50, we learn of Jehoshaphat's death and Jehoram, his son, reigned over Judah.

Jeroboam's son, Nadab, reigned over Israel two years, and was not replaced by his son. Baasha killed Nadab, took the kingdom, and killed all the house of Jeroboam. He reigned 24 years. Elah, son of Baasha, reigned two years. Zimri, Elah's servant, killed the king, took the throne and killed all of Baasha's kinsmen and friends. Zimri only reigned seven days, went into the king's house, and burned it down about him. The people made Omri, the army commander, king over Israel. He ruled six years. He bought a hill and built the city of Samaria. Omri's son, Ahab, reigned in his stead and was the most wicked of all Israel's kings. His wife was Jezebel and together they prompted the worship of Baal.

Chapter seventeen begins Elijah's dealings with Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah was sent to tell Ahab that there would be no dew or rain until Elijah gave the word. During the drought, God sustained Elijah with water from the Brook Cherith and by sending ravens to bring him bread and flesh morning and evening. When the book dried, He sent him to a widow of Zarephath. During this time, her son became ill and Elijah healed him, and her supply of meal and oil did not fail until the Lord sent rain.

In chapter eighteen, Elijah told Ahab to gather all Israel together on Mount Carmel, and to bring the 450 prophets of Baal along with the 400 prophets of Asherah that ate at Jezebel's table. Two alters were built with a bull on each one. The prophets of Baal prayed all day for fire to come down and consume the sacrifice, but nothing happened. Then Elijah prayed and God sent down fire and consumed everything. Following this, Elijah executed the 450 prophets of Baal. When Ahab told Jezebel what had happened, she swore she would kill

Elijah, and he fled for his life. While Elijah was in the wilderness the Lord told him to anoint Hazael as king over Syria, Jehu as king over Israel, and Elisha as prophet in his own place. God then informed Elijah that He had seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

There was a vineyard next to Ahab's palace in Samaria that belonged to Naboth. When Naboth refused to sell or give it to Ahab, Ahab took to his bed and refused to eat. Jezebel, using the king's name and seal, brought false witnesses that resulted in Naboth's being stoned--then Ahab had Naboth's vineyard. The Lord sent Elijah to tell Ahab that where Naboth's blood was shed, dogs would lick Ahab's blood, and that the dogs would eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

Even though Ahab was the most wicked and abominable king, he repented in sackcloth and ashes. The Lord told Elijah that, due to Ahab's humility, He would not bring calamity in Ahab's time, but in the days of his son.

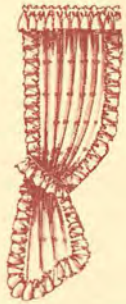
When Jehoshaphat of Judah came to visit Ahab, Ahab talked him into going to war with Syria on Ahab's side. Through trickery, Ahab tried to put Jehoshaphat in jeopardy in battle, but Ahab was killed. Ahaziah, Ahab's son, reigned two years over Israel.

The book of I Kings covers the golden years of Israel's history. Never before nor after the reign of Solomon was the nation as powerful, rich, or as well known. In this short span, it can be seen so clearly how God blessed His people when they obeyed. But in this book is described, as well, the terrible effects of sin. Truly, "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

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A Woman's Point Of View



OLDER WOMEN ARE TO TEACH YOUNGER WOMEN

by Verna McKee

AGE:

Older as compared to whom? Almost everyone is older than some other person. The law of averages makes more people younger as the years go by.

There is no magic number set by the wisdom of the Lord. We tell young mothers, and rightly so, that there is no set age at which you can bring a child to services and he will sit quietly and listen. The earlier he is started to be **trained** to behave well, the easier the task is done.

In the same way, the **training** that has gone into the years changes the ability of a woman at a given age.

MATURITY:

This work carries the connotation of stability and wisdom.

The ability to see what needs to be done and set it in order calmly and with the least amount of confusion.

We all know people who are "mature" at an early age and others who will never be "mature" if they live to be ninety.

EXPERIENCE:

In jest it has been said that many congregations are looking for an energetic thirty year old preacher with twenty-five years of preaching "experience." Most of us expect more of others than we should.

For each year that we live, each of us undergoes 365 days of experience--meaning that things happen to us every day. Living through all those **years**, however, doesn't guarantee that we have gained wisdom from them.

The difference in individuals may be determined by the use made of problems through the years. Some people wall themselves in with rocks of trial and temptation with the result that they can see only their own woes and end up being bitter and self-pitying. Others use their rocks of trial and temptation to build steps that, not only enable them to see beyond their own problems, but by which they can reach down and help others to an easier path by the steps they have built.

It is extremely difficult to teach others a thing one does not know and do well oneself. The fact that keeps one from becoming mired down in despair is that everyone has a few things he does well. So if he is not too proud at one thing, he is bolstered by the knowledge that he can do another well while he works at strengthening his weaknesses.

The things that are laid down in God's Word as necessary to salvation are **never** impossible to attain. The first steps necessary in reaching the ability to teach women younger than oneself is to study and apply that knowledge--

study again and again, making a determined effort to put each fact and command learned into a way of life.

The Holy Spirit gave such a beautiful system when, in Titus 2:3-5, He described **what** aged women were to be rather than an **age** they were to be. Their behavior is described first--their living in "*holiness*," teachers of good things. If they were slanderers, back-biters, gossips, their teaching would carry no conviction to the younger women who need to be taught.

An aged woman who is bitter, discontent with her lot and her family will have to grow up in the Lord (no matter how **old** she is) and change her attitude before she can teach a young woman to love her husband and her children.

An aged woman who does not control her own life well will have great difficulty in teaching young women to be wise, chaste and good. She can be no idler, wandering about from house to house, tattling, busybody, speaking things she ought not (I Tim. 5:13) and still teach young women to be "*keepers at home*." She cannot belittle her own husband and harm his influence for good with others, and still teach young women "*to be obedient to their own husbands*."

The beauty of God's Word is that as long as one person knows less than another, there is a command to teach one another. There is no pinnacle to be reached from which wisdom is proclaimed by an all-wise person! The wisdom is all from God's Word and must be taught as such. There is no "Big Me and little you." Everyone goes to the same fountain for information and guidance--then cares enough for others to "pass it on."

"*Older women must teach younger women to love their husbands; love their children*." Have you learned these lessons and put them into the fabric of your everyday life? Then to you is given this command to teach others who have not!

STUDY--PRACTICE--TEACH!

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DEAD FISH RELIGION

by Frank Walton

Know what a "dead fish" handshake is? It's a disgustingly clammy, weak handshake that feels like you've just grabbed a dead fish. Yuk! But a spiritual parallel could be a peril to the Christian. In trying to walk hand-in-hand with God, many Christians give God a dead fish handshake by their pitifully lukewarm efforts to follow the living Christ. Such cannot save. *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. . . So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth"* (Rev. 3:15,16,NKJV).

Dead Fish religion is the feeble and grudging attempt to follow God's will without gladly understanding or carrying out the purpose of His will. The result will be spiritual death. *"But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen and repent. . . or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place"* (Rev. 2:4,5). Such apostasy into Pharisaism is practicing a superficial form of Christianity without internalizing its dynamic truth in the heart. Hence, the frequent question, "Do I **have** to do this?" And the excuse, "Oh, I don't think I can do that." Minimal effort and non-involvement is the goal of Dead Fish religion. They don't believe or teach you're saved by faith only; they just act like it. By rolling over and playing dead, they hope they won't be bothered or inconvenienced by their religion.

The mentality of Dead Fish religion self-righteously proclaims, "I'm obviously right. Everyone else is wrong. I tried doing personal work once or twice before and nobody was interested. I clearly told them that if they weren't a member of the Church of Christ, they were heading straight to hell. They wouldn't listen. They deserve to be lost." This attitude is seen in members of the church who make excuses instead of looking for opportunities to meekly teach the Good News of Jesus.

Preachers of Dead Fish religion relish in dissecting the Word of God like a frog in a Biology lab, instead of

feeding upon it and sharing it as the Bread of Life. Truth is something to argue over, not meditate upon and do. Truth is used like a twelve-gauge shotgun to blow peoples heads off with. Tact is replaced with belligerence. *"Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers"* (2 Tim. 2:14). Such preachers can take a different verse and end up the same sermon: The world is filled with false teachers and doctrine, and practically everyone is going to hell. Also they love to yell at the members for their failures. But few solutions are ever spelled out in any practical way to help those in error or help build up and encourage the saints to do better. Dead Fish religion is all bark and no bite. Very few sermons are ever heard on the doctrines of Christ's resurrection, His cross, His person and life, joy, grace, love, meekness, peace, zeal, prayer's power and place, providence, hospitality, brotherly love, personal work, etc.

A CALLOUS RELIGION

Disciples of this callous religion were usually raised in the church and accepted it at face value as the right way. So sitting where those in the world sit is an impossibility to empathize. Attending services 3 times weekly at a "sound church" automatically punches your ticket to heaven. No radical thoughts are mentioned of restoring the unconquerable love, Christ-like compassion, or fervent zeal of the New Testament church.

Followers of Dead Fish religion are driven to obedience out of fear instead of being motivated by love according to God's will. *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love"* (1 John 4:18). Mental energy is spent bickering over why this plan won't work to do God's will, instead of searching for solutions to effectively implement His will. Exhorting such members to be "abounding in the work of the Lord" is like trying to drag a dead horse. Inertia is a "sound" position to avoid practicing error.

Cold formalism is the price of durability. The longer the church exists, the greater the possibility Dead Fish religion can sap the strength and vitality of true Christianity. Our hearts can be dulled and eyes blinded to the total requirements of the Lord, the needs of others, and the fruit of our beliefs. *"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves"* (2 Cor. 13:5). "Christianity" that is as cold as ice, dry as dust, dull as dish-water, and as lifeless as a dead fish handshake is **not** a faithful heir of New Testament Christianity. How about YOU? What religion are you practicing? *"Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His power which mightily works in me"* (Col. 1:28-29). Let us labor for the Lord.

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CONFUSED?

by Steve Cawthon

Have you ever been to an ice cream parlor and tried to decide among dozens of different flavors? If so, then you can probably understand how many people feel when trying to decide which religion to follow. There are more different church groups in this country than there are flavors in a well-stocked ice cream shop. A person can find about anything to suit his taste. But the difficulty is in deciding which.

But while various churches, denominations, factions, and parties are vying for your allegiance, Jesus bids you to follow Him. He said, *"Come unto me. . . and I will give you rest"* (Matt. 11:28).

Why not forget about the divided religious world? Step out of the maze of confusion and follow Christ and His word. Any other decision is vain and worthless.

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The Book Worm



PUBLISHERS: Send all books for review to:

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WHAT DOTH THE LORD REQUIRE? by Loren N. Raines (Florida College Bookstore: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1977, paperback, 269 pages, \$4.95.

This book is written around a question found in Micah 6:8. Moses asked the same question in Deuteronomy 10:12. They both asked the same question, but they worded their answer a little differently. While we are living under a different law than that under which Micah and Moses lived, we are responsible to the same God. Bro. Raines attempts to aid us in finding the answer to this all important question, "What doth the Lord require?"

The book is divided into two parts: "God's Right to Make Requirements" and "What the Lord Requires." Part one looks at God as the Creator, Jesus as our Savior, the revelation of God's will as our guide, and God's church as our refuge. Part two shows that God does **not** require as well as some of the things He does. The author has dealt with what God requires of sinners, erring Christians, and faithful Christians.

This little book would make an excellent gift to a non-Christian friend and/or to be presented to new converts.

LORD, HELP ME WHEN I'M HURTING by Harold Hazelip (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 117 pages, \$3.95.

No two people on this earth are exactly alike. Although we are unique individuals, we still share many characteristics and experiences with all humans. We seek happiness and we experience disappointments. We confront pressures and possibilities daily.

Of the many painful experiences we

suffer, Hazelip has chosen fifteen of them for special reflection. Who has not felt suffering, failure, disappointment, unanswered prayers, lack of self-control, the apparent silence of God, temptation, fear, lack of self-esteem, unhappiness, guilt, or anxiety about death and depression?

Each chapter offers solid help for dealing with one of these emotional struggles. First, the problem is analyzed. Then an example from the life of Christ is used to show how our Lord confronted this problem. From this, guidelines are developed to enable us to overcome these problems.

Each chapter goes beyond positive mental attitudes or self-help techniques. The answers to these problems are anchored firmly in the teachings and personal experiences of Jesus Himself. His teachings and life are affirmed throughout as the primary resource for dealing with your needs today.

The underlying theme of this book is that when we feel that no one cares, One always does! Jesus helps hurting people change into happy, trusting followers of God's way.

MAKING UP THE DIFFERENCE by George Rekers and Judson Swihart (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 147 pages, \$6.95.

For all of us, life is changeable. It is filled with unforeseen unknowns. This book deals with one of the many changes occurring in this country--single parents with teenagers. Statistics now tell us that by 1990 one in four children will be living in a single-parent home for a significant portion of his or her childhood. Ninety percent of those households will be headed by women, most of whom will also work outside the home.

The authors of this book are both professional counselors. They are committed to a preventive approach to family-life education. Their wise written counsel can lead the single parent to a pathway of healing and understanding that can prevent further

hurt, disappointment, and brokenness.

The single parent often needs emotional and physical assistance, financial counseling, a shoulder to cry on, a church that cares, and friends who do not care if they have odd-numbered place settings at dinner parties. This book encourages you to reach out, include, comfort, support, help to sustain, befriend, understand, love, and seek out those who are attempting to raise families without the help of a mate.

This book digs beneath the surface problems to get at root causes, and then skillfully shows how to break down walls and build bridges. It is filled with insights that will translate into better understanding, better communication between parent-child, and stronger family ties.

The thirteen chapters include such topics as peer pressures, understanding body changes, understanding a teenager's mood swings, dating, attraction, love, and more. Although the primary focus is for the single parent, friends and other family members will benefit enormously from reading this book.

STUDIES IN THE REVELATION, edited by Dub McClish (Valid Publications; Denton, Texas), 1984, hardback, 552 pages, \$13.00.

This book contains the lectures delivered at the third annual Denton lectures. Thirty-five divisions of the lectureship serve as an exhaustive study of John's revelation at Patmos. The various preachers involved are worked diligently to make excellent applications on some rather difficult sections of this final book in the New Testament.

The book is divided into six sections: introduction and survey, exposition of the text, topical studies, answering false doctrines relating to the Revelation, studies of difficult passages in the Revelation, and controversial issues.

The topical studies include the beatitudes of Revelation; Christ as

lamb and lion; the person, nature, work and destiny of Satan; the angels of God; and the church of the triumphant Christ.

A few of the many false doctrines answered include separate resurrections of righteous and unrighteous; the rapture; only 144,000 to be in heaven; instrumental music in heaven; 1,000 year reign; kingdom is future; and Christ will come a third time after the rapture.

The detailed table of contents make it easy to locate whatever verse you are wanting to study in the Revelation. It is a book of excellent quality and will be valuable to any teacher, preacher, or student of the Revelation.

DISCIPLING FOR JESUS by *Bus Wiseman* (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1983, paperback, 145 pages, \$4.95.

Jesus commanded that we not only go, teach, and baptize—but He said for us to continue teaching them after we have baptized them. Too many churches seem to forget the new convert shortly after bringing them up out of the water. They seem to dry up and wither away without further teaching.

This book is a practical book. It was designed to help you build and strengthen Christians to maturity. There are eight chapters entitled "First Principles," "New Creation in Christ," "Discipleship," "Character Building," "Attitude," "The Called Out Ones," "Fellowship," and "Leadership." Each lesson contains a central theme, a discussion principle, Bible questions, and a section for applying the lesson to life.

The section on discipleship deals with following and learning of Jesus; love; obedience; sacrifice; prayer; and more. The section on character building deals with 2 Peter 1:1-11. The section on attitude deals with the Beatitudes. These three sections alone are worth the price of the book.

EXCAVATION IN PALESTINE by *Roger Moorey* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, paperback, 128 pages, \$6.95.

Moorey is Senior Assistant Keeper with the Department of Antiquities of Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. One thing he knows a lot about is archaeology and excavations in

Palestine. Many people have become fascinated with archaeology in recent years, but this has done nothing but raise a lot of questions for a lot of people. How do archaeologists know where to dig? How do they sort out layers of stones, dirt, and broken pots? And what is the connection between archaeology and biblical study?

Moorey answers these questions and at the same time explains the history of archaeological excavation in Palestine. He describes the daily routine of digging on a site. "To find a wall and follow it by clearing away the debris on each side," he says, "might seem an obvious way to excavate to a layman. Nothing could be more disastrous." He then goes on to discuss the evaluation and dating (including carbon dating) of such debris as pottery, stone, bone, coins, glass, wood, textiles and plan material.

The first chapter, "Introducing Archaeology," serves as a fine introduction to what "digging" in the Bible lands is all about. The various trial and error methods of working out this science have been described by the author, showing us how sophisticated it has now become. You almost feel you are in Palestine, peering over Moorey's shoulder as a piece of pottery, a spear tip, or an old coin is unearthed and delicately and carefully studied.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE PROMISED MESSIAH by *James E. Smith* (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1984, hardback, 522 pages, \$13.50.

Before one is baptized into Christ, he or she willingly confesses, "I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God." To say that Jesus is the Christ means that He is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament. The author of this wonderful book fears that the average Christian would probably be at a loss to defend this confession of Jesus' Messiahship if called upon to do so. This volume is designed to help Christians make that "good confession" intelligently and confidently.

This book contains thirty-one chapters, six appendices, a bibliography, an index of Scriptures, and a topical index. It is one of the best organized books I've seen for a long time.

The first chapter captures one's interest in the Messiah by defining the

term, showing the use of the word in the Hebrew Bible, and looking at classical arguments based on fulfilled Messianic predictions. That simply whets the appetite and one gets excited and wanting to read the rest of the book.

The book is well-written, informative and very readable. This is one more in the series College Press is presenting called, "What the Bible Says about. . ."

QUMRAN by *Philip R. Davies* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, paperback, 128 pages, \$6.95.

This volume is just one of the titles in the series called "Cities of the Biblical World." Each book describes the excavation and finds of a particular site and shows how this evidence can help our understanding of the world of the Bible.

The ruins of Qumran are situated a mile from the western shore of the Dead Sea. The modern city of Jericho lies nine miles to the north; Jerusalem lies thirteen miles to the west. For many years, most folks had never heard of Qumran apart from one possible allusion in the Old Testament. Today you say the name Qumran and most people think immediately of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered there in 1947 by three shepherd boys.

This book puts the site in perspective, explains its history and development from an early settlement, possibly in the time of King Uzziah (781-40 B.C.), to the community which produced the famous Scrolls. From the Scrolls we learn about the organization of the community, their daily activities and rituals, their beliefs, doctrines and hopes. The author also explains how the archaeological evidence helps us to interpret the writings and how the writings in turn help archaeologists to understand their discoveries.

The book is filled with twenty-four pictures and numerous maps and plans.

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TEEN TALK

A Column for teens and by teens

"I am a Sophomore and have been dating a boy that is a Senior. He has asked me to go steady with him. I like the idea of wearing his ring, but I don't like the idea of being "tied down" to just dating one boy. What should I do?"



**Michelle McClelland
Sparks, NV**
Age: 17

Well, I've been dating a guy who is a year older than me for 3 years now and I think it's really great! At my school, if you date a lot of guys then you get a bad reputation. So if you went to my school, I would advise you to go steady with him.

On the other hand, Sophomore is a little young to get serious--especially if you have the idea that you'd like to wear his ring but not be serious. If you do decide to be "tied down", please don't go out with other people behind his back. That ruins the relationship entirely.

I know this sounds wishy-washy, but I feel it depends on the circumstances around you.



Ginger Clark
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 14

Well, if you don't like the idea of being "tied down" don't do it. Tell him that you will date him but will not go steady with him. That way you are doing both him and you a favor in dating other people.

Paul Schreiner, Jr.
Oxford, OH
Age: 17



Obviously you must make a choice: whether to go steady or not. I would recommend you avoid going steady for two reasons. First, high school is a time to have fun and learn to interact with people in general. Dating is one of the foremost methods to associate with the opposite sex. It allows one to learn more about other people and about their own likes and dislikes in someone of the opposite sex. To go steady would hamper the variety of interaction with others. Rather, you should try to date as many people as possible.

Another reason to avoid going steady is that all too often it leads to serious involvement of the two people. This involvement is not acceptable to God outside of the marriage relationship. Also, most of the time this situation results in problems for everyone involved.

Therefore, I would say to turn down this boy's offer to go steady. Try and date as many people as possible. You'll probably have more fun and learn alot, too.

Troy Reece
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 14



You should go to him and talk it over with him. Explain to him that you like him and would like to keep dating him. Tell him that you don't want to become too serious or committed at

this age. Don't center your life around one boy so much that you forget there are other boys. Don't let any boy lead you into doing something that you really don't want to do. If you keep your mind on spiritual things, everything will work out.



Chris Reid
Birmingham, AL
Age: 16

A person can have different degrees of feelings toward others, so its better to tell the person your true feelings and the way you feel towards them. Instead of going along pretending that you liked them, enough to wear their ring, tell them what you feel. It would be better in the long run and it wouldn't hurt them as much in the end. Go ahead and tell them that you don't want to date just one person, but that you want to date others also. If you approach it from that point of view, and tell them nicely, I'm sure they will understand.



Robin Underwood
Middlebourne, WV
Age: 14

I think you should talk to your boyfriend about it. Tell him how you feel. If he is of any account, I'm sure he will understand. Finding a mate is a serious thing. Like it says in Matthew 19:8-10, if you get a divorce, it was better not to have married at all.

When ever I think of finding a spouse, I always think of a boy who was asking the girl's father for her hand in marriage. The boy told her father that he loved her, but her father said, "Yes, but do you like her?" We sometimes don't realize a person's spouse should also be their best friend.

I really think that the problem you have should be taken seriously. After all, going steady with someone is not just a ring on your finger.

The Teaching Of Women's Liberation About Religion

by David Pratte

In this article we conclude our study of the views of the leaders in the Women's Liberation Movement, as compared to the Bible.

THE TEACHING OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Some Libbers try to justify their views by the Bible and even say Jesus was a Women's Libber. But the fact remains that no informed person can honestly harmonize Lib views with the Bible. Most Lib leaders admit their rejection of the Bible, and their acceptance of other religious views, especially Secular Humanism.

Be it resolved: That as feminists, we seek to...create a society in which feminists, humanist values will prevail...--Revolution, p. 18

It is absurd to say...that one is a humanist but not a feminist...feminism is the last evolutionary development of humanism. Feminism is humanism on its most advanced level.--Riane Eisler, Humanist Magazine, 11 & 12/80 (quoted by Pro-Family Forum, 3/81)

The scriptures are unredeemably sexist.--Ann Ware, Assoc. Dir. of a National Council of Churches commission (via Pulpit Helps, 11/82)

[Mary Daly] looks upon the Judeo-Christian tradition as a patriarchal myth, and she wants nothing to do with a patriarchy. That ties in with her feminist philosophy...On occasion, however,...when she needs an expletive she may say "Goddess forbid."--Bay Area Journal, 3/27/80. (Daly teaches lesbian/feminist theory at Boston College, and has written textbooks on women's studies.)

By the year 2000 we will, I hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God.--Gloria Steinem, Saturday Review of Education, 3/73 (quoted by Pro-Family Forum)

Humanist beliefs are formally stated in the *Humanist Manifestos*. These beliefs deny the existence of God, and affirm many of the same views we have seen Libbers hold. These Manifestos were signed by Betty Friedan, founder of NOW, often called the "Mother of the Women's

Liberation movement."

Though many of them disbelieve the Bible, Libbers realize that the Bible has great influence, so many reports recently document efforts to make the bible "non-sexist". Instead of being our "Father", God is called our "Source", our "Parent", etc. Songs are also changed, such as "Faith of our Ancestors". (See *Pulpit Helps*, 11/82; *Searching the Scriptures*, 2/81; *Christian Inquirer*, 3/80; etc.)

Especially galling to Libbers is the idea that women cannot be bishops, priests, preachers, etc. They are working for legal rulings so churches with such beliefs will lose their tax-exempt status or be declared outright illegal.

We urge the [National Council of Churches] to...[t]ake the lead in uniting women of all denominations and religious groups to work together to support efforts to recognize the right of women to be ordained in religious bodies where that right is still denied...[W]e demand that the seminaries...actively recruit, employ and justly promote women theologians...We demand that...religious groups no longer have legal sanction to discriminate on the basis of sex.--Revolution, pp. 17,18

THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

Obviously, the Bible affirms the existence of God, but it also affirms that there is abundant evidence that God exists and the Bible is His word (Rom. 10:17). This evidence includes the existence of the universe, which cannot be explained except that God made it (Rom. 1:20; Psa. 19:1). Bible writers repeatedly predicted the distant future in detail and their predictions always came true. This historical fact proves God exists and these men were guided by God (Isa. 41:21-23; 42:8,9; Duet. 18:20-22; Lk. 24:25-27, 44). Jesus & Bible writers possessed supernatural powers to perform miracles impossible by natural power. Eyewitness testimony regarding these miracles in the Bible proves God gave them the power as they claimed (John

5:36; Acts 14:3; 4:16; John 11:47,48).

The Bible further affirms that **man cannot know the proper course to live without revelation from God**. The main problem of Libbers and other Humanists is they first determine what they think is best, then they reject any contrary beliefs, including the Bible, if those beliefs claim to come by revelation from a Supreme Being. They refuse to even consider the possibility that there might be convincing objective evidence that the Bible really did come from God. They simply assume without proof that human wisdom is the highest wisdom there is. But the Bible insists that we should not follow human wisdom in religion, because God's wisdom is so much greater than ours (Isa. 55:8,9; Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; I Cor. 1:18-25; Matt. 15:9; 2 John 9).

The Bible repeatedly describes God by masculine terms. The term "father" is the exact same word (in Hebrew, Greek, and English) whether used to describe God or to describe the male parent in a human family (Matt. 4:21; 15:4; Lk. 1:59; 15:12ff; Acts 7:14; 16:1; etc.). It is unquestionably masculine, and all efforts to camouflage that are simply lies.

When used for God, the term "Father" does not mean He produced the human race by some sexual union. But it shows that God possesses many of the same qualities that the Bible attributes to human fathers (but on a much greater scale, of course). He is the source who produced all creation (I Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 3:14f; Jas. 3:9; Eph. 4:6). He possesses authority over all (Matt. 7:21; 12:50; 26:39; Eph. 4:6; Acts 1:7; Heb. 12:5-11). He provides and cares for us (Matt. 6:1-18; 6:29-32; 7:11; Eph. 1:3; Jas. 1:17). We have earlier seen that all these are masculine qualities, works done by an earthly father for his family, so God our Heavenly "Father" is likewise described.

Finally, the Bible clearly teaches that **women may not have oversight in Jesus' church, nor may they preach in public worship assemblies**. Women do

have important teaching responsibilities, and they should help spread God's word (Tit. 2:3,4; Prov. 31:1; Acts 18:6; John 4:28-42). But they must not teach in any capacity where they exercise authority over men, nor may they preach in a public worship assembly of a local church (I Tim. 2:11, 12; I Cor. 14:34,35). Nor can women serve as an overseer (elder, bishop, pastor), because such must be the husband of one wife (I Tim. 3:1,2; Tit. 1:5,6). Women are not permitted to exercise authority over men in the church or the home.

The following points answer Libbers efforts to set aside this evidence: (1) Subjection of women to men was not taught just by Paul, but also by Moses and Peter (Gen.3:16; I Pet. 3:1-6). (2) These teachings were not the opinions of men, but are the decrees of the Creator and Ruler of the Universe (I Cor. 14:37; Gen. 3:14,16; 2 Pet. 3:15,16). (3) These instructions were not just for the church at Corinth, but were for all churches (I Cor. 14:33,34). (4) These instructions were not just for the first century, but have

been taught ever since man's first sin, and are as enduring as the relationship between Christ and His church (Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-24).

CONCLUSION

The fact is that the Bible exalts women to the highest status they have been given in any religious system. The more a society has been influenced by the Bible, the better it has treated women.

The Bible gives women equal privileges to become children of God, be saved from sin, enter Jesus' church, and receive eternal life (Gal. 3:28; I Pet. 3:7; Acts 16:12-15). Many important women are expressly mentioned in the Bible, including Sarah, Rebekah, Deborah, Ruth, Mary Elisabeth, Mary Magdalene, Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, and many others.

While it is true that woman was created to do different work from man, it is also true that the work of women is just as important as that of men. Women are just as needed as men are, and they should be honored and praised just as much as men are (Prov. 31:28-31; I Pet. 3:7). They

should be loved and respected (Eph. 5:25-29).

Women do have hardships and difficulties in their work, but the same is true of men (Gen. 3:16-19). Women's place of subjections to men is not intended as a position of dishonor, for possession of authority has never been a measure of greatness or value by God's standard (Matt. 20:25-28).

We freely confess that many individual men have disobeyed God's will and have mistreated women. This is wrong and sinful, but no more so than many other sins men and women have been guilty of. The sins of men do not justify anyone in rejecting God or His commands. Women have violated God's will for their lives just as often as men have, and probably no group of women is more guilty of this than the Women's Libbers! But the true way to happiness and freedom is to follow God's will for our lives. His way is always best.

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Postponement Will Stop

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

I heard this short tale a long time ago. My memory of it is so hazy the only thing about which I am sure is that I do not remember the details as first related to me. No matter!! The point can still be grasped in my telling.

"A young boy sitting idly on the curb was obviously bored and lonely, since he could think of nothing to occupy his energies. An elderly gentleman happened to be strolling that way. He likewise had little to demand his time and attention. Seeing and sensing the boy's plight, he sought to engage him in conversation and strike up a friendship, "Well sonny," he began, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

"Nope," the boy responded without a moment's hesitation.

The man was agast. "You mean you do not want to go to heaven when you die!" he demanded scornfully.

"Oh, when I DIE!" The youngster

seemed relieved. "I thought you was making up a load right now."

There are so many people who, if they knew the Lord was "making up a load right now", would obey the gospel. I am talking about those who have studied and learned what the Lord requires for them to do to become a Christian. Many of them are marital companions of Christians. I know some right here with whom I have studied the Bible. They know but will not do.

The purpose of this writing is just one more effort to reach out and convince. You see, the fact is: the Lord may be "making up a load right now." He did not mail out a schedule. This is why He said, "*Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh*" (Matt. 24:44). "*Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein*

the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 25:1). You nor I may ever see tomorrow in this life. That is why the Lord had James to write, "*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away*" (Jas. 4:14). Now is the day of salvation (II Cor. 6:2) because tomorrow may be too late. The soul of man is his most valuable possession. If man would understand that fact, surely he could realize it is far too great a stake to risk in a gambling match with death.

Many will say to Him in that day (cf. Matt. 7:22), "Lord, I aimed to obey your gospel." And the Lord will say, "You may have aimed but you did not pull the trigger."

The Lord wants to be saved (II Pet. 3:9) and so do we. If you have a faithful Christian as a mate, that person also wants you to be saved. We suggest you ask an unbelieving mate to read this article and tell them you do not want them to miss the trip. "I will someday" is the procrastinator's lament that will all too often become his dirge.

147 Creekwood Drive
Florence, AL 35630

MAN'S WRATH- GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

by Jeffery Kingry

One of the dangers Christians face in dealing with any aspect of human behavior is the tendency to oversimplify. We have only to look to the inter-action of the physical world to see that hardly anything "lives or dies unto itself." Everything is hooked together. When we consider human behavior, and the cause and cure of depression, we need to look at the connections between various kinds of attitudes.

Depression is caused by **something**. There are some physiological manifestations of depression, but these physical upsets and imbalances are not the **cause** of depression. When doctors prescribe "mood levellers" like Vallium, tranquilizers, and stimulants they are merely treating symptoms, not the cause of depression.

The fact that we may be unaware of what is causing our discomfort does not deny that the cause is specific. (As a case in point, I suffered from mild, recurring depression during the summer of 1982. At a regular checkup at the Doctor's office, I talked with him about it. I described the process I had gone through to pinpoint the cause of my depression - all to no avail. He listened patiently as I talked. Then he said, "I see you had a birthday recently. Do you find yourself thinking much about getting older?" Almost instantaneously it came to me that I had been resentful about getting older quite a bit since my 37th birthday! I could recall feeling sorry for myself frequently - older, balder, fatter, and not much wiser. The fact that I was consciously unable to focus on the cause of my depression did not mean it did not have a cause. It took someone outside of my subjective observation to point it out to me.) When we consider the basic components of depression, we are inevitably led back to the conclusion that the common denominator in every case of depression is selfish anger.

Anger is not a complicated emotion, but it has many manifestations. Boredom is a form of anger. When we do not like our situation, and want

stimulation and novelty, but feel unable or limited to produce it, we get bored. We become angry at our situation and angry at being unable or unwilling to change it. We feel "trapped". This is a quality that the scriptures say often afflict the sister in Christ (1 Tim. 5:13; 2 Thess. 3:11). There are many sisters in Christ, confronted with housekeeping, young children, meal preparation, clothes cleaning, etc. who suffer from this bored, trapped feeling. Actually the reality of the situation is that they find no satisfaction or fulfillment in these things and are angry that they are obligated to do them. Feeling unable to change their situation they become bored. Sometimes this anger can focus on people as well as things. She may resent her husband or feel envious. In her mind she sees him as being challenged, excited, stimulated by his job while she must deal with the mundane. Or it may be directed at her children, who she sees as dependant upon her, dragging her down with petty demands. It may be directed at the church, or even God. There are many who chafe at the restrictions God has placed upon them. Unable to gainsay the clear teaching of the Bible, yet resenting its application, the bored Christian loses interest in spiritual things and those associated with the focus of their resentment. The bored Christian feels she is losing out on something, much like the little boy who has to stay home to split wood while his friends go out to play ball or fish. The anger generated by boredom is essentially selfishly oriented, brought on by a sense of resentment at ones situation and self-pity at ones inability to change it.

Resentment is another form of anger. The Bible refers to it variously as "bitterness" or "malice". Paul says that the Christian is to put away such emotion (Eph. 4:31). When we examine the emotion of anger we see that sometimes it is prompted by a sense of hurt. When people feel wronged by someone or something,

they direct their anger at it. Sometimes this resentment is prompted by the success of others. The resenter feels excluded, isolated, envious. It is prompted by selfishness, being more concerned with self than others. Solomon described the man "*whose hatred is covered in secret*" (Prov. 26:23-26). Because he hates others (for whatever reason), he harbors "*seven abominations in his heart*". He may cover his hatred with an external graciousness for awhile, but unless he comes to grip with the emotion, eventually it will spew forth in some public way, "*his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation.*" It may be that the resenter is angry because he believes he is not honored, respected, and deferred to as he believes others, less worthy than himself, are. It might be that he wants the respect given to the righteous, but is unwilling to obtain that respect in a godly manner. It may be that he feels wronged, burdened, or hurt while another goes without pain. Whatever the reason, the emotion brings forth a selfish response, and resentment is the result. Resentment is suppressed anger directed toward others.

Shame is a form of anger directed at oneself. Shame is connected with selfishness. Solomon said, "*When pride cometh, then cometh shame. . .*" (Prov. 11:2). "*Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honored*" (13:18). Shame is felt when one is aware of one's own failing. The man who accuses the Christian, and then can find nothing evil to support his judgement is shown to be unjust (1 Pet. 3:16). He feels shame because he realizes his own false judgement. The brother who falsely accuses another, only to find his judgement was flawed through ignorance or pride feels shame (1 Cor. 4:14). The Corinthian Christians overlooked Paul's sacrifice. In contrast to his life, their strutting was particularly inappropriate. Paul's rebuke was not intended to shame them, but it would have that effect on a

sensitive heart. Shame, of itself, is neither good nor bad. How we react to shame determines its worth (Compare Matt. 19:22 and I Cor. 7:9ff). If we make the wrong response, like Judas or Cain, then our shame is evil. If our shame leads us to repentance and renewal of effort like Peter or David, then it is a good thing. Only the humble can use shame effectively.

Self-pity is another manifestation of anger. The only reason a person would feel sorry for himself would be if they felt they had been wronged in some way. Anger at some insult, injury, or rejection must be dealt with in some way. People react to perceived hurt in various ways, but the universal response is usually self-pity. Then the depressed person wonders why they feel so badly.

The Bible tells us to “. . .do all things without murmurings or disputings” (Phil 2:14). Everyone is just in his own eyes. It goes without saying that no one is entirely objective about themselves. Even when we do wrong, we seek to lay the blame elsewhere. This does not address the question of whether the hurt is real or imaginary. The greatest source of self-pity is genuine hurt. But consider the response of Jesus to his very authentic and painful rejection, abuse, and insult. Contrast the life and attitude of Jesus over against the perpetual complaints and self-pity of the Israelites in the wilderness. Self-pity is a sin. It will destroy the soul of the one who gives in to it.

WRATH IS A SIN

Paul writes that we can be angry and not sin (Eph. 4:26). In the context of the passage he defines the sinless anger as that emotion that does not “let the sun go down on your wrath.” Obviously, the flesh reacts to a perceived wrong with little encouragement from the spirit. But, **how we react to this anger** determines whether it is sinful or not. (I might add that **no** emotion of the flesh is evil, per se. Passion, properly controlled and directed at the proper object is not sinful. Hatred, properly controlled and directed at that which is indeed evil is a righteous thing. Fear can disable us or make us strong. It is how we react to the emotions that determines whether we are pleasing to God. We should not deny emotion's existence, but control and use it for God's glory.) God is angry (Eph. 5:6). Jesus was angry

(Mark 3:5). But, man's anger is often not righteous. We are warned, “*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be . . . slow to wrath for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*” (Jas. 1:19, 20). Selfish anger is a sin of the flesh, and those who continue in such behavior can't please God (Gal. 5:20, 21). Self-centered anger is to be put out of the Christian's life (Col. 3:8). We cannot lift holy hands in prayer to God with anger in our hearts (I Tim. 2:8). The man who is not easily stirred to anger is a saint of great value (Prov. 15:18; 19:11). Indeed, anger resides in the bosom of fools (Ecc. 7:9).

What does the Christian put on in the place of anger of the fool? The scriptures say, “*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor (the tumult of controversy), and evil speaking (hurtful, damaging, destructive conversation) be put away from you, with all malice (viciousness, cruelty): And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ sake, hath forgiven you*” (Eph. 4:30-32).

THE OLD MAN (PUT OFF)

Bitterness (Rom. 3:14; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15) Harshness, literally that which makes the stomach sour.

Wrath (Gal. 5:20; Col. 3:8; 2 Cor. 12:20) Hot anger, passion, agitated outburst.

Anger (Col. 3:8; I Tim. 2:8; Jas. 1:19, 20) An abiding, settled condition of mind, often coupled with revenge.

Clamour (Eph. 4:31; Acts 23:9; Matt. 25:6) Literally, the word in Greek meant “to caw” like a crow or raven. Signifies the tumult of controversy.

Evil Speaking (I Pet. 2:1; Rom. 1:30; Jas. 4:11; I Pet. 3:16) Translated blasphemy, backbiting, speak evil, and evil-speaking. Means literally “to speak against”. Includes railing and reviling, defamation (destroying another's fame, or name), slander, contempt, etc.

Malice (I Cor. 5:8; 14:20; Col. 3:8; Rom. 1:29; Tit. 3:3; I Pet. 2:1) A vicious character. Taking all things on the evil part.

THE NEW MAN (PUT ON)

Gentleness (I Tim. 3:3; Tit. 3:2; I

Pet. 2:8; I Thess. 2:7; 2 Tim. 2:24). Equitable, fair, moderate, not insisting on rights.

Kindness (Eph. 4:32; 2 Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22; Tit. 3:4). Mild, pleasant, kind, gracious, literally that which is useable. Also translated goodness.

Soberness (Rom. 12:3; Tit. 2:4, 12; I Thess. 5:6,8; I Tim. 3:2) Self-controlled, sound-mindedness, self-restraint that governs the flesh.

Merciful (Gal. 6:16; I Tim. 1:2; Jas. 2:13; Phil. 2:1; Matt. 5:7) Compassion upon the mistakes and troubles of others, in profane Grk. meant to reconcile.

Peaceable, Quiet (I Tim. 2:2; I Pet. 3:4; Rom. 14:9; 12:18; Col. 1:20) To bring peace, reconcile, to produce tranquility, causing no disturbance to others. A characteristic of disposition (I Pet. 3:4).

Gracious, Tender Hearted (Col. 4:6; I Pet. 2:3; 3:8; Phil. 4:8; Jas. 5:11) Means compassionate, pitiful, good heartedness. Uses words that build up and make strong.

Virtue (Phil. 4:8; 2 Pet. 1:5) Whatever behavior that brings pre-eminent estimation, intrinsic eminence, moral goodness. Behavior that brings the praise of excellence from God and godly men.

In preaching this list and running the biblical references I thought of the role models we have in these qualities. Of course, there is Jesus at the top of the list with His Father. We have only to look at God's gentleness and kindness to us as sinners to realize what we have been called to. The mercy of God, His gracious and virtuous offering of His son on the cross should be an example to us to follow. The patience and sacrifice of Jesus on this earth should move us to be like minded. We have been called to a “new man”.

We can look to the Apostle Paul as in illustration and example of behavior, as he followed his Lord. Peter, the stumbling apostle, is a good example for us to emulate. A study of their lives shows a devotion to following after the “new man created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”

Yet, the role models that seem to abound today, those held up as great standards to emulate, somehow do not seem to fit the mold found in the Bible. If one is cruel and cutting to the erring, contemptuous of the weak, bitter and clamorous in denunciation of the enemy then he is held up as a

“champion of the cause.” The intemperate competitiveness of some preachers should be a source of shame rather than pride. It is no small thing that preachers in large numbers have grown discouraged in their work and some have even left the faith. It is hardly surprising that those most competitive in the upward scramble to assume the cloak of “leadership” in the universal church are often the most miserable and compulsive in their living. Some, having stretched for power and glory through carnal means find, after its acquisition, that there is nothing left to conquer, overcome subjugate. They turn to “subjugate” their wives by abuse, or find new “conquests” in seduction. It is interesting to consider how many times the quality of sexual impurity is applied to the “false teacher”. “Of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers

lusts. . . evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. . . spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices. . . for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness. . . while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption. . . there are certain men crept in unawares. . . ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness. . . for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication. . . all these evil things come from within a man, and defile the man” (2 Tim 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:13, 14, 18, 19; Jude 4; Mk. 7:21, 23). Such behavior is based in anger directed at others. It is not “love” but abuse.

Such aggressive subjugation of others is just another way of venting sinful, selfish anger.

CONCLUSION

We need to recognize that our anger is sinful and repent of it. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jno. 1:9). Instead of attempting to justify our sin we need to turn away from it and practice righteousness. The depressed person should seek the help of a spouse or close friend, even a doctor, to find the source of their anger and repent of it. In it’s place, they should start practicing the biblical alternative. You brethren who are spiritual need to encourage and rebuke brethren who are caught in the grips of selfish anger, helping them to escape the snare they are caught in.

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HUMILITY: The Forgotten Virtue

by Dalton Key

I have heard that there are two kinds of egotists: Those who admit it, and the rest of us. The unassuming nature of humility does not come easy for most of us. We boast of our achievements, our influence, our success. We come to feel that the world could not manage without us; we feel that if we hadn’t been born, people would wonder why. Those who claim exemption from the vice of pride are all too often proud of their humility. As Robert Burns said, “They are proud in humility, proud that they are not proud.”

Not long ago I overheard a member of the church boastfully exclaim, “This church wouldn’t last a week without me.” Many preachers will do everything but alter the figures to prove that their congregation’s work is going better with them in the pulpit than did with the last preacher. It is often hard to hear yourself think in public gatherings for all the horn tooting going on.

Perhaps too many of us are like

Cicero, who has been called “the greatest Roman orator.” It is said that when people heard Cicero speak, they would cry out, “Behold, how well did Cicero speak!” At one point he said, “When I write on philosophical subjects and lay my writings aside and later have occasion to return to them, I can scarcely believe that I wrote them, they sound so philosophical!” Cicero made the same mistake many of us make; he believed the many good things people were saying about him. In fact, if we believe everything that anyone says about us, it will not be long before we become bitter and ungrateful, for we will never think we are getting as much praise as we deserve.

Jesus laid down this divine principle: “For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted” (Lk. 18:14). The apostle Paul elaborates upon this principle by stating, “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is

among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3). Inspiration further admonishes us to be “clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble” (1 Peter 5:5). Paul warned the Galatians by writing, “For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself” (Gal. 6:3). “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . boasters, proud” (2 Tim. 3:1,2).

Ironic as it may sound, the greatest of all men are generally those who fail to recognize their own greatness. We agree with John Ruskin who said, “I believe the first test of a truly great man is humility.” The man who “toots his own horn” most always does so because he can find no one else to toot it for him. May we properly diagnose our haughty hearts and treat the dread disease with a generous dose of humble pie. May we be able to say with Paul, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14).



P.O. Box 563
Liberal, KS 67901



Dear Rachel

Dear Rachel:

My young son has just informed me he wants to be a preacher. I can't begin to tell you the kaleidoscope of emotions racing through my mind as that simple statement was made. The pendulum swung from that of immense pride to immense fear.

Does he realize what being a "preacher" entails? Surely, as a preacher's son he has felt the pain inflicted by busybodies who have nothing better to do than point out the shortcomings and failures of the preacher and his family. Perhaps the naivete of youth has shielded him from the pressures of being an example to be held up to others. Other members' sons may have long hair, but NOT the preacher's son! Why, even if he holds hands with his favorite girl, it is likely to cause a scandal!

He must remember the congregation which let his father go because he taught on a subject that was much needed — but unwanted. Does he remember his father being told not to step on the toes of "so-and-so" or of his family, because "they run the church here"? Does he realize how "touchy" some elders are about their bit of authority?

Could it be he was less affected by his father's conspicuous absence at family dinners and school plays than I feared? Does he remember how his father has been called out all hours of day or night to help people in distress, to give comfort, or advice, or solace for personal matters, financial crises, marital problems, and, all kinds of difficulties — for both members and non-members alike?

Hasn't he ever wondered about the lack of support — the skimping and saving and "getting by," year after year? Does he remember how the family has had to plan, and explain, and justify every single expenditure — things the average family would never think of trying to justify?

Surely he has felt the lack of privacy, the resentment of being told how to behave "since you are the preacher's son." How can brethren expect a young man to have the judgement and understanding of one who has been a Christian for fifty years?

— A Future Preacher's Mother

Dear Mother:

My heart goes out to you. You appear to be in need of an understanding ear and warm spiritual arms to embrace you. I can sympathize with your fears for the happiness of your son, for my father is a preacher, my husband is a preacher, and two of my sons have expressed the desire to become preachers.

Fortunately, God has given to children the ability to sense the truth many times without the anxiety and apprehension and "cover-ups" with which we adults are likely to view the same situation. Your son's decision to become a preacher of the gospel is a living testimony of the love and dedication you and your husband have shown for the Lord and for his people. All of the things you say are common ills of the men and the families of those who would preach. They "go with the territory," so to speak. Congregations are made up of sinful people (what other kind is there?) and we must simply accept that fact.

Remember God watches over even the sparrow; and God can be trusted to care for his own. It may help you to talk to an Elder or some older Christian whom you love and trust.

Sometimes it is good to "air the laundry" and get things out where you can take an honest look at them. And having once done that, get on with your living, and concentrate on the joys and rewards and happiness of being a Christian. Remember, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

Make it a practice to send a short letter of appreciation every time some member does something nice for you or your family. It will do them good, and will do you even more good. Charity. . . "thinketh no evil." And that word "charity" is from a Greek word. AGAPE, which means "love," but a special kind of love; not the love of parents for a child, or of a man for a woman; but the kind of love God had for Christ—and has for us; it is a love with spiritual connotation, and goes deeper than what we ordinarily think of as love.

Encourage your son to follow up his desire. Have him talk to the man who has undoubtedly been his role model, his father. Perhaps your husband can give him more positive reasons and a deeper commitment so that he will be able to stand firm, no matter what the setbacks and discouragements. Help him to build his faith through study and prayer. Perhaps in this way you can build your own faith, and can thank God that your son has made such a choice. Remember Hannah and her dedication to Samuel to the service of God.

*Love,
Rachel*

THE
BIBLE CON-
TAINS 3,566,480
LETTERS, 773,693
WORDS, 31,102 VERSES,
1,189 CHAPTERS AND 66
BOOKS. THE LONGEST
CHAPTER IS THE 119th
PSALM, THE SHORTEST AND
MIDDLE CHAPTER IS THE 117th
PSALM. THE MIDDLE VERSE IS THE
8th OF THE 118th PSALM. THE
LONGEST NAME IS IN THE 8th CHAP-
TER IF ISAIAH. THE WORD OCCURS
46,277 TIMES, THE WORD "JEHOVAH"
OCCURS 6,855 TIMES. THE 37th CHAP-
TER OF ISAIAH AND THE 19th CHAPTER
OF THE 2nd BOOK OF KINGS ARE ALIKE.
THE LONGEST VERSE IS THE 9th VERSE
OF THE 8th CHAPTER OF ESTHER; THE
SHORTEST VERSE IS THE 35th VERSE
OF THE 11th CHAPTER OF JOHN.
THE 21st VERSE OF THE 7th CHAPTER
OF EZRA CONTAINS ALL THE LETTERS
OF THE ALPHABET EXCEPT THE
LETTER "J". THE FINEST
PIECE OF READING IS
THE 26th CHAPTER OF ACTS.
THE NAME OF GOD IS
NOT MENTIONED
IN THE
BOOK OF
ESTHER. THE BIBLE
CONTAINS KNOWLEDGE,
WISDOM, HOLINESS AND LOVE.

RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

L. L. PINKERTON

Lewis L. Pinkerton was born on January 28, 1812 near Baltimore, Maryland. His father instructed him in the Presbyterian Catechism while he was young, but as a teenager he read the New Testament with the help of Wesley's notes on the scriptures. After a sermon by Alexander Campbell, Pinkerton was baptized into Christ in September, 1830.

Pinkerton settled in Butler county, Ohio in late 1831. He spent four years there teaching school and studying medicine. He married Sarah A. Ball on the 19th of March, 1831. Out of this union nine children were born. In 1835 he began his medical practice. During August of the following year he moved to Carthage, a suburb of Cincinnati. While there, he worshiped at the congregation where Walter Scott preached.

Dr. Pinkerton gave up his medical practice in May of 1838. D.S. Burnet and Walter Scott had urged him to devote his life to the proclaiming of the gospel. He spent several months working with John T. John and

William Morton in Kentucky. The following spring and summer he preached in Ohio and Indiana, working with John O'Kane and Love H. Jameson.

During the next few years he labored with several congregations in Kentucky. He began a sixteen year work at Midway, Kentucky in the fall of 1844. While there he started a school for orphan girls, with the help of James W. Parish. The school was first called the Baconian Institute. In a letter to Alexander Campbell dated June 18, 1846, Pinkerton spoke of his desire to establish a Female Orphan School. Campbell printed the letter in the *Millennial Harbinger*, and gave Pinkerton his hardy endorsement.

According to A.W. Fortune, Pinkerton's plan for the school "provided that no pupil could be received under nine years of age, or remain more than four years. This suggestion was partly due to the fact that only a small number could be received at one time, and he felt that the benefits of the school should be

shared by as many as possible; and it was partly due to the fact that it was generally believed that an elementary education was sufficient for girls" (*The Disciples in Kentucky*, pg. 236).

While living at Midway, Pinkerton also preached at Mt. Sterling, New Castle, Versailles and Paris. In 1858, while he was preparing to move to Paris, Kentucky, the Orphan School building was burned. He decided to stay at Midway and help the school recover.

The most memorable item associated with Pinkerton's name is the introduction of instrumental music into the worship of the church. "There was discussion about the right to use instrumental music in the worship before that time. Aylette Raines, who kept a diary for many years, which diary is now in the College of the Bible Library, made the following entry April 27, 1851: Brother S[aunder] wishes to introduce the melodeon into the church. The church to which he referred was Millersburg, and inasmuch as Mr. Raines was opposed to all innovations it is needless to say that the melodeon was not introduced" (*Fortune*, pg. 373). John Rogers wrote



Midway College at Midway, Kentucky



State Historical Marker in front of Midway College.

to Alexander Campbell in 1851 concerning the use of musical instruments. In a later issue of the *Harbinger*, Campbell gave his most famous quote concerning instrumental music. He said, "To all spiritually minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert."

"The introduction of the instrument owed its inception to the deplorable singing the congregation did. This singing had degenerated into screeching and brawling that would, as Pinkerton said, scare even the rats from worship. At first it was suggested that a meeting be held on Saturday night to practice the songs. Shortly afterwards, someone brought in a melodian to be used in getting the right pitch. Before long, one of the sisters was accompanying the singing with her playing the melodian. The group observed that the effect of the use of the melodeon was good on the singing, and so it was decided to try the use of

instrument on the Lord's Day worship. Thompson Parrish, son of James Ware Parrish, one of the founders of the Midway Female Orphan School, played the instrument at the worship" (*Search For The Ancient Order*, Earl West, pgs. 311-312).

A Lexington newspaper later reported, "the melodeon caused so much trouble in the Midway Church that Adam Hibler, an elder of the church, removed the 'instrument of Satan' from the church late one night with the assistance of a Negro servant, Rueben, who passed it out to his master through a window. History of the melodian for the ensuing period is obscure but it was located comparatively recently by John Rogers, a Midway historian. . . whether the melodeon was given to him or he purchased the melodeon at a sale for \$1.65, as reported by some members of his family, is not known" (*The Lexington Herald*, April 10, 1938). The melodeon is now on display in a glass case at Midway College.

For a detailed study of the reaction of brethren in that day, I suggest you read Homer Hailey's book, *Attitudes And Consequences*, pages 197 through 222.

Dr. Pinkerton sided with the Union at the start of the Civil War. In 1862, when General Bragg entered Kentucky, Pinkerton was appointed as surgeon of the Eleventh Kentucky Calvary. To add to his burden, he also held daily "prayer meetings" with the troops. During this trying time he suffered a sun-stroke, from which he never fully recovered.

During most of the time between

1866 to 1873, he was without regular employment. In 1867 he delivered a series of lectures in the Biblical Institute of Hiram College. In 1869 and 1870 he worked with Professor John Shackelford to publish the *Independent Monthly*.

In October, 1874 he became very ill. He died on his sixty-third birthday, January 28, 1875. Funeral services were conducted in the Main Street Church in Lexington, Kentucky.

President James A. Garfield said of Pinkerton, "He possessed an intellect of remarkable clearness and strength. In his religious opinions, two ideas possessed and controlled him: his strong conception of the ineffable majesty and justice of God, and his abiding trust in the condescension of love of Christ." Pinkerton's biographer, John Shackelford, said that his last audible words were "My Saviour, my Saviour, the Lord Jesus."

2612 South Villa Drive
Evansville, IN 47714



Original melodeon used at Midway. Now on display at the college.



Present building of the Midway Christian Church.

ARE YOU GRATEFUL?

by Rick Duggin

A man, playing golf, stopped and took his hat off and placed it over his heart as a funeral procession passed. His partner remarked, "That certainly was a nice thing for you to do." He said, "Well, it's the least I could do. She was the best little wife a man could hope to have for the last forty years!"

I hope this story is fictitious. Surely no one could be so unloving and disrespectful that he would consider a game of golf more important than attending the funeral of his beloved

wife.

But we all know people who are this ungrateful--and then some! No one has done more for us than our Lord Jesus Christ. He left His exalted position in heaven to live on earth as a man and die as if He were a criminal. He loved us when we were utterly unlovable (Rom. 5:6-8). He suffered a humiliating death on the cross (Phil. 2:8) for you and for me. Without His perfect sacrifice, we would be doomed for eternity in hell (Heb. 2:9; 9:22-28).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16).

But why is it that multitudes of men and women consider their recreation to be more important than attending the assemblies of saints where Jesus is worshipped and praised? If we regard one as an ingrate for forsaking the funeral of his wife for self-amusement, how must we be considered for treating our Savior with even less respect on a continual basis (Heb. 10:25). Are YOU grateful to Him?

316 Kings Highway
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

Thoughts on Phrases

by C.R. Duane

"They Were Called Christians"

In Acts 11:25-26 we find Barnabas going from Antioch to Tarsus, finding Saul, and returning with him to Antioch. "And," the inspired text says, "it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (v. 26). Since that time critics have disagreed over precisely who it was that first uttered, and thereby originated, the name Christian. Some argue that it was an invective used against the disciples by the Jews; others credit it to pagan origin; and still others believe that the disciples merely took the name upon themselves. But after careful consideration, it should be apparent to the Bible student that any of these is, at best, only a guess.

The one option that most "scholars" seem to value the least is, to me, the most worthy of our attention: viz., that it was Saul (Paul) and Barnabas who gave the disciples that worthy name, by divine instruction.

Whenever a knotty problem arises in the book of Acts, many, like myself, will consult McGarvey's *New Commentary on Acts* with a degree of veneration. There we find these words:

"To an untrained reader of the Greek it might appear that the passage should be rendered, 'they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people, and called the disciples Christians first at Antioch,' thus representing Barnabas and Saul as the authors of the name; but this rendering is condemned, and that of our text is justified by the unanimous judgement of scholars" (p. 228).

I would be the last person to disparage J.W. McGarvey's capacity as a scholar; however, there's something missing in his notes. He states his conclusion but does not proceed to justify it (beyond the "judgement of scholars"); nor did he in his *Original*

Commentary on Acts, written about thirty years before. In fact, Moses Lard criticized this silence, in his *Quarterly*, short after the earlier book had been published: "Nor has even Brother McGarvey, in his *Commentary*, recently from the press, grappled with the subject as we have reason to hope he would" (Vol. 1, p. 262).

In an article entitled *Criticism of the Holy Scriptures*, Lard, who was hardly an untrained reader of the Greek, argued strongly for the following alternate rendering of verse 26:

"Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to seek Saul; and finding him, he brought him to Antioch. And it happened that for a whole year they were brought together in the church, and taught a large crowd, and called the disciples Christians first in Antioch" (Vol. 1, p. 261; emphasis mine, crd).

By carefully reading this verse and comparing it with your own New Testament, two pertinent differences are evident: 1) the passive form of the verb "call" (*chrematidzo*) becomes active; and 2) Saul and Barnabas are the subjects of that verb and, thereby, become the ones who called the disciples Christians.

Besides McGarvey and Lard, other pioneer preachers differed over the meaning of this phrase. In an earlier written exchange with Alexander Campbell, Professor James Shannon of Christian University (Canton, Mo.) drew the same conclusion as Lard. He too pointed out that not only the active verb form but also the original word order linked Saul and Barnabas to the act under consideration:

"That chreematisai is the first aorist, infinitive active, connected by the enclitic conjunction te with didaxai, and together with it, governed by egeneto, will hardly be denied; so that, be its meaning what it may, the same persons who taught much people, also chreematised the disciples

Christians, first at Antioch" (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1858, p. 454).

Though a little more technical than I'd like for this kind of article, Mr. Shannon well makes the point that whoever did the teaching (*didaxai*) also did the calling (*chreematisai*) namely, Saul and Barnabas.

The word translated "were called" in our text is found elsewhere in the New Testament eight times (cf. Matt. 2:12 & 22; Lk. 2:26; Acts 10:22; Rom. 7:3; Heb. 8:5; 11:7; 12:25). It is rendered, "to warn," "to reveal," or "to be called." Arndt and Gingrich primarily define *chrematidzo* "1. of God (to) impart a revelation or injunction or warning" (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 893). A concurrent examination of all New Testament uses of the word will bear out the above definition - i.e., that it is always used with respect to a divine communication. In six instances *chrematidzo* is rendered passively from the passive verb form; and once it is rendered actively from the active form (cf. Heb. 12:25). However, on two separate occasions our English Bible translates this verb passively from the active form (cf. Rom 7:3 and our text). In neither of the latter two cases is this necessary.

Most commentaries, in an attempt to uphold the passive rendering in Acts 11:26, appeal to Romans 7:3 for proof: "she shall be called (*chrematisei*) an adulteress." But even here translators unnecessarily assume the passive idea for the verb. In the context of verse 3 Paul began by saying that "the law (*nomos*) hath dominion (*kurieuei*) over a man for so long time as he liveth" (ver. 1). The "law" is the subject of the active verb; it is that which has dominion over the man. By allowing the "law" to be its antecedent, which is perfectly permissible, *chrematidzo* is able to retain its active sense: "So then if, while the husband lives, she be joined to another man, the law will call her an adulteress. . ." This is certainly the meaning in either case, but we feel the above to be clearer and more accurate.

Some have objected that, if Saul and Barnabas did do the calling in Acts 11:26, then *chrematidzo* cannot possess the sense of divine instruction, since there would be a human mediation involved. But as we have seen in Romans 7:3, the law called the woman an adulteress. Was not Moses the mediator of that law and God

speaking through him? In Luke 2:26 the Lord admonished (same word) by the Holy Spirit, in Acts 10:22 by an angel, and again in Heb. 12:25 by Moses. Can He not do the same by His New Testament apostles and prophets? God spoke so many things through them (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10-13); surely He could call the disciples Christians first in Antioch, in much the same way, through Barnabas and Saul.

Probably the most perplexing of all questions is, Why have all the accepted translations and most lexicons retained

the passive "were called"? For this we cannot produce a satisfactory answer. Perhaps we're wrong and have overlooked something quite obvious (though we don't believe we have). The aforementioned Professor Shannon offered a somewhat trenchant remark, which the reader may take or leave as he so desires:

"I have scorned in this investigation to rely on the great names, or the authority of lexicographers, who have frequently done little else, so far as the New Testament is concerned, than to

copy with the utmost servility the blunders of King James' version" (Millennial Harbinger, 1858, p. 569).

With Messrs. Lard and Shannon we basically agree, that Saul and Barnabas called those earlier disciples Christians at Antioch. Hopefully, we've not confused you, the reader, beyond repair but have, on the other hand, provided some helpful thoughts that will assist you in further study of this controversial phrase.



Life and Laughter

I'll Answer It

Don Fischer of Sabetha, Kansas, passes on this story: "When our son was about three, we had just sat down at the supper table and he was beginning our prayer for the food when the phone rang. A big thing at that age was to answer the phone since his sister, two years older, also liked to answer it. He stopped in the middle of starting the prayer, ran for the phone and my wife and I had tears in our eyes from laughing when we heard him say as he answered the phone, 'Our Father in Heaven...'"

Willie Nelson On The Mind

Keith Parker of Iowa Park, Texas, recently explained how he became impressed with the fact that everybody in the congregation where he preached was "country." A trademark seemed to be a disc of Skoal in the hip pocket, a pair of cowboy boots, and a radio blaring the country-western songs of the day.

It even carried over into the worship services of the church when a visiting song leader who had grown up in the community, introduced the one who had been designated for the first prayer of the morning by saying, "And now Willie Nelson will lead us in prayer!" His name was really Willie Rushin, one of the deacons.

A Preacher's Life

Just imagine, if you can, the feelings of a certain gospel preacher who visited an East Texas church on a Wednesday evening some time ago. He was finally prevailed upon to preach, and the congregation was informed that the usual class meetings would be suspended for that particular evening. An aged brother, being called upon for prayer followed his usual routine: "We thank Thee, Oh Lord, for this opportunity of coming together to study and learn more of Thy Word-- Oh, just a minute, Lord, on second thought, I believe we are going to have a visiting preacher tonight..."

Waiting In The Maternity Ward

Three expectant fathers were waiting in the father's lounge of the hospital. A nurse came and said to one of them, "Congratulations! Your wife has just delivered twins!"

"Wonderful," he said. "And that's such a coincidence. I worked with public relations with the Minnesota Twins ball team."

The next nurse came and said to another of the expectant fathers, "Big News! Your wife just had triplets!"

"Great!" he said. "That's another coincidence. I work with the 3-M Company."

The third man grabbed his hat and said, "Let me out of here. I drive a truck for the 7-Up Company!"

A Modern Wedding?

Things are really getting complicated at wedding rehearsals for some liberal families. It goes something like this: "The groom's stepmother comes in with the groom's father, next comes the groom's mother with the groom's stepfather. Then the bride's stepmother comes in alone, of course, because the bride's father will be with the bride. And lastly, the bride's mother enters with the bride's stepfather."



"Want to know what I learned at Sunday School this morning, Hypocrite?"



Could we have a moment of prayer together before you look at my report card?

HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

NO MORE 'WOES' FOR GARRY MOES AS AP REPORTER IS REINSTATED

Garry Moes' woes are over, now that he's been reinstated as Montana's government reporter for the Associated Press. Moes had been demoted to desk editor several weeks ago.

Moes was demoted after his religious faith came to the attention of his employers. The *Montana Christian*, an independent religious newspaper, printed a feature story about Moes in which he was described as a "beacon in a national media outlet which is agnostic and atheistic."

In the *Montana Christian's* feature story, Moes said he had been censured earlier by the AP bureau chief and ordered not to write anything about abortion for a two-year period. This censure came about after Moes' father, chaplain of the Montana House of Representatives, delivered a prayer at a pro-life rally. The same day his wife was observed standing in the crowd at an anti-abortion rally. Other journalists observed this and complained to the AP Bureau.

His dismissal took place after some local press questioned his objectivity. When the Associated Press received word of the story they removed Moes from the capitol beat, pending review by the New York AP office.

Moes attorney, Douglas Alexander, said the Associated Press was in violation of Montana law forbidding discrimination on the basis of religion. With additional help from John Whitehead's Rutherford Institute, a religious civil rights law firm, Moes filed a one million dollar grievance against the Associated Press. AP's New York office soon reinstated Moes to his capitol beat.

Moes was pleased to be reinstated to his former position. He called his struggle "A crucial issue involving

religious freedom and journalistic ethics. The victory was especially pleased in that we had to make no concessions whatsoever to receive just satisfaction. It was unfortunate that my remarks in the *Montana Christian* interview were intercepted by some in the media to be an admission that I deliberately distort the news to conform to my Christian views."

Moes continued "The truth is that I merely acknowledged that I have a personal religious starting point as all news personnel have. My own personal religious base is a Christian one and I believe that it is a base from which truth, justice and fairness are served."

Montana Christian publisher Ernie Lambright said that in reviewing the case, the AP indicated opposition to being labeled "agnostic and atheistic." Lambright supports his assertion, however, by quoting from a Lichter and Rotheman survey of national journalists in which half of journalists polled claimed no religious affiliation, while only eight percent said they attended church regularly; 86 percent said they felt adultery was morally acceptable. The Lichter and Rotheman study concluded the media is "much less religious than the general public."



BAN ON PRO-LIFE PICKETING OVERRULED BY MICHIGAN HIGH COURT

In an act which overruled two lower courts, the Supreme Court of Michigan on Nov. 1 unanimously dissolved a temporary restraining order which had prohibited Father Eduard Perrone, a Catholic Priest, and all others from

picketing within 500 feet of specified abortion clinics in Detroit and nearby Livonia.

The injunction had been originally issued by Circuit Court Judge Lewis Simmons in a suit brought against Perrone and others by abortion clinics seeking business damages of \$10,000 and punitive damages of \$100,000, in addition to an injunction. When Joe Scheidler and others from the Chicago-based Pro-life Action League picketed the clinic after Perrone had been ordered to stay away, Judge Simmons extended his injunction to all demonstrators at the specified clinics.

Scheidler objected to the judge's actions, saying "Are courts to be toadies of abortionists? The decision makes the law simply a matter of taste. Constitutional rights have been removed by judicial fiat. Following such a precedent could be reason for prohibiting free speech from anyone in any manner." The state's Supreme Court apparently agreed, and dissolved the order which it said was "overbroad and improperly infringes on the exercise of the defendants' First Amendment rights of free speech and assembly."

FALWELL LOSES LIBEL CHARGE BUT WINS \$200,000

A jury determined that *Hustler* magazine publisher Larry Flynt did not libel Moral Majority leader, Jerry Falwell, in an ad parody portraying him as an incestuous drunkard, but awarded Falwell \$200,000 for damages.

The offending ad, a parody of a Campari liquer ad, was entitled "Jerry Falwell talks about his first time," quoted Falwell as saying he "always gets sloshed" before preaching, and described a fictional sexual encounter with his mother in an outhouse. Falwell sued for libel, asking \$45 million in damages arising from the

twice-published ad.

After more than six hours of deliberation, the federal jury determined Dec. 8 that Flynt and his distributing company must pay Falwell \$100,000 in punitive damages, and \$100,000 in compensatory damages for emotional stress.

Falwell said "Our attorneys feel that the jury's verdict in my favor was a landmark ruling. While the \$200,000 awarded to me from Larry Flynt is not insignificant, it is overshadowed by the finding that the First Amendment is not absolute."

Falwell's attorney said he expects to appeal the jury's decision that Falwell was not libeled by the ad parody. Flynt's attorney said he plans to appeal the jury's award to Falwell.

Falwell said "If the ruling is upheld, no longer can a pornographer or sleaze merchant falsely and maliciously inflict emotional anguish upon a public figure whenever he wishes to do so."

PRIESTS FIGHT AT BETHLEHEM

It was no "Silent Night" at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem last month as Greek Orthodox and Armenian priests scuffled briefly while cleaning the church building for the holidays.

The brawl began after one group of priests began wiping a wall of the church building that the other group believed was their responsibility. The ensuing brawl over the right to wash the wall was stopped only after police were called in. Officials did not say which group of priests started the fight. One priest was injured in the fracas, but his name and the state of his injuries were not released by authorities.

COLORADO VOTERS PASS AMENDMENT PROHIBITING ABORTION FUNDING

Colorado's voters have approved a state constitutional amendment prohibiting public funding of abortion. The amendment, which prohibits spending public funds "either directly or indirectly" to pay for abortions, passed by about 10,000 votes - just over the one percent that would require an automatic recount.

The vote on the amendment was close throughout election day, and the amendment looked like a loser through the morning after election day.

Colorado Governor Richard Lamm has hailed the amendment's defeat the previous evening, but pro-life voters in rural areas of Colorado were able to reverse the trend and pass the amendment.

Pro-abortionists have promised a court test of the amendment, charging that it was vaguely on the ballot so that pro-abortion voters did not know what a "yes" or "no" vote would mean.

FIVE STATES LEGALIZED GAMBLING DURING NOVEMBER ELECTION



More states adopted legalized gambling in 1984 than during any other single year in American history. Five of seven states with gambling on the ballot voted to legalize various forms of gambling.

The only victories for anti-gambling forces were casino votes in Arkansas and Colorado. Voters in Hot Springs, Arkansas and Pueblo, Colorado, turned down proposals to adopt a wide-open gambling status which would permit casinos to operate.

State lotteries were adopted by California, Missouri, Oregon, and West Virginia. Lottery forces, led by Scientific Games, Inc., an Atlanta-based lottery products corporation, spent about \$1.6 million in California, and an estimated \$250,000 in Oregon to promote legalization of a state lottery.

Missouri voters approved pari-mutuel gambling as well as a state lottery. Gambling proposals in Missouri had met with strong opposition. Opponents there were disappointed when pari-mutuel gambling remained on the ballot even after gambling proponents were shown to have included fraudulent signatures in their petition drive for a state initiative on horse-race gambling.

Anti-gambling spokesman Larry Braidfood of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission noted that five of seven gambling proposals in this election were placed on the ballot by the initiative process, bypassing the state legislatures. "The gambling industry seems to have discovered the most effective technique for getting the issue before the voters. With this initiative process the deliberation of elected officials is circumvented. Hearings are not held; factual information is not

amassed. The issue becomes one where voters are wooed with mass sums of money pumped into a promotional campaign by the gambling forces."

Braidfood anticipates still more gambling initiatives in the next election. "The level of intensity was high this year, but that is nothing compared to what we will encounter in 1985. If we do not begin now to prepare for this challenge, the results will only worsen."

FAITH HEALER DIES; WAS UNDER INDICTMENT IN DEATH OF FOLLOWERS

Dr. Hobart Freeman, a faith healer who told his 2,000 member Faith Assembly to seek God's healing rather than medical aid, died Dec. 8 of broncho-pneumonia and cardiovascular disease.

Freeman had been indicted in the Sept. 16 death of a Warsaw, Ind., girl who died after her parents refused to seek medical attention for her illness. Had he lived, Freeman would have stood trial for her death.

Freeman, 64, taught that medicine was evil, and is alleged to have told his followers that he "could not die." More than 90 deaths have occurred in his Faith Assembly since the early 1970's; Freeman attributed these deaths to a "lack of faith."

Once a teacher at Grace Theological Seminary in Winona Lake, Ind., Freeman was known as a brilliant Bible teacher. Freeman changed later in life; one former church member recalls that when questioned "he rebuked us and told us that we were not to question or criticize the appointed."

The coroner who performed the autopsy said the illness that kept Freeman bedridden for a month was treatable, but said he could not be certain that Freeman's death was preventable.

Freeman was buried Dec. 10; because of Faith Assembly custom, no mourners attended his burial. Freeman's son-in-law, Steve Hill, is favored for future leadership of the Wilmot-based church.

FLORIDA COLLEGE PLANS ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

The thirty-ninth consecutive lectureship at Florida College is scheduled for January 28-31. The theme for this year will be "Humanism: Devotion To Man." The

lectures have become a popular occasion for former students, prospective students, and other interested visitors to visit the campus in Temple Terrace, Florida. Attempts are made to have variety in age, experience, and style in the speakers for these lectureships. The schedule for this year looks like this:

Morning Lectures: Tuesday

- 9:00 Jesus and Darwin
David A. Eakin
- 10:00 The School System: Values Clarification.
Ward E. Ellsworth
- 11:00 The Christian and Human Rights
Daniel Burton
- 12:00 Divine Ethics in a Corrupt Society (The Prophets)
Homer Hailey

Morning Lectures: Wednesday

- 9:00 Jesus and Marx
Melvin Curry
- 10:00 Media Manipulation
Guy E. Warner
- 11:00 The Sanctity of Human Life
John H. Haley, Jr.
- 12:00 True Wisdom in an Age of Folly (Wisdom Literature)
Homer Hailey

Morning Lectures: Thursday

- 9:00 Organized Humanism
Allan Turner
- 11:00 Situational Sexual Ethics
Mike Willis
- 12:00 Reacceptance of Separateness
Connie W. Adams

Evening Lectures

- Monday 7:30 Sound the Alarm: the Threats of Humanism
James P. Needham
- Tuesday 7:30 Reconsideration of Private Education
John L. Clark
- Wednesday 9:00 Recovery of Family Life
Bob Buchanon
- Thursday 7:30 Constancy in Times of Conflict (Book of Revelation)
Homer Hailey

A variety of classes will be available to visitors at 8:00 a.m. Tuesday through Thursday.

If you have any questions or need

any further information, write to President Bob Owens, Florida College, Temple Terrace, FL 33617.

ONE IN TEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NEW YORK HOOKED ON ALCOHOL



One in ten high school and junior high school students in New York State described themselves as "hooked" on alcohol in a recent survey. The survey, which was conducted for the state's Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, estimated that of the state's 1.5 million secondary-school students, 53 percent had been drunk at least once in the last year.

One student in ten reported getting drunk weekly; 13 percent said they had attended classes while drunk. Of students in grades 7 through 12, 83 percent said they had tried alcohol; in grades 10 through 12 that figure jumped to 92 percent. Students who described themselves as heavy drinkers (at least five or more drinks weekly) were less successful academically.

The responses of New York students indicate a more liberal attitude toward drinking than survey results from other states. While 15 percent of students questioned in national surveys described themselves as heavy drinkers, about 20 percent of New York students said they were heavy drinkers.

PROCTOR AND GAMBLE STILL FIGHTING RUMORS OF LINK WITH CHURCH OF SATAN

Procter & Gamble Co., manufacturers of Crest toothpaste, Tide detergent, and Ivory soap, is fighting once again to keep its public image clean amidst charges that the corporation is somehow supporting the Church of Satan.

Similar rumors circulated two years ago, passed on primarily by evangelicals and fundamentalists. According to these rumors, Procter & Gamble donates some of its profits to the Church of Satan, and the "moon and stars" logo used on many P&G products is a sign of Satan.

Satanism rumors began to plague the nation's largest household product manufacturer in the late 1970's. When calls about the alleged ties to the Church of Satan peaked at 15,000

per month in 1982, P&G fought back. The company arranged testimonials from noted clergyman, including Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell. Lawsuits were filed whenever a rumor could be traced to its source, and within a year the company thought it had the problem licked.

But last month Procter & Gamble got 5,000 calls from people concerned about a possible link to Satanism; more than 1500 of these calls came from Western Pennsylvania. And the largest single source group for these rumors, according to P&G, is Catholic priests and nuns.

Company officials aren't sure where the rumors are originating. Many Catholic clergy who helped spread this destructive rumor in Pennsylvania learned of the charges through an anonymous flyer left in mailboxes. The flyer repeats old charges about donations to the Church of Satan and evil origins of P&G's corporate trademark, and adds a claim that the company's president appeared on the nationally-syndicated Phil Donahue television show to discuss his company's support for the Church of Satan. The leaflet claims that the company president told Donahue that his company's ties with Satanism wouldn't hurt sales because "There aren't enough Christians in the world to make a difference." Actually P&G's president John G. Smale has never appeared on the Donahue program.

Procter & Gamble is using a security team headed by former FBI agent James Jessee to track down sources of the Satanism story and vows to sue anyone responsible for spreading the rumors.

TERMINALLY ILL CAN REFUSE LIFE SUPPORT, COURT SAYS

Terminally ill patients have the right to refuse life support, and doctors who withhold medical treatment from such patients at their request are free from liability for their deaths, a California court has ruled.

In a unanimous decision a three-judge panel of the Second Court of Appeal ruled that refusal of treatment is a "constitutionally guaranteed right which must not be abridged."

This decision has nothing to do with euthanasia or "mercy killing"--it is strictly a right to withhold treatment. An injection to end life is still considered murder.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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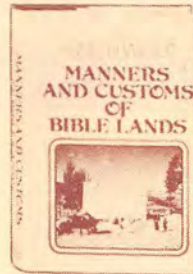
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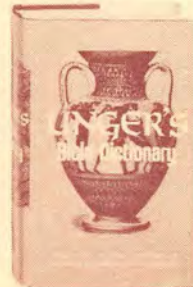
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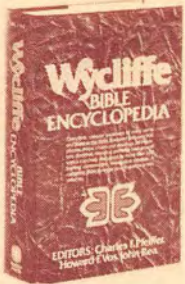
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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

February 1985

Number 2

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, CLARIFIED

by Michael Garrison

It is not at all unusual to find people who have some serious preconceived ideas and misconceptions about the church of Christ and those who are members of the body of Christ. These false ideas come about, at least in part, because of denominational preachers telling all manner of lies and rumors about us. Then, people hear what these false teachers say and accept without question what is said as fact.

I wish to clarify some of the many misconceptions people have, but I will not be able to cover all points wherein people are misinformed. There will be no particular order in which these misconceptions are covered, although some will logically follow a related item. I hope that what I will point out will be received by those with honest and good hearts and that some will believe and obey the truth in the matter.

Don't Believe In Music

We are often accused of not believing in music in our worship assemblies. Such is not true. We believe in the music commanded and authorized by the New Testament. In Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16,

the command is to sing, not play. The ones who wish to abide in the Lord (John 15:4) will not deviate from what He has commanded.

Think Only Preachers or Elders Should Baptize

Any Christian can baptize a penitent believer. In II Timothy 2:2, Paul told Timothy, "*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*" Timothy was no doubt familiar with Paul's teaching concerning baptism (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27, etc.) and may have even known some Paul had baptized at Corinth (I Corinthians 1:14 & 16). He would commit this, not just to other preachers, but to other faithful men, who would then commit it to others. It may well be that most prefer the preacher who taught them to also baptize them, but that is their choice.

Believe In Water Salvation

Some will tell just about anything if they think their hearers will believe it. No Christian or preacher of the truth, to my knowledge, has *ever* taught that salvation is in the water! We believe and teach just what the scriptures say:

that when one obeys the Lord by being baptized (Matthew 28:19) in water (Acts 8:36), it is "*for (in order to) the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38). But, the power to remit sins is not in the water, nor in the one doing the baptizing, but in the "*faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him (Christ) from the dead*" (Colossians 2:12). If anyone does teach the power to save is in the water, they are wrong and teaching error.

Believe In 'Baptismal Regeneration'

Of course, the ones making this charge do not inform us what they mean by "baptismal regeneration." They are good about setting up "straw men" so that they can tear them down. What we do teach, is that in order for one to be saved, God has required that one believe (John 3:16; 8:24); repent (Acts 2:38); confess Christ before men (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10); and be immersed in water for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36; 22:16). Belief, repentance, and confession are works men must do and baptism is what the penitent one must submit to. One is not saved by baptism only; nor faith only; nor repentance only; etc. But, one is saved, born

again, when he obeys ALL of the Lord's commands. See Hebrews 5:8-9. Unless you have submitted to ALL of Christ's words, you have not been saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8).

Think Only Members of Your Church Will Be Saved

I suppose members of the church of Christ believe about this similar to what most believe: that the only ones the Lord will save are those who have done the Lord's will. Since the Lord's will involves only one body, and the body is the church (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:20) and since Jesus is the saviour of the body (Ephesians 5:23), then I must find the body or church which pleases the Lord in doctrine, faith, and practice.

Related to this is the accusation that Your Church Is Just A Denomination

The church one reads of in the Bible was not a denomination. I believe all who have much Bible knowledge will agree with that. The church one learns of in the Bible had no earthly headquarters; denominations of men do have such. The church of the New Testament had no man-made creeds, disciples of faith, manuals of church government, nor catechisms, etc. Since the word "creed" means "I believe," the creed of the church of the New Testament was the scriptures written by the inspiration of God. That is all the church of Christ abides by today. We want all men to do away with their man-made creeds and return to the words of the apostles so that all can be one in Christ (John 17:20-21). Is not this desirable?

Related to this misconception is the idea that we

Think the Church Saves

Many have the unfounded idea that members of the church of Christ believe that the church is that which saves. Such is another false idea. We know the church is not the saviour, Jesus is! But, what is Jesus going to save? In Ephesians 5:23, we learn that Jesus "is the saviour of the body." The body is the church (Ephesians 1:22-23) and there is "but one body" (1 Corinthians 12:20; see Ephesians 4:4). When one obeys the gospel, the Lord adds him or her to His body, the church (Acts 2:47). No, the church doesn't save - it is the saved.

Don't Believe In Caring For Orphans or Widows

We are falsely accused of not

believing in taking care of orphans and widows. Such is another misconception. In James 1:27, Christians are told, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Note the word "himself" in this verse. In verse 26, James mentions "man," "his tongue," "his heart," and "this man's religion." He is speaking to the individual Christian, not about the work of the church. When individual Christians see orphans and/or widows in need, we are to help them. The church may indeed help "widows indeed" (1 Timothy 5:16) but otherwise, "let not the church be charged" (1 Timothy 5:16). If everyone who desired to adopt a child were able to get one or more, all orphanages would be out of work! If all who were responsible for mothers, grandmothers, etc., who needed their help and did what God expects of them (1 Timothy 5:8 & 16), there would be no need of widows' homes and such. Don't be deceived when you hear that we don't believe in caring for certain ones!

Somewhat related to this charge is the charge that we

Don't Believe In Education

This charge comes about because we will not take from the church treasury and send money to build or maintain schools and/or colleges of various kinds. We see no authority in God's word for the church, which we are told is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15), to maintain human organizations. If the Lord had wanted His body, the church, to train preachers and teachers in a man-made institution, He would have given orders for it. Since He gave His body no such orders, we do not support human organizations. The church, as the Lord organized her, is sufficient to do whatever He has authorized.

CONCLUSION

I know this article will not do any good to those who have closed their eyes and ears to the truth. I know some will continue in their prejudiced way. Members of the church of Christ will continue to be evil spoken of and called "Campbellites," "antis," "believers in water salvation," and other such nonsense. But, being persecuted, maligned, and cursed has always been the lot of the faithful few who follow the Lord (see Matthew 10:22 & 25; II

Timothy 3:12), and will continue to be. Let us who are the faithful ones not let the words or actions of others cause us not to continue faithful unto the Lord. Jesus told us, "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" (Matthew 10:28). If we are faithful to the Lord, He has promised blessings beyond human ability to really comprehend. (See Revelation 3:5; 21:2-7; 22:1-5.)

If you have any questions or comments about this article or other Bible subject, let us know. We want to help you grow in the knowledge of the Lord.

This material is available in tract form. Single copies are free and may be ordered from the author. Or you may order 25 copies for \$3.25.

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A CHRISTIAN

by R.C. Smart Sr.

It is difficult to define a Christian. It is possible to determine those prerequisites that constitute conversion or the change from sinner to saint.

The mind is changed by evidence accepted from unbelief to belief or faith. Godly sorrow softens the heart and produces repentance, a change of attitude or will. He humbly submits his will by obeying the requirement of being baptized. At this point he is raised to walk in newness of life, to grow in grace and knowledge.

Do we judge him for what he is or what he is striving to be? At no point is his journey from earth to heaven is he "saved" in the calvinistic "once saved always saved" sense.

However, by walking in the light, staying in a penitent state of mind, he is cleansed by the blood of Christ, so at that point he is in fellowship with God, "saved" if you will.

Appreciate us for what we are striving to be, the progress we have made, and encourage us to continue.

As the little girl in the cartoon says, "be patient, God isn't finished with me yet."

P.O. Box 109
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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

HUMAN SEXUALITY

We live in a sex-saturated society. Everywhere one turns, sex is being used to attract attention or entertain. It is used to sell everything from home products to paperback books, music, clothes or even bulldozers. Even things as innocent as toothpaste have been advertised with the subtle promise of giving you "sex appeal." One TV commercial producer has said that the strongest appeal that any commercial can have is to appeal to the sex instinct and desire in a person. He says, "If I can appeal to that, I know I can sell my product." Television networks make no secret of their attempt to win the ratings-war with plenty of sex, sex, and more sex. The craze has even hit professional football, with teams scrambling to put the prettiest, sexiest, and scantiest-clothed cheerleaders on the side line.

The most wide-spread effect of this sexual revolution has been on the attitudes of some of our wives and daughters, who are now wearing clothes that are either too short, too thin, too tight, too low in the neckline, or too revealing in other ways. Naturally, all of this emphasis on sex is reflected in our lives. Many couples are living together without the benefit of marriage. Rape is becoming epidemic in many cities. Figures on abortion and unwed mothers are becoming impossible to calculate. Venereal diseases are widespread. Homosexuals are claiming to be "coming out of the closet" and advocating an "alternative lifestyle." We can safely say that sex is America's national god.

Business men traveling that have tried it all, bored housewives that are contemplating adultery, frustrated teen-agers that are asking "to bed or not to bed," the adolescent that's watching their bodies change, engaged couples wondering why they should wait, married couples that have lost part of the excitement they used to have, middle-aged couples turning to porno books and films, or

the homosexual who wonders about themselves and their lives--it is the judgment of God that they need to know what to do to become a Christian and how to live after they become one.

People are confused on the subject of sex. What the world needs (and even many members of the Lord's church) is the proper view on this subject. I am not advocating a return to the Victorian ethics of the 1800's, when all sex (even in marriage) was considered only a necessary evil, and even the word itself was not mentioned in public. But one does not have to go to one extreme in order to avoid another. The silly puritanism of a past generation and the "Playboy," "free love," or "anything goes" philosophy of today are destructive extremes that miss the biblical concept of sexual ethics. Our society has not tried the Biblical view of sex. It has never been tried. I am willing to preach and/or write on this subject with no apology--and I do it with faith. We should be happy to discuss anything that God has created. The Bible, God's Word, deals with every relationship from the cradle to the grave. No volume upon the earth deals so intimately with life and its ramifications as do the holy inspired writings of the prophets and the apostles.

DIFFERENT LEVELS

It seems that people live on one of three levels in the way they view sex:

The first of these is **instinct**. This is where a person says, "I have a desire and I will satisfy it." An animal has instincts. An animal will satisfy its desires with any animal, any where, at any time. Some people only know the physical side.

A second level is **obligation**. The only way to have a child is through sexual relationships, therefore it is a necessary evil. Some believe that because they have sexual desires that those are bad feelings, that sex is dirty and that it's ugly. They believe bad people enjoy it, but fine people (especially Christians) do not. The view that says sexual relationships between husband and wife are ugly, dirty, or unwholesome and to be experienced with guilt is never found in the Bible. There is not one single inference or deduction of that point of view.

The third level is what I simply call **understanding**. When our bodies start changing from adolescence into adulthood, there are developing those organs designed for marriage--the sex organs. All of this is God-designed, wholesome and good. **Sex is not a dirty word**. Just to mention the word, however, causes faces to turn red and some people to become very astonished. For too long this subject has been completely ignored or lightly touched upon from pulpits across this land. Teachers have shunned the subject for fear of "embarrassing the brethren" or being thought of as "crude or dirty minded." We are going to have to speak on it often enough and factual

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enough that people learn that God created us male and female. He provided in the relationship of marriage for a man and a woman to express thru their sexual relationship the essential oneness of their union.

God made man from the dust of the earth and for the man created He a woman (Gen. 2:18). As said earlier, the sex urge is of God. He wove this urge to be fulfilled only as regulated by the law of the Creator in marriage. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and the wife, and were not ashamed" (Gen. 2:24-25). "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. . ." (Gen. 1:28).

God purposed that from this union should come forth the beautiful wonder of birth. But sin entered into the world and the sins of man have perverted this natural instinct God placed in man. The sex urge is a source of power like electricity. When under control it will work wonders. When out of control it will be wild and destructive. The individual is the only controller of this urge. Possibly you have seen trucks on the highway with a sign "DANGER--HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE." When these explosives are properly directed and channeled, they are useful. So it is with sex.

God never intended for us to live on the level of instinct or obligation. Understanding is the Biblical view. It is rooted in Genesis, solid in Matthew, and found in Paul. It hits the target in the 20th century.

GIVEN FOR MAN'S GOOD

The Bible is not ashamed of sex. It uses plain (but respectable) language to describe the sexual functions of men and women--even the physical pleasure that it brings. A look at Proverbs 5:1-2, 15-21 will show that sex is not dirty, but one of joy. The Hebrew writer said, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. . ." (Heb. 13:4). There is nothing cheap and ugly, but an act held in honor. It's a matter of purity and something right before God.

We did not just evolve into sexual beings. It was given of God. The satisfaction of sexual desires in marriage is the responsibility of both husband and wife. Some think sex is just something that men think about. Notice that Paul said, "Let every man have his own wife and every woman have her own husband" (I Cor. 7:2). There are women who have physical needs that would make it better for them to marry just as there are men who could not contain themselves. Here is a need that existed on both sides. Paul said, ". . .to avoid fornication"--MARRY. The Bible clearly portrays sex as a very natural and beautiful function that men and women should enjoy. To place unnatural restrictions on it, or to degrade all sex as "a necessary evil," is to pervert a sacred institution give for man's good.

That is not to say that the Bible blesses unrestricted sex. It portrays sex as lovely, pleasant, meaningful, etc. **only within the bounds of lawful marriage.** All adultery, fornication, homosexuality, promiscuous divorce and remarriage, and even adulterous thoughts, are flatly condemned as perversions of the divine purpose for sex (see I Cor. 6:9-10, 18; I Thess. 4:3-5; Matt. 19:3-12; 5:27-32). Only a permanent marriage bond can provide the emotional and mental security that makes the physical act

truly rewarding.

A BATTLE OF FLESH AND SPIRIT

The Bible sets an extremely high standard for sexual behavior. To live by that standard has never been easy. God made the sex drive intense to insure the survival of the human family, but He requires that it be satisfied only under severely limited circumstances--namely, within rightful marriage. The sexual impulse must otherwise be checked, curbed, and reined in. No where is the battle between flesh and spirit more hotly contested than here. The flesh wants unrestricted freedom to take its pleasures where it can find them, while the spirit knows that the laws of God and the views of decent people of society must be respected. More souls are tortured by lust, or, on the other hand, weighed down by guilt, than anyone knows about.

Yet we must not think of God as a fiend who delights in setting a roaring fire within and then condemns us when we quench it. In the first place, sexual immorality does not quench the fire of lust--it fuels it. Fornication and adultery are addictive. The man reading this pornographic literature or watching the X-rated movies never gets enough. Like all addictions, they are easier to prevent than to cure. Sexual activity is no more a treatment for inordinate desire than whiskey is a treatment for alcoholism. Therefore to envision the high-principled individual as living in misery while the person of low morals follows the smooth road of easy virtue is a ridiculous distortion of the situation. If anything, the truth lies entirely in the other direction. Immorality breeds pain, heartbreak, and wretchedness. Purity brings a sense of self-worth and dignity. God has put a fence around the mountain because He knows what is best for us. His aim is not to keep us from experiencing pleasure, but keep us from seeking pleasure at times or in ways that can only create even great pain.

SEX EDUCATION

Much has been said over the past twenty years over sex education in the public-school system. My opposition to it has been because they would teach the biological facts, but teach no morals with it. They would teach it only on the level of instinct. If we want our children to have a good view of sex, we must have one and then pass it on to them.

There are many elders, preachers, teachers, and parents who will not teach what God has said about sex! Some are embarrassed to do so; others are too ignorant on God's Word to tell the facts on it. There is little doubt that many of our problems in the church of our Lord are existant because we have tried to act like an ostrich and just bury our head in the sand. This is not going to eliminate the high divorce rate or unhappy homes. We've got to get back to the Book!

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“CREATOR”

Heb. Word: bore'ekha

Meaning: your creator, creators

In Ecclesiastes 12:1 a young man is encouraged to remember his Creator in the days of his youth. The word creator is actually a plural form, **bore'im**, plus a suffix, **KA**, meaning “your.”

There has been much discussion about plural usage in reference to Jehovah and I do not think myself qualified to answer all the questions that can be raised concerning this Old Testament phenomenon. But here is a thought or two.

Why do passages like Eccl. 12:1 say, literally, “creators” instead of “creator”? There are those who say this is simply a “plural of majesty.” When the Queen of England speaks formally she is always saying, “We do this,” or “We think that.” She is just using the plural to show that in theory, at least, reigning sovereigns are bigger than common people. I think it goes back to the idea of the divine right of kings. God and the king or queen are supposed to be doing the talking. Or maybe it means that the reigning personage is speaking for the whole people. Is that what the Bible intends in places where it uses the plural of a word that identifies God?

If so, I find it remarkable that it is used in some of the places it is. We are familiar with Gen. 1:1: “*In the beginning God created*” (**’elohim**, pl. “gods”). And here in Eccl. 12:1 we read about the Creator (**bore'im**, “creators”). I suppose these could be fitted into the category of plurals of majesty.

But what of Prov. 9:10 in which the word holy is used in a parallelism with the word Lord (**Jehovah**)?

“*The fear of the Lord (Jehovah, singular) is the beginning of wisdom:*

And the knowledge of the holy (kedhoshim, plural, holy ones) is understanding”

Why did the wise man use a plural word, **kedhoshim**, to parallel a singular one, **Jehovah**? Truly, I am not scholar enough to say for certain. But I think I

am student enough to say that a door stands open which no man can, as yet, shut. Our God is without question a trinity of persons. And I am not qualified to say that these plural usages are not an indication of this fact. It will change nothing of the nature of God if they are plurals of majesty, but who is prepared to say without question that this is so?

“WILLINGLY”

Heb. Word: milbo

Meaning: from his heart

This word is actually a combination of two words and a suffix: the preposition **min**, from; the noun **lev**, heart; and the suffix **o**, of him. And so our word is really a phrase: “from the heart of him.”

A few days ago I was reading the Book of Lamentations in which Jeremiah mourns the fall of Jerusalem (586 B.C.) and the wretched state of all the people of Judah, including himself, thereafter.

No doubt it is hard for those of us who have not lived through the destruction of our homeland to appreciate the horror depicted in the Lamentations. Those of us who have not seen our children tossed from spear to spear, nor seen our wives and sisters raped before our eyes, nor felt the humiliation of total defeat and subsequent enslavement at the hands of a merciless invader can scarcely know what Jeremiah felt as he penned this saddest book of the Bible.

But each of us has his burdens to carry and his sorrows to bear. And along with suffering humanity of all the ages we are made to wonder why certain tragedies can befall us and how long it will be before we can laugh or smile again.

And it is a great comfort to read in Lamentations 3:33 that “*he doth not afflict willingly*” (i.e., from his heart). God did not rejoice over the agonies through which Judah was passing. It had never been in **His heart** for such horrors to be borne by men. But the sins of the nation had made this severest of disciplinary measures

unavoidable (Jer. 18:6-10).

Every evil and source of heartbreak in the world today is directly or indirectly the consequence of sin. If old Adam had kept his place, perhaps we would have kept ours as well. And we could yet be living in Eden. But it is not so, and we must live with the consequences of his sin, our sins, and the sins of others. Between Eden and Heaven there is many a rough and painful road to travel (Acts 14:22). The whole creation has been subjected to vanity (Rom. 8:18-23).

But it will be helpful to all of us as we wait for the dawn of a new day in a world without tears to know that any discipline our sovereign Creator sees fit to allow into our lives does not come from His heart. It is His “*strange work*” (Isa. 28:21), what Martin Luther called the work of His left hand. It is for our good, however bitter and painful it may be for the present (Heb. 12:5-13). And it will be over in due time, “*For the Lord will not cast off forever*” (Lam. 3:31).

“STUMBLE”

Greek Word: ptaio

Meaning: slip-up

William Barclay says this word means “to slip-up” (*Daily Study Bible*, James, **in loc.**). It is used four times in the New Testament. In Rom. 11:11 Paul talks about the Jews who are guilty of rejecting Jesus. They have “stumbled, slipped-up.”

In James 2:10 we are reminded that one minor “slip-up” brings the weight of the whole law down on us: “*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*” I believe he says this to help us see how important it is for us to have a merciful “law of liberty” through the work of Christ (Jas. 2:12).

In 2 Pet. 1:10 we are exhorted to add the seven graces a Christian needs to cultivate: *Virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity*” (1:5-7). He says if we do this we’ll never “slip-up” (1:10).

But in Jas. 3:2 we are reminded that none of us escapes slipping-up: "*For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man...*"

Our lives are full of slip-ups. Some are deliberate, and some are not. Our speech is ample testimony to this truth.

How easy it is to say the wrong thing! How difficult to find just the right word. And catastrophic sometimes are the consequences of our slip-ups in speech.

This word should teach us at least two things: 1) To be on guard against the sins that are so easy to slip into: 2)

To be thankful to God for his unspeakable kindness in redeeming a hopeless race of slipper-uppers (Rom. 7:24-25).



3646 Highway 96 W.
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ADAM AND EVE: REFLECTION

by Mark E. Williams

Eve picked up her crying infant and began to nurse him absent-mindedly as she looked at the sun almost setting on the horizon. She was getting hungry and wished Adam would hurry up with the produce from the field.

The evening became chillier and she pulled her sheepskin coat closer around her. She reflected upon the beauty and warmth of the coat that God had made for her--He loved her in so many ways--yet she remembered the time when she had not needed a coat against the cold, and when she had not been ashamed of her nakedness. It had been a wonderful time of innocence and love. She couldn't remember any time that she had ever worried about food in the garden. Every time you wanted something to eat you just reached up for it. And the work that they had done had been so beautiful. She remembered the bridge that Adam and she had built over a rocky stream; how they had planted masses of daffodils (her favorites), around the bird baths. Their work had been so creative, but now their work seemed to center around keeping hunger at bay. But oh, how they prayed to God now! They hadn't realized how much they needed Him before.

In fact, more and more every day, Eve saw how foolish she had been to doubt God's love. That evil snake had told her in his roundabout devious way that God was taking advantage of them by keeping them ignorant. That

thought had never occurred to her before. When God would walk and talk with them in the garden they had never viewed Him with suspicion. He was their loving Father. They had laughed with Him and showed Him all of the beautiful ways that they had tended the garden. Eve smiled at how proud God had been of them and how much they had loved each other. She missed those days, aching inside to see God again.

She remembered that terrible day when she believed the snake's lies about how uncaring God was. She had also given the fruit to Adam to eat. She cringed when she remembered how awful it had felt to have guilt enter into one's body. She had been so ashamed of her naked body, though even after they had covered their bodies up, they had still felt too ashamed to face God. He would know that they had doubted His pure love. And what they had expected! They had expected annihilation, to be blasted into oblivion, to die that very day, as God had promised. But no, instead two sheep had died, from which God had made clothes to cover their shame. Eve had cried when she realized two sheep had died for her and Adam, but what a relief that someone or something else was paying for their transgression. That evil snake's head would one day be crushed, and all his hateful lies would end.

Her baby stopped nursing and

looked up at her smiling. The truth that she would tell her children was that God loves them. She would warn them not to listen to lies about God. He loves you. He only let you be born so that He could love you. She held her child close.

Adam approached the hut along the path that he traveled every day. His lower back ached from stooping over the rows of green beans and red leaf lettuce. He carried a sack of vegetables home for dinner. He hoped that Eve still had some garlic and onions left! His mouth watered.

Adam stopped at the door of the hut and as his eyes adjusted to the darkness he saw that Eve was hugging their child. He remembered the beautiful love they had shared in the garden. He also remembered the hurt in Eve's eyes when he had blamed her for the transgression--as if he had slapped her across the face.

"Any food?" Eve asked.

"Yes. God made these grow for us." Adam showed her the sack. Eve began eagerly to prepare the meal.

"It seems we depend more on God now, than when we were in the garden," Eve remarked.

"Yes, we do." Adam kissed his son. "And when our bodies die, we'll go live with Him again."

"Oh, won't that be beautiful? Especially now that we appreciate Him more." Eve snapped the green beans rapidly into a bowl.

"Yes. We didn't know we needed Him so much. We must make sure we teach our son that God loves him."

Eve smiled. "I was just thinking about that today." She stopped snapping beans and looked out the door at the growing dusk. "One day God will send someone from my seed to crush the snake's head."

"Yes," Adam replied. "What a great day that will be."

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Thoughts on Phrases

by C.R. Duane

"From Faith To Faith"

Romans 1:16-17 is one of those well-known and oft-quoted passages that most aspiring gospel preachers commit early to memory and utilize regularly. Grubbs called it, "The Fundamental Thesis of the Epistle" (p. 33), and rightly so; for many wonderful lessons have been preached on "*the gospel. . . the power of God unto salvation.*" In that gospel, Paul goes on to say, is the righteousness (i.e., justification) of God revealed "*from faith to faith*" (v. 17). Just what does Paul mean by this last phrase? In our own investigations many explanations have been offered. Let's look at a few before endorsing just one.

For example, several of the more modern translators, who subscribe to the "dynamic equivalence" method (i.e., idea for idea instead of word for word), have set forth a variety of paraphrases of this phrase. The *New English Bible* says it is, "*a way that starts from faith and ends in faith;*" J.B. Phillips renders it, "*a process begun and continued by faith;*" and the *New International Version* reads, "*a righteousness that is by faith from first to last.*" The way in which the word of God expands and multiplies at the hands of these linguistic craftsmen is truly amazing. Four little words (corresponding to four in the Greek) promptly become eight, and it is doubtful whether their interpretation is any closer to the meaning. There are no Greek words to sustain such expressions as "begun and continued," "starts. . . and ends," and "first to last." They are simply translator-filler to accommodate a particular interpretation, which makes these versions better commentaries than translations. If I understand them correctly, "*from faith to faith*" merely means a lasting faith and, depending upon their theological bias, quite possibly, **faith only.**

Another effort to explain this passage attaches the prepositional phrase "from faith" to the verb

"revealed." That is to say then, "the righteousness of God is revealed from faith," thereby suggesting that our faith has something to do with bringing about God's revelation. Grubbs candidly addressed this matter:

"Meyer and some others strangely connect it (from faith, *crd*) with the verb revealed. But his effort to explain this appears unintelligible to me. (. . .) We accordingly agree with Meyer when he says that the revelation spoken of is designed to produce faith, but fail even to comprehend him when he says that righteousness is revealed in the Gospel from faith and that the revelation spoken of proceeds from faith. While faith, in all cases, proceeds from revelation, we can not see how revelation can proceed from faith in any sense of the word" (pp. 37-38).

One can only guess at the purpose of this kind of reasoning. It has been taught, and still is by some, that faith is a miracle wrought by God in the heart of the sinner. Until such a time as God works this miracle, man is said to be completely helpless and totally unable to believe the gospel. Perhaps the notion is that, once God has placed that faith in the heart, the individual then realizes (i.e., it is revealed to him) that he is justified by the gospel of Christ. This, however, is contrary to the Scriptures, which teach that the preached gospel is to produce faith (cf. Mk. 16:15-16) and that faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17).

A third explanation I've often heard in sermons is that "*from faith to faith*" really means "from the faith to our faith," equating the first "faith" with the **system** of faith, the gospel (cf. Acts 6:7; Jude 3). This would have Paul saying: "For in the gospel is revealed a righteousness of God **from the gospel** in order to faith in us." This is a feasible interpretation, but ought to be rejected for two reasons. In the first place, it is an unwarranted assumption in such a close context.

Paul has plainly used the word "*gospel*" in verse 16, and it supplies the antecedent for "*therein*" of verse 17. Paul has also spoken of man's personal faith in both verses ("*to every one that believeth*" and "*to faith*"). Though I readily admit that "*the faith*" frequently refers to the gospel in other passages, here it would be exceedingly confusing to the reader, since one's personal faith has already been mentioned. Secondly, it should be noted that, unlike Acts 6:7 and Jude 3, the definite article "the" is lacking in both the English and Greek texts of this phrase. It is simply "*from faith*" (**ek pisteos**). If Paul had meant "the faith," why didn't he say so? He was certainly acquainted with this mode of expression (cf. I Cor. 16:13; Gal. 3:23; etc.). To assume that Paul really meant **the faith**, when he didn't actually say it, is certainly nothing more than just that, an assumption.

In order to fully understand what Paul is talking about, let's view the seventeenth verse in its entirety:

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith."

Like every good preacher, though he possessed full apostolic authority, Paul backed-up his teaching with a quote from God's word. In this instance it was from Habakkuk 2:4, "*Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*" Here we should be careful to notice that "*by faith*" and "*from faith*" are translated from the same original (**ek pisteos**). Therefore, when Paul says that "*a righteousness of God*" is revealed in the gospel, he is also telling us **how** that righteousness is obtained, "*by faith.*" **"If these are placed in their natural or regular order, the Apostle would say that in the Gospel 'a righteousness of God by faith is revealed in order to faith' "** (Grubbs, p. 36). MacKnight, in his translation, with this agrees: "**For the righteousness of God, by faith, is revealed in it, in order to faith**" (p. 57). Stated simply, the gospel reveals a righteousness (i.e., justification) which is **by faith.**

What then is the sense of the expression "to faith?" As already hinted above, this also refers to man's faith, but with a **reactionary** force. In other words, it is the desired response to the gospel proposition of

justification by faith. So if we ask, "Why has God, in the gospel, made known justification by faith?" Paul replies, "in order that men might believe and be justified!" Lard, whose *Commentary on Romans* has been described as harder to understand than the epistle itself, is right on the mark when he says,

"In the gospel is revealed God's justification by belief, *eis pistin*, for belief; it is revealed for, or to induce a certain end, to induce belief. Surely there is nothing difficult here. As a motive to induce men to believe, God reveals to them that if they will believe he will justify them" (p. 45).

With these thoughts on this phrase immediately before us, there remains one duty left undone—viz., verification.

Do the Scriptures support our claim? I believe they do. When the Philippian jailer asked his two prisoners, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" their reply was, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." And upon hearing the word of the Lord, which Paul and Silas then spoke to him, he demonstrated his repentance and was baptized; and the text goes on to say that he "rejoiced greatly. . . .having believed in God" (cf. Acts 16:30-34). Our point here is that when told that salvation was by faith in Christ, the jailer believed. Again, when it was revealed to him (in the preached gospel) that justification was by faith, he was motivated by that knowledge to believe.

Justification by faith is a very good reason for believing in Christ. And in

the words of the prophet, such is the gospel's plea: "as it is written, 'Now the just by faith, shall live'" (**The Living Oracles**, p. 287).

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PRIDE: A SPOILER

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

Pride has ever been man's great problem. It obviously began in Eden. (Gen. 3 and 4) The Old Testament wise men wrote of it often: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). The Lord warned repeatedly, ". . .Whosoever shall exhalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exhalted" (Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14). Other writers of the New Testament were used to warn of its consequences: ". . .God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6; I Pet. 5:5, 6).

One might think that man should have learned by this time. However, a movement's observation and reflection is all it takes to reveal the hurt, disappointment, strife, enmity, despair and error that springs from an inordinate pride. Religious people who profess to be students of the Bible and believers of its inspiration and veracity are certainly not immune from its evil effects. In fact, some contend they are the greatest culprits. We do not here argue the point. It remains that the Lord will abase all those who need to

be brought down.

One facet of the encroachment and result of intemperate pride is desire evident in the speech and conduct of some (former) gospel preachers to gain acceptance and praise of those who are enemies to the faith of Jesus. This concerns us greatly. Why does this condition exist at all? God knows! We suggest one possibility. Some may have deceived themselves as a result of a faith that did not grow and push down roots strong enough to resist the onslaughts of pride. Such danger is obviously evident in Paul's admonition to the Colossians: "and this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 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" (Colossians 2:4-8).

When Gospel preachers begin to associate brotherly with false teachers and adopt denominational jargon to express themselves, even though a vain attempt is made to justify with an appeal to semantics and tolerance, an alarming trend is indicated. When men become more concerned with human philosophy and enticing words than with the pure, simple, and narrow religion of Christ, spoilage and vain deceit are readily evident.

It is true there is nothing innately wrong with some expressions such as "Receive the Lord Jesus into your hearts" and "Witnessing or testifying for the Lord." However, the general understanding of those who use these statements is a misunderstanding of God's way of salvation. To adopt religious language which results from erroneous doctrine will not cause others to learn truth. There is surely a difference in using a word, phrase or statement which although not found verbatim in the Bible, nevertheless, conveys a scriptural concept and in using that which in common usage communicates error.

The Lord's people must remain steadfast in the faith and thus separate from the world (II Cor. 6:17, 18) in order to please Him. The growth of the Lord's church is not calculated by numbers gained as a result of capitulation to vain worldly pride.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- JOY

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

In a previous article we discussed the fruit of love. Now we notice the second fruit - joy. The New Testament is a book of joy and the Christian's life should be filled with rejoicing. The word "chairein," which means to rejoice occurs seventy-two times, and the word "chara," joy, appears sixty times in the New Testament. It is a command that can be obeyed, for God never commands man to do something that is impossible.

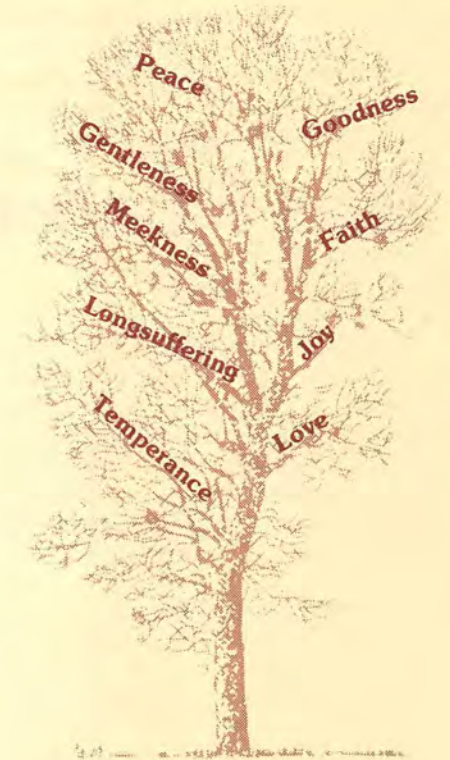
There are many things about which we should rejoice, though by the appearance of many Christians, you might think that they had little about which to be happy. A little girl asked her mother if she was happy. Her mother growled "Sure, why do you ask such a thing?" The little girl said, "If you are, I wish you would tell your face!" When Christians go around like their religion disagrees with them they should not expect others to be attracted to it! If you take a bite of food and "turn up your nose," don't pass it to me - you have already told me that I do not want it!

But, someone says: "I cannot be happy in my situation." The fact is that our external situation cannot indefinitely destroy our happiness. The unhappy person has formed a habit of complaining, rather than of rejoicing, and his circumstances have little to do with it. The apostle Paul was in prison, not knowing whether he would live or die, and wrote one of the greatest books on rejoicing - Philippians. The theme of the book may be summarized thusly: "I rejoice; rejoice ye!" At least seventeen times in the four chapters he used the words "rejoice," and "joy." (See: 1:4,18,25; 2:2,17,18,28,29; 3:1; 4:1,4,10).

The Philippians were commanded to "rejoice in the Lord" (3:1; 4:4).

Their rejoicing was not to be simply in good health, material prosperity, family and friends, but "in the Lord." Every child of God should seriously consider this command: "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). The only thing that dampened Paul's joy in the Philippians was the little strife that existed between two of the women there (Phil. 4:2). He told them that they could "make full" his joy by being "of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). The Psalmist said: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133:1). We might add that one of the greatest destroyers of joy among Christians is strife. Though some seem not to be happy unless they are causing strife, surely they cannot really enjoy that manner of life.

We should rejoice when the lost are saved. When the Pharisees and scribes condemned Jesus because he ate with sinners, he told three parables which showed God's attitude toward the lost being found. He, in essence, said that He had to go to heaven to find someone to rejoice with him when the lost were saved! "I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). "Even so, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (v. 10). The elder son represented the self-righteous Jews who felt no joy when the lost turned from their sins. Brethren, do we rejoice when the lost are saved? Do we rejoice with those who are baptized into Christ and those who are restored to the Lord, or do we walk out the door and go home as



usual?

There should be joy in the heart of one who has obeyed the gospel. The Ethiopian heard the truth and Philip baptized him into Christ. Afterward, he "went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). He had received a good conscience by being baptized into the death of Christ (1 Pet. 3:21; Rom. 6:3,4). When a person knows that he has done what God commanded, he has reason to rejoice.

The Bible even commands us to rejoice in temptation and hardships. "Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proving of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2,3). Jesus endured the cross because he knew the end result. "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and hath set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). There is no delight in suffering itself, but the end result is good, if we use it properly, therefore we can rejoice even in suffering.

The natural, or carnal, mind cannot produce this fruit. Our fleshly feelings say to grumble when things are not going as we like, or when we have some persecution, but the Spirit says "rejoice always." Since our joy is rooted in Christ and not changing external circumstances, we have the

source of joy which the world cannot know. Yes, there are valleys of despair, but we have the source of joy in our hearts and can rise to the mountain

peaks of joy. Ultimately, we will reach the place where there is *"no mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more"* (Rev. 21:4). That hope should brighten any

downtrodden heart!

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The Perfect Church

by L. Scott Mann

You have probably noticed that churches, like people, have distinctive personalities. There are warm churches & cold churches, friendly churches & aloof churches, dead churches & active churches--every kind you are able to imagine. These "personalities" are our perception of the attitude of the aggregate - all of the people who compose the church. When one speaks of a "warm church" he is not speaking of the meeting place, i.e., the building, but the people who assemble at that building. In Revelation 2 & 3 we read of seven different churches, each having a different personality, some imitable and others not. But whatever the church, if it is patterned after the N.T., it is somewhere on the road striving to be that elusive group that everyone looks for: the perfect church!

THE IDEAL CONGREGATION

Wouldn't it be wonderful to be part of **that** church? The perfect church! It has qualified elders and deacons. Elders who truly oversee the flock watching for souls. They visit those who need encouragement and admonition. They are active teachers both to Christians and non-Christians. The deacons are busy with their responsibilities so as to insure that everything is conducted decently and orderly. Every member of that church loves every other member in the same manner in which they love themselves. When the natural conflicts that stem from working together arise they quickly go to one another and listen to one another with humble hearts. When they are angry they do not sin.

But there is more to the perfect church than just people who are at peace. One has little doubt but that the church in Sardis lived peaceably (Rev. 3:1 ff); they were dead! In the ideal church, every member attends every service that he or she possibly can. Each Christian studies his Bible daily with a mind to applying it to himself. In the perfect church, each individual prays to his Heavenly Father without

ceasing. The giving of this church reflects true cheerfulness and purpose of heart. Each is a true example of believers and homes & marriages are patterned after the Word of God. In this church, doctrinal purity is not an option; the true Standard, the Word of God, is followed in word and deed.

The elders of this church are men of vision. They are able to foresee the needs of the flock far in advance of problems. The preacher is a perfect example of the things he teaches just as Paul admonished Timothy to be. Every member is busy leading others to Christ understanding that true disciples bear the fruit of souls won for the Lord.

The perfect church exhibits all of these Scripture qualities and more yet that church has never been found on this earth. It does exist, however, **in Heaven!** Hebrews 12:23 tells us that we have come to *"spirits of righteous men made perfect"* Spoken while the words of Hebrews 11 (the heroes of faith) were still fresh on the minds of the readers we can understand that those whose spirits have been made perfect are those righteous who have died and gone to be with the Lord. We won't find the perfect church until we join them. What a grand day that will be when we can rest from our labors and join with that mighty cloud of witnesses who have gone before us.

THE SOLUTION

Then where does that leave us who must live with churches and people who are less than perfect? The answer is three-fold.

First, each of us must remember that we too are less than perfect. We regard others with humility of mind (Phil. 2:3) because we too make mistakes, sin, and are in need of forgiveness from God and from our fellow man. This humility will better enable me to help others (Gal. 6: 1,2) and keep me from sin.

Second, we can each determine what part we are going to fill in this church. Every member in a local church fills one of two roles within that church: either he is part of the problem and involving himself in sin, or he is part of the solution and striving to keep himself unspotted from the sinful

world. Though you will never find yourself in the perfect church on this earth you will fit one of these roles. You can be a part of the problem or a part of the solution to problems. You can handle each difficulty according to the Scripture. You can study as you ought and teach your children the Will of God. You can attend every service faithfully because you love your Father in Heaven. You can teach your neighbor and be an example of a true Christian. Where have you fit in the work of this church? Regardless of your past actions determine to be a part of the solution in making this a church as God would have it. Be a working member of this body (I Cor. 12); there are no vestigial organs in the body of Christ!

Last, you can expect the best from yourself and every other member of this church. Bad churches do not become such by accident; they are bad because no one ever expected any better of them. Be a follower of Christ and expect others to do so as well. When they do not, restore them in the spirit of gentleness and forgive them as they repent. A church will never rise above the vision and goal it sets for itself. If we drift along complacently excusing our sins and those of others saying, "that's just the way we are" **that's just the way we will be!** Let us build one another up to make better Christians of one another by doing what God said. Be part of the solution - the workers - not the problem.

Almost all of the epistles of the New Testament were written because of "imperfect" churches. However, they were also written in order to help those churches overcome their problems. Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia and Thessalonica all needed to improve in their doctrinal purity, their love for one another and their love for God. Churches had need for growth and maturity then and they do now. This fact should not lure us into complacency but spur us on to greater things with the help of Christ through His Word. Let us grow and strive to be a perfect church and pray that we may all live perfected together in Heaven.

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The Kings of the Divided Kingdom

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KINGS OF JUDAH	AGE AT CORONATION	DATES OF REIGN	LENGTH OF REIGN	CHARACTER	PROPHETS	REFERENCES
1. Rehoboam	41	931/30 -- 913	17 y	Bad	Shemaiah	1 Ki. 12:1-24 1 Ki. 14:21-31 2 Ch. 10:1 -- 12:16
2. Abijam (Abijah)		913 -- 911/10	3 y	Bad		1 Ki. 15:1-8 2 Ch. 13:1-22
3. Asa		911/10 -- 870/69	41 y	Good	Azariah Hanani	1 Ki. 15:9-24 2 Ch. 14:1 -- 16:14
4. Jehoshaphat	35	[873/72 -- 870/69] 870/69 -- 848	25 y	Good	Jehu Jahaziel Eliezer	1 Ki. 22:41-50 2 Ch. 17:1 -- 21:1
5. Jehoram (Joram)	32	[853 -- 848] 848 -- 841	8 y	Bad	Elijah OBADIAH?	2 Ki. 8:16-24 2 Ch. 21:1-20
6. Ahaziah (Jehoahaz) (Azariah)	22	841	1 y	Bad	Elijah	2 Ki. 8:25-29 2 Ki. 9:14-29 2 Ch. 22:1-9
7. Athaliah		841 -- 835	6 y	Bad		2 Ki. 11:1-20 2 Ch. 22:10 -- 23:21
8. Jehoash (Joash)	7	835 -- 796	40 y	Good	Zechariah JOEL?	2 Ki. 11:21 -- 12-21 2 Ch. 24:1-27
9. Amaziah	25	796 -- 767	29 y	Good	Man of God A prophet	2 Ki. 14:1-22 2 Ch. 25:1-28
10. Azariah (Uzziah)	16	[792/91 -- 767] 767 -- 740/39	52 y	Good	Zechariah ISAIAH	2 Ki. 15:1-7 2 Ch. 26:1-23
11. Jotham	25	[750 -- 740/39] 740/39 -- 732/31	16 y	Good	ISAIAH MICAH	2 Ki. 15:32-38 2 Ch. 27:1-9
12. Ahaz	20	[735 -- 732/31] 732/31 -- 716/15	16 y	Bad	ISAIAH MICAH Oded	2 Ki. 16:1-20 2 Ch. 28:1-27
13. Hezekiah	25	716/15 -- 687/86	29 y	Good	ISAIAH MICAH	2 Ki. 18:1 -- 20:21 2 Ch. 29:1 -- 32:33 Isa. 36:1 -- 39:8
14. Manasseh	12	[697/96 -- 687/86] 687/86 -- 643/42	55 y	Bad		2 Ki. 21:1-18 2 Ch. 33:1-20
15. Amon	22	643/42 -- 641/40	2 y	Bad		2 Ki. 21:19-26 2 Ch. 33:21-25
16. Josiah	8	641/40 -- 609	31 y	Good	Huldah JEREMIAH ZEPHANIAH NAHUM HABAKKUK	2 Ki. 22:1 -- 23:30 2 Ch. 34:1 -- 35:27
17. Jehoahaz	23	609	3 m	Bad	JEREMIAH HABAKKUK	2 Ki. 23:31-34 2 Ch. 36:1-4
18. Jehoiakim (Eliakim)	25	609 -- 598	11 y	Bad	JEREMIAH HABAKKUK	2 Ki. 23:34 -- 24:7 2 Ch. 36:5-8

19. Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) (Coniah)	18	598 -- 597	3 m	Bad	JEREMIAH	2 Ki. 24:8-17 2 Ch. 36:9-10
20. Zedekiah (Mattaniah)	21	597 -- 586	11 y	Bad	JEREMIAH	2 Ki. 24:18 -- 25:7 2 Ch. 36:11-21
KINGS OF ISRAEL	AGE AT CORONATION	DATES OF REIGN	LENGTH OF REIGN	CHARACTER	PROPHETS	REFERENCES
1. Jeroboam I		931/30 -- 910/09	22 y	Bad	Ahijah Man of God	(1 Ki. 11:26 -- 12:20) 1 Ki. 12:25 -- 14:20 (2 Ch. 10:1-29) (2 Ch. 13:1-20)
2. Nadab		910/09 -- 909/08	2 y	Bad		1 Ki. 15:25-28, 31
3. Baasha		909/08 -- 886/85	24 y	Bad	Jehu	(1 Ki. 15:27-32) 1 Ki. 15:33 -- 16:7 2 Ch. 16:1-6
4. Elah		886/85 -- 885/84	2 y	Bad		1 Ki. 16:8-10, 14
5. Zimri		885/84	7 d	Bad		(1 Ki. 16:9-13) 1 Ki. 16:15-20
6. (Tibni)		885/84 -- 880	4 y			1 Ki. 16:21-22
7. Omri		[885/84 -- 880] 880 -- 874/73	12 y	Bad		(1 Ki. 16:16-22) 1 Ki. 16:23-28
8. Ahab		874/73 -- 853	22 y	Bad	Elijah Micaiah	1 Ki. 16:28 -- 22:40 2 Ch. 18:1-34
9. Ahaziah		853 -- 852	2 y	Bad	Elijah	1 Ki. 22:51-53 2 Ki. 1:1-18 2 Ch. 20:35-37
10. Jehoram (Joram)		852 -- 841	12 y	Bad	Elisha	2 Ki. 3:1-27 (2 Ki. 4:1 -- 8:15) 2 Ki. 9:14-26 2 Ch. 22:5-8
11. Jehu		841 -- 814/13	28 y	Bad	Elisha	2 Ki. 9:1 -- 10:36 2 Ch. 22:7-9
12. Jehoahaz		814/13 -- 798	17 y	Bad		2 Ki. 13:1-9
13. Jehoash (Joash)		798 -- 782/81	16 y	Bad	Elisha	2 Ki. 13:10-25 2 Ki. 14:8-16 2 Ch. 25:17-24
14. Jeroboam II		[793/92 -- 782/81] 782/81 -- 753	41 y	Bad	JONAH AMOS HOSEA	2 Ki. 14:23-29
15. Zachariah		753 -- 752	6 m	Bad	HOSEA	2 Ki. 15:8-12
16. Shallum		752	1 m	Bad	HOSEA	(2 Ki. 15:10) 2 Ki. 15:13-15
17. Menahem		752 -- 742/41	10 y	Bad	HOSEA	(2 Ki. 15:14) 2 Ki. 15:16-22
18. Pekahiah		742/41 -- 740/39	2 y	Bad	HOSEA	2 Ki. 15:23-26
19. Pekah		[752 -- 740/39] 740/39 -- 732/31	20 y	Bad	HOSEA	2 Ki. 15:27-31 2 Ch. 28:5-8 Isa. 7:1-9
20. Hoshea		732/31 -- 723/22	9 y	Bad	HOSEA	(2 Ki. 15:30) 2 Ki. 17:1-41

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

II KINGS

by David McClister

The Old Testament book of II Kings is probably one of the most neglected books of the Bible as far as regular Bible study is concerned. Perhaps the book receives so little of our attention because at first glance it appears to be little more than a mass of short episodes connected only by the fact that they are parts of Israel's history. But there is more to II Kings than meets the eye. Because of its great variety, and the fact that it is an inspired and authoritative account of a very important part of Israel's history, II Kings is an interesting, informative, and morally practical document. II Kings is a very significant part of the Old Testament, full of lessons for us today, and it deserves our attention.

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

II Kings was really not meant to be studied as an independent piece of historical literature, but is the continuation of the story of I Kings, which itself takes up where II Samuel ends. Thus II Kings is an integrated segment of Israel's inspired historical literature, and it should not be approached apart from its historical background. As a matter of fact, I and II Kings are one book in the Hebrew Old Testament.

The book begins with the rebellion of Moab against Israel, which is dated at approximately 850 B.C., while Ahaziah was on the throne in Israel. A valuable archaeological find, the Moabite Stone, confirms from a secular source the historical trustworthiness of the Bible here. Ahaziah was the son of Ahab, who with his wicked wife Jezebel, had brought God's displeasure against Israel. Ahaziah was the eighth king of Israel. II Kings then proceeds to record the fall of the northern kingdom, Israel (dated to 722 B.C., the fall of the capital city Samaria), the last days of the kingdom of Judah, and finally the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the Babylonian captivity.

The book ends with a picture of Jehoiachin, one of Judah's last kings, in prison in Babylon. Thus II Kings covers about 280 years of Israel's and Judah's combined history, and relates the stories of the reigns of twelve of Israel's kings and fifteen of Judah's kings, not to mention several important prophets.

For the sake of clarity I shall present this survey according to the kings of Israel, the kings of Judah, and the work of Elisha and Isaiah, rather than follow the chronological order given in II Kings.

KINGS OF ISRAEL

Ahaziah was a Baal worshipper like his parents. One day he injured himself and inquired of Baal whether or not he would recover. Through Elisha God informed him that he would die because he had turned to an idol for help instead of turning to God. The king died after a reign of about a year. **Jehoram**, Ahaziah's brother, then came to the throne in Israel. During his reign Israel crushed the Moabite rebellion and, with the help of Elisha, was able to escape defeat when the Syrians had blockaded the city of Samaria. The Syrian siege of Samaria had been so severe that it actually led some to cannibalism, but the Syrians were miraculously fooled into retreating and the inhabitants of Samaria fed on the provisions which the Syrians had left behind. In a later battle against Syria Jehoram was wounded, and he went to the city of Jezreel to recover. While he was recovering **Jehu** was anointed to be Israel's next king and he was ordered to kill the remaining members of Ahab's family as God's punishment against Ahab for his idolatry. Jehu cleverly executed this order and also killed the king of Judah, Ahaziah. Then Jehu executed a clever plan by which he killed the worshippers of Baal in Israel and destroyed Baal's temple.

But the virtue of this act was negated by the fact that he turned to worship the golden calves at Dan and Bethel. Jehu died after a twenty-eight year reign. **Jehoahaz** was Israel's next king. Like his forefathers, he continued in idolatry. God then punished Israel and as a result Israel lost much land and almost all of its army in battles against the Syrians. The next king, **Jehoash**, also continued in idolatry. During his reign Elisha died, but just before he died he prophesied that Jehoash would defeat the Syrians. Of course, the prophecy was fulfilled and Israel regained much of their land. After this there was a brief civil war with Judah in which Judah was defeated as a punishment by God against its idolatry. **Jereboam II** had a lengthy reign of forty-one years. Under his reign Israel enjoyed a measure of rejuvenation because God pitied them under their punishment. So Israel regained even more land and enjoyed a period of relative peace. The peace was abruptly shattered when **Zechariah** and **Shallum**, the next two kings, were murdered by their usurpers after very short reigns. **Menahem's** reign marked the beginning of the Assyrian threat to Israel. This king paid a heavy tribute tax to Assyria in order to keep Assyria from invading Israel. **Pekahiah**, the next king, was murdered after a reign of only two years. The reign of **Pekah** was a period of crisis for Israel. Under his reign the Assyrian captivity of Israel began and there was more civil war with Judah. This king finally died at the hand of his usurper, **Hoshea**. Hoshea found himself in the unpleasant position of being vassal king under Assyrian threat, so he made a secret alliance with Egypt in an attempt to rebel against Assyria. The king of Assyria, Shalmaneser, learned of this and besieged Samaria, and took away the Israelites into captivity.

KINGS OF JUDAH

As II Kings opens, **Jehoram** is on the throne in Judah. In order to protect

his position as king, Jehoram killed his six brothers, along with others whom he feared were rivals to his throne. He was also an idolater, and as punishment God allowed foreign nations to revolt against Judah. Jehoram died after an eight year reign. **Ahaziah** then came to the throne of Judah. He was killed by Jehu, king of Israel, after reigning only one year. His mother then killed off all of his brothers and tried to reign as a queen over Judah, but one child, **Jehoash**, was saved. After six years of hiding from the queen, Jehoash was placed on the throne by means of an armed revolt led by a priest named Jehoiada. Thus Jehoash became king at the age of seven, and, mainly through the direction of Jehoiada, Judah enjoyed peace and reduction of idol worship. The temple was also repaired. But later the king took the temple gold and gave it to the king of Syria, because he feared that the king would invade Jerusalem. Jehoash's (also called Joash) forty year reign came to an end when he was murdered by his own servants. This brought **Amaziah**, Joash's son, to the throne. Amaziah killed his father's murderers and was successful in defeating Edom in battle, but his successes made him proud. He issued a challenge to the army of Israel, and in the brief civil war that followed the army of Judah was severely beaten and Jerusalem and the temple were partially sacked. Amaziah was eventually killed in a conspiracy against him, just as his father had died.

The next king was **Azariah**, who was also called **Uzziah**. Azariah allowed idol worship to continue in Judah, so God smote him with leprosy. This brought his son, **Jotham**, to power. All that is recorded of this man in II Kings is that he, like his father, allowed idolatry to continue, and that he built the upper gate of the temple. After a reign of sixteen years, his son **Ahaz** became king. Ahaz was a godless man who, when Judah was being attacked by the Syrians, turned to the Assyrians for help instead of turning to God. Ahaz also had a great liking for the Assyrian religious trappings, and had an altar built in Jerusalem to match the one he had seen in Assyria. In so doing he rearranged, and thus defiled, the temple. The reign of his son **Hezekiah** was much better. Hezekiah was extremely devoted to God, and he destroyed idolry in Judah

and rebelled against the Assyrian dominance. Because of his rebellion the Assyrian king Sennacherib invaded Judah and threatened to destroy Jerusalem. But Hezekiah relied upon the word of God which was delivered through the prophet Isaiah, and the city was saved from destruction. The conduit which Hezekiah made (mentioned in 20:20) can still be seen in Jerusalem today. The righteous reign of Hezekiah spanned twenty-nine years. **Manasseh** was the next king of Judah. The record sadly states that this man was an excessive idolater and murderer. He even placed an idol in the temple! His wicked reign lasted fifty-five years. **Amon**, the next king, was also a very wicked man. He died in his own house at the hands of his own servants. **Josiah**, on the other hand, was a very righteous king, and procured extensive religious reform in Judah. Idols were torn down, the temple was again repaired, and in the course of repair a copy of the Law of Moses was found. The Law was read publicly to the people, the people agreed to obey it, and the Passover was observed. Yet all of this righteousness could not erase the fact that God had already decreed that Judah would be punished for her sins. Josiah died in battle after a thirty-one year reign. **Jehoahaz** was on the throne three months when he was taken into captivity by the Egyptian king, and thus **Jehoiakim** was made vassal king under Egyptian dominance. Jehoiakim paid heavy tribute to both Egypt and Babylon, but rebelled against the latter. God also punished him by sending numerous enemies against him. After he died his son, **Jehoiachin**, came to the throne. During his reign the Babylonian captivity began (technically speaking, it began when Jehoiakim was captured by the Babylonian king after rebelling, dated 606 B.C.). Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took Jehoiachin away to Babylon, and Mattaniah, whose name was changed to **Zedekiah**, was appointed vassal king by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah made the mistake of rebelling against the Babylonian rule, and so Jerusalem was again attacked and Zedekiah was taken captive. This last attack upon Jerusalem left the city totally devastated.

ELISHA AND ISAIAH

These two important prophets are given prominence in several of the events recorded in II Kings. The work

of Elisha is mainly recorded in chapters 2-8. In addition to performing several miracles, Elisha played key roles in the moral and military struggles of Judah. Isaiah is given prominence during the reign of Hezekiah.

For a complete picture of Israel's latter history, the reader should also read the books of the Chronicles as he reads the book of Kings. William D. Crockett's book, *A Harmony of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles*, is very useful.

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Matt. 19:9 and God's Order by Donnie V. Rader

I am bothered no little when I see and hear brethren misuse Matt. 19:9 to justify some kind of unscriptural situation. Some get a divorce for some unscriptural reason and then, after the divorce, one of the partners commits fornication. Some then claim that justifies a remarriage on the part of the other. Or one may be put away for an unscriptural reason and then their former mate remarries and some think that justifies a remarriage on the part of this put away one.

All such reasoning is guilty of changing God's order in Matt. 19:9. Read this passage carefully and you will see that God's order is: 1. Fornication, 2. Putting away, 3. Remarriage. Any other order is man's order and thus a perversion of the text. After the divorce ("putting away") any fornication or remarriage doesn't justify what had been an unscriptural divorce or remarriage. That fornication or adultery is after the fact.

To change God's order in this text is just as wrong as changing it in Mark 16:16.

The problem isn't understanding the text. The problem comes when men try to make the text fit their lives. We should rather fit our lives to the text.

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FASCINATING WOMANHOOD by Helen B. Andelin (Pacific Press: Santa Barbara, California), 1974, hardback, 309 pages, \$10.95.

This book shows the clear and simple way to married happiness--how a woman can win and maintain a man's complete love and devotion, and obtain from marriage the things every woman needs, while placing her husband's happiness as a primary goal.

The authoress shows how to become a fascinating woman and how to understand a man, his varying moods and feelings, and how to supply him with the understanding every man needs. She also shows how to react when a man is thoughtless, unfair or harsh in such a way as to bring love and tenderness to her relationship rather than cooled attitudes.

This book has now passed into its twenty-ninth printing. The success of the book is measured not so much by the tens of thousands of copies sold as by the happiness its philosophy has brought to countless couples. This book offers hope of a new generation of women--happy, feminine, adored and cherished!

TODAY'S SECTS by Maurice C. Burrell and J. Stafford Wright (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, paperback, 128 pages, \$4.50.

This book is an unemotional and factual examination of major sects (Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Christian Scientists, etc.), presenting the historical background, key doctrines and idiosyncratic teachings, methods of operation and a summary comparison of each sect with the key doctrines of what is taught in the Bible. The authors write from the position of

those who believe that in the Bible we have God's true revelation of Himself, and not simply one more record of man's search for God. The authors believe the Bible must be the yardstick against which they measure both their views and those of the sects they have examined.

And despite the influences of the newer cults, such as Hare Krishna or The Way International, the authors feel that the greatest challenges are still the more established sects: Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.

FAITH IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS by L.A. Mott, Jr. (Florida College Bookstore: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1977, paperback, 52 pages, \$3.00.

The material in this little book was originally delivered as three lectures on the Bible doctrines of faith and works. It is brief, but scholarly. Several brethren that heard the original lectures encouraged Mott to put the material in writing. I'm glad they were able to talk him into it. This is a valuable material that needs to be read by all.

The chapter headings are: "Righteousness Through Faith," "The Nature of Faith in Romans," and "Faith Faces the Future." For those churches scheduling a few extra Bible classes one night a week, I would recommend this little book for a study.

THE APOSTLE JOHN by W. H. Griffith Thomas (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 376 pages, \$7.95.

On the day of his ordination, Thomas was admonished not to neglect his Greek New Testament. For the rest of his life, he read one chapter each day from the Greek text. This devotion to deep study shows up in his writings.

This is a study of the apostle, including his life and writings. Thomas writes in a well-developed outline form. Clarity is not Thomas' only virtue, but it is certainly one of his strongest. A clear analysis of chapters makes the flow of thought easy to

follow.

You will find this book to be a great preaching and teaching aid for studying the apostle and/or any of his epistles.

OUTLINE STUDIES IN LUKE by W. H. Griffith Thomas (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 410 pages, \$8.95.

As a preacher and a teacher of preachers, Thomas excelled in practicality and simplicity of expression that made the most profound truth come alive with excitement. He was a preacher, teacher, co-founder of the Dallas Theological Seminary.

This book is a collection of outlines from the author's private devotional study. It was from these outlines that he developed many sermons, public addresses, and articles. It is basically a section-by-section outline, particularly geared at drawing out the key ideas from each section.

TOUGH TIMES NEVER LAST, BUT TOUGH PEOPLE DO! by Robert H. Schuller (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1983, hardback, 238 pages, \$12.95.

The author of this book is better known as being the founder of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. His television program, "The Hour of Power," is one of the most widely viewed programs in television history. He has written fifteen books, but this one hit the New York Times bestseller list at the same time as his other book, *Tough-Minded Faith for Tenderhearted People*, making religious publishing history. Both books on the list marks the first time a religious author has had two books on a national bestseller list simultaneously.

Schuller argues that no matter how tough times get, you have the God-given potential for achieving happiness, health, and prosperity. No matter what your problem--whether

it's unemployment, poor health, destructive habits, loneliness, fear, or anything else that blocks your success--the author says you can turn your negative into a positive. He says, "Name your problem, and you name your possibility!"

This book discusses specific guidelines, including 4 ways to evaluate a new idea, 10 commandments of possibility thinking, 5 principles for putting problems in a proper perspective, 12 principles for managing problems positively, 18 principles of leadership, 5 phases necessary for the faith that can move mountains, and more.

The theme of the book can be summed up in this one statement from the book: "You won't start winning without beginning!"

MAKING A BAD SITUATION GOOD by Raj K. Chopra (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 172 pages, \$10.95.

The author of this book was born in India and educated at Punjab University. He came to the United States and received his master's degree and Ph. D. from Bowling Green University in Bowling Green, Ohio. He has overcome seemingly impossible odds and now puts part of the "key" in print for others to read.

Chopra believes the "secrets" that work for him can work for anyone in any situation. "To make progress in any situation," the author says, "you have to start with what's right about it and build on that. You must be able to see the good in a bad situation."

This book is devoted to a study of how to use praise, optimism, enthusiasm, love, faith and other power principles. By reading this book, one can discover the simple techniques for coping with stress and avoiding burn-out, dealing with the negativism of those around you, and harnessing the strength of individuals and of groups to overcome seemingly impossible obstacles.

THE FASCINATING GIRL by Helen Andelin (Pacific Press: Santa Barbara, California), 1983, hardback, 307 pages, \$10.95.

This book is written to single girls and gives a step by step guide to gaining the attention and interest of men and eventually winning the

particular man of your choice. It explains how to understand men--their characteristics, peculiarities, and sensitive masculine nature--and how to be the kind of girl that men adore. The book deals with pertinent topics such as what men find fascinating in women; how to make a man feel like a man; mistakes that drive men away, and many other subjects. You will learn what to look for in a mate, and when you find the man you want, how to plan a campaign that will win him.

The author believes, "Femininity is acquired by accentuating the differences" between a woman and a man, not the similarities. This practical book is a most timely aid to every young woman who desires to be attractive and to eventually marry. All principles suggested in this book are on the highest plane and serve to make both men and women happy and successful.

A COLLECTION OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS by Elaine Ije and Rosalind Sutton (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1983, hardback, 21 pages, \$2.50 each.

The six titles in this series include: *Noah And The Ark*, *Moses The Leader*, *David And Goliath*, *The Birth Of Jesus*, *The Childhood Of Jesus*, and *Stories Jesus Told*. Each volume is delightfully written and illustrated. The books feature larger type than most storybooks for beginning readers.

One of the unique features of these books is a section to encourage full participation in the story through observation, memory, and imagination. Each book has a section at the end of the story with several pictures taken from the story. The student is asked to go back through the story and find each picture and to then tell the story in their own words.

The children that I have already shown these books to have immediately fallen in love with them. They will make excellent additions to a private or church library.

STACY'S SERMONS by John Stacy (Stacy Publications: Lake Station, Indiana), 1981, hardback, 185 pages, \$6.00.

This book is more than just a few outlines--it contains full content outlines in series. There are eleven sermons on the apostles, eighteen on Christ, four on non-conversions in

Acts, and eight on the gospel armour.

The author has always been fond of series preaching and felt there was a great void in sermon books focusing attention to a particular subject for several lessons. This book should help fill that void.

GALATIANS: THE LITERATURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT by James Sanders (Romar Publication: Jacksonville, Florida), 1984, paperback, 38 pages, \$3.50.

Many class workbooks go from one extreme to the other -- either too shallow (a mere fill-in-the-blank where the student goes home blank and unfilled) or too deep and detailed for the average church member. This new workbook is unique and fresh in its style and approach.

This study is about the literature of Galatians -- the words, the style of writing, the figures of speech, the grammar. Each lesson begins with the actual words of the text with marginal notes to show thought development. Questions, summary, and reference notes are all together on the same page-opening. The reference notes are scholarly, but easy to read and use.

If judged by its size, Galatians might seem unimportant--perhaps, even trivial. "Galatians is a personal letter," Sanders writes, "simply written with a sense of directness." The central theme of the letter is the difference between law and gospel. "This difference, of course, is quite crucial. For if the gospel is nothing more than revised law, then Christianity is nothing more than revised Judaism. And Christians are but proselytes."

Sanders helps us to better understand Galatians. A better understanding of the book, through the use of this workbook, will help us to better understand the gospel and what it means. It also provides us the strength to live as Christians must live. If you are wanting to better understand all of this, I would heartily recommend this book.

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“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

All Old Testament Prophecy Is Fulfilled

The Bible says in Matthew 5:17, 18, *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”*

Christ did not destroy the law, or the prophets, but came to fulfill. There are many who understand that the Old Testament law has been abolished or fulfilled, as a law today, but are nevertheless teaching error as they believe certain Old Testament prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. In the next few minutes we shall show that this is not so. Actually, the reading of our text should tell us the truth in this matter, for Jesus plainly stated that nothing would pass from the law until it was all, both law and prophets, fulfilled. Since such books in the New Testament as Galatians teach that we are not under the old law, we must conclude that the prophets have also been fulfilled.

Properly speaking, a prophecy is a foretelling of a future event. You will notice that the writer of the Hebrew epistle stated that God *“spoke in time PAST unto the father by the prophets,”* but speaks today by His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1,2). From this we can understand that this was God’s plan *“in time past.”* The purpose of the prophets, as a literature, was to point to the coming of the Messiah, the Christ, and that is plainly stated in such passages as John 5:39. Jesus came to fulfill the law AND the prophets. I believe He did just that.

Actually, the prophets were a part of the Mosaic law, as can be seen from the Scripture mentioned in Matthew 5:17, 18. Nothing would change in the law until the prophets were fulfilled. Either all the prophecies concerning the Lord and His kingdom are fulfilled, or the law itself would still be in effect. However, Paul said in

Colossians 2:14 that Christ nailed the law to the cross. It may well be that this phrase, *“nailing it to his cross,”* is used in a comprehensive manner, indicating that particular period of time, but with the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70 every single prophecy of the Old Testament was fulfilled. Jesus foretold this in Luke 21. Verse 22 says, *“For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”* Furthermore, all those things would be fulfilled **BEFORE THAT GENERATION PASSED AWAY.** (Verse 32).

Concerning His death and resurrection, Jesus said, *“These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, 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). Thus, after the resurrection everything about Christ was fulfilled, and with the invasion of Jerusalem by the Romans a few years later, **ALL THINGS, PERIOD, WERE FULFILLED.**

I mentioned a few moments ago that the prophets were a part of the old law, and the following conclusively shows that: In John 15:25 Jesus said *“but this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.”* This prophecy was recorded in Psalm 36:19, and Psalms is considered a book of poetry or wisdom literature. But it is also a book of prophecy; Jesus said in their law, thus “law” includes those books specifically designated as books of law, but also the books of poetry and prophecy.

Yes, we have a use for the Old Testament today, but not as anticipation of prophecy yet to be fulfilled (Romans 3:21).

Bible Authority

The Bible says, in I Peter 3:15, *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a*

reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” What does it mean to sanctify the Lord, and how can we give answer for our hope? As I answer these questions now, we need to fully understand that authority from the New Testament gives the answer.

In the course of my work I tell folks that if one declines the teachings of the Bible, I have nothing else to offer - we will have none other common ground for discussion. To sanctify merely means to have a special place in our heart or mind, and the answer we give for our hope must be based on Bible teaching. I certainly do not deny that your opinions are as good as mine; or even better, possibly, in many cases. The point is, though, our standard must be placed in some form of authority or we could never have any agreement. My authority is in the Word of God, the New Testament of Jesus Christ.

The word authority means **“Legal power to enforce obedience, influence that creates respect and confidence, correct source of information or wise advice, expert on some subject, control, jurisdiction, dominion.”** Surely from this we can see the importance of a religious standard of authority in all our affairs. As a matter of fact, the government has set up a bureau of standards to regulate those things. We have standards for weights, measurements and time. We must not forget that our religious standard is the New Testament, and we must study it with the objective of sanctifying God, and being able to give others a reason therefrom for the hope in us.

In other lessons we have seen that our standard today does not revolve around the teachings of the Old Testament, the law of Moses, so we must concern ourselves with the authority of the New Testament. Keep this in mind as we consider a few Scriptures on the subject.

In verse three of his epistle, Jude made the statement that it was necessary for us to *“earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”* This surely means that we must stand on New Testament truth of all times. Jesus, in praying to the Father, said *“Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth”* (John 17:17). There is no contradiction in truth, thus any time there is religion division someone is failing to do what both Jude and the Lord Himself

instructed us to do. The truth of God's Word is what we're interested in, for it and it alone can teach us that which is necessary to salvation. In this same book Jesus said, "*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:31,32). My friend, if you're ever to be free from the burden of sin it will be

because of a knowledge and an obedience to the truth of God's Word.

It should be obvious to the discreet Bible student, that the religious world in general falls far short of these precepts. Does your preacher give a book, chapter and verse for everything he teaches? Can you find the name and organization of your church in the Bible? Are you sure you have obeyed

the truth to be saved? Can and do you give an answer from the Bible about everything you practice? These are very serious questions that all of us will have to face sooner or later.



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Causes of Divorce

by James Hahn

I recently read an article in the newspaper which stated that the divorce rate in the United States was "leveling off" at the rate of about one in every two marriages ending in divorce. With this kind of "leveling off" we do not have much to be excited about. For many years the number of divorces in this nation has increased. In 1975, for the very first time in history, there were over one million (1,000,000) divorces in this nation. That number has increased since then. What is the cause (or causes) for this alarming number of divorces? I do not claim to have all the answers but I do believe that I have observed certain things that contribute to the many divorces that take place each year.

The very fact that so many are getting divorces is one factor that encourages so many divorces. In years past divorce was frowned upon by nearly everyone in our society. Getting a divorce was an admission of failure and was a shameful thing. I am sorry to say that such is no longer the case. The attitude of "everyone is doing it" seems to prevail. Getting a divorce is now the "in thing" and nothing for which one needs to be ashamed. This should not be the case.

Another problem is the failure of parents to properly teach their children. Paul instructs fathers to bring up their children "*in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*" (Eph. 6:4). One has not done this if he fails to teach his children the Lord's will pertaining to the marriage relationship. God's will is very plain. When a man and woman are married they have made a life-long commitment to one another (Rom. 7:2,3). Parents, we need to teach our children from the time they are able to be taught that

when they reach the age when they will be selecting a marriage companion they must consider this a relationship which will exist as long as they both shall live. To fail in teaching this truth is to fail in providing proper teaching for our children.

This failure in teaching is a contributing factor in another cause of divorce. Many young people enter into marriage with the attitude of mind that if things do not work out as they would desire they can always get a divorce. Young people (and old ones as well) need to understand that when difficulties and problems arise (and they surely will) divorce is not an option they have and must never be considered as a solution to their problems.

Selfishness is another cause of divorce. Paul instructed husbands to "*love their wives as their own bodies*" (Eph. 5:28). A failure to show such love will lead to problems and heartaches. I have known men who thought of no one but themselves. They would spend all their "free" time doing only the things they enjoyed doing. They would spend large sums of money on themselves and on things they wanted but would never consider doing the same for their wives. As long as husbands or wives continue to think only of themselves and their own desires we will continue to see these marriages ending in divorce.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to talk to a judge that had presided over many divorce cases. I asked him what he thought was the number one cause of divorce. I was somewhat surprised at his answer. He told me that the number one cause of divorce, in his opinion, was the interference of in-laws. He noted that even when other problems were given

as the cause of the divorce investigation would show that these problems had often come about as a result of either his or her parents interfering in the marriage. Whether you agree with this judge about this being the number one cause or not, you must admit that this is a problem in many marriages. God said that "*a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife*" (Gen. 2:24). This applies to the woman as well. So many young people are not willing to leave father and mother. They fail to realize that their first responsibility (as far as human relationships are concerned) is now to their husband or wife. They need to let their mate know this in word and in action. To fail to do so is to invite disaster.

However, not all of the problem lies with young people unwilling to leave father or mother. Many parents are unwilling to let them leave. Many fathers just can not accept the fact that someone else now has the responsibility of providing for his "little girl" and many mothers feel that they must tell that daughter-in-law how her "little boy" must be cared for. Parents, we need to teach our children to obey God's will and this means that we need to teach them to "leave father and mother and to cleave" to their husband or wife. I have seen parents interfere in their children's marriages and then when divorce finally comes they are ready to say, "I told you so." What they never admit is that if they had not interfered their son or daughter could have had a very happy and long-lasting marriage.

Of course, in all of these causes, we see a failure to respect God and His will. This we must do if the divorce problem is to be eliminated. To follow His will is to insure happiness here and a home in heaven in the hereafter.

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Short and to the Point



Test Yourself

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. . ." (2 Cor. 13:5).

Take a few moments to ask yourself these simple questions, designed to help you evaluate your spiritual condition.

- * Am I providing a godly example for my family, friends and neighbors?
- * Is the church growing because of me, or in spite of me?
- * Do I attend all of the services as faithfully as my Saviour would want?
- * Am I growing spiritually stronger every day?
- * Is my prayer life what it should be?
- * Have I led a lost soul to Christ Jesus in the past month? In the past year?
- * Do I really consider Christ's sacrifice when I partake of the communion service?
- * Am I totally committed to the Lord?
- * Would I go to heaven if I died tonight?

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. . . Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:3-7).

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Gossip and God

One of the most unfortunate practices among God's people is malicious gossip. For any number of reasons people find it "necessary" to talk about the faults (at least what they

conceive to be faults) of their brethren to everyone who will lend an ear except the person whom they are talking about. The Bible clearly teaches us to tell a brother "his faults between you and him alone" **before** we tell anyone else about it. I suspect that Jesus' teaching on that point is one of the most ignored things in the Bible. Gossip is unfortunate not only because it is a violation of the command of Jesus, but also because it is destructive to all the parties involved. It can seethe within the soul of people and destroy their trust and confidence in their brethren. In fact, my experience has shown that gossip is most destructive not to the victim of the gossip, but to the perpetrator. Therefore, I make it a practice to try my best to avoid saying anything bad about anyone to anybody unless I have first spoken to the person involved.

Of course there is one exception I will always make to that rule. That is I will talk about that person to God. God is always ready to listen and we can trust that he will be able to do something constructive about what we tell him. When I set out to gossip about brethren to men I usually seek out those who are sympathetic to my "cause." God, on the other hand, knows all of the circumstances and will not always agree with me, and, if I put my trust in Him, He will help me to see where I have gone wrong in my assessment of that person. Why not try it out sometime?

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Where Is The Miracle: Hearing or Speaking?

(Acts 2:1-13)

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire. . . began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterances. . . every

man heard them speak in his own language. . . Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaean? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? . . ."

From time to time I've been asked if the miracle God performed on Pentecost was that He enabled the speakers to speak a language which they had NOT LEARNED or if He enabled the people to HEAR what was spoken in their own language? If one will observe closely, it is clear: The Spirit gave the apostles **tongues to speak** which was heard and understood in the hearers' "own" **language**.

Many unscriptural positions have been advanced and accepted in modern times, relative to speaking in tongues. Christians need to first be informed as to what the scriptures teach on the subject; then, they need to see what is claimed in the religious community and distinguish between the two. We must accept and advocate the scriptural position on this subject, as well as on all others.

1. From this passage, and others that we could use, it is clear to the objective observer that "tongues" are "languages." Some contend that "tongues" are NOT languages but such is **unknown**--not capable of being understood by anyone other than one inspired by God. Such is not true; let us see the truth and love it to the point we'll embrace it.

2. Many contend that the tongues were for every disciple--all on the day of Pentecost spoke; they contend that all can thus speak today, IF they will SEEK such. Look closely at Acts 2:14 and see that it was the 12, the same as verse 1: Matthias was "numbered with the eleven apostles. They were all together with one accord. The Spirit came and they spoke. Peter stood up with the eleven, said "Ye men. . ."

3. The tongues had been promised (Mk. 16:17) and they came (Acts 2:1-ff; Mk. 16:19-20) "*confirming the word*" (Heb. 2:3-4). Such was a "sign" that God was with the speaker, as well as permitting them to communicate effectively in languages which they had NOT learned. Yes, God has a purpose in providing such. Let us see, accept, and proclaim it! Do you understand God's plan in this?

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A CALL TO WORSHIP

by Ronny Milliner

What is involved in worshipping God? We do not have in mind only those expressions of worship that we as Christians do collectively when we come together. Our whole life is to be one of worship to God. Paul admonishes, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"* (Rom. 12:1).

While there are many passages which would help us improve our worship to God, we would like to direct your attention in this article to Psalm 96. In this psalm we see three areas of worship considered: (1) the branches of worship to God, (2) the broadness of worship to God, and (3) the basis of worship to God. We suggest you read the entire psalm before giving further thought to this article.

THE BRANCHES OF WORSHIP TO GOD

One of the ways in which we can worship God is in song. *"Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His name."* Such praise is what God receives continuously before His throne (Rev. 4:8-11). *"Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name"* (Heb. 13:15). We don't have to wait till Sunday or Wednesday before we praise His holy name in song. Instead, *"Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms"* (Jas. 5:13b).

We should also worship God by proclaiming Him. We can proclaim His great deeds. *"Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples."* Another psalm says, *"All Your works shall praise you, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And*

the glorious majesty of His kingdom" (Psa. 145:10-12). Our tongues should not be able to be stilled; words of praise should flow from our mouths to tell of what He has done for us.

Not only should we proclaim His deeds for us, but we must also declare His Deity. *"For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary."* Our God is the Almighty. He is the Eternal One. He is the Creator. He is the First and the Last. He alone, as God, is worthy of worship (Rev. 22:8-9). No "thing" is worthy of such devotion.

Another means of expressing our worship to God is by an offering to Him. *"Give to the Lord, O kindreds of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts."* Every good thing that we have comes from God (Jas. 1:17). So we should *"offer to God thanksgiving"* (Psa. 50:14). An interesting thought about our giving to God is that He will always bless us more in return (2 Cor. 9:6-11).

Our worship which we offer up to God must be in reverence. *"Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth."* Because of Who God is, we must humble ourselves before Him in awe. In fact all the world should, for Psa. 33:8 says, *"Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him."* Let us *"serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear"* (Heb. 12:28).

Finally, we need to realize that we should worship God in the world. *"Say among the nations, the Lord reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously."* We should never be ashamed to speak His name before those in the world. Daniel and Paul

were not ashamed to pray before unbelievers (Dan. 6:10-11; Ac. 27:33-36). Woe be unto us if we find ourselves being ashamed of our Lord. Jesus warned, *"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels"* (Mk. 8:38).

THE BROADNESS OF WORSHIP TO GOD

God's creation praises Him. *"Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fulness; Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the Lord."* As an earlier psalm had affirmed, *"The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork"* (Psa. 19:1).

If God is so greatly praised by the inanimate creation, how much more so should His new creation. We of all people should be continuously offering up our adoration to Him who sits on the throne.

THE BASIS OF WORSHIP TO GOD

There could be many reasons given why we should worship God. The psalmist closes this psalm by giving just one reason—the coming universal judgment. *"For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth."* We may choose to forsake the Lord here, but the day is coming when every knee shall bow before Him (Phil 2:9-11).

CONCLUSION

Let us be open to ways in which we can praise God every day that we live. We live to honor Him! *"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power"* (Rev. 4:11a).



The Family Affair

WHAT I WANT TO LEAVE MY CHILDREN

"It is appointed unto men once to die. . ." (Heb. 9:27). All of us realize that someday we are going to die, but we never really admit that it could be soon. A deep sadness steals over us as we think of departing permanently from our children. Are we ready? Are they ready? Do they know where the insurance papers are? Do they know who my lawyer was? Did I think to tell them where I had placed my will?

Most of us will precede our children in death, and it will not be long at the most. But once the funeral is over, the flowers have died, and the tears have been brushed away--what will the children feel that we have left them? Are they going to fight over who gets what share of the money? (In my case it will probably be over who has to pay what bill!) Will there be questions about stocks, bonds, land, jewelry, etc.? Here are some of the things I would like to leave my children:

1. A Good Name. Solomon said, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, a loving favor rather than silver and gold" (Prov. 22:1). "A good name is better than precious ointment" (Eccl. 7:1). The value of a good name is set forth several times in the Bible. A bad name would be a heavy burden for our children to bear. If you had your choice, would you take the good name or the great riches? Your riches can be taken from you. But no one can steal your good name. A good name will open doors of opportunity and give encouragement to good deeds. You may not always have money with a good name, but with a good name there is always credit available.

2. A True Faith in God. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). The matters of which parents talk most to one another and to their children are considered by the children of greatest importance; and when the Word of God is not spoken at

all, it is natural for children to consider it of no importance. In an age of skepticism, doubt and cynicism, it is wonderful to be able to leave our children with a faith in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is early in the home that the battle for faith in God must be won.

3. The Memory of a Good Home. When the prodigal son sat broken-hearted in the pig pen, he had been stripped of nearly everything. His money was gone, and with it his fair-weathered friends. His personal respect was gone. The only thing this lost and lonely soul still had was a memory--the precious memory of a good home. It was this memory that caused the boy to return home. There is no influence on earth more potent than a good Christian home. There is no greater heritage that we can leave our children than the blessed memory of such. Edgar A. Guest said, "It takes a heap of living in a house to make a home." How true! A home may be beautiful while the house may be rickety or ramshackled and in need of painting or other repairs.

4. A Personal Example. It is important to tell our children this or that is right. But it is far more important to set them a worthy example. I want to leave my children an example they can follow with honor and safety. As parents we should all ask God for strength never to do what we wouldn't want our children to do; never utter words that we wouldn't want them to speak; never have motives in our hearts that we wouldn't want them to have. It is important to tell children what is right, but it is even more important to demonstrate it. The shortest, yet the most far-reaching biography ever written is found in the words of Jesus, "He went along doing good." Some merely go about. I like this expression from a father to a son: "I have led thee in right paths" (Prov. 4:11).

5. A Proper Education. I don't know what my children will turn out to be. Right now my son is tossed between trying to be a football player, preacher, or dentist; my daughter thinks she wants to be a veterinarian. I don't know whether I'll even be able to afford college for them when that time comes. How much education do they want? How much do they need? What will their education do to them? I just want to be able to provide the perfect education as described in Luke 2:52: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

6. An Appreciation of the Beautiful. I want to leave my children the ability to see the good and beautiful in all of God's creation and be lifted up by them. Too many live frustrated, empty, meaningless lives, while all around them is the inspiring goodness of a beautiful world on every side. Children who can see the good and beautiful in life will be enriched beyond expression. I want them to see the beauty of the rose, the rainbow, the new-fallen snow, the fall colors. I want them to appreciate the magnificence of the Grand Canyon, Mammoth Cave, or Niagra Falls. But I also want them to see the beauty of the faith as seen in Abraham, the patience as seen in Job, the purity as seen in Joseph, the meekness as seen in Moses, the boldness as seen in Elijah, the faithfulness as seen in David, the love as seen in John, the earnestness as seen in Paul, and the beauty of them all as seen in Jesus. This beauty never fades.

No, I may not leave my children much of this world's goods in terms of money or land. This doesn't really matter. If our children have these things, making sufficient money will never be a problem to them. But if they do not have the things we have viewed, they can neither wisely use, nor long retain, any amount of money that might be left them.

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

FALSELY ACCUSED

(Chapter 7)

The ancient title reads: "Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush of Benjamite." The only other occurrence of Shiggaion in scripture is in Hab. 3. "This title seems to mean 'variable songs' with which also the idea of solace and pleasure is associated" (Spurgeon).

Apparently this "Cush the Benjamite" had brought accusations against David that were very hurtful. It may be that David had been accused of treason or conspiracy against King Saul, or perhaps the false accusations were made after he, himself, had become king.

THE DANGER (1,2)

"Oh Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me: Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver."

David was on the spot. He had been slandered and accused, and his enemy was closing in for the kill. In desperation, he cries out to God in whom he trusted, whether in days of plenty or days of distress.

There were many who persecuted him, and from all these he desired salvation and deliverance. But there was one enemy in particular who was like a lion before whom he, in his own strength, was as defenseless as a lamb. David needed the Great Shepherd.

The damage caused by slanderous tongues can never be over estimated. It's been said that one difference between a physical wound and one caused by words is that the physical will heal. Tongues cut deeper than flesh.

INNOCENCE AVOWED (3-5)

"...if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands; If I have rewarded evil into him that was at peace with me; (Yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy:) Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it, yea let him tread down my life upon the earth and lay mine honour in the dust. Selah."

A clear conscience comes in mighty handy when trouble comes. David was being accused of a crime he had not committed. The words of "Cush the Benjamite" were being received without proof. Innocence is no guarantee of being shielded from the wicked. Lying tongues will ever find an audience.

Since we cannot hope to be shielded from all such in this life, let us at least resolve to be no party to any such. "Out of the mouths of two or three witnesses every word shall be established" (Matt. 18:16). This has always been God's order.

The parenthetical statement of verse 4 reminds one of the occasions that David allowed his arch-enemy, Saul, to escape unharmed, when he had opportunity to take his life (I Sam. 24:4-11; 26:7-12).

LET THE LORD JUDGE (6-9)

In this section, God is spoken of as the Judge. David pleads with Him to ascend the bench and judge in righteousness. He cried out for God to awake. God never slumbers, but it may appear to man that He does. David desires that the righteous anger of God might be manifested, not only for his sake, but for all the "congregation of

the people."

Then it seems that he sees the Lord ascending to the seat of judgement: "The Lord shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness and according to mine integrity that is in me. Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

David, like all of us, often could not pray that God would judge him according to his integrity. But he was innocent of these charges, and he knew that while others might judge after the appearance of things, only God could judge him "reins and heart" or his inward affections and secret thoughts.

THE LORD WILL CLEAR

THE SLANDERED SAINT (10-13)

"My defense is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked everyday." There comes a time that it is useless to try to defend yourself before men. The upright will then leave his case with God. Be assured that his case is in good hands. God defends the righteous. He is angry with the wicked. Our God is not insensible and unemotional.

The figures of the sword and the bow are used to depict God's battle against the persecutors of His elect. Those who sin will not get away with it.

THE SLANDERER WILL BRING CURSES ON HIMSELF (14-16)

They who live by the sword will perish by the sword. The wicked are represented by two metaphors. First, that of a woman in travail: "Behold he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood." There are those who conceive in their hearts some wickedness and they are in pain until they carry it out.

The second is that of a hunter: "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made." Like a hunter, he is cunning and doesn't mind working hard to bring his plans to fruition.

But he shall reap as he has sown: "His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."

Finally, David avows to praise the Lord "according to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of the Lord most high." David Allan Hubbard in *Psalms for all Seasons*, entitles this

seventh psalm "A Friend in Court." Let us be mindful that when we are slandered and falsely accused, we have a Friend in court. But even more wonderful: when we are guilty as charged, and have no defense, we still

have a Friend in court. *"Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also*

maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 3:33,34).



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JESUS WEPT THRICE

by Ron Mosby

One of the most exciting characteristics of Mark's brief gospel account is his recording of the many human traits and emotions of our Lord while here upon the earth. He pictures Jesus as a fast moving servant of action who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45). When the careful Bible student studies Mark's account closely, he understands his Lord much better. The human characteristics of our Lord are those shared by all of us. Mark tells us that Jesus loved little children. He took the time while on His way to Jerusalem to die for our sins to stop His rapid pace long enough to take them in His arms and put His hands on them and bless them (Mk. 10:16). He took a damsel by the hand (5:41); He felt anger at the self-righteous ritualists of His day (3:5); He loved the rich young ruler (10:21); He "sighed" on two occasions (7:34; 8:12); He was moved with compassion (6:34); He was hungry (11:12) and got tired (6:31); He went to sleep on a pillow (4:38). Yet, of all the feelings and emotions we may each share with our Lord, the ones that stir our heart within us most of all are they which tell us that Jesus wept! What marvelous condescension to think that Jesus Christ, the sinless and only begotten Son of God, was actually moved to the shedding of tears over the happenings of mere mortal and sinful man!

There are at least three occasions that record the fact that Jesus wept. Probably the death of His close friend, Lazarus, is the first and most familiar event recorded where Jesus broke forth in tears. He was actually moved to tears when He saw Mary and the Jews with her weeping over the death of Lazarus. This is true sympathy. He truly felt what they who were weeping

felt. This is so beautifully amazing, especially in view of Christ's own awareness that He in just a few moments of time would raise Lazarus from the dead (John 11). This shows the wonderful and sympathetic High Priest we have in Jesus our Lord (Heb. 4:15; 2:18).

The second occasion when Jesus wept was the final week following His triumphal entry into Jerusalem just after His scathing sermon condemning the Scribes and Pharisees (Mt. 23:37-39). Only Luke tells us that Jesus, when He was come near, beheld the city and wept over it (Lk. 19:41). This also shows very clearly that true righteous indignation is not personal anger that would smolder and burn for a long time. Rather, it is soon past when the violated principle has been upheld and corrected. However, it usually ends in tears on the part of the one who undertakes the emotional and traumatic responsibility of bearing the news.

The third occasion when Jesus shed many tears was the night He was in the garden of Gethsemane - alone. This was the same night He was betrayed, unlawfully tried, condemned, and finally crucified for our sins between two thieves! We are told that Jesus was afraid and prayed with strong crying and tears (Heb. 5:7). This demonstrates to us the strong commitment and determination of our Lord to do His Father's will above His own no matter what would be the cost! He did this, too, all the while knowing His Father could have delivered Him at any time (Mt. 26:53-54).

The many feelings and emotions expressed by our Lord are of particular interest to the sensitive disciple who is struggling so desperately to follow in His steps. It is indeed comforting and of supreme interest to know by faith

that we have a merciful and faithful High Priest in Jesus our Lord, Who really cares and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 2:16; 4:15). We are encouraged to know He can save even to the uttermost, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).

None of us yet has resisted unto blood, striving against sin (Heb. 12:3-4). Jesus did. Before we become weary in well-doing and begin to faint in our own minds, we need desperately to learn one lesson and learn it well. If it was necessary for the only begotten Son of God to learn obedience by the things which He suffered, how may we expect in all our imperfections to learn true obedience any less expensively? Luke, the beloved physician, describes the intensity which characterized the three hours of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane when He poured out His deepest and intermost feelings to the Father for the last time before He died (Lk. 22:40-44). Here, He was learning obedience by the things which He suffered. He truly learned it and did His Father's will.

The writer of Hebrews no doubt alludes to this time of Jesus in the garden when he wrote, "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death and was heard in that He feared" (Heb. 5:7).

May these many human emotions expressed by our Lord while incarnate serve as a blessing in this brief writing to draw us all closer to Him Who loved us and laid down His life for our sins. Let us each one pray for the necessary strength to press on the upward way until at last God will wipe away all tears from our eyes (Rev. 21:4) and there will be no more crying or dying, but we will live forever with Him in beautiful heavenly felicity throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

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From out of the Past

The Gospel Guardian
December, 1949

Narrow - Mindedness

by Luther Blackmon

Do not feel insulted when someone tells you that your religion is narrow. Maybe he is right. If he is right, you should feel complimented. Your critic may be confusing narrowness with bigotry, in which case he is the one out of step, not you. Bigotry the Lord condemned; narrowness (in the scriptural use of the term) he commended: ". . . narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be which find it."

THE NARROWNESS OF TRUTH

Truth is always narrow. Five plus five equals ten; this is true from kindergarten to college and everywhere else in the world. It isn't ten because the arithmetic book says so, but it is ten because it cannot be anything else. If in a class of 100 students, only one gave ten as the answer to five plus five and all the other 99 agreed on a different answer, the one would be right and all the others wrong.

Historical truth is narrow. The Battle of San Jacinto was fought in Texas; Valley Forge was in Pennsylvania. These are facts which are understood alike by all students of history. If a student in a history class gave any other answer concerning the location of these spots, he would be incorrect. No one would think the teacher was "narrow" in telling him so.

There are twelve inches in a foot, three feet in a yard all over the world. It doesn't matter whether the one doing the measuring is a president or a preacher, an illiterate hill-billy or a college professor. To fail to recognize these facts would throw the world into hopeless confusion.

RELIGIOUS TRUTH

Since truth in every field is narrow and dogmatic, why should we suppose that divine truth is so flexible as to be

susceptible of any interpretation man wants to place upon it? "We just can't see it alike," someone answers. But we see other things alike. Is man more able to make himself understood than is God? We may misunderstand the meaning of a passage of scripture, but does our misunderstanding of it change the meaning of the passage? Does its meaning change and shift to suit our various understandings of it? If the writer of the passage meant to teach something when he wrote the passage, is not that something that he intended still in the passage?

Take, for example, the much discussed passage, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:16). The question about this passage is whether Jesus did, or did not, make baptism necessary to salvation. He either did, or he didn't. Some of us believe that he did; others vehemently deny it. It must be apparent to all that somebody is teaching false doctrine on this point. Is it broadminded to ignore these contradictions and pretend they do not exist? Baptists and Presbyterians teach that a child of God cannot fall away from the favor of God and be lost; Methodists teach that he can fall away and be lost. Does the Bible teach both?

Some denominations teach hereditary depravity, that infants are born totally depraved as a result of Adam's sin. Others deny this, and teach that everyone is born sinless and only becomes sinful by his own transgressions. Now if we are to escape the stigma of being called "narrow," we must cooperate with and encourage the man who is teaching the very opposite of what we believe to be the truth. Is this honesty? If one preacher preached four conflicting doctrines,

people would call him a hypocrite; but if four preachers preach these conflicting doctrines, they are all teaching the truth!

HOW BROAD SHOULD WE BE?

The Unitarian believes that Jesus of Nazareth was a great man and a great teacher, but that he was not the Son of God. The Orthodox Jew worships God, but denies the divinity of Jesus. Shall we have these men in our fellowship? If honesty and sincerity are the only criteria, why not? Who will say they are not as honest as we are? Some denominational preachers are already taking this position. They swap pulpits with Jewish rabbis right along. This shocks the religious sensibilities of some more conservative religionists, but it is nothing in the world but the legitimate an inevitable fruit of that namby-pamby, stand-for-nothing, anything and anybody is right attitude that we are talking about.

Most members of denominations are not ready yet to take in the Jews and the Unitarians on their broadminded proposition. They narrow it down a bit. We **must** believe in Christ, they say; we **must** see alike on those scriptures that teach that Jesus was the Son of God; that he was born of a virgin; that he suffered vicariously; that he arose from the dead; that he ascended into heaven, where he intercedes for us. But **why** must we see alike on those particular passages, but have unbounded liberty to differ on nearly everything else connected with the religion of Christ? Are not the passages pertaining to the organization of the church, baptism, apostasy, worship, church membership, discipline, authority, etc., inspired of God as much as are the other passages? Are not these things a part of the Lord's plan? Have they no place with divine truth? How much truth is essential, and how much is nonessential? How much of the Bible is important, and how much is unimportant?

We feel no personal animosity, of course, toward those who teach things we do not believe; but we cannot, with a good conscience, bid them Godspeed. John said, "*if there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house; neither biddeth him Godspeed: For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds*" (II Jno. 10). Paul said, "*If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto*

you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:9). These apostles thought it was a matter of much import what a man believed and taught.

We are not infallible, and we are

open to any truth that may be presented to us; we will change when convinced we are wrong. But two things we do know, and of them we are certain: (1) truth does not contradict

truth, and (2) we will not learn by hiding our heads in the sand and refusing to admit that religious divisions exist, or that such are wrong.

WHY IS THE CHURCH LOSING PEOPLE?

by Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.

When people quit the church it is a source of concern among the members that remain. It should be a source of concern. When the church teaches and practices what God wants it to, there are sometimes going to be those who are not willing to remain with the church. We see this problem everywhere. But I am afraid that some react to this problem in an improper way. Some seem to think that if we lose people, then obviously the problem is with the things that we are doing. Since we are losing people because of what we do and teach, then many reason that we ought to change what we do and teach. That is not necessarily the case. When we are teaching and practicing the truth, we must abide in that regardless of who gets offended.

Christ had a problem with losing disciples during His personal ministry on earth. In the sixth chapter of John, we are told of an occasion when "*many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more*" (v. 66). Why was this so? He had taught them something that was hard for them to accept. (v. 60). Also, he had not given them the thing that they had come for. They had followed him to be fed with loaves and fishes, but all they got from him was some sermon that they didn't want to hear. (v. 26ff).

Now if the disciples of Christ had been like many of my brethren today, they would have chided Christ for what had taken place. They would have instructed him to be more careful what he said to people because he was driving them away. They would have become alarmed because he was causing these people to leave by not accomodating them by giving them what they expected. After all, if a few loaves and fishes would have kept them happy, why not give it to them. Why,

he didn't want to be the cause of them leaving did he? Fortunately, however, his disciples understood the commitment that they had made to Christ and followed him regardless of whether others rejected him or not.

I am afraid, however, that many today are more committed to keeping members coming than in standing for the truth. Many fail to realize that in standing for the truth, you are sometimes going to lose those who are not willing to stand along with you. No one wants to see people leave the church. But the price of keeping them is sometimes too great.

Many a preacher has had it suggested to him by some "concerned" member that if he continues to preach as he does that he will "drive everyone away". It is hinted that maybe he should be more careful about what he preaches so as not to offend anyone. After all, if he continues to preach as he does there won't be anyone left. But if the only way to keep people from leaving is to tone down the truth or withhold part of God's word, the preacher cannot and must not do so. There are those who will remain when the truth is taught, those who want to do God's will. (See II Tim. 4:2-4)

There are also times when people quit coming because there has been a change in preachers. Maybe the new preacher is not as good a speaker as the old one. Or maybe he doesn't have the personality of the old one. Or maybe he doesn't have the sense of humor that the old one did. Whatever the reason, many people are more attached to a preacher than to the cause of Christ. (See I Cor. 1:11, 12). Therefore, when the preacher does not suit them it is time to move on.

Some also quit if they are not pampered. If they are sick or if they

feel that some attention ought to be paid them, they expect everyone to drop everything they are doing and come running to their side. They develop the attitude that if the preacher or some other member doesn't come and visit me every week, then I won't come to church. Or they feel like that if "my" needs are not taken care of properly by the church, then "I" will not have anything to do with the church. Certainly, members of the church should care for one another and visit one another, but if one makes this a basis for his attendance, then something is wrong. He is thinking of himself and not of Christ.

There are also those who leave because of some action that the church might take to further the cause of Christ. It may be that the church takes disciplinary actions as directed by God's word. (I Cor. 5). It may be that the church decides to change some things it might be doing in an effort to better advance the cause of Christ and better serve God. Many times when actions like this are considered, one of two things happens. Either someone gets mad and leaves because they don't like the action being taken or brethren oppose some action being taken because they don't want to drive people away. What we need to realize is that if we are serving God and following his commandments, it is not our actions that drive people away, but their lack of commitment to Christ that causes them to leave.

Why do people leave the church then when truth is being taught and practiced? They have not committed themselves to Christ (II Cor. 8:5). They have not denied themselves, taken up their cross and followed Christ (Matt. 16:24). Their religion is self-centered and not Christ-centered. We need to determine that we are going to follow Christ and do what the Lord teaches even if everyone else turns away. In Christ's time there were many that turned away and walked with him no more. It should not surprise us that the same conditions exist today.



History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanon

HEAVEN HOLDS ALL TO ME

During a gospel meeting in Golden, Texas, in 1903, Tillit S. Teddlie was baptized into Christ. He recalls that it was on a Sunday evening when "they were baptizing people in the creek across the railroad and they had some of the sweetest music I'd ever heard."

Teddlie said he had been associated with a bunch of "bad boys" and somehow had obtained a pistol. When he saw the activities across the railroad, the 17-year-old rushed home, slicked down his hair, wrapped the six-shooter in a handkerchief and put it in his hip pocket.

"When they sang the invitation song. I was the first one up there," he said. About 35 people were baptized during that meeting. The morning after his baptism, he "put that pistol up and never saw it again."

That day was a turning point in Teddlie's life. Since then he has made his mark in Texas as a preacher and superintendent of Boles Homes, but his best-known contribution is as a hymnwriter.

Teddlie is now blind, confined to a wheelchair and a little hard of hearing, but his 99-year-old mind remains sharp. From his bed at his home at the Hilltop Haven Nursing Home, he said he was mighty proud of reaching 99. "Never was a bride with greater anticipation than I had reaching my 99th birthday," he said, "And I'm not anxious about 100, though I'd like to reach it."

He can remember songs he learned as a young boy, and dates and details of events are recalled as if they happened yesterday. He even brags about his memory. "You haven't found any 99-year-old kids around who can remember and tell you things with such precision."

Teddlie said he wrote his first gospel song in 1906 and called it "I've Waited Too Long." Since then he has published 14 different books, two or three hymnals and several paperback song books. He has written more than 100 gospel songs, including "Worthy Art Thou" and "May This My Glory

Be."

Where does he get ideas for so many songs? Teddlie said the talent is natural. "If I had any proper training, I probably wouldn't have amounted to anything," he said. "It was natural."

However, he did attend an 18-day music school in 1900 where they taught sight reading, voice culture and how to read shaped notes, but Teddlie admitted he was "too young to get hold of it."

He's written songs on everything from a blackboard in an old church building to the flyleaf of his Bible.

Eight or ten years after his baptism, Teddlie said he returned to the farm where he grew up near Golden (located between Greenville and Tyler). With a stub of a pencil, he wrote "Heaven Holds All To Me" on the back of an envelope while leaning against a hickory tree 150 feet from the creek where he was baptized.

Teddlie said he still thinks of new songs, but his blindness keeps him from writing them down. "I wish I could write them down," he said. "I can think of some good ones." But by the time someone could get to the hymnwriter to write down the thoughts, he says the song would probably "get away."

Being unable to write songs hasn't kept Teddlie from singing and listening to them. Sometimes his friends stop by and even though his voice is old and a bit scratchy, Teddlie persuades them to sing with him. He also has a drawer filled with cassette tapes of many of his most popular songs that he listens to.

Teddlie said he's learned a lot in 99 years and he's had a balanced life, full of good friends and memorable experiences. He said it feels like a "major accomplishment" to live so long. And coming from wisdom gleaned from 99 years of living, Teddlie said, "Don't be rushed about anything. Take time to enjoy life and the things it offers."

Yes, one can tell that Teddlie has enjoyed life. But the gleam in his eyes shows that he's more excited about the

treasures of heaven than any span of earth-life.

**Earth holds no treasures
but perish with using,
However precious they be;
Yet there's a country
To which I am going.**

**Heaven holds all to me.
Heaven holds all to me.
Brighter its glory will be;
Joy without measure
Will be my treasure,
Heaven holds all to me.**

**Why should I long for the world and its
sorrows,
When in that home o'er the sea
Millions are singing the wonderful story?
Heaven holds all to me.**

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The Poet's Page

THE SEARCH FOR POWER

I looked around and there I found
Problems beyond my grasp.
I stood in awe for there I saw
Quandries that made me gasp.
Though man may grope, he finds no hope
In his own vaunted power.
It's weak and lax when foe attacks,
And fails him in that hour!

I looked within. To my chagrin
I found no solace there.
For I knew well my power to quell
Weakness within its lair
Would not suffice, and that the vice
Of my own errant ways
Would soon erase my power to face
Problems that fill my days.

Then I looked up, and from God's cup
I drank of nectar sweet.
I felt it give that power to live
In confidence, and meet
That bitter sting that problems bring;
And then I asked why I
Had not, in love, sought God above
Where peace and power lie?

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

FOR ME

For me...
He emptied Himself;
The riches of Heaven did not hold Him,
Nor the glory of The Throne;
He stepped down,
From King to servant;
Creator to creature;
God to man;
Knowing no sin, sin He became.

In the flesh, to live then to give;
To a crown of thorns;
a stake of wood;
a grave of stone;
He died here.

Not the dark prince of death,
Nor the powers of the grave did hold Him;
He emptied them all...
for me.

--Wayne Greeson
Noblesville, IN

I LOVE YOU...

Let me tell you how I love you,
My brother in "the faith".
I am anxious for the opportunity
To see you face to face.

You are my encouragement,
To know you too will stand;
For the truth revealed by Jesus,
And not the works of man.

We have so much in common,
Having accepted the heavenly plan;
We are one man in Christ,
Who was the perfect man.

You and I fight the same battles,
Against a common foe;
We need the strength of each other,
As down life's road we go.

We should not forsake the assemblies,
So inspiration commands;
For there we admonish each other,
And gain the strength to stand.

We meet to sing the songs of Zion,
To remember our Saviour's death;
We also look forward to His return,
Are you present with the rest?

When the brethren met at Troas,
Paul preached with much to say;
His sermon lasted till midnight,
Then they talked till light of day.

They hungered and thirsted for righteousness,
Desired the spiritual diet;
No sermons were needed on attendance,
They looked forward with delight.

Oh, that we loved each other
And the truth the same today,
The church would grow and prosper
We'd be in heaven's way.

Yes I love you brother,
I want to see you there;
So we can sing and give and pray,
Go forth to serve with care.

--Kenneth E. Thomas
Bradenton, FL



THE OLD YEAR

One more year has slipped away,
And coming to a close,
365 more days,
Of pleasures and woes

I cannot change the deeds I've done
Or wipe them from the slate-
But every victory for Christ I won
Enriches my estate.

I cannot profit here below
By living in the past
But with a brand new year to go
My hope is blooming fast.

I'll try to spend more time in prayer
And say "THY WILL BE DONE,"
That I may reach that mansion fair
At the setting of my sun.

I'll try to learn more from the Book
And live it day by day,
That I upon God's face may look:
For that will be my pay

--Eula Coe
Russellville, KY

EACH DAY

My soul sinks in deep despair,
The way of things seems so unfair.
I search the darkness of my mind.
More light and faith I hope to find.
Give me strength to go on each day,
It's not in myself to find the way.

It's so hard to take the hand of fate,
That often strikes with hurt or hate.
But I know Father that you care,
That you hear and answer prayer.
With this thought I continue the fight
With you beside me I glimpse the light.

Sometimes I want to quit and run
But that would not reflect your Son.
I look forward to a home with you,
When the work is finished you gave
me to do.
This earth will vanish but my spirit will soar
As I wait for heaven and so much
more.

--Jan Shepard
Waynesboro, MS

HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

BATTLE RAGES ON BETWEEN RAJNEESHEES, OREGONIANS

Animosity continues to build between residents of the Rajneesh commune in the former town of Antelope, Oregon, and residents of the surrounding communities.

The Rajneeshes, followers of Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, have been ordered to tear down 640 huts that did not meet building codes. The huts, called winterized tents by the Rajneeshes, were used to house street people brought in by the Rajneeshes in what some believe was an effort to influence local elections.

Wasco County Circuit Judge John Jelderks ordered that the huts must have their utilities disconnected, and be torn down within 45 days. Wasco County and the state of Oregon had challenged the structures for violations of building codes. The Rajneeshes appear to be complying with the order.

The state has levied a \$1,400,000 fine against the Rajneeshes for electrical violations in that tent city, the largest such fine ever levied. The Rajneeshes are expected to appeal.

The Rajneeshes recently demonstrated their firearm skills for members of the media. At the demonstration, called by the Rajneeshes, about 30 members of the commune fired at human silhouette targets with a variety of firearms, including .38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolvers, and Galils and Uzis (both semiautomatic carbines).

The firearms demonstration was to demonstrate to people in the surrounding communities that members of the Rajneesh Security Force were capable of using their weapons to defend the commune, according to Rajneesh treasurer Sat Prabodhi.

In another action involving the Rajneeshes, attorneys have begun the

process of discovery in preparation for a state suit challenging the existence of Rajneeshpuram on the grounds it violates constitutional guarantees of separation of church and state.

Legal action is also underway to challenge the annexation by Rajneeshpuram of 119 acres, formerly farm land now rezoned for urban use. An Oregon land-use watchdog group, 1000 Friends of Oregon, is challenging the annexation on the grounds that it violates state land-use goals.

Neighbors of the Rajneeshes are also battling the name change of their town from Antelope to Rajneeshpuram. After gaining control of the Antelope town council the name of the historic town was changed; street names were also changed from pioneer names to guru names. Rajneeshes have applied to have the Antelope post office officially renamed. Citizens are writing the postmaster general to oppose this action.

And an arrest warrant has been issued for Guardian Angels founder Curtis Sliwa, who has twice failed to appear in court on disorderly conduct charges filed against him by the Rajneeshpuram Peace Force. Silwa and six other Guardian angels were arrested by the Rajneeshes after lying in the main road into Rajneeshpuram to halt traffic. Sliwa said the action was to protest the Rajneeshes treatment of homeless people brought to the commune and later expelled.

AGENCY ACCUSED OF KEEPING MONEY RAISED FOR ETHIOPIA

Allegations that an organization that has raised millions of dollars for famine relief in Ethiopia hasn't delivered any aid are being investigated by the Catholic attorney general and the Ventura County district attorney.

International Christian Aid, Inc.,

an evangelical organization affiliated with Inter-Aid, Inc. of Camarillo, has solicited donations through television appeals featuring starving Ethiopians. Some of the television appeals, which appear to show the current situation in Ethiopia actually contain footage that is five years old, according to missionaries who appear in the film.

The dating of the film may not be the only deception however. Michael Bradbury, the Ventura County district attorney, says "We're satisfied that the funds aren't being channeled to Ethiopia."

Inter-Aid founder and president Joe Bass called the reports "grossly inaccurate."



BAPTISTS AGAINST CATHOLICS

An Anabaptist preacher and one of his followers have been found guilty of shouting anti-Catholic slogans outside a Catholic church, and fined \$100 for "excessive noise."

"The maximum punishment isn't enough," said General District Judge Joseph A. Jordan when sentencing the pair. "The Constitution stands for your right to worship freely. It also stands for the complainant's right to worship freely."

Ronnie McRae, 30, who pastors Bible Anabaptist Church in his home, and Timothy Schuller, 29, did not deny that they had created a disturbance, but argued that they were within their rights to stand on the sidewalk "and preach our religious views."

Joseph Slattery, a priest with Holy Trinity Catholic Church, testified that McRae and Schuller stood across from

the church yelling "violently anti-Catholic" slogans at parishioners arriving for a service. "They were bellowing," said Slattery. "They said that what we celebrated in the Mass is cannibalism, that Confessions will not help people."

Both men plan to appeal their convictions. They were released on a \$250 bond each, and warned that a repeat disturbance would cause them to forfeit their bonds. "Under no circumstances are you to go back to the church and express yourselves as it has been testified today," ordered the judge.

ABORTION CLINIC BOMBINGS CONDEMNED BY PRO-LIFERS

Christmas-day bombings of three abortion clinics in Pensacola, FL, have drawn criticism from nationally-prominent pro-life leaders.

Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority, called abortion clinic bombers "deranged" and said their actions diverted attention from the "real authority" taking place inside the clinics. Falwell said that people involved in supporting the dignity of life should not "be involved in a violent act."

President Ronald Reagan condemned the clinic bombings as "violent, anarchist activities," and pledged to do "all in my power to assure that the guilty are brought to justice." Reagan had come under criticism from pro-abortion forces for not ordering more vigorous investigations of the attacks.

There were 24 attacks on abortion clinics in 1984. Of these, the three Christmas bombings in Pensacola were perhaps the most publicized. Matthew J. Goldsby, 21, was arrested after admitting that he planted the bombs that caused \$375,000 in combined damage at the clinics. Also arrested in connection with the explosion was Goldsby's fiancée Kaye Wiggins (18), James Thomas Simmons (21), and his wife Kathy Simmons (18), from Cantonment, 10 miles north of Pensacola.

Agent Morris Pelham of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms said of Goldsby "He felt that God's law was what he had to follow, not man's law." Pelham said that Goldsby believes that no matter how much time he has to spend in prison, "if he saved one life then what he has

done was worthwhile." Both men involved are being held as federal prisoners without bond.

The couples involved in the bombings called their action "a gift to Jesus for His birthday." Goldsby explained "We knew abortion was wrong. We also knew the majority of religious leaders would not agree with what we did. We did not go to the elders of the church because more likely, you know, they would have told us not to do it. . . we saw children being killed and we reacted in the quickest manner."

FBI agents were not involved in the Pensacola investigation. The FBI came under criticism earlier when FBI Director William Webster said that attacks on abortion clinics did not fit the Bureau's definition of terrorist acts, and therefore would not receive a high priority for investigation. Abortion clinic bombings are not regarded as terrorist acts because they are not an effort to "overthrow the government."

ILLINOIS CHURCH HAS MONEY PROBLEM: TOO MUCH, NOT TOO LITTLE

The United Methodist Church in this tiny farming community has money problems. But unlike many churches, this congregation has too much money, and can't decide what to do with it.

The problem began earlier this year when Ceja Corp. of Tulsa, Okla. struck oil on church property. The well began producing in May, averaging 114 barrels each day. Oil was also found on adjacent property, in which the church also has an interest. Royalty payments from the two wells come to about \$20,000 each month, according to John Hartleroad, pastor of the church.

"They don't give you a course in seminary on how to deal with abundance," says Hartleroad. "It's always how to make ends meet on limited resources."

The 170 members of Hartleroad's church are divided on how the money should be used, but agree that it should be spent to help others, and not on themselves. "It's all new for us, and we want to do it right," explains Hartleroad. "It's a tremendous opportunity to further God's work, but it's a complex problem. It's been difficult. Everybody has their own

projects that they would like to see the church contribute toward."

Discussion on how the money should be spent centers on one issue, according to Hartleroad. Some members want to use the money for projects as it becomes available. Others want to invest the money, and use the interest as a perpetual fund for project support. "The two groups are having trouble seeing each other's viewpoint," says Hartleroad.

The money will not be used for the church itself, according to the pastor. The 80-year-old building is paid for, and still useable, so the congregation is "free to minister to others," according to Hartleroad. "It's difficult being pastor and being stuck in the middle, but what's been exciting to me is that they really want to use it in the best way possible."

Hartleroad says that people in his farming community have expressed a great concern over world hunger, and predicts that at least some of the money will go for hunger relief projects.

Hartleroad says he's been getting plenty of advice from his colleagues. "All of my friends in the ministry have prophesied doom, and said this will mean the end of giving in my congregation," he relates. "Actually giving has kept right up and is a little ahead of last year. My people say giving to the church is their service to God and their privilege."

UNBORN FETUS IS A PERSON SAYS NORTH DAKOTA COURT

The mother of a still-born child can sue her doctor and hospital on the child's behalf for negligence, according to a North Dakota Supreme Court ruling.

The court ruled that an unborn fetus that dies before birth is a person under North Dakota law. The ruling overturned a lower-court decision, and ordered the case back for trial.

According to the court's decision, a child "conceived but not born is to be deemed an existing person so far as may be necessary for its interests in the event of its subsequent birth." The court's 4-0 opinion also said. "We believe it is commonly understood that an unborn child is a human being which has life and which, even prior to the process of birth, can experience death."

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“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

March 1985

Number 3

THE “OLDEST AND BEST MANUSCRIPTS” OF THE NEW TESTAMENT??

by Luther W. Martin

Perhaps you have wondered, just **why** the confession of the divinity of Christ is omitted in several of the modern English Versions of the New Testament, as given by the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:37?

Today's English Version, as published by the American Bible Society, uses brackets to indicate that any wording contained within the brackets is “not in the oldest and best manuscripts”. Who says so? Who has determined what constitutes the “oldest and best” manuscripts of the New Testament?

New American Standard Bible, says, “See marginal note”, instead of including Acts 8:37 in the Biblical text. The note states: Late mss. (manuscripts-LWM) insert verse 37: “*And Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’*” Here again, it has been concluded that the “late manuscripts” have the Eunuch’s confession of Christ, while “earlier manuscripts” do **not** contain it. Who says so? Who has determined the “early-ness” and “late-ness” of manuscripts?

English Revised Version, omits Acts 8:37 (it was the first of the English Versions to do this). It adds a marginal note, stating: “Some ancient authorities insert, wholly or in part, ver. 37: “*And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*”

Revised Standard Version, omits Acts 8:37 and introduces a footnote with “Other ancient authorities add all or most of verse 37. . .”

Similarly, nearly all of the modern English or American Versions drop Acts 8:37, chop off Mark 16th Chapter after verse 8, and generally exclude various Scripture passages. Would you like to know **WHY?** It’s really quite a story, and it has affected the thinking and attitude of several generations of Bible students, preachers, Christians and seminarians.

THE WESCOTT AND HORT THEORY.

Just as many classroom teachers have mistakenly thought and taught the theory of evolution to be a **fact**, so did two British Greek scholars arrive at a **theory** by which they thought they

could decide which was the more correct reading, when they found a “variant”, a variation, in the wording of a specific passage of Scripture. These two men were Greek scholars. . . no question about that. . . , but they entered into their studies of manuscripts of the New Testament with some preconceived notions and prejudices that led them to erroneous conclusions. But they were also very persuasive, and. . . but let me give you some more background information, before we really get into this history.

HAND-COPIED MANUSCRIPTS

The very sub-head, immediately above, is redundant! The word **manuscript** means “hand-written”. . . and that’s the only Scripture the world had, until Gutenberg’s invention of movable type printing in the Western world.

“*The books and the parchments*” to which the Apostle Paul made reference in 2 Timothy 4:13, were of necessity, hand-written items. As the different New Testament books were penned by their inspired writers, individuals and congregations made copies of these letters and biographies of Christ. Collections came into being,

but each and every one had to be hand-copied. Scribes or copyists put in long weeks and months in making a single copy of what became the New Testament.

Now think of your own ability at copying some writing with pen or pencil. Think of how your eyes may "play a trick" upon you, and you drop a word, or perhaps copy the same word twice. Possibly your spelling is not too good, and so mis-spellings crop in to your copy. And, if you are copying a copy of a copy, you may be adding your own errors to those of the copyist before you.

So, it was no surprise that the very first book to be published upon Gutenberg's printing press was an edition of the Bible, in Latin. This new invention meant that from henceforth, once the book was "proof-read", that no copyists' variations would interfere with the correct and accurate transmission of the Holy Scriptures. That's not to say that there have not been some careless printers and proof-readers, down through the years. . .but generally, since the invention of printing, the reproduction of books has become an exacting science.

The Books of the New Testament were initially completed by the end of the first century. They were written either on **papyrus**. . .a plant that grew along streams, and was famous along the Nile River in Egypt; or, they were written upon **vellum**, the skins of animals. In fact, we get the name "paper" from papyrus. The first manuscripts of New Testament books were written in **uncials**, single upper-case letters. . .one letter at a time. Later, **cursive** writing was used, wherein the letters were connected together and instead of being capital letters, they would be more like lower-case. Still later, smaller letters were used in the manuscripts, and the scribes tended to "slant" their letters, like in "Italics". These were gradual changes in the style of writing, that could be used in generally determining the century in which a manuscript might have been written.

SOURCES OF CONFIRMING NEW TESTAMENT ACCURACY.

(a) *From the New Testament Itself:* Paul affirmed - ". . .the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37).

". . .that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written. . ." (I

Cor. 4:6).

"How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, by which when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Eph. 3:3-4).

"And when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16).

"I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren" (I Thess. 5:27).

". . .if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thess. 3:14).

The foregoing Scriptures demonstrate the use of the New Testament writings, as well as the Old Testament, during the first century, A.D. I have underscored the words that referred to reading and writing.

(b) *Translations of the New Testament into Various Languages:* The New Testament was written in the commonly spoken Greek Language, known as the **koine** Greek. Since the days of the Greek Military leader, Alexander The Great, the Greek Language and civilization has been spread to all the nations bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The word "Mediterranean" meant the "middle-of-the-earth" or center of the world Sea. This Greek Language was the language of commerce, religion, learning, science (such as it was), and philosophy. Therefore, the New Testament was written in this language, but it was not long until the Latin Language began to supplant the Greek. . .and finally, the Greek of the New Testament, became a "dead" (no longer used) language. . .thus, effectively placing the Greek of the New Testament into a kind of "deep freeze", so that it was preserved, without change. Living language change and evolve, but not so, a "dead" language. I suggest that this was God's way of preserving and insuring the Word of Inspiration. The New Testament was translated into the common language of Syria, called the Peshitto; the language of Egypt, known as the Coptic Language; a dialect of Upper Egypt around Thebes, called Thebaic; Armenian, and other languages. These different languages

served to cross-check each other, in keeping the copies of the New Testament accurate with each other. . .even when copyists made mistakes in copying.

(c) **Scripture Quotations Included in Writings of Early Christians:** It is amazing to discover that the entire New Testament can be reproduced from the writings of Christians who were known to have lived in the early centuries. Scholars of New Testament Greek have reported that the complete New Testament could be found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria (150-220 A.D.), Origen (185-253 A.D.), Eusebius (265-340 A.D.), and Athanasius (298-375 A.D.); and this includes all twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

(d) **Lectionaries:** These were portions of Scripture that were copied and kept on lecterns and pulpits in places of public worship, for convenient use when copies usually have lengthy excerpts from the biographies of Christ and/or the Old Testament. In any event, these served as additional evidence of the original wording of the books of the Bible.

SOME CURRENT TOTALS OF MANUSCRIPTS.

New discoveries of old manuscripts continue to be made. Numerous additional manuscripts have been found since the days of Westcott and Hort, to whom we shall shortly give attention. As Greek manuscripts are located, a number is assigned to each one. Professor Kurt Aland, has been given the task of numbering all the Bible manuscripts that have come to light. A fairly recent list has:

81 papyrus manuscripts
267 manuscripts in unicals (capital letters)
2,764 manuscripts in cursive or minuscules
2,143 lectionaries
5,255 total of all types of texts.

Of these 5,255 texts, some consist of only a few words, some a few chapters, some a few books, and others contain the complete New Testament.

1844 A.D. — TISCHENDORF DISCOVERS THE SINAITICUS MANUSCRIPT

Named for the place where it was discovered, a monastery on Mount Siani, this was a spectacular discovery, in its day. Seven years later, a 23 year-old student named Fenton John Anothony Hort, wrote to a friend, expressing his disdain for the Received Text (Textus Receptus) from which all

of the English Versions of the New Testament had been translated:

"I have no idea till the last few weeks of the importance of texts, having read so little Greek Testament, and dragged on with the villainous *Textus Receptus*. . . . Think of that vile *Textus Receptus* leaning entirely on late MSS.; it is a blessing there are such early ones." (Life and Letters of F.J.A. Hort, by A.F. Hort, Vol. I, page 211).

Young Hort, at this early time in his life, refers to the *Textus Receptus*, as "villainous" and "vile", yet admitting that he had "read little" of the Greek Testament.

It was in 1851 that Hort wrote of the *Textus Receptus* being in his estimation, "villainous" and "vile". Then in 1853, he teamed up with B.F. Westcott and in writing to an acquaintance, expressed the hope that they would have a new Greek text out in a little more than a year. (It actually took them 28 years).

Hort set out to establish a new Greek Text, and devised his theory of textual criticism to fit his pre-determined goal. . . . that of supplanting the *Textus Receptus*. . . and this Hort and Westcott succeeding in doing!

"THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN!"

The Westcott and Hort theory of how the manuscripts of the New Testament were developed in "families", sounding plausible in the 1860's and 1870's, but to make their theory "hold water" they had to embrace some assumptions, that have subsequently been disproved by more recent manuscript discoveries.

According to the W-H Theory, the Majority Text (more of the manuscripts agreed with this "family") originated in the region of Constantinople or Byzantium, therefore this "family" became known as the "Byzantine" Text. But the two "oldest and best" manuscripts differed from the vast majority of the other manuscripts, and therefore W-H based their Greek Text upon two manuscripts, and since the same handwriting is found in both of these manuscripts, it appears that the same copyists had to do with both of them. We refer to *Codex Sinaiticus* (Aleph), and *Codex Vaticanus* (B).

Hort imagined (it was important to his theory) that what he called a

"Syrian" text had been severely revised and produced in the last half of the third century, and that Chrysostom was the first scholar to quote from this "later recension". Chrysostom died about 407 A.D. This "Syrian" imaginary text, was never produced by Hort, but it was important to his theory. . . and he convinced numerous ones of his followers to accept the idea of a late 3rd century revision of the "Syrian" text that became the basis for the *Textus Receptus*. And Hort had concluded that the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus were older than the basis for the Received Text, and were, therefore "older and best" in comparison.

MANUSCRIPT DISCOVERIES IN THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS HAVE "SUNK" HORT'S THEORY!

Because there have been manuscripts located that contained readings similar to the supposed "Revised Syrian" which were older than, and pre-ceded Chrysostom and the late third century!

Note what a recent scholar has to say:

"A significant development has taken place in the evaluation of the Byzantine or Koine type of text, which Westcott and Hort dismissed as of no real value in the process of textual criticism. Occasionally this text-type may have preserved the true text. Metzger gives an example of a reading preserved only in the Byzantine manuscripts which nevertheless commends itself as original." (Introduction To The New Testament, by Everett F. Harrison, page 82, 1971 Edition.)

"It is especially because of the fairly large number of Byzantine readings found in the papyri that a re-evaluation of this text-type is needed. On this matter G. Zuntz gives the following testimony: 'A number of Byzantine readings, most of them genuine, which previously were discarded as 'late,' are anticipated by P⁶⁶. Our inquiry has confirmed what was anyhow probable enough: the Byzantine did not hit upon these readings by conjecture or independent error. They reproduced an older tradition.' The findings of E.C. Colwell are equally relevant. 'The Bodmer John P⁶⁶ is also a witness to the early existence of many of the readings found in the Alpha text-type (Hort's 'Syrian', and Kenyon's 'Alpha', both referring to the *Textus Receptus* - LWM.)'" (Ibid. page 82.)

CONCLUSION

The New King James Version, published by Thomas Nelson, is based upon the *Textus Receptus*. The Editors and Scholars involved with this Version have totally rejected the Westcott and Hort theory and text. I, for one, would like to commend this effort which, by recognizing the importance of papyrus manuscripts discovered in the last 100 years, has reached the scholarly conclusion, that the Westcott and Hort text is built upon wishful fabrications. And, that the basic text used for all English Versions prior to 1881, the Received Text, is well worthy of continued respect and study.

707 Salem Avenue
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Filled With The Spirit by R.C. Smart, Sr.

Ephesians 5:18-19 is a command to the Christian. There is a positive and a negative side to it. "Be filled with the Spirit" is the positive. In this era of controversy and confusion over the miraculous aspect of the Holy Spirit, we must not lose sight of the fact that Christians are to be filled with the Spirit.

In the abstract sense, the statement could be applied to any cause or movement--such as Freedom, Liberty, etc. This would cause one to be filled with a fervor of feeling that would reduce all else to a secondary role. We are, however, speaking in a specific sense. The Holy Spirit indwelling the Christian (Acts 2:36-38). This is manifested by bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control.

Rather than worry about the miraculous, which was for a specific people for a specific purpose for a limited period of time, we should show more concern for the above indications of ones being filled with the Spirit.

ObeY the Gospel of Christ. Grow in Grace and Knowledge. Read I Peter. 2:1-2 and II Peter 1:4-11.

P.O. Box 348
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CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

IMMODEST DRESS

Our nation is grievously distressed by fornication, adultery, unwed mothers, and abortions. The cheap literature on newsstands, triangular love affairs on television and theaters, and the lust-provoking attire worn by many contribute to the present state of affairs. The general public applauds such, parents often allow it and too many preachers and teachers refuse to warn the guilty.

Let those who claim to be Christians think, talk, act and dress as becometh a Christian. Our world needs to see examples of purity, modesty and fidelity. Followers of the Lord are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather we are to reprove them (Eph. 5:1-11). There would be fewer people suffering physical and mental troubles here and fewer in hell later if more were done now by parents, teachers and preachers to teach the beauty of holiness, chastity, modesty and decency.

Before sin entered into the world, Adam and Eve had lived in fellowship with God, in marital companionship with each other, and in the same innocent nakedness which is still seen among small children. Immediately upon sinning, Adam and Eve experienced shame in nakedness and made apron-like girdles to wear. God replaced these with long coat-like garments (see Genesis 3:7,21). Wherever mankind has gone, the bodies of men and women have been covered because of the influence of God's Word, the shame of sin, and the reality of temptation. Lack of clothing has characterized cultures darkened by rejecting God, embracing sin, and delighting in pleasurable lusts.

Clothing reflects attitudes. Enticed by "the attire of an harlot," foolish men have destroyed their souls in lust and sin (Proverbs 7). Once a man possessed by demons went about with "no clothes" but was healed by Jesus and was then seen "clothed, and in his right mind" (Lk. 8:26-36).

Each year when the temperature starts getting higher the clothes start coming off. We are living in an age when people are almost apathetic toward the idea of immodesty. Even many of our church members think nothing of taking off half of their clothing and indecently exposing their bodies to the gazing eyes of the lustful public. The female population think they have to always "be in style." They don't even think twice about wearing skin-tight pants, low-cut blouses, see-through dresses, high-slit skirts, or shorts. Men and boys think it is stylish to leave three or four of the buttons on their shirt open to show their chest or to wear pants so tight they ache in the crotch. I verily believe there are many people today who don't think that there is such a thing as immodesty.

Christians are being tempted on every hand to relent to the ways of the world and sacrifice truth and modesty. Some Christians are succumbing to this temptation, and, as a result, worldliness is creeping into the Lord's church. Because of this condition, I feel it necessary to "speak out" on this to young people and contend for the faith.

With the constant changes in styles the question, "Is this modest?" is one a Christian must answer nearly every time you buy clothing. I am no so foolish as to think I can answer all questions that arise on modesty vs. immodesty. Too many have tried to define immodesty by how short the skirt is, how tight the pants are, or how high the slit in the dress is. Customs of the day do alter styles; obviously what is considered modest today would have certainly been immodest fifty years ago. But society cannot altogether set the standards of modesty for the Christian, and a godly person should not seek to be in the forefront with every new style. That which is "stylish" may not necessarily be modest, especially not if its effect is to stir up the carnal appetites in the opposite sex. Why permit the **God-less** to set the standards for the **God-fearing**?

I have heard of preachers who will dogmatically argue that a dress one-sixteenth of an inch above the knee is immodest. I heard of elders in one church that posted a deacon at the door and refused to allow any woman wearing a pantsuit to enter for worship. I heard of one congregation refusing to allow a man suffering from bronchial trouble the right to lead in prayer because he couldn't wear a tie. This is legalism to the nth degree--no man can draw this kind of line for another individual. What, then, is the solution to the problem? How can a Christian know what to wear and what not to wear? Let us consider several Bible passages for our answers:

GALATIANS 5:19-21

Much of the unchaste exposure can be attributed to a sin listed here as one of the works of the flesh. That sin is **lasciviousness**. If you will notice, people guilty of this sin cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The word lasciviousness means: "**wanton, lewd, lustful, that which**



Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"
— Proverbs 27:1

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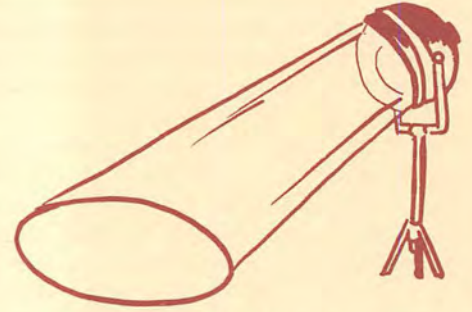
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Today's Spotlight



An interview with

FERRELL JENKINS

When did you first start making your trips abroad?

I started in 1967. The reason I did that was that I had simply wanted to go to the Bible Lands myself, and at that time I had never conceived that I might have enough money to afford a trip without getting other people to go. William Wallace and I were both living in Indianapolis at the time, so we decided we'd put together a tour. We made the plans, but then I moved to Akron. So, I was actually living in Ohio when the first tour originated.

I think we had 19 people on that first tour. Even before that tour was over, we had decided we wanted to go a second time to see some new things. That's the way it all began. After a few tours I realized that I had a service to offer. I felt that a lot of Christians wanted to see the Bible Lands and they wanted to go with somebody that knew a little about it.

What do you feel would be one of the greatest highlights of these tours?

That would be hard to answer. There have been seventeen Bible Land trips--sixteen tours in Israel plus one archaeological trip to dig at Lachish. There have been so many highlights, it would be difficult to pick out one as the greatest.

There are many things we were able to do in those earlier trips that we are not able to do today. For instance, when I first started in 1967 it was possible to do what we called an eight-



Jenkins served on the institutional staff of the Lachish, Israel, Excavation Project in 1980. He is shown at work in the Palace area of Lachish.



Ferrell made a personal study tour of Western Asia Minor (modern Turkey) in 1984. Here he views the site of ancient Colossae which lies silent in the shadow of majestic Mount Cadmus. No archaeological work has yet been done at Colossae.

country tour in sixteen days. We would go to Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel. It was easily possible to do that because they are so close together. But politics, wars, and other problems have made that impossible now. For a few years there was no land access to Israel. We had to fly to Cyprus and then to Tel Aviv. That has been constantly changing. At the present time, it's easy to travel in Egypt, Jordan, and Israel--but not so easy to go into Lebanon.

I have been to Iraq where Babylon and Nineveh are located. That, of course, is now an area that is a little difficult to go in. The accessibility of places change from time to time.

One of the highlights would have to be some things I have done on my own, privately. These are often places that very few people ever get to do. Sometimes I'm able to take groups to these places, but not always. I certainly haven't been able to take every group to all of these places. I usually take one day away from the group in Israel and have a rental car and go to places that I've not been able to go before. I've still got a few places like that to go, but I've covered a lot of the country.

What convinced you to go on the dig in Lachish?

I just wanted the first-hand experience of what was done at a dig. It gave me a better understanding of the science of archaeology and how it actually works. I learned how they uncover the evidence and what they do with it.

Many people have asked me what we expected to find. The answer is simply, "Whatever is there." You're not really searching for any particular thing, but you want to uncover everything that is there.

It was a very rewarding experience. I'd love to do it again sometime.

Do you get to keep any of the finds?

Oh, no, none of the things are kept by the workers. The state of Israel requires that everything be left there. That's mostly true everywhere today. That wasn't true in the past years. Diggers would go in and bring out treasures. But the laws are very strict on that today.

What do you see in just every-day life in the country that makes the Bible more meaningful?

We actually see the Bible "come alive" in the daily life of the Arab people. We consider them to be more

primitive in their technology and they are using the methods that were used in Biblical times. So you'll see the shepherd with his sheep, the men sowing in the fields, or men plowing with the animals. You can see the women drawing the water from the wells or the winnowing of the grain. You are able to see many of the customs that are mentioned in the Scriptures.

How do you decide what you want to see on a trip like this?

On my first trip I had to use an itinerary that someone else had planned. I felt that I was prepared for the trip because in graduate school I had done some research papers on some of the first-century remains, had studied archaeology a good bit, and had taught a course in Bible geography. But after that first trip, I started thinking of other things that I hadn't seen.

But in our tours today, I have to keep in mind our first-time travelers. I have to keep repeating the places he would want to see. For instance, I could say we could go and skip seeing the Sea of Galilee, but you wouldn't dare do that if you're taking a person for the first time. You've got to see these places over and over.

What do you feel, for the first-time visitor, is his biggest surprise?

The thing that most people mention is the size of the country. They had envisioned these places as being much further apart than what they are. The trip from Jerusalem to Jericho or from Galilee to Judea is not the distance many expected it to be. They are surprised how close these places are. I think this is often a surprise to even the knowledgeable person.

The person that has done very little studying about the area is surprised to find all of the buildings and shrines.

Most people are impressed with the landscape, the mountains and the valleys, and what happened in those mountains or valleys--just like the Bible describes them.

What is the oldest thing a person can see on a trip like this?

I might jokingly answer that by saying, "The dirt." That's really hard

to be specific, though, in saying what is really the oldest. Different people might give different answers. Kathleen Kenyon, the British archaeologist, said Jericho is the oldest city. She dated it to about 8 to 10 thousand B.C.

We see lots and lots of things that go back to the time of the patriarchs, the judges, and prophets, and, of course, the New Testament period.

How can a traveler separate the genuine from the artificial, the shrine from the original?

I call it the fact from the fiction. That's a real problem, especially for the first-time traveler that has not studied very much. I find that even a lot of gospel preachers go and even though they have read about the Bible Lands a lot, they are overwhelmed all of a sudden by seeing so much and hearing about this building from the 10th century B.C., this is from the 1st century A.D., this is from the 4th century, this is Byzantine, and this is Islamic. It is almost overwhelming and it takes a while to sort all of this out.

Throughout the lands where Bible events transpired, church buildings have been erected over this or that "sacred spot." These buildings are simply show places. Tourists stream through them at a steady rate observing the ancient ornamentation still preserved. In many cases the present building, which is often centuries old, simply covers the ruins of earlier buildings. In the name of Christ, rituals are performed by sectarian groups.

To illustrate specifically: In Bethlehem, the tradition of the birthplace of Jesus goes back to the middle of the second century. The spot, now covered by the Basilica of the Nativity, would hardly remind one of anything he reads in the New Testament. The student now finds an old building with mosaics with gold backgrounds dating from the 12th century, and art of the middle ages. The ruins of the large buildings erected by Justinian in the 6th century simply serve to cover the 4th century building by Constantine. As in so many of the buildings, one can see holes in the floor showing earlier mosaic floors. The student of church history never forgets that all of this was the activity of an apostate church and does not reflect New Testament Christianity. I explain

to the group, and sometimes to a guide, that we will not be pausing to pray at these shrines. I remind them that when the woman of Samaria wanted to know whether Jesus took the position of the Samaritans that worship should be at Mount Gerizim, or the position of the Jews that it should be at Jerusalem, the Lord answered that *"an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father."* Jesus explained that the true worshippers were those who worshipped the Father in spirit and truth; the place is a matter of indifference.

But we see something else in the Bible Lands just as impressive and not nearly so discouraging. We see the excavations of the archaeologists whose interest is to get back to the original building, floor, street, etc. He carefully and painstakingly removes the tons of debris collected by centuries of indifference. Finally, after many seasons of effort, he sees the fruit of his labor. It may be bronze jewelry in a Canaanite tomb in the Jordan Valley, the name of the city stamped on a wine jar at Gibeon, the Solomonic gates and walls at Gezer or Hazor. But the archaeologist has found what he was looking for--the original. He carefully observes it,

makes drawings, detailed reports and photographs. From this he may seek to make a model of the city or item as it was originally, and he has a lot to go on.

The Herodian walls, from the time of Christ, can be seen in many places. Excavated pools, first century tombs, and the pavement, help us to recreate the Jerusalem that Jesus knew.

I feel, and I've had others to say the same thing, that you learn more the first year after your trip than you've ever learned before. A real student continues to study and tries to sort out what has been seen. Now if you make a lot of pictures on the trip, you come back and want to be able to really identify that picture and tell about what you have seen. That encourages a lot of studying, too.

Do you see different things at different times of the year?

Yes, if you go in March or April you can see the fields green and the hillsides covered with flowers. If you go later in the summer, everything will be dry. I've been at different times during the summer, like May or July, and then later in the summer one goes the drier the area becomes. That's what Jesus was talking about when He said the grass "is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven."



In 1979 the Department of Tourism of the State of Israel presented Ferrell an official state medal to honor him for his promotion of tourism.

What is your favorite area of the Bible Lands?

That is **really** a hard question. I love so many of the places, but I suppose that Jerusalem would have to be one of my favorite because of the association with so much of Biblical history. But then I would also have to say the Sea of Galilee because Jesus did so much of His work in that area.

Do you recommend these trips for everyone or is this just something for preachers and elders?

When I first started traveling and wanted to show my slides, for a number of years I felt very self-conscious about it. I was afraid some might think I was just trying to drum up business. That was never my motive. After a while, though, after I realized that I had been so many times and made so many pictures I would organize them with maps and diagrams so they would be understandable and educational to brethren. I wanted to just help them understand the Bible better. I realize that most brethren will never have an opportunity to go and I'm very happy when I can share my pictures and my insight into the country.

I feel that every Christian would profit from a trip like this. I have heard so many people says something like, "I have read about this for so long and it is so good to see it with my own eyes." I have heard some, even before the trip is over, say, "I was reading my Bible last night and it is just amazing how it comes to life now because I have seen these places." Yes, the trip is beneficial to everyone who reads and studies the Bible.

Do you think your travels have helped your preaching?

Yes, I think it has been a tremendous help for me. Even though I don't necessarily have to talk about having been to a certain place, it has given me a depth of understanding about the places that has enlivened my own teaching and preaching.

Can tourists travel in these places and feel safe today?

My answer to that is that if it were unsafe to travel in these regions, the State Department would notify us of such. For instance, they recently said it was not safe for Americans to go to Linengrand. There has never been any such warning as that to Israel. The second thing is that the media plays these things out of proportion. By focusing in with their cameras on some troubled spot, and our not knowing so much about the area, we may think the whole area is being troubled. I often illustrate it by saying if we see on television that there is a problem in Nashville we wouldn't hesitate to go to Louisville. Or even in some of our major cities like Miami or New York, there may be a problem in one certain area of the city but that wouldn't affect the whole city.

I understand that there are just as many acts of terrorism in the U.S. as there are overseas. It's not a problem. I've been nearly every year since 1967 and I've taken my wife and both of my children. Obviously, I wouldn't take my family if I thought it were dangerous; I wouldn't even go myself if I thought someone was going to get hurt.

Another thing I might say about all

of this is that you learn about the problems over there the same way you learn about the problems over here. You hear them on the news the next day.

How did you move from trips to the Bible Lands to trips to various parts of the world?

In the early Bible Land tours, we would visit certain capitals--like London, Rome, or Paris. The principle reason for going to some of these places was to see some of the museums. Many of the archaeological artifacts relating to the Bible are to be found in these museums.

Several brethren began saying to me, "We've been with you to the Bible Lands two or three times, but we like to travel to other places. We don't want to go with other groups because they plan some of their most important sightseeing on Sunday or have drinking parties or something we can't participate in."

So in 1975 I started directing tours to Europe. Since that time, I have been over most of Europe, Scandinavia, British Isles, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, the Orient, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii.

I am working on a Scandinavian trip for '85 and China for '86. I'd like to hear from any Christians that would like to go with me on one of these trips.



Readers may write to Ferrell Jenkins at 9211 Hollyridge Place, Temple Terrace, FL 33617.

HOW TO KILL A CHURCH by Roger Hillis

1.) Don't plan a Bible study program. Let the teachers teach whatever they want. With no organization, no one will ever learn too much.

2.) Never discipline unfaithful members. That way, members will never form any real convictions about right and wrong.

3.) Don't worry about scriptural authority. If a thing seems to be good do it - whether God authorizes it or not.

4.) Emphasize social activities over spiritually oriented functions.

5.) Discourage new converts from being too zealous. They need to learn quickly to take Christianity and salvation for granted. After all, if these things were really that important, wouldn't the older Christians take them more seriously?

6.) Don't let young people take an active part in the work of the church. They might grow into hard working, zealous members.

7.) Complain unendingly about the decisions of the elders. Never appear pleased with any spiritual work that is done.

8.) Never show hospitality to one another. Do not appear to have any brotherly love.

9.) Don't talk to anyone about the lost condition of his soul. You might accidentally convert him.

* "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev. 3:1).

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- PEACE

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

In contrast to "enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties and envying," the fruit of the Spirit is "peace" (Gal. 5:19-22). The contrast between following the flesh and the Spirit is nowhere more forcefully or strikingly presented. The "peacemaker" is producing the fruit of the Spirit. The trouble-maker is producing the work of the flesh, and God said he "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

The word "peace" appears eighty-eight times in the New Testament. It involves every relationship of life. Man must be at peace with God, himself, his family, his brethren and the world.

Peace with God is attained through obedient faith. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). All other kinds of "peace" would be worthless without this one! Those who are in sin are at enmity with God, but God provided an atonement that they may become friends. "But God commandeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:8-10). Peace is not only attained through Christ, it is maintained through him. "His life" (v. 10) refers to his resurrected life, as he sits at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. (See Rom. 8:34).

The Christian who produces the "fruit of the Spirit" in his life is at peace with himself. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom.

15:14). "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col. 3:15). "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7). Paul taught Timothy to pray "for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity" (I Tim. 2:2). The word, "tranquil" refers to "the absence of outward disturbance." "Quiet" refers to "tranquility arising from within" (Vincent's Word Studies). The Christian should have an inner contentment that radiates in his manner of life.

The Spirit teaches that there should be peace in the home. Husbands and wives are to love one another, and this produces a peaceful atmosphere. Love "has good manners, is not selfish, is not easily provoked. . ." (I Cor. 13:4-7). The wise writer of Proverbs said: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a contentious woman in a wide house. . . It is better to dwell in a desert land, Than with a contentious and fretful woman" (Prov. 21:9, 19). (And we might add that the same would be true about a contentious man!) Paul told the Corinthians that if an unbeliever was not content to dwell with the believer, "let him depart" because "God hath called us in peace" (I Cor. 7:15). Though the marriage commitment is not to be taken lightly, the believer's right to "peace" is also important. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for a Christian to live the life he/she should live in an environment of strife. Each person in the family needs to consider this important "fruit" and make sure that his "tree" is bearing "peaceable fruit."



The Christian must be at peace with all men, and groups of men. In the Jewish morning prayer, there is a thanksgiving in which the male Jew thanks God that he was not made "a Gentile, a slave, or a woman." In contrast to such prejudice, the Spirit said: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). To the Ephesians, he said: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace" (Eph. 2:14, 15). Racial hatred is not a fruit of the Spirit. We are to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). The man who would "love life and see good days," should "seek peace, and pursue it" (I Pet. 3:9, 11). "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).

The Spirit also teaches that there must be peace in the church. "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). The "bond" that preserves "unity" is peace. The peacemaker is doing the will of God and contributing to the growth of the church. The trouble-

maker is doing the work of the Devil, by destroying spiritual and numerical growth. Personal ambitions, opinions and preferences should be sacrificed for the peace of the local church. Someone said: "Show me a fussing, growing church, and I will show you a **white** black-bird!" Such does not exist. Paul likened the strife that so often exists in churches to a dog fight. He said: "*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not*

consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15). James said: "*the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace*" (Jas. 3:17). The opposite "fruit" is produced by strife.

In the list of "works of the flesh," eight of the fifteen sins specifically named involve **attitude**. Though we preach long and loud against fornication and drunkenness, there is probably more damage done to the Lord's cause by those sins that involve

attitude.

We are not advocating "peace at any price," but each individual has an obligation to produce the fruit of "peace" in his life. One who is not producing this fruit of the Spirit is hurting himself and the Lord's work.



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"Don't Worry About It!"

by Mason Harris

How often have you been given that advice? I have been told that many times, and I find myself giving that advice to others quite often. But I'll tell you one thing: It is a lot easier said than done. We live in a society where getting things done is a mark of one's success. And if it seems we are failing to "get things done" amid the pressures around us, we become anxious. We have goals to reach and deadlines to meet, and when anything gets us off track, we get up tight about it. And doctors tell us that this is not good for our physical welfare. Many of the so-called psychosomatic problems are really physical problems brought on by anxieties. The expression, "It worries me to death," may have much truth in it.

But perhaps not all anxiety is bad. It seems that we need enough concern to form a healthy, realistic appraisal of what is going on. We need to fear starvation enough that we plant seed and work toward a bountiful harvest. We need to fear the cold enough to make clothes for ourselves while we can. To be sure, a fair moment of anxiety can motivate us, but too much has a tendency to sap our physical, mental, and spiritual strength, leaving us with little energy to pursue worthwhile things. We may reason with ourselves saying, "What's the use?" Too much anxiety hinders our effectiveness and interferes with the

work God has given us to do. What we need is enough concern to work, and enough faith to trust in the Lord that all will go well with us.

Jesus gave different reasons to not worry. Consider a few of them.

1. The birds do not worry about tomorrow and gather into barns, yet the heavenly Father feeds them. Are we not better than they? It is man that was made in the image and after the likeness of the Creator, not the birds. Jesus said, "*Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they*" (Matthew 6:26)? A Jewish Rabbi said he had never seen a stag as a dryer of figs, or a lion as a porter, or a fox a merchantman, yet they all are nourished without worry. Then He observed: "*If they, who are created to serve me, and nourished without worry, how much more ought I, who am created to serve my Master, to be nourished without worry; but I have corrupted my ways, and so I have impaired my substance.*" Man is taught to work, but he is also taught to trust the Lord.

2. It is useless to worry, for how much worry can add an inch to one's height, or a day to his life? "*Which of you by taking thought (being anxious) can add one cubit unto his stature*" (Matthew 6:27)?

3. Do you constantly worry about what you are going to wear? Jesus said, "*Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought (be not anxious) saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*" (Matthew 6:28-32).

What could surpass the beauty of the lilies as they bloomed on the hillsides of Palestine? Yet, when they died, they were good for nothing but to be cast into the oven and burned. Now, if God bestows such beauty on short-lived flowers, will he not much more care for man whom he has made after his likeness?

4. Worry is characteristic of the heathens who do not know God. "*(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:)*" (Matthew 6:32). They do not know God and therefore fail to understand God's care for his people. The heathen may well ask, "What are we going to eat? What are we going to drink? What are we going to wear?" But the Christian knows the loving care of God, and believes that all things work for good to them that love the Lord. The Christian seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness with the calm assurance that he will have food to eat, water to drink, and clothes to wear. With this assurance, why worry?

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“FOOLISHNESS”

Greek Word: *aphrosune*

Meaning: foolishness

I have been asked to write a little bit about “foolishness” in Mk. 7:22.

In early Greek speech the diaphragm of a man was called the **phren**. And, as is commonly known, the internal organs of a person were thought to be the seat of his intellectual and spiritual activity. And the diaphragm was thought to have certain powers in reference to the thought process of men. In particular, since the diaphragm governed the limits and strength of the breathing process (pneumatic function), it was thought to govern the extent of the spiritual functions of human life (**pneuma** = spirit **and** breath or wind in Greek; cf. Jn. 3:5, 8).

But this word soon lost its physical significance and came to be used, for the most part, of the mental and spiritual capacity and activity of human beings (Kittel, TDTNT, IX, 220).

A family of words was derived from this original root. And among this family are several words with what is called the “alpha-privative,” i.e., the **a** affixed to the front of the word so that the word is “essentially defined by a lack or a negation” of the thing being considered (Brown, NIDNTT, III, 1024).

And so we find words in the New Testament like **aphorizo**, to foam (Mk. 9:18, 20); **aphros**, the one who foams (Lk. 9:39); **aphron**, fool (Lk. 12:20); and **aphrosune**, foolishness (Mk. 7:22). All of these words indicate, generally, human behaviour that is characterized by the absence of sound, smooth-functioning mental processes. The problem may be organic; it may be psychological; or it may be moral-spiritual—but the mind is not being properly employed, for whatever reason.

In Mk. 7:22 the word for “foolishness” is **aphrosune** as indicated above. It is used four times in the Greek New Testament and in each

case seems to refer to an absence of responsible mental-spiritual activity that is the fault of the party practicing the “foolishness.”

In 2 Cor. 11:17, 22 Paul indicates that he is deliberately behaving as though he had no judgment or sense, i.e., he is playing the fool to help the Corinthians see the foolishness of their position. The KJV translates “foolishly” here. And in 2 Cor. 11:1 uses the same word but translates “folly,” which emphasizes the idea of mental deficiencies that are not physical or psychological problems but a moral-spiritual problem (cf. NIV, “I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness”).

In Mk. 7:22 when Jesus lists several sins that defile a person before God, he includes “foolishness.” It should be noted that He is listing sins, not physical illnesses or mental deficiencies. Consequently it seems to me that He is teaching that a person can refuse to use the mind he has been given and behave in an ungodly way **as though** he had no sense. His excuse may be, “I lost my head; I didn’t know what I was doing.” But God knows his heart and is capable of telling whether or not his behaviour was due to a debilitating disease or to plain old ungodliness; i.e., deliberate mindlessness.

“SHESHACH”

Hebrew Word: *sheshach*

Meaning “a sinking down” (Babylon)

While reading the Book of Jeremiah I came across this unusual word. It occurs in Jer. 25:26 and 51:41. It obviously refers to Babylon, that great seventh century B.C. oppressor of nations and destroyer of Jerusalem. This much is clear because Jeremiah uses it as a parallel of Babylon:

“How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth astonished! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!” (51:41).

But what does the word mean? And why is it presented in the text as a

proper name? There seems to be no such name, as such, in ancient history connected with Babylon. The answer lies in the fact that this word is a cryptogram, a code word.

In order to spell the name Babylon it is necessary to use three consonants in Hebrew: **Beth** (the 2nd letter of the alphabet), **Beth** (2nd letter again), and **Lamed** (the 12th letter). In order to form the code name for Babylon, Sheshach, Jeremiah simply counted to the same places, 2nd, 2nd, 12th, in the Hebrew alphabet, starting at the **end** instead of the beginning. So: **Shin** (2nd from the end), **Shin** (2nd from the end), **Kaph** (12th from the end).

It has been suggested that this name was invented to stand for Babylon in Jeremiah’s text because the prophet wished to avoid mentioning Babylon by name for fear of reprisal. The Apostle John used a code name for the City of Rome, apparently for this reason (see Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2). But this is hardly likely in Jeremiah’s case because he mentions Babylon openly in the same texts where the word Sheshach is found (see again 51:41 above and 25:26 along with 25:12-13).

C.F. Keil suggests that this word was a contraction of the word **shechshach**, “a sinking down” (Comm. on Jer., p. 383). So Jeremiah is using this skilfully devised cryptogram not to hide the identity of Babylon but to threaten that evil city:

“For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations. . .to drink it. . .all the kings of the north, far and near. . .and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them” (Jer. 25:15-26).

When Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had served his purpose in the hand of God to punish the nations he, too, would drink the wine cup of God’s fury. He himself would prove to be the king of a “sinking down” kingdom.



Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

HOW EXCELLENT

(Chapter 8)

The words we have chosen as a title for this eighth psalm are used in the first and last verses in reference to the name of Jehovah. They fitly describe the psalm as well. This is a mountain peak in the ancient hymnal. It speaks of the majesty of God and the glory and limitations of man. It speaks of the chasm between God and man and the grace of God that bridged that chasm.

The title reads: "To the chief musician upon Gittith, a Psalm of David." As with most all of these terms, scholars are uncertain of the meaning of Gittith. Some believe it refers to a tune; others, to an instrument, some suggest it refers to a joyful hymn. The word is applied to two other psalms (81, 84), both of which are joyful.

WORDS OF ADMIRATION (v. 1)

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Human speech and mortal tongues can never express the glory of God. But a valiant attempt is made to that end in this psalm.

God has displayed His excellency through all His creation. The signs of His eternal power and Godhead are everywhere in evidence. He is omnipresent and so is the reflection of His greatness. Whether we look to the valleys, or the mountains; the seas, or the sky above, God's signature is indelibly written. The heavens cannot contain His glory. It is set above the heavens.

HIS CONDENSATION (v. 2)

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." God's glory is seen not only

in His immensity, but in His condescension to man. The words concerning "babes and sucklings" are true in a literal sense. The little ones can instruct all of us in many ways. Not only may they teach us sometimes with their startling pronouncements, but especially so with their innocence, wide-eyed wonder, and faith. "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

But application should probably be made primarily to babes in spiritual maturity (Matt. 18:10, 11) or those viewed as babes by virtue of being "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13; Matt. 11:25; I Cor. 1:19-27). God condescended to such in the revealing of His will, and that will is so simple that even a child can understand, yet so sublime that a philosopher can never fathom fully its depths.

It is through the labors of such "babes and sucklings" that the enemies of God are vanquished.

A QUESTION FOR ALL SEASONS

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Who is not filled with awe upon beholding and contemplating the solar system and the thousands of pin pricks of light that are visible on a clear night? Such motivates humility and that's needed as much as any commodity we can name. Man's glaring fault is pride. Pride is largely responsible for all the wars and problems and contentions that men and nations suffer. But "when we consider the heavens. . .", what insignificant beings we appear to be. We are but atoms in the immensity of

God's creation. Just grains of sand upon the shore of the vast sea.

While we need to be humbled by these truths, let us not be deceived into thinking that we have no significance to God.

"What is man. . .?" That question still cries for an answer in our day. Where did he come from? For what purpose has he appeared? Why do we exist on this small planet? Is there meaning, significance, reason, for living?

There are basically but two answers being given. The "natural man" (I Cor. 2:14) pronounces man as just a graduate beast, and an insignificant cog in the great cosmic machine. Bertrand Russell is quoted as saying: **"The life of man is a long march through the night surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, toward a goal that few can hope to reach and where none may tarry long. One by one as they march our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent death."**

"Brief and powerless is man's life. On him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way. For man, condemned himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that enable his little day."

Russell has eloquently expressed the hopelessness, despair, and frustration of materialistic philosophy that so saturates the thinking of these times. But contrast that with the Bible answer:

THE GLORY OF MAN (v. 5-8)

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." In order of dignity, man stands next to the angels. As the verse stands in our King James text, it is remarkable. Yet actually from Elohim, the Hebrew for God. Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:26, 27), and every person is of supreme importance to the Creator. Man was made by God and for God.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas."

Consider man's authority over

nature. Through the creative ability and inventive genius enstamped on his consciousness, man now flies through heavens, measures distances to the stars, and transmits his voice around the world. Through his intellectual poweress, he controls animals much more powerful than he. Every dish of meat we eat bears witness to man's dominion in nature.

Yet, as the Hebrew writer quotes these passages, he observes: *"But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering*

of death, crowned with glory and honour. . ." (Heb. 2:8, 9).

The original dominion over nature that was given to man was severely limited when he (Adam and Eve) yielded to Satan. Today, man is ruining the creation rather than running it. He is "under the circumstances" rather than on top of them.

"But we see Jesus!" Behold in the inspired biographies the Lord's complete dominion over all nature. "What manner of man is this?" exclaimed His disciples when they saw

that even the winds and the sea were subject to His voice.

But we see Jesus as He perfectly exemplifies love, patience, self-control, and all other virturous attributes. In Him we see all that God would have us to be. And only in Him may true purpose be found.

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"



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ANTI-PAUL LIBERALISM

by Guthrie Dean

There is a growing trend among the denominations to reject the epistles of Paul; and discard them as being spurious. This anti-Paul liberalism seems to be fostered mainly by those in the various "civil rights" movements. However, I first ran into it head-on at Conway, Arkansas in the 50's. Two theological students at Hendrix College assured me that Paul's epistles were not inspired; and that they were so instructed at the College. Their objection to Paul's writings were; that they "differed so greatly" from the other books of the New Testament. I asked for some of these great differences; and we ended upon discussing the woman's place in the Bible. But, dear readers, I find no difference at all between Paul or any other writer in the New Testament on the position of women. Let us examine some vital points wherein both Paul and the apostle Peter addressed themselves; and see if there is any difference on any major topic.

1. PAUL: *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord"* (Eph. 5:22-24. PETER: *"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives"* I Pet. 3:1-6.

2. PAUL: *"Husbands, love your*

wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" Eph. 5:25-33. PETER: *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered"* I Peter 3:7.

3. PAUL: *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"* Eph. 1:7. PETER: *"Ye. . .were. . .redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"* I Pet. 1:18-19.

4. PAUL: *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name"* Phil. 2:9-11. PETER: *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* Acts 4:12.

5. PAUL: *"As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed"* Romans 9:33. PETER: *"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded"* I Peter 2:6.

6. PAUL: *"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"* Romans 2:4. PETER: *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* 2 Peter 3:9.

7. PAUL: *"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses"* Col. 2:12-13. PETER: *"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"* I Peter 3:21.

8. PAUL: *"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* I Tim. 3:15. PETER: *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"* I Peter 2:5.

CONCLUSION: We could carry the comparison further; but this is sufficient to see that Paul's statements are in keeping with those of Peter (and the other writers). In fact, it was Paul's writings that Peter referred to as "scriptures". See 2 Peter 3:15-16.

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT by *E. Glen Barnhart* (Barnhart Publishers: Lubbock, Texas), 1983, paperback, 65 pages, \$2.75.

The emphasis in this book is upon a continued outline of the Old Testament, including the 400-year period between the testaments. The chronology is up-to-date from conservative, Old Testament scholarship.

Barnhart feels that "before a person can best profit from a detailed study of any section of the Scriptures, it is vital that one become familiar with the broad setting. This would include the historical background, geographical setting, chronological relationships, national and provincial conditions, cultural factors, and the purpose(s) of the writer." This little book combines all of this information into a useable book for use in personal study and/or Bible classes.

The book contains accurate chronological charts; a continued historical chart-outline from Adam to Malachi; a map relating to each period; and a two-page survey of each book of the writing prophets.

THE WISE TEENAGE BUILDER by *E. Glen Barnhart* (Barnhart Publishers: Lubbock, Texas), 1984, paperback, 144 pages, \$5.35.

The writer has had many advantages which have been combined by God's providence to write this book for teenagers: a good childhood in which the moral and spiritual values of the Bible were taught, a good wife who has supported these same values, the rearing of four children through the teenage years, thirty-five years of experience in preaching God's Word, and eleven years of teaching young

people at Florida College.

This book would not really appeal to every teenager--it will only appeal to the more mature ones. The title suggests the theme of the book: all young people need a solid foundation on which to build a good life for God and self. Principles of truth and righteousness must undergird the events, the choices, the problems, and the goals of life for a teenager. Without that solid foundation, of if it is weak, the teenager will be drifting on a sea of human doubts, temporary pleasures, and insecure future. Barnhart feels that they need "a dependable foundation of belief, attitude, and conduct, which comes only from the God of heaven."

The author did not design this to be entertaining reading. It attempts to gain your attention and hold it by appealing to the more serious side of the teenager. It is practical and personal. It is an excellent book that should be read by all teenagers and by all parents of teens.

THE EXPANDED VINE'S, edited by *John R. Kohlenberg III* (Bethany House Publishers: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1984, hardback, 1349 pages, \$14.95.

In 1940, a company known as Oliphants Ltd. published the one-volume edition of W.E. Vine's **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**. This book soon became one of the most popular religious books available to aid in the study of the Bible. F. F. Bruce summarized the reasons for the popularity of the book by saying, "Mr. Vine's Greek scholarship was wide, accurate and up-to-date, and withal unobtrusive."

However, the continuing explosion of biblical reference works, critical and popular, has weakened the assessment for the present. In order to keep Vine's scholarship "wide, accurate and up-to-date, and withal unobtrusive."

However, the continuing explosion of biblical reference works, critical and

popular, has weakened that assessment for the present. In order to keep Vine's scholarship "wide, accurate and up-to-date," it would be necessary to revise the entire Dictionary in many minor and some major points. Bethany House Publishers decided to supplement and expand Vine's original work while leaving that original work intact.

Each Greek word of Vine's index was first keyed to the numbering system developed by James Strong for his **Exhaustive Concordance to the Bible**. This allows those not familiar with the Greek alphabet to access the resources of many other reference works.

Each word was then indexed to the **Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature** of Walter Bauer, as translated, revised and better known as Arndt, Gingrich and Danker. This work provides the most accurate and up-to-date definitions for the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament.

Finally, each word was indexed to the **New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology**.

Words from modern translations which do not appear in the original Vine's are cross-referenced to the appropriate entry (example: for "helper"--see "Comforter").

This volume is really going to open the doors for many people to do more advanced studies.

SERMONS INSIDE AND OUT, edited by *Hoyt H. Houchen* (Houchen Publishing: Aurora, Colorado), 1984, paperback, 258 pages, \$5.95.

The title for this book is derived from the two-part arrangement of the book: sermons to members of the church (those inside) and sermons to aliens (those out). It is a compilation of one-hundred and thirty-seven sermon outlines by seventy-two different gospel preachers.

This book was first printed in 1954, but it has been out of print for many

years. The editor has done a great service to many brethren by bringing this volume back in print. Since the original was printed before the break came in the Lord's church over the institution question, it contains outlines by men that later took their stand on opposite sides of the issue.

This volume is not intended to encourage laziness among preachers. The outlines are simply suggestions (or what I like to call "springboards") for further studying and sermon preparation. This is a great addition to sermon-outline books.

EVANGELICALS AND INERRANCY, edited by Ronald Youngblood (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 265 pages, \$8.95.

The editor of this volume is Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Bethel Theological Seminary West in San Diego, California, and editor of **The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society**. Stating his convictions on the Bible, Youngblood said: "Because the Bible is God's Word, he originally gave it to us in a form that was without error and that spoke truthfully on whatever subject it treated."

"The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs." That single sentence has served as the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Theological Society since its organization thirty-five years ago.

All twenty-three chapters of this book are reprinted from the Society's previously published papers and journals. This book tackles such issues as "plenary verbal" inspiration, "limited" inerrancy, and "inspired but not inerrant" Scripture. Using the best of contemporary conservative scholarship, they examine the full range of current opinion, from the charge that belief in inerrancy makes the Bible a "paper pope" to the conviction that a liberal approach to Scripture is "a one-way street in the wrong direction."

Whether you are a student of Scripture, a believing Christian grappling with Biblical authority, or simply a curious observer of the inerrancy controversy, you will find this book a valuable addition to your library as you study the continuing debate about the authority of the Bible.

HEALING THE HURT by Mildred Tickfer (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 94 pages, \$4.50.

The author of this book is a registered nurse and a staff educator at Pine Rest Christian Hospital. She has worked with children and youth groups for more than thirty years. During these years, she has seen many teenagers' security destroyed by divorce. This book is a help for teens whose parents are divorced.

Most young people can define divorce, but they never dreamed that the word would find its way out of the dictionary and into their own home. It brings much pain and sometimes shame. This book addresses all the painful kinds of things that can happen when Mom and Dad decide to "split." The author attempts to get the teenager to accept the fact that even parents sometimes deliberately make wrong choices. The main thrust of the book is to get the teens to understand that divorce is something the parents decided--not something the young person caused. The author helps the young reader to understand certain reactions and feelings about divorce.

Divorce hurts! You know that and so does the author. She wants to show you that there is healing because there is God.

I TELL YOU TRULY by Hal & Nadine Gulley (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1981, paperback, 185 pages, \$4.95.

We all know that "good communication" is important in our marriages, but how many of us really spend good quality time in talking and listening? This book examines four specific communication components found in a four-year research study to be characteristic of happy marriages (as contrasted with distressed marriages and those ending in divorce). It examines what actually goes on in real, everyday communication between husband and wife.

The authors believe that every couple can improve their communications with each other---and that they have an obligation to try. Too many homes are being split by divorce. Rather than seeking a new partner, husbands and wives should reassess what they have going for them, examine their strengths, and consider realistically areas where they can do

better.

Communication is the place to begin. Where there are tensions, partners will be happier if they can learn to tell the other more fully where it hurts! This book is a valuable tool to help open these doors to better communication.

LEADER'S GUIDE FOR I TELL YOU TRULY by Hal & Nadine Gulley (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1981, paperback, 44 pages, \$1.95.

This guide is designed to help you and your spouse lead a short course on communications inside marriage, using as a textbook the above mentioned book. It gives complete plans on how to set up special classes, even suggesting time limits for each section of the class. It will also help the leader by giving many more Biblical references for each area of discussion. The guide has 13 suggested sessions, plus an appendix of visual aid ideas.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT by E. M. Blaiklock (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 186 pages, \$6.95.

From Egypt to the Dead Sea, from Bethlehem to the vast catacombs beneath Rome, the author brings to light recent archaeological evidence to enrich your study of the Bible. Blaiklock believes that archaeology supports what Scriptures have taught and hearts have hoped for years. In an interesting style, this book introduces the first-century world to the twentieth century reader as reconstructed from such clues as scraps of ancient business notes, broken shreds of pottery, and forgotten pieces of art.

Blaiklock wants the everyday world of the earliest generations of Christians to come alive. The reader will not only better understand the issues confronting the early disciples, but will also experience the common sights and sounds of the early Roman empire.

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

II CHRONICLES

by Keith Ward

Someone has said that a history reflects the philosophy and purpose of its author more than it reports objective truth. The histories (?) written by totalitarian states reinforce the truth of this observation. But, a history is not necessarily invalidated merely because the author selected the facts he reported to fit a particular view, or to fulfill a specific purpose. When the author is God, we can be certain that the philosophy and purpose are noble, and that the selection and omission of facts is absolutely true to objective reality. We may illustrate by observing that Stephen's history of Israel was absolutely true though abbreviated. And, he chose and worded events in a way designed to drive home the lesson "*Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 7:51). Yet, his facts were so unquestionably accurate that they had held his hostile audience spellbound to that point. Refusing to believe, they killed him in the hope of destroying the truth of his history.

Some modernistic scholars have rejected much of Chronicles because the author had a design in writing. Judging the inspired author by their own hearts, they accuse him of bending truth to fit his purpose. Unable to conceive of integrity greater than their own, and unwilling to accept inspiration, they edit divine history with a chopping axe.

If Ezra did not write Chronicles, the author is unknown, but of roughly the same era. BY EXAMINING THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF THAT TIME, we can determine the matters a spiritually concerned author would address. The penitent captives returned with resolve, but soon faltered because they feared their enemies, and despaired of ever again marching the glories of the past. In the indifference wrought by these temptations, they became careless in their worship and irresponsible in maintaining pure genealogies. Ezra and Nehemiah

reformed that generation only by severely reproofing them, and finally resorting to corporal punishment. Far from being a self-serving Levite who elevated the priestly system to insure job security (as accused by modernists), the Chronicler precisely answered the needs of his day.

God wrote Chronicles to answer, and to prevent, the recurrence of those specific problems--their fear and the need for purity in worship and lineage. To accomplish His purpose, He developed four themes: First, victory and prosperity come from righteousness toward God, not from military might. Next, worship must be kept pure, or restored to purity, in order to please God. Reinforcing that principle, the third emphasis exact appeal to reveal law in order to know what pleases God. Finally, the dangers of alliances and intermarriages are depicted for those whose half-breed children spake "*half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language*" (Neh. 13:23). At times almost boring in its relentless repetition of these themes, Chronicles was at least outwardly successful in keeping Israel pure till the coming of Christ.

In many ways, II Chronicles exhibits the author's purposes more clearly than I Chronicles because the succession of good and bad kings allowed more comment and exhortation on his themes.

A WALL OF FIRE

Solomon's prayer sets the theme by emphasizing the conditions for divine protection--pure worship and a right standing with God. Further, he built the temple according to a REVEALED PLAN, and removed his Egyptian wife from the holy city (8:11). His prayer and God's response predict captivity if they "*forsake my statutes and my commandments which I have set before you and . . . serve other gods*" (6:19). Throughout succeeding

generations, prophets arise to declare the same message--God rewards Israel when pure, and punishes them when evil. Thus, neither might nor alliances can save; nor can the "heavy artillery" of the enemy prevail over a pure Israel. Pharaoh Shishak plundered Jerusalem because Rehoboam apostatized (12). Jeroboam used superior tactics, but Abijah triumphed because "*God smote Jeroboam and all Israel*" (13:15). The prophet Azariah praised King Asa for his faith in overcoming the superior Ethiopians (15), but Hanani rebuked him for losing faith and hiring the Syrians' help against Israel (16). At the command of "*the man of God,*" Amaziah sent home a hired army he had already paid, and defeated Edom (25). Hezekiah prayed for deliverance, and God slew 185,000 Assyrians in a night (32 cf Isa. 37:36). Again and again the warnings of otherwise unknown prophets and the lessons of history repeat the message--God gives victory (12:5; 15:1-2; 16:7; 20:3, 14; 25:8). These must have been encouraging words indeed to the remnant who dwelt in fear among military superior enemies, and who depended on God to be a "*wall of fire about*" (Zech. 2:5). Further, II Chronicles emphasizes that defeat results from Israel's ungodliness, not from God's weakness (25:14-20; 28:6-23).

THE CHARTER OF THE RESTORATION

To have victory and prosperity, Israel had to be pure before God. It follows that if worship had become corrupted, they must restore it exactly as God originally designed it. Asa "*took away the foreign altars. . . and commanded Judah to seek Jehovah. . . and to do the law and the commandment*" (14:3-4). Any restoration must begin by removing the evil, and proceed by practicing the good. The first major restoration set the pattern for all others, including those better known (Hezekiah, 29-32,

and Josiah, 34-35). Asa well illustrates Jesus' teaching "*he that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me*" by removing his idolatrous mother from being queen (15:16; Mt. 10:37). Would that today we had more with such dedication to the Lord, and fewer "*bleeding hearts*" trying to placate those who have "*gone out from us.*" Under the regency of Jehoiada the high priest, Joash destroyed Baal's altars and killed his priest before restoring the temple (23:17-24:). Worship of God cannot be built upon, or exist alongside, false worship. Whether that false worship is idolatry or corrupted worship of God, it must be rooted out at all personal cost and loss before worshippers can approach God.

WHERE THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK, WE SPEAK

In all the restorations of 2 Chronicles, one absolute standard guided the penitent who sought God. Those people had not become as educated as some today who think God's law impossible to obey without grace to forgive sins they "just cannot help doing." Nor did they believe obedience involved conflicts requiring one to sit in judgment over the law, deciding which commandment to obey (Jas. 4:11-12). They did not plead for exceptions based on ignorance or inadvertence. They obeyed God exactly. Brethren, our concern for our "erring brethren" has reached the "loveth more than me" stage, when we lose sight of the absolute authority of God's word, and our ability to understand and to do all He requires. Jotham "*ordered his ways before Jehovah his God*" (26:6). When Hezekiah restored Judah to pure worship, we find many expressions of exact obedience: "*according to the commandment. . . for the commandment was of Jehovah by his prophets*" (29:25); "*to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of Jehovah*" (30:12); "*according to the law of Moses the man of God*" (30:16); "*as it is written in the law of Jehovah*" (31:3-4). When certain sincere, but unclean, men desired to partake of the Passover, he did not allow some "higher law of love" to supercede the ordinance. Rather, Hezekiah asked, and "Jehovah hearkened" and prescribed a one-time exception (30:18-20, 17). When we have a response and

a prescription from God, we can make exceptions to his laws. Until then, we need to preach God's law, and urge absolute obedience to it, persuading men to "work out their own salvation." We should be as SILENT as the scripture is about what God might do about what **WE THINK** are exceptions. Some are SPEAKING, and have turned grace to licentiousness by excusing some "kinds" of sin (Jude 4). Josiah did that "*which was right in the eyes of Jehovah. . . and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left*" (34:2). We can obey when we want to obey. (see also 8:14-16; 34:31; 35:6, 12, 26).

The message for the restored remnant was clear. They had begun to profane the Sabbath, sacrifice the blemished, and allow foreigners to pollute the temple (Neh. 13:4, 19; Mal. 1:8). They needed to restore pure worship according to the commandments or be cast off. If we will be admonished by "*the things written aforetime,*" we will maintain purity by God's pattern without apology or compromise (Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 1:13).

FELLOWSHIP

When Jeroboam began the false worship of God via the golden calves at Dan and Bethel, righteous men did not debate the meaning of **koinonia** (fellowship), or seek a technical demarcation of how far they could share with the "liberals" without actually taking part in the sin. **THEY GOT OUT.** "*The Levites left their suburbs and their possessions and came to Judah. . . after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their heart to seek Jehovah came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto Jehovah the God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah*" (11:13-17). They left home, friends, family, and possessions for truth. Some years later, during Asa's reign, more Israelites joined Judah "*they saw that Jehovah his God was with him*" (15:9). They came out from error, refused to be yoked to it, and separated themselves at a cost we can scarcely comprehend because the old law placed such importance or inheritance, and land had been in a family for 700 years (6:14-17). In the chronicler's day, the returned remnant began to intermarry and make alliance with foreigners. Nehemiah's work was greatly hindered by those too loving

and tender-hearted to renounce those alliances. Whatever noble intentions they may have had, they served as traitors to the people of God. They needed a definitive statement on fellowship. II Chronicles relates two lengthy stories that teach against these practices--Athaliah's usurpation and the rebukes given Jehoshaphat.

Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab who killed all the seed royal, except Joash, and ruled Judah for six years after Jehu killed her son Ahaziah. (22:23). Those of the remnant who were marrying foreigners needed to see the results--two generations of corruption because Judah allied with the "liberals," Israel. Mixed marriages had only worked to the advantage of the people of God when the foreigner first converted, e.g., Ruth, Rahab.

Jehoshaphat was indirectly responsible for these corruptions by allowing the first affliction with the house of Ahab, and marrying his son to Athaliah. Jehoshaphat was a good king, everywhere praised for his faith in God and his worship from a pure heart. Yet, he associated with Ahab. The Bible nowhere records that Jehoshaphat participated in Ahab's sins. In fact, his participation was limited to politics and business--fighting against their common enemies, Syria and Moab, and sending trading ships to Tarshish (18; 20:35-37; 2 Kg. 3). We also know that at least once he reprimanded Ahab for his attitude toward the prophet Micaiah (18:7). Yet, Hanani rebuked Jehoshaphat in the severest terms, "*Shouldst thou help the wicked and love them that hate Jehovah? for this thing wrath is upon thee*" (19:2). Those who constantly have "dialogues" with apostates, call on liberals for prayer, participate in all but the sin (rebuking a departure or two to save their conscience), had best heed the lesson of Jehoshaphat. The returned captives did, and stayed pure till Christ. Our duty is to those who have departed is to preach to them and beg them to join us in pure worship as Hezekiah did (30:1-12). Fellowship is simple. If we preach and practice truth, many will "*fall to us in abuncance,*" while others will "*laugh us to scorn and mock us*" (15:9; 30:10). Only when we soften our stance on truth will there be alliances, dialogues, and shared ventures.

CONCLUSION

The author certifies his work by

reference to other books known to his readers (9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 32:32; 33:18-19; 35:25-26; 36:21-22). They could check; this was the way it happened.

II Chronicles is pre-eminently a message of triumph and blessing for

those who order their lives before God. We may fail at times. But, if we repent and restore pure worship, pure lives, and pure hearts "as it is written in the law of Jehovah," God will restore us to favor as he restored the captives to the land. We may be downtrodden,

surrounded by enemies, and see no hope for deliverance, but God will give us the victory in Jesus.



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You May Not Believe These Kids-- But They're For Real!

by Royce Chandler

How I wish you could see them! Students from pre-school through high school. . . about 26 of them. . . every third Sunday evening of the month. . . finding and refining skills they didn't even know they had. . . enthusiastic and energetic. . . willing to try everything asked of them, no matter how different or unfamiliar. . . developing almost unbelievably, for their ages, in such activities as:

1. leading songs with proper pitch, spirit, and skill
2. leading prayers tailored to specific purposes and goals
3. reading scriptures articulately
4. reciting memorized sections of Scripture
5. making announcements of important things related to the local church
6. reading with vocal expression and meaning
7. illustrating spiritual thoughts with real-life experiences
8. preparing minds for the Lord's supper with carefully prepared comments from the Scriptures
9. publicly analyzing the positive aspects of each other's efforts
10. making short talks (one to two minutes)--not just a feeble, rambling effort to disorganized material, but a carefully structured and well illustrated presentation of a spiritual point and its application.
11. assuming responsibility for leading various parts of the class and involving the fellow students
12. demonstrating a practical understanding of various persuasive techniques in presenting spiritual thoughts to others
13. removing completely the

paralyzing fears of "stage fright"

14. interacting with students of every age group, including adults

15. engaging in all of these activities before a group of class observers made up of the whole congregation

I assure you that these training classes are anything but traditional, but you can be equally assured that they are both scriptural and amazingly effective. I use such adjectives, not as a reflection of the teacher's ego, but as a compliment to the skills of the young students and to their willingness to expect "more than the ordinary" out of themselves. THAT is the key to every success we have enjoyed--the difference between the student that sees himself as very ordinary, scared to succeed, unmotivated to improve or to develop--as contrasted with the student who is led to recognize that he is chocked full of talent and then demands of himself that he let that talent be mined and refined in the training class.

Why are we able to rejoice in such success with all these young people? There are several key factors I'd like to share with you, each of them vital and each capable of reproduction in every local family of God's people.

A. These young students are seen as an important part of this congregation, not for what they can offer in the future but for what they offer right now.

B. They were told that they possessed far more talent than they had previously been led to believe, and this was demonstrated to them in the very first class. Some of the initial accomplishments were meager but, being positively reinforced, they were convincing.

C. They were given short-range goals designed to guarantee success with a minimum of effort, as a stepping stone to more demanding efforts. Those initial successes led them to believe in themselves; so, the harder efforts were easier to handle.

D. All this done in an atmosphere of 100% positive encouragement, where every student experiences a success in every class and never faces a put-down or a negative reinforcement. We don't ignore weak performances but comment in such a way as to positively work on them.

E. The congregation is eager for such training, greatly encouraged by it, and thus gladly sits through each session as spectators, both parents and non-parents feeling free to help, in a positive way, to appraise the students' efforts.

Some of the natural results of this are obvious, but the greatest three are the tremendous self-confidence acquired by these students, the rapid and astounding development of abilities they did not imagine themselves to have or to be able to publicly exercise, and the close rapport developed between the students and the adults who sit with them and encourage them in every effort they make.

With all my heart I believe the youth of the Lord's local churches are an almost untapped gold mine of ability, of enthusiasm, and of an uplifting and motivating influence over the whole local family. But I also fear that this treasure is too often buried beneath the mountain of negative opinion that sees them only as children, incapable of contributing, and asks such profound foolishness as,

“What can THEY do?”. . .that says, “Wait ’till they grow up.”. . .that offers such encouragement as, “My child could never do those things!” When parents, elders and others view the children with such negative shallowness, the children will respond accordingly. Such “stinkin’ thinkin’,” dumped into the minds of the young, causes them to see themselves as spiritually untalented, as important to the local work, and as non-achievers and non-contributors. Not surprisingly, their behavior will reflect that poor self-image.

But thank the Lord that the opposite is also true! When adults see them as amazingly talented, indispensable to the local work, capable of the greatest achievements, and called upon as valuable contributors to the work--watch out, brother, because, given half a chance, their behavior will wonderfully reflect that good self-image!

We in Mason have been blessed beyond measure, having literally marvelled at what has come from these young people, even some as young as seven and eight. When taught to believe in themselves and to see how much talent the Lord has given them, when given the opportunity and the encouragement to allow that talent to be uncovered and polished, and when made to believe that they are a prized and indispensable part of this local family--their response has been nothing less than tremendous. And their achievements, beyond all expectations.

These children have filled me with wonder and gratitude so often and so completely that I just had to let you know about them, in hopes that many, many more of us will take a new look at our children and be encouraged to recognize, to develop, to profit from and to rejoice in the spiritual capacities of even our youngest children. Some won't believe it unless they see it. But if you expend the effort, the brilliance of these children will dazzle your eyes! Praise God for them, and for what they have done for those of us who have seen them try and excel. They have caused us not only to have hope for the future, but also to rejoice exceedingly in the present. Again, praise God!

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Thoughts on Phrases

by C.R. Duane

“By The Foolishness Of Preaching”

More than one preacher, seeking to establish his own net worth or to justify a little silliness in a sermon, has been heard to quote, “*it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*” (I Cor. 1:21). In this application the emphasis is placed upon the preacher or the act of preaching, as though here Paul was making such the contingency of man's salvation. As handy as this passage may be, Paul had neither idea in mind.

Other Scriptures can be found to confirm the value of the preacher. Romans 10:14 asks: “*how shall they hear without a preacher?*” In I Thessalonians 2:16 Paul condemned the Jews for “*forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved.*” And if it had not been for Phillip, the Eunuch might have continued to wonder, “*of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other?*” (Acts 8:34).

However, the written words of the apostles, as contained in the finished New Testament, provide all the information one needs, to be saved - with or without a preacher. In fact, it's quite possible for the perceptive reader to learn the Truth unassisted. If this is not so, how does the church exist today? The leading figures of the Reformation did not learn their doctrines from the Pope's preaching; nor did the great men of the Restoration gain their plea from the denominations. Rather, they turned to the “*sacred writings that are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus*” (II Tim. 3:15). These and others like them went straight to the fountain of life without human mediation. Few, however, possess the determination necessary to “*search the Scriptures daily*” and “*work out their own salvation with fear and trembling;*”

and for this reason, the work of the preacher is ever present to call erring hearts and minds to a soul-saving knowledge of God's word.

In the context of I Corinthians 1:21, Paul is not talking about the act of preaching, but the message that is preached - the gospel. In verse 18 he called it “*the word of the cross.*” In our phrase, the King's version omits the definite article, which most later translations, like the American Standard, correctly insert. “*By the foolishness of preaching*” then becomes “*by the foolishness of the preaching,*” a rendering which is more accurate and less confusing. The original word for “preaching” (**kerugma**) is literally translated in the margin of the ASV, the “*thing preached;*” and most reliable lexicons give “proclamation” as its primary definition. Thus, when used articularly, as in our text (**tu kerugmatos**), it becomes “the proclamation.”

Throughout verses 18-25 (and on into the second chapter) Paul is contrasting the wisdom of God - the gospel, the word of the cross - with the wisdom of the world. The former is foolishness to men, and the latter foolishness to God. But to them that are called, “*Christ crucified*” is the power and wisdom of God (vv. 23-24). Essentially, the apostle is saying the same thing here that he said to the Romans: “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation*” (ch. 1:16).

I know to some we appear to be scratching where there is no itch. But let us all clearly see that Paul is not talking about the preacher or the act of preaching, but the very message itself (foolish as it may seem to many), God's power to save.



“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

Bible Authority, Number Two

The Bible says, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This passage indicates that the Bible is perfect, and contains enough to make a man perfect in every spiritual way. Thus any change, modification, addition or subtraction would only make for imperfection. The phrase *“that the man of God may be perfect”* surely indicates the need to correctly apply the Word of God. Furthermore, any WORK we might engage in, either as a church or as individuals, which cannot be supported with Bible authority is simply not a good work. We have been *“thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* For what more could we ask?

All that man knows about God and the Savior, Jesus Christ, has been revealed to us through the Bible. Since this is true, this is how we gain the knowledge that is necessary for reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. In Matthew 7:21 the Lord said, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”* Thus, the perfection of our text also includes doing the Lord's will. Open your Bible and read on down a few passages from where this quotation was taken, Matthew seven, and note that many in the day of judgment will plead *“good works”* but if it's not according to His will, all will be in vain. Our desire and aim should be to study daily from the Scriptures to learn more of the will of God, and to cultivate that desire to render obedience to the knowledge that we gain.

In I John 2:3-5 we read: *“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth*

is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”

With due consideration to what we've said thus far, we need to ask ourselves, are we really making a good application to these truths? The Bible gives the perfect plan, but am I trying to correctly apply it? Are you even trying to do the Lord's will. Remember, you cannot be saved otherwise!

God has revealed Himself through His Word. Peter, in his second epistle, said that through a knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, we have been given *“all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* (II Peter 1:3). Perfection can only be obtained through a knowledge and obedience of the Bible. All things necessary to the wellbeing of our eternal soul has been revealed to us therein. We must determine to become within subjection to its doctrines if we plan to make heaven our eternal home.

Sometimes we fail to realize that everything we do is supported by authority from some source. Jesus said in Matt. 15:9, *“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”* If our standard of authority is in ourselves, or what the preacher says, or what the church practices, it may well be VAIN, useless and void. Many of the so-called “clergy” would be insulted if we should ask for Bible authority for what they teach. Nevertheless, any practice, belief or attitude on our part that cannot be supported by a thus-saith-the-Lord is condemned in the mind of God. *“In vain do they worship me”*. The sooner we learn this, the better off we shall be.

Prophecy of False Teachers

In previous lessons on this program, we have set forth the authority of the Scriptures, and the necessity of establishing Bible authority for all things we practice. We have also shown that our standard today is in the New Testament, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is very unfortunate that all people do not believe and practice this, however, for it is quite evident to even the most casual Bible student that there is a good deal of error and contrary teaching throughout the land today. The prophecies of this and the warnings against false teachers are so numerous that it would be almost impossible to quote them all, but please notice a few outstanding examples, nonetheless.

The Bible says, *“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”* (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Again, *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of”* (2 Peter 2:1-3). And again, Paul told the elders from Ephesus that even some of them would be carried away with a false doctrine: *“For this I know, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them”* (Acts 20:29-30).

These are just a few of the warnings that are found in the pages of the New Testament. We can see the ultimate of the fulfillment of these prophecies even today, for as already stated, too many among us have very little respect for the Word of God. But assuming you have a desire to know the truth, the question is asked, what can the individual do? John answered that question: He said, *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”* (I John 4:1). Do you ever do that? Obviously the only way we can “try the spirits” is to check in the Bible to see if the truth is being taught. To illustrate, can you find the name, organization, form of worship, and work that the church where you attend practices?

It must be your obligation to check the Scripture references given in order

to "prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21). You must never believe me or any other individual for our word's sake alone. I challenge you to ask questions, read your Bible, learn the whole truth, and determine to practice it! "Try the spirits!" Why? Because many false prophets are gone out.

A good example is left for us by the

Berians: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). This is a very personal obligation. Your "measuring rod" is the New Testament. God will credit to your account an act of nobility when

your search its pages daily.

Yes, God foretold a time when people would not want the truth, and would find someone to tickle their ears. A very important question is, what is my attitude in that regard?

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How Husbands Can Show Appreciation For Their Wives

by Gary Henry

"I CAN FLY HIGHER THAN AN EAGLE. . .but you are the wind underneath my wings." So went the refrain of a recently-popular Lou Rawls song. How many wives heard that and thought for a wistful moment how nice it would be if their own husbands would say something like that to *them*?

The unappreciated wife is the victim of one of life's saddest injustices. And the horsewhip is about all a man deserves who is either so unfeeling or so stingy with his praise that he will not regularly *tell* his wife how grateful he is for her. Yet, Christian husbands by the thousands, this writer included, will have to admit that they have not tapped the tongue's potential to brighten the life of their good wives. What can be done to deal with this habit of neglect?

DO appreciate her. Wives need real gratitude, not play-acting. In fact, wives hate nothing more than to be patronized. The suspicion that a man may be expressing appreciation merely because that is what he is "supposed" to do will breed resentment. What is needed is something more than a husband who will talk and act *as if* he valued his wife. The man who substitutes the carrot for the stick just to get more out of his "maid" deserves the contempt he will eventually get.

The only worthwhile way to solve the problem of non-expression of appreciation is to solve the problem of non-appreciation itself. Words of gratitude and hollow insults if a man's heart is not involved. Candy on Valentine's Day is nice, and so are

flowers on Mother's Day. But *tokens* of appreciation are cheap if they are not given in genuine love. If our wives do not *hear* enough about how much they mean to us, it may be because we have forgotten how much they actually *do* mean to us. And we can begin remedying that by rediscovering just how special our wives are.

Count her virtues. Husbands would do well to spend some time fairly frequently reminding themselves how many praiseworthy attributes their wives possess. The chances are good that the qualities are still there which originally prompted a marriage proposal. These have probably deepened with the passing of time and been enriched by the addition of still other wonderful characteristics. These need only to be remembered consciously to be appreciated. And when he is counting his wife's virtues, the average husband can head the list with the benevolent generosity she demonstrated in marrying *him!*?!?

The husband who meditates on his wife, prays about her, and enumerates to God the things about her for which he is thankful will sooner or later find himself being more expressive of these thoughts to his wife herself. If he counts *her* blessings — the ways in which she has been uniquely gifted by God — he will be well on his way toward showing his appreciation more openly.

Walk in her shoes often. Helping his wife with her work is a surefire way for a husband's appreciation to increase. It is not exaggerating to say that the average man could not hold up

for long, physically or emotionally, under the load that the average mother and homemaker carries seven days a week. But if he will offer to help her now and then as opportunity permits, he will get a dose of reality that will do any marriage good.

Even the routine things that wives do are not only demanding physically, they require a range of skills that a husband may well underestimate until he has tried his own hand at a few of them. A man who is serious about learning to be more expressive of his appreciation needs to take advantage of every chance he gets to experience life as *she* lives it. Just let him make a fool of himself bungling his way through tasks that his wife performs with ease and expertise and he will be a rare man if he can continue to take her for granted.

Express appreciation NOW. There is no grief more heart-rending than that of the husband who loved and appreciated his wife dearly but allowed her to go to her grave without letting her know how he really felt. As he weeps before her lifeless form in some funeral chapel he may well be tormented by the memory of the years he robbed her of the affection and gratitude that could have brightened her way. But his chances to *show* her his love are gone forever.

"If you can find a truly good wife, she is worth more than precious gems! . . . Her children stand and bless her; so does her husband. He praises her with these words: There are many fine women in the world, but you are the best of them all!" (Proverbs 31:10, 28f, Taylor). Christian husband, you have it within you to express your thankfulness for your wife. *Do* you love her? *Do* you appreciate her? Then tell her about it — before it's too late.

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Short and to the Point



Hide And Seek

The pathway to Heaven through obedience to God is something we have to look for. Jesus said that the way is narrow that leads to life and only a few "find" it (Mt. 7:14). Evidently there is a search involved. The Hebrew writer tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6). One doesn't just stumble onto the promises of Jehovah; he searches them out. We are commanded to seek out the kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33) and are promised that if we do seek we shall find it (Mt. 7:7).

It would seem that with all of this searching that God must be hiding from us. Not so! God has always manifested His will to man though man sometimes fails to see the forest for the trees. Jehovah has never expected anything of man without first revealing His will to man (Amos 3:7). The only way we can know what God wants of us is to know His will. The Scriptures teach us that God has revealed His will to us in His word (1 Cor. 2:9-13). Since God has made Himself known to men it is now man's responsibility to understand God's commands (Eph. 5:17).

So many people aren't satisfied with the simple message revealed to us. They have the same problem as Naaman. After the servant of the prophet of God told Naaman what was required to be healed Naaman replied, "Behold, I thought. . ." (2 Kg. 5:11). Naaman had some preconceived ideas about his healing and they didn't coincide with God's. So who did he question? God! In the first century the same problem existed. The Jews sought signs and the Greeks searched for wisdom, but the simple preaching of Christ crucified just didn't coincide with their ideas of salvation. The same holds true today - the message is the

same and the problems are the same. We need to put away all preconceived ideas about how we think things should be and follow the plain message of the Gospel of Christ. It was the way of salvation in the first century and will remain the same until Christ returns.

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When They Get Old

Parents are having a real struggle in rearing their children to be Christians today, and this is caused in part by the moral changes we have seen over the past years. Children are not like children used to be because parents are not like they used to be. To allow a child to miss any service of the church in order to participate in some sport activity was unheard of in the past, but today it is a common practice. Parents who allowed a child to read or look upon sexual provocative material was once considered to be heathens. But today, with TV, everything is placed before them in full color within the walls of the living room.

Parents often seek to pacify their small children by providing whatever is necessary to occupy their minds and keep them out of mischief. I firmly believe that most parents are unaware of what they are doing. They set the little ones before the tube unaware that they are feeding their little minds with passions which will seek gratification when they get older. Parents are often shocked when a teenager rebels, becomes wild and begins to seek gratification of all the burning passions which have been stored up in the mind over a period of years. You can't feed a child on sex and violence without producing such conduct in their lives, and it doesn't matter what book publishers, educators, or television producers may say to the contrary.

It is said of Moses that "When he was come to years (grown, adult), he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:24-25). Why? Why did he individually choose to do so? The answer is: Moses had been taught and trained in his youth the right principles of life, and when he became a grown man he was equipped to make the right decisions. Isn't that a simple formula? You can read the same instruction in Prov. 22:6, and also in Eph. 6:4.

What will your child be when he/she becomes an adult? Answer: Your child will be exactly what you are feeding into it's mind today.

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Judgement By Sight

It seems we must ever learn. I knew a man who was sick. He had a problem in his talk and in his actions. To look at him, one might think him drunk. But being trained at such things, I knew he was not drunk. Yes, he did drink some, but he never got drunk. I am able to tell a boozer or a druggie in short order. Well, the police picked this man up one night. He told them he was sick but he had had a drink or two. The young officers brushed aside his story of being sick and took him in to book him as a drunk. The next morning he was dead! They said he **looked** drunk.

Less than a year later, the same thing happened with another man. Both of these men were not drunk--medical tests proved it--but they both looked drunk. There were law suits, officers disciplines, etc. The state of Michigan has now been forced to make certain laws to over come this from happening again. I hear that other states have also been forced into similar action.

Can we judge by sight? If so, to what extent? The Bible talks to the mind. We must use our eyes, yes, but before we judge we must make sure we have investigated and have all the facts. Is there a lesson here for us in Christ? I think so, don't you?

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HOMOSEXUALITY / LESBIANISM

by Luther A. Bolenbarker

In 2 Peter 3:14, we are admonished to ". . . be diligent that you may be found by Him in peace, without spot, and blameless;" and in verse 17, "You therefore, beloved, seeing you know these things beforehand, beware lest you also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness;" What Peter is telling us all here is that we have to be aware of what's going on and aware of the fact that we are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and one way of doing this is to be forewarned of the sin and error of the wicked, and when we are then we should be more able to withstand and overcome the temptation to sin or approve of sin.

There are many shocking statistics in this article and if you shock easily or are offended, then open your Bible and read the following verses concerning our subject title. Romans 1:26,27 "For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their errors." Read also 2 Peter 2:4-10; Jude 7; 1 Cor. 6:9.

God does not approve of such ungodly behavior. Read also 1 Tim. 1:5-11 at this time and see where God places this sin in relation to other sins.

Now to the facts and statistics of what people of the world say about our subject at hand:

* In a 1981 Washington, D.C. Sex Education Workshop: "Children from the sixth grade on must accept homosexuality as normal." "Parents who quote Scripture against homosexuality are irrational, their minds are perverted." These type of statements are typical of the homosexual agenda or way of thinking in order to establish (strengthen) homosexual/lesbian behavior as a normal expression of human sexuality and to make non-homosexuals believe that homosexuality is a legitimate alternative lifestyle. * Homosexuals make up only about 3% of the population of the USA, yet they have been far more successful than any other special interest group in

persuading some politicians as well as some denominational organizations into openly supporting their lifestyle. This is evidenced by the following:

Gay-Pride Week, established by the mayors of many of our cities, including our own city, Houston.

Walter Mondale: "We are including and recruiting openly gay and lesbian candidates for our staff." Human Events, Feb. 25, 1984. "If I'm elected president I will issue an Executive Order banning discrimination against them; I will support the Gay Rights Bill; I will push for changes in the immigration laws to allow homosexuals to enter the USA."

Geraldine Ferraro says, "We must have legislation that would stop the military from discharging people because they are homosexual." (San Jose Mercury, July 14, 1984).

In 1982, 54 U.S. Representatives accepted over \$1,000,000 from Gay Organizations and all were re-elected (one from Houston).

Gay Rights groups gained tax-exempt status under the Carter-Mondale administration. ("We espouse a philosophy just like the churches and schools" was the argument used to gain this status).

At last count, 1983 tax records, there were 330 homosexual churches in 47 states.

The FBI, CIA and the Department of Defense are at this time being sued because of their stand against homosexuality within their ranks. (can churches be next? LB).

All of the political and social gains of the homosexual community are moving them ever closer toward local, state and federal gay rights legislation aimed at obtaining special privileges as a "bonafide minority."

What are gay rights? There are none, because they should not exist. A gay rights law is nothing more than an attempt to force the government to legislate homosexual legitimacy.

Is the homosexual/lesbian lifestyle something to admire, defend, advocate, practice or legislate. Certainly not for the Christian! Here are some medical findings among the "gays". Remember only 3% of our

population is homosexual but disease attributable to them is as follows:

* 72% of the reported AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) cases.

* 51% of the Gonorrhea cases.

* 53% of Intestinal Infections

* 94% of all known gays are carriers of cytomegalovirus (cause of AIDS?)

* Gays have a 25 times greater rate of infectious hepatitis.

* In San Francisco, California, the capital of homosexuality: hepatitis has increased 300% in the last 10 years, and colon infection has increased 2500%.

* 70% of all gays have had venereal disease.

* V.D. clinics report seeing 75,000 patients per year and 75% are homosexual.

* AIDS, first diagnosed in 1979 has now been spread to people other than homosexual, through some sort of contact (normally blood transfusions).

* Every homosexual known to have AIDS in 1979 is now dead. About four years is all the doctors will give an AIDS victim. (4 died last week in Houston) Few survive more than three years. None to date have fully recovered.

* AIDS has increased 53% in 1984.

* Blood Donors must now sign a card stating that they are not homosexual.

* Average treatment cost per victim for AIDS is \$100,000 (most paid for by tax money)

* Over \$50,000,000 has already been spent by the U.S. Government (our tax dollars) trying to find a cure for this "gay" plague. The cost is expected to reach over \$300,000,000 by years end. So far; no vaccine, no cure, no sure treatment.

Billy Graham and numerous other "big name" evangelist believe that AIDS is God's way of dealing with Homosexuals. I'm not sure of that, but I do know that God said that the "way of the sinner was hard" (Proverbs 13:15).

The Bible teaches that Homosexuality/Lesbianism is anti-biblical and sinful. God does not approve of it nor those who engage in it, nor should you and I if we are truly "seeking first the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 6:33). Also

(Mt. 6:33). Also in 2 John 10-11, "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine (the doctrine of Christ, v.9) do not receive him into your house nor greet him (support them LB.) for he who greets him shares

in his evil deeds." Brethren, the "gay" lifestyle is not gay, it is sinful and will cause those who do not repent and give it up, will be lost! (Rom. 1:32, "those who practice such things are worthy of death" [second death = hell]).

Repentance is possible regardless of the sin. See I Cor. 6:9-11.

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Marriage and Divorce Among Christians

by Jerry F. Bassett

Paul wrote, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). (All Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated.)

The word translated "honorable" used above to describe marriage is used also by Peter at I Peter 1:19. There it describes the blood of Christ, and is rendered "precious." It is a term which has to do with value, or esteem. Thus, Paul is saying that marriage is to be held in honor because of its value. It is to be kept in esteem because it is a precious relationship.

Unfortunately, some Christians do not honor marriage. Or, to be precise, they fail to honor their own marriages as is the case when one, or sometimes both, of its partners ignores God's will by sundering that which God had joined together.

Most people who believe the Bible is God's word agree that in a marriage involving two Christians one may divorce the other, and remarry, if the one who is put away has violated the marriage by adultery. So said Jesus according to Matthew 19:9.

However, we have been hearing some brethren argue that one Christian may divorce another for causes other than adultery as long as they do not marry someone else. Oddly enough, Matthew 19:9 is one of the passages being used (or misused) to prove this contention. It quotes Jesus as saying, "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery. . . ."

Perhaps an illustration of the principles found in Jesus' statement would simplify its meaning for everyone. Paul used the relationship between husband and wife to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22-32). We ought to be able to reverse the illustration by

applying Jesus' words on marriage at Matthew 19:9 to Himself and the church without over extension of the illustration, and thus being consistent with His will.

Thus, suppose Jesus had said, "Whoever turns away from Me, except for unfaithfulness (i.e., by Christ) and is joined religiously to another, commits spiritual adultery." Obviously, the idea of Christ ever being unfaithful to it is unthinkable, but please bear with me for the sake of illustration. If Jesus had said such a thing, who would ever have gotten the idea that without His being unfaithful to us, it would be permissible for us to "divorce" Him just as long as we did not "marry" (form a new religious union with) someone else? Who is unable to see that the language would not even suggest such an idea? Even so, what Jesus did say at Matthew 19:9 does not allow one Christian to divorce another, except for infidelity. To the contrary of what some brethren are supposing Jesus' statement allows two married Christians to do, what it actually does is bind them to their marriage partner "except for sexual immorality."

HOW ABOUT

I CORINTHIANS 7:10-11?

In this passage, Paul indicates he was saying the same thing the Lord had said in person about marriage and divorce between two people in covenant relationship with God, e.g., at Matthew 19:9. In verse 10 he tells the wife not to depart from her husband, and in verse 11 he tells the husband that he is not to divorce his wife. But Paul also tells the wife (the same principle applying equally to the husband) that if she departs to remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband.

Emphasizing Paul's "but even if she departs," some argue that this implies permission for one Christian to

divorce another as long as they do not remarry with someone else. Not so! Paul is simply warning Christians that if they make the mistake of divorcing, not to compound the sin by then marrying someone else.

Is it a sin to do what the Lord forbids? Certainly, it is (Jas. 2:10-11). Well, by Paul, the Lord tells the wife not to depart from her husband, and the husband not to divorce his wife. For either of them to do so would be just as wrong as it would for that one who sundered the marriage to marry someone else thereafter, and for the same reason, i.e., the Lord has forbidden it.

TWO CLOSING THOUGHTS

First, marriage is a covenant, a contract between a man and a woman in which each agrees to fulfill the divinely appointed obligations of that relationship (Mal. 2:14). For either of them to walk away from this responsibility without divinely appointed justification is therefore to break a covenant, and covenant breaking is sinful (Rom. 1:31, KJV, ASV). At Romans 1:31 of the New King James Version, the term "untrustworthy" is used instead of "covenant-breakers." What alternate word could better describe a husband or a wife who walks out on his or her partner in this most intimate, most important, and most fundamental of all human relationships?

Second, God told the people of Israel in no uncertain terms that He hates divorce (Mal. 2:16). What God hates, his children, now found in spiritual Israel, the church of His Son, need to learn to abhor also lest they become abhorrent to Him (Ps. 11:5).

Brothers and sisters in Christ, let each of us who are married hold marriage, especially our own, in honor. Let us realize the preciousness of this divinely ordained relationship, and so do everything within our power to fulfill its commitments and strengthen its bonds.

3583 Elwing Street
Eugene, OR 97401

A TRUE STORY

by Bruce Edwards, Jr.

Dear Michael:

I got your letter today. You talked of wanting to die. Somebody has said, "People who say they want to die really mean they wish they had something to live for." I don't really believe you want to cease to live. The fact is, what the world has shown you hasn't impressed you too much. You can't change the world your logic goes—so it's best just to by-pass it altogether.

Mike, don't you see that's just what Jesus and His apostles have been telling us all along? That the world, as it is, is not worth living for? That we're living on a fallen planet, a planet that is closer to death each day and destined for oblivion? The Bible tells us that things are not as God has planned it since the Garden, and Adam and Eve and us? Christians, more than any other people, ought to have their eyes wide open. For that reason they should be better prepared to handle the frustrations and disappointments of this world better than anyone else. But it doesn't always work that way. Your Christian training and growth have obviously not prepared you for the way you are feeling at this moment? What now?

What unrealized dreams do you have, Mike? What hopes, pleasures, joys have eluded you? Make a list. Then offer them to Jesus: "Here, Lord, these are the things that I think will make me happy." Then ask Him to give you the things that will really fulfill you. You remember that Jesus told us, "I came to give you life, and life more abundantly." What was He saying to us there? Something like, "I came to give you something more than bare existence—not just more food or pretty clothes, to teach you that life is more than what you can eat or drink or how many women or men you have, how many college degrees you can attain, how much power money can accumulate." You see, Mike, being a Christian is not "being religious" in a particular way, but being the man or woman God called Adam and Eve to be. When our Lord came, He was despised not because He was too religious, but because He was not religious enough. He was too real, too genuine—man as He ought to be, life

and it ought to be lived—with courage, honor, with laughter and tears. . .

I'm 31 now, but I can still remember being 19. I don't think it is so strange that you should have such strong feelings about life, and death. I remember well the uncertainties, the anxieties, the apprehensions. You mentioned "hating life." What you hate is not life; it is the emptiness of what the world calls life which you hate. It is bogus, counterfeit, not genuine. You haven't really tasted life yet, or have tasted in such fleeting circumstances that you have not been able to savor it for what it is or can be. No, it is not so surprising that you have such sensitive feelings about life and its quality—but that so few of us have your sensitivity. Some people never achieve it. Most of us are content to drift through life never asking any hard questions—content to fill our stomachs with God's daily bread, never pausing to thank or praise him.

What's happened? You know when we're children, we have lively imaginations. We like stories, colors, dreams. We wonder at that butterfly, that train. We ask, how do fish breathe? Then something happens. The world becomes too familiar. We begin to take things for granted. We go to school and our science teacher seems to be able to explain everything. Our TV sets become part-time parents. We begin to trade in our real selves for the false images the world sells us: the beauty queen, the sports hero, the scholar, the power-monger, the religious fanatic.

But what Christ offers us is this: to be born over, to "become as little children," with a fresh start. Do you see why so much of Jesus's teaching was couched in such concepts as children, birth, milk and meat? We need to recover our innocence, our sense of wonder, to renew our sense of life as adventure with glory and grandeur of our childhood imaginations.

We Christians seem to have been missing the point for a long time. Instead of seeing the world for what it is, its means, its power, its tactics, we slowly gravitate toward their use. We become worldly. . . First, we are

"Christians," then we become merely "respectable citizens." Finally, Jesus, the Scriptures, heaven—they all hold little motivation for us. We're sold on the world.

You've seen a lot of religious misery in your short time on the earth and in the body of Christ: church squabbles, scandals in the brotherhood, hurt feelings, lost souls. This is unfortunate and it can be depressing; but it's probably good that you have seen it and know it's there. Now you can get down to business. Not only is the world imperfect, as you already know, so are the Christians who have been called to help redeem it—you and I included.

At this point, Mike, there are three responses you can make: (1) you can ignore it all, like the priest and the Levite in the Samaritan parable, going your own way, smug, indifferent, and resigned to bitterness. (2) you can give up all together, becoming cynical and resolving never to risk trusting people again, living isolated from any close relationships. Or (3), you can acknowledge the imperfections of the world, your brethren, and yourself, and start again, determined to find out what you can do to make things better in your corner of the world. You can guess which is the best response of the three—but you should know that I have tried them all and I too am too often saddled with self-pity, doubt and despair. I guess there's only so many times a person can endure getting his/her heart stepped on before he recoils in anger and bitterness. And sometimes it takes facing death, or the desire for it, to get one's thinking straight.

I like to think I have a high threshold of pain. But I can't imagine what it would be like to live, as some do, with disease or paralysis. Yet once upon a time, a certain Person took our place on the most painful cross, undergoing the most humiliating persecution ever devised by man. When He cried out there was no one at home in the universe, including his own father. When Jesus hung on that cross, with all my sins and yours, and the sins of the world, he was surrounded by hundreds of snickering, slandering cut-throats laughing and leering and

betting on who would get his torn clothing. That is to say, we were there, standing side by side. When you think of that kind of love, that calibre of commitment, it is difficult to talk about wanting to die, Mike. Jesus died so we might live, not die. And live more abundantly.

Let me ask you the awkward question: How much time have you spent in prayer lately? Mind you, I'm not talking about the kind of formality intoned over Super Bowls or the dinner table or mumbled half-attentively at bed-time. And I'm not talking about the cliches we sometimes hear in public prayers, "the ready recollections" and "no fears of molestation in our humble abodes" so often quoted. I'm talking about a personal sense of Jesus' presence and care-prayer which is not just mouthing old wives tales, but which is a direct and candid conversation with God - no holds barred. Remember Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*? That's prayer: talking to God - not as the principal of the school where you've been caught smoking at lunch time, but as a Father who knows what you need even before you ask, someone you can talk to when you're sad or heartbroken or angry, depressed or excited, at any time, for any reason. He's there. He hears. He answers. I know. I try to tell Him everything, not because He needs to hear it, but because I need to tell Him. I ask for help and strength, I ask for frivolous things too, but also I tell Him thanks and praise for what He's already done.

I don't scoff at what you call your unbearable pain. I just know you can deal with it, if you will. In some ways, your retreat into isolation is a shirking of responsibility. A responsibility to what or whom? Well,

obviously, to Jesus—your Master and Benefactor. But also to yourself: in humility face yourself, what sinful attitudes or behavior am I refusing to give up? That's a starting place. If nothing stands out, then consider—ask, Am I just being lazy or selfish or stubborn? Or, am I paralyzed by fear of failure? Mike, don't be timid or shy about facing your own imperfections, internal struggles. You have them like all of us rebels. The difference is that some of us have been saved. We know Jesus the Liberator. You will fail many times—at least I have. There is, regrettably, a sad trail of failures back there in the darkness. Every once in a while, the devil rattles the chain of failures and I cringe. But the Lord delivers me everytime I call on him. He silences that prosecutor from His throne on high, the devil cannot practice law in God's court anymore.

I'll quit sermonizing now. But, one or two more things, Mike. "Trust in God" means exactly that. Trusting Him means that daily you'll seek your life from Him; you believe and expect that He will take care of you in all circumstances. That doesn't mean you won't ever get a cold, or that you won't ever wish you had something; it doesn't mean that there will never come a problem or a trial. The world is still out there. But it does mean He will walk every step of the way with you to support and bless you. One thing God does; He plays by the rules. He asked nothing of you that His Son has not also endured, and because of His endurance can promise us hope, confidence and strength.

Trust means you will have a sense of God's presence wherever you are, whatever you are doing. And that means a bit of work. Do you think

Abraham felt God's presence easily while he was driving those tent pegs day in and day out, searching for Canaan? Do you think it was simple for Moses to rest in God's care with fifty thousand Egyptians on chariots at his back? Was it a cinch for Paul to sense God's presence when he survived the stoning at Lystra? No, Mike: trusting God isn't pretending that He might be there, but being convinced that He is and will be beside us from the day we ask Him into our lives.

Trusting God means dedicating to Him whatever you're doing: playing your oboe, eating strawberry shortcake, rounding third base—everything. Every simple, mundane affair of life can be given to Him, to His glory. I know this may sound a bit silly to you—especially since we are used to thinking of worship as five specific acts that take place in a certain building at a certain time; we like to divide the world up into the holy and the profane, the sacred and the secular. But Jesus came into the world to make life more abundant, and part of that is to break down the barrier between the two worlds: to make them all holy. He wants to start with you.

AFTERMATH

I would like to report a happy ending to this story. But I cannot. Mike, now a senior RTV major at a university here in Ohio, still remains untouched, aloof from the Lord Jesus and His people. He remains hurt, bruised from his own battle with sin and his own ego. The Lord, of course, is always at the threshold, waiting to be invited back in.

1040 Village Drive
Bowling Green, OH 43402

POT AND PRAYER

by Wayne Walker

A young man wrote a letter to Dear Abby some time ago about his fiance. Both were in their mid 20's. Not long before she told him she would like to get him high on pot just to see how it would affect him. Her reason was that she had smoked it occasionally with an earlier boyfriend and the sex was really terrific. (That's known as fornication--Heb. 13:4).

He went on to say that he had never even tried pot. He had told her that he had no desire to do so and if she did

she had the wrong guy. Since she had never mentioned it before, her sudden interest in it worried him. He wanted to know what Abby thought about it and what advice she might give.

Abby responded by pointing out that studies show that the principle chemical in marijuana, which is THC, lowers the level of testosterone (the principle male sex hormone), decreases sperm count, and causes abnormalities in the sperm. Thus, while pot may enhance the sexual experience, it actually

damages one's reproductive capabilities. This fellow can be thankful that he has had no part of it and it is good that he wants none.

Abby continued to say that one of the most widely held misconceptions about marijuana is that it is not physically or psychologically addictive. She said that it is! She concluded, "I don't mean to preach, but people who start using drugs rarely have a prayer." She's right--drug abuse is condemned in the Bible (Gal. 5:19-21). Moral--stay away!

P.O. Box 313
Medina, OH 44258

The Poet's Page

ENOUGH'S ENOUGH!

The wind was whistling 'round my house
As I sat by the fire;
I reached and turned the TV on
To while away an hour.

A bedroom scene was being played
Across my TV screen;
The man was in his middle years
The girl a teenage queen.

I turned a news show on and saw
An interview being done;
A "gay" was talking 'bout his rights
And a civil suit he'd won.

Again I changed the channel to
A blaring hard-rock scene;
It was bizarre; the stars' attire
Would rival Halloween!

I turned the TV switch to "OFF",
Turned on the radio,
I listened to a woman sing
On a country music show.

She sang about a place where they
Would "make it through the night";
She said she didn't care at all
If it was wrong or right.

I picked up the newspaper, saw
In column one, front page,
A picture of a porno shop and
A young man in a rage.

The folks of his fair town, it seems,
Had had his place closed down.
He argued that his shop was not
The business of the town.

I flipped the page and turned again
In column two, page two,
And read of the successful work
Of a group - ACLU.

They want no scriptures read from space,
Nor prayers in public schools;
And those who dare to disagree
Are unenlightened fools!

They advocate - at our expense -
Abortion on demand;
Our judges say this "right" to kill
Is legal in our land.

I glanced on down the page and saw
A used car advertisement;
A pretty girl - bikini clad,
Was used as an enticement.

I sat and thought, America,
You're in an awful rut;
You've buried all your values
In a cesspool filled with smut.

The darts from Satan's well-aimed bow
No longer cause you pain;
And sin's become so commonplace
There's no remorse or shame.

Seems "Free Press" gives us license
To print obscene trash and lies;
Malicious slander of fellowmen
Under "Freedom of Speech" disguised.

The ERA finds fault with things
The Scriptures have to say.
God's rule for man is obsolete;
They have a better way.

We need a feast of decency
To feed this starving nation;
A respite from the god of sex
For the good of all creation.

Is it too late? Have we gone too far?
Has Satan won the war?
Not if we all together cry ---
Enough's enough! No more!!

--Fay Mobley
Brodhead, KY

STANDING BEFORE THE ALMIGHTY

In trance, I see the Almighty.
His splendour burns my eyes,
I tremble at peals of thunder,
I quake with holy surprise.

My strength drains away in wonder,
My body seems to disappear,
I fall on my face before Him,
I cannot even utter a prayer.

I lie as a dead man in waiting,
Unable to move or to speak.
Then a voice like many waters,
Bids me rise, and stand on my feet.

I stood in the midst of millions,
And I had in my hand a palm,
We worshipped the Lamb and the Father,
In rapture we sang and we sang.

Waves of joy and happiness filled me,
Light and Glory o'erwhelmed like a flood,
And my spirit repeated within me,
It is good! It is good! It is good!

To think that eternal salvation,
Is a moment like this, without end.
When we in heaven forever,
Serve our Almighty, Eternal, Friend!

--Steve Kearney
Firhouse, Dublin 24

CARE

I looked to God and He has done,
What others said could not be.
I look to Him for all my good,
And He has made me free.

Free from the cares of this troubled
world,
With its sorrows, pain and woe.
He gave me a mind to seek higher
ground,
And showed me the way to go.

So look to the Lord for all your needs.
For He does freely give.
To all who seek Him while He may be
found,
That you may truly live.

--Gwendolyn Cowan
Flint, MI

STONES FOR BUILDING

Failure is God's chisel that
Carves out His stones for building.
He uses that same tool to etch
His image on His children.

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

THINGS UNSEEN

God asks that I, in faith, believe
In things I cannot see.
Then, through my faith and trust in Him,
He gives them all to me.

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

HAPPENINGS

News and Notes From Around The World

DISTRIBUTION OF U.S. FOOD UNFAIR SAY PHILIPPINE PROTESTANT LEADERS

U.S. government food aid sent to the Philippines in the wake of several major typhoons is being distributed in a discriminatory manner, according to statements by two indigenous Protestant leaders in Zamboanga City.

Pacifico Odango, head of the Philippine Christ Centered Crusaders on the island of Leyte, says the Roman Catholic Church is the official designated distributor of U.S. government food supplies, and that usually those of non-Catholic faith miss out in the distribution.

Another evangelical leader, Vicente Bacadon of the Mount Olive Gospel Churches located on the island of Mindanao, states "The Philippine government has received millions of dollars of help and gifts from other nations, but they have not been given to the victims of the typhoon disaster."

Carl Gordon, treasurer of the Virginia-based Christian Aid Mission, said "It seems the best way to assure that food is distributed to disaster victims is to send monetary help through independent charitable organizations you can trust."

Since the worst series of typhoons ever to hit the Philippines struck last fall, Christian Aid Mission has sent more than \$48,000 in aid to more than 20 indigenous groups affected by the storm.

BIRTH CONTROL ADS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A public school district has found itself in a legal dispute over its policy prohibiting student newspapers from accepting paid advertising for birth control products or information. Planned Parenthood of Southern Nevada is seeking a judgement declaring the school's district

advertising policy in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The lawsuit maintains that the school district's regulation of advertising in student publications is an unconstitutional prior restraint on the free speech rights of Planned Parenthood. A spokesman for the district said the ads were deemed offensive because they seem to sanction sexual activity among teenagers, and states that the school district will take the position that student publications are under school board jurisdiction.

IN-DEPTH BIBLE CLASSES BEING OFFERED BY WEST MASON CHURCH



Two Cincinnati-area preachers, Royce Chandler with the West Mason Church and Wayne Chappell with the Mill Road Church, are going to work together in intensive, in-depth Bible classes to be offered by the West Mason Church of Christ. The studies are open to any person desiring to develop and mature as a student and as a servant of Jesus Christ. The two-year course of study covers the entire Bible and related subjects. Each year there will be three trimesters of twelve weeks each. The first year's classes will start on August 26, 1985 and continue through May 23, 1986.

The class will place strong emphasis on practical skills (writing, research, speaking, etc.). This will be valuable training for future elders, preachers, and teachers.

The cost is free! Each student is responsible for his own living costs and study materials. This is an ideal arrangement for those desiring only Bible training and unable to pay high tuition costs for college work.

For more information, write to West Mason Church of Christ, 5920

Butler-Warren Road, Mason, OH 45040.

AN UPCOMING DEBATE ON THE BENEVOLENCE ISSUE

Robert Wayne LaCoste of the Wonsley Drive Church of Christ in Austin will meet Bill Jackson of the Southwest Church in a public debate on May 20 and 21. The propositions for the two nights will deal with whether or not a church should grant aid to a person not a member of the church.

More information may be received by writing Robert LaCoste at 7300 S. Ute Trail, Austin, TX 78729.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PLANS HOMOSEXUAL ORDINATION

The Presbyterian Church has upheld a ban on ordination of practicing homosexuals. The 3.1 million-member denomination's Permanent Judicial Commission reaffirmed 1978 and 1979 actions barring homosexuals from being ordained into the clergy, or serving as elders or deacons in local congregations.

The ruling said that Buffalo's Westminister Presbyterian Church erred in 1983 when it declared it was extending leadership opportunities to all members, including homosexuals. Five members of the 24-member commission filed a dissenting opinion.

ABORTION PROTESTERS SENTENCED FOR PRAYING ON SUPREME COURT STEPS

Twelve pro-life protestors who knelt in prayer on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court building have been sentenced to a day in jail and fined \$10.

The protestors were arrested Jan. 22, during an anti-abortion protest that drew more than 70,000 demonstrators to Washington, D.C. The crowd

gathered near the White House to hear President Reagan reaffirm his commitment to the pro-life movement, then marched to the Supreme Court building, bearing a baby-sized casket. A dozen protestors were arrested by Supreme Court police when they knelt to pray on the steps of the Court building.

Those arrested were charged with violating a federal law that forbids picketing at the Supreme Court. In a plea-bargain agreement, the protestors received a comparatively light sentence, for a violation that carries a maximum penalty of 60 days in jail and a \$100 fine.

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE BATTLES LOCAL CHURCH FOR PROPERTY



Eight years ago St. Joseph's Church in Brooklyn, New York decided to protest changes in Episcopal doctrine by joining a splinter group, the American Episcopal Church. On Feb. 19, 1985 the Long Island Diocese of the Episcopal Church responded, serving the congregation with an eviction notice.

The diocese maintains the 76 members of St. Joseph's, formerly known as Trinity Church, are "nothing but squatters," because of their defection to the American Episcopal Church.

Paul Taylor of St. Joseph's, a practicing lawyer who was ordained as an Episcopal priest last October, realizes that his congregation may have to leave. Taylor points out that other splinter churches have been forced to forfeit their property in the years since the Episcopal Church changed its doctrine to permit the ordination of women and homosexuals.

CHURCHES FORCE PORN OUT OF 7-ELEVEN STORE; SOUTHLAND CORPORATION PUTS IT BACK IN

A 7-Eleven convenience store in Wheaton, Illinois took pornographic magazines from its racks in response to protests organized by local churches; but the Southland Corporation, parent company of 7-Eleven, has taken the store back from its local manager, and returned pornographic magazines to its shelves.

Former store manager Frank Hudock announced his decision to remove the magazines Dec. 13, in

response to pressure exerted by local churches. First Baptist Church of Wheaton led an economic boycott of the store, which included picketing. Members of the Wheaton College Church, the First Church of the Assemblies of God, and Wheaton Bible Church also signed petitions supporting the boycott.

According to Hudock, the store became "a ghost town" with daily losses of \$300 after the protests began. Steven French, associate professor of First Baptist Church of Wheaton, said "It was the picketing that was the crushing blow." French said that picketing made 7-Eleven customers aware of the boycott, and kept many away from the store.

French commented "If anyone had a right to be bitter about our actions, it was Frank Hudock, but he has joined our ranks. He wants to nail Southland Corporation to the wall with us if he can." French says the Southland Corporation forced Hudock to give up his store. "The porn is back on the racks now, the corporation put it back," says French. "They're just daring us, challenging us."

In addition to continued action at the 7-Eleven formerly managed by Hudock, church groups plan to pressure five other Wheaton businesses that sell pornographic magazines. These include another 7-Eleven store, two Convenient Food Marts, a local convenience store, and a Crown Books outlet. The owner of two White Hen Pantry stores in Wheaton removed pornographic magazines while the boycott was underway against the 7-Eleven store near the First Baptist Church.

PRAYING IS NOT ALLOWED

A federal judge has struck down West Virginia's 6-month-old school prayer law as unconstitutional. The law, which was approved by state voters, authorized a daily period of silent prayer or meditation by school children.

NUDITY IS NOT ART

Crucifixes showing a naked Christ hanging on the cross have been ordered removed from St. Edward's Church in Mendon Michigan, following a campaign of protest by the Fidelity Forum of Western Michigan.

The removal order, issued by Bishop Donovan of Kalamazoo,

Mich., cited possible scandal and offense from the nude figures. Donovan's order reversed his earlier decision to support the display of the crucifixes as acceptable expression of artistic freedom.

HIGH COURT TO DECIDE IF DRIVER'S LICENSE PHOTO REQUIREMENT VIOLATES RELIGIOUS FREE- DOM GUARANTEES



The Supreme Court has heard arguments in the case of a Nebraska woman who refuses on religious grounds to be photographed for a driver's license. Frances J. Quaring maintains that allowing her photograph to be made would violate the second of the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing. . ." The state of Nebraska denied Quaring a driver's license when she refused to comply with a state law requiring the photo.

Ruth Anne E. Galter, an assistant attorney general for Nebraska, told the Court the state had compelling interests in requiring the photo, including instant identification for police checks and financial transactions. Galter said that allowing exemptions on religious grounds would create an administrative problem, which would outweigh the burden placed on Quaring's free exercise of religion.

Justices repeatedly pressed Galter for further explanation of the state's compelling interest in requiring a photograph. Galter said the law helped sales clerks identify underage liquor customers. Galter also claimed that it would be unconstitutional to provide exemptions "solely on religious grounds." Quaring's attorney, Thomas C. Lansworth of Des Moines, Iowa, said the state could find "less restrictive" means to achieve its ends, and insisted that to allow no exceptions to the law would unconstitutionally restrict his client's free exercise of religion. Quaring was not present at the trial; her attorney cited distress over the likelihood of being photographed by news reporters and television cameramen as "one reason she is not here today."

A decision in this case is expected sometime this spring.

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Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

April 1985

Number 4

"SO MIGHTILY GREW THE WORD OF THE LORD AND PREVAILED"

by Webb Harris, Jr.

The biblical record of Paul's third missionary tour focuses primarily on the two years that were spent in the great city of Ephesus. This was the city referred to by Pliny as "the ornament of Asia". She was a city of beauty and reputation. Population-wise, Ephesus was one of the premier metropolises of her day. Moreover, she was the home of the noted Temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Numerous men of renown are reported to have journeyed to Ephesus to worship at the Temple; among them, Alexander the Great. Silver coins were circulated around the Roman world, inscribed with the words, DIANA EPHESIA, i.e., Diana of the Ephesians.

The Bible student's attention, however, is not stolen by Ephesus' magnificence. We are not captured by Diana and "the image which fell down from Jupiter". Rather, Ephesus stands out in our minds as the site of some of the most fruitful evangelistic work to be read of in the book of Acts. Luke used the words of this article's title to summarize the results of Paul's labors in Diana's back-yard.

I encourage the reader to take a few moments to review Acts 19:8-20, to familiarize himself with the account I will be referring to throughout this

article. Realize that the passage is a collection of five basic "ingredients" which, when merged together, resulted in the word of the Lord growing mightily and prevailing. Notice, (1) the recognition of potential, (2) speaking the word of Christ, (3) evidences, (4) the exposure of false religion and (5) the testimony of changed lives.

Recognition of Potential: When Paul preached the gospel in the city of Corinth, he was laboring in a city that was reputed to be the world-capitol of immorality. Thus, he was preaching to a people who would have been overlooked or neglected by many preachers today. We would be prejudiced that such a sleazy population would never receive the word of God. We would be convinced that such a population would have no interest in a call to purity. But Paul was able to see **POTENTIAL** in Corinth. He entered her gates and brought with him the wonderful story of love. Eventually, a congregation of saints existed there, composed of people who had been homosexuals and drunkards prior to their repentance. (I Cor. 6:9-11). Brethren, wherever there are human beings, there is **POTENTIAL**.

I Corinthians was written by Paul when he was in Ephesus. Read I Cor. 16:5-9. In the 9th verse he says of

Ephesus, "for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries". Hence, he was going to tarry there. Is it not true that more often than not, when we are confronted with adversaries today, we feel that the door has been slammed shut? Learn from Paul. We must start recognizing the potential for fruit in areas that are being forgotten.

Speaking the Word of Christ: See Acts 19:8,9. As we follow Paul's travels, we see him doing one thing over and over. Whether in the synagogue, on the river-bank or at the lecture-hall of Tyrannus - the apostle is "speaking out boldly". He is persuading and debating. He is holding up Jesus as Lord.

If brethren want to see the word of God prevailing in their cities and towns as it did in Ephesus, they are going to have to start proclaiming it. Let us not be afraid to finance bible-calls and correspondence courses. Let us resurrect the gospel meeting. Let us quit expressing contempt for door-knocking. Let us pray unto God that He will bless our efforts and start speaking the word of Christ with zealousness.

Evidences: See Acts 19:11, 12. Too many brethren are shattered over the fact that the miracles and the prophets

are gone. They want to jump on the band-wagon of sensationalism. They want amazing feats and flashy acts of showmanship. What they need to see is that such was suitable only for infancy. However, we can (and **must**) appeal to those miracles, those fulfilled prophecies and that glorious resurrection through the Bible. The Bible is overflowing with EVIDENCES. The word of God is sufficient to convict every honest heart on our blue-green globe that all authority belongs to Jesus.

I am convinced that through so many of our friends are adamant that they believe that the scriptures are inspired and that Jesus is God's Son, the majority haven't given such things 60 seconds of serious thought. The world needs convincing. God's evidences are abundant.

Exposure of False Religion: See Acts 19:13-17. What Paul could do in

the name of Jesus Christ, the pretenders could not! I think that these five verses are worthy of great consideration.

Those who hold to the truth and enjoy the fellowship of Christ, ought to be the kings of the mountain. However, it is too common that brethren live in the shadow of the imposters. Is God pleased with the fact that the Watchtower's Witnesses have knocked on my neighbor's door many times in the past year, while he has yet to find out where I worship and what I believe? Is it proper for the deceived to be more joyous in a lie than I am in the truth? Is it not sad when our neighbors attain to a higher standard of morality than we do?

We are living a chapter out of Jeremiah's day, when the heathen was more devoted to his god of marble than the Israelite was to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Testimony of Changed Lives: See Acts 19:18, 19. Where idolatry was rampant, sorcery and black magic flourished. When Christ was received, men were enlightened. The idolators of Ephesus were eye-witnesses of the change that Jesus, whom Paul preached, wrought in the lives of their fellow-citizens. There is a proverb older than anyone reading this article: Actions speak louder than words. This is so true. We will never know how much good is done by our public metamorphosis unto righteousness. Jesus instructed His disciples to let their lights shine.

Let us follow the pattern laid out in Ephesus. We will rejoice in the results.

P.O. Box 1555
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It Won't Work

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

The title above is a positive statement to correct a negative excuse: I think.

How many times have you heard some youngster, old enough to know better, just growing out of adolescence and seeking to flaunt his irresponsibility, blame his parents for his own withdrawal from God? The tired, worn and shallow excuse may go something like this, "When I was little, they made me 'go to church' all the time and now I just cannot stand to go. They turned me against the church." It won't work!

Perhaps you have heard the husband of a wife, who is a faithful Christian, say, "I let my wife go to services, in fact, I insist that she go, but I do not have to go because she keeps me in line, you see. Besides, everybody is not religiously inclined, you know." It won't work!

It may be that you know a marital companion (husband or wife) who resents the time a faithful mate may give to the Lord and His church. "They love the church more than they do me" is often the lament. "I might be more interested in religion if they didn't act so goody-goody" is the inane and irascible response often

given in an effort at rationalization. It won't work!

You may know a family who have left a faithful and sound church of the Lord's people to become a part of another local group. While the cause of change may be legitimate, it often is for no better cause than, "they wouldn't let me do anything over there" or "they wouldn't listen to me" or "they are unfriendly" or "they don't have enough social activities" or "they are too old-fashioned." It won't work!

What do I mean it won't work? I mean, when you and I face the Lord in the final judgment (and we all will - II Cor. 5:10), He will not permit such puny excuses to be offered in justification for our own sins. If the Lord had intended to accept such excuses, He would have said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness unless your parents make you go to church to much when you were little" (Matt. 6:33). He would have had Paul write "and to you who are troubled and 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: unless your wife knows God and obeys the gospel for you" (II Thess. 1:7-8). Surely He would have said, "...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind except when your companion wants you to use all your time and affection to make them feel more important in your life than the Lord thy God" (Matt. 22:37). It seems certain Paul would have been inspired to write "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" but if you can't be the boss don't help build up the body" (Eph. 4:16).

Hopefully, these misquotes will cause us all to see the absurdity of the many excuses offered in an effort to circumvent the plain Word of the Lord. Jesus truly 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).

We all are accountable to God (Rom. 14:12) and all excuses are futile. Indeed, they won't work!

147 Creekwood Drive
Florence, AL 35630

EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

PREACHING IN THE PHILIPPINES

After several months of praying and intensive planning, brother Howard Jones and I departed from the O'Hare International Airport on February 18 for a month-long preaching trip in the Philippine Islands. We came home a few pounds lighter and very tired, but with a feeling that we were able to accomplish the work we set out to do. Twenty-six precious souls were baptized into Christ while we were there and I have received reports of almost that many more baptisms in the couple of weeks after we left.

Some brethren, upon learning of our plans to visit the Philippines, gave us the names of preachers they wanted us "to check up on," as if we would be in contact with all the churches and all of the preachers in the Philippines. It would be about like asking a preacher that is holding a gospel meeting in Chicago to contact a certain preacher in Atlanta. The distance between places is far. Many American brethren do not realize the massiveness of the Philippine Islands (114,830 square miles). It is a nation made up of 7,083 islands in the Pacific Ocean, a great number of which are volcanic in origin and very small. Many of them are uninhabited, only 730 are known to be populated. The population at the present time is estimated to be close to 50 million people.

There are probably more faithful congregations and gospel preachers in the Philippines than in any other foreign nation. There may be as many as 400 preachers in the Philippines who are working full or part-time basis preaching the gospel, many of whom are supported in their work by congregations and/or interested individuals in the United States. The growth of the church there in recent years has been remarkable, and even more remarkable is the fact that the majority of our brethren there has resisted and taken a stand against the liberal and institutional

trends which have swept so many congregations in the United States and in other countries into apostasy.

This was Howard's first time to visit the Philippines. I had been for a two-month preaching trip in 1979. In planning our trip, Howard and I had gotten together on several occasions. We also spent much time on the phone. I tried to condition him for the new adventures awaiting him, but it is really impossible to find the words to adequately describe a new way of life. The first impressions of an American leaving the Manila International Airport enroute to the hotel is hard to describe. It is very doubtful that any American preacher could get in an automobile and drive from one side of the city to the other and arrive alive. There are no distinct traffic laws. A driver makes a lane wherever he can squeeze in. What few stop signs or traffic lights you see are ignored and it is a case of who can pull the biggest bluff on the other driver. Speed limits are either non-existent or ignored by all drivers. The colorful, brightly decorated jeepneys everywhere, seemingly all car horns blowing at once, motorcycles hauling a dozen people in a side car, hawkers trying to sell their goods on every street corner, little children yelling "Hi, G.I. Joe" or asking for money, and the near misses while negotiating traffic provide unforgettable memories.

HOSPITALITY

The attitude toward hospitality displayed by Filipinos is unmatched by any we have seen in our country. It is from the heart and will be the very best that the host has. The visitor is always treated as an honored guest. If some of our hosts heard hints that we liked a certain thing (watermelon, pineapple, mango, etc.), it would most likely be served at the next meal. On several occasions we were being fanned by some of the sisters while we were eating. Often, we ate alone with our host while the rest of the family waited until we were through. Even though this is a different custom than we are used to and it often made us uncomfortable, we tried to adjust to it knowing that they want to do this and consider it an honor to us.

Some of the food and eating customs are extremely different than what we are normally accustomed to, but we soon adjusted. We often ate with the only forks they owned while the others ate with their fingers. Some of the food we ate in some locations did not tempt us to go back for seconds, but we survived. But a few of the areas had some of the most delicious food that money could have bought (especially some of those unusual soups)! During our last night in Manila, we were treated to a feast at the home of Ben Cruz that is beyond description. I believe his wife and daughters must have been at the stove cooking all day. I've seldom seen that much food served in one house--regardless of whether it was in the Philippines or in the States.

Today

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

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LECTURESHIPS HELD

During my 1979 trip, I attempted to visit as many of the congregations as possible. We had decided to pick key locations for this trip and have extensive lectureships, inviting as many preachers as possible to come to these certain cities. We would love to have picked out about a another six areas, but time simply would not allow us to do so in this trip. Those areas will have to be reserved for the next trip.

Numerous interested brethren had contributed funds for the printing of outlines to be used on this trip. We took five cases of outlines dealing with the church, how to study the Bible, premillennialism, errors in denominationalism, Christian evidences, growing in the faith, etc. Many of the preachers acted like we were distributing birthday presents. They were so thrilled to receive such teaching tools.

Our first preaching was done at the building of the Pasay Church in Manila, where Victorio Tibayan (one of the strongest debaters in the islands) has labored for years. Vic had done a wonderful job in getting the word to so many preachers in the metro-Manila area. An accurate count of the attendance was not taken, but we met many preachers from Luzon that we would not otherwise have been able to meet. The church assemblies in the second floor of a building over a busy street. The street noise is loud and one must almost yell in order to be heard, but in spite of the heat and noise the interest was good.

From Manila, we took a bus to Batangas, where we could get on a boat going to Calapan, Oriental Mindoro. Diosdado Menor is the well-respected and greatly loved preacher who arranged our lectureship in Calapan. He has been a Christian since 1932 and has been preaching most of that time. At 76 years of age, he still does as much teaching and traveling as his health will allow him. Although he is failing in health, he still conducts many preacher-training seminars. He is a very kind and gentle man, very knowledgeable in the Scriptures, and an excellent preacher.

Bro. Menor was able to secure a special permit in order to erect a bamboo shelter for us to use for the lectureship. It was to be removed shortly after our lectureship concluded. Time and space will not allow us to mention each preacher that we met on Mindoro, but I will say that the brethren seemed to have love and appreciation for one another and their work. We saw not even one hint of jealousy. Another thing worthy of mention is that there is not a single church of Christ on either Mindoro or Tablas islands with any liberal tendencies, and there must be more than thirty congregations on the two islands. This is largely due to the work and influence of brother Menor and his faithful co-workers, Ricarte Madayag and Eliseo Sikat.

From Mindoro, we went to Tuguegarao up in the Cagayan Valley. Rody Gumpad had planned the lectureship, invited the brethren from two provinces, and he, too, had erected a shelter for our use. Rody has a 30-minute radio program each Saturday and has made contact with many people in his area. He has a good grasp of the Scriptures and enjoys teaching. Three elders from a Christian Church and one Nazarene preacher were baptized while we were there. I have heard since we returned home that a preacher from a liberal church has also repented of his errors and made a stand for Truth.

Our next stop was in Pagadian City, on the large island of Mindanao. We were greeted by one of our largest

parties of brethren and welcomed with lovely floral and shell leis. Ramon and Jonathan Carino had arranged to rent the assembly hall at a girl scout camp. Our attendance averaged over 100, with lectures held in the morning, afternoon, and night. Preachers had come from far and near and we had some very interesting question-answer sessions after each lecture.

Our final lectureship was held in Sibagat, Agusan del Sur, an area where none of the American preachers had ventured before. Venancio Pecson arranged our lectureship here. We had just recently learned of about twenty congregations and about a dozen preachers in this area that we did not know had existed. It was a joy to be associated with them and see their dedication and zeal. I was able to speak on a radio program in Butuan City, where Agapio "Boy" Catamora has been paying for the program out of his own pocket.

MEMORIES

The trip leaves us with many pleasant, edifying and motivating memories. The friendships we made with so many Filipino Christians will last a life-time, whether we are ever privileged to see them again in this life or not. It is difficult for us to objectively assess the results of the trip, but the brethren we worked with assured us that our efforts were helpful to them in the different places where we went.

Probably the greatest beneficiaries of the trip were Howard and I — it helped and inspired us in so many ways and gave us insight into the lives, work, and faith of Christians in another land. To see people so interested in and responsive to the preaching of the gospel, in contrast to the general indifference we often experience on the part of most people in this country, was refreshing and thrilling. To see the love, sacrificing, dedication, faithfulness and zeal of so many of the Filipino Christians in circumstances that we would consider very difficult, was rewarding and motivating.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND REMARKS

The cost of living is higher in some areas of the Philippines than in others. Some preachers are receiving more than they deserve; others are under-paid; some are getting no support. There are a number of worthy men in need of support. If you know of an interested individual or congregation that would desire to do so, please have them to contact us. We can supply some names and addresses. We do not know of a more fruitful field of the gospel today than the Philippines.

Song books, Bibles, communion sets, tracts, class materials, etc. are needed in many areas. The very ablest and most experienced of the Filipino preachers, several brethren have sent study helps to some of the Filipino preachers. Many others, however, are limited to maybe a concordance. We will be happy to put you in touch with a Filipino preacher who would love to receive study aids from you. We will even ship them for you if you are willing to pay for them.

It was not at all uncommon to speak with a Filipino preacher who had been supported by an American church for five or six years, only to learn that he had received no communication from them during these years. The preacher is in need of the monthly check as his support, buy many of them are so longing for a letter of concern and encouragement and a reminder that "we remember you in our prayers and are thinking of you on this side of the globe." What about it, brethren? When is the last time you wrote?



Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

BUT MEN

(Chapter 9)

According to the ancient title, this psalm of David is dedicated to the chief upon Muthlabben. The significance of the Hebrew words used in so many of these titles and sometimes in the text (as in v. 15) is uncertain.

DAVID GIVES THANKS (v. 1-6)

The king had witnessed God's justice and grace through many seasons. Upon reflection of such he exclaims: *"I will praise thee, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High."*

Praise is both a solemn duty and a sacred privilege. Here we behold the proper fountain of praise. It must spring forth from the whole heart. Half-hearted praise is never acceptable. The fruit of praise is showing forth the great works of God, or telling others of these. The proper spirit of praise is gladness and joy. The expression of praise is joyful singing. James said, *"Is any merry? Let him sing psalms"* (Jas. 5:13).

"When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence." Fleeing from God's presence would not save them. *"For thou hast maintained my right and my cause, thou sittest in the throne judging right."* David knew that God's judgment would be right, however man might misjudge. *"Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name forever and ever."* Many nations had been destroyed by God because of their contempt for His laws and their consequent descent into every form of ungodliness and impurity. Notice that He rebukes before He destroys. Great and powerful nations have been wiped

off the earth. May nations today take heed.

"O, thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: and thou hast destroyed cities; their memorial is perished with them." Destroyers will be destroyed. Those who live by the sword shall by the sword perish. A nation may be used as an axe in God's hand to bring destruction, and then itself be destroyed by God (Isa. 10:5-15).

FAITH FOR FUTURE DAYS (7-12)

"But the LORD shall endure forever, he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness." The basis for all faith and hope is that God shall endure. The enemy shall come to an end, but the righteous judge shall continue forever. With Him, there shall be no partiality and no respect of persons. May we stand in fear when tempted to sin and be comforted when slandered and oppressed.

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in time of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." God is the haven of rest for the weary soul. The old hymn beautifully echos the thought here: *"My soul in sad exile was out on life's sea. So burdened with sin and distressed. I heard a sweet voice, saying make me your choice. And I entered the haven of rest. I've anchored my soul in the haven of rest. I'll sail the wide seas no more. The tempest may toss over the wild, stormy seas. In Jesus, I'm safe evermore."*

"Sing praises to the Lord, which

dwelleth in Zion" declare among the people his doings." He had already promised to sing praises (v. 2), now he tells us to. Let us ever sing praises and declare His doings.

"When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble." An inquisition is the act of inquiring. It is an official examination. A comparison of translations will assist us here:

"For He who requires blood (i.e. avenges bloodshed) remembers them; He does not forget the cry of the afflicted" (New American Standard Bible).

"For the avenger of blood has remembered men's desire, and has not forgotten the cry of the poor" (New English Bible).

"How he bears you in mind, this Avenger of bloodshed. How he never forgets the wail of the weak" (Moffett).

God is the avenger of blood. He will not forget what the righteous have suffered. The government is His ordained medium of vengeance (Rom. 13). But when governments fail, let not the wicked think they shall escape His wrath (Ezekiel 24:7-9). The martyred saints shall be remembered (Rev. 6).

A CRY FOR MERCY (13, 14)

"Have mercy upon me, O LORD: consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death: That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation." He has spoken of past memories and future hope. Now present needs are brought forth. The Lord is acknowledged as He who lifts in His everlasting arms from sickness, despair, temptation, yes, even the gates of death.

David's object in desiring such mercy is not just in view of personal needs, but that praise might redound to His Deliverer.

THE CERTAINTY OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT (15-18)

"The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgsion. Selah. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God. For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever."

Even as Haman was hanged upon his own gallows, so shall the wicked ever reap as they have sown. The character of God demands punishment for sin. His holiness is demonstrated thereby. If a ruler winked at lawlessness, he would be a lawless ruler and his nature would be manifest to all. The same principle applies infinitely to God. His judgement is not only sure, but wise and just. In a sense, the wicked become their own executioners. Judas went to his own place (Acts 1:25).

The wicked shall not escape the damnation of hell. Neither shall any who forget God. They may not be considered wicked by men. They may be moral and honest and benevolent. But when nations forget God, disregard of human dignity generally follows. David affirms that all wrongs shall be made right. The righteous will have to wait, but they shall not wait in vain.

CLOSING PRAYER (19, 20)

"Arise, O Lord, let not man

prevail; let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O LORD" that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah." May all of us grow in our awareness that God is God and we are but men. *"Obedience not power should be our ambition; worship not exploitation should be our way of life."* (D.A. Hubbard).

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"I CHANGE NOT"

by Dalton Key

Like it or not, the world is changing. Yesterday's rule has become today's exception; today's fad will soon be tomorrow's history. Nothing seems to stay the same.

Heraclitus, an Ephesian philosopher who lived more than five centuries before our Lord's flesh, based his ideas upon the world's state of flux. His classic illustration was that no one can step twice into the same river. Just as the river continues to flow, to move forward, so life is forever changing.

This type of reasoning is good, but only up to a point. Still waters do become stagnant and life does thrive on change. In many respects we do need to keep both our eyes and our minds open and try to keep in step with the times. But still, we must not forget that some things do not change. We must realize that all change is not for the better.

Our God does not change. *"For I am the Lord, I change not."* (Malachi 3:6). God is *"from everlasting to everlasting."* (Psalms 90:2). The relentless passage of the centuries has not disturbed the changeless Father. His fundamental nature of judgment, truth and mercy is both eternal and unalterable. The same God who cared for Moses and Jacob, Peter and Paul, cares for us. Thus we may with confidence and assurance lean upon his *"everlasting arms."* (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Neither does God's standard of right and wrong change. The world's

morals and ethics are in a constant state of revision. What was taboo in the "Victorian Era" is now accepted in our more modern "Age of Enlightenment." For many, sin has become a relic of the past. We are advised to "do our own thing" while "grabbing for gusto," all the while "looking out for number one!" The only real wrong, we are told is to "feel wrong."

And yet the eternal word of God, which is *"true from the beginning"* and *"endures forever"* (Psalms 119:160), emphatically states, *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12). The principles within God's book are timeless. We must never become guilty of changing the Bible to agree with modern thought and practice; rather we must alter modern thought and practice to agree with the eternal word.

Some things have always been wrong, are wrong now, and will always be wrong. And the passing of time will do nothing to change a thing inherently wrong into a thing inherently right. The world may unite as one man and vote to make a wrong thing right, but such will not change the truth, for truth is as eternal and unalterable as is the God behind it. *"Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar."* (Romans 3:4).

Look again at the sins listed in the latter part of Roman's first chapter. Reread the sins of the then-unconverted Corinthians in I Corinthians 6. Review

the horrid "works of the flesh" listed in Galatians 5. Such things were wrong in the days of Noah, they were wrong in the days of Lot, they were wrong in the days of Paul, and they are no less sinful today. Dressing up sin and boldly, attractively promoting it on larger-than-life-sized billboards or over the six o'clock news makes it no less sinful. Wrong is still wrong and all the time in eternity won't make it right.

Hiding behind the guise of respectability, we've become more or less complacent towards the world's sinful state. We are no longer startled or embarrassed by gross immorality which takes place almost nightly within our own living rooms by means of video music. Filthy words which used to make us blush are not taken for granted. And the saddest part is that many of these changes are changing us and not for the better.

A change in fashion is one thing; a change in philosophy is something altogether different. Our modern, secular society is running full throttle toward complete and utter destruction. Sin is still a reproach to any people. (Proverbs 14:34.) The way of transgressors is still hard (Proverbs 13:15). The wages of sin is still death. (Romans 6:23). We had best think twice, and think twice again, before joining ranks with modern Sodom. The first Sodom fell and so shall modern Sodom. We must not for the sake of modernity surrender to the stench of Satan's sin.

Remember: some things change, truth does not. May we commit ourselves in life and in death, if need be, to our God which changeth not. Men may scorn his ways as ancient and archaic, but to us they are time-tested and true.

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- LONGSUFFERING

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

The well-known story about the impatient man who prayed: "Lord give me patience, **right now**," illustrates the problem many, if not most of us, face. We often hear the expression "short-tempered," but we do not use the word "long-tempered." The Greek word **makrothumia**, "longsuffering," literally means "long" (makros), "temper" (thumos). Thayer says: "patience, endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance, esp. as shown in bearing troubles and ills. . . patience, forbearance, longsuffering, slowness in avenging wrongs." It is restraint that does not hastily retaliate. Webster says, "long and patient endurance of offense."

CHARACTERISTIC OF DEITY

When Moses was on Mt. Sinai, the Lord passed before him "and proclaimed, *The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth*" (Ex. 34:6). Jonah knew that God was "merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Jonah 4:2). The Psalmist said: "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (Psa. 86:15).

The New Testament is replete with references to the long-suffering of God. In Romans 2:4, Paul said: "Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Peter said: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. . . And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation. . ." (II Pet. 3:9, 15). The long-suffering of God is the basis of

our hope and should be a powerful motivation for us to show patience.

PATIENCE WITH EVENTS

Abraham demonstrated longsuffering in order to obtain the promise (Heb. 6:15). Men of less faith would have given up on God's promises. Barclay commented: "It may be that the hardest lesson of all to learn is how to wait, how to wait when nothing seems to be happening, and when all circumstances seem calculated to bring nothing but discouragement. James insists that the Christian must be like the prophets who again and again had to wait for the action of God; he must be like the farmer who sows the seed and who then through the slow months waits until the harvest comes. (Jas. 5:7-10). It may well be that this is the hardest task of all for an age which has made a god of speed" (*Flesh and Spirit*, p. 96).

PATIENCE WITH PEOPLE

Paul taught the gospel "in long suffering" (II Cor. 6:6), that his ministrations be not blamed. He told Timothy to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (II Tim. 4:2). The Jews had a saying: "An irritable man cannot teach," and it is equally true that an irritable man cannot learn. Both teaching and learning require longsuffering and patience.

The first three verses of Ephesians 4, discuss the spirit that must exist if there is to be unity in the body of Christ. One of those characteristics is that we must have a long temper. Those who agree on the facts of Ephesians 4:4-6 often have division because of a lack of the proper attitude.

Longsuffering is a characteristic of love (I Cor. 13:4), and is to be a part of the Christian's attire. "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and



beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:12, 13). This is really just an application of the golden rule. If we expect others to be patient with our short-comings, we should show this attitude toward them.

The fleshly man says, "retaliate, hate, ignore." The Spirit says "be longsuffering." Just as a man gains more "temper" by losing it, he gains a long-temper by controlling it! Someone has said that "Patience is the ability to idle your motor when you feel like stripping your gears." Growth in this respect takes time, but it is a fruit that is sweet when it is properly developed and one that every Christian must nurture.

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

II CHRONICLES

by Bruce Hudson

about 450 B.C.

PURPOSE

I believe that I Chronicles was written to restore the remnant to their heritage, lineage, and relationship to God. II Chronicles continues in the same direction, though stressing the importance of worship, praise and devotion. Besides Clarke's commentary and Pulpit commentary, Smith's Bible Dictionary states the same idea given above:

"...not only had Zerubbabel, and after him Ezra and Nehemiah, laboured most earnestly to restore the temple and the public worship of God there to the condition it had been under the kings of Judah; but it appears clearly from their policy, and from the language of the contemporary prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, that they had it much at heart to reinfuse something of national life and spirit into the heart of the people, and to make them feel that they were still the inheritors of God's covenanted mercies, and that the captivity had only temporarily interrupted, not dried up, the stream of God's favour to their nation."⁶

It is no small thing that the compiler gives prominence to the reigns of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah. They tried to return the people back to the importance of worship to God in the temple. Most of the other kings were wicked and temple worship was corrupted. The message from God to the returning Jews is: Don't let history repeat itself! Learn from your fathers in the past and stay away from idol worship. Worship Almighty God!

A TIME FOR GREATNESS, 1-9

The first verse tells us that God was with Solomon and magnified him exceedingly. In the first chapter, Solomon offers 1,000 burnt offerings at the tabernacle. This action was significant in that the temple was soon to be built. Also, Solomon requests of God wisdom and knowledge to judge His

people. Verse 12 reminds us that there was never a king like Solomon. Chapter 2 tells of the preparation for the temple and Solomon's dealings with Hiram, (In Kings-Hiram) king of Tyre, for the cedars. In chapter 3-5:1, we are impressed with the great beauty of the temple. Many things were made with pure gold and others overlaid with it. How terrible to think of it being destroyed (36:20)!

In 5:2-7:1-28, we have the dedication of the temple. This is one of the most impressive sections to read and visualize. A beautiful prayer by Solomon is followed by fire coming out of heaven and consuming the sacrifices which could not be numbered (5:6). The glory of the Lord then filled all the house. Two things here would have an effect on the remnant. First, 6:36-39 is mentioned of the people sinning against God and being carried away. If they would repent, forgiveness would be granted. The second is in ch. 7 where the people bowed down to the ground, praising the Lord. This section would stir the remnant with encouragement to faithfully worship God.

Chap. 8-9 describes various activities of Solomon. His wisdom was sought by many, including the queen of Sheba, who bore many questions as well as gifts for him. We are reminded in the remaining of ch. 9 of Solomon's greatness and also his death. During the peaceful reign of Solomon, the nation of Israel probably enjoyed its zenith of riches, power, and glory. J.W. McGarvey points out that it was due to that which Solomon had requested of God:

After building the temple, and also a magnificent palace for himself, Solomon proceeded to inaugurate a complete system of fortification at strategic points in his kingdom, so that one or more of these would confront an enemy from whatever point he might attempt to march an invading army toward Jerusalem. It was probably this wise precaution, together with an

It is difficult to capture the essence of a book compiled so long ago, and written for a certain purpose. But I am convinced that God would have us to see not only his great providence at work in man's redemption, but to learn and apply the great lessons in history for ourselves today. This is true of the Chronicles. Jerome said of them, **"They are an epitome of the Old Testament. They are of such high moment and importance, that he who supposes himself to be acquainted with the sacred writings, and does not know them, only deceives himself."**¹ J. Sidlow Baxter refers to them with one word—**"Retrospection"**.² And that they are! A glimpse back into the nation's history to help them put things in perspective before God.

Chronicles means literally, **"Words of the Days"**.³ Edward Young states, **"In the Hebrew Bible, the two books of Chronicles form a single work and bear the title 'the words of the days.' As is seen from I Chron. 27:24, the term is used in the sense of annals."**⁴ I Chronicles ends with David's final words to Solomon and the congregation. After David's death, II Chronicles begins with Solomon seated on David's throne.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Most scholars agree that Ezra probably was the compiler of the Chronicles. Five points to consider are: 1) Talmud tradition in Baba Bathra 15a 2) Ezra lived during this period of captivity, as well as after the return to Jerusalem 3) The ending of II Chron. and the beginning of Ezra's book are the same 4) Certain words and phrases peculiar to Ezra are found in Chronicles and Ezra's book⁵ 5) He was in the best position (priest) to remind and encourage the remnant about their relationship (I Chron.) and worship (II Chron.) to God.

The Chronicles were compiled after the Babylonian exile when the remnant had returned by the edict of Cyrus in II Chron. 36:22-23. The books could be dated anytime after then. Possibly

alliance by marriage with the reigning king of Egypt, that preserved his kingdom in peace throughout his long reign of forty years.”

However, “*her sun is gone down while it was yet day*” (Jer. 15:9).

A TIME FOR DIVISION, 10

This leads us to the divided kingdom, when Jeroboam and the ten tribes rebelled to leave Rehoboam's heavier burdens on them. This section points out the consequences when we listen to the counsel of our peers instead of those who are older and much wiser. In the remaining part of II Chronicles we have nineteen other reigns, besides that of Rehoboam. The compiler will concern himself almost exclusively with Judah and mention Israel only occasionally.

A TIME FOR KINGS, 11-36:13

Rehoboam continues into ch. 11-12, building several cities and having war with Jeroboam all their days. He did evil because he did not seek the Lord. Abijah, in ch. 13, did battle with Jeroboam, although he was outnumbered 800,000 to 400,000. Abijah stands on Mt. Zemaraim and makes a terrific speech. “*Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel...you think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David...But as for us, the Lord is our God and we have not forsaken him...O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.*” While he spoke, Jeroboam tried to ambush from behind. Israel still lost the battle with a slaughter of 500,000 men! How great the victory when God is with you. However, Abijah walked in the ways of evil as I Kings 15 points out.

In ch. 14-16, Asa is one of the good kings who did right. He took away all the idols and images, including his mother's, whom he also dethroned, and the land had rest for ten years. He had the people seek after the Lord with all their heart and soul. When Asa became ill later, he surprisingly sought after the physicians and not the Lord. His son, Jehoshaphat, walked in the commandments of the Lord. He sent many priests throughout all of Judah to teach the book of the law of God. From ch. 17-21:3, we learn of his friendly relations with Ahab, and later Ahaziah. Ahab's daughter, Athaliah, marries Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat. Ch. 20 is another good place to find Judah praising God. Ch. 21 deals with

Jehoram putting to death all of his brothers. The Edomites and Libnah revolt against Judah's dominion, while other nations come in and slay all of Jehoram's family, except for Jehoahaz (Ahaziah). This happened just as Elijah had written in his letter, as well as the disease that afflicted Jehoram until he died. The sad epitaph for him was that he “*departed without being desired.*”

Ch. 22:1-9 tells of the short reign of Ahaziah, who walked in the ways of his mother, Athaliah. He allied himself with his uncle Jehoram, but Jehu slew them both. Athaliah, ch. 22:10-ch.23, then proceeds to destroy any heirs to the throne. However, Jehoshabeath, sister to Ahaziah, hid young Joash for six years while Athaliah ruled the land. Joash is later crowned king and the people destroy Athaliah along with her idols. Ch. 24 shows the good influence of Jehoshabeath and her husband, Jehoiada (high priest), over Joash. Later, Joash forgets this kindness and has Jehoiada's son, Zechariah executed.

Amaziah, in ch. 25, did right, but not with a perfect heart. For some reason, after the slaughter of the Edomites, he bows down to their idols. He finally was taken by Israel and killed. Ch. 26 tells of the long reign of Uzziah, who did right in the sight of the Lord, until he went to burn incense at the altar. He was smitten with leprosy and later died. We find Jotham's reign to be a short one in ch. 27. He did that which was right and became mighty because he prepared his ways before the Lord. Ahaz, ch. 28, did evil by making images, which he worshipped until he died. He even offered his own children in the fire as the heathen did. His son, Hezekiah, was now in a position to strengthen Judah (ch. 29-32). repaired the Lord's house and had the priests sanctify themselves. Once again we see the devotion to God emphasized and the images taken down. At one point, Sennacherib, king of Syria, threatened Judah, but God delivered them.

Mannasseh, ch. 33:1-20, reigned the longest, 55 years and did evil by building up idols again. However, when taken captive, he humbled himself greatly and tried to correct any of the wrongs he had done. Amon finishes out ch. 33 doing evil during his reign, with his own servants killing him in his house. In ch. 34-35, we have the good influence of Josiah. He sought Jehovah while very young and sought

to cleanse Judah. As the temple is being repaired, Hilkiah finds the book of the law of God. Once again, we see Judah's humble attitude toward it and their devotion in observing the passover. Josiah is eventually killed by Necho, king of Egypt, in the valley of Megiddo.

Jehoahaz, ch. 36:1-3, reigns for 3 months until the king of Egypt replaces him with his brother Eliakim (Jehoiakim). Jehoiakim is an evil king (ch. 36:4-8) and Nebuchadnezzar carries him away to Babylon with vessels from the Lord's house. Jehoiachin (ch. 36:9-10) was likewise evil during his reign of 3 months and 10 days and is replaced with the last evil king, Zedekiah in ch. 36:11-13.

A TIME FOR REFLECTION, 36:14-21

He now impresses upon the remnant of Judah's great transgression in polluting the Lord's house. They cared no longer to worship God. God's mercy is seen in the many messengers he sent to Judah, whom they only mocked. Therefore, they were taken by Babylon into captivity, with all the vessels of the temple. Verse 19 would cause the remnant not only to reflect on the beautiful temple of Solomon destroyed, but also their lack of a place to worship God. The Babylonian captivity provided a new kind of environment for this reflection. Instead of idols, they listened to the prophets. They reflected on their own circumstances, just as Mannasseh had been humbled. Many could reflect on the day when they might return to their homeland.

A TIME FOR RESTORATION, 36:22-23

In Isa. 44:24-45:7, we find the prophesy concerning Cyrus, king of Persia. He issues the proclamation to the Jews to return and rebuild the Lord's house. “*Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him and let him go up.*” It was time for restoration. We remember David's desire in I Chron. for the building of the temple and Solomon's dedication in II Chron. to complete it. When one recognizes the importance of a relationship to God, he will seek after the Lord with a burning desire. He will then have a zealous dedication in his worship to God and “*to be complete in Him.*”

A TIME FOR APPLICATION

The temple was of the utmost importance for the people to worship

God. The church is God's holy and undefiled temple today. Are we corrupting our worship to Him? We are when we substitute material, worldly things in place of the heavenly. We may concentrate so heavily on material prosperity and neglect spiritual prosperity. Are our eyes blinded to the true riches of his glory? If so, then we shall be taken captive by Satan - and not for a mere 70 years, either!

Much of our trouble like Judah, comes from plain neglect. Access to God was close by for Judah, but she refused to obey. So it is with us today when our faith in God is neglected and we turn to "idols", even "though he be not far from every one of us."⁹ We grow tired and weary of doing the same thing over and over. "Same songs - same prayers - same worship," we say. Our eyes become heavy, our ears become dull, and our heart grows cold. And we desire something new and exciting. But that is where patience comes in for someday, in the sweet by and by, we shall fall at His feet in worship:

"Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."¹⁰

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FOOTNOTES

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"What Can I Do To Help?"

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He Ruined His Bad Reputation

by Dick Blackford

Recently there was a country song about a guy who found a nice gal and reformed his life. The punch line of the lyrics is worth considering. Perhaps some have reformed for this reason, but there is a Bible character who met the one Lord nearly 2000 years ago and he really "ruined his bad reputation." The man? Saul of Tarsus.

The first time we read of him he was consenting to the death of Stephen and took care of the garments of those who stoned Stephen to death, Acts 7:58-8:1.

The second time we read of him we are told that Saul "laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women, committed them to prison" 8:3.

The third time we read of him this is recorded: "But Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples" went to try and capture both men and women who were following The Way, 9:1,2.

"WE HAVE HEARD OF THIS MAN"

Saul's reputation traveled ahead of him, 9:21. For even after his conversion the disciples were afraid of him when he tried to unite with them. Barnabas finally convinced them of Saul's conversion, 9:26-30.

Saul had "persecuted the church beyond measure," Gal. 1:13. He was not your average "run of the mill" persecutor! After he learned the truth Saul was sickened by his former manner of life which he described as a "blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious." He then summed up his whole life by calling himself "the chief of sinners!" (I Tim. 1:13, 15). What a miserable feeling Saul must have had when finally the truth came rushing home with overwhelming force. He had been resisting the God of heaven, the only hope for mankind!

THE CHANGE

Knowing of Saul's determination never to violate his conscience and to always do what was right (Acts 24:16), the Lord decided to give him a close encounter. On the road to Damascus Saul was struck blind and the Lord asked him point blank, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (9:4).

Knowing that here was one who had power over the elements of the universe (including his eyesight), Saul acknowledged his superiority and asked a very appropriate question in return-"What shall I do Lord?" (22:10). Instead of saving him then and there Jesus answered the question by saying "Arise and go into Damascus; and there (not here, DB) it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do," 22:10. The account in chapter 9 says "rise and enter the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do," 9:6.

Whatever Saul was to do, we know it was not optional, for God had appointed it to be done and Jesus said it was a must.

WHAT SAUL WAS TOLD

When Saul met the Lord's messenger (Ananias) in Damascus, he was told:"And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," 22:16. Did Saul call on the name of the Lord? You can be sure that he did, for "he arose and was baptized," 9:18. Have you called on the name of the Lord? You can be sure-if you have done what Saul did.

THE RUINED REPUTATION

Saul's eagerness to do right is seen only in his immediate obedience in baptism for the forgiveness of his sins but also in his immediate attempt to undo the damage he had done. "And immediately in the synagogue he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the son of God." From there Paul's life was a series of perils and sacrifices in an effort to spread the gospel. And God used him to write more books in the Bible than any other man. "He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he made havoc," Gal. 1:23.

Saul realized the urgency of becoming a Christian by his immediate obedience in baptism-a good example for sinners. And he realized the urgency of spreading the gospel by his immediate efforts to tell others the good news-an example for Christians. What a way to ruin a reputation!

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Studies About The Spirit

by David Holder

INTRODUCTION: Designations Of The Spirit

Whenever the Holy Spirit is mentioned, most of us run scared. In any discussion about the Spirit we are apt to be more than a little suspect and very defensive. Many of our sentiments are understandable, even if they are not fully justifiable. So much error has been and is taught concerning the Spirit that one is wise to proceed with caution. Our caution and concern, however, has left us, for the most part, ignorant of the Spirit's work and bereft of the Spirit's power. We have explained the work of the Spirit so much in terms of what He does not do that we have explained away what He does do.

I have stated all this to say that the time has come that we take a fresh and positive look at the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives. This article serves as an introduction to a series of upcoming articles about the Spirit of God. It is not my purpose in these articles to refute all error that is propagated about the Spirit, though this will of necessity be accomplished when the truth is presented. Neither is it my purpose to present new or strange views concerning the Spirit, though this too may inevitably occur when old ground is newly plowed. It is my purpose to examine the Biblical evidence concerning the Holy Spirit in its original setting and further in its contemporary application. I begin with a study of designations of the Spirit in the New Testament.

Holy Spirit. The most frequently used designation of the Spirit in the New Testament is Holy Spirit. In light of this, it is striking that this designation is used only twice in the Old Testament. In Psalm 51:11 the parallelism

compares the "presence" of God with the "Holy Spirit" of God. In Isaiah 63:10,11 the prophet referred to the people's rebellion as grieving God's "Holy Spirit" and then the people searching for "He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them" who had withdrawn. But even in these two Old Testament passages, it is debatable as to whether the references are to the so-called "third person of the Godhead." The references may have been simply to God's presence and power which were characterized by holiness and expressed in terms of spiritualness. It is likely, however, that these Old Testament references at least serve as the background for the New Testament designation of the Spirit as the Holy Spirit.

The first New Testament reference to the Holy Spirit, from a historical chronological standpoint, was in connection with the conception of Jesus (Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35). Next, Zacharias was described as "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Luke 1:67) and Simeon as having the Holy Spirit "upon him" (Luke 2:25). John the Baptist referred to the Spirit as the "Holy Spirit" in his statements about Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11, et al). Jesus was "full of the Holy Spirit" (Luke 4:1) and referred to the Holy Spirit first in connection with "speaking against the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 12:32). A comparison of the gospels' record of this incident shows a divergence in references to the Spirit: Spirit of God (Matthew 12:28), Spirit (12:31), Holy Spirit (12:32), Holy Spirit (Mark 3:29), and finger of God (Luke 11:20). After

Jesus, every New Testament writer except James refers to the Spirit as the Holy Spirit.

The adjective "holy" describes the Spirit's character. He is "holy" because He is God and not man. Also, the Spirit is "holy" because He is from heaven, not from earth. The New Testament designation of the Spirit as "holy" puts Him in contrast with evil spirits and human spirits.

Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ. Not only is the Spirit designated in terms of His character, but He is also described in terms of His relationship with the other personalities of Deity. In the Old Testament the Spirit is most often referred to as the Spirit of the Lord (Yahweh, God's covenant name) or as My Spirit, His Spirit, and Your Spirit (with all the pronouns referring to God). These same designations are used in the New Testament and are expanded by additional references to the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of the Son.

All of these designations of the Spirit depict the **tri-personality** of God and the **interrelatedness** of the three persons. The three persons of Deity are so connected that one is sometimes described in such a way so as to include the others. Note one example here, though this concept will certainly be noted in other connections later. In 2 Corinthians 3:17 Paul states that the "Lord is the Spirit" and also refers to the "Spirit of the Lord." Jesus and the Spirit are so interrelated in the work of liberation that one can be put for the other. The personalities of Deity are **distinct, complementary, and interrelated** at the same time.

Spirit of truth, life, promise, grace and glory. In scattered references to the Spirit, He is described in terms of His role and work. He is the **Spirit of truth** (John 14:17, et al) because of His work in revelation, inspiration, and confirmation of the truth, John, in fact, stated that "the Spirit is the truth" (1 John 5:7), by which he emphasizes the truthfulness of the Spirit's testimony. He is the **Spirit of life** (Romans 8:2) in that through His work He "gives life" (John 6:63; 2 Corinthians 3:6). He is the **Spirit of promise** (Ephesians 1:13) because He was the subject of several Old Testament promises (Joel 2:28f; Ezekiel 36:27, for example) and because Jesus referred to Him as "the

promise of My Father" (Luke 24:49). He is the **Spirit of grace** (Hebrews 10:29) and the **Spirit of glory** (I Peter 4:14) in the sense that His work provides grace and ultimately glory (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:17, 18, where Paul

refers to "liberty" and "glory").

The Spirit is not merely an attitude or influence. He is real, active, and powerful. It is imperative that we understand who He is and what He does in our lives. A significant

dimension of our "spirit-ual" lives is missing if we neglect the presence and power of the Spirit of the living God.

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Life and Laughter

A Preacher's Story

Several years ago a reader of the *British Weekly* wrote a letter to the editor as follows: "Dear Sir: I noticed that ministers seem to set a great deal of time in preparing them. I have been attending services quite regularly for the past 30 years and during that time, if I estimate correctly, I have listened to no less than 3,000 sermons. But, to my consternation, I discover I cannot remember a single one of them. I wonder if a minister's time might be more profitably spent on something else.

Sincerely. . ."

The letter kicked up quite an editorial storm of angry responses for weeks. The pros and cons of sermons were tossed back and forth until, finally, one letter ended the debate. This letter said: "My Dear Sir: I have been married for 30 years. During that time I have eaten 32,850 meals -- mostly my wife's cooking. Suddenly I have discovered that I cannot remember the menu of a single meal. And yet, I received nourishment from every one of them. I have the distinct impression without them, I would have starved to death long ago.

Sincerely. . ."

Enough Has Already Been Said

Tom Butler recalls when Foy E. Wallace, Jr. conducted a gospel meeting for the Lake Wire Church in Lakeland, Florida, in 1939. He said Wallace preached for over two hours and then a few announcements were made. When he asked, "Is there anything else to be said?" one of the elders, D.C. Boswell, immediately replied, "Yes, the benediction!"

Poor Choice of Songs for the Time

Dick Blackford, preacher for the Westside Church in Owensboro, Kentucky, tells the following story about his days at Florida College: "We always had devotions in the dorm before retiring. It consisted of a prayer, a few songs, and a talk by one of the students. My turn came to lead the singing, and just before the talk I led, **Are You Sowing The Seed?** As fate would have it, the speaker spoke on, 'Sowing Your Wild Oats.' I learned a good lesson."

A Sure Cure For Sleepyheads And Smart Aleck Preachers

In preaching sermons I must confess
That I do often blunder,
But that's no cause for half the folks
To spend the time in slumber.

So I've devised a master plan
If they do that next Sunday.
I won't awaken them til I
Come in to work on Monday.

And though it may seem out of style
To any sleeping crowd,
I'll drive right down the center aisle
And blow my horn real loud!

And the squalls and squawks of the
sleepy bunch
Will be heard forever after
While the preacher sits there in his car
All doubled up with laughter.

And if this plan is a success
In waking up the mob,
I think I know a preacher
Who'll be looking for a job.

--Dick Blackford
Owensboro, KY

Looking Back

The Sunday school teacher was explaining to the children how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. One of the little boys spoke up and said, "That's nothing. My mother looked back once while she was driving the car, and she turned into a telephone pole."

Power of Persuasion

The preacher prepared a beautiful sermon describing the plight of the poor, pointing out that it is a charitable duty of the rich to share their wealth with the poor.

After the service, a friend asked the preacher if he had gotten his message across.

"Well, it was a partial success," he answered reflectively. "I convinced the poor."

She Loved Her Preacher

A lady of a very aristocratic church called the minister of a very humble church on the phone and asked him to visit her husband, who was ill. The minister replied that he would be very glad to do as requested, but wanted to know why she wasn't having her own minister visit him. Her answer was: "Well, you see, my husband is very ill with a contagious disease, and we love our preacher so much we don't want him to run any risk."

Holding Grudges

One day a visitor leaned on the fence around an old farm as he watched an old farmer plowing with a mule. After a while, the visitor said to the farmer, "I'd like to make a suggestion. I don't like to tell you how to run your business, but you could save yourself a lot of work by saying 'Gee' and 'Haw' to that mule instead of tugging on those lines all day."

The farmer pulled a big handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his face. Then he said, "I reckon you're right, but this animal kicked me about five years ago and I ain't spoke to him since."



WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“BLESSED”

Greek Word: makarios

Meaning: happy, blessed

This word is “from a root **mak-**, meaning large, lengthy. . .” (Vine, in loc.). But we are accustomed to use terms of this sort to measure material objects or distances. But it is clear in the New Testament that this word is talking about something spiritual or emotional--non-material. Most often the word “happy” is used to translate it into modern English. But in the King James Version it is seen most often (out of fifty occurrences in Greek) as “blessed.”

So our word means **great** or **large** or **longlasting** happiness or blessedness. But what does this mean specifically for Christians? A.T. Robertson writes that this “**word is as old as Homer and Pindar and was used of the Greek gods and also of men, but largely of outward prosperity**” (*Word Pictures*, vol. 5, p. 39). Many people in ancient times, as in our own day, assumed that great material possessions guaranteed great happiness.

But this is not the New Testament idea, for Paul uses this word to tell us we are happier when giving to others than when receiving for ourselves. He quotes the Lord Jesus as saying, “*It is more blessed (makarion) to give than to receive*” (Acts 20:35). And, further, it is clear from the teaching of Jesus that this blessedness is not dependent on physical well-being or social acceptance: “*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake*” (Matt. 5:11; and read Matt. 5:1-12 entire).

Notice the ending of Matt 5:11: “*for my sake.*” Here is our key to the New Testament idea of great happiness. As the expositor Vincent has written concerning our word:

“**Shaking itself loose from all thoughts of outward good, it becomes the express symbol of a happiness identified with pure character. Behind it lies the clear cognition of sin as the fountain-head of all misery, and of**

holiness as the final and effectual cure for every woe” (*Word Studies*, Matt. 5:3).

Christians experience great and lasting happiness when they live for the Lord Jesus, doing good, as He did (Acts 10:38), following His commandments. He said to His apostles, after washing their feet: “. . . *I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you. . . If ye know these things happy (makarioi) are ye if ye do them*” (Jn. 13:15,17). So much is this the case that the Apostle John can write, “*Blessed (makarioi) are the dead who die in the Lord from hence forth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them*” (Rev. 14:13).

We may be called on to live under conditions that the world accounts as miserable--for Christ's sake. And we may die at the hand of a merciless persecutor--for Christ's sake. In either or both cases the unbeliever must surely believe us unhappy, for he has only the things of this present age to comfort and gladden him. But our happiness transcends every tragedy (or delight) of a self-centered existence. Our happiness, like our peace of mind (Jn. 14:27), is great and longlasting because we are in fellowship with our Saviour. On this basis true happiness is guaranteed, and on no other is it possible.

“FIRSTBORN”

Hebrew Word: bekor

Meaning: firstborn (fig., most important)

In Psa. 89:27 God says, “*Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.*” This passage, in which our word occurs, is probably the background of a concept used by Paul in Col. 1:15. The Colossian passage says that the Christ is “*the firstborn of every creature*” (“*of all creation,*” A.S.V.).

Many who read this will have given much thought to this word already because the Watchtower organization interprets the phrase in Col. 1 to mean that the Eternal Word who came to

earth in the person of Jesus of Nazareth was a created being, not co-eternal with the Father. Their idea is that He, the Word (Jn. 1:1-3, 14), was born before all the rest of the creation and is, therefore, the “*firstborn of all creation*” in a chronological sense, i.e., the first creature to be created. But a careful consideration of the use of this word in its Old Testament background will show us that this idea is not to be found in Col. 1:15.

It is true that the word firstborn (**bekor**) when used **literally** in the Old Testament refers to that which is born first-in-time. For instance, the eldest son of Ishmael was Nebajoth (Gen. 25:13). The same word is applied to animals in the same way: “*Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the Lord's firstling. . . it is the Lord's*” (Lev. 27:26). God claimed all of Israel as His own and as a token of this claim Israel was to give Him all its firstborn (Ex. 13:1-16).

This chronological use of the word is also seen in the Old Testament usage that gave the firstborn son in a family certain privileges. Among the privileges was the right to inherit a double portion of his father's legacy (Dt. 21:17). And it is at this point that a figurative use of the word can be seen developing. From the idea of the **privileges** of the firstborn son came the idea of **pre-eminence**.

This usage can be seen in passages where the whole nation of Israel is called God's “*firstborn*” (Ex. 4:22; Jer. 31:9). The nation of Israel was not literally born of Jehovah but was given a **special position** among nations by Him (Deut. 7:7-8). The same idea of pre-eminence or superlative nature can be seen in Job 18:13 where a deadly disease, i.e., a disease of the first magnitude, is called the “*firstborn of death.*” The same idea is found in Isa. 14:30 where the poorest of the poor are called the “*firstborn of the poor.*”

Turning back to Psa. 89:27 and Col. 1:15 we are in a position now to ask, “Which of these two usages, literal or figurative, of the word

firstborn is best applied in these passages?" In Psa. 89:27 the word **bekor**, Heb., is used of the heir to the Davidic throne who is seen in the New Testament to be Jesus (Acts 2:29-30). And there is no doubt that the word **prototokos**, Gk., in Col. 1:15 applies to the same person--but **literally** in the chronological sense or **figuratively** in the sense of preeminence?

It seems to me that it requires a preconceived theory to apply the literal meaning of firstborn in either passage. Our Watchtower (Jehovah's Witness) friends have been "pixilated" by the position of the 4th century heretic Arius. There are too many passages in the New Testament that plainly declare the eternity of the Word who became Jesus to allow the literal meaning in

Psa. 89:27 and Col. 1:15 (see Jn. 1:1-3, 14; et. al.). These two passages are emphasizing the pre-eminence of the Christ as King of Kings, the person of greatest importance in all the creation.



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Who's Training Your Child?

by Dennis Tucker

Have you wondered who's training your child? You can look around at a local store and see a group of young people misbehaving. Perhaps they are just talking loudly and running throughout the store, or perhaps they are destroying some of the products. You wonder where the parents of these children are. Many times while driving on the city streets at 11 o'clock at night, you will see young children still playing and talking. One has to wonder as to where the parents of these kids are and why aren't they concerned about their children. The reason that so many children are rebellious and out of control is not that parents are doing a poor job; they aren't doing the job at all.

There are over one million divorces each year, one out of two marriages will end in divorce, and many girls become pregnant outside of marriage. This means that few children actually have two parents to rear them and, if they do have both a mother and a father, one may not be the real father or mother. In an elementary class of thirty students asked about their parents, only three or four actually had their real mother and father rearing them. This shows that many children are not being reared in the home that God had designed. It is hard for one person to care for all the needs of a child. At times the child is left trying to rear himself. On the news there was a story about a Latin American country which is very poor but receives a lot of wealth from tourism. The average family is very poor and, as a result,

breaks up. The children are literally on their own. They go to the coastal beaches and beg for handouts. Their only aim is to keep from starving. They sleep on the city streets and watch out for each other. Just as the children in Latin America are left on their own to provide for their physical needs, so are the children in America left on their own to provide for their mental and spiritual needs. Both countries are neglecting their youth and are sitting on a time bomb.

In many Christian families, children are being neglected. We think that feeding and clothing a child is the same as rearing one. Some people feel that taking the family to church on Sunday is all there is to teaching their children. As a result, we have families that are well fed and clothed, but falling apart. Parents wake up after ten years and find out that their children are animals. Children never get to know their mother and father and are unable to communicate with them. One of the problems with neglect is that it takes awhile to show up and hurts both the parents and the children. "*Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord*" (1 Sam. 2:12). Eli was a priest of God, but he failed to meet his obligations in rearing his sons. As a result, they brought shame to Eli and themselves. "*Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting*" (1 Sam. 2:22). As a result of Eli's neglecting

his duty, his sons were corrupt and their sins were public knowledge. As a direct result of Eli's not using discipline, his sons were to die and so would he. "*For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them*" (1 Sam. 3:13).

Today many parents are playing the part of Eli. They are neglecting their children and then wonder what went wrong. Parents are working outside of the house, and children are left alone during the week. On the weekends, everybody has a sporting activity to go to. Dad goes and plays golf, Junior plays on the little league team, Sally plays tennis, and mom turns into a taxi service. The family unit is never together for more than a few minutes. A family activity is sitting around the television and watching "Who's The Boss?" Many children watch seven to eight hours of T.V. each day, but talk with their parents for just a few seconds each day.

To rear a child correctly, a parent is going to have to spend some time with that child. You can't substitute material possessions, such as games and cars, for your own time. Most kids don't want more games, they just want a parent who cares and is willing to show that they care. Families need to work together and have picnics so the child can see a complete person. It is a shame that Christians are losing their children. "*And fathers do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*" (Eph. 6:4). Rearing children is more than spanking them or feeding them. You need to be able to answer their questions and fulfill their needs. This takes time, but in the long run it pays dividends.

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THE ART OF BEING MARRIED by Rubel Shelly (*20th Century Christian: Nashville, Tennessee*), 1985, paperback, 134 pages, \$5.95.

The wise man once said, "of making many books there is no end" (Eccl. 12:12). This is certainly true of books on marriage and the home. This book, however, is different. It gets right to the core of some problems. The author feels that there is no art in **getting** married (around two and a half million Americans find their way to the marriage altar each year), but the art is in **staying** married. The staying together he has in mind "is more than a grit-your-teeth situation of endurance; it is a relationship of love, confidence, and mutual growth."

This book deals with one area that is seldom discussed in a book on marriage--the fact that it is not for everybody. He gives four reasons as to why some people ought to stay single. It should be read by every young person contemplating marriage.

Shelly builds the book around seasons or stages in marriage. It begins with the initial decision about marriage, proceeds to discuss the importance of early adjustments in marriage, looks to the arrival of children, considers the possibility of problems so severe as to raise the option of divorce, and closes by looking at the role of grandparents.

Each chapter is filled with many Scriptures and could be studied with great profit by any age group from high school students through senior citizens.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GOD THE RULER by Jack Cottrell (*College Press: Joplin, Missouri*), 1985, hardback, 465 pages, \$13.50.

This volume is the newest in the

"What the Bible Says" series, the second one dealing with God. The providence of God, His sovereignty, miracles, and other important subjects are thoroughly covered in this book. A large amount of material is also included concerning predestination, election, the will of God, prayer, and the nature of evil.

Cottrell said: "It is probably true that nothing has perplexed Christians more than questions about the will of God. If God is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, should we not be able to say that 'whatever happens is the will of God'? But how does this apply to specific events, especially those that bring tragedy and suffering? A young baby dies of cancer. Is this truly 'God's will'? A young mother or father is seriously injured in an accident. We pray earnestly for her or his recovery; but we piously add, 'Thy will be done.' If recovery is denied and death ensues, has 'God's will' been done? A college student is convinced that God has a particular, ideal plan for each individual's life. Thus he agonizes over the question, 'What is God's will for my life?' Trying to find a sure formula for 'how to know the will of God' is the preoccupation of many Christians."

This book contains some excellent material for thought-provoking study on some very important doctrines. Even if you don't agree with each conclusion the author has reached, he will have challenged you to a greater study.

College Press recently advertised this book in *Christianity Today* and I predict that it will truly be a best seller in the "What the Bible Says" series.

TEACHING FOR RESULTS by Findley B. Edge (*Broadman Press: Nashville, Tennessee*), 1956, hardback, 230 pages, \$9.95.

Although planned primarily as a college text, this book provides an approach and procedures that will be tremendously helpful to every teacher and/or preacher. The author feels that

"... teachers fail most often in their work because their teaching aims are not sufficiently specific. Aims that are general or vague prevent the pupil from seeing the relevance of the lesson to his own experience."

The book contains fifteen chapters, covering such topics as "Emphasizing Results," "Studying the Bible and the Pupil," "Making Aims Specific," "Making the Lesson Personal," "Testing Our Teaching," and "The Importance of the Teacher." Edge believes the objectives of good teachers may be summed up under three headings: knowledge (to lead the group in a systematic study leading to an understanding of the meaning and the facts involved), inspiration (to lead the class to accept the ideal or attitude), and conduct response (to lead the class to make specific applications in everyday relationships). Even though all three objects are worthy, the author wants more time to be spent in seeking a conduct response aim.

The book is made easier to read and applicable by giving numerous illustrations and examples of the principles that are discussed. I believe every teacher will enjoy reading this book and applying the teachings to make them better teachers.

WHAT EVERY HUSBAND SHOULD KNOW by Jack R. Taylor (*Broadman Press: Nashville, Tennessee*), 1981, hardback, 168 pages, \$7.95.

The author of this book is convinced that most men are selfish--they are only thinking of meeting their own needs. Taylor writes that the best way for a husband to have his own needs met is by being sure that he first meets his wife's needs.

This book deals with helps for better communication, the basic needs of a wife, how to have healthy confrontations, and seven ways to spell love. The last chapter, "Assessing the Strength of Your Marriage," is really a marriage test. Using the acronym "marriage", this chapter is divided

into sections on motivating one another, accepting, respecting, responding, identifying, attentive to one another, going in the same direction, and excited about one another. Each section comes with six questions to be answered honestly.

Since wives will be curious about this book, Taylor has also included one chapter for them. It includes tips for helping their husbands carry out the principles of the book.

THE FOCUS OF OUR FAITH by Monroe Hawley (20th Century Christian: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, paperback, 175 pages, \$5.95.

The author of this book is a graduate of Harding College and Washington University, with an M.A. in history. He is a great student of restoration history, having written two prior books--*Redigging the Wells*, a study of undenominational Christianity, and *Searching for a Better Way*, an examination of apostolic Christianity. This new book is a new look at the restoration principle. It differs from A.T. DeGroot's book, *The Focus of Our Faith*, in its presuppositions, methodology, and conclusions. Real students of restoration history would want to compare the two books and their different conclusions.

Hawley says he believes "that the restoration ideal is valid. However, in recent years there have been significant challenges to the restoration concept, some of them raised by those from within the restoration tradition. The objections range from a questioning of the presuppositions undergirding the restoration philosophy to the inconsistencies with which restorationists have applied the principle. These are valid questions which demand answers. The tendency among those of the restoration persuasion has been to ignore the challenges or to give simplistic answers. Neither is a satisfactory response."

Whether one agrees with Hawley's conclusions or not, it is a must for all students of restoration history. He starts with the restoration principle and covers such subjects as early restoration efforts various movements compared, the role of the Scriptures, Biblical interpretation, and the culture factor. Under the chapter called "The Sectarian Spirit," his section called "Sectarian Symptoms" deals with the use of "church of Christ"--how some

use it to the exclusion of other scriptural language, or in an unbiblical way, and how some misuse it to talk about "church of Christ preachers," "church of Christ schools," or even "church of Christ Christians." He also deals with the problems of traditionalism and dogmatism.

The author contends that for restoration to be complete Jesus must be made the focus of our faith. Failure to do this has caused some movements to lose their direction. Hawley views restoration not as just something in the past, but a continuing search for Truth in which each generation must find its own way by reexamination of the Scriptures rather than merely repeating what you have heard that restorationists of the past believed.

FORGOTTEN FACTORS by Roy Hession (Christian Literature Crusade: Fort Washington, Pennsylvania), 1977, paperback, 109 pages, \$2.95.

This book is small, but it is powerful. The first sentence of the first chapter pretty well sums up the theme of the book: "No sins cause so much sorrow and shame and so many unhappy complications, both personal and social, as sins of sex."

The sub-title of this book is "An Aid To Deeper Repentance of the Forgotten Factors of Sexual Misbehavior." The chapters deal with "The Forgotten Factor in Adultery," "The Forgotten Factor in Fornication," "The Forgotten Factor of Multiplied Duplicities," "Forgotten Factors in Homosexuality," "The Dishonor Done to One's Own Body," and much more. Through each section, the author tries to get the reader to understand that in addition to a grievous wrong to self there is a wrong done to God.

Under the chapter called "The Divorce Court or the Cross?", the author says: "Now let it be understood that there is no couple who do not sometimes have differences and a crossing of wills, no matter how loving or dedicated to God they may appear to be. Such things do not surprise or shock the Lord. He simply intends that when such situations arise they should go, not to the divorce court (such a possibility should never occur to them), but to the Cross of His dear Son, where barriers can so easily be broken down and hearts made one again."

THE TIMELESS TRINITY by Roy H. Lanier, Sr. (Christian Bible Teacher: Abilene, Texas), 1974, hardback, 429 pages, \$9.95.

This book is one of fundamental doctrines, principles, and issues. Few books have ever covered the Godhead as thoroughly as this one. The author spent many years in research for this material. He felt that "No one can really love that which is unknown, so if you know very little about God it follows that you cannot love God very much. The more you learn about God, the more you can love him. The more you love God, the more you serve him. And the more you serve God, the more he will reward you in eternity." A close study of the material contained in this book will give you a good working knowledge of God.

The author presents convincing and exalting truths about the Godhead that every person should know. His primary source of material for such a profound subject is the Bible, but he also quotes many different scholars to reflect on the subject. The bibliography is replete with internationally known authorities.

The book is divided into three sections: "Existence and Attributes of God," "A Study of Jesus Christ," and "A Study of the Holy Spirit." The twenty-eight chapters deal with such things as "The Knowledge of God," "Attributes of God," "The Unity of God," "Justice and Righteous of God," "Pre-existence of Christ," "Prophecies Proving the Deity of Jesus," "The Humanity of Jesus Christ," "Holy Spirit in the Old Testament," "The Holy Spirit is God," "The Holy Spirit Dwells In Christians," "The Holy Spirit In Providence," and much, much more.

Each chapter is followed by a "Practical Lesson," designed to help you get the most value from the text. I highly recommend this book for serious consideration by every truth seeker.



All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:
The Book Shelf
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A Woman's Point Of View



I AM SURVIVING ADULTERY!

** Name withheld by editor*

Just a little over a year ago my husband confessed to me the sin of adultery. Most of us would like to deny the possibility of this ever happening to us. My first thoughts were, "What is he trying to say?" After finally admitting what he had said, I then went into periods of pain, grief, anger, and a very deep desire to understand "WHY?"

I wanted to forgive my husband and go on. I did not realize that what I wanted would be so painful to deal with. Blindly (but I thank God for that), I jumped into a very long, painful, learning year of my life.

I am so thankful to my loving Father that He gave me the strength to cope with some of the problems and pains that I would face. I used every available tool that I could in order to win this very lonely battle. I'd like to share these tools with others in hope that they, too, might win this same battle if it occurs in their lives.

1. Love for Christ. I developed a deeper love for Christ and a better understanding of His love for me. Just knowing that He loved me helped me make it through the fight. I tried to remind myself of His suffering on the cross and that He loved me even when I didn't love Him.

2. Prayer. My prayer-life improved during this ordeal. I prayed for strength, for understanding, and for forgiveness. I prayed that God would help us flee adultery and its terrible side effects.

3. Love for my husband. We had memories of good years in our past. I

tried to remind myself of my love for him. I wanted an understanding of how God wanted me to be a good wife.

4. My children. A crisis like this is hard on every one involved. My precious little children encouraged me in their own special ways to fight to keep a home for them. I could see why God hated division and began to understand what God wanted in a family.

5. A dear couple. One dear Christian couple became my emotional, physical, and spiritual crutch to lean on. They helped me to survive. Their proper love was a substitute for the love my husband had misplaced. They, like any crutch, took a lot of abuse but kept working and carried me through until I was able to stand on my own.

6. A dear friend. I learned a lot from a dear friend who had suffered adultery four years before. She fought to keep her marriage together. Her encouragement made me want to try. If for no other reason, at least for her I could not give up. She was a real coach!

7. A helpful psychologist. Many brethren may be opposed to the use of a doctor in times of trials like this, but I received great help from a caring psychologist who helped me work through a puzzle in my mind of painful childhood experiences. Understanding these experiences helped me to see how our lives lead to adultery. None of this excuses the sin, but understanding did help in forgiving and accepting the scars that we must live with. I keep remembering Christ with the woman caught in adultery. He looked beyond

her sin to a deep understanding and love.

8. Education. I try to search, read, meditate on, and study everything I can get my hands on to educate myself on rebuilding a home.

9. A hobby. This may sound like a strange tool, but it is a vital one for me. My coach encouraged me to do cross-stitching. It helps clear my mind. As I push and pull that needle, I take out a lot of fear, grief, anger, bitterness, and tears. In turn, I receive much joy! I make things with meaning to me. I give most of them to children or friends who I haven't been able to share my life with this year. I had to stop a lot of relationships in order to deal with self. That was hard for me! The making and giving of my cross-stitch was a substitute for these relationships. Maybe all of this was not proper, I don't know, but it was the best I could do at the time.

10. Memorization. I memorized I Corinthians 13. This helped me to control my thoughts. Using what I now have in my mind from that great chapter helps me look beyond my many emotions to my husband's needs. Some day I hope to be able to apply all of this to others, but for now I must deal with one day at a time and one situation at a time; for now I must learn to deal with just my special family.

God allows divorce for adultery. Maybe sometimes that must be, but I believe God wants His children to learn to work and love as a unit when possible. I am fighting hard to keep my family together. I will have to learn to live with certain scars, but my husband is now fighting, too. I don't know what is ahead for us, but I do know that we have today. We have a better understanding of each other and I understand myself better. My husband fulfills my needs in a way we never shared before. I feel, too, that I now fulfill his. We have come a long way and we probably have a long way to go. Maybe I have a fairytale mind, but I believe broken hearts can be glued back together.

Oh, yes, there's a line, a scar, when one has to use glue; but in that scar of glue is hard work and learning. For me, at least, that's a foundation to build on. I believe all of this happened for reasons I still don't fully understand, but the providence of God has and will continue to work to bring me a better life because I love my Father and He loves me.

"And we know all things work together for good to those who love God. . ." (Romans 8:28).

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this

day, to save many people alive" (Genesis 50:20).

A Tragedy Too Common

by Jefferson David Tant

A few years ago a young man went overseas on a dangerous mission of mercy. He went to rescue a friend who was in prison in a foreign country, and who was facing death by execution. Josh knew that his friend was guilty, and that by all considerations of justice, deserved to die. But because of Josh's love for Sam, he undertook the long journey to the Orient at his own expense. He felt his friend's life was worth saving, and that he could have a useful life.

Josh had chosen an almost impossible task. He spent months and months going from one place to another, talking to this official and that, running into one obstacle after another. A few people were caught up by the earnestness of his cause, but they were powerless to help, as they were not from the ruling class. Before long, he had depleted his funds, and often slept on the ground, accepting food from those who had befriended him. But Josh would not give up. He was a man with a cause.

He began to speak in the streets, and attracted crowds of curious followers. He received a good bit of publicity from the press--largely ridicule and derision. But in time the authorities grew weary and alarmed. They wearied of Josh's incessant proclamations concerning their own corruption and hypocrisy, and they feared lest he turn the people against them.

Finally, Josh was arrested on the charge of inciting to riot. There arose a great deal of confusion at his arrest, and while the police in charge of the prison were busy tending to the multitude that had gathered, Sam managed to slip out to freedom and safety in the confusion and madness of the occasion. Having obtained his freedom, he quickly crossed the border, and eventually made his way back to his home in the United States.

But things did not fare so well with Josh. When the authorities realized that Sam had escaped, they held Josh guilty, and in their anger put him to death within a few days. Josh knew that his mission was dangerous, and had considered the possibility that he

might have to give his life for his friend. Thus he was resigned to his death, and went to the gallows without complaint, feeling that he had accomplished his mission.

Meanwhile, Sam had returned to his home and family, and was most thankful to Josh for his selfless sacrifice. Sam went to see the family of Josh, and expressed his deep gratitude. Furthermore, he pledged to see to their needs and support in an effort to repay the great debt that he now owed in exchange for his life. He really could not comprehend the love that Josh had for him, and at times shed tears as he told the story to others.

But in time Sam's priorities changed. Although his intentions had been honorable and good, he became absorbed in his own life and affairs, and began to neglect his responsibilities towards Josh's family. Finally, he turned his back upon them and forgot them altogether. He just walked away and left them in need. He didn't have the time to be bothered anymore. He had his own interests and his own pleasures to pursue. Thus Sam was able to blot from his memory the fact that the saving of his own life was due solely to the sacrifice of his once beloved friend. His callousness and ingratitude is hard to comprehend, and yet this story is really not so uncommon. Although the preceding story is fiction, that which follows is true.

There once was a young man under the sentence of death because of sin. He was guilty. He deserved to die and burn forever in the fires of hell. But the Son of God looked down upon him with compassion and love, and was moved to leave his heavenly home and come to this earth on a mission of mercy to rescue this finite, sinful creature from such a fate. Jesus Christ spent the years of his ministry suffering ridicule, animosity, persecution and deprivation. Finally, the authorities conspired to lie about him, that they might arrest him and put him to death, for they feared him and were envious of him.

Thus Jesus Christ died a cruel death

on the cross in order to set this young man free. When the young man first came to realize what had transpired, he was most grateful, and promised his love and loyalty to this one who had set him free.

But in time, this young man decided he had other interests to pursue, and eventually turned his back upon the one who had sacrificed his own life for him. His loyalty was now to himself and his own selfish interests. Thus he made the death of Christ on the cross a mockery, for the death of the Son of God was now in vain for this one.

How do you explain such ingratitude, such callousness? Furthermore, how do you explain the actions of one who has spit in the face of the one who died for him, who has forfeited his claims to an eternal home in heaven, and has made a down-payment on eternal pain, anguish and suffering in the fires of hell? How do you explain it? I can't, except to say that Satan has the power to deceive the mind and blind the eyes to reality.

Is this what has happened to you, my friend?

"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserved to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:26-31).

There is yet time for you to repent and return to the Lord, that you might avoid this terrible and tragic end. *"I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation"* (II Cor. 6:2). Friend, I, and many others are praying for you.



Dear Rachel,

I am 25 years old and a new bride. My husband and I had known each other for several years and shared many interests.

However, several months ago I became a Christian. Now it seems our relationship is constantly strained. I love him and can't bear to think of his being lost for all eternity.

Our marriage is becoming a constant battle. He resents the time that I devote to Bible study and to church services. And I refuse to go drinking and dancing with him.

New and Doomed

Dear New,

Often times a new convert, like a new mother, becomes so obsessed with this magnificent phenomenon they have discovered they overwhelm others with their zeal.

Converting another person takes time, planning and a lot of love. You already have plenty of love for your husband.

The first step here seems to be to bring him to accept your involvement with the church without his resenting or feeling threatened by it. Try these do's and don'ts:

1. Do invite (not insist or beg) him to attend with you.

2. Do try to plan some togetherness time, something he can look forward to after services. BE PROMPT.

3. Do share BRIEFLY any new discovery you have made about the Bible, especially historical or scientific proofs. (Choose your time wisely! Not during his favorite T.V. program or — heaven forbid — when he is feeling romantic!)

4. Relate only the good things concerning the congregation you attend. Leave the issues and personality conflicts for discussion with an elder or older Christian.

5. Do try to involve him in social events with other Christians. If there

are few or no social meetings planned, THEN PLAN SOME. Invite couples to join you in an activity he will enjoy.

1. Don't stop studying your Bible daily. You need it now more than ever. Just make an effort to do it without a lot of fanfare, quietly, when he is occupied elsewhere.

2. Don't complain of being too tired to attend the church services or of boring lessons and sermons (There are times we all feel that way. In your special situation you must make an effort to keep it to yourself.)

3. Don't give him an ultimatum or time limit about his own baptism. Add "patience to your knowledge."

4. Try not to chastise him using the Bible: "The Bible says you're not to . . ." — that kind of statement can kill any interest he might have. Be positive instead: "Life is so much simpler now that I have a guide! The Bible even shows me how to be a better wife to you!"

5. Don't expect a sudden change or even a constant change. Remember your own doubts and fears. Be confident in your faith; study so you can answer his questions. Often they will come in the form of accusations: "You think you are better than anyone else, just because you're a Christian."

Be slow to anger, "Wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove" (Matthew 10:16). We are all equal in God's sight. Being a Christian only guarantees me a second chance and the peace of mind that comes from complete forgiveness.

The main thing is to show him the Bible and Christianity are not his rivals but his allies, which will help to deepen your love and loyalty to him.

Next is Time, the hardest of all attributes to accept and develop. In I Corinthians 7:13-16 we are told to teach by example; this takes time. I have found using the beatitudes as a guideline helps to keep my own growth continuous as well as to keep me

humble by showing me I, too, have a long way to go.

Finally, but not least by any means: Pray for strength, for patience, for knowledge, and for understanding. At the same time thank your Heavenly Father for the chance to teach your husband; thank Him for His love; thank Him for each new day which may be the day your husband sees the light. Pray often without ceasing.

God bless you in your endeavor.

In Christian Love,
Rachel

Dear Rachel,

My fiance has just told me he has decided to become a gospel preacher! I know I should be proud and supportive, but I have so many doubts and fears. Will I be able to live up to being a "preacher's wife"? What if he decides to go overseas as a "missionary," or perhaps to some "backwoods" area of our own nation? I keep wondering if my faith is strong enough to accept such? Am I selfish to want a "normal" life? A husband with a 9 to 5 job, privacy and security?

Scared and Bewildered

Dear Scared,

I have often thought there should be a special support group, similar to Ala-non, for preachers' families. It is true there are many special pressures and troubles in being the wife (or daughter) of a preacher. Many of these problems are the result of the culture in which we live. Take comfort in your Bible; it is the ONLY guide that God has given for us to use.

God knows it takes experience and knowledge to be able to direct others. That is why He tells the "older women" to teach the "younger." Teach them to be lovers of their own husbands and children — to be chaste "keepers of the home."

Don't try to jump ahead of your time. Take it one step at a time. Study Proverbs 31:10-31, which gives us a picture of the perfect wife. (Keep in mind that no one is really "perfect" — no, not one. You just keep trying!)

As a preacher's wife you will be called on to do many things. You must set your priorities — God first, your husband second, then home and others. Don't try to do everything you would like to do! Remember, you are like a water pitcher: in order to keep pouring

it out, you must constantly replenish the supply. The only real prerequisite to being a good preacher's wife is to be a dedicated Christian. If your husband decides to go overseas or to some remote area of our own nation, remember Naomi and Ruth.

Life can be an adventure or a disaster, depending on your own attitude toward it. Before the decision is made as to where you want to serve our Lord, take a candid look at your own talents and assets. Above all, remember you are marrying a man,

you are not marrying his profession or calling. Build on that love, and you and the man you marry will learn to give strength to and receive strength from each other.

*Love,
Rachel*

Short and to the Point



The Habit Most Vile

The greatest physician in the land has warned us that its use is definitely hazardous to our health. In fact, he goes so far as to say that continued use will result in heart disease and interfere with the very breath of life.

Many argue that even though they engage in this disgusting habit and it does them harm, they are not hurting anyone else. Not so! By their example, they are giving approbation to it and cause great harm to others, especially young and impressionable children and others too weak to resist its terrible influence.

It is a habit which reaches out and affects not only the doer but those about him as well. It robs the addict of the company of many who see the good in him but cannot tolerate his habit. Those who refuse to be slave to it cannot enjoy the company of those who persist in it. By insisting on and continuing in this activity, the addict often removes himself from the opportunity to associate with those who are unwilling to expose themselves to such behavior, especially in their own homes.

Those who say they can "take it or leave it" seemingly always return to it even when they try to quit, finding themselves hopelessly addicted and finally totally insensitive to those around them who not only do not care for this type of behavior but who are repulsed by it as well.

Those who do it are the first to admit that they don't want their children to pick up the habit, but they themselves refuse to quit. The evidence

of their addiction is usually quite observable wherever they go, and their homes are often full of the empty husks of this stench-filled habit.

This unsocial habit is peculiar only to humans; yet, even though it prevents true sociability, it is often found at most "social" gatherings.

Why would anyone persist in adopting and defending such vile behavior? Yet, millions do. It is big business and entire industries are devoted solely to its manufacture, packaging advertising, sales and distribution.

What is it? Go back and re-read this essay. Then see if what is written does not describe the HABIT MOST VILE: sin.

--Richard Williams
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Cough Drops

When you have a sore throat you usually buy cough drops to relieve the pain. However, if you notice, on the box it reads, "If pain persists see your doctor." The cough drops only treat the symptom of what is sometimes a more serious problem. An ear or sinus infection or other such problem may exist on which the cough drops have no effect. Sometimes the problem may take care of itself through rest & nature's cure. But relieving the symptom won't cure the cause and often we spend so much time with the symptoms the underlying problem gets worse.

The analogy holds true in the

Lord's church. Symptoms pop up and we try to relieve them without considering the cause. Sporadic attendance, dwindling contribution, lack of class preparation & participation are but a few of the symptoms. Our classes seem disoriented because people will not sit together; we complain to anyone and everyone except the person responsible when we are not used in worship services or teaching. Again, these are symptoms of a more serious problem. Admittedly, this sounds like a broken record, but what has become of our Christian attitude? Paul commended the brethren in Macedonia and the reason was because they gave **themselves** to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:5). Paul told the Corinthians to act like men and let all be done in love (1 Cor. 16:13, 14). Brethren, let's put away childish things and grow up! As a congregation we are to exhort one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24). In closing, notice how Paul instructed the church in Ephesus to grow: "*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love*" (Ephesians 4:11-16).

--Bruce Everett
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Marion, IN 46952

The Need For Workers Overseas

by Dudley Ross Spears

What was once called "mission work" should now just be called overseas work. Jet travel has caused the world to shrink enough to make working overseas no longer that far-away exile of former years. One used to think of foreign missionaries as going off to some remote part of the world and being consigned to near oblivion. However, all of that has changed. One can reach any point on this globe in less than a day. There are some places in this world that are more convenient and comfortable for living, but there is no place that does not need workers for the Lord. The question is no longer one of distance but of committed Christians to work. Who is willing to meet the need overseas, is the real question.

The great commission requires that all nations be taught. Jesus said that the taught are to be baptized and then taught to observe all of His commands (Matthew 28:19-20). Those who are willing to go must have a lot more than the inclination or desire to go. Desire is nice but desire with no other considerations is not enough. More than desire is required. Ability is necessary, but even a desire coupled to ability is insufficient. There are several other qualities and qualifications required in order to do an effective work for the Lord overseas. Please consider some of these carefully. It may be that you are the very one who should work for the Lord overseas.

CONSIDER THE NEED

Once in a while the comment is heard, "I believe charity begins at home and people overseas have already had the gospel preached to them." Particularly is this remark made toward work in Europe. Others will complain, "We were taken in by an unscrupulous fraud calling himself a missionary once and we won't be taken in twice." There are perhaps elements of truth in these statements. However, we do not think this way in other areas of life. Because we were once schooled does not mean we need no further schooling. A banker will often return again and again to be taught again and again better ways of banking. Where the truth once was does not relieve us

of the duty to take it there again. Furthermore, because we have been disappointed and deceived does not relieve us of the duty to continue supporting worthy and dedicated workers.

The need is great. It is an ever present need. Not only in Europe, the Philippines and Nigeria, but also in Canada, Scotland, Kenya, Afghanistan, Korea, Manchuria and Greece, as well as a hundred other places, the gospel is needed now. Charity really does not begin at home. Charity is the outward expression of true concern for others. If it begins at home and just stays there it is not charity.

A need is reconciled on the basis of the circumstances and opportunities which create it. It is difficult to understand how an area where churches have large memberships, beautiful buildings, an abundance of preachers and teachers, secretaries and all the rest is a needy area and a place where a small group of saints meet in a cold room over a tavern has to go without preaching and teaching from an evangelist. It is difficult to accept the fact that parking lots have to be resurfaced or sealed, cushions installed in the pews, and the buildings redecorated and not to see the need of sending qualified men into a place where there is neither building nor parking lot. Needs are relative. They are based on circumstances and opportunities. The need exists everywhere, but the need is greater overseas than it is in the "Bible Belt."

CONSIDER THE WORKERS

Just who is a qualified worker for overseas work? Every Christian should be willing to go anywhere and everywhere to preach and teach. However, not every Christian is qualified for such an endeavor. When the Lord selected His workers and outlined the work He wanted them to do, He chose them according to their special abilities and qualifications. James remained in Jerusalem, along with Peter and John while Paul was selected to go overseas. (Galatians 2:8-9). Barnabas, a suitable helper, went with Paul. Not all of the Lord's followers today have the

same abilities and qualifications.

The first question to consider, after having seen the need is, "If I am able and qualified, should I go?" Ability includes the powers and skills one has. This includes both spiritual, mental and physical ability. The spiritual ability of a Christian is the ability to commit oneself to a task at all times, to use discretion and wisdom in difficult situations where one is all alone. It is the ability to continually seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first. (Matthew 6:33). Mental ability is the intellectual capacity and capabilities of an individual. It may include the ability to learn a foreign language and facts about a people and their culture. It includes an ability to fit into a lifestyle of a people who are likely different from you in nearly every way you can think of and yet not compromise your convictions. Physical ability means you are healthy and strong enough to endure the rigors of things which bring on weariness of the flesh and bones.

Consider first your spiritual ability as you contemplate the question just posed--"Am I able to go?" In a foreign country, there are any number of things which tempt and try one's soul. It is easy to get depressed and lonely. Away from friends, family, brethren and familiar situations, the overseas worker can become very lonely. A comforting word from a friend, an ear of a brother to listen and a hand from a son or father to lift up are to the overseas worker like water to the thirsty. Yet, in a foreign land, they are not there. A telephone is a poor substitute for the touch of a friendly hand. Without a very deep spiritual commitment to be faithful to the Lord, the overseas worker will fail.

Your mental ability must be strong in order to work effectively in a foreign land. Just learning their language is a very difficult thing. No one will ever succeed overseas in a country where the language is different from one's mother tongue until the language is mastered. This does not mean one must be letter perfect in the language. A German asked me one time if he spoke perfect English. I replied that no one speaks

perfect English, at least in my circle of acquaintances. Mental ability is a must in order to learn the language of another people. Glenn Jones once told this writer that he had learned that the German people among whom he works are very understanding of those who come to their country and speak a poor brand of German, but they soon lose that understanding nature when, after years, there is no improvement.

Language is always a problem for an overseas worker. If one must depend on translators or interpreters for very long one may as well come home and stay. An exception to this would possibly be in an underdeveloped country where an educated worker is looked up to. However, in more highly developed lands, one who continually needs a translator is destined to fail. The fact that one must master a language should not discourage anyone from trying. Brother Jerry Earnhart told this writer that he had lived for years in Europe before he became comfortable with the language. He lived there around twenty years. One must simply be comfortable with the language so as to be fully able to understand others and know exactly what you are saying. This writer will never forget some of the embarrassment experienced when trying to say one thing only to be told what he really said!

If one has to be letter perfect in a language, then we may as well forget preaching anywhere. It is certainly good and desirable to be able to speak any language fluently and near perfectly, but a "letter perfect" requirement would eliminate nearly all preachers in any country, even the one in which they were born and have lived. Most of the work you will do overseas does not involve much public speaking. It is mostly a one-on-one matter. It may involve a small group around a kitchen table or in a living room, but for the most part it is a work that involves an informal occasion. That means that if you are comfortable in a language and can communicate with those you contact, you have "mastered" the language well enough. Besides, you will want to continue to study. One of the very best ways to learn a language other than your own is to buy a Bible in that language and diligently and regularly read and study it.

Your physical ability is also an important factor in your decision to either go overseas or not to work for

the Lord. If you are unfortunate enough to suffer a physical weakness or illness, it may be better for you to stay home and help others go. It is not wise to enter bad climates and unfamiliar conditions to work unless you are physically up to it. The work overseas often involves long hard hours of strenuous work, both in preparation and performance of the work. Michael C. Griffiths described it like this:

"A missionary needs to be fit in order to adjust to an unfamiliar climate. He needs to have the stamina to serve long hours, yet rise early the following day. He needs a constitution that can adopt an unfamiliar, perhaps uncongenial, diet and irregular mealtimes. He needs strong knees for squatting on the floor and a stong back for digging cars out of the mud, or houses out of the snow." (You and God's Work Overseas).

Physical condition is unquestionably important. It is not necessary that you be a "macho" individual who stands head and shoulders over your peers; you need to be realistic about your physical condition. After all, if you cannot do it physically, you cannot do it at all.

STAYING OVERSEAS-- SOME FACTS

One of the things that has hindered our work overseas is the lack of staying power by those who go. Here is another reason why we have to go back again and again to the same places and start all over. There are many things to consider about staying in a foreign country. Do not make the foolish mistake of thinking it is easy, and do not err in overlooking a number of things that will hinder you from staying overseas. But, remember that staying is important. You need to be able to say, "I will go and I will stay." But in making that commitment, please consider some facts.

1. **There is the fact of your family situation.** If you are a younger person, there are your parents, your aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters to consider. This is not so serious a problem for young people today due to the ability to return home from time to time for a visit. The wise selection of air fares makes this both advisable and economic. But you should consider what it means to leave home and go thousands of miles away from your own family. If you are married, the problem is more severe. Is your spouse

willing to leave home, uproot her life, and rebuild one in a strange land? What about your children? If you have seven or eight children, it will take a lot more money to support you overseas than someone with a family of two. Furthermore, consider whether or not your wife will be able to take the emotional strain of bearing children in hospitals where she does not know the language spoken by doctors, nurses and orderlies. Consider the cultural situation into which you will be placing your children. Workers with pre-teenagers and teen-agers need to think seriously about the educational situation of these youngsters. You will be taking your children into a situation where their companions will be everything other than religious and morally upright. The school system in most countries other than our own is drastically different. It is often impossible to fit children into the educational structure of another country. Any alternative to the national school system of the country in which you plan to live will be prohibitively expensive.

2. **There is the support of your brethren to consider.** Here is one of the major reasons why workers do not stay overseas. You will have to depend on churches at home to finance you while you try to preach the gospel. In countries where the living is much less expensive than here, that is not as great a problem, but in countries where the rate of inflation doubles our own, and where food and travel are twice as expensive and where you have to play the guessing game with the exchange rate of the American dollar, it is a real problem. One of the most frightening things an overseas worker can hear is that on a moment's notice his support is being cut off. Many overseas workers have had to get back home, often the best way they can, because a roof had to be repaired, an air-conditioner went kaputt or a parking lot just had to be repaved.

Then, there is the immaturity of some local churches and elderships. Some are so immature that they want to see results for the money they contribute to a preacher overseas. They look at it like an investment, or an agricultural project. If it doesn't produce, then cut it out. The overseas worker is thrust into the situation of producing converts or coming home. Even though many overseas workers

seldom baptize a person or build up large memberships, they have no opportunity to play golf or raquetball or fish--they are too busy passing out tracts, brochures, correspondence course advertisements and conducting regular classes with converts. In the meantime they spend hours on hours preparing these pieces of literature by writing it in a language they have learned. But, if they cannot report to their supporting congregations that they had x-number of conversions in a certain amount of time, some congregations want to "take a close look at the work before they agree to continue." Brethren, the seed of the kingdom does not work as fast as rag weed seeds. Some take much longer to come to a decision than others.

Another sign of immaturity in contributing congregations is the capriciousness with which they divide and splinter. When a congregation has a good work going and are supporting perhaps several overseas workers, then comes the devil and gets after them until they split. There are now two smaller groups, neither of which can carry the load they previously did together as one congregation. In fact, now either one of them or maybe both of them try to get outside support for their own preacher, and then have the unmitigated gall to call it "mission work." But, you the possible candidate for overseas work, need to consider these things. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "*For whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men*" (1 Corinthians 3:3). This carnality is also immaturity or childishness. You might want to spend the rest of your natural life overseas, but not be able to do it because immature congregations and elders won't support you.

A SHORT TERM WORK OVERSEAS

You might want to consider doing some short term work overseas if you find that for family situations and other considerations it is impossible for you to make the indefinite commitment. This is surely second best. However, it can be an effective work. Take the work done by a good number of brethren who have made short trips to the Philippines, Nigeria and Italy. All the brethren in Italy speak of the trip that brother James W. Adams made as the "rebirth of the work of the Lord in Italy." We must not underestimate the value of a short visit

overseas. For one thing we have the precedent of Paul to consider. Many times he started a work on a short term trip overseas, then returned to his starting place and then went back to confirm and strengthen his new converts. (Acts 14:21-24).

The strength and encouragement lent to those who are going to stay overseas justifies a short term visit. Those who have determined to live in a foreign land and work there indefinitely have not much greater joy in their life than to receive visitors from their home land or home congregation. Here is a gentle suggestion to elders. Consider going overseas to visit those you support yourself. Today's travel is not so expensive that it would prohibit such a visit. If you as elders cannot go, send one of the elders, the preacher or some faithful brother to visit with and encourage those you support in the work of the Lord.

A short term work can be very effective by those who already know the language and land. We think nothing much about asking a preacher from California to fly to Florida and preach for a week in a meeting. It is really not much further to Africa from Florida than it is from California to Florida, is it? It is not much further on to Italy, or any other place on our globe. Why then be reluctant to send a man to a foreign land to preach, teach and make personal contacts for two or three weeks?

IT IS UP TO YOU NOW

Perhaps the most important thing to consider is the question of what God would have you to do. God has not promised to communicate His will to you in dreams, feelings or signs. He created the life in you, gave you your soul and revealed His will by which He expects you to regulate and conduct your life. You have to make the decision. God has done all the rest. Paul wrote the Philippians, "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure*" (Philippians 1:12-13). Now look carefully at the place God works. Paul said it is "in you" that God works to will and work His good pleasure. You might want to notice that the personal pronoun "you" is a plural word, meaning all of us. Especially it meant the Philippian congregation. Grammarians tell us that when this prepositional phrase is

used in the dative case, it means "in your midst, or among you." God does will and work in our midst through His word and our part is to work out our own part of this salvation. It may just be that the eternal salvation of those who are able, qualified and willing to go overseas and work depends on which decision is made.

The need is great. Who will respond to the Lord. In the words of an ancient prophet of God, who heard the following, "*Whom shall I send and who will go for us?*" he replied, "*Here am I; send me.*" (Isaiah 6:8).

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Alvaton, KY 42122

Everlasting Earth?

by Ken Green

How do you answer a Jehovah's Witness who says Ecclesiastes 1:4 teaches that the earth shall last forever?

First, the primary objective should not be to answer a Jehovah's Witness. It should be to understand the truth expressed in Ecclesiastes 1:4. If the Jehovah's Witness is teaching the truth, then we ought to accept what he teaches.

But the passage does not teach that the earth shall never pass away. Young's Analytical Concordance defines the Hebrew word which is here rendered "forever" as "age-lasting." You should show your Jehovah's Witness friend such "forever" passages as Exodus 27:21 (the lamp in the tabernacle was to burn forever); Ex. 28:43 (the priest's office of Aaron and his descendents was forever); Ex. 29:28 (the offerings of the law were forever); See also, Ex. 30:21; 40:15; Lev. 6:18; 7:36; 10:9; 16:31, 34; etc.

Thus, Ecclesiastes 1:4 ("the earth abideth forever") teaches that the earth is age-lasting. It will last until it has served God's purpose. 2 Peter 3:10-13 shows it will then be destroyed by fire.

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“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

Preaching The Truth

The Bible says, in II Tim. 4:2, *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”*

In a previous lesson we read several Scriptures about false prophets, and each individual's obligation to *“try the spirits.”* Now, for a few minutes, let's notice the preacher's work. This is necessary because no doubt there are preachers listening, and also because all of us must demand that our preachers preach the truth. All of us have the obligation to study, that we might be approved unto God, *“a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (II Tim. 2:15).

The preacher's obligation, then, is to preach, and that preaching must be Bible centered with authority established for every doctrine. He must be willing to give a book, chapter and verse for everything he says. In like manner, as you try him according to truth revealed, if he does not do this he then must be classified as one of the false prophets that have gone out!

Here are a few examples of what I'm talking about: Most preachers will contend that a man is saved by faith only, but the Bible says *“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”* (James 2:24). Which do you believe? Most preachers tell you that a person is saved, and then may be baptized if he wants to be, or to join some church; But the Bible says, *“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ”* (I Peter 3:21). Which do you believe? Most preachers tell you that one church is as good as another, but the Bible says there is only one body, and that body is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23; Eph. 4:4) Certainly there are many congregations, but if the members are really members of the one church of the New Testament, then

each congregation is practicing and teaching the same thing, and each preacher is instructing people in Bible doctrines.

As I endeavor to fulfill my obligation to preach the word, you must remember your obligation to try the spirits, to study the Bible, and to prove all things.

There is no doubt but that all of us wish to be justified in the sight of God. Faith justifies, the Bible teaches, but the kind of faith or the degree of faith we have may be something else. In Gal. 3:11, quoted from Habakak 2:4, Paul said *“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith.”* So the kind or degree of faith that saves is the kind we live by. Not faith only, as already noted from James two. We have also noted that the gospel plan or system is called or named faith, *“the faith”*, and we, both the preacher and the hearers, are urged to earnestly contend for that faith. (Jude 3) This faith we live by comes from the New Testament, Paul says in Romans 10:17. . . . *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* Hearing produces faith and faith produces action. The New Testament is our perfect guide to this requirement. And the preacher's obligation is to preach these facts, while your obligation is to check him out, demand the truth, then apply it to your own life.

Further admonition about preaching is found in Romans ten, and verse ten equates OBEDIENCE to *“calling on the name of Christ”*. Yes, your preacher must preach the Word, you must try the spirits, and we must all obey the truth if we are to be saved in the judgment.

Establishing New Testament Authority

The Bible says, in Colossians 3:17, *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”* Inasmuch as our law

today in the gospel, it is necessary to gain an insight into the principles set forth in this passage. The New Testament is not a book of detail concerning *“thou shalt”* and *“thou shalt not,”* but nevertheless contains the principles for righteous living in subjection to God's will in all things. These principles must be utilized and their ways or methods of interpretation understood if we expect to gain that goal in the afterwhile. A proper *“dividing”* or *“handling aright”* is necessary in this respect. (II Tim. 2:15) We are told to *“prove all things; hold fast that which is good”* (I Thess. 5:21).

Our starting text teaches that all things that we do must be supported by New Testament authority. There are, however, two types of authority which must be classified: (1) That which is SPECIFIC, that which has been specified and therefore cannot be changed, modified or deviated from; and, (2) that which is GENERIC, of a general nature and gives men a freedom of choice in some ways, and also includes methods or aids. As I illustrate these points, both must be thoroughly understood, limitations established, and the true interpretation planted firmly within our understanding. Furthermore, as we establish New Testament authority, as we read and study the Bible desiring *“all the counsel of God”* (Acts 20:27), be aware that three sources of information have been given within the New Testament. That is, there are PRECEPTS, which constitute express statements or commands; and there are EXAMPLES, the exemplary action or attitudes of the early church and inspired men, called Approved Apostolic Examples; and there are some things authorized by NECESSARY INFERENCE, unavoidable conclusions, that which from the context is inferred and is absolutely necessary, in one form or another, to the fulfillment of either the specific or generic requirement of the Word. Remember, the New Testament contains *“all things that pertain to life and godliness”* (II Peter 1:3).

To illustrate these points consider for a moment the act of baptism. Authority in this respect is very specific, and salvation cannot be obtained without obedience. (I Peter 3:21; Acts 2:38) Further, the action of baptism is a burial that has been specified (Rom. 6:3,4), and sprinkling

will not suffice. But other things are generic, or general in nature, so we have a choice of using a baptistery, pond, lake or river. All of this is taught both by precept, express statements, and is also exemplified in many Scriptures. A baptistery is authorized by NECESSARY INFERENCE, being inherent in the specific requirement to bury, baptize, in water.

Another good illustration is authority for a church building: The specific prohibition against forsaking

the assembly is given, (Heb. 10:25) and several other Scriptures authorize and require an assembly, both expressly stated and exemplified. Thus some things are specified that we do in the assembly, like observing the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), and we observe that example today. NECESSARY INFERENCE therefore demands an assembly place, but that which is generic giving us a choice allows to have lights, song books, and other

optional aids. However, it is wrong for the church to build and maintain fellowship halls for things purely social, for that is not the work of the church. (I Cor. 11:24).

Our starting text again, "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*" (Col. 3:17).

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TRIVIAL PURSUIT

by Ramon A. Madrigal

Some of the hottest selling items this past holiday season were trivia games. These board games feature a variety of formats and designs, but they all share the characteristics of questions and answers. Most of these questions and their answers are of no consequence and are therefore trivial in nature. Whether the category of query concerns geography, history, politics, entertainment, science or sports, the questions are generally insignificant. Most retailers discovered that even Bible "trivia" games were also fast moving products. Although many of the questions in such games as "Bible Search" and "Bible Challenge" are trivial ("What part of Saul's garb did David cut off without Saul knowing?", or "What was the name of the tempestuous wind near Crete?"), it may be difficult for a child of God to describe anything in the Bible as "trivial". I do not recommend the "Bible Trivia" games as a tool for diligent study of God's Word, but they can be a good form of entertainment for both family and friends.

It is interesting to notice that while most people recognize the trivial nature of such board games, they fail to see that many of their goals and aspirations and pursuits in life are equally trifling. Though we could cite many things that are eternally insignificant, we will describe only a few:

PHYSICAL PURSUIT

We live in a physical-conscious society. When it comes to health and good looks, America is aware! No nation advertises, sells or buys as many health, exercise, and cosmetic products

as the United States. The percentage of the Gross National Product spent on such products is astronomical. The "body-industry" is growing by leaps and bounds. Jack Lalane, one of the first of the exercise gurus, recently achieved a great feat of human strength and endurance. With both hands and feet bound together, he proceeded to swim one mile with 70 row boats (with at least one person in each) harnessed to his torso. While this human tug-boat event lasted over two hours, it was "the dream of a lifetime", said the 70 year old bodybuilder. Indeed it was. Yet my question to Mr. Lalane and his disciples is this: what will it matter in 100 years? Such accomplishments are vanity and a striving after wind!

The apostle Paul told Timothy that "*bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.*" I think that Paul would include all earthly lusts in this category of trivial things. How sad it is that so many lives in pursuit of physical things that are ultimately and eternally trivial.

ECONOMIC PURSUIT

Perhaps the most obvious ambition in life for many people is money and the materialism it affords. While we live in a physical world and thus need material things to survive (food, shelter, clothing, etc.), the emphasis placed on the acquisition of goods and services (consumption and status) is quite prominent. Money is an important part of life as people use this medium to exchange goods and

services that "make the world go 'round". Yet one should be careful to maintain a proper attitude toward wealth. Jesus once queried: "*What shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?*" If our priority in life is the acquisition of wealth and riches, we are truly in the pursuit of something trivial (cf. Ecc. 2:4-11).

ACADEMIC PURSUIT

The preacher Qohelet of the book of Ecclesiastes tells us that even wisdom and the pride that it produces is "*vanity and a striving after wind*" (cf. 1:12-18). One of the unfortunate by-products of the academic enterprise is the insolent and haughty heart it encourages among some scholars. While this is especially true among the humanistic professors of today [1], arrogance is also found in the personalities of some Christians. Yet the Bible promises us that the "*poor in spirit*" shall be "*blessed*". We should strive for knowledge and use such to live happy, productive, and Godly lives. Scholarship as an end in itself is a "dead end" and a trivial pursuit.

SPIRITUAL PURSUIT

While there is nothing inherently evil about education, money, and health, these appealing things often become the dominant focus in life. Jesus invites us to put Him first and make the kingdom our priority. "*Seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you!*" (Matt. 6:33). When we have received the Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8, Rev. 2:10) and when our hope of Glory has become a living reality, what will it matter whether or not we ever "won" a game of trivia?

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The Poet's Page

THE ONE WAY

I saw a road, wide and broad:
 Reserved for the unjust.
 Many people traveled there on.
 Their minds were evil,
 Their actions wicked.
 There were false teachers
 And prophets telling things not true.
 I heard each group read manuals
 and creeds
 From books written by men;
 And they called themselves
 By different names, crying,
 "Come join us! Enter this wide gate!
 It's easier over here. No, it's
 Better over here! You'll enjoy it more!
 You will thrill from the entertainment.
 All ears will be tickled!
 Look at our fruit: beautiful thorns and
 thistles!
 Our trees have delicious fruit.
 Take your choice: It is a delightful
 variety
 Offered by the churches of the world.
 Come travel with us; it pays.
 It's a jolly pathway called
 "TO EACH HIS OWN,"
 Again I looked and saw two ways
 And entered the gate I chose.
 It was narrow as squeezing between
 two rocks.
 Not many took this road.
 Trees were laden down with
 multi-colored
 Luscious fruit. Bright Blossoms
 Perfumed the air.
 It was hard underfoot.
 "Who will direct my way?"
 I asked as I knelt to pray.
 In Psalm 119:11, I heard David say:
 "Thy word have I hid in mine heart,
 That I might not sin against thee."
 Came words from Jeremiah 32:39:
 "And I will give them one heart,

and one way, . . ."
 Traveling with me were the ones God
 delivered
 Out of temptations, who were cleansed
 By the blood of Christ.
 We read from God's inspired word at
 John 14:6:
 "I am the way, the truth and the life;
 no man
 Cometh unto the Father, but by Me."
 A bright light shown at the end of the
 narrow way.
 I saw Jesus in the clouds and up in the air.
 At the end of the broad way,
 I saw many plants uprooted,
 Piled up with the thorns and thistles
 From the evil trees.
 The were the "Every plant which my
 heavenly Father
 Hath not planted", Jesus said in
 Matthew 15:13:
 These "shall be rooted up".
 The tares were bound in bundles,
 Just as in Matthew 13:30 I had read.
 They were all burning with fire.
 The Books of Life were open.
 The sheep went on the Lord's right hand.
 The goats separated on the left.
 There was no time to choose
 What we wanted to be.
 It was too late to pick the ONE BODY
 Or THE ONE FAITH I have been
 taught,
 From Ephesians 4:4 and 5; 1:22 & 23
 and Colossians 1:18:
 The ONE CHURCH that Christ pur-
 chased with His precious blood.
 There was no more time to say:
 "TO EACH HIS OWN!"
 It was the Judgement Day!

--Myrtle Webb Williams
 Key West, FL

A POEM ON PSALM 30:5

The longest rainy day e'er seen
 Was Noah's to endure
 The dove with olive branch of green,
 Returned to reassure
 The promise made to Noah
 By God who cannot lie:
 To show, He made a rainbow
 And arched it 'cross the sky
 To be a sign to mortal man
 And thus, his hope insure
 Of a place in God's eternal plan
 To keep his faith secure.
 To hide himself, Elijah fled,
 When all but God forsook
 The ravens brought him meat and bread
 He drank from Cherith brook.
 For the thorn's removal, thrice,
 Paul made to God a plea
 God's answer was His promise,
 "My grace - enough for thee."
 Hosts of others could be named
 Who've endured pain and sorrow,
 But always conquered when they claimed
 God's grace for each tomorrow.
 No matter what adversity
 May strike without a warning:
 However dark the night may be,
 There's joy in the morning.

--Jean Blackford
 Owensboro, KY

CARE

I looked to God and He has done,
 What others said could not be.
 I look to Him for all my good,
 And He has made me free.
 Free from the cares of this troubled world,
 With its sorrows, pain and woe.
 He gave me a mind to seek higher ground,
 And showed me the way to go.

So look to the Lord for all your needs.
 For He does freely give.
 To all who seek Him while He may be found,
 That you may truly live.

--Gwendolyn Cowan
 Flint, MI

NO THANKS

I thought the world would laud and praise
 But found to my surprise,
 My deeds weren't really all that great,
 In other people's eyes.

--Dwayne Laws
 Bowling Green, KY

INNER BEAUTY

A woman's face is constantly
 Her inner self declaring.
 Love gives her far more beauty than
 The makeup she is wearing.

--Dwayne Laws
 Bowling Green, KY

HAPPENINGS

News and Notes
From Around The World

SCHOLAR, EDUCATOR TENNEY DIES AT 80

Dr. Merrill C. Tenney, noted Bible scholar and educator, died March 18 in Central DuPage Hospital after a lengthy illness. He was 80.

Tenney was Dean of the Wheaton College Graduate School from 1947 to 1971, and taught at Gordon College for 15 years prior to his appointment at Wheaton. Tenney graduated from Nyack Missionary College and Gordon College in theology and missions, earned his M.A. at Boston University, and his Ph.D. in Biblical and Patristic Greek at Harvard University.

Tenney authored *New Testament Survey*, *New Testament Times*, and *Philippians, The Gospel at Work*. *New Testament Survey*, perhaps his best known book, has been translated into Bengali, Chinese, German, Portuguese and Spanish. Tenney also authored biographical sketches of apostles for the *World Book Encyclopedia*, and served on the translation committee that produced the New International Version of the Bible.

HUSTLER PUBLISHER FLYNT SENTENCED FOR OBSCENITY

Hustler magazine publisher Larry Flynt has been sentenced to 60 days in prison for using obscene language before the U.S. Supreme Court and, in a separate incident, wearing an unauthorized Purple Heart medal.

Flynt, a wheelchair-bound paraplegic since a 1978 assassination attempt, was also fined \$350 and placed on probation for three years. He admitted using obscenities before the Supreme Court in 1983, and pleaded guilty to the Purple Heart charge.

HOME SCHOOLERS FILE A CLASS-ACTION SUIT IN TEXAS

Home schoolers in Ft. Worth, TX, have filed a class-action suit aimed at clarifying state law governing home

schools. The suit will force the court to rule on the claim of home schoolers that their homes are private schools and that this exempts them from compulsory attendance laws.

Thirty-eight states now officially permit home schooling in some form, an estimated 5,000 families in Texas are involved in home schooling.

Many home schoolers are conservative religionists who want to avoid the secular philosophy they say pervades public schools. Others simply feel the public schools are not doing an adequate job of educating their children.

ORAL ROBERTS CATCHES FLACK FOR FUND-RAISING LETTERS



Fund-raising tactics of Evangelist Oral Roberts have been called into question by the New Brunswick Senior Federation. Federation leader Bernard Richard, who filed a complaint with local and provincial police and with the Better Business Bureau in Canada, said Roberts's appeals for money "take advantage of the sensitivity of seniors and prey on them at a time in their lives when they are most susceptible."

Richard cited a letter from the Tulsa-based evangelist which was received by an elderly resident of St. Stephen, New Brunswick in January. In the three-page, mass-mailed appeal, Roberts said that through "the gift of prophecy" he had been told the reader could expect "creative miracles for things seemingly dead in your body, your spirit, your mind, and your finances to come alive again."

The letter also contained a warning: "If you neglect to pay attention to what He [God] is especially saying to you, then Satan will take advantage and hit you with bad things and you will wish that 1985 had never come."

The letter urged recipients to send a

"seed faith gift" which would help them get a "hundred-fold return." Roberts offered to send a list of 33 predictions, including a revelation of "how to avoid terrible new diseases that are coming upon people because of stress over world conditions."

Fund raising of TV evangelist Rex Humbard and International Christian Aid president Joe Bass have also come under recent scrutiny in the Canadian press.

CHURCH GROUP CONDEMNS STATE LOTTERY

The Washington state lottery has come under severe criticism from the Washington Association of Churches, which represents the Roman Catholic Church and 11 Protestant denominations, including Baptist, Lutheran, Congregational, and Methodist.

A final policy statement on gambling is still awaiting approval by all member denominations, but Loren Arnett, executive minister of the Association, says comments received so far indicate agreement with the statement's recommendations. The report maintains that legalized gambling undermines character, leads to crime and corruption, and diverts income from more healthy industries.

The Oregon counterpart of the Washington association has announced plans to monitor the social cost of Oregon's new lottery.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS OUTSHINE PUBLIC SCHOOL PEERS

Students at private Christian schools test one to two years higher than students in public schools, according to a recent study.

In 1984 more than 7,000 students in Accelerated Christian Education schools (A.C.E.), randomly selected from 44 states, averaged between one

and two grade levels above the average public school pupil in the California Standart Achievement Test. A.C.E. schools do not use teachers in a traditional classroom setting. Students work at their own pace on non-graded curriculum, monitored by adult supervisors.

Students in Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) schools rated an average of one year ahead of the national average on the Stanford Achievement Test. That test includes vocabulary, reading, word study skills, math, spelling, language listening, social studies, science, and using information.

FAMILY SUES CHURCH FOR EXPELLING THEM

A family which was expelled from First Baptist Church in Sunset, Louisiana, has filled a \$2.5 million lawsuit against the church. The church and Pastor William M. Hill, Jr. are defendants in the suit.

Filed by Lloyd Benjamin Ruth. Taye Carter Ruth and their 16-year-old daughter, the suit contends that Hill made accusations during a congregational meeting concerning the girl's character and sexual activities, knowing his remarks were false. The suit also claims invasion of the girl's privacy, by publicizing charges that were "not of legitimate concern" to the congregation.

Hill denies both accusations, and said the suit was a threat to the "right of a congregational church to discipline its members."

The church's attorneys, Fred and F. Jean Pharis of Alexandria, La., will file suit on behalf of the church, alleging civil rights violations. Fred Pharis told the Baptist Press "Traditionally, courts have declined to take part in judging actions of ecclesiastical bodies."

Pharis continued "It is our opinion that the Constitution guarantees separation [of church and state] and courts have ruled that constitutional and practical considerations prevent them from overriding the highest authority [within a church]."

PLANNED PARENTHOOD, PRO-LIFE GROUP BATTLING IN MASSACHUSETTS

The Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM) is working to frustrate the efforts of a pro-life

group, but that group, Problem Pregnancy Inc. (PPI) is successfully frustrating PPLM's abortion clinic here.

PPI runs a crisis pregnancy center just down the hall from Planned Parenthood offices, which perform abortions two days a week. PPI also coordinates picketing and sidewalk counseling in front of the building when abortions are being performed. Planned Parenthood's legal efforts to hamper PPI have been effective, but costly.

In a fund-raising letter PPLM's executive director appealed for \$192,000 to finance "costly litigation to fight continued "right-to-life" harassment at our Worchester clinic."

Bishop Timothy J. Harrington of Worchester has countered with a fund-raising appeal of his own. His "Share for Life Dollar Crusade" asks each person in his Diocese to donate a dollar to Problem Pregnancy Inc. In his letter the Bishop praises PPI "whose tireless and energetic and peaceful vigil is deterring abortions and saving lives."

In a trademark infringement suit brought by Planned Parenthood, PPI was enjoined not to continue using the initials "PP" on their door. PPI has been ordered to post a cross on their door.

Another legal battle resulted in PPI's "corridor counselors" being forced back onto the sidewalk. PPI is also fighting an eviction notice prompted by PPLM's threat to sue the landlord for failure to prevent interference with PPLM activities.

NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE STANDS FIRM AGAINST GAYS

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York will give up \$72 million a year in city funding for its social programs if the alternative is being forced to accept Mayor Edward Koch's order banning discrimination against homosexuals, according to Archbishop John J. O'Connor.

During a City Hall press conference on another topic with Koch, O'Connor said "Even the mayor doesn't know this. We have been examining how we could provide precisely these services without any city, state or federal support at all."

"That's impossible," interrupted Koch. "That's \$72 million you just gave up."

O'Connor noted that it was much

more than \$72 million when matching funds from state or federal grants was taken into account, but said that the social services the archdiocese provides to 5700 youngsters might be able to operate just as effectively with private funding. "We have no intention of closing the agencies or not taking care of those youngsters. [The mayor] can threaten me if he wants."

O'Connor repeatedly stated that the Archdiocese does not discriminate against homosexuals in hiring for government-funded programs, but held that complying with Koch's Executive Order 50 would signify acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle.

A State Supreme Court Justice ruled in September that Koch overstepped his authority by ordering all agencies receiving city funds to sign a form of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual preference. The Justice ruled that such a policy required legislation, and not merely an executive order. The order has been blocked while the case is appealed.

HELMS INTRODUCES ANTI-ABORTION BILL

As the first session of the 99th Congress convened, Senator Jesse Helms (R.-N.C.) introduced a comprehensive bill to protect unborn human life. Helm's legislation has been moved directly to the Senate calendar, where it can be taken up at any time.

In a Senate floor speech, Helms called the present state of abortion in America "utterly intolerable," and urged Congress to "act to remedy at the earliest possible point."

The Helms bill would put Congress on record as finding that the Supreme Court erred in its legislation of abortion. The bill also would have the effect of permanently removing public funding from abortion.

OFFENSIVE FILM ON LIFE OF CHRIST STILL ONLY A RUMOR SAYS PARAMOUNT

Contrary to widespread rumors, a movie project dealing with "the sex life of Jesus" is not under consideration by Paramount studios, according to a Paramount spokesperson. Rumor that Paramount was considering a movie based on the book *The Last Temptation of Christ* by Greek novelist Nikos Kazantzakis are unfounded, according to a Paramount official who said such a movie was "never even an

officially announced project. And it will never be a Paramount project.”

Similar rumors about a supposed film titled “The Sex Life of Jesus” have been circulating for eight years, despite widespread publicity that the rumor was false. A rumor that a company in Illinois was planning such a film has resulted in more than 300,000 letters of protest to that state’s attorney general’s office.

UTAH CULT LEADER CONVICTED OF MURDER

A jury has convicted cult leader Dan Lafferty, 36, of murder in the throat slashings of his sister-in-law and her 15-month-old daughter. Lafferty said the killings were the result of a divine revelation. Brenda Wright Lafferty, 24, and her daughter, Erica, were found with their throats slashed on July 24.

The motive for the killings, according to prosecutor Wayne Watson, was Brenda’s opposition to her husband’s involvement with the “School of Prophets,” a religious sect that claimed Ron Lafferty as its prophet. Ron Lafferty, 43, was scheduled to stand trial with his brother Dan, but his trial was postponed after he apparently tried to hang himself Dec. 31.

THOUSANDS MARCH AGAINST ABORTION IN WASHINGTON, D.C., AND ACROSS NATION

President Reagan told more than 71,000 anti-abortion protesters that “the momentum is with us” and urged abortion foes to “rededicate ourselves to ending the terrible national tragedy of abortion.” The pro-lifers gathered in the nation’s capital to mark the 12th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

Reagan said “I am convinced that... understanding begins with a recognition of the reality of life before birth and a recognition of the reality of death by abortion.” Reagan also condemned violence at abortion clinics, urging “a complete rejection of violence as a means of settling this issue.”

Reagan was the first president to address the demonstrators in the 12-year history of March for Life. Reagan’s address, was relayed by telephone from the White House to the rally, held on the Ellipse a quarter-mile away. After hearing Reagan the

demonstrators, who covered 12 city blocks, heard from nearly a dozen pro-life members of congress and activists, including Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell.

Later the crowd marched to the Supreme Court Building to protest there; 29 were arrested as they knelt in prayer on the steps. Pro-lifers then visited the House and Senate office buildings to lobby for passage of a human life amendment.

Pro-life groups across the nation marked the anniversary of Roe v. Wade with rallies in state capitals. And Milwaukee’s Common Council passed a law requiring aborted fetuses to be buried or cremated — a first in the U.S.

THE POPE IS STILL CATHOLIC, BUT ITALY ISN'T



Italy is no longer officially Catholic. The Italian Chamber of Deputies ended Roman Catholicism’s status as the state religion on March 20.

The lower house voted 350 to 75 to ratify a revised concordat regulating church-state relations. The Senate ratified the concordat last August. The new concordat is a revision of one part of the Lateran Pacts signed between the Vatican and the government of Benito Mussolini in 1929.

PTL STAFFER DEFENDS BAKKER'S LUXURY CARS, VACATION HOME

Richard W. Dortch, a senior vice-president of the PTL television network, has defended television evangelist Jim Bakker’s purchase of a luxury vacation home and two expensive automobiles at a time when Bakker told his viewers his ministry was facing its biggest financial crisis ever.

In a letter to the Charlotte Observer, Dortch said the newspaper’s coverage “relies on inaccuracies, hearsay and half-truths to support its malicious accusations,” but did not deny that Bakker and his wife Tammy Faye had purchased a \$449,000 desert home near Palm Springs, and two luxury automobiles.

Dortch’s letter asked “Is there something wrong with a person purchasing a home for his future and retirement and disciplining himself to

make monthly payments on that home?” The letter called the purchases “purely a personal matter that in no way involved any funds from the PTL ministry.”

CHURCH ACTION CLOSES HEALTH CLUB THAT WAS OFTEN SITE OF PROSTITUTION ARRESTS

A “health club” in Fridley, Minnesota, that had been the site of sixteen prostitution-related arrests since 1982 was closed recently, in part due to the efforts of a local church.

Gene Hermeier pastors the Redeemer Lutheran Church, located just blocks away from the “Number 1 Health Club.” Hermeier organized demonstrations outside the club that have continued regularly since last fall. He said the purpose of the demonstrations was “to tell club operators Fridley will not tolerate houses of prostitution.”

Fridley police padlocked the club after a judge ordered its closing based on evidence “that prostitution is being practiced on a regular basis.” The Club owners describe the 24-hour facility as a service offering “feather duster and vibrator rubdowns...to club members for a fee.”

NEW MUSEUM WILL HOUSE \$40 MILLION IN BIBLE RELICS

A new museum will be established in Jerusalem to house archeological relics with an estimated value of over \$40 million. Plans for the Bible Lands Museum have been approved in principle by the Jerusalem municipal planning commission, according to Gidon Shomron, future director of the museum.

Shomron, who has spent the last five years working with the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., expects construction of the museum to take at least two years.

The Bible Lands Museum will display rare pieces accumulated over a period of 40 years by Dr. Elie Borowski, an international art collector. The collection includes 1,800 archeological finds from Middle Eastern countries. The pieces date from 5000 B.C. to 500 A.D. About 300 of these pieces relate directly to Bible stories. Borowski, who will donate the collection to the museum, says his collection is the world’s largest and most complete collection of Bible related documents.

FIELD REPORTS

**Bill Pierce, 759 E. North Street,
Spencer, IN 47460**

I am now in my fourth year with the church here and plan to make this our home. I'm currently taking a course in Real Estate and if I pass my course and state test, I will be working part time in that. I'll still maintain my work schedule with the church.

The church here has three godly elders who are on top of the work. They meet every Monday evening to discuss and plan the work as well as give members the opportunity to meet with them if they have problems. We have Don Bassett scheduled for our spring meeting. Bob Williams will be here the first week in February for three nights in a study of Revelation.

**Tom Hickey, 630 East Ash Place,
Griffith, IN 46319**

Back in November of '84, Dennis Lynd of 206 South West Street, Lexington, Illinois 61753, was guest speaker for the Griffith church of Christ lecturing on the theme of "Divorce." The lessons were the most ably presented that I have ever heard on the subject, and the crowds were about the best that we have had for any meeting of any kind. In fact, the Thursday evening service was the best attended night service that we have had during the five years I have worked with the Griffith church.

I attribute our attendance during the lectures to the timeliness of the subject and to the fact that brother Lynd is well known in the Chicago area as to his ability, attitude and devotion to the Lord.

Brother Lynd is a young man in his thirties, but the wisdom and humility of his presentations suggest the ability of a much older man. He also shows extreme sensitivity to the pain and suffering of those who have experienced marital problems.

Brother Lynd presented six lessons for us, but he has enough material to adapt to a much more extensive format should it be desired. The lessons he presented for us are as follows:

The Scripture View of Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage, Divorce Trends In America, The Marriage Vows, Socialism and Divorce, Sectarian Views of Divorce, The Divorce Issue In The Church.

Brethren, I wish this series of lessons could be heard in every city and hamlet in the country. I fear that many brethren have not yet realized that the divorce problem and its peripheral effects have already altered the very character of churches of Christ and even threaten our continued existence and identity as the people of God!

I want to recommend Dennis Lynd as a gospel preacher, and I urge you to invite him to present this series of lessons where you worship. He has done his research well and you will not be disappointed with his work if you are concerned about and seeking solutions for the problem of divorce.

**Glenn Jones, Eckener Platz 8, D-2300 Kiel 17,
West Germany**

... Gary and I attended the lectureship held annually by the brethren from German-speaking congregations. Despite my known disagreement with certain projects some churches are engaged in, I was asked for the fifth time in a row to speak on the program. As usual, I profited from the gathering and hope others profited from the things I had to say. Perhaps more than any other year, we had opportunity for discussions with leading brethren in the German-speaking brotherhood concerning our disagreements with the centralization of church funds for schools, camps, and radio programs. Most brethren had not studied the matter seriously, but we hope our discussions will motivate at least some to investigate the matter more thoroughly.

**Alex Ogden, 48 Harnett Street
Asheville, NC 28806**

Things continue to go well here in Asheville. As of January 1, the church here is self-supporting. We still lack elders and deacons but we hope that such will come within a reasonable time. Please pray for us as we continue to work for the Lord in 1985.

**David V. Hurst, 2712 Byron Drive N.W.,
Roanoke, VA 24019**

As you may be aware, Roanoke has about 225,000 Metropolitan population and the church here is small with about thirty members--half of which live in surrounding cities. This is the only faithful church in a 50 mile radius and in some directions over twice as far. Most people here associate the term "church of Christ" with the idea of a Christian church. There are at least two "liberal" congregations and one group who believes it is sinful to have Bible classes, etc. Basically, it seems to me that Christians haven't made a lot of impact in this area over the years.

I am keeping busy with several Bible studies, a thirty-minute call-in radio program, and other work. I am presently trying to arrange to study with some prisoners at the city jail. May our work continue to glorify our Father in His precious kingdom!

**Charles F. House, P.O. Box 1031,
Douglas, AZ 85608-1031**

Two Mexican preachers withdrawn from: The Agua Prieta Mexico church has advised that Camilo Villegas and his family have been disciplined by the local church for causing divisions. The Naco Mexico church has advised that Fidel Cisneros has been disciplined by the church there because of adultery. Abram Villegas, eldest son of Camilo Villegas, is a Faithful Gospel Preacher, who preaches regularly at Sonoyta, and San Luis Mexico each Sunday. He was Not included in the disciplinary action mentioned above. Pray For All Of These Precious Brethren, that God's Will might Always be done!!!!

**Charles E. Davis, 4519 Charing Cross,
Memphis, TN 38116**

After laboring three and a half years with the church of Christ which meets at 1119 East Trigg Ave., in Memphis, Tennessee, my family and I have decided to relocate.

As of July 1, 1985, we will begin working with the Summit Avenue church of Christ which meets at 10 So. Grotto Street in St. Paul, Minnesota. My family and I are anxiously looking forward to this new work. There is such a tremendous need in the midwest for men who will preach the gospel of peace. In the state of Minnesota, which boast of a population of approximately 4½ million souls, there are only nine faithful churches of Christ. The brethren at So. Grotto are desirous of growth and are making extensive plans to start another work in the twin cities as soon as it is numerically and economically feasible. I can not help but to admire So. Grotto's attitude and their intestinal fortitude in undertaking such an arduous and yet rewarding task.

In the past, there have been two major obstacles which has impeded growth in this area. One is finding men who are willing to come and endure the hazardous winters and two, finding churches of Christ who are willing to support men in that area. Thanks to our Heavenly Father for those faithful churches who still believe that the gospel is for all and are willing to send men with their blessings and support to such areas. . . Our commission from Christ is to "teach to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:18-20). This can only be possible when we all remember this commission and strive to fulfill it.

**Steven A. Wallace, Hauptstr. 24,
6799 Wahnwegen, Federal Republic of Germany**

I'm happy to report that we baptized three souls into Christ in mid February. One was the daughter of a family here at Ramstein; the other two were a man and a woman I'd studied with for a while. I am continuing on in my studies with them. The lady studied with the Jehovah's Witnesses for 9-10 months and has lots of questions.

I am always having studies and questions related to the historically divisive issues. As soon as I finish my present series on "Divorce and Remarriage," I'll begin a series on the issues. One man visited services from the largest institutional church in our area and said he wanted to come and hear the series when I preached it. It is interesting that just the existence of an "anti" church here has caused a great deal of searching and inquiring on the part of brethren in institutional camps ignorant of the issues.

**Wayne S. Walker, 5170 Chippewa Rd.,
Medina, OH 44256**

The church of Christ in Medina, Ohio, formerly meeting at 6205 Wadsworth Road, has moved. The facility that we have been renting for the past four years has been sold. We are planning to erect a building of our own as soon as possible, but until such time as this can be achieved, we will be meeting temporarily at 120 N. Elmwood Street. This location is not available on Wednesday evenings, at least for the present, so we are having midweek services in other places until we can make more suitable arrangements. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 313, Medina, OH 44258. If you would like more information write us or call (216) 723-4509 or 725-5614.

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PREACHER AVAILABLE

I am 25 years old and have been preaching the gospel for 5 years. I am interested in relocating with a faithful church as soon as suitable arrangements can be made. Additional information regarding my character and work can be obtained by writing me: John R. Madrigal, Rt. 1 Box 50, Jennings, FL 32053 or calling (904) 938-4620.

After nearly 5 years of labor with the Chena Small Tracts Rd. Church of Christ in Fairbanks, Alaska, I have given my resignation, effective May 31, 1985. I desire to relocate with a congregation in the "lower 48" states. Due to some personal business, I will not be available until after mid-August. I am 32 years old, married (since Sept. 1983) and have no children. I have been a Christian for 10 years. Fairbanks is my first "full time" position as evangelist but I had quite a bit of experience prior to moving here. An integral part of my work with a congregation is an adult Bible class curriculum that I developed with the help of 2 Christians who have degrees in education. Much of my preaching is coordinated with this curriculum. Until May 31 I can be contacted by writing: R.T. ("Ted") Mitchel, P.O. Box 61029, Fairbanks, AK 99706-1029 or calling 907/455-6312 (home) or 907/479-6170 (church building). After May 31 you may write to me: C/O W.F. Mitchel, P.O. Box 52, Bremen, IN 46506.

Gospel preacher, 31, married, with 16 years experience (4 full-time) would like to relocate with a sound, mature congregation on or before June 1, 1985. References will be gladly supplied. Keith Stormont (614) 425-3233.

PREACHER WANTED

The Church of Christ in Paris, Kentucky, is in immediate need of a preacher. We now have 27 members and attendance runs 30 to 35. We have recently purchased a permanent meeting house. Some outside support will be needed. A lot of contacts have been made and need follow ups. Contact Jim Sizemore at (606) 234-9432 or Don Bishop at (606) 987-1273.

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Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

May 1985

Number 5

DID GOD CREATE EVIL?

by Ellen L. Guillette

How would this be possible? Surely, it is not! God is good; God is love. Evil could not possibly come from him. Yet he created everything that is, and EVIL IS. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). So how did evil come into being? Perhaps, when we look into the components of evil, we may have understanding.

Paul spoke in Romans, the 7th chapter, beginning at verse 19, of the strength of sin: "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me, into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And wretched are we all, when delighting in the law of God, we find ourselves nevertheless in captivity to the law of sin. Have we not all desired to do good and found ourselves doing the evil we hate? "Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good" admonished John in 3 John 11,

"He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

The works of the flesh are evil. "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things ye would" said Paul in Galatians 5:16-17. Then he listed the works of the flesh beginning in verse 19.

The first listed are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness, says the KJ version, immorality, impurity, licentiousness says the RS version. All of these are moral/sexual sins. Yet, sexual desire in itself is not a sin, for God gave Adam his wife and companion (Genesis 2:21-25). And Jesus taught in Matthew 19:5 that a man should leave his father and mother, cleave to his wife, and they should be one flesh. And Paul wrote in I Corinthians 7:2 ". . .to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." Therefore, the moral/sexual sins are simply the wrong use of a rightful desire.

Paul then listed idolatry as a work of the flesh. There appears to be a built-in need in all of mankind to worship. God commanded Israel to worship Him and Him only in Exodus 20:3-6, and Jesus repeated this in

Matthew 22:37. He had warned in Matthew 15:9 that some worship is not acceptable. Since idolatry is the worship of anything in place of, or more than God, it represents an evil shift of emphasis of a right concept.

Witchcraft is next listed. Adam Clarke asserts this word comes from a Greek word meaning drug or poison, "Because in all spells and enchantments, whether true of false, drugs were employed." It is certain that witchcraft/sorcery is an attempt to control people and their affairs. But the teachings of God is that we control ourselves and teach (not control) others. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16).

Hatred, listed next, is in direct opposition to brotherly love which Christ commanded in Matt. 22:39 ". . .Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" and again in John 15:17 "These things I command you, that ye love one another." Hatred, which is then fearful emotionalism, will lead to the next works of the flesh listed. Variance (or contentions), emulations (or strife to excel at the expense of another), envy (or the desire to have that which belongs to another), jealousy (or fear of not retaining what one has), wrath (or turbulent passions,

janglings), are all the sad, harmful results of being off balance, selfish, and emotionally fearful. For, if I really believed that God will take loving, generous care of me, why would I desire what is yours? Or, if I really believed that I am loved and special in the sight of God, why would I desire to be one-up over you?

Next are listed seditions and heresies which are divisions, factions, parties, setting one group within the church against another. These works of the flesh will often be the natural consequences of the envy and wrath listed above, and which are called vain glory in Galatians 6:26. Obviously, they are in opposition to the fruit of the Spirit, verses 22-23: “. . . love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against such there is no law.”

Murder, next listed, is the deliberate taking of a human life with malice aforethought, which would not be possible if one loved his brother and neighbor.

Last in the list are drunkenness (intoxification) and revealings (lascivious feastings with obscene songs, music, and dance). These are listed because they are drinking and eating (and being entertained) in such a way as to cause one to lose control of oneself and act in ways which children of God ought not.

The works of the flesh, then, are all fearful twistings and distortions of abilities, desires and characteristics of GOOD THINGS which God has given us.

EVIL, THEN, IS NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN THE DISTORTION OF GOOD.

Since God gave mankind the abilities to think, imagine and make decisions, he did give mankind the ability to sin, to do evil.

Mankind takes his natural, God-given desires and distorts them through his abilities to think, imagine, and make decisions. There is nothing wrong with the ingredients--it's the way man mixes them (Genesis 6:5).

Perhaps an example can be shown from the chemical world of explosives. Chemicals have certain properties which identify them, but mixing them may produce properties unlike those of the original chemicals.

In 1845, Christian F. Schonbein was working with sulfuric and nitric acids in his wife's kitchen, in her absence. (She had forbidden him to use his smelly chemicals in her kitchen.) When he spilled some, he wiped it up with her cotton apron. Then he put the apron in the oven to dry, presumably to hide the evidence of a wet apron. It exploded--and the discovery of nitrocellulose or gun cotton, an important smokeless power, was

announced to the world.

I'm certain some analogy to sin can be seen here.

In the English language, **evil** is the reverse spelling of **live**, and the end result of evil is the reverse of living; it is dying. *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* That is why he lists for us *“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance”* after listing the works of the flesh. It is so that we may be chilled by the sins, evils, and warmed by the knowledge that *“if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”* means **we can so choose**. Understanding what sin is, and how it comes into being, helps us to avoid it.

We can then, turning again to Paul's fearful lament in Romans 7:24--*“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* also join with him in triumph *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”* (Rom. 8:1).



635 Old County Road #10
Belmont, CA 94002

“Investigate the Church of Christ”

by Gardner Hall

This is the closing admonition of many tracts, newspaper articles and sermons. But a simple answer to a simple question frankly shows the popular suggestion to be unbiblical and sectarian.

That simple question is: What is the church of Christ? The simple answer is that the church is US, those that God saves in spite of our ugly weaknesses and sins. (Acts 2:47). If one considers this basic fact he can see that recommending that the lost “investigate the Church of Christ” is telling them to investigate US and I would think (at least hope) that all but

the “cockiest” among us would be uncomfortable in giving such arrogant advice.

As far as I'm concerned, I don't want anyone “investigating” me because I'm afraid that some of my weaknesses might turn them off if I am the focus of their attention. Please don't investigate me!!! Neither would I want anyone to investigate some other brethren I know. If a non Christian in Laodicea “investigated” the lukewarm church there to find the truth, he would have been completely disgusted just as his counterpart would have been in Corinth “investigating” the church

there during its troubles. Therefore I don't think such admonitions would have been useful in the first century and perhaps that's why you don't find the concept of “investigate the church” given to unbelievers in the New Testament to give them a focal point in their search for truth. On the contrary you find another focal point:

* *“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord”* (II Cor. 4:5).

* *“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified”* (I Cor. 2:2).

There's only One that we should ask people to investigate if we don't want them to be turned off completely and that is Jesus Christ. The plea “investigate Jesus” seems much less sectarian than the rather arrogant plea to “investigate the Church of Christ.”

Box 686
West Paterson, NJ 07424

EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

THE BLOOD-BOUGHT CHURCH

More and more I am amazed at the colossal ignorance of, and unconcern for, the purpose of Christ's blood shed the cross! Liberal-thinking preachers for many years have been making efforts to eliminate the blood of Christ from man's need of coming to God and some even look upon the blood as repulsive. Many work hard trying to separate the church from salvation saying that the church has nothing to do with salvation.

GOD CHOSE BLOOD

Since man's first sin in the Garden of Eden, God has required the shedding of blood for the atonement for sin. God instructed Cain and Abel concerning the kind of sacrifice He wanted. It is said of Abel, that by faith he "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Heb. 11:4). This blood sacrifice must have been precisely what God wanted since faith comes by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). The first thing Noah did after he came out of the ark was offer a burnt-offering (Gen. 8:20). When Israel was delivered out of the slavery of Egypt, blood was used in their deliverance (Ex. 12:7-13).

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says, "The rite of circumcision is an Old Testament form of blood ceremony. Apart from the probably sanitary importance of the act is the deeper meaning in the establishment of a bond of friendship between the one upon whom the act is performed and (Jehovah) Himself. In order that Abraham might become 'the friend of God' he was commanded that he should be circumcised as a token of the covenant between him and God, Genesis 17:10-11" (see "Blood," p. 489). The patriarchal age was marked by sacrifices and rites of blood by those desiring to please God.

In Abraham's covenant, his own blood had to be shed. Later an atoning animal was to shed blood, but those who did appropriate the blood of animals were only

ceremonially, and temporarily clean, because it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin (Heb. 10:4). In all ages, however, there must always be a shedding of blood. The covenant under Moses was dedicated by the blood of animals. Moses took the blood of calves and goats and sprinkled both the book and the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry, and almost all things by the law are purged with blood and without the shedding of blood is no remission of sins" (Heb. 9:20-22).

Since there is no salvation but by blood, and since the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, it naturally follows that some blood of greater merit must be applied. As the first covenant was sealed by the blood of animals, the New Covenant was sealed by more precious blood, the blood of Jesus.

THE INDIVIDUAL IS BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

Each child of God has been purchased. Paul wrote, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirits, which are God's" (I Cor 6:19-20). This was accomplished by the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7), something of far greater value than silver and gold (I Pet. 1:18). Each child of God has the same hope, having been purchased by the blood of Christ.

Unto the saints in Galatia, Paul wrote, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14). Paul would not be found guilty of minimizing the cross of Christ, and what it had done for him. He would never equate the cross of the Lord, as some do today, to some \$2 ornament worn as jewelry about the neck. To Paul, the cross was the symbol of the blood which Christ has shed thereon, and this gave it the fullest meaning.

It is only when we find what the blood of the cross did for lost men that we have an appreciation for it. The view of Paul is far different from those who claim such love for the blood of Christ, and sing loudly of the "Old Rugged Cross," yet spurn the very thing which the shed blood of the cross purchased for us. To fully appreciate the cross of Christ, we must look much further than the shape of the tree on which Jesus died.

THE CHURCH PURCHASED BY THE BLOOD

Paul's statement in First Corinthians 6:20 shows that every member of the church has been bought with the price of the blood of Christ; the church is composed of members; hence, the church had been purchased with the blood of Christ. He has given for it His own most precious

Today

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:

P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"
— Proverbs 27:1

blood, thus making it His own by the dearest of all ties. The transcendent sacredness of the church of Christ is thus made to rest on the dignity of its Lord and the consequent preciousness of that blood which He shed for it. We must maintain that, had not this Lord been God, His blood could have been no purchase for the souls of a lost world and the promise of redemption in His church would have been impossible. Since the church has cost heaven its dearest treasure, we ought to value it very highly indeed!

When Paul met the elders from Ephesus at Miletus, he discussed many important things. Included in the discussion was this thought: "*Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*" (Acts 20:28). Paul wanted them to know that the body of Christ owed much to the blood of the cross! This cannot be emphasized enough. Jesus Christ gave His blood to purchase the church and it should be remembered by all that He has never complained of being defrauded in the deal!

It was by this sacrifice that the church was bought and sanctified. When Paul wrote back to his friends and brethren at Ephesus, he said, "*Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it*" (Eph. 5:25). This divine institution was the spiritual body of Christ. Nothing is like it is in the world, and nothing else like it in the Bible. Now, if Jesus had promised to build a multiplicity of churches, then we might have the option of choosing one to our liking. But since He promised to build only *one* (Matt. 16:18), and added the saved for only that *one* (Acts 2:41-47), then no option is extended!

Since Jesus Christ loved that church so dearly that He gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:23), God "*gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23). You just cannot afford to down-grade any institution so important to the Lord, that it was purchased with His own blood! To belittle the church of the Lord is to belittle the very blood of the cross which bought it. Unto the saved in Christ, Peter said they were redeemed with "*the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*" (I Pet. 1:19).

THE HIGHEST PRICE

The word, "purchase," as used in Acts 20:28, occurs but in one other place in the New Testament — I Timothy 3:13: "*For they that have used the office of deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith.*" The word properly means "**to gain or get for oneself, purchase**" (W.E. Vine's, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 231). This may be done by a price, or by labor.

No verse in the New Testament, or any other statement that could be imagined, could possibly exceed the power of Acts 20:28 in declaring the eternal importance and necessity of the Church which Christ established. Here the heretical notion of salvation by "faith alone" is shattered and counter-manded forever. By any definition, salvation by "faith alone" means salvation without the church of Jesus Christ; and in such a view the crucifixion of our Lord is reduced to the status of a senseless murder. As James Coffman said, "**If men are saved, in any sense by the blood of Jesus, they must be saved through the church of**

which that blood is here declared to be the purchase price" (*Commentary On Acts* p. 395).

That the church is, therefore, of peculiar value — value to be estimated by the price paid for it — is clearly taught. This fact should make the purity and salvation of the church an object of special solicitude with the elders. They should be deeply affected in view of that blood which has been shed for the church; and they should guard and defend it as having been bought with the highest price in the universe. The chief consideration that will make elders faithful and self-denying is that the church has been bought with a price. If the Lord Jesus so loved it, if He gave Himself for it, they should be willing to deny themselves, to watch, and toil, and pray, that the great object of His death — the purity and the salvation of that church — may be obtained. Too many men like the title of elder, but do not like the work that is required; they like to see their name on a piece of stationery or bulletin, but do not want to put in the hours of labor that is required.

THE SHEPHERD

Paul's figure of speech to the elders is directly connected with a reference to the church as a flock; to the officers as overseers, or shepherds; and to their duty of feeding the flock. The figure as used by our Lord in John 10 should be compared with the expression in Acts 20:28.

How does a shepherd purchase his sheep with his blood? *Pulpit Commentary* noted, "**The shepherd may actually give his life in fighting and killing the wolves. If he kills the wolves he saves the sheep, though he may himself die of his wounds; and then he plainly purchases the safety of the flock with his blood. These figures may be applied to the work of the Lord. He imperilled his life for our defence. He met our great foe in conflict. He overcame sin and death, and plucked death's sting away. He died in the struggle, but he set us free; and so he has purchased us by his own blood. He has won, by his great act of self-sacrifice, our love and life for ever**" (Vol. 18, p. 168).

IMPLICATIONS

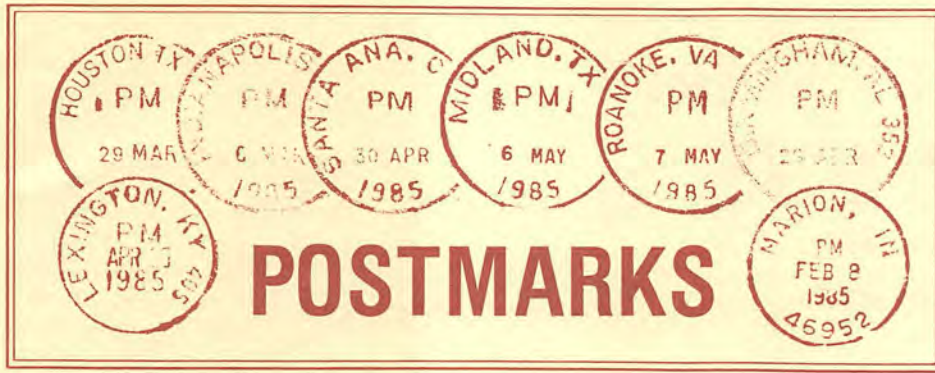
It is easily seen that some count the blood unholy when they have little regard for the church of the Lord and see it as just another denomination of no importance in God's scheme of redemption. Such say by their lack of respect for the church that the blood was wasted in purchasing the church.

Let it be said, in teaching and in practice, that the purchased church was not purchased to be a social club, but it has business second to none — that of saving souls. The borders of the kingdom must expand yet at the same time purity must be maintained within the church for it is Christ's desire to present it a glorious church without spot or wrinkle.

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WANTS A SPACE TO PRESENT IDEAS

I would like to see a "Letters To The Editor" column in your magazine. This would add greatly to the interest and readability and would give people space to present their own ideas. People who never have an opportunity to write for a magazine could perhaps contribute worthwhile ideas in a column like this.

--J.F. Mallard
Dyersburg, TN

Since we have had several requests to add such a feature, we are starting such this month. We hope this will give our readers the opportunity to agree and/or disagree with articles that have appeared in *Today*. It will also serve as an opportunity to make suggestions for future articles that you would like to see in print.

QUESTIONS USE OF WORD

I am very appreciative of your work in editing *Today*. It seems to me to be one of the best papers that is published by brethren. Keep up the good work.

Having said that, I do want to point out something that bothers me. I noticed in the January issue that you referred to an Eduard Perrone as "Father." Perhaps it was an oversight or maybe you have different convictions on the matter. But it seems to me to be inconsistent with Jesus' teaching in Matthew 23 to call any man in the religious sense "Father," "Rabbi," "Doctor," "Reverend," or any other similar term. Being that you seem to be doing such a good job, I hate to bring this objection up. But I feel that it is my duty before God and, hence, I humbly ask your consideration of this matter.

--Jerry Merten
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Most of our news and notes on the *Happenings* page comes from a weekly news service we subscribe to called Evangelical Press Association. The EP News is to religious journals is what AP News is to daily newspapers. We try to carefully screen what items we lift for publication in *Today* and try to change much of the denominational jargon that appears. We have slipped up a couple of times and let a few words get in print that we normally do not use. The above mentioned story is one case in point. I share the same convictions on the matter and do not believe that any man should be addressed as "Father" in any religious sense. Thanks, Jerry, for pointing this out. My apologies!

ANOTHER LOOK AT BAPTISM

In the February issue of *Today* the article by Michael Garrison on the cover, "Some

Misconceptions About The Church of Christ, Clarified," needs a slight but important clarification itself.

I doubt that brother Garrison meant to leave this mistaken impression, but he implies in the article that only a Christian can baptize a sinner or "penitent believer." The sub heading in the center column states, "Think Only Preachers or Elders Should Baptize," and then the copy reads, "Any Christian can baptize a penitent believer," and proceeds to cite Paul's instruction to Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:2. As far as it goes, brother Garrison's treatment of the subject is correct; however, by leaving out a simple "or non-Christian" from his first sentence of the subject, he implies that **only** a Christian can perform a scriptural baptism. As I said, I don't believe that brother Garrison meant to imply such, but nevertheless, it is so implied and I deny that such is the case.

Consider Romans 1:16 where we find that God has limited His power to save to the Gospel of Christ. The power is in the Gospel, the Truth, and not in men. . . . Paul recognized that it was the Gospel and the authority of Christ that saves, and the person who administers the baptism is not important, rather it is the message and the belief of the repentant one in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

. . . Now, consider the impact of the position that "only a Christian can baptize" (a position that I **know** some in the church hold and would misinterpret brother Garrison's statement to further support such a position). If such were true, then most probably the church in America **does not exist**. Consider this: if the first believers in this country who studied the Bible and came to a conclusion of the truth were not scripturally baptized by a Christian, then any whom they subsequently taught and baptized would likewise be unscripturally baptized.

What if the preacher (or elder, or other Christian) who baptized you was not himself baptized by a Christian years earlier? That would make you unscripturally baptized as well! And you might never even know it! . . .

Let us remember, in closing, that the burden of obedience to the Gospel is on the one who believes and not on others. It matters not what others believe, so far as your own soul's salvation is concerned, but it matters eternally what you yourself believe and obey.

--Richard Williams
Taft, CA

QUESTIONS SIZE OF WORK

Today the April issue of your paper came and I immediately read your article describing your recent work in the Philippines. I have a special

interest in that field because it was my privilege to work there twice for a total of ten weeks. But though I share your sentiments about the great work there, the hospitality of the people and the needs and opportunities, I believe you overstepped in describing the **size** of that work.

Perhaps you have, by now, read the reports by Karl (my son) and me regarding our recent journey and work in Nigeria. The reports were in the last *Think*. It so happens that I am, as far as I know, the only conservative preacher who has worked in both Nigeria and the Philippines. I only wish you could have gone to Nigeria also. My estimation has always been thus: "there is no greater, more hospitable people than the Filipino people, and I would take nothing from the greatness of that field. However, my observation is that it is far less in magnitude than in Nigeria".

You state that "There are probably more faithful congregations and gospel preachers in the Philippines than in any other foreign country". I believe this is speculative. I am sure it is impossible to know for sure the extent of such in either country. Over-all, counting all churches of Christ, Nigeria probably has twice as many and 2 or 3 or more times as many members and preachers. Of course the percentage of "faithful" ones may be greater in the Philippines than in Nigeria in proportion to the total number of members and churches.

But it is not my purpose to array one country against the other, or one in contrast to the other. I rejoice in the great work in both countries. But I simply believe you used an uneducated guess and that you over-stated the case. We did not try to state statistics, generally, but you will see so me of the indications of the greatness of the work in these reports.

Sincerely,
Leslie Diestelkamp
Aurora, IL

APPRECIATION FOR ARTICLE

I have just read the article on Human Sexuality in the February issue of *Today*. I wanted to drop you a note to tell you I enjoyed reading this very thought provoking article.

I have never heard a preacher speak on such a subject about what the Bible says about sex nor have I read anything written about it. It seems that it has been avoided as if it were a dirty word.

Going back to the Bible and using scriptures as guidelines helps one to better understand and feel more comfortable with themselves and their spouses.

Truly, as much as sex is advertised by TV and books we need articles such as this to discuss a clean, wholesome attitude toward it.

Like you said, biological facts are taught in schools but more so today, than ever before, children need to learn morals along with it to understand and deal with their sexual feelings.

I hope to see other articles on the subject in the future. This could be a useful tool in helping me talk to my daughters as they reach young adulthood.

--Sharon Sanders
Bowling Green, Ky.



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- KINDNESS

(GENTLENESS)

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

Christianity not only prepares us for the next life, it makes us better for the life that now is. "Kindness" (chrestotes) is a fruit of the Spirit which means "opposed to harsh, crabbed, crooked temper. It is a disposition to be pleased; it is mildness of temper, calmness of spirit, an unruffled disposition, and a disposition to treat all with politeness" (Albert Barnes on Galatians). It is a sweetness of temper that puts others at ease and avoids inflicting pain. Wuest says it "refers to benignity and kindness, a quality that should pervade and penetrate the whole nature, mellowing in it all that is harsh and austere" (*Word Studies*, Vol. 1, p. 160).

When the Bible speaks of God as "good," this word is sometimes used. Rather than "moral goodness," it refers to kindness. "Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. . ." (Rom. 11:22). The Psalmist said: "Praise ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Psa. 106:1; cp. 107:1; 136:1). God's kindness was expressed in action - both in the physical (Lk. 6:35), and the spiritual realms (Titus 3: 4, 5).

One of the characteristics of a preacher of the gospel is that he is to be kind. "And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:24,

25). Paul said, "But we were gentle (kind) in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children" (1 Thess. 2:7). There is a time for rebuke and correction, and kindness does not mean compromise with error, but if we "whip" a man in argument and do not save his soul, what have we accomplished? Just as God is both kind and severe, preachers must strive to have both qualities. There is a time to "rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13), and there is a time to be "gentle . . . as a nurse cherisheth her own children." A preacher's job is to teach the law, not enforce it. He is a preacher, not a policeman! One who loses the spirit of gentleness, or kindness, needs to prune the trees and nourish the fruit of kindness.

All Christians have the same responsibility. Paul told Titus to "put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all meekness to all men" (Titus 3:1, 2). The wise writer of Proverbs said, "That which maketh a man to be desired is his kindness. . ." (Prov. 19:22). Paul told the Ephesians, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:31, 32). The parallel passage in Colossians says, "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other.



(Col. 3:12, 13).

Kindness is goodness expressing itself in deeds. It is a desire to make others happy; the opposite of rudeness and repulsiveness. Barclay commented: "This Christian kindness is a lovely thing, and its loveliness comes from the fact that Christian kindness means treating others in the way in which God has treated us." When we produce this fruit of the Spirit in our lives, we are showing our kinship with God.

Kindness is a language which the dumb can speak and the deaf can understand. It is a hard thing to give away because it usually comes back to you.

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Identifying The New Testament Church

by Mark Moseley

The Hebrew writer warned in Hebrews 4:1, "Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to come short of it." As we read through the Bible we are impressed with the numerous warnings of about "coming short" of God's rest. Why? Because we tend to come short of being and doing what God wants while in this world.

There is a great need for brethren everywhere to stop and consider the question, "Have we come short of being the church of Jesus Christ that is revealed in the Bible?"

Without a doubt I am convinced that in general we have taught the truth concerning the outward identifying characteristics of the church (i.e., its worship, work, organization, terms of admission, etc.). But there are some other identifying marks of the New Testament church that I fear we have overlooked and ignored. Yet these characteristics are every bit as essential as those mentioned above. In fact we may even say they are "Weightier matters."

In Matthew 23 Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees saying, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law; justice mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others." Notice two things: 1. Jesus said of their tithing, "these are things you should have done". We must recognize that there are no unimportant requirements of Christianity. There are no commands or patterns imposed by the Lord that we can afford to ignore. Thus in saying that I believe that we have ignored some "weightier" aspects of the Lord's church I am in no way minimizing the importance of following the distinct pattern God has laid down for the church. 2. Jesus pointed out that the "weightier" provisions of the law to do with spiritual principles and attitudes of the heart. There are aspects of Christianity which must be stressed that are spiritual in nature. These deal more with the inner man (though certainly a right heart will demonstrate itself in concrete service and activity in harmony with God's

law).

WHAT ARE THE "WEIGHTIER" ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH?

1. **UNITY**-Jesus prayed for His disciples, "...that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (Jn. 17:21). A church might outwardly appear to be the Lord's church, but if the members are filled with strife and division they are coming short of the divine plan of God for His people.

And it is very significant that we recognize that we give the world a reason for rejecting Christ as the Son of God by our lack of unity! Jesus never said that the world would recognize Him as the Christ because we worship without instruments, are autonomous in government, or baptize for the remission of sins. The world will not be impressed by our doctrinal purity (essential as it is) if it is coupled with division. But the Lord Himself has declared that the UNITY of the church, the peace that exists among Christians, the harmony among brethren, would cause the world to believe God has sent Him.

2. **LOVE**-Again Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another" (Jn. 13:35). How is it that we will convince all men that we are genuinely the Lord's disciples? IF YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER! Of course we understand that genuine love for Christ manifests itself in obedience to the commandments of Christ (Jn. 14:15). But we also recognize the possibility of being "commandment keepers" in whom love is absent. The mere appearance of orthodoxy in basic areas of obedience does not guarantee that we are loving disciples of Christ.

And again I would suggest that we might find it hard to prove to the world that we are the disciples of Christ because we don't take money out of the treasury to support human institutions if there is a lack of love. Church supported institutions are nowhere authorized in the Bible. But Jesus did not say the world would identify as the New Testament church by our stringent obedience. We know strict obedience to the will of Christ is

necessary (Jn. 8:31-32). But I doubt seriously that we will ever open the eyes of the world to the necessity of strict adherence to the commands of Christ if they do not observe our love for one another.

Examine the church at Jerusalem in Acts 2:44-46. Who can doubt that their grand display of love and concern for each other was directly responsible for the positive reaction found in verse 47, "praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

3. **SERVICE**-Jesus in Mark 10:43-45 taught that He came not to be served but to serve and that the greatest in His kingdom would be the slaves of all. If Jesus saved the world through serving can His disciples expect to do any differently? Paul said, "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more" (1 Cor. 9:19).

Brethren are we trying to take the cheap way out? We cannot absolve our responsibility to the world merely by "speaking" the word. The word must be preached (Romans 1:15-16; 10:13ff). But the word must also be LIVED! How effective would the gospel of Christ be without the life of Christ empowering it? Even so, Christ must be living in me before I can be an effective sower of the seed.

4. **EVANGELISTIC**-Do not suppose that we are going to say it is unimportant that we preach the gospel. If there is anything that stands out about the church of the Bible it is their willingness to "go everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

The New Testament church labored diligently to carry out the Great Commission. They took the command of Christ to carry the gospel into all the world PERSONALLY. I fear that we often look upon the Great Commission as only a CORPORATE responsibility rather than an individual one. That is, we separate ourselves from the church body and excuse ourselves from any obligation to win souls. We think, "If the church fails to take the gospel into all the world it is not my fault", as though we are not a part of the church.

Oh but we are part of the body! And

it is our responsibility to preach the gospel into all the world. The New Testament church believed the Lord meant what He said about the gospel being carried unto every creature. And they got busy and did what He said to do (Col. 1:18)!

Brethren, hear me well. We charge our denominational friends with not loving the Lord because they do not keep all His commandments (Jn. 14:13). We claim to be the New Testament church because we follow the pattern of the Bible in worship, work, organization, etc. But brethren, in all the generations from the restoration movement we have NOT carried the gospel into all the world!

Let there be no excuses. We just have not done it. Something is wrong. We have yet to carry out the greatest responsibility that we have upon the earth as the church of Jesus Christ, the pillar and support of the truth.

5. **SACRIFICIAL**-(Romans 12:1-2;

1 Peter 2:5). When you read this, I pray that it hurts you as much as it hurts me to write it. It indicts me and I believe it will many an honest soul in the church.

How many of us are willing to say that we are living "sacrificial lives" for the sake of the gospel? A great sacrifice for me is to have to tape the U.K. basketball game on the VCR in order to go to worship on Wednesday night. Some other poor souls have to miss it entirely! Or instead of T-bone steak we have to eat hamburger. Truly a sacrifice.

Take time to read the description of another man's life who had sacrificed himself for the cause of Christ (I Cor. 4; 2 Cor. 11). Do those passages adequately describe your life? Do they fairly depict your willingness to sacrifice for Jesus Christ? We say it our hearts, "Sure it would, if it were NECESSARY for me to so live. If I were called upon to make such a sacrifice". Brethren how can we say it is not necessary when our feeble

efforts are failing on every had to accomplish the will of God? We deceive ourselves by being confident that our nice church building and full auditorium is evidence that we are "doing all we can". Maybe the REST of the church is failing but we are "rich and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing" when in reality we are "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked" (Rev. 3:18).

Looking back over this article it seems a bit harsh. I did not intend for it to be harsh, bitter or pessimistic. But I pray it will stir up your heart and cause each one of us to examine ourselves carefully. May God help us to be His in thought, word and deed and to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.



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Faith Assembly Convictions

by Roger Shouse

Amid controversy, curiosity, and indictment Hobart Freeman died. The founder and leader of a band of charismatic believers called the "Faith Assembly" was known for his unusual and even troubling ideas.

Freeman, who professed to have received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit", rejected nearly all established churches. He dismissed the celebration of Christmas and Easter, and refused legal representation when before the courts. This group which started in the mid-70's swelled to over 2,000 local members and witnessed the establishment of churches world-wide. Recently the group was thrust into the local headlines for its position of refusing any and all medical treatment. As many as 89 members, many of them children, died needlessly because they rejected medical attention. Local prosecutors have taken several families to court on the basis of negligence and criminal recklessness. The beliefs of Freeman and his followers are that the Lord will heal them

miraculously. For these folks it is a matter of religious conviction.

A study of the purpose of miracles would reveal that God chooses not to work through this medium today (Heb. 2:2-4; I Cor. 13:8-12). But regardless of that, I find a rare type of faith here. A trust and belief that warms the soul. An autopsy disclosed that Freeman suffered from heart problems and an infected foot that had turned gangrene. For four weeks this man lay in his bed suffering and dying. At any moment he could have picked up the phone and medical teams would have arrived providing the comfort and necessary aid to save his life. Hobart Freeman held on to his faith as his life slowly slipped away. Many parents in this group saw their tender young children lie in pain and agony, dying, as they stood convicted in their faith.

PARENTS NEED SUCH CONVICTION: It is not enough just to tell our children of the dangers of the world. Often through persistence

parents will give in to their children even though they may have doubts and fears. Wanting their children to "be somebody" causes many families to sell their convictions for the compromises of the world. If parents must say no, then stand up and say "NO!"

CHRISTIANS NEED SUCH CONVICTIONS: Faced with the pressures of the press, the community, the law, and looking at the eyes of death the faith of these dedicated Faith Assembly members did not shudder. Oh to have such trust in God, and to fear none. To know that God will care for his people. It is so easy for us to excuse our presence from the Lord and his people so we can rest or make a few extra dollars when we should be in worship. It is such a temptation to throw in the towel when times get tough or things don't go our way. Paul wrote, "*be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*" (I Cor. 15:58).

How we can learn from these folks. Let us not only consider these thoughts but profess them as well.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

I CHRONICLES

If I were to ask the average church member to summarize the content of I Chronicles, I suspect that a great many would probably say something like this: "It beats me!" or "I really don't know. I usually skip that one." or "I Chronicles, mmmm. . . Now, let me see. . . I remember reading that. . . Isn't that the one with all the names?" Generally speaking the works of the Chronicler have been greatly neglected in our study of the word of God. To the casual student of God's word, and perhaps even to the not-so-casual student, these books seem rather dull, dry, and dusty. They are full of uninteresting statistics, lengthy lists of names, ritualistic forms, and religious institutions that have little significance to us today. But may I suggest to you that there is much more to these books than at first meets the eye. If your study of these books, thus far, has yielded little fruit, I hope that this survey will heighten your appreciation for this part of God's revelation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As with the two books of Samuel and the two books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles were originally one single work in the Hebrew Bible. The work was first separated into two parts by the translators of the Septuagint Version (the LXX) in the third century B.C., and Jerome adopted the division in his translation of the Latin Vulgate at the end of the fourth century A.D. The division has been maintained in the various translations of the Hebrew text since the time of Jerome.

In the Hebrew Bible the title of the work is *Dibre Hayyamim* which means "The Events (Affairs, Accounts, etc.) of the Days." The Septuagint translators substituted a title which they regarded as more suitable to the contents of the work. They entitled it *Paraleipomena* which means "The Things Omitted." Evidently, they considered these books to be supplementary to the books of Samuel

by Kevin S. Kay

and Kings. Our own English title "The Chronicles" is derived from the Latin Vulgate.

The author and the date of composition of the books of Chronicles is somewhat uncertain. Assuming the integrity and the unity of the text and excluding the theories of later interpolations, there are certain "time-indicators" that help to date the books, however. The books record events down to the decree of Cyrus (ca. 538 B.C.) which permitted the Jews to return to their homeland from exile (II Ch. 36:22-23); therefore, the books could not have been written before this date. The catalog of names in I Chronicles 9 indicates a date of composition subsequent to the return of the remnant and the partial resettlement of the land, and the genealogy of Zerubbabel in I Chronicles 3 indicates a date of composition late in the life of Ezra or Nehemiah (ca. 450-425 B.C.), if not even later.

The origin, however, of Chronicles is strongly suggested by its close relationship with the book of Ezra. Hebrew tradition ascribes all three of these books to the pen of Ezra, and there is a marked similarity of style and content between them. This is apparent from such things as: the frequent lists and genealogies, the similar stress upon ritual, and their common devotion to the law of Moses. C.C. Torrey writes: "There is not a garment in all Ezra's wardrobe that does not fit the Chronicler exactly" (*The New Layman's Bible Commentary*, p. 474). Some scholars do, however, ascribe the work to an unknown "Chronicler" at a much later date.

A number of scholars believe that the books of Chronicles are based, at least to some extent, on the historical records of a variety of documents that are no longer extant. The Chronicler refers to the following in his work:

1. "The Book of the Kings of

Israel and Judah" (I Ch. 9:1; II Ch. 16:11; 20:34; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 33:18; 35:27; 36:8)

2. "The Chronicles of King David" (I Ch. 27:24)

3. "The History of Samuel the Seer" (I Ch. 29:29)

4. "The History of Gad the Seer" (I Ch. 29:29)

5. "The History of Nathan the Prophet" (I Ch. 29:29; II Ch. 9:29)

6. "The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite" (II Ch. 9:29)

7. "The Visions of Iddo the Seer" (II Ch. 9:29)

8. "The History of Shemaiah the Prophet" (II Ch. 12:15)

9. "The History of Iddo the Prophet After the Manner of Genealogies" (II Ch. 12:15)

10. "The Commentary of the Prophet Iddo" (II Ch. 13:22)

11. "The History of Jehu the Son of Hanani" (II Ch. 20:34)

12. "The Commentary of the Book of the Kings" (II Ch. 24:27)

13. Isaiah the Prophet on Uzziah (II Ch. 26:22)

14. "The Vision of Isaiah the Prophet" (II Ch. 32:32)

15. "The History of Hozai (the Seers)" (II Ch. 33:19)

16. "The Lamentations" (II Ch. 35:25)

The references to these historical documents are quite suggestive. They suggest that the archives of Israel was a body of literature that was carefully composed, collected, compared, and compiled rather than the spurious, spasmodic collection that some recent "scholars" have supposed. They indicate that the Chronicler was well-informed for his task. The references to these well-known historical documents would have served to demonstrate the authenticity and the reliability of his history to the people of his own day; any error could have been easily discovered by simply comparing his account with these other historical records. All of this

should serve to confirm our confidence in the essential reliability of the records that have come down to us today.

THE GENERAL NATURE AND THE PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

The book of I Chronicles divides itself very naturally into two main sections. The first nine chapters contain the principal genealogies of God's people from creation to the time of Nehemiah. The last twenty chapters are a record of the reign of David. Thus, this book retells the story that has already been told in II Samuel. It is REPETITION, but it is **not VAIN REPETITION**. The Chronicler retells the story from a different standpoint, for a different reason, with a different emphasis.

Though the history is the same, there are some striking dissimilarities in the accounts of II Samuel and I Chronicles. II Samuel is more biographical and personal, whereas I Chronicles is more statistical and official. II Samuel is written from the standpoint of the prophet. I Chronicles is written from the standpoint of the priest. The emphasis in II Samuel is on the throne. The emphasis in I Chronicles is on the temple. Hence, the history of II Samuel has been called "political," and the history of I Chronicles has been called "ecclesiastical."

The theological perspective of I Chronicles is further emphasized by a number of significant additions and omissions in the book. Many of the events recorded in II Samuel concerning David's life, his early reign in Hebron, his kindness to Mephibosheth, his sin with Bathsheba, and his subsequent family troubles (II Sam. 1-4; 9; 11-12; 13-23), are conspicuously absent in the Chronicler's account. On the other hand, David's preparations and prescriptions for the temple (I Ch. 23-29) are present only in the Chronicler's account. Over and over again in one way or another, the TEMPLE is emphasized as the vital center of the nation's true life, and this suggests that the Chronicler's primary concern is not historical but theological.

To fully appreciate the book of I Chronicles as we should, we must recognize this theological perspective; and to do this, we must understand and appreciate, to some extent, the historical background that occasioned the writing of the book. When the

Chronicler took pen in hand, his people, the remnant, had recently returned from captivity. The temple had been rebuilt. But the threads of the old national life, broken by the captivity, had not yet been gathered together. His people needed every encouragement and persuasion to rebuild the theocracy that had collapsed in the days of their fathers, and so, the Chronicler reminds them of their ROOTS. He reminds them of the majesty and the might of the Davidic kingdom and of the glory of Jehovah's house.

To the Chronicler, all the past was to be read, the present reconstructed, and the future anticipated in the light of the temple. It was his strong conviction that the whole future of his people was bound up with the preservation of the temple service, the proper maintenance of the priests and Levites, the regular establishment of the "courses," and the rightful distribution of the several ministrations of the temple among the Levitical families. He, therefore, drew the attention of his countrymen to the past history of the temple. His central purpose was to bring home afresh to his people where the true emphasis in the national life belonged and to convince them as to where their first duty lie.

Gleason Archer, in his book *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* writes that the books of Chronicles were:

"composed with a very definite purpose in mind, to give the Jews of the Second Commonwealth the true spiritual foundations of their theocracy as the covenant people of Jehovah. This historian's purpose is to show that the true glory of the Hebrew nation was found in its covenant relationship to God, as safeguarded by the prescribed forms of worship in the temple and administered by the divinely ordained priesthood under the protection of the divinely authorized dynasty of David. Always the emphasis is upon that which is sound and valid in Israel's past as furnishing a reliable basis for the task of reconstruction which lay ahead. Great stress is placed upon the rich heritage of Israel and its unbroken connection with the patriarchal beginnings (hence the prominence accorded to genealogical lists)" (page 404).

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

Chapters 1-9 form the first major

section of the book, THE MAIN GENEALOGIES OF ISRAEL. These genealogies serve to outline the family tree of the PEOPLE OF JEHOVAH. Chapters 1-3 primarily trace the kingly line from Adam to Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Judah to David and to Zedekiah, the last of the Davidic kings. Chapters 4-8 review, in general, the genealogies of the other tribes of Israel and their allotments in Canaan. Chapter 9 is a list of those who returned from captivity to dwell in Jerusalem. These genealogies were very important to the Jews of the post-exilic period. The captivity had uprooted families by the thousand. Connections had been broken. Many of the records had been lost (cf. Ezra 2:59). These genealogies served to link the remnant with the nation before the captivity.

Chapters 10-29 form the final section of the book, THE REIGN OF KIND DAVID. Chapters 10-12 are concerned with the ANOINTED OF JEHOVAH. The death of Saul is briefly related, no doubt, to serve as a kind of transition. David's anointing, his conquest of Jerusalem, and a list of his mighty men complete the picture. Chapters 13-16 are primarily concerned with the ARK OF JEHOVAH. The Chronicler records the story of David's attempt to transport the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem on an ox-cart in direct violation of the law (Num. 4:15ff; 7:1ff) and the death of Uzzah as a result. He also records the story of the people's repentance and subsequent rejoicing when the ark is finally brought safely into the city. Chapters 17-21 emphasize the COVENANT OF JEHOVAH. The Chronicler records the covenant that Jehovah made with the house of David, and he relates the full establishment of David's kingdom in his victories over his enemies in fulfillment of the Divine covenant. Chapters 22-29 are concerned with the TEMPLE OF JEHOVAH. The Chronicler records David's preparations of material and men and his prescriptions for the building of the temple of God.

SOME LESSONS FOR US TODAY

No doubt, there are a great many lessons that can be learned from the book of I Chronicles, but I would like to briefly suggest just a few.

This book emphasizes the importance of strict obedience to the will of God,

and it reminds us once again of God's attitude toward sin. Uzzah lost his life because David did not respect the law of God (I Ch. 13:1ff; 15:1ff), and God's people suffered terribly because David attempted to number them without the authority and the approval of God (I Ch. 21:1ff; 27:23ff).

The elaborate preparations of David for the construction of the temple and all that was associated with it, should serve to highlight the importance of our worship to God. The casual attitude of so many today toward the worship of God Almighty is diametrically opposed to the reverence for Jehovah that is demonstrated in the life of David.

The Chronicles also remind us that a nation's response to God is the decisive factor in her history and destiny. The wise man said so long ago: "Righteousness exalteth a nation; But sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr. 14:34). Would that America and every other nation on the face of the earth recognized this great truth.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, in reminding his people of their heritage, the Chronicler reminds

us of the wonderful privilege that we have to be called the children of God (I Jn. 3:1; cf. Ps. 95:6-7a). David said it so well so long ago:

"Blessed be thou, O Jehovah, the God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou rulest over all; and in thy hand is power and might; and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? . . ." (I Ch. 29:10-14).

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Editorial Apology

Sorry, but we goofed. . .

In our hurry to get some assignments made and then get the jobs typed and pasted up, we wound up with two men doing a survey on II Chronicles and no one doing one on I Chronicles. We apologize for this mix-up. Since both men had done such a wonderful job on II Chronicles, and since their articles were so different, we went ahead and printed both surveys. We now include the survey for I Chronicles. Lord willing, we will be back on schedule next month with a survey on Ezra.

Christians At War

by L. Scott Mann

While the minds of many are focused on world conflict and the amassing of military power it is an opportune time to "Walk about Zion." We are engaged in spiritual warfare. Consider three elements of that warfare: The enemy, the nature of our conflict, and the condition of the soldiers.

No soldier is prepared for the battle without an accurate reconnaissance of the foe. Our battle is against Satan and the "spiritual forces of this wickedness" (Eph. 6:12). Satan is not to be scoffed at; he is powerful and in control of the forces of darkness. The scripture warns in I Peter 5:8, "Be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." Every Christian soldier must be diligent and instilled with a healthy respect for Satan.

The conflict is the good fight of faith (I Tim. 6:12). The battle is spiritual in nature as are provisions. In Ephesians 6 the armor and weaponry is described: by taking up the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, and the accompanying battle regalia, the Christian is prepared with the full armor of God to fight Satan. Wielding this weaponry requires adequate spiritual nourishment. Christ has supplied living water and living bread through the word of God. It is Christ whom we follow, for He is the captain of our salvation (Hb. 2:10) and He supplies our strength in the battle (Eph. 3:14-21). We take no captives, rather through the teaching of the Gospel many are freed - from sin (Romans 6).

In what condition do we find Christ's soldiers? Some have been wounded. Through their own

weakness of faith, the fiery darts of Satan have pierced the wounded. We are to tend to them with loving care. "You who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). There are also the deserters who are spiritual cowards; "AWOL" from the worship, work, and battles of the Lord. Casting their lots with these are the traitors who have sold Christ for a season of pleasure. Others still stand in the ranks of the faithful but are maligning their fellow-soldiers and are destroying the moral of the troops. All of these are walking disorderly and must be disciplined if they are to be useful soldiers again. However, there can also be found those who suffer hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ (I Tim. 2:3); strong soldiers who march fully armed into battle.

We should each take inventory of our condition and gird ourselves with the whole armor of God. If you are not in the Lord's army - you should enlist today!

A Harmony of the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles

by Kevin S. Kay

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1 Sa.	27:1ff	1 Ch.12:1-7	8:20-22	21:8-15
	29:1-3	12:19-22	8:23-24	21:18-20
	31:1ff	10:1ff	8:25-27	22:1-4
2 Sa.	5:1-5	11:1-3	8:28-29; 9:1-28	22:5-7, 9
	5:6-10	11:4-9	10:11-14	22:8
	5:11-16	14:1-7	11:1-3	22:10-12
	5:17-25	14:8-17	11:4-20	23:1ff
	6:1-11	13:1ff	11:21; 12:1-3	24:1-3
	6:12-23	15:1ff; 16:1ff	12:6-16	24:4-14
	7:1ff	12:1ff	12:17-18	24:23-24
	8:1ff	18:1ff	12:19-21	24:25-27
	10:1ff	19:1ff	14:1-6	25:1-4
	11:1-27	20:1	14:7	25:11-16
	12:29-31	20:1-3	14:8-14	25:17-24
	23:8-39	11:10-47	14:17-20	25:25-28
	24:1-9	21:1-6; 27:23-24	14:21-22; 15:1-4	26:1-15
	24:10-17	21:7-17	15:6-7, 27-28	26:22-23
	24:18-24	21:18--22:1	15:32-35	27:1-8
1 Ki.	2:1	23:1	15:38	27:9
	2:1-4	28:20-21	16:1-2	28:1-2
	2:10-12	29:23-30	16:3-4, 6	28:3-8
	2:46	2 Ch. 1:1	16:7	28:16-19
	3:4-15	1:2-13	15:29	28:20
	5:1ff	2:1ff	16:8-18	28:21-25
	6:1ff	3:1-14;4:9	16:19-20	28:26-27
	7:15-21	3:15-17	18:1-3	29:1-2
	7:23-26	4:2-5	18:13	Is.36:1
	7:38-46	4:6, 10, 17	18:14-16	2 Ch.32:2-8
	7:47-50	4:18-22	20:1-11	32:24
	7:51	5:1		Is.38:1ff
	8:1ff	5:2; 7:10	20:12-19	39:1-8
	9:1-9	7:11-22	18:17-37	2 Ch.32:9-19
	9:10-28	8:1ff		Is.36:2-22
	10:1-13	9:1-12	19:1-5	2 Ch.32:20
	10:14-25	9:13-24		Is.37:1-4
	10:26-29	9:25-28; 1:14-17	19:6-7	Is.37:6-7
	11:41-43	9:29-31	19:8-19	2 Ch.32:17
	12:1-19	10:1ff		Is.37:8-20
	12:21-24	11:1-4	19:20-37	2 Ch.32:21
	12:25	11:5-12		Is.37:21-38
	12:26-31	11:13-17	20:20-21	2 Ch.32:32-33
	14:22-24	12:1	2 Ki.	21:1-16
	14:25-28	12:2-12		2 Ch.31:1-9
	14:21, 29-31	12:13-16	21:17-18	33:18-20
	15:1	13:1-2	21:19-26	33:21-25
	15:6	13:2-31	22:1-2	34:1-7
	15:7-8	13:22; 14:1	22:3-20	34:8-28
	15:11-12	14:1-5	23:1-3	34:29-32
	15:13-15	15:16-18	23:21-23	35:1-19
	15:16-22	16:1-6	23:24-26	34:33
1 Ki.	15:23-24	2 Ch.16:11-14	23:28-30	35:20-27
	22:1-40, 44	18:1ff	23:30-33	36:1-3
	22:41-43	17:1; 20:31-33	23:34-37	36:4-5
	22:45	20:34	24:8-9	36:9
	22:47-49	20:35-37	24:15-17	36:10
	22:50	21:1	24:18-19	36:11-12
2 Ki.	1:1; 3:4-5	20:1-3	24:20	36:13-16
	8:16-19	21:2-7	25:8-21	36:18-21



Studies About The Spirit

by David Holder

The Ministry Of The Spirit 2 Corinthians 3

What was perhaps Paul's fourth letter to the Corinthians (our 2 Corinthians), is a letter of instruction and defense. In particular, the apostle gave instructions about restoration (2:1-11; 7:6-16) and distribution (8:1-9:15); and made a defense of himself as a person and more so as an apostle (1:12-24; 3:1-7:5; 10:1-13:10). In the course of the discussion about his apostolic work, Paul described himself and Timothy as "servants of a new covenant" (3:6) who needed no "letters of commendation" (3:1). No letters were needed, according to Paul, because they had already been written-- "You are our letter. . . known and read by all men" (3:2).

People being letters is discussed in 2 Corinthians 3 in terms of the service of Paul and the work of the Spirit. Paul's role as a servant of the new covenant was bound up with the ministry of the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3 is full of contrasts by which Paul shows the value of his ministry in terms of the glory of the Spirit's work. The purpose of this article is to note these contrasts, especially as they pertain to the work of the Spirit.

THE SPIRIT WRITES LETTERS (3:2,3)

First, Paul discussed the **nature** of the letter. The apostle referred to the Corinthian Christians as "our letter" and as "a letter of Christ." The Christians comprised a "letter" in the sense that they contained and conveyed a message. In this case, the message was about the apostle "our letter", but more importantly about the Lord "a letter of Christ". The fact that they were Christians through the preaching ministry of Paul (cf. 1 Corinthians

4:15) said something about the authenticity of the apostle's work. That they were Christians meant that they belonged to and followed Jesus Christ. The NIV aptly translates, "You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry" (3:3).

Second, Paul discovered the **production** of the letter. The living letter was "written. . . with the Spirit of the living God." Paul attributed the production of "a letter of Christ" to the Spirit. The first set of contrasts emerges at this point between "ink" and "the Spirit," and between "tablets of stone" and "tablets of human hearts."

The point of these contrasts focuses on the **material** used in writing. Paul obviously alluded to Exodus 32:16 where God's "writing" was engraved on the tablets of stone in recording the law revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. In this case, Paul described the writing to be "with ink" and "on tablets of stone." By way of contrast, a letter of Christ was written "with the Spirit of the living God" and "on tablets of human hearts." The **scribe** who produces a letter of Christ is the Spirit. The **place** He does His writing is human hearts. The work of the Spirit produces letters of Christ.

THE SPIRIT GIVES LIFE (3:4-11)

Paul makes it clear that whatever those Christians were, they were because of God (3:4, 5). The apostle perceived his role as being nothing more than a servant. At the same time, however, Paul shows that his service was glorious because it coincided with the Spirit's work. The apostle discussed his work as a "servant of a new covenant" by means of two

contrasts.

The first contrast is between the **letter** and the **Spirit** (3:6). This contrast is even more striking in Greek because of the similarity of the words used: GRAMMA (letter) and PNEUMA (Spirit). As in 3:3, Paul's contrast here is again between the old and new covenants. The old covenant "of the letter" "kills" because people were unable to keep it in all its particulars. The new covenant, however, gives life simply because it is "of the Spirit" who is the source of life. Both covenants, of course, originated with God, but the emphasis of one was legal codes which identified sin while the emphasis of the other was (and is) life through the forgiveness of sins. This idea is expanded by still another contrast.

The second contrast is between the **ministry of death/condemnation** and the **ministry of the Spirit/righteousness** (3:7-9). With this contrast Paul explained **why** the letter "kills" and **how** the Spirit "gives life." The "letters engraved on stones" ultimately comprised a ministry of condemnation and death because they demanded something that no one was fully able to live up to (cf. Romans 7:10f). The "ministry of the Spirit," by way of contrast, was and is a "ministry that brings righteousness" (NIV). Instead of demanding perfection, the new covenant "of the Spirit" promises righteousness through forgiveness.

The **focus** of these contrasts is "glory" (3:10, 11). The letters engraved on stones "came with glory" (3:7), even though they comprised a ministry of condemnation and death. It follows naturally then that the ministry of the Spirit has "even more glory" (3:8) and that the ministry of righteousness "much more...abounds in glory" (3:9). On one hand, the former covenant which had glory "fades away" like the glory of Moses' face. On the other hand, the new covenant "remains" and has surpassing glory. Paul's service to the new covenant was significant because that covenant was (and is) "of the Spirit" and consequently "gives life."

THE SPIRIT PROVIDES LIBERTY (3:12-18)

The "glory" of the ministry of the Spirit and of the new covenant of the Spirit is explained in terms of liberty. Again, Paul used a contrast to make his point. The existence and

availability of liberty is emphasized by a contrast between the "reading" of Moses and the "beholding" of the Lord.

The "reading" of Moses (i.e., the old covenant) is characterized by **obscurity**. As Moses put a veil over his face so that the people of Israel could not see the fading glory, so the reading of Moses caused a veil to lie over the heart (3:15). Paul stated explicitly, "*At the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed by Christ*" (3:14). The old covenant and the way of life it prescribed did not have Christ nor His saving work, and was in that sense obscure.

The "beholding" of the Lord is characterized by **liberty**. When one "*turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away*" (3:16, a quotation from Exodus 34:34). Only in Christ is the veil of the old covenant "removed." Paul

identified the "Lord" of the Exodus 34:34 quotation as the Spirit (3:17). The point is that "*where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*" The condemnation and death that characterized the old covenant are removed in Christ, or, to put it another way, people are **liberated** by the Spirit.

Paul made it a point to identify the Lord as the Spirit. The Lord and the Spirit are so interrelated that one can be put for the other. The "*Lord is the Spirit*" and the Spirit is "*of the Lord.*" Paul's interest in the entire section has been the work of the Spirit. He wrote about the work of Christ in terms of the Spirit. The "*letter of Christ*" is written "*with the Spirit of the living God*" (3:3). Here, the veil is "*removed in Christ*" but "*liberty*" is expressed in terms of the presence of the Spirit (3:14, 17). The work of Christ and the work of the Spirit are essentially one

and the same. The "*glory of the Lord*" that we behold is "*from the Lord, the Spirit*" (3:18). As we behold or contemplate the Lord's glory, we are thereby "*transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory*" (NIV). The "*glory of the Lord. . . from the Lord, the Spirit*" is made known in the "*new covenant. . . of the Spirit*" (3:6) and is the "*ministry of the Spirit*" (3:8). It is through this "ministry" that we are transformed into the Lord's glory.

Paul's service to the new covenant was valuable and significant because his service involved a covenant of the Spirit of the living God--the Spirit who writes letters, gives life, and provides liberty!



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Barnabas Differed Like A Christian

by Stanley W. Paher

If I should ever get into a religious dispute, I hope it will be only with a Christian like Barnabas, "*a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.*" He was so much like Paul in many ways, giving to his calling his whole-hearted self-sacrifice and nobility. Barnabas was a Jew, a Levite, trained as a Greek in the island of Coyrus. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees.

Barnabas was both a generous saint and an intellectual Christian. Luke tell us that he had a field but sold it and laid the money at the feet of the apostles, to be placed in the common stock. Paul similarly gave up his goods and took to tent making.

Like Paul, Barnabas had two names. Saul was later Paul. Joseph was called Barnabas, the "Son of Exhortation" or "Son of Consolation." As the Son of Consoling Exhortation. Barnabas was a man of able speech, gracious and kind and exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit, one who made friends wherever

he went.

Surely Barnabas possessed the three essential characteristics of a missionary--to have broad sympathies, to be a friend maker and to make sacrifices for the ideal One. Little wonder that Barnabas became Paul's preaching companion. It was Barnabas who introduced the newly converted Paul to the amazed and incredulous disciples at Jerusalem. It was Barnabas who went after Paul so that the apostle might help him harvest souls at Antioch for about a year.

It was Barnabas along with Paul who was sent by the Antioch church to Jerusalem with the famine relief fund. He was effectually Paul's right hand man on the first missionary journey, where the citizens of Lystra took him for Jupiter and the less imposing Paul for Mercury. It was Barnabas who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem on a later occasion to pleas for the Gentiles when the apostles and elders met. It

was also Barnabas who was selected by Paul as his comrade for the second missionary journey. If ever two men were fitted to be boon companions in the Lord's work, it was Paul and Barnabas.

But alas! When John Mark, the young cousin of Barnabas entered the picture, things changed. Why he turned back from Perga, we do not know. Whatever the reason, it is quite enough to know that Paul disapproved of the reason and would have no more of his company, while Barnabas extenuated the fault and wanted to take him along. "*And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other,*" Luke reports. On that occasion Barnabas took Mark and Paul took Silas, and as far as we know, Barnabas and Paul never worked together again.

Nevertheless, they loved each other just the same! Paul's later epistles ever referred to Barnabas in a friendly way. The two had differed, but they "agreed to differ," and **agreed in the difference!!** They had two sharp opinions but one heart; two paths but both originated from the one Cross. Even amid sharp contentions, Barnabas was a Son of Kindly Exhortation. May we have sufficient grace to differ in the Christian way, in the spirit of a Barnabas.

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The Book Worm



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THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE DICTIONARY, edited by J. D. Douglas (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois), 1980, hardback, 1,776 pages in 3 volumes, \$99.95.

If I sound excited about this dictionary, it is because I am excited! This is the most up-to-date, colorful, and comprehensive Bible dictionary available. It is unique, too, in its wide range of quality scholarship and visual helpfulness.

This 3-volume set is handsomely bound in a strong long-lasting brown hardback, with gold lettering on the spine, and comes with a full-color illustrated and laminated dust jacket. The pages are 8½" x 11" and are exceptionally well-designed and easy to use. A laser phototypesetting technique was used with a clear type-face to ensure easy readability.

Over the past five years 166 archaeologists and Bible scholars have been working to bring together *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. It features 2,150 entries in alphabetical order on all the books, people and major doctrines of the Bible. Background information on the history, geography, customs and cultures also aids the reader's understanding. A 6,000-word index and a comprehensive system of marginal and cross-references is also available.

Your understanding of the Bible subject will be greatly enhanced by over 1,100 photographs--most in full color--and accurate explanatory line drawings. Over 200 specially commissioned maps and over 250 charts and diagrams, including plans of cities and buildings, historical tables, and a wealth of efficiently presented information makes this a dictionary that you will return to often.

Some may complain that this is too much money to spend on a Bible dictionary. I don't think any amount of money would be too much if it helps make the Bible come alive for you! This 3-volume set will provide hours of reading enjoyment and pleasure to everyone who is really interested in understanding the Bible. Don't buy this set if you're just wanting a dust collector, but if you are truly looking for a good reference tool--I'd heartily recommend this set.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE PROBLEM PAGE by Roy H. Lanier, Sr. (Quality Publishers: Abilene, Texas), 1984, paperback, 240 pages in Volume I and 237 pages in Volume II, \$5.95 each.

As the title suggests, the material found in this book is a compiling of materials taken from *The Problem Page* in the *Firm Foundation*. Reul Lemmons, past editor of the paper, said of Lanier: "We did not always agree with Roy, nor he with us, but we both respected each other and the bond of love between us was strong. One thing we especially liked was the fact he was always fair with his opponents; he never misrepresented them nor tried to attribute to them a position they did not hold. His mind was always open to the possibility that he might be in error, and he never reached the place where he felt he had nothing else to learn."

Each volume is arranged in alphabetical order. The first volume covers A to G (starting with Alien Sinners, Attendance, Autonomy, & Authority and goes through the Godhead). The second volume starts with Grace, Heaven, Hell, Holy Spirit, and Indwelling and covers a wide range of subjects down to Women, The Word, and Worship.

Although I disagree with the author's section on Orphan Homes, I still think this is a wonderful book to study. It contains such a wide variety of subjects, one will return to it often.

COME FLY WITH ME by Frank Basile (Charisma Publications: Indianapolis, Indiana), 1984, paperback, 51 pages, \$5.00.

The author of this little book presents speeches, seminars and workshops all across the United States and Canada under the sponsorship of universities, trade associations, chambers of commerce, professional societies and private companies. His topics include motivation, goal setting, time management, human relations, personal growth, stress, communications, sales, management and real estate maintenance.

Basile desires to help each reader get the most out of life. This book is small, but it is powerful. It is crammed with practical ideas that persons of every age group can apply. The book is divided into sections dealing with motivation, goals, plan, desire, self-confidence, determination, and not only a conclusion to the book--but a conclusion to your life.

Many people don't like where they are in life, but they don't have the courage to do anything in order to change it. This little book can give you that courage; it can help you set those needed goals and have the confidence and determination to achieve them. I'm sure you will enjoy reading this little motivational book.

HANDBOOK FOR BIBLE TEACHERS AND PREACHERS by G. Campbell Morgan (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1982, paperback, 301 pages, \$8.95.

This volume is an unabridged edition of *The Living Messages of the Books of the Bible*, a four-volume set originally published in 1912.

Morgan began preaching in England at the age of twelve. He held many pastorates, wrote more than sixty books, and is best remembered for lectures in England, America, and throughout the world. He maintained that the central message of each book of the Bible must be familiar and

thoroughly understood before a teacher or preacher can effectively interpret its message. Over the years, he made keynotes for all sixty-six books of the Bible.

This handbook takes each Bible book, supplies background material, and then offers an easy-to-follow commentary with contemporary applications. At the beginning of each chapter, Morgan puts outlines called "The Permanent Values" and then highlights one or two outstanding verses in the book under a section called "The Living Message."

THE GOD OF THE TOWEL by Jim McGuiggan (Montex, Publishing Co.: Lubbock, Texas), 1984, paperback, 196 pages, \$7.95.

"There were thirteen men in the upper room that night. Twelve lords and one servant. Yes, twelve lords and one servant! Only one in that room knew anything about service. The others had just been having a quarrel over who was the greatest. And Jesus does a servant's work. . . . He rose to stoop. He manifested his Godhood in serving. He rose from supper, took off his outer garments, wrapped a towel around himself, poured water in a basin and proceeded to offend Peter by serving. . . . this incident was only one more marvellous illustration of the spirit and character of God made manifest."

The above words are found in the introduction to chapter seven of this book and from which the title came. This little book takes a good look at the disciple's Lord and then at the disciple's response to that Lord. The book is divided into main sections--understanding God and then understanding the disciple. The chapter titles in section 1 are "The God Who Loves Humans," "The God Who Died," "The God Who Majors in Forgiveness," "The God Who is Holy," "The God Who Loves the Weak," "The God Who Acquits Criminals," "The God Who Wore A Towel," "The God Who Made Yokes," "The God Who Permits Suffering," and "The God Who Came Talking." The chapter titles of section 2 are "The Disciple and Brotherhood," "The Disciple and The Call to Holiness," "The Disciple's Model," "The Disciple and Maturity," "The Disciple and Service," "The Disciple and The Weak," "The Disciple and Evangelism," and "The Disciple and Self-Denial."

McGuiggan is convinced that true conversion is the proper response to a Person, Jesus Christ. This book shows that Jesus does more than teach or reveal the law of God--He is the law of God, embodied. The aim of the book is to give a little assistance to those who want to be more than just church members. McGuiggan is trying to reach those who want to really be disciples! If you are seeking to be more and more like Jesus, then have your Bible close at hand and find an enjoyment in reading this book and studying the Scriptures.

MRS. PREACHER by Karen Norheim (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1985, paperback, 139 pages, \$3.95.

What things should you consider before marrying a preacher? What are the attitudes of the community and church toward a minister's wife? Does a preacher's wife have her own identity? What does a preacher's wife expect of herself? Is there added stress for a preacher's wife? How do you deal with criticism? Will there be adequate time to spend with the family? Should a preacher's wife try to develop close friendships within the congregation? Is the preacher overpaid or underpaid? Is there an advantage to owning your own home? How can the local church encourage the preacher's wife?

These and other questions are answered in this little book. Here's a book with real facts taken from a survey done among approximately 250 ministers' wives who have openly shared their hopes, dreams, and frustrations. It also gives a response from nearly 250 church members from coast to coast who have also willingly participated in a survey regarding the minister's wife and her role in the church.

Every church member needs to read this book. Every preacher's wife can profit from the book, too. And I'll even go far enough to say that every preacher would profit from it, too.

UNCLE RUE by Don Deffenbaugh (Deffenbaugh Press: Neosho, Missouri), 1985, hardback, 306 pages, \$12.95.

Rue Porter was a preacher of many abilities. He held his audiences spellbound. His style may be described as "untrained eloquence" and was not the kind one would learn in school. He was also a debater, holding more than forty oral and written discussions on a

variety of religious subjects. He had an interest in the music of the church and wrote both the words and music to several songs. He helped compile song books and had one song book of his own. He was a well-respected writer through the pages of *Christian Worker*.

This book is a biography of Roland Rudolph "Uncle Rue" Porter. It covers everything from his birth to his marriage, his preaching, his writings, and his death. Biographies always help us to understand what has happened in past years of church history. This will be an enjoyable volume to add to your shelf of biographies.

BARNES NOTES ON THE NEW TESTAMENT by Albert Barnes (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1982, hardback, 1,761 pages, \$34.95.

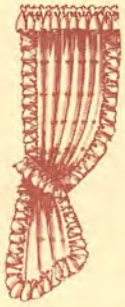
Barnes' Notes has been among the favorites of commentaries for many years. It is comprehensive, easily understood, and challenging in its interpretations of many verses. Kregel Publications has now taken the eleven volumes and published this complete and unabridged work in one volume. Verse-by-verse, Barnes covers the entire New Testament, carefully and understandably, explaining every verse and offering a practical application to the passage.

The author received academic degrees from Hamilton College and Princeton Theological Seminary. He preached for the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for 37 years, during which time he found time to prepare his series of commentaries. Although he occasionally slips in some of his Presbyterian theology, he is usually conservative and reliable.

The advanced Bible student may desire a large set of commentaries, but if I could only recommend one single-volume commentary it would have to be this one. It meets a need today just as great as it did when it was first published.

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A Woman's Point Of View



THE BLESSINGS OF A PREACHER'S WIFE

by Barbara C. Adams

Tonight is the 23rd of December. In another week a new year will be upon us. It, naturally, is a time for reflection and a time to count our blessings. We are blessed because we live in America and are free to worship God in the way He commanded us; we are blessed because we have plenty to eat and warm houses in which to live while people in other parts of the world are starving. But there is one blessing that I share with a relative few in this world. It is a blessing that I prize very highly and one that I am thankful God gave me the freedom and opportunity to choose—I am blessed in that I chose to become a preacher's wife.

I can almost hear some now saying: "That's a strange thing to say. She must be off her rocker in some way. A preacher's wife can't be thankful or call that a blessing. Why she is often criticized and put on the spot. Her husband is often gone for days at a time and she is alone. Her children are in the spotlight and their actions minutely inspected. Preachers never make much money or have fine houses. They must move every so often. How can she call that a blessing?"

Yes, I can hear all these comments, even though unspoken. And I grant that most of them are true. But I still count it a blessing. Until recently, I never gave it much thought. I just went along from day to day doing what had to be done. However, some recent events have prompted me to reflect on this blessing. Perhaps my reflections can help a few others to appreciate their lot in life a little more and also

cause others to choose this way, if the choice presents itself.

Recently, I have heard some voice the opinion that they did not want to be a preacher's wife or that they did not want their little girl to become a preacher's wife. I have heard of boys who want to give up preaching because their sweethearts did not want to be preacher's wives. You know, I never gave that a whole lot of thought. Maybe my mother wishes I had; but if so, she never spoke that thought. She did tell me that she wanted me to help make my husband a good one. Those of you who know him can judge how well I succeeded!

What is the life of a preacher's wife really like? There are others who have been "at it" far longer than I and who could tell far more about it, I am sure; but tonight let me give you some of my thoughts.

It will soon be twenty-eight years since I decided to take that 'giant step' and I never have been sorry for one minute. It has not always been smooth sailing or an easy course to follow. I have made a lot of mistakes — for these, I am truly sorry — but God forgives a preacher's wife on the same basis He forgives anyone else. The brethren where we have lived have "put up with," encouraged, laughed, and even cried with us on various occasions. For this, I am grateful. Without their help, I never could have "made it," I suppose.

I do not believe that I was consciously trained to become a preacher's wife. However, I never was

discouraged. It just never really concerned me too much one way or the other. We had preachers in our family (though all are either dead or liberal now), and when we could get all together, it was a wonderful time. I am sure that when I left to go to Florida College in 1949 the thought must have occurred to my parents that I might marry a preacher, since that institution was (and is) well known for the marriages that are created there. I am an "only child" and when I left for college it was for good, except for short, infrequent visits. That is not the way I would like for it to be. However, because of our work it has had to be like that. So, being an only child is no excuse for not becoming a preacher's wife.

Next week is the twentieth birthday of our older son. Some of you will remember where he was born. Not in some comfortable American hospital in my hometown, to be sure. No, he was born in a University hospital in Bergen, Norway, thousands of miles from either of our homes and parents, with a doctor who was a Communist and nurses and attendants who did not speak or understand English. It was not an easy time. We had few friends there then, having been in Norway only four months. At the time, I came as close to not caring about anything as I ever have. But I thank God that I did not entirely give in. Even then, I did not regret being a preacher's wife. What I am saying is this: There may be times when you, as a preacher's wife, will have to leave this country. It is almost certain that you will have to leave your hometown and parents. But as Jesus said in Luke 14:26 "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

This is a time of protest and discontent. The younger generation are critics of the older generation. They say we are materialistic. But I just wonder what it is when a boy decides not to preach because the girl he wants to marry just does not want to move around every so often, or does not want to leave her parents or her hometown. She wants the security of a job and a house in one locality all her life. Is this materialism? What else?

Preacher's wives are not a special breed. Why, God did not even give us

special admonitions as he did the wives of elders and deacons. We have the same admonitions as all other women. However, there are a few commands which certainly pertain to a preacher's wife.

As with other Christians, we dare not to gossip or bear tales. No Christian should do this. And certainly not a preacher's wife. She is in a position to know things about other Christians which do not need to be made public. Things are said to her and her husband in confidence and she needs to be able to keep such knowledge to herself, lest it hurt the person, her husband, and even the congregation. In fact, some things her husband should not even tell her. If I had any one piece of advice to give any girl who is about to marry a preacher, it would be, "Keep your mouth shut!" Neither is it her business to advertise decisions that the elders make, or, for that matter, to try to tell the elders or her husband which decisions to make.

And which of us has not at some time engaged in a little self-pity? Some are more prone to this than others. But a Christian has no right or need to do this. We are called to serve God wherever and whenever we can. The preacher's wife cannot afford self-pity. There will often be times when her husband will be called away to the hospital to sit with a family during an operation; or to a funeral home after a sudden death; or to a person's home during a trying time when a marriage is on the brink of failure; or even to a local jail to help somebody in trouble. She must wait at home with a supper pushed to the back of the stove or in the oven. Or, he may be gone for several days at a time in a gospel meeting clear across the country, or to a lectureship, or to a debate. Maybe he will even be involved in his work half-around the world.

I have never asked my husband not to go where he thought he was needed for God's work. Yet, I must confess that I came close in 1971 when he and J.T. Smith decided to go to the Philippine Islands. I knew there would be physical danger involved in such a trip; it would mean that the children and I would be alone for an entire month. What if one of the children got seriously ill? Or what if I became sick? However, I agreed that he should go. In fact, I knew he would go before he even finished telling me of the need.

For some reason, I have always believed that it was up to me to let him go and that it was up to God to take care of him. So far, it has worked out that way. How glad I am now that he and brother Smith went. Because of their efforts and the efforts of others who have gone, the brethren there have been helped immensely. By mail, I have come to know many of those people. They have had many difficulties and troubles which many of us would find unbearable. Would I be willing for him to go again? You bet I would!

Congregations often expect too much of the preacher's wife. They seem to think that for some reason they "own" her and should be able to tell her what to do and how to do it. This attitude can cause problems. Let me hurriedly and thankfully say that I have never really faced this problem. The congregations where we have worked have been very considerate along this line; but I do know that such things have happened. Just because the church owns the house in which the preacher lives or pays the rent for him, does not give the members the right to tell the wife how to run her house. This is their home for the time that they live there.

Neither does the congregation "hire" the preacher's wife. For the first twenty years we were married, I did a lot of secretarial work for my husband and the church. I knew how to do such work and was glad to do it. With one exception, I have never been paid for such work. However, a congregation has no right to expect more from a preacher's wife along this line than from any other woman in the congregation.

A preacher is not always as well paid as some in this life. He does not have many fringe benefits which workers in plants or offices have. Few churches pay social security, health insurance premiums, or pension plans. Yet, I do not know of many churches that will deny a preacher an extra day off at a holiday season or fail to continue his salary during a long, drawn-out illness. Though your daughter may not always have the "most" in this life, you can rest assured that there are fringe benefits which few others will ever have.

What am I talking about? For one thing: friends. Yes, our friends...from Maine to California; Washington to Florida; in Canada, Norway and the

Philippines. We would not trade these acquaintances for any amount of money on earth. These are people with whom we have worked through the years and who now have scattered around the country and the world. They include preachers, and, yes, their wives. They include sons and daughters of preachers who have grown up and married in the past few years. Whole congregations are included. These are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and all of them are (or should be) striving toward the same goal—an eternal home in heaven. These friends are the finest people on earth.

These "preacher-wife" years have meant a broader education for my children and me than would have been possible had we always lived in the same place. How else could we have seen the midnight sun of Norway; the snow of northeast Ohio; the blastoff of a rocket at Cape Kennedy; the rock-bound coast of Maine; the lakes of Ontario; the cathedral of Worms, Germany where Martin Luther took his stand? I do not mean for this to sound as if we have been to these places for just the fun of traveling. That is not it at all. The work came first and that is what took us to these places, but I would be foolish to let you think that it did not benefit our lives. It has even helped our children in their school work.

One of the greatest fringe benefits is being the constant recipients of the prayers of the congregation. Who else has God's blessing invoked upon them in public prayers as much as the preacher and his family?

Most of all, a preacher's wife develops a better understanding of people and a desire to have a part in the saving of their souls. Who could describe the frame of mind a preacher is in after someone has obeyed the gospel, or a wayward church member has repented, or some evidence is seen of good resulting from your husband's efforts? Could it just be that I did have some part in making that possible? If so, then it has been worth it after all.



Editorial note: The preceding article appeared in *Searching The Scriptures* in March 1978. It contained truths back then that needed to be said and I'm convinced that these same truths need to be heard again today.

Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

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THEY ALL MADE EXCUSE

Text: Luke 14:15-24

I. A Parable of Excuses

- A. Many great lessons are set forth in this parable
- B. First man's excuse: had bought some land and had to go look it over
 1. His problem: materialism
 2. Many today have the same problem
- C. Second man's excuse: bought five yoke of oxen and needed to go prove them
 1. His problem: his business came first
 2. Same attitude of many today
- D. Third man's excuse: had just been married
 1. Perhaps most legitimate of all
 2. His problem: putting family ahead of the Lord

II. Man's History: A History of Excuses

- A. Excuses have been offered since the beginning of time
- B. People today are no different

III. Some Other Excuses Heard Today

- A. Don't know enough about the Bible
- B. The life of a Christian is just too hard
- C. I have tried and failed

Conclusion

1. What's your excuse?
2. In a similar parable in Matt. 22:1-14, one came to a wedding feast without a wedding garment. He was asked by king his reason, "...he was speechless"
3. In the day of judgment, our excuses will not avail
4. We are now invited to the "great supper," a spiritual feast, let us not make excuse but rather let us accept the gracious invitation

GIVE ME THY HEART

Introduction

1. God gives us many things
2. He requires one gift of us - "My son, give me thy heart" (Prov. 23:26)

I. What Is the Heart That God Requires?

- A. Heart defined: "Man's entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and emotional elements. In other words, the heart is used figuratively for the hidden springs of the personal life." (Vine's Expository Dict.)
- B. Our intellect, emotions and will

II. How Do We Give Our Hearts to God?

- A. By giving our intellect to Him
 1. By reading and studying His word with an open mind
 2. Richness of its truth can be seen by the one free of prejudice - I Cor. 1:18-29
- B. By giving our emotions to Him

1. By loving Him, by loving what He loves, by hating what He hates
2. By loving His Son and our fellowman, by hating sin
- C. By giving our will in obeying His commands and determining to serve Him all the days of our lives

Conclusion

1. What is the condition of your heart? It can:
 - a. Be hardened - Heb. 3:15
 - b. Die and cause to be as stone - I Sam. 25:37
 - c. Be honest and good, receptive to good seed of God's word - Luke 8:15
2. Who owns your heart? Why not give it to God?

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

Introduction

1. Text: I Sam. 17:1-51
2. Text contains one of the most thrilling accounts of courage that can be found
3. Story has come under suspicion
4. Goliath was a worthy adversary whom David was willing to engage in battle

I. Courage of David

- A. Where did David find his courage
 1. Not in his personal size or strength
 2. Not because of his military armament
 3. Not because of numbers or support of others
- B. Strength, courage, found in his great faith in God
 1. Knew God was with him
 2. Knew "the battle is the Lord's" - v. 47

II. Old Testament Examples of God's Ways of Victory

- A. Jericho given to Joshua in most unusual way - Joshua 6
- B. Gideon's victory over the Midianites not by usual methods - Judges 7

III. Today the Battle Is the Lord's

- A. Was in 1st century
 1. Seen in garden of Gethsemane - John 18:8-11
 2. Wisdom and courage of Paul - 2 Cor. 10:1-6, 13-18
- B. Need to recognize it now
 1. Lord needs men and women of deep faith and courage
 2. Must conquer "giants" of today
 3. Can if we will acknowledge "the battle is the Lord's"

Conclusion

Each one of us should have the courage of David to meet the giants of today.

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The Family Affair

***END-OF-SCHOOL NOTE.** Take a moment to jot a note to your child's school teacher. Thank them for the interest they pour into your child and express your appreciation. A similar note to a Bible class teacher, scout leader, or anyone else involved regularly with your child could really make their day. Everyone needs sincere praise and encouragement.

***COLLEGE FINALS.** Do you have a son or daughter away from home in college? If so, it is about time for all of those college finals. This often brings about typical bouts of depression, restlessness, tenseness, or homesickness. Take a few minutes this week to encourage him or her by assembling an "Ecclesiastes 12:12 Survival Kit," to which every family member contributes. (Look up the verse to see why it's appropriate). Include such things as cookies (traditional homemade are best); pizza coupons, blank flashcards, Kool-ade envelopes, and homemade bookmarks with encouraging notes such as "You can do it!" "Study hard!" "We're praying for you!" or "Can't wait till you get home!" Decorate the package with colorful stickers and send it early enough to arrive during the reading period.

***PLAYED SCRABBLE LATELY?** If you don't have this game, get one. It's super for building vocabularies, spelling skills and word relationships, and adapts to most any age level. If your children are younger, limit the words to three or four letters...or to animals or fruit, etc. Let them use the dictionary if they want to. You'll have plenty of time later on to play by the rules.

***OLD SAYINGS.** For a fun time after dinner one night this week, quiz your children on how many old sayings they know and understand. Write out the first half of the adage and ask them to fill in the rest. Sayings such as:

"Don't put all your eggs in. . .", "Don't bite the hand that. . .", "All is fair in love and. . .", "Don't count your chickens before. . .", "If at first you don't succeed. . .", and "Children should be seen and. . .", etc. You'll be amazed at what answers turn up and the discussion that follows. Then try giving the first half of Bible proverbs, such as: "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is. . ." (Prov. 21:6). Let them look up the answers then talk about them.

***SECURITY COIN.** When your child starts going places on his own (or off to kindergarten), give him a dime or quarter (depending on the cost of a pay-phone in your city) folded into a piece of paper with your office phone number on it. Tell him, "Anytime you need me, just call at the office. Tell them you want to talk to your dad, and I guarantee they'll put you right through."

***HAM TIME.** Next family night, try this one on for laughs. On separate slips of paper list the following situations (or invent your own): Hitchhikers, Jaywalkers, Women at a sale, An older couple out for a stroll, A little boy trying to walk a big dog, Cars trying to get on a freeway, etc. Have each person draw a slip and act out the idea while the others try to guess what is being dramatized. Be ready for lots of laughs.

***SUMMER BUSINESS.** While your children are out of school for the summer, take them each along on a business lunch appointment or to the office for part of a day. They'll be proud to be with you and understand a lot more about what dad does.

***POP TOP.** Put an empty pop bottle in the center of the table and see which family member can stack the largest number of toothpicks or wooden matches on top.

***EMPTY TOUR.** Every child, big or little, is curious about how things

work and what goes on behind the scenes. Take your kids on a tour of an empty stadium, classroom, church building, or movie theater. With a little planning you could tour an empty train, railroad boxcar or airplane. Pick a business or industry connected with something your child enjoys and arrange for a mini-tour. The possibilities are endless.

***LET ME TELL YOU WHAT I THINK.** Take a moment from work today to think of five things you appreciate most about your marriage partner or each of your children. This evening, find a good moment to stop and tell them what they are.

***LOTS OF CONVENIENCES.** Challenge the kids during Saturday morning's breakfast to list twenty things that were not invented when you were their age (waterbeds, blow dryers, trash compactors, skateboards, etc.). Ask which we would be better off without. And cap the conversation with some prayers of thanksgiving for all the conveniences and good things you enjoy as a family!

***I CAN REMEMBER.** Storytelling is easy if you focus on "when you were little" themes. Kids of any age are always interested in adventures you had as a child, the times you got in trouble and what happened, how many spankings you had, and what you and your childhood friends did for entertainment. Sharing the lessons you learned, too, will turn the tables into "teachable moments" of great value.

***THE BEST TOYS WE'VE EVER HAD.** Grab two cardboard cartons on the way home from work tonight (the best ones are the large ones stoves or dishwashers come in). Cut some holes and doors in them and turn your toddlers loose to decorate and play with them anyway they wish. The simple toys which involve imagination are still the best.

***LEARNING HOSPITALITY.** Guest night can be a very happy tradition for your family. Choose a weekly or monthly time, like Friday evenings or Sunday noons, when you share a meal with some guests. Focus on a rotation of good friends, families in the neighborhood, friends at church, and some "strangers" you'd like to reach out to. Involve the whole family in selecting the guests and preparing the meal and activities. What your children learn about friendship, sharing, and hospitality will stick with them a life time.

The Need For Fellowship In The Gospel

by Dudley Ross Spears

The evangelization of the world is a great partnership. The work of spreading the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth is the happy privilege of God's people. A passage that brings this forcefully to our minds is Paul's statement to the Galatians. *"But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things"* (Gal. 6:6). This passage seems to set the tone of partnership in the spreading of the gospel. The verb of the text can be translated, "let him participate with." It leaves the impression of "going shares" in a mutual undertaking, therefore the preaching of the word is shared both by those who do the teaching and those who are taught. Some have understood the verse as a basis for individual saints to share financially with those who teach. The sharing, however, is in *"all the good things"* of this text.

Congregations of God's people are sharers in the preaching of the gospel also. Paul wrote to the good brethren at Philippi, *"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now"* (Phil 1:5). Then again in verse 7, he said, *"... I have you in my heart, inasmuch as, both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace."* Some have concluded that the "fellowship" for which Paul is so thankful is the "gift" that is mentioned in Phil. 4:15, and while surely that is part of it, it by no means is all of it. Paul was not merely thankful that the Phillippians sent to his necessity a donation of money, or its equivalent. He was thankful mainly for their share of his preaching. That they had participated in such a great work outweighed any personal consideration Paul may have had. He said, *"not that I seek for the gift, but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account"* (Phil. 4:17).

The need for such a fellowship in the gospel is great. It is as great as the scope of the great commission, all the world and to every creature. It is difficult to conceive how the gospel

could be preached to the whole world without fellowship. While the serious thinker will recognize this at once, the attempts to implement it have led to some serious errors. Alexander Campbell based his support for the missionary society on the principle that there must be fellowship or cooperation in preaching the gospel. His error was that he applied this to local churches amalgamating into a society of churches. I remember the first time I read the *Otey-Briney Debate*, how impressive the appeal was that Briney made. He said,

"Now the way in which the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, is to sustain it. Preach it in the world. Carry it to the children of men, unto the uttermost parts of the earth. This presents to our mind the great purpose and function of the body of Christ, or the church of the living God, or the kingdom of heaven. Now, my dear friends, I think it is obvious to every mind that in this regard the church cannot act as a whole. I take it that the term is used in this passage in its general sense, and equivalent to the body of Christ" (pp. 161-162).

Briney's view of the body of Christ was a body made up of local churches, all functioning through one common directorate to spread the gospel. Like Campbell, the need was recognized, but the application was deficient.

How is this fellowship to be implemented? The answer comes directly from inspired writing. Paul said that the fellowship he and the Philippians had was a mutual sharing in the work and benefits. The work consisted of Paul preaching, the Philippians supporting him financially and born receiving from God fruit in their account in heaven. It may not be pressing this too far to say that fruit is gathered at the harvest time. The more that this partnership functions, the more fruit there will be to gather at the end of our labors here on earth. We are woefully and sadly failing in building up for a great harvest at the last day. Someone has said, "God keeps an exact

account of every penny laid out upon him and his, that he may requite it, and his retributions are more than bountiful." Fellowship is needed in the gospel today from churches and preachers who are willing to spend and be spent for the spread of the word.

While financial support of a preacher who takes the word to others is needful, there is more to the fellowship than money. People who are partners in an endeavour that really means something to them do more than contribute money. They work, plan, pray, encourage and assist one another in every way possible. Consider a preacher overseas, who gets a check once a month from a church here in the USA. While he appreciates the help with which he can take the word to other, often there is something lacking. It is fellowship when he gets the check, but it is not the fullest kind of fellowship. To know that those who finance the work of preaching are actually behind the work, pray about, show outward interest in it and who are willing to do everything they can to assist the preaching, is a great blessing to a man in some isolated place trying to save others. As a suggestion, elders could encourage members to write personal letters to the preachers being supported financially. What a great project this would be for a Bible class!

To share in the gospel that a man preaches means that some will labor or work with him. Paul was thankful for the women at Philippi who had worked with him, and urged his true yokefellow, *"to help those women who labored with me in the gospel"* (Phil. 4:3). Could one of them been a Lydia who had provided Paul with housing and put him in touch with those who would hear him preach? It seems that "those women" were really Euodias, and Syntyche, for the pronoun here refers to them. It is possible that their differences sprang from differences in how to work in the gospel. All such dissension detracts from the effectiveness of preaching. To work together in the gospel under strife and factionalism is nearly futile. Working together in the work of preaching

demands agreement, laying aside petty and minor matters over which differences arise. Sharing in a great work like preaching is too blessed for such triviality.

The local church is the largest possible functional body in God's plan for evangelizing the world. When a local church becomes a partner in preaching, it cannot be a partner with another church, but with a preacher of the word. Congregations did not amalgamate or form a cooperative. Either one local church sent directly to the preacher (Phil. 1:5; 4:14-16) or several churches sent directly to a preacher. (2 Cor. 11:7-8). This is the only cooperation or fellowship taught in the New Testament in evangelism that I can find. What need is there for any other? This is sufficient and effective. The gospel went to the uttermost parts of the world by the time the New Testament was completed. Paul wrote to the Romans, "*First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world*" (Rom. 1:8). See also, Col. 1:23. They did it with the simple plan God gave, viz., local churches

sending men or sending directly to them.

It was in this way that darkness was dispelled and that the sound of great news rang through every village and hamlet of the first century. Paul commended the Philippians for letting their light shine by holding forth the word of life. (Phil. 2:15-16) and said that the Thessalonians were examples to others for the word had sounded forth from them. (1 Thess. 1:7-8). All they needed was the opportunity. What do we need today? We need not the opportunity--we need the motivation. While they lacked neither, we lack the fires that move one to sacrifice to cause the gospel to be spread. We live in a world as dark, if not darker, than the first century church did. They were known by their preaching. For what are we known? We may be known for nice air-conditioned, carpeted buildings, excellent preaching and huge bank accounts, but the lasting memorial for any group of Christians is their account with God in heaven.

All of this can start with you. Yes, you--the one reading this article. Start

now to be a partner in the gospel of Christ. Preach it and help others preach it. Encourage congregations to liberally support worthy men who are willing to go far and wide with the message. Write letters to men who are in far away places and keep up a regular correspondence with them. Give individually to worthy men who preach and encourage others to do likewise. There is no greater work. I believe it was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said,

"The human race is divided into two classes--those who go ahead and do something, and those who sit still and inquire why it was done in that way instead of another."

The question before each of us should be, which category am I in now? So, if it starts with you, infects another, and another and on and on, eventually, we will, like the first century church, take the gospel to the whole creation. But fellowship is needed.

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The Less Traveled Path

by Bruce Everett

Walking down the road I came to a large woods where the road forked. In one direction was a very broad road which was well worn; full of ruts and potholes from the many travelers who chose that particular route. The other fork led down a narrow path which went straight into the woods. The woods were full of pitfalls and thorns and other obstructions, but the path seemed safe, though narrow and less traveled. I chose the less traveled path.

Along the way I met others and we enjoyed each others' fellowship while we strove to reach our common goal. Some were faster than others and some had more abilities but all traveled in harmony, helping one another toward our destination. There were stretches of emptiness along the way where no

other person could be seen. Some had family and friends who had taken the other path while they walked this one alone. But, the path was safe and long as I did not stray and followed it faithfully I was comforted and at peace. And for those who remained on the path there was promised a great reward.

In my journeying I noticed some who would wander off the path, into the woods trying to find another way through on their own. At times you could see the broad road through the trees and there seemed to be great excitement going on with all those who traveled it. However, every once in a while a stranger who had left the broad way would find his way through the woods to this less traveled little path

and walk with us. They told of lies and deception, of unfulfilled promises and wickedness along that way and of a great calamity that was at the end of the road. Some stayed with us to the end while others merely crossed our path and wandered off following their own way or turned back to the multitudes blindly following each other to destruction.

The road is life and the decision we make at the fork could well determine our eternal destiny unless we change. Jesus said, "*Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad which leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it*" (Matthew 7:13,14). Which way have you chosen? The path less traveled has made the lives of all who travel it better and fuller; it is the way of safety and freedom. The promises to those who follow this narrow way are attainable and can be seen afar off. Christians strive together for those promises. Won't you come with us down the less traveled path?

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

ARISE, O LORD

(Chapter 10)

In this psalm there is presented the cry of a troubled heart against what appears to be Divine indifference to the injustice and brutality of wicked men. There is special benefit here for the righteous in all times of persecution and oppression.

THE COMPLAINT (v. 1)

"Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?" Is God like most men of flesh who just don't want to get involved? Is he as the priest and Levite of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan who passed by on the other side?

To those who suffer unjustly, He often seems to be as these. He can help. Why does He stand afar off? Why does He hide? Is He a fair weather friend? Oh, but let us remember that there may be a "need be." Peter wrote: *"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations. . ."* (I Pet. 1:6).

DESCRIPTION OF THE WICKED (v. 2-11)

"The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices they have imagined." Two charges are laid down. First, there is pride. It is the root cause. Next, there is tyranny. It is the effect.

The request is reasonable and just. *"For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"* (Mark 7:2).

"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." The charges are not without evidence. We behold the pride of the wicked in their boasting. They boast of their

accomplishments and their intentions (James 4:13-16). They honor the very ones whom God abhorreth, and slobber their flattery upon the covetous. Even in the church, covetous people are received and treated as respectable members. If one is a drunkard or a fornicator, we cast him out. But who ever heard of church discipline being exercised against the covetous? Yet, the case of Ananias and Sapphira involved this sin (Acts 5). Covetousness is mentioned in the same contexts as sins we deem to be much more grievous (I Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:3-5).

"The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." Spurgeon wrote: **"Proud hearts breed proud looks and stiff knees."** Pride (as well as humility) is written on one's face. Pride will keep one from seeking God because God is not in the thoughts of the proud. That's one place where God is not!

"His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of His sight; as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them." The road to hell is a rough, bumpy road. People speak of God's way being hard, but the Bible says the way of the transgressor is hard. God's commandments *"are not grievous"* (I John 5:3).

God's judgments are far above the proud. The wicked may hold his head high, but not high enough to comprehend the things of God. They are foolishness to him (I Cor. 2:14). He puffeth (sneers, threatens, holds in disdain) his enemies.

"He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity." Oh, the empty pride of the wicked! He thinks himself a privileged

character. He's on an endless winning streak! No one can touch him! Foolish man! He has built his house on the sand. Pride goeth before destruction.

"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity." Having established evidence for the charge of pride, the writer goes now to the charge of tyranny. These go hand in hand. Pride begets cruelty.

Jesus said, *"By thy words. . . thou shalt be condemned."* The mouth of the wicked is full of self-condemnation. He curses God and man. He speaks words of deceit. He breaks oaths, and robs his fellowman. Look under his tongue. Find mischief and vanity.

"He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places does he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den; he lieth in wait to catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones."

With the cunning of a lion and a hunter, the wicked prey on the unsuspecting. We may think of con-artists who hoodwink the simple and innocent. We may think of sharp business men, landlords, and employers who use their advantage to oppress the poor. We may think of the whisperers who watch, slander, bear false witness, and seek to ruin the reputation of others. The picture is of those who take every unfair advantage to further their own aims. If a fool is born every minute, at least a dozen are born to pick him clean.

"He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it." Ever the practical atheist, he lives as if God will not bring every thought and deed into judgment.

GOD SEES (v. 12-15)

"Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble." Again the psalmist cries in anguish to God. He seems to be asking, "Are you going to stand for this, Lord? Do something!"

"Wherefore doth the wicked contain God? He has said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it." He contemns (despises) God because he doesn't believe God is just. He mocks at the idea of his sin bringing punishment. The writer knows better. He says:

"Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite

it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless."

This is spoken to God. He does see. There is no hiding or fleeing from Him. He will arise to judgment. He will help the oppressed. "Break thou the arm of the wicked and evil man:" Remove his power and authority.

"...seek out his wickedness till thou find none." Root out the evil.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING
(v. 16-18)

"The LORD is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land. LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to

hear: To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress." Let us remember that the Lord is not blind to the needs of his people. He sees. He shall arise to judgment.

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Thoughts on Phrases

by C.R. Duane

"The Gift of the Holy Spirit"

To say that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian is one thing; but to say that He does so **personally** is another altogether. For the first statement we have an abundance of Scripture; but for the second we have none. Therefore, to assert, as though quoting the Holy Writ verbatim, that the Spirit of God **personally** indwells the child of God is to make a purely human assumption "above that which is written" (cf. I Cor. 4:6).

In his preface to K. C. Moser's *Way of Salvation*, Cled Wallace observed that the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit was "a sensitive point with the author" (pp. 6-7). Fifty years later, it remains just as "sensitive" with some, if not more so.

Allow me to reiterate, the issue is not **if** the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian, but **how**. Is it "by faith," as Jesus lives and dwells in us (cf. Gal. 2:20 & Eph. 3:17), or shall we suppose otherwise? At this point the personal-indwelling advocate usually cuts loose with a barrage of Scriptures, fired in rapid succession, the most of which muddy rather than clarify the issue. Many of these texts, when viewed individually in their contexts, say nothing about the matter of indwelling, and none of them speak of a personal indwelling. This notion is already in the mind of the reader and is read **into** each passage.

One case in point is the "gift" and "promise" of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38-39. Without looking at the

context (which is the rule-of-thumb with many), the grammar permits two possible interpretations: 1) ye shall receive the gift **which is** the Holy Spirit; or 2) ye shall receive the gift which is **from or given by** the Holy Spirit. It can go either way; only the context will tell. The word "For" of verse 39 certainly connects "the promise" with verse 38, but that's all it does. We still don't know if the "gift" is or is **from** the Holy Spirit. About this time many folks will assume the rest and conclude, "It's a personal indwelling!" To do so is to ignore the entire context of Acts Two.

In the body of his sermon Peter had quoted two prophets, who made some very distinct promises: 1) "*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (ver. 21; Joel 2:32) 2) "*thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption*" (ver. 27; Psa. 16:10). Will any deny that these men "*spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*" (cf. II Pet. 1:21)?

Peter then goes on to point out that David didn't receive for himself the promise he had made; but "*being therefore a prophet,*" and certainly moved by the Holy Spirit (cf. II Sam. 23:1-2), "*he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption*" (vv. 30-31). Jesus received the promise made by the Holy Spirit through the prophet David, namely, that He would be raised from

the dead, which he was; and the miracles of Pentecost testified of this fact. Peter says, "*Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear*" (ver. 33).

But was this promise resurrection for Jesus only? In verses 38-39 when Peter says, "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,*" he goes on to say, "*For to you is the promise. . .*" What promise is he talking about? What promise had he been talking about?!? Joel called it "deliverance" or salvation. David foresaw it as the resurrection of the dead and Peter went on to say that Jesus had received that promise. But was it to Him only? Thanks be to God, the answer is no! The Bible says that Jesus is the "*firstborn from the dead*" and the "*firstfruits of them that are asleep*" (cf. Col. 1:18; I Cor. 15:20). Peter is saying that the same promise of the resurrection and eternal salvation is to "*as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him.*" What a wonderful gift!

No, our phrase does not speak of an ineffable, intangible, personal indwelling of the Spirit, but rather of that "*lively hope*" unto which the child of God has been begotten (cf. I Pet. 1:3-4).

Address Change?

If you plan on moving, please send us your change of address at least one month in advance.

You, *not the post office*, must send the change. Failure to notify us in advance will mean the post office will discard your copy of *Today* and then charge us 30¢ to notify us of your change.



WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“PATIENCE, LONGSUFFERING”

Greek Word: makrothumia

Meaning: self-restraint

Makrothumia means, literally, long (**makro**)-passioned (**thumia**). It is a word that deals with intense feelings. And it conveys the idea of willingness to put up with a great deal of very aggravating, even outrageous, behavior from another person or persons for a long time.

There are two words often rendered **patience** in the N.T. One of them is **hupomone** which denotes rugged endurance and aggressive response to hardship and trial (Jas. 1:2-4). But our word is the second, **makrothumia**. In Jas. 5:7 it occurs in its verbal form, **makrothumeo**:

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.”

In this passage James is giving instruction to brethren who are poor and oppressed. The context suggests that wealthier brethren are the ones doing the oppressing--a particularly galling circumstance (Jas. 5:1-6). James is warning these badly abused, poor brethren to resist the impulse to seek personal vengeance or to allow hatred to rob them of their souls.

This word, **makrothumia** (**makrothumeo**), that he uses implies the exercise of **“self-restraint which enables the sufferer to refrain from hasty retaliation. The opposites of ‘patience’ in this sense are great wrath and revenge”** (R.V.G. Tasker, *Tyndale Commentary*, in loc.).

The range and depth of this kind of self-restraint can be seen in the fact that the word **makrothumia** is used to describe the longsuffering of God toward sinful humanity (Rom. 2:4; I Pet. 3:20). His **makrothumia** is the precise reason for which this world has not yet been burned up:

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-

ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).

This kind of self-restraint is not easily cultivated. There are too many factors in modern society, as there were in ancient times, that conspire to make people fly off the handle. Unremitting stress is one of them. Injustice is another. Senseless, brutal, violent crime is another. And the list could be extended indefinitely. But the point is that at every turn in this life there is a temptation of one kind or another to allow righteous indignation to become vengeful hatred. And, like another demon mentioned in the scriptures, these evils hardly go out of a man but by prayer and fasting (Mt. 17:21).

“POOR”

Hebrew Word: 'ebyon

Meaning: “One in the state of wanting, a needy or poor person” (Theo. Wd. Bk. of O.T., R. Laird Harris, et. al.).

When Jesus said, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit. . .”* (Mt. 5:3), He was using a concept rich in meaning for those Jews He was teaching. The passage in Matthew uses the Gk. word **ptochos** which describes **“absolute and abject poverty”** (Wm. Barclay, *Daily Study Bible*, in loc.). But the concept underlying this Gk. word reaches far back into Israelite history by way of the Heb. word **'ebyon**.

Originally the word **'ebyon** meant simply **poor**. It was used to describe those who, for whatever reason, had come to the bottom of the financial pyramid of Israelite society and were poverty-stricken. But poverty, along with its more obvious fellow-travellers, hunger and nakedness, is followed closely by severe social and political handicaps. Consequently the word **'ebyon** came to mean not only **poor** but **“because poor, therefore having no influence or power, or help, or prestige”** (Barclay, *Ibid.*).

Because of the gradual permeation of Israelite society by envy and greed the word **'ebyon** took another step in

its development. It came to mean, not only the person who was penniless and therefore without power or influence, but also **“because having no influence, therefore down-trodden and oppressed by men”** (Barclay *Ibid.*). The prophets of the 8th century, B.C., testified to the extensive oppression of the **poor**:

“The LORD stands up to plead, And stands to judge the people.

The LORD will enter into judgment With the elders of His people

And His princes:

For you have eaten up the vineyard:

The plunder of the poor is in your houses.

What do you mean by crushing My people

And grinding the faces of the poor?

Says the LORD God of hosts.”

(Isa. 3:13-15, NKJV; cf. Amos 2:6-7; 5:12)

And because the oppression of the **poor** in Israelite society seemed without earthly remedy (because the powerful had no pity and the poor had no power) this word took an additional step in the development of its meaning. It came to refer to **“the man who, because he has no earthly resources whatever, puts his whole trust in God”** (Barclay, *Ibid.*).

The Old Testament recognizes Almighty God and the only final Defender of the Poor:

“The humble also shall increase their joy in the LORD,

And the poor among men shall rejoice In the Holy One of Israel.”

(Isa. 29:19)

And when Jesus said, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit. . .”* He was spiritualizing this concept of absolute poverty whose only remedy must come from God. He was commending the person who is wise enough to know the depths of his own spiritual poverty--his need for revelation and salvation. Until one has come to the point of sufficient humility to know the true dimensions of his need he has nothing. When he realizes and acknowledges the need he is on the threshold of the **“blessedness”** of which Jesus spoke.

The Poet's Page

THE LIFE OF RUTH

In Bethlehem there was a famine in the land,
To leave and go to Moab was Elimelech's plan.
His wife Naomi and their two sons he took,
And that dry, dusty country they forsook.

Elimelech died and much grief came into her life,
In time, each son did take a wife.
Two Moabitish women her daughters-in-law became,
Ruth and Orpah are their names.

After ten years Mahlon and Chilion also died,
Three heart-broken women cried and cried.
To Judah, Naomi and her daughters-in-law started,
But from Naomi and Ruth, Orpah parted.

From Naomi, Ruth would not leave,
To her and her God she would firmly cleave.
In Bethlehem it was barely harvest time,
To earn a living, work, Ruth must find.

In the field of Boaz, a wealthy man she worked,
She was not lazy and her duty she did not shirk.
Boaz told her drink his water and eat his bread,
Each day of his food she would be amply fed.
For Naomi Ruth had much love and care,
She saved some of her field lunch and with her did share.

In time Ruth became Boaz's wife,
Much happiness came into their life.

To their home God sent a tiny baby boy,
Who was his Grandmother's "pride and joy."
A book of the Bible bears Ruth's name,
Being an ancestress of Christ is her greatest fame!

--Avis C. Porter
Natchez, MS

ODE TO BILLIE JEAN

There once was a hypochondriac
who in the church did dwell.
We knew that she was faking it
For she always looked quite well.

Sometimes she said her head hurt
or sometimes it was her feet.
It seems the pains went everywhere
And then they would repeat.

She spent her husband's earnings
On doctors far and wide.
He didn't seem to mind the waste
Nor the sin that it implied.

For surely it was sin to pretend
to be sick so much.
We let her know that we weren't
fooled over such.

We let her know that she was
headed straight for hell.
We let her know that she couldn't
be ill and look quite so well.

After a time she left the church
and went out far from us.
But she would have continued with us
if she had been one of us.

I recently saw her husband,
he looked so drawn and pale.
My heart went out to him and
I asked him, did he ail?

He said his hypochondriac had just
been buried, truth to tell,
And that all things considered,
she really looked quite well.

--Ellen Gillette
Belmont, CA

MODERN WAYS

There's change most everywhere I peek.
Believe me when I say
Folks used to take one bath a week
And religion every day!

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

DID YOU TALK TO GOD TODAY?

When you ask God in the morning
For guidance through the day,
Thank him for the many blessings
He in love has sent your way;
When you are asking aid from Heaven
Mingled with your morning prayer
A word of praise and gratitude
for all his kindly care.

When you send up your petition
On the throne of grace on high
Thank him for the many favors,
That his mercy does supply;
Be more mindful of the blessings
That his kindness does impart
And the Lord will bless you
For the joy you brought his heart.

--Eula Coe
Russellville, KY

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

In the beginning
God in His image made man,
Breathed into him the breath at life
According to His plan.

The circle unfinished
God saw man alone,
So he created for man a woman
Flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone.

Leave thy father and mother
Be faithful only to each other,
Leaving and cleaving, sharing and caring
Patient, kind and forbearing.

The circle now completed
And may it ne'er be broken
Two hearts, two halves united
Your solemn vows now spoken.

May your love for one another
Grow stronger through the years,
Your circle ever shining
Through your laughter and your tears.

Your circle may be tested
By trials and temptation,
Remember through the years to come
You're God's own Creation.

--Mary Frances Liggins
Panama City Beach, FL



HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

IDAHO AUTHORITIES SEIZE SIX CHILDREN IN RELIGIOUS DISPUTE

The State of Idaho has taken six children away from their parents and placed them in foster homes in a dispute involving a couple's religious opposition to public school education.

Sam and Marquita Shippy are members of "Followers of Christ," a small conservative Christian sect, and parents of 16 children. The six of their children that are of school age were taken from their home after they refused to agree to the state's order that they send their children to public schools.

"It isn't anything in particular about the public schools, although there are things there we object to, as much as the whole freedom issue," explained Marquita Shippy. "We should make decisions for our children, not let the state make decisions for us. We don't think the state has the right to rule our children. If we agree that they can come into our home and rule our children we wouldn't be doing what God wants us to do.

"The State says in effect that they own the children," she continued. "You have to raise them the way the State wants them raised or they'll take them away and give them to somebody else."

More than two years ago with some other families, the Shippys had incorporated a private school, the "Black Canyon Private Schools." This school used curriculum materials similar to that used by the public schools, but was only allowed to operate for a few weeks before the local school district took the parents to court and closed the school.

At that time the Shippys sent their children back to the public schools and were placed on two years probation. Marquita Shippy says three days

before their probation was up the school board took them back into court to force them to sign an agreement to continue sending their children to public school. When they refused on religious grounds they were sent to jail for three weeks, and their children were placed in foster homes.

The Shippys won't be fighting in court for custody of their children, as they oppose legal battles on religious grounds. "We believe in doing unto others as we would have them do unto us, and we don't like to be dragged into court," explained Mrs. Shippy. "We don't feel like treating people that way because we wouldn't want people to treat us that way."

The Shippys will get their children back when they agree to send them to public school, or when the legislature changes the compulsory education laws in Idaho, or at the end of the school year. Until then, they'll just be "trusting God."

"We'd like to have the children home," continued Mrs. Shippy. "But if we can't stand up for our principles, how are we going to instill them in our children? If we back down on our principles will the children understand?"

NO MORE PORNO MOVIES AT CHURCH-OWNED THEATER

Members of the First Presbyterian Church in Concord, California, who unwillingly became landlords to an X-rated theater, have now written "Closed for Good" on the Showcase Theater's marquee.

The only X-rated movie theater located in this city was purchased three years ago by the church for \$425,000. The purchase was urged by church leaders, who saw it as a way to start a community center and close a porno theater with a single transaction.

But Great Western Theaters, the chain that ran the theater, had a

provision in its lease allowing it to continue showing movies for three years following a change of landlords. Because of this provision, the church was forced to become temporary landlord for the porno theater. For three years First Presbyterian Church made mortgage payments by collecting rent from a theater which featured such films as "Debbie Does Dallas" and "Manhattan Mistress."

Some church members, embarrassed to be a part of a congregation that operated a dirty-movie house, left the church. But most stayed with the church, willing to put up with the situation temporarily, rather than allow the theater to show pornography indefinitely.

The church is now cleaning and renovating the theater. "There's a 10 year backlog of cigarette smoke," explains church member Jerry Smith.

JUDGE RULES AGAINST CREATIONISM TEACHING; CREATIONIST GROUP FILES APPEAL

A Louisiana judge has issued a summary judgement against the state's Balanced Treatment of Origins law, which requires schools to present balanced teaching in the area of creation-vs.-evolution. Judge Adrian Duplantier ruled in favor of the American Civil Liberties Union, saying in a ten-page decision that any teaching of creationism violates the establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution because the concepts of creation and a Creator are necessarily religious and implicitly unscientific.

Bill Keith, head of the Creation Science Legal Defense Fund, said "It was quite apparent from reading his decision that he did not even take the time to read our 600-page brief." The Fund has filed an appeal with the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. That court has previously overruled Judge

Duplantier on the behalf of creationists.

Keith said, "Ultimately the issue of creation-science will be settled before the U.S. Supreme Court. This temporary delay might give President Ronald Reagan the time to appoint some new Supreme Court justices, some men or women who would be fair-minded on this important issue."

In 1982 Louisiana's Balanced Treatment Act was declared unconstitutional under the state's constitution; that ruling was reversed by the U.S. Court of Appeals and the Louisiana Supreme Court. In 1984 an effort to repeal the Balanced Treatment Act failed. The current summary judgement based on the U.S. Constitution is on appeal, and creationist groups are hopeful that the state's law will be upheld.

NFD PLANS NATIONWIDE PICKET OF 7-ELEVEN STORES

A massive nationwide picket of stores selling pornography continues weekly, according to the National Federation for Decency (NFD). Organizers of the protest say their goal is to picket 5000 stores which sell pornography. The picketing is part of a continuing effort to get stores to stop selling pornography; during the past year nearly 6000 stores have stopped carrying pornographic magazines.

Several national organizations are participating in the picket, including Concerned Women of America, Citizens for Decency Through Law, American Coalition for Traditional Values, and the NFD. In addition, national ministries, including Jimmy Swaggart, are promoting the picketing.

A primary target of the protest is 7-Eleven stores. According to the NFD, 7-Eleven is the nation's leading retailer of pornographic magazines. Donald E. Wildmon, a United Methodist minister who heads the NFD, has met with 7-Eleven leaders three times, but says he was told that 7-Eleven makes too much money from the porn to discontinue sales. Wildmon said the purpose of the picketing is to draw attention to the stores which sell porn and to promote a boycott of 7-Eleven.

COURT WON'T ALLOW BURIAL OF FETUSES

More than 16,000 aborted babies taken from the back yard of a California physician will not be given a

memorial service. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that conducting a memorial service with cooperation of the local district attorney would violate provisions in the state constitution.

The battle began three years ago when Los Angeles District Attorney Robert Philibosian accepted an offer by a private non-sectarian cemetery to inter the remains of 16,500 embryos and fetuses taken from the back yard of physician Malvin Weisberg. The bodies were found preserved in storage containers filled with formaldehyde.

The Feminist Women's Health Center filed suit to prevent Philibosian from turning over the fetuses to the cemetery, insisting instead that they be incinerated. A local superior court agreed and issued a preliminary injunction. After Philibosian argued that he needed to preserve the bodies for possible future prosecution, the court agreed to allow the interment.

The case was joined by the Catholic League, which sought to conduct religious services at the cemetery. The women's center and the American Civil Liberties Union argued that the burial would unconstitutionally aid religion, since the district attorney sought burial "with the knowledge that the cemetery has contracted with a religious group for . . . the holding of a public religious memorial service."

The California Court of Appeals reversed the local court, and two appeals by Philibosian, including the latest to the U.S. Supreme Court, have been refused.

BAPTIST CONGREGATION REVOKES GAY MINISTER'S ORDINATION

On a 112-2 vote the congregation of Calvary Baptist Church in Bel Air, Maryland, voted to revoke the ordination of Brian Scott, 29, a self-professed homosexual.

Scott, now a minister at the Gay-Lesbian Christian Fellowship in Waldorf, Md., was ordained by the congregation shortly after graduating from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary of Louisville, Ky. with a master of divinity degree.

Scott said he "repressed my feelings prior to ordination" but "finally accepted myself" a year later. When Calvary Baptist Church learned that Scott was a homosexual he was asked to return his ordination papers. After he refused two requests to return

his papers, the church voted to revoke his ordination.

James R. Cole, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, says the church "did not knowingly ordain a homosexual," and added "we do not approve of homosexuality."

U.S. LEADS INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD IN TEEN PREGNANCY, BIRTHS, ABORTIONS

American teenagers become pregnant, give birth, and have abortions at significantly higher rates than teens in other industrialized nations, according to a study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute. The study also shows that the U.S. is the only developed country where teenage pregnancy has increased in recent years.

The pregnancy rate for Americans ages 15 to 19 is 96 per thousand, compared with 45 in England and Wales, 44 in Canada, 43 in France, 35 in Sweden, and 14 per thousand in the Netherlands. The teenage abortion rate for the U.S. is as high as the combined rates for abortion and births in other countries studied.

Pregnancy rates among black teens in the U.S. are still higher than the rates for white teens: 163 pregnancies per 1,000 compared to 83 per 1,000. Younger teens have even higher birth rates in the U.S. as compared with teens in other countries. With more than five births per 1,000 girls aged 14, the U.S. rate is around four times that of Canada, the only other country with as much as one birth per 1,000 girls of comparable age.

According to the study, 60 out of every 1,000 women in the U.S. have had an abortion by the time they are 18 years old, twice the rate of Sweden, and three times the rate of England and Wales.

EVOLUTIONIST OFFERS, BUT WON'T PART WITH PRIZE

Geologist Robert Dietz, who has been described as "an ardent evolutionist," issued a public challenge to creationists, offering \$1,000 to the finder of certain fossils in the Cretaceous limestone around the Paluxy River in Texas. According to evolutionary doctrine, trilobites became extinct 125 million years before dinosaurs evolved. Dietz challenged creationists to find fossil evidence that disproved this doctrine.

In response to Dietz' challenge,

Arizona State University student Robert Witter took a copy of the Bible-Science Newsletter to the Geology Department of Arizona State University. The front page of that newsletter showed a trilobite from the Paluxy formation as well as saber-toothed tiger tracks. Creationists have found trilobites with dinosaurs as well as human footprints and handprints in the Paluxy formation.

Confronted with photographic evidence, Dietz refused to award the \$1,000 prize. Dietz claimed that the evidence was not satisfactory, and claimed the fossil was from a quarry in Illinois. The fossil in question is, in fact, on display at the Somervell County Museum in Glen Rose, Texas. Witter continues to seek the reward.

MOONIES SPENT \$10 MILLION TO ENLIST CHURCH SUPPORT

An organized effort is underway to enlist public support for the Unification Church and its leader, the Rev. Moon. Approximately 300,000 ministers across the U.S. have received "a gift for you from some folks who care" — a packet of three video tapes and two books from the Unification Church. Estimated cost of this mailing is \$10 million.

Gary Leazer, a leading Southern Baptist authority on the Unification Church, said "One reason for this mass mailing is because the Unification Church has enough money to do anything it wants. But we need to remember there are only 2,000 to 4,000 fulltime members of the group in the United States."

Leazer cautioned pastors against overreacting to the mailing. "If you show any interest at all you can expect a personal visit, but if you don't want the Moonies around you just say so, and they'll leave."

The video tapes explain Unification theology on creation, the fall of man, the purpose of the messiah, God's work through history, and the second coming of Christ. One of the books is a theological work, the other is a new book containing Moon's "message from prison."

Some churches have apparently responded favorably to the material, and accepted offers of help from Moonie missionaries. "They will do anything from custodial work to painting the church to holding Bible schools and teaching Sunday school classes,"

Leazer said.

The mailing is a continuation of the church's effort to gain acceptance in Christian churches. Last summer a Unification Church affiliate hosted 200 pastors for a conference on Unification theology in Freeport, The Bahamas. All expenses for the trip including airfare, were paid by the Unification Church.

FREE COPY OF DEBATE

The Wonsley Drive Church of Christ has printed and made available written copies of the debate between Robert LaCoste and Bill Jackson. The propositions were on whether or not a congregation could give aid, from its church funds, to those who are not members of the church. For your free copy, write to: Wonsley Drive Church of Christ, 507 E. Wonsley Drive, Austin, TX 78753.

FEDERAL BUDGET DEBATE MAY THREATEN BENEFITS ENJOYED BY RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Churches and religious organizations may face a financial squeeze if some tax simplification and budget proposals now being considered are passed by Congress.

Non-profit groups that raise funds or distribute publications by mail would see their postal rates more than double this year under provisions of President Reagan's budget proposal. Rules governing retirement plans for employees of charitable organizations would change under a Treasury Department tax simplification proposal. And proposed restrictions on the tax-deductibility of charitable contributions could negatively impact charitable giving.

Reagan's budget does not include subsidy of a non-profit rate for second-class mail. If that subsidy is dropped, many religious publishers and organizations could see their postal costs more than double as soon as October. Currently the postal subsidy amounts to \$801 million for 1985, and \$981 million for 1986. Efforts to eliminate this subsidy are expected to face opposition in Congress.

Changes in benefits and retirement plans for employees of nonprofit organizations could result from tax-simplification proposals by the U.S. Treasury Department. Some of these proposals would reduce incentive

programs for retirement savings, such as matching contribution programs involving employers.

Other Treasury Department proposals would affect charitable contributions. No tax deductions would be allowed for charitable giving unless that giving exceeded two percent of one's income, under a Treasury Department proposal. The proposal would also require itemization of deductions to claim charitable contribution credit. Research indicates that while tax-deductibility is not a major motivation for charitable giving, it does often determine the size of the gift. One study estimates that the Treasury Department's proposal would result in a net decrease in charitable donations of nearly \$8 billion annually in the U.S.

EERDMANS TO TAKE OVER PUBLICATION OF CONTROVERSIAL BOOK

The William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company will take over publication of the book *Brave New People*, which InterVarsity Press dropped in response to protests from many who believed the book advocated abortion.

Written by medical biologist D. Gareth Jones, the book was written to serve as a textbook for medical students, seminarians and others interested in issues such as test tube babies, embryo transfers, cloning, and genetic engineering.

Franky Schaeffer, son of the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer, led opposition to the book, charging that it condoned abortion as a means of avoiding problems of handicapped or unwanted children. Schaeffer called for a boycott of the book and all other InterVarsity books, asserting that his father would have been horrified to see this "recent travesty, published by a company largely built on the money made with his books."

James Sire, director of InterVarsity Press, initially defended the book. While acknowledging that *Brave New People* did not hold an "absolutist" position against abortion, he said "The author does not favor abortions, but does recognize that it might be the least tragic of a number of tragic consequences." InterVarsity later stopped publishing the book, in response to pressure from critics.

HANNA-BARBARA WILL PRODUCE BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN

The company that popularized Yogi Bear and Huckleberry Hound is trying something new: animated Bible stories on video cassettes. Hanna-Barbara will spend about \$20 million over the next five years on "The Greatest Adventure: Stories From the Bible."

Already in production, the first six stories in the series include "David and Goliath," "Noah and the Ark," and "Samson and Delilah." The 30-minute tapes should be available in video by October, and are expected to sell for approximately \$20 each.

Joseph Barbara, president of Hanna-Barbara, said he tried to sell the series to network television 17 years ago, without success. "They felt there wasn't an audience," he told the *New York Times*. "The Bible stories have violence, deceit, treachery, plagues. But that wasn't good enough for the networks. I guess they were afraid the shows could turn out ponderous and preachy, but we've tried to avoid that."

Barbara continued "I see a moralistic return in the '80's. There is a surge of religion. I was raised that way, and then it disappeared. But now the Sunday schools are back."

Well known actors will provide voices for the characters. Contracted so far are James Whitmore as Moses, James Earl Jones as Pharoah, Robby Benson as David, and Herschel Bernardi as Goliath. The tape series will feature two young archaeologists, trapped in a sand-storm and whirled back into time, to serve as commentators as biblical tales unfold. Hanna-Barbara has also hired a priest, a minister, and a rabbi to insure faithfulness to the biblical record.

SHROUD DATES BACK TO AT LEAST THIRD CENTURY, AND CONTAINS THE IMAGE OF A JEW, SAYS RESEARCHER

The Shroud of Turin, thought by some to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, has been dated back as far as the third century A.D. by Duke University professor Alan D. Whanger and his wife and co-researcher Mary. Whanger's finding disputes claims that the shroud is a 14th-century artistic creation.

Whanger's study showed that the

image on the shroud may have been used for hundreds of ancient artistic depictions since the second and third centuries, particularly in the Roman catacombs. Also, faces on seventh and tenth century Byzantine coins were modeled "exactly" after the shroud face image, he said.

Whanger, of Duke University Medical School, said on one early portrait the face of Jesus has 152 points of congruence with the image on the shroud. Whanger has studied the shroud for eight years.

Whanger's research also reveals that a phylactery — a small leather box or pouch worn by orthodox Jewish males during prayer and to hold small parchments on which Scripture is written — was on the left arm of the person whose image is on the shroud, indicating the figure was Jewish. Whanger and his wife used a polarized image overlay technique to discover the phylactery. Earlier they discovered a phylactery on the head of the image.

The phylactery imprint on the left arm "is on upside down and the top has been damaged in some way, apparently by the box containing the Scripture parchment being torn off," Whanger said. "This is perfectly consistent with the desecration of the phylactery on the head. We believe this indicates both were put on prior to the crucifixion and were worn during the crucifixion as a mark of mocking the crucified man as a Jew."

The shroud is a burial cloth on which the image of a crucified man can be detected. It has been preserved in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Turin, Italy, since 1578, and has been displayed publicly only three times this century. In 1978 a team of 50 scientists were allowed to perform extensive tests on the linen, and most concluded that the image could not have been painted on the cloth.

PARENTS IN RELIGIOUS COMMUNE LOSE CHILDREN FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

Parents from the Good Shepherd Tabernacle in Dallas, Oregon have lost their children because of alleged severe disciplinary actions. Eight children from that religious commune have been made wards of the court, and three others who had been placed under court jurisdiction earlier will remain that way.

Polk County Circuit Judge Darrell

J. Williams said that testimony by the parents carried "absolutely no weight whatsoever," and noted that testimony by children and adults was "directly and totally in conflict."

Punishments for children at Good Shepherd Tabernacle allegedly included padlocking a boy in his room at night; up to 12 hours of confinement in an empty swimming pool, a storage room, or a pumphouse; and restraint by handcuffs and ropes, including being chained to a bed. The children were punished for offenses ranging from minor theft to failure to play cooperatively with other children.

Ten parents are disputing the state's allegations. Four adult members of the group face criminal charges, including Ariel Sherman, the teacher and leader of the group. Sherman has apparently fled the state.

In Memory

BARBARA "BOBBIE" ADAMS

At about 1:00 P.M. on Sunday, March 31, the spirit of Bobbie Adams moved out of its earthly tabernacle. The pain and suffering of cancer had intensified during the recent weeks, but she is now at rest.

Sister Adams was the wife of a dedicated Christian and fellow gospel preacher, Connie Adams. Connie has served as editor of *Searching The Scriptures* for ten years, but several people close to the Adams family have heard Connie say that Bobbie was a vital part of what made the paper succeed. She was pretty much in charge of keeping records, organizing the mailing lists, and mailing out the bills. She was always a source of encouragement to Connie, not only in his editorial duties but in every Bible class he taught or sermon he preached. She was truly a "helpmeet" that wanted to be in subjection to her husband and give her Lord the praise and glory that He deserved.

Funeral services were conducted on April 2 at the building of the Expressway Church of Christ in Louisville, Kentucky, by Weldon Warnock and Dee Bowman, both longtime friends of the Adams family. Rollin Morris led the congregation in the singing of "Standing On The Promises," "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me," and "Faith Is The Victory!" Her body was laid to rest in the Hebron Cemetery, a short distance from her earthly home in Bullitt County.

The Lord had blessed Connie and Bobbie with two sons, Wilson and Martin. Our sincere sympathy is extended to each member of the family. Those wishing to send cards of sympathy may write to Bro. Connie Adams at P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109.

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Today

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

June 1985

Number 6

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK WITH THIS BUNCH?

by Gardner Hall

Brethren can be aggravating! What good preacher or active Christian has not had to deal at one time or another with cantankerous brethren that tempt him to throw in the towel and give up all effort to motivate a church to be stronger?

If you're discouraged with a group of brethren, perhaps it will make you feel better to hear of the weaknesses of a group, that a preacher I know of had to work with. (I'll call him preacher "J" and not give the names of the brethren for several reasons.)

WEAKNESSES PREACHER "J" HAD TO FIGHT

(A) Pride and Desire To Dominate

Others: If there was ever a group of brethren that all wanted to be chiefs with none wanting to be "injuns" it was the group Preacher "J" had to work with. They were constantly feuding over who was the greatest. The mother of two of them, brothers J and J, even got into the fracas by trying to influence Preacher "J" to give her two boys special privileges.

Preacher "J" did everything he could to show these brethren through example as well as simple illustrations that God considers those who serve to be greater than those who try to be first, but that lesson seemed to never

penetrate the thick skulls of the brethren and they continued to struggle for power and influence.

(b) **Shallow Understanding:** The brethren seemed perfectly incapable of grasping even the simplest Bible truths. One false concept that seemed to give them particular trouble was the old premillennialist - like the kingdom of God was some kind of earthly kingdom with armies, literal thrones, etc. Even after hearing preacher "J"'s preaching for three years, they still didn't seem to grasp that God's kingdom is spiritual in nature.

Brother P's unstable faith became well known. Though occasionally he would do or say something very praiseworthy, the next minute he would pull a real "boner."

As for brother T., he was known for his skepticism though at least he was willing to consider evidence and eventually became stronger.

(C) **Ungrateful Cowards:** Though the brethren were always talking about how strong they were, when a group of religious leaders began to attack the truth that preacher "J" taught, they were afraid to defend it, leaving preacher "J" to do so alone.

One of the brethren, Brother Ju, got preacher "J" into trouble with the authorities and none of the brethren

would stand by him. Brother P even tried to act like he didn't know him.

HOW DID THE PREACHER HANDLE THIS GROUP?

Preacher "J" did not throw up his hands in disgust, neither did he "give up preaching" because of this seemingly hopeless, helpless group. Instead, he worked with them patiently and they became some of the most effect workers ever seen. He even thanked God for them constantly in prayer!

I suppose it's time to name names as far as these brethren are concerned if you haven't already determined who I'm discussing. Preacher "J" is Jesus and the brethren he had to work with were the apostles. (Brothers J and J are James and John, P is Peter, T is Thomas and Ju is Judas.) The purpose of this article is to point to Jesus as our example in dealing with weaker brethren.

WHAT WERE HIS SECRETS THAT WE OFTEN IGNORE?

Why do we often blow up and become discouraged with brethren who probably have less weaknesses than those Galileans whom Jesus trained to turn the world upside down?

A study in contrasts between those I call "chasers of brethren" and Jesus and His followers (who were builders

of brethren) will help us see some of the divine ways of dealing with weaker brethren. But before making the contrasts, it needs to be pointed out that many "chasers of brethren" don't mean to be that. They are often good workers in many areas, they love the Lord and want to **help** brethren. But because they have never learned to show the tact and love that Jesus demonstrated, they end up chasing brethren off, instead of building them up. All of us, through our own well intentioned bungling, have probably been "brethren chasers" at one time or the other.

THREE AREAS OF CONTRAST

I. (A) **Jesus, while never ignoring dangerous weaknesses, never let them allow Him to lose sight of the good in the apostles.** Jesus didn't decide to "withdraw" from the apostles for being confused about a worldly kingdom because he saw they could learn better. He didn't chase Peter off with sarcasm and ridicule after Peter's many blunders, because underneath those blunders He saw strength. Even when the apostles abandoned Him to Judas and his murderous mob, He in his infinite patience did not give up on them.

As among the 12 apostles, there are today shallow-minded and frustratingly immature brethren. But as Jesus did not allow Himself to become demoralized with the apostles' errors, let us look for the good in our weak brethren as we try to help them correct their weaknesses.

(B) **Negative chasers of brethren cannot see the good in brethren because they exaggerate their weaknesses.** The "chaser" considers every weakness as a proof of a "lack of love for God" or as a sign of rebellion. Thus, the brother who doesn't give as much as he should just "doesn't love God at all." The brother who wants to visit his inlaws instead of distribute invitations is "unworthy of the Kingdom." Because of this negative outlook, the sincere "chaser" soon concludes that the weak brother is "not worth working with." But, is this the way Jesus dealt with the weaknesses of the apostles?

II. (A) **Jesus condemned the weaknesses of the apostles, while praising their character, thus building their self image.** The same voice that chided the apostles for their little faith also promised them to sit on twelve

thrones for their sacrifices. The same lips that condemned Peter's rash statements said, "*blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah.*" Jesus condemned the weaknesses of the apostles but never destroyed their self image. In essence He let them know they were good, and should therefore not act badly.

Illustration: Those who have had some High School Spanish remember that there are two different words in Spanish for the single English verb "to be"; ESTAR, a word which relates a temporary condition and SER which indicates a permanent condition. For example, when one is discussing a temporary condition such as sickness he uses a form of ESTAR. I am (ESTOY) sick. However, when discussing a permanent condition such as nationality, he uses a form of SER. I am (SOY) an American.

Thus there is a tremendous difference between telling someone that they are (ESTAR) bad (temporarily) and telling them that they are (SER) bad (permanently and characteristically so). One statement (using ESTAR) may be made gently to correct an error. The other (using SER) is an insult telling the person he is bad by nature.

This difference between telling someone they are temporarily in error and telling them that they are bad by nature is the difference between the correction Jesus gave and the correction of the "chasers of brethren" today.

Jesus corrected the apostles' misconceptions and weaknesses as temporary aberrations that could be overcome. (You are (ESTAR) bad.) He never implied that they were bad by nature or that He never thought they would correct their weaknesses. You are (SER) bad. Such would have destroyed their spiritual self image.

If we follow the example of Jesus today we will never ignore dangerous weaknesses in brethren, but neither will we attack others' weaknesses as if they indicated a kind of total depravity with no hope of correction. We will correct weaknesses with love and a full confidence that the brethren will change because they are good by nature.

(B) **Negative chasers of brethren attack not only the weaknesses of weaker brethren but their character as well.** They can never distinguish

between condemning a brother with a temporary, correctable weakness and someone who has willfully rebelled against God. Both brethren receive the same sarcasm and blasting as the example of Jesus and the apostles is ignored. They are lambasted as if the "chaser" thought them incapable of anything better.

The negative brother's message comes from across like this: "You are bad, bad, bad. You don't love the Lord, you're no good," etc. The brethren who listen to him develop a bad self image and are chased off like dogs with tails between their legs. A child who is always told that he is a bad person will develop a negative self image, and so will the Christian who is always told that he is bad. Jesus proves that correction can be made without the destruction of one's self image.

III. **Jesus thanked God for His weak apostles.** Negative brethren gripe about who they're stuck with.

The prayer of thanksgiving that Jesus gave in John 17 for such an unstable group of men who were about to abandon Him is as amazing as it is a powerful lesson for us when we become discouraged with brethren. How was Jesus able to give thanks for such weak men? He must simply concentrated on their goodness in His thanksgiving instead of their weaknesses.

Can we thank God for our weaker brethren? It's hard sometimes when one thinks of all the aggravating things they do. But by following the example of Jesus, we can give thanks for them by concentrating in our thanksgiving on their goodness instead of their weaknesses.

CONCLUSION

Certainly we will encounter some Judases and Demases who cannot be helped. But if we can learn to work positively with weaker brethren with prayer and patience, we may find that some of them, like the apostles, aren't as hopeless as we thought.

Are we chasers or builders of brethren? The answer we give to that question depends on how well we follow Christ's example in dealing with the weaknesses of the apostles.



EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

JESUS IS THE WORD

The life of Jesus on earth is recorded in four successive Gospels in the New Testament. Without conflicting, each Gospel writer presents Jesus from a different point of view. The readers could not adequately grasp the complex nature and unique ministry of the Messiah without reading all of the accounts.

Matthew magnified the kingship of Jesus. As one writer said, "Who could have done this better that the noted tax collector who so willingly turned from serving an earthly emperor to follow the King of kings?"¹ Mark stressed Jesus' deeds and sacrifices. His presentation was in the short-and-to-the-point terms typical of such a dynamic young man. Luke dealt with Jesus as God's witness on earth, as the heavenly messenger of divine truth. These three Gospels have many similarities in their presentations of the life of Christ. For that reason they are called the Synoptic Gospels.

The reader who opens the Gospel of John at once notices a marked difference between it and the three preceding Gospels. Matthew traced the lineage of Jesus back to Abraham and David; Luke, back to Adam. But John carried the connection back to God.

The Gospel of John is, without a doubt, the most hated book of the Bible, and the most beloved — for the same reason, namely, that it was written that "ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). As Homer Hailey said, "Eternal life depends upon this faith; nothing else will do. Either Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God — all that He claimed to be — or He was and is an imposter. There is no middle ground. This is John's proposition. . ."² If the contents of a book were not important, it could not be very much hated or very much beloved. The contents of this Gospel are extremely important.

THE PROLOGUE

The first eighteen verses of John constitute a division technically known as the Prologue. It has been the subject of lively controversy among scholars. Some have seen little or no relationship between it and the main body of the Gospel. They have viewed it as "an introduction designed primarily to catch the attention of Hellenistic Greek readers by using certain terms, in particular *logos*, the Word, that would be familiar to them. Others, attracted by its seeming poetic language, have seen it originally as an ancient hymn taken over with certain changes by the writer to introduce his Gospel."³ While there is a possibility that it may have been used among the early Christians in certain forms as a hymn, it must be accepted as the composition of the writer himself, as he purposely traced the origins of Jesus Christ back to the ultimate, eternal being with God.

The Greek word from which *word* is translated was widely known in the world of John's day, being found some 1,300 times in the writings of Philo, a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria (30 B.C. to 40 A.D.).⁴ It was the inspired genius of the apostle John which seized upon this word, applied it to Christ, and gave it a meaning as far above anything that Philo ever dreamed of.⁵ As a New Testament designation of the Christ, the term *Word* is found only four times in the New Testament, twice in this prologue (Vv. 1, 14), in I John 1:1, and in Revelation 19:13.

The use of the Greek term implies that the order and reason which existed in the mind of God found place and meaning on earth in Jesus Christ as an expression of the mind of God. Just as our thoughts and purposes are made known when we communicate through words (Matt. 15:18), God's ageless purposes are made known through His Word.⁶

The mechanical analysis of this Prologue divides its text first of all into two sections of unequal size which deal with the two persons mentioned in them: the Word and John the Baptist. By so dividing the text, two lines of thought appear. Verses 1 to 5, 9 to 14, 16 to 18 concern the Word; verses 6 to 8 and 15 concern John the Baptist. The structure of the Prologue divides naturally into seven sections, each of which deals with some aspect of Jesus Christ, the Word. These divisions contain the gist of the message of the Gospel.⁷

THE WORD AND DEITY

No more meaningful statement about the person of Jesus was ever made than the declaration of His pre-existence: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). It is similar to God's statement about Himself to Moses, "I Am that I Am" (Exodus 3:14), stressing the eternity of his deity.

Our finite minds cannot comprehend eternity. John is

Today

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.
Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:
P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

condescending to our level of understanding. He gives us a point in time (the beginning) from which to reflect upon the eternal existence of the Word. The first statement of John carries us back to the account given in Genesis 1:1 of the beginning of all things, when, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" Before the world and time, the Word already existed. The verb "was" emphasizes existence, and in the imperfect tense it has a continuing meaning. This same emphasis upon existence is made in John 8:58: "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" These are two ways of saying He existed from all eternity. He was not what certain heretics claimed Him to be, a created being.

The discerning reader will notice that John makes no argument for the existence of God. He boldly assumes that God does exist, just as the writer of Genesis begins by assuming the existence of God.

"*And the Word was with God*" means more than simple co-existence. The Greek word translated "with" is the word *pros*. As John used it here and other places it represents equality and intimacy. The word was "*face to face with God*"; He was "*in the bosom of the Father*" (v. 18), and was "*on an equality with God*" (Phil. 2:6). There was perfect sharing by the Father and the Word. Before Bethlehem, the Son had been a spiritual being without an earthly body. He took upon Himself an earthly form; he became man; he "*emptied himself*" (Phil. 2:7).

And more, "*the Word was God.*" As the writer of Hebrews expresses it: "*the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance*" (Heb. 1:3). Paul wrote to the Colossians that "*in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" (Col. 2:9). Jesus is like God, for He is Deity. When we understand that Jesus existed eternally in such a state of oneness with the Father, we begin to understand that God *was* and *is* always like Jesus Christ (minus His earthly body, of course).

THE WORD AND CREATION

The three prepositions of verse one are reduced to a single declaration in verse two: "*The same was in the beginning with God.*" The repetition prepares the way for the statement that follows in verse three and "**the practice of repeating an important truth for the sake of emphasis, or of preparing the mind of connected truth, is characteristic of this evangelist's style.**"

To continue his emphasis on the preincarnation life of the Word, John declares that Jesus participated in creation. "*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made*" (v. 3). Everything that man could see, the hills and sky or rivers and forests, declaring the eternal existence of Christ. "*All things were created by him, . . . and by him all things consist*" (Col. 1:16-17). Jesus was the active agent through whom all created beings or things came into existence. Hailey said, "**Their creation became an expression of His will. It was by God's will that they were, but they were created by Jesus Christ as the Word of God. This puts Christ before all things, both in times and in preeminence or primacy.**" As its creator, Christ has continuing control of the universe. He is not only the one by whom all things were made; He is the ruling Lord. In that assurance we can take comfort. God's eternal purpose of creation will be carried out, for His Son is still in charge of things.

THE WORD AND LIFE

In addition to the creation of all things (vs. 3), the work of the Word in the world of men emphasizes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual aspects of life and light. John says of Him, "*In him was life; and the life was the light of men*" (v. 4). The word *Life* occurs thirty-six times in this Gospel. In 20:31, John states that the major purpose in writing this Gospel is that men "*might have life through his name.*" From Him proceeded the life that has given light to men, the revelation of God which appeals to the conscience and reason of man. The life not only gives light to a darkened world, but it is that which quickens in man a response to the light. Through believing in the light men can become "*sons of light*" (12:36).

THE WORD AND THE WORLD

John has just spoken of the personal coming of the Light of the world. Lest any one should forget that He was already in the world as the Word, he says, "*He was in the world, and the world was made by him and the world knew him not*" (v. 10). The very creator of the world cast aside the glory of His eternal existence and chose to enter earth life as a man subject to all the inconveniences and limitations of the flesh. That is a fact of awesome wonder, but added to that is the obstinate and rebellious refusal of the Lord's creation to acknowledge Him when He came.

World, used seventy-seven times in this gospel, is one of the distinctive terms used by John. Here it applies to the material and spiritual environment in which men live. Some men, no doubt, rejected Jesus because they did not understand Him or the spiritual mission He had come to fulfill on earth. He was so different from their preconceived notions of the promised Messiah that they refused His call and spurned His pleas. Other men rejected Christ because they did understand Him and they wanted to have no part of Him or His ministry. They stood at the crossroads of decision. Deliberately they chose the road that led away from Him. They did not merely neglect Him; they rejected Him — and with Him, truth.

THE WORD AND MEN

Verses 11 through 13 develop further the statements of verse 10. The statement, "*unto his own,*" really means He came home. Because the world was His creation, He had come to visit His own property. The same expression is used in 16:32 referring to the disciples' departure, each man to his own home; and in 19:27 where it states that the beloved disciple took Jesus' mother to his own home.

The fact that man can spurn his Maker reveals the kind of man God made and suggests the purpose He had in His act of creation. Man is given a will; he must exercise his choice. Jesus came to Palestine, but the populace offered little promise to Jesus. We would assume that, in the light of their background, His people would have been waiting to greet Him with open arms. Their opportunities to know Him had been so many. The efforts of God to reveal Himself to His own had been so frequent. Throughout their history God had sought to prepare His people for this hour when He would appear in the flesh. When the hour came, they failed God utterly. They rejected the Christ of prophecy.

Rejection, however, has as its counterpart reception. John states that some did receive Him, and hastens to discuss the reception in terms of its effects: "*But as many*

as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. . .” To be a Jew meant one was physically born into the Jewish nation. Here the point is briefly suggested, and made more fully in chapter 3, that becoming a child of God does not depend on physical birth, because it does not lie within man’s will to make a child of God. The new life in Christ does not depend on blood, upon physical descent from Abraham or from any other ancestor. Two thoughts in this verse were developed later in John’s gospel, that of the new birth in chapter 3, and that of the true children of Abraham in chapter 8.

THE WORD INCARNATE

The central truth of John’s witness begins to witness itself in verse 14: “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” This claim was a staggering mystery. How could the divine become human? How could spirit take on flesh? How could the Son of God become a man?

The Word became flesh, expressing Himself in a human personality that was visible, audible, and tangible. He partook of flesh and blood with its limits of space and time. But then He “*dwelt among us.*” “Dwelt” really means “to pitch tent.” He literally camped among us.

It is a weakness of many Christians today to emphasize so strongly the deity of Jesus that they tend to forget that Jesus Christ was fully a man as well. Since we are flesh and blood and often enslaved by the fear of death, Jesus shared with us this nature in order that He might relieve us of this terrible fear which chains all humanity. He conquered Satan and took away his power of death! And the beauty of it all is that Jesus shared in our fleshly nature, without sin, that He might become our Eternal High Priest, one who intercedes on our behalf Who has been “*touched with the feeling of our infirmities. . . tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin*” (Heb. 4:15).

THE WORD REVEALING

The final and climatic statement of the Prologue concerning Jesus, the Word, is found in verse 18: “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*” It is in Christ that God has chosen to reveal Himself. Jesus Christ has seen God, and has been in the closest communion with Him. This is expressed in the

phrase “in the bosom of the Father,” which means He is in the closest and most affectionate relationship with Him as His Son.

In the flesh, Christ revealed the Father. Hailey said, “**Men had seen visions, theophanies, and angelic appearances of God; but until the advent of Jesus in the flesh, no man had seen God in person. Now ‘the only begotten Son,’ He who was with God from the beginning and who was Deity itself, has revealed, interpreted, unfolded God, becoming ‘a satisfying exposition’ of Him.**”¹⁰

Jesus Christ, the Word, is the complete and perfect revelation of God. In this He fulfilled the words of the prophets who had said that He should be “*Immanuel — God with us*” (Isa. 7:14).

CONCLUSION

John presents the evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the Word. The reputation and character of Jesus hang in the balance. If He is not the Word that John testifies Him to be, then He is an imposter, liar, and scoundrel of the deepest dye. He cannot be a Saviour, not even a good man, if He was not “God in the flesh.” The reader must look at the evidence as presented by John and determine what he shall do with Jesus. The book is available; it is either fact or fiction. If fact, then Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world. If fiction, then John has perpetrated upon mankind a fraud of gigantic proportions with no known motive for his fraud.

¹James L. Sullivan, *John’s Witness to Jesus* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1965), p. xi.

²Homer Hailey, *That You May Believe* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), p. 17.

³Frank Pack, *The Gospel According to John* (Austin: Sweet Publishing Company, 1975), p. 27.

⁴William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), p. 69.

⁵James Coffman, *Commentary on John* (Austin: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1974), p. 14.

⁶Paul Butler, *The Gospel of John* (Joplin: College Press, 1975), p. 21.

⁷Merrill Tenney, *John, The Gospel of Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 61-63.

⁸Alvah Hovey, *Commentary on John* (Philadelphia: The American Bible Society, 1885), p. 60.

⁹Hailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁰Hailey, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

TWO LOCAL CHURCHES ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR ANNUAL LECTURESHIPS

The South End Church in Louisville, Kentucky, will have their consecutive summer Bible study series July 15-19. A study of Cults, the book of Galatians, and Christians as living stones in God’s building will be the themes of the morning and evening lessons. Fifteen gospel preachers will

be speaking during the week, beginning with Monday night and then each morning and evening, from Tuesday to Friday. This meeting is planned by and for the South End Church, for edifying the members, and hoping to reach the lost in the community. All brethren are also encouraged to attend this special Bible study. The building is located at 4001 Taylor Boulevard.

The Royal Heights Church of Christ in Franklin, Tenn. will conduct its second Annual Lecture Program July 21-26, 1985. The general theme for this years lectures will be The Church, God’s Eternal Purpose. The featured speakers will be Ken Green, Dee Bowman, Sewell Hall and Harry Pickup, Jr. Several local gospel preachers will be used for day classes. The building is located on Highway 96 just west of the I-65 Exit, directly across from the Harpeth Ford Agency

Are We Emphasizing "Sound Doctrine" to the Neglect of "Godly Living"?

by William C. Sexton

Recently one raised the question in the title of this article. I have since given it some thought--relative to my teaching experience. I hope that I have not been guilty but it is worth raising to the conscious level of each of us, I believe.

Perhaps, being strictly accurate, such is not possible! However, the question in mind of the one asking the question is a valid one. Therefore, this short article is aiming at challenging us to examine our teachings to see if we are going overboard on certain parts of God's revelation while leaving untouched other portions.

1. Strictly speaking from a scriptural point of view, **sound doctrine** includes the practice in our behavior!

"But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things--that they admonish the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discrete, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise exhort the younger men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; . . ." (Titus 2:1-7, NKJV).

In this passage, he continues to point to and identify the different groups, **servants**, etc.--in each case setting forth the behavioral qualities which were to be evidenced in the every-day-life! Such is sound doctrine!

Consequently, when we fail to point to, identify, and urge each to conduct themselves properly, we aren't, strictly speaking, teaching **SOUND DOCTRINE!**

2. However, there seems to be a danger in failing to emphasize practice as much or to the same extent we do **ideas, beliefs, concepts**, etc.

This was a major problem in the days when Jesus walked on the earth. The Jewish leaders, many of them, had

strict concepts, but the **behavior** didn't reach the same level of emphasis with them as did the concepts!

There is a level on which this becomes hypocritical. Jesus was very strong, to the point, in denouncing such (Cf. Matthew chapter 23). Each of us would do well, I believe, to see that we are not guilty of such.

There is another level, though, on which any of us are more likely to miss the mark--being unconscious of the missing-of-the-target! We may get so caught up in a matter, seeing that so many are obviously building a false concept, that we just spend most of our time, energy, effort fighting that concept! Results: We do not say much about the behavior of anyone, especially if they agree with us and join in the discussion of the concept, its various erroneous elements, etc. . This is the level of concern with which the person who raised the question was dealing, I'm sure. Yet, this is probably the more dangerous aspect of the matter. I give most of us credit with **basic honesty**, wanting to be right with the Lord, but Satan can and does get us involved to the point we are deceived; we get excited and forget other aspects of evil!

3. In light of these facts, then, let each of us, first look at ourselves. Am I inclined to emphasize ideas over practice? If so, then let me change in the specifics I see as being deficient. Secondly, then let each of us look at others in the congregation where we are members: Are there people who are strictly concerned about concepts but seem to give little or no attention to certain behavior which is set forth in the divine, heaven-revealed-message? If we see such, then, in love and understanding, let us seek to point to the place where there needs to be improvement. Thirdly, if people point to our life and suggest that there is some deficiency, some inconsistency between our strictness of concept and lack of strictness in our practice, let us give genuine consideration to such, and if they are right let us correct the same immediately!

I'm fearful that a certain idea

which is gaining acceptance in many quarters today may be lending support to this way of living. The idea is that we are all missing the mark so often and to such an extent, that it is **not possible** for us to be aware of the missing of the target, and that to fail to recognize this Human Weakness is to be haughty, self-righteous, and without hope! When that seed is planted, germinates, and grows to bear fruit, we might as well, in my judgment, "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Once that idea is given acceptance in the heart of a person, there is no way he/she can fight the evil of **specific sins**--if all are guilty of some and God will wash them away without any action on man's part; then He'll do the same for all! We might as well stop pointing to specific sins, accept the idea that we are all guilty and unable to do anything about it and **trust God to do it all**. However, I challenge you **NOT** to accept the idea!

Let us study the Bible, and understand that man is capable of looking into the law that is perfect (Jas. 1:21-25)--understand, act upon, and be **BLESSED!** If we only give lip service to God's word (Matt. 15:8-9) we are doing, whatever we are doing, in **VAIN!**

Let us not emphasize sound concepts to the neglect of sound, scriptural practice! God's word, beloved, is **understandable** (Eph. 3:3-4) and **practical** (2 Tim. 2:15; 2 John 9). Therefore, we are all **accountable** (Jn. 9:41; 12:35-41; Rom. 14:11-12; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rom. 10:6-21).

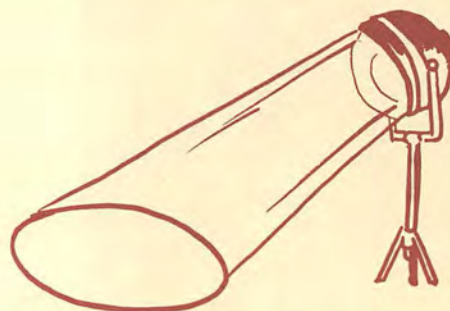
Hell is a prepared place for an unprepared people (Matt. 25:41). Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people (Jn. 14:1-6; Matt. 25:35, 46).

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Today's Spotlight



An interview with

JULIE WARNOCK

Have you always been a "preacher's kid?"

Yes, for the 27 years of my life. Daddy had been preaching for about five years when I was born in 1958 in New Martinsville, West Virginia. In being a "P.K." I have lived in Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Florida, Ohio and West Virginia.

Are you often referred to as a "P.K.?"

Not really that often. I've found that people outside the church refer to me as a "P.K." more than Christians.

Do you resent this term?

No, it's usually said in a joking way and not meant to be derogatory. I am proud to be a "preacher's kid" and don't mind telling it.

Do you feel any extra pressures due to your Dad being a preacher?

Maybe to some extent. It depends on the situation. Sometimes I would like to speak up and give an opinion, but I must remember that many people think that what I say is what my father said and I would not want to misrepresent him.

Preachers move quite often and it has occasionally been difficult to know what to continue in school or in a work-related setting. Fortunately, I went to the same high school all three years and appreciate my father for letting me do that. We lived in Akron, Ohio, for almost five years and I



completed my nursing education there. Besides the fact that I enjoy being a nurse, the profession is one which is flexible and has allowed me to move where my family has moved.

Have you ever felt a double standard in what is expected of a preacher's child and any other member's child?

Yes, most definitely! I have felt like I was always expected to give the correct answer in a Bible class. Unfortunately, the preacher and his family are expected to always look

their best and give an account of where they are as compared to the other members. I feel like the preacher and his family must be especially considerate of the other members' opinions concerning entertainment and matters related to the church. This in particular can be positive towards creating patience and learning to appreciate others' feelings.

What are the greatest joys of being a preacher's child?

There are so many! I have been able



to meet wonderful people. They have all helped to mold my life. One of the greatest joys has been to meet and have in our home the preachers from across the country. My memories are filled with times of hearing the preachers in the pulpit and sitting with them at the dinner table. I always encouraged the young people of the congregation to invite out the preacher during a gospel meeting.

Another joy is the hospitality shown by Christians. I remember moving into a new place and when we arrived, our dishes were put away, curtains were hung and members brought in enough food to last for days. I've been invited into so many homes and shared laughter and tears which only a preacher and his family can sometimes experience.

Watching a congregation grow spiritually and numerically is another joy. I recall moving to a new location where the people my age were almost nil. But as a family, we worked together to help the congregation grow and by the time we left, the congregation had grown with about 30 young people and all were Christians. That is one of my most treasured memories.

At times I wish that all the many Christians we've met could get together and enjoy each other's company, but then I think, that is what heaven will be like.

What are the greatest heartaches?

One is having to leave a place in

which you have become very attached. Believe me, it is hard. Moving into a community and the only ones you know are each other, makes you miss that last place even more. But as has always been the case, something good has come out of every place I have lived. You have to set your mind to thinking that soon you will make friends and one day hate to leave them also. It became easier as I grew older, but during elementary school and on through high school, it was difficult to appreciate.

I think "P.K.'s" tend to accumulate a lot of things people have given them such as stuffed animals and knick-knacks. It is a way to deal with frequent separations and helps to keep a part of the place or persons from whom you are being separated. I will admit that I still have things people gave me when I was six or seven years old.

Other than this, I can't think of more heartaches that are probably not experienced by any other Christian.

How do your peers treat you when they learn that you are a "P.K.?"

In elementary through high school, I felt like my peers were always testing me to see if I would bend "my" rules. And I have found out that it continues in the working world. In the world, people will say, "You had better watch what you say, her dad is a preacher." My reply is always, "That's right!" In the church the young people tended to shy away and I would help to break that barrier by having a party to let them know that I was interested in us becoming friends.

Dating has been difficult in that boys in the church took a long time to ask me out, much more so than non-Christians. I always got the feeling the fellows thought they would have to act differently around the preacher, especially dating his daughter. One Christian whom I was dating said, "All you talk about is church." It was probably true because of the fact that my whole life revolves around the church. (By the way, we didn't date long!)

Would you want your children to be "P.K.'s?"

There are many things in life that I would like for my children to have and



experience, but I believe being a "P.K." would be their richest blessings. True, my father is gone a lot of times and when I was little I cried every time he left. But my mother impressed upon my mind that my daddy was doing the greatest work on earth, telling others of Jesus.

Today when I meet people from across the country, they tell me that my father held a gospel meeting for them and how much they enjoyed it. That makes me feel real proud of my father and mother and reinforces the fact that the Lord has given me something that few will ever experience.

Readers may write to Julie Warnock at 1021 Welford Drive, Xenia, OH 45385.

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Lax Attitudes On Sin

by Wayne Greeson

Lax attitudes toward sin and its consequences are becoming increasingly prominent, not only in society, but also in the lives and minds of many Christians. Sin is gaining ground in the lives of Christians and local congregations that are becoming "soft" on sin. Many are being "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13). When the abhorrence of sin is minimized, the seduction of sin is maximized. Slowly, surely, lax attitudes towards sin breakdown and ultimately destroy the Christian's resistance to sin. An old wives' tale says that a frog dropped into boiling water will jump out quickly, but the same frog placed in cold water that is slowly heated will eventually be cooked. Such is the deception of sin. A Christian knows to "jump out" of obvious circumstances to avoid sin, but too often, too many Christians are "cooked" because they continued to tolerate the subtler deceptions of this world.

WRONG FOR THE WRONG REASONS

One of the more subtle, and for that reason more dangerous attitudes towards sin, is the condemnation of sin upon the wrong reasons. Preachers, Christians and parents will often "preach" against sin and denounce sin upon **earthly consequences rather than eternal consequences**. For example, homosexuality is wrong because: "It's not nice. I don't like it." or "Society frowns on it." or "You might catch and suffer from that terrible disease A.I.D.S." Teenagers are taught that sex prior to marriage is wrong because: "You might become pregnant." or "You might become a father." or "You might get V.D." Drunkenness is wrong because: "It is dangerous to drive and drink." or "It is bad for your health." or "It breaks up homes." Playing instruments of music in worship to God is wrong because: "A piano is noisy and doesn't sound as good as singing." The support of human institutions by the church is wrong because: "Human institutions absorb too much money in administration and are inefficient." or "Institutionalized children are emotionally retarded."

When sin is condemned as wrong upon the basis of "dire" earthly

consequences, attention is diverted from the sufficiency of God's Word concerning the definition, nature and eternal consequences of sin. As a result, many are often led to the conclusion that whether an act is a sin or not, is determined by the earthly consequences it produces. If a sinful act produces "good" or "successful" earthly consequences, many reason that such an act cannot be wrong or sinful.

For example, homosexuals, claiming to be Christians, often argue that homosexuality cannot be sinful because it does not "hurt" or "wrong" anyone and it produces "good" by encouraging people to "love one another" (sic). If one attempted to argue that homosexual activity was wrong because of its earthly consequences, (i.e. "Homosexuals suffer loneliness, depression and disease"), the homosexual would reply, and rightly so, that many practicing homosexuals are living "successful" lives and they do not suffer any more than heterosexuals. Obviously, the irrefutable reason that homosexuality is wrong is: God said so!

Likewise, premarital sex and adultery have been justified on the grounds that if it does not hurt anyone and produces "good" it is not wrong. Drunkenness is not sinful as long as one does not drive and become dangerous to others. Instruments of music in the worship are not sinful, because they produce "good" by making the worshippers feel religious. The support of human institutions by the church and the social gospel is often justified in terms of earthly results: "Look at all the 'good' we are doing." To preach, teach and discuss the good or bad earthly results of these sins, does little but give the proponents of sin a "polemic platform" upon which the earthly merits and results of sin are debated and justified in the eyes of the world.

Further, the **possibility** of suffering for sin on this earth proves nothing. First of all because sin does not always result in earthly suffering. For every example you can point to, demonstrating one suffering on this earth because of sin, there is an example of one

prospering on this earth because of sin. Second, not all suffering on any one person comes because of that person's sins. The righteous may suffer without apparent cause. The psalmist Asaph had to learn these principles (Ps. 73:1-14). Likewise, Job and his friends had to learn the same lesson.

While the Bible recognizes that sin often results in earthly consequences, this is never presented as a **sufficient reason** for why sin is wrong. Yet entire sermons and articles are often devoted to condemning certain sins upon the basis of earthly consequences. The Word of God teaches that while one may avoid or escape the earthly consequences of sin, there is no avoiding the eternal consequences of sin. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

Human authority is not the proper basis for the condemnation of sin. Sin is not wrong because society frowns on it or because government reports say it is bad for your health, or because "I don't like it" or "I don't think it is nice." Sin is wrong because God said so! "Sin is the transgression of (God's) law" (1 Jn. 3:4). This gives us both the sole and sufficient reason why sin is wrong. When one sins it is an offense against God. After committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her husband, Uriah, David proclaimed "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight" (Ps. 51:4).

Human authority and opinion is ephemeral and changing. What society frowns on today, it may smile on tomorrow; government reports are a dime a dozen on both sides of any issue; and what "I" like, is my opinion and may be completely different from someone else's opinion. Even if a human authority or opinion falls on the "right side" of an issue, that is no reason to use it as "proof" sin is wrong. One can always find a human authority to say sin is okay. Further, does God's authority need the support or confirmation of human authority? "Yea, let God be true and everyman a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

When sin is condemned from the pulpit, in our homes and in our lives let it stand condemned solely upon the

basis of a "Thus sayeth the Lord..." and "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die*" (Ezk. 18:4), not on the possibility of sin's earthly consequences or upon the basis of any human authority.

MAKING LIGHT OF SIN

Another dangerous attitude toward sin is the view that sin is a joke, something to make fun of or laugh about. Notice how often sin is made out to be something humorous and fun in movies and on television. Homosexuality is portrayed as something to laugh at, rather than sinful. Just within the last couple of years there has been numerous "comedy" movies based upon the premise of a man dressing up as a woman (i.e. "Tootsie"), or a woman dressing up as a man (i.e. "Victor/Victoria"). In both "Tootsie" and "Victor/Victoria", the main characters were "forced" to change their sexual identity to find a job and make money. Another recent "comedy" movie, "A La Cage A Folies", based on the story of two aging homosexuals, has been such a smash hit it has been turned into a successful Broadway musical.

I recently heard on a television talk show a "cross-dresser" (a man who dresses up in women's clothing), use these movies as evidence that the attitude of society toward "alternative sexual expression" was becoming friendlier. These movies are made to make us laugh at the sin of homosexuality while feeding us the message that homosexuality is an acceptable "life style". Homosexuals are laughed at because they have a "funny walk" or they "talk funny", but homosexuality is not a laughing matter, it is sin.

Homosexuality is not the only sin that has been portrayed as humorous. Adultery and drunkenness have long been the favorite "comic" subjects of comedians, television and movies. Adultery is portrayed as a humorous game of hide and seek or a slap-stick comedy of spouse swapping or bed hopping. Comedians joke about their spouses and marriage from the "Take my wife, please", to the details of sexual exploits. Drunkenness is portrayed as something funny, again on the basis that drunks "talk funny" and "walk funny". Drunken brawls are portrayed from: good clean "cow-boy fun" all the way to "campus hijinks".

While there is certainly a time for laughter in the lives of Christians, (Eccl. 3:4), sin is not a laughing matter,

it is deadly serious. The eternal destination of souls are at stake. James wrote to those in sin, "*Be afflicted and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy into heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up*" (Jam. 4:9-10).

The Bible teaches "*Fools mock at sin*", (Prov. 14:9), and sin is "*sport to a fool*" (Prov. 10:23). Laughing at sin is foolish because it lowers our guard and breaks down our abhorrence of sin; it teaches our children that sin is funny instead of deadly; and it minimizes the serious nature of sin and its consequences.

EUPHEMISMS

Words are powerful tools as words often carry an emotional impact along with a substantive meaning. Because of the power that words carry, the words a Christian uses to convey ideas are very important. In preaching or teaching others concerning sin, words should be used that emphasize the ugly and deadly nature of sin. Too often, the words that are used by preachers and Christians, fail to carry sufficient emotional impact that emphasizes the true character of sin. In the speech of many Christians, euphemisms replace "sound words".

A euphemism is the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant. We are all familiar with euphemisms, vandalism is called souvenir hunting, a garbage collector is called a sanitary engineer; a janitor is called a maintenance engineer; or a preacher is called a "doctor of divinity."

Has the Christian's language concerning sin become euphemistic? Instead of calling a drunk a drunk, the word "alcoholic" is substituted. And instead of drunken, tipsy or inebriated is used. A thief is a "kleptomaniac"; a whore, a "lady of the evening"; a liar, "one who shades the truth" or one who "exaggerates"; and an adulterer as one who "fools around"?

Jesus never minced words in condemning sin or sinners. In Matthew 23, Jesus did not use any euphemisms in describing and condemning the Pharisees. Jesus identified them for what they were, liars, hypocrites, blind guides and fools. There are some brethren today who would cringe at such preaching. "Don't say it that way. Don't call names," they would say. If these brethren had it their way, Jesus

would have told the Pharisees politely that they were prevaricators, pretenders, leaders without vision and they failed to use good judgment.

Isaiah had strong words for those who said unto the prophets, "*Speak unto us smooth things.*" These were a "*rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord*" (Isa. 30:9-10). Isaiah declared "*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*" (Isa. 5:20).

BIG SINS VS. LITTLE SINS

A constant threat to sound doctrine on sin is the human attempt to classify sin into some graduated scale of seriousness. Men are perpetually looking for ways to minimize sin by making distinctions between "big sins" with serious consequences and "little sins" with minimal consequences.

The Catholic system has attempted to classify sin into categories known as "mortal sins" and "venial sins". A "mortal sin" is a big fat sin that, when committed, will condemn one to spiritual death and hell unless "penitence" is given. A "Venial sins" are small negligible sins that will not condemn the sinner to spiritual death and hell. Catholics teach "a sin that is committed through weakness or ignorance is said to be venial." (Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Theologica*, 1-2, 77, 8).

Unfortunately, there are brethren today who are attempting to revive the Catholic system of classifying sins. There are those who teach that only sins of wilfulness and presumption will separate a Christian from the grace of God and condemn, while sins of weakness and ignorance will not separate a Christian from God's grace nor condemn, as long as the sinner is living a generally good life. Although the names have been changed, the classification system is virtually the same. Both systems of sin classification divide sins along the line of the general attitude of one committing the sin. If the general attitude of the one committing the sin is "humble, penitent and prayerful" then the commission of sin in weakness or ignorance does not condemn, whereas the commission of sin in a wilful, deliberate attitude does condemn and demand repentance.

The Word of God contains no system of classification between big sins that spiritually condemn and little sins

that do not spiritually condemn. Neither does the attitude of wilfulness, presumption, weakness or ignorance, on the part of the one who commits a sin, alter the Bible prescription of confession and repentance of sin. The consequence of sin, without confession and repentance is uniform: *"The soul that sinneth is shall die"* (Ezk. 18:4; Rom. 6:23).

The Scriptures consistently and persistently teach that the child of God is to avoid the mistake of characterizing any one sin as greater or lesser in seriousness or consequences than any other sin. For example, to show "respect of persons" is just as serious and deadly as adultery or murder. James explained that if a Christian showed a *"respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, he is guilty of all"* (James 2:9-10). James exemplified this principle with the sins of adultery and murder. John explained that the sin of hating one's brother was the spiritual

equivalent of the sin of murder and both brought spiritual death. *"He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and know ye not that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him"* (1 John 3:14-15). Neither is there any distinction in the Scripture between "black lies" and "white lies", for *"all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstones..."* (Rev. 21:8).

Likewise, the Scripture makes no distinction of spiritual consequences between sins based upon the attitude (a. wilful; b. presumptuous; c. weakness; d. ignorance) in which they were committed. Paul declared that those who had crucified Christ had sinned in ignorance. (Acts 3:17-19). Regardless of whether these individuals had sinned in an attitude of wilfulness or ignorance, Peter taught them the need to *"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out..."* (Acts 3:19). Paul prayed for the **salvation** of sincere zealous people who were **ignorant** of God's

righteousness (Rom. 10:1-3). When the brand new Christian, Simeon the sorcerer, saw the apostles giving the gifts of the Spirit, in ignorance he sought to buy the apostles' ability (Acts 8:14-19). Peter considered Simeon's sin of ignorance a serious matter and identified it as "wickedness", and "the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:22-23). The remedy for this sin was *"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray to God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee"* (Acts 8:22).

Christians must constantly *"be on the alert"* against lax attitudes towards sin, because *"the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). We can never be too cautious in our battle against the Adversary, nor too cautious in our attitudes toward sin. Our guard must never be down, our eyes and ears must never cease to examine and our stance must never be relaxed.

1498 Clinton St.
Noblesville, IN 46060

Love Rejoiceth In The Truth

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity enveith not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemingly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

Among the attributes or characteristics of love is the fact that it rejoices in truth. And why not? Jesus said, truth frees (John 8:32). Love and truth are not antagonists. Yet, it often appears that those who wish to emphasize the importance of love in God's scheme of things do so at the expense of truth. Today many may be heard ridiculing (is that love?) the hard hitting, toe the mark, book chapter and verse, chips fall where they may preaching of yesteryear.

It appears there is today a general inclination to soften or "water down" New Testament teaching relating to the distinctiveness of undenominational Christianity, the uniqueness of the Lord's church and the sacred and

essential significance of the act of baptism.

It is sometimes declared that older preachers preached too much about denominationalism. They emphasized the fact the Lord only built one church too much we are told. They stressed the necessity of baptism into Christ for the remission of sins until those outside Christ were antagonized we are informed. Some today, it is reported, brag about making no reference to baptism in their preaching. The justification that is offered for such a course of action is that aliens will be driven off. Can you imagine? Aliens are deprived of the very truth they must have to be saved because they may be offended if they hear it.

The feeling that seems to exist in many circles of those claiming to be members of the Church of Christ is that we should abandon "doctrinal" emphasis and concentrate more on "love" and "surrender to Jesus." None should dare to minimize love and surrender to Jesus, but one cannot love and surrender without His truth. Jesus stated it succinctly when He said, *"If ye*

love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). To leave off commandment preaching is to embark on the course that always leads to denominationalism. The "doctrine" that "it doesn't make much difference about your baptism or the church as long as love is in your heart and you accept and trust Jesus" is not the "doctrine" of truth.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the Lord's true church today will exist only when and where sound, old-fashioned gospel preaching is heard, believed and obeyed. Jesus loved and loves us with a great love, but thanks be to God; He did not conclude that since He loved us so it did not matter whether He died for us or not. Paul preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 1:2). He also preached that we are baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3) and into His body (1 Cor. 12:13).

If we really love the Lord and the souls of our fellow man, we will not deceive with a watered down, perverted gospel (cf. Gal. 1:6-9). The pure Word of God sanctifies and that is the truth (John 17:17). Love the truth!

147 Creekwood Drive
Florence, AL 35630

Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

3575 Pickett Court -- Tallahassee, FL 32301

MEASURING GOD'S LOVE

Introduction

1. Text: Eph. 3:14-19
2. Love of God and Christ passes knowledge, yet, Paul prays that we may know this love
3. May apprehend the dimensions of God's love
4. Can measure it by John 3:16

I. Length of God's Love

- A. Reached out even to the gift of His Son
- B. Reached out to provide salvation through the gospel - Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 15:1-4
- C. Does not reach beyond sacrifice of His Son
- D. Does not reach beyond terms of the gospel

II. Breadth of God's Love

- A. Reaches out to all men - Titus 2:11-12; Rev. 22:17
- B. Must not try to broaden love of God to fit ones own ideas

III. Depth of God's Love

- A. Reaches down to those guilty of the vilest sins
- B. His love reached
 1. Those who crucified His Son
 2. Saul of Tarsus - I Tim. 1:15
 3. Wicked Corinthians - I Cor. 6:9-11
- C. Does not reach beyond death or into hell

IV. Height of God's Love

- A. This dimension is the one that may be difficult for us to understand
- B. We can live in the very abode of God even though we are sinners before Him

Conclusion

Recognizing the dimensions of God's love, we need to live our lives so that we'll be the recipients of it now and then later in the life that knows no end.

LUST AND TEMPTATION

Introduction

1. Temptation is an ever-present reality - I Cor. 10:13; Luke 17:1
2. No person is immune to it
3. Becoming a Christian does not remove it - I Pet. 5:8
- I. **Temptation: A Challenge to Ones Faith**
 - A. Temptation is not sin
 - B. Temptation is enticement
 - C. Temptation is a challenge to ones faith
 1. Must not yield to it
 2. Consider the positive aspects of it - Jas. 1:2
 3. Two possible progressions from it for the Christian - Jas. 1:3; Rom. 5:3-5; Jas. 1:13-15

II. Lust: Desire Unchecked

- A. Temptation can lead to lust
- B. Sin is committed when one allows his own lust to take command of his heart and actions

C. Each person is responsible for his own actions

III. Keys to Overcoming Temptation

- A. Follow the perfect example of Jesus - Heb. 4:15
- B. Rely on the word of God - 2 Pet. 1:3; Titus 2:12
- C. Worship God regularly - John 4:24; Heb. 10:24-25
- D. Watch and pray - Matt. 26:41; 6:13
- E. Choose right companions and friends - I Cor. 15:33; Prov. 13:20
- F. Be busy doing good - Gal. 6:10; I Tim. 5:11-13
- G. Flee - Gen. 39:7-13; 2 Tim. 6:11

Conclusion

"Holiness in its best estate is possible only under conditions which make it necessary to meet, resist and triumph over temptation. . ." - I.S.B.E., Vol. V, Pg. 2943

A KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD

Introduction

1. Text: John 18:33-37
2. This lesson will consider why Christ's kingdom is different and why it could be classified as being "not of this world"

I. A Kingdom Not of This World Must Have a King Not of This World

- A. Jesus is not of this world in His origin
- B. Jesus is not of this world in His character
- C. Jesus is not of this world in reference to the tenure of His kingly office

II. A Kingdom Not of This World Must Have Laws Not of This World

- A. Laws of Christ's kingdom are not of this world in their origin
- B. Only the sovereign King has legislative authority - Matt. 28:18
- C. Laws of Christ's kingdom not of this world in their nature
- D. Laws of Christ's kingdom are not of this world in their design and power
 1. Intended to bring men to faith
 2. Intended to convict, persuade and convert
 3. Their ultimate aim is salvation
 4. They are the basis of fellowship with heaven

III. A Kingdom Not of This World Must Have Subjects That Are Not of This World

- A. In their conduct
- B. In their thinking, values and objectives
- C. In their destiny

Conclusion

One must be a part of this kingdom that is "not of this world" if he is going to live on after this world is no more.

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

EZRA

by W. Frank Walton

The book of Ezra was named after its chief character, who first appeared in chapter 7. He was "a scribe skilled in the law of Moses" (7:6). This instructive book is a record of restoration and renewal. It is testimony to God's inevitable progress of redemption.

Preceding the events of Ezra, the Jews had been practically all taken away into Babylonian captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C., following the total destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews of Judah had a partial deportation into exile previously in 606 B.C. and again in 597 B.C. The exile was to punish the people's sins and to purify a faithful remnant to one day return and serve God. The exile was predicted 900 years earlier by Moses (Deut. 30:1-10). Return to the homeland was only possible when the people's hearts wholly turned to Jehovah.

FIRST EXILES RETURN (Ch. 1-2)

The book takes up where 2 Chronicles ends. In Ezra 1:1-4, we see Cyrus, King of Persia, who had just overthrown the Babylonians in about 536 B.C., now stirred up by the providential Hand of God. As God's servant and instrument, he allowed the Jews to return home to rebuild the Temple. The Persians were relatively mild rulers who wanted the blessings of all 'local gods' of their conquered peoples, which to them would include Jehovah.

Cyrus' action fulfilled the prophecies of Jeremiah 25:12, 29:10, along with Isaiah 44:28, 45:1, which specifically names Cyrus about 175 years before his decree. Amazing!

Along with the captured Temple vessels, a carefully constructed list of returnees was made (2:2-60). Only 49,697, a fraction of all Jews in captivity, returned to the homeland under Zerubbabel (2:64-65).

TEMPLE WORK STARTS (Ch. 3)

As God commanded in the Law, the priests set up an altar in its previous

place among the Temple ruins. They began sacrificing for the nation as they sought God first to restore a right relationship with Him. Local inhabitants, who had drifted into the desolated land, intimidated the new arrivals (3:3). But the people celebrated, as it is written, the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles). This focused their attention on the new year and fresh start of the civil calendar and also caused them to remember the saving acts of God's power for His people from long ago.

The people were gathered together as "one man" as all pitched in to help support laying the Temple's foundation. Upon completion, many older men, who had seen the first Temple, wept nostalgically. Others loudly rejoiced in this first successful step in restoration. Serving God in truth with all our hearts will certainly tap our emotions.

HARASSED WORK (Ch. 4)

The inhabitants of the land sought to join in the rebuilding of the Temple. But Zerubbabel and the other Jewish leaders curtly refuse this potentially compromising and dangerous request. God's people were then threatened and discouraged in the rebuilding effort.

In 4:6-22, we jump from the present story to a parenthetical account of persecutions against the Jews' building efforts. Unrecorded construction work on the city and the wall were thwarted during Ahasuerus' (Xerxes') reign of 485-464 B.C. and Artaxerxes' reign of 464-424 B.C.

In 4:24, the present account is resumed, where the Jews' enemies halt the work on the Temple just shortly after they returned to the land in 536 B.C.

TEMPLE COMPLETED (Ch. 5-6)

After about a 15 year delay, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah spark

a revival in rebuilding the Temple in 520 B.C. Darius I, who reigned 521-485 B.C., found the original decree of Cyrus and supported the construction of the sanctuary out of the royal treasury. It was finally completed in 516 B.C. and dedicated amid much jubilation and thanksgiving. God's providence did not allow the Jews' enemies to stop the work, while the potent words of the inspired prophets spurred the people on to complete the task.

The events of the Book of Esther transpire during the time between the time-frame of chapters 6 and 7.

EZRA'S ADVENT (Ch. 7-8)

In 458 B.C., the providence of God caused King Artaxerxes to send Ezra, "a scribe skilled in the law of Moses" to Judah. His mission was to begin a great religious awakening by instructing the people in the law of God. Many were ignorant of God's will. Ezra was successful in his spiritual tasks because "the hand of the Lord his God was upon him" (7:6). With 2,020 others, Ezra proclaimed a fast and sought God's providential protection on the long, dangerous journey instead of asking for an armed escort (8:21-23).

CORRECTING SIN (Ch. 9-10)

Soon after Ezra arrived in Judah, a thorny crisis emerged--the Jewish people, including the priests and leaders, have intermarried with the surrounding pagan nations! This widespread peril threatened the restoration of the nation. Ezra was appalled. He tore his garments and pulled out some of his hair. In 9:5-15 we read of Ezra's anguish expressed in a humble plea to Jehovah for mercy in this shameful compromise. He identified himself with the people's sins and confessed the unfaithfulness of the nation. This prayer moved many gathered around Ezra to weep (10:1).

A resolution was made to put away (divorce) the foreign wives according to God's will, so the nation would be

spared God's wrath and the restoration could continue. This difficult, heart-rending decision was met with committed courage to obey God at any cost. The seriousness of sin and compromise was seen in spite of emotional ploys to the contrary. All the guilty gathered trembling before the Temple in heavy rain to resolve this matter. Ezra commanded them to put away their foreign wives, with any children they had by them. The guilty agreed: "As you have said, so it is our duty to do" (10:12). A list of the guilty priests was given (10:18-44) as a public record of those who sin surely found them out.

IMPORTANT THEMES

1. **God.** He is a real, living entity active in the affairs of men. His purposes shape human history. God is ultimately faithful to His promises and the purified remnant. In spite of great odds, His way will succeed. In Ezra,

such events are perceived by the faithful as God's guiding influence. The post-exilic remnant gave Him all the credit for success in the return and rebuilding the Temple. He must be pleased above all else.

2. **The Temple.** The priority of returning to rebuild the Temple is such because it is the central focus in the Jewish worship and religion. God's presence dwelt among His people in the Temple. His blessing and protection was here available. Sacrifice for sins in daily offerings and on the Day of Atonement was impossible without the Temple. Daily incense, a token of continuous communion with God, could not be offered for the nation.

3. **The Covenant Relationship and the Law.** God made promises to His covenant people. The Law laid down His will in ethical and religious matters so His people could enjoy a living relationship with Him. An unholy

people cannot approach a holy God. The Law's stipulations reinforced God's covenant promises. Restoration in Ezra was meticulously based on "as it is written" (3:2, 3:4, 6:18). For example, certain priests among the first returnees were considered unclean and forbidden to serve because they could not prove their priestly ancestry (2:61-63).

Ezra was the great, influential teacher of God's law. A covenant relationship can only be maintained by a knowledge of covenant law. Ignorance was destructive. This was seen in the intermarriage with foreign women, which was a dire omen of a drift toward a religiously defiled and apostate community.

May we benefit from this motivating and helpful book (Rom. 15:4).

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Caring For the Church

Christ's Care For the Church

by David Holder

Hallmark Card Company capitalizes on the idea of caring with its slogan, "When you care enough to send the very best." The idea of caring is found several times in the New Testament both with a negative and a positive connotation. Negatively, "care" means to worry or to be anxious. Luke 8:14 and 21:34 refer to the "cares of this life" (KJV). Jesus instructs us not to "care" for such things (Matthew 6:25). Positively, "care" means to be concerned, as in Philippians 2:20 where Paul refers to Timothy as one who will "care" for others. In a series of three articles, attention will be focused on "caring" in a positive sense as it has to do with caring for the church. In this first article, notice some things about Christ's care for the church.

CHRIST SHEPHERDS AND GUARDS THE CHURCH

In I Peter 2:25 Jesus is described as "the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" (NASB). Both of these designations focus on the idea of caring. A "shepherd" is one who feeds, tends, and provides for the flock. In John 10:11,14 Jesus describes Himself as "the good shepherd." In

this passage, Jesus contrast Himself as a shepherd to a hireling and shows that His care is both sacrificial (11) and personal (14). "The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep." The hireling leaves and flees while the wolf snatches and scatters. The good shepherd knows His own and His own know him. The hireling "is not the owner of the sheep" and "is not concerned about the sheep." Jesus is the good shepherd who tends His flock with sacrificial and personal care. The writer of Hebrews refers to Jesus as "the Great Shepherd of the sheep" (13:20) and Peter calls Him "the Chief Shepherd" who will appear. Jesus, the caring Shepherd, is good, great, and chief.

A "guardian" is one who cares for and protects those given to his charge. The word translated "guardian" (NASB) in reference to Jesus is the same word translated "bishop" or "overseer" in reference to elders (cf. Acts 20:28). In Luke 19:44 and I Peter 2:12, a closely related word is translated "visitation" in reference to God's coming to His people. Jesus "visited" man with loving care. He tenderly but firmly cares for those

given to His charge.

Jesus is the Shepherd and Guardian "of your souls." He cares for, provides for, and protects His people. In the immediate context of I Peter 2:25, Jesus' care is explained by the fact that He "suffered for you" (21), "bore our sins in His body" (24a), and that it is by "His wounds you were healed" (24b).

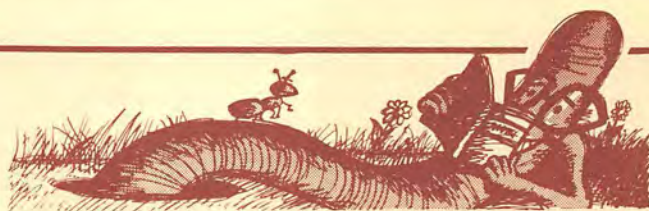
CHRIST CHERISHES THE CHURCH

In Ephesians 5:29 Jesus is described as one who "cherishes" the church. The rare word "cherish" means to keep warm. It might be thought of in terms of a hen warming her eggs and later her chicks, an analogy that Jesus used about Himself in Matthew 23:37.

Ephesians 5 shows that Jesus cares for the purity (26), glory (27), and nourishment (29) of His church. Jesus lovingly gave Himself for the church to "sanctify" her through cleansing. His goal is to present the church "in all her glory" without spot, wrinkle, or such like. The purity and glory of the church are realized through the nourishment Jesus provides. Jesus recognizes the church as "His body" and cares for it accordingly. Christ cared enough for the church to give the best He had to give -- the best there was to give. Jesus wants the best for and from His church.

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THE FOOL OF GOD by Louis Cochran (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1985, hardback, 412 pages, \$11.95.

This is a reprint of the classic novel-biography of Alexander Campbell. The life of Campbell is told as a work of fiction, but in its essentials it is a factual book. Every event actually occurred, or had its basis in solid fact; each person really lived, and played his role much as is related in the novel.

The book is clear and interesting in style. It does not presume to be a study of Campbell's religious thinking, or an account of his work in the restoration movement. It is more of an internal look at a man who had the vision of the coming of unity in the one body.

A novel is a different approach to understanding church history and the restorationists, but I believe this book will be a nice tool in understanding a man who, like Paul, was willing to be called a fool for Christ's sake.

LIVING LESSONS FROM THE PROPHETS, edited by John Waddey (East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions: Knoxville, Tennessee), 1985, paperback, 441 pages, \$9.00.

Although some 2,400 years have elapsed since Malachi laid down his pen, the words of the Old Testament prophets still speak a clear message to the heart of God's children. The lessons of the 1985 lectureship of the East Tennessee School of Preaching have now been preserved in this book. This volume was not designed to be a verse-by-verse commentary on the prophets. The book presents an introduction, a synopsis, and a summary of the lives and messages of the prophets. The lectureship committee was hoping that this book would whet the appetite of its readers

to further explore into the Divine Record.

The book's first few chapters deal with principles for interpreting the prophets, the office and function of a prophet, historical backgrounds of the prophets, false prophets, and looking to the Messiah. The remaining chapters then take various prophets and explain their writings in such a way you feel you really get to know them. Isaiah is described as the statesman prophet; Jeremiah as the weeping prophet; Ezekiel as the prophet of the exile; Amos as the prophet of justice; Jonah as the runaway prophet; etc.

The book is divided into thirty-four chapters and should prove to be a valuable tool in studying these Old Testament men and their writings.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, edited by J.D. Douglas (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1978, hardback, 1074 pages, \$29.95.

This is a newly revised edition in a comprehensive, one-volume reference work. It contains 4,800 articles covering 2,000 years of history. This is a book on how musicians, kings and missionaries, seers and soldiers, kings and councils, poets and persecutors, humanists and heretics have all, for better or worse, had bearings on Christianity.

More than 180 historians and scholars have contributed to this volume. This is almost a "Who's Who" or a "What's What" among religion. It deals with reformers, restorers, popes, cults, and churches.

Most of the readers of this magazine would be interested in the section on Churches of Christ. The author states: "They follow a congregational pattern of church polity which they regard as being in accordance with NT teaching. Indeed, to align all church practice and belief with the Scriptures is a major goal of the Churches of Christ. Nothing is to be accepted as an article of faith or as a

condition of communion but 'what is expressly taught and enjoined. . . in the Word of God,' which is 'the perfect constitution for the worship, discipline, and government of the New Testament Church.' The Bible is the best source of information about God, far better than creeds of statements of dogma."

This volume is a valuable tool for a thumb-nail sketch on the beliefs of a particular man or cult. The scholarship is high, the materials are impartially and objectively presented, and the brevity is commendable.

CRY A LITTLE, LAUGH A LOT by Mary Jo Tankley Frazer (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, hardback, 90 pages, \$4.95.

Life is a mixture of happiness and tears. Blended together in different amounts, they make each of us different. Some people have had more laughter than sorrow, while for others the opposite is true. But we are all bound together by the universal experiences of crying and laughing.

This little book is a compilation of letters and short compositions about people whose lives have touched the author. It is a book of warmth and of caring for others. As the author relates incidents from her life, readers will relive memories from their own and recognize the importance of sharing special moments with others.

This book was written in response to a feeling of guilt and grief the author experienced after the death of her parents. Writing it was a healing experience for her. I'm sure you will enjoy reading it.

SECRET HISTORY by John Ahmanson (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 179 pages, \$9.95.

This book was originally written in Danish in 1876. Only three copies have been discovered, and for the first time it has been translated into English, by the noted linguist Gleason L. Archer.

This book examines the rise and spread of Mormonism in the United

States through the eyes of a disillusioned Mormon. This is the story of a devout Mormon convert who survived the bitter handcart pilgrimage to Salt Lake City, who knew Brigham Young personally, who worked as a missionary for the Mormon Church, and then risked his life to leave it.

The author gives his perspective on the basis of this now-powerful system and the tactics the early church leaders employed to make it powerful. Ahmanson deals with the life of Joseph Smith and the origins of his Book of Mormon.

Informative historical notes have been added to Ahmanson's text, including comments by Mormon research experts Walter Martin, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, and others.

MAN OF STEEL AND VELVET by *Aubrey Andelin (Pacific Press: Pierce City, Missouri), 1981, hardback, 316 pages, \$10.95.*

This book describes in a simple and forthright way what it takes to be a real man. Too many men in our society are convinced that the "macho" image and the man-must-be-tough philosophy is what makes them a real man. This book explains what it means to be a caring human being. In learning what it means to be a man, the reader will also learn how to understand women. The author points out what women appreciate in men and what it takes to provide women and children with security.

A man must not only be tough like steel, but he must also be soft like velvet. This is the kind of man who receives the admiration of his friends and the devotion and respect of his family. This is the kind of man that others look at and say, "He's such a nice man."

I have always required that this book be read by all men that have asked me to perform their wedding ceremonies. It also makes for a wonderful wedding or anniversary gift.

APOLOGETICS--AN INTRODUCTION by *William Lane Craig (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 214 pages, \$13.95.*

Apologetics is defined as "the branch of study dealing with the defense of Christianity; a formal spoken or written defense." It is a willingness to do what Peter said: ". . . be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the

hope that is in you. . ." (I Peter 3:15). In a society in which the prevalent philosophies are fundamentally and essentially anti-Christian, believers are often called upon to defend the things they believe--to present a clear and rational case for their faith.

Craig presents what is a basic course in apologetics, complete with historical background and helpful bibliographies and emphasizing the two primary issues: the existence of God and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Chapters include such things as How Do I Know Christianity Is True?, The Absurdity of Life Without God, The Existence of God, The Problem of Historical Knowledge, and The Resurrection of Jesus.

101 MORE HYMN STORIES by *Kenneth W. Osbeck (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, paperback, 327 pages, \$9.95.*

One noticeable feature of a church that is alive is its congregational singing. This form of worship to the Lord has lifted many a heart from a spirit of indifference to one of great joy and praise. But what is behind the hymns that are sung by churches all around the world? Who wrote them? What were the circumstances under which the songs were written?

The author had earlier edited a book called *101 Hymn Stories*. It, and this new companion book, help us to understand the poets and musicians that have given us some of our favorite hymns. This is a book that will be valuable for song leaders and preachers or just for personal and family devotions.

KNOWING GOD'S WORD by *Stanley A. Ellisen (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 294 pages, \$8.95.*

The main purpose of this book is to provide a simple guide to reading the Old Testament--but it goes far beyond that. Ellisen has put together simple, clear charts and outlines to help the reader understand that how each book fits together into the Old Testament, how the contents of each book relate to one another, and how each book "flows" from beginning to end.

Each book of the Old Testament has a one-page outline--to give the reader at a glance what is in that book.

It deals with the title of the book, the authorship, the dates and historical setting, and often the political and religious setting of the book.

Ellisen also describes the purpose of each book (why it was written, why it was included in the Canon) and the unique contributions each book makes to the Old Testament. The author has also included a list of suggested commentaries for various Old Testament books, highlights of the intertestamental period, and a glossary of terms.

COMMENTARY ON REVELATION by *Henry Barclay Swete (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1977, hardback, 562 pages, \$14.95.*

The book of Revelation is a book of strong figurative and symbolic language that has astounded the minds of the greatest scholars of all time. The author of this book accepts no hand-me-down explanations as to what the symbolism is all about, but he digs from each verse every possible drop of interpretation from the Greek and Latin.

Swete was perhaps one of the greatest biblical scholars ever to have come out of England. He was educated at King's College in London and received a B.A. at Cambridge. He received his M.A. in 1862 and a B.D. in 1874. Though keeping a very busy teaching and preaching schedule, Swete was prolific reader and writer. He produced a half dozen of the most scholarly and usable works one will find.

The first part of Swete's work is worth the price of the book. He gives some of the most interesting and useful information available. Surprisingly, the author takes an amillennial approach in his work. He feels a foundation must first be laid before a building can be erected, so he has laid an extensive historical foundation before he begins his commentary.

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Games, puzzles, & Riddles

Word Search by Lori Miescke

Here are some ways which could lead us to a more spiritual life. Circle the words in the word search. They read horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

FORGIVING	OBEDIENCE	UNDERSTANDING
GOOD WORKS	PEACE	VICTORY
GROWTH	PRAISES GOD	WALKS IN THE SPIRIT
HONESTY	PUTS JESUS FIRST	WISDOM
BE HUMBLE	REGARDS GOD'S WILL	WORSHIP
LOVE	TRUSTING	SPIRITUAL MINDEDNESS

D O B C G N I V I G R O F E S G H L U U P
 O N S H O N E S T Y P O B E D P C E O N E
 E H Y S P E A T M R O L M A H R N E S D T
 S I R N E G R H A V C X Q U A A S A L E M
 N C O R T S W I E R E S M B V I T O L R U
 T U T A M B E H U M B L E O H S R E I S O
 R L C M S E T I N G S P S O D E E M W T P
 U S I V S Z G R O W T H P R A S S T S A U
 S L V G O V E G O G P U T S J G I S D N T
 T M O P E A C E L O O T P E W O E W O D S
 I D L M B E C C E B R O E G A D D S G I J
 N P W N O M I T S E T S D I R I P S S N E
 G C E O M E E L G D I O U W P O U T D G S
 M S E T R V N G H I S E R T O O S E R E U
 I S M E O S W O P E H E N T L R K J A E S
 E J O L T E H W E N T T O T H E K G G H F
 S P R E T R Y I A C L K S I N T H S E C I
 S R E H T O R O P E F I L S K S I R R A R
 S S E N D E D N I M L A U T I R I P S I S
 W A L K S I N T H E S P I R I T U O U L T



Fill in the blanks with persons names from the Bible.

A is for _____, the father of Cain.

B is for _____, who had fields of grain.

C is for _____, a courageous spy.

D is for _____, who a needle did ply.

E is for _____, a queen beauty was she.

F is for _____, to whom Paul made a plea.

G is for _____, known for his sword.

H is for _____, brought her child to the Lord.

I is for _____, Sarah his mother.

J is for _____, Benjamin's brother.

K is for _____, the father of Saul.

L is for _____, converted by Paul.

M is for _____, found by Pharaoh's daughter.

N is for _____, whose ark stood the water.

O is for _____, back to Moab she went.

P is for _____, to Rome he was sent.

Q is for _____, whom Paul briefly mentions.

R is for _____, filled her royal intentions.

S is for _____, a strong man was he.

T is for _____, who said he must see.

U is for _____, in battle "effaced".

V is for _____, by Esther replaced.

Z is for _____, climbed a sycamore tree.



BIBLICAL BIRDS

The following birds are found in the Bible. Can you unscramble their names? The Scripture verses will help you if you get stuck.

voed _____	Gen. 8:8	leage _____	Is. 40:31
loveruettd _____	Lev. 1:14	honer _____	Deut. 14:18
traepridg _____	Jer. 17:11	low _____	Lev. 11:16
gopein _____	Lev. 1:14	nerva _____	Lev. 11:15
prawors _____	Luke 12:6	kahw _____	Lev. 11:16
snaw _____	Lev. 11:18		



WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“DUNG”

Greek Word: skubalon

Meaning: “refuse, rubbish, dirt, dung”

This is a noun of the neuter gender and is used only once in the New Testament. It occurs in the plural (**skubala**) in Phil. 3:8 where Paul says:

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. . .” (King James Version).

Later translations use the words “refuse” (A.S.V., R.S.V.) and “rubbish” (N.A.S.V., N.K.J.V., N.I.V.). And though the point of Paul’s passage is quite clear this word is a bit puzzling to the modern reader as he or she compares the various translations now available. And since this word occurs only once in the Greek N.T. it is helpful to inquire its non-biblical use in the first century, A.D., for insight into its precise meaning in Phil. 3:8.

Moulton and Milligan, in their *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, explain that the word was rather general in meaning in the first century. It could mean “leavings” in the sense of gleanings from a crop. Or it could be used pejoratively in the sense of “refuse” or “rubbish,” i.e., undesirable remains or leftovers.

And there was a more specific usage that Moulton-Milligan illustrate with a papyrus document dated about A.D. 100. In this ancient note a man called Gemellus informs his son that a donkey driver has brought “a little bundle and rotten hay, the whole of it decayed--no better than dung” (M-M, p. 579). And Moulton and Milligan suggest on the basis of their evaluation of the evidence that “‘dung’ is probably what Paul meant in Phil. 3:8” (Ibid.).

So much for the word itself. But what is the lesson for us? It seems to me that the reply to a second question will give us an answer to the first: “What did I give up to become a

Christian?”

We are often tempted to indulge ourselves in that most despicable of all emotions, self-pity. And one way of doing so is to enumerate the many many advantages, good times and possessions we have given up to serve Jesus. How hard it has been for us!

But compared with the “excellency of the knowledge” of Christ Jesus the Lord what have we really given up or been denied in order to become and be Christians? Was it a governorship? A new dining-room suite? A prestigious pulpit? A large number of dollars? A lot of what would otherwise have been leisure time? Paul’s answer was, and is, “dung.”

“SERVE”

Greek Word: latreuo

Meaning: “to serve by carrying out religious duties”

What will the saved do when they get to heaven? I suppose many of us have entertained ideas of sitting on a cloud and strumming a harp all day, or something of the sort.

Perhaps Rev. 22:3 will help us to bring that fuzzy picture a little clearer--though I do not for a moment pretend to know all that may be known or experienced in heaven. The Apostle John writes:

“And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him” (King James Version).

The verb “to serve” in this text is our word **latreuo**. And as our definition above suggests it has to do with the performance of religious duties. And ordinarily one would think of it in connection with acts such as singing hymns of praise to God, eating the Lord’s Supper, and praying. But it is applied much more broadly than that to the lives of New Testament Christians.

In Rom. 12:1 Paul tells Christians that their entire lives are to be presented as a living sacrifice to God. This, of course, includes what we normally call “acts of worship.” But

the verse demands that we include other activities such as plumbing, school-teaching, homemaking, recreation, et. al. (cf. I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17). And when we do so Paul says we are offering our “reasonable service” to God.

Now the word “service” in the King James Version of Rom. 12:1 is underlain by our Greek word **latreuo** in its nominal form, **latreia**. Later translations render the phrase “spiritual worship” (A.S.V., R.S.V., N.I.V.) instead of “reasonable service.” And the reason for this difference is that the translators are trying to help us see that our service is worship and our worship is service. When Christians talk about a “worship service” they are actually being redundant. They might just as well say “worship worship” or “service service.” The New American Standard Version attempts to make this point by translating in Rom. 12:1, “your spiritual service of worship.”

My point is that we must not draw lines of distinction between service and worship or secular and religious work that the Lord has not. Some items of service the Lord has prescribed for assemblies of His disciples and some may be performed anywhere **but** all are worship when done for the Lord’s sake and with a view to pleasing Him. The **latreia** in Rom. 12:1 includes the hammering of the carpenter as surely as it includes the preaching of the preacher (Col. 3:22-23).

Now then, if the verb **latreuo** and the noun **latreia** include service of all kinds that becomes spiritual because we do it for Christ’s sake, then we may surmise from Rev. 22:3 that in our resurrection bodies we will perform varied services for and to the Lord in heaven. Rev. 22 draws its imagery in part from the Garden of Eden, before the curse, in which a part of mankind’s assigned responsibility was the performance of meaningful work (Gen. 2:15).



Studies About The Spirit

by David Holder

The Spirit And The Son

The Holy Spirit is often depicted in the Bible in terms of His relationship to Jesus. The Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7), the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9; 1 Peter 1:11), the Spirit of God's Son (Galatians 4:6), and the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:19). The Spirit and the Son and inextricably joined; their work is completely interrelated.

Many of the difficulties that we have created concerning the Spirit are due to our failure to understand that work of the Spirit as consequent upon and concurrent with the work of the Son. We often claim to understand the work of Jesus in our salvation and our lives, but our understanding falters when we come to the corresponding work of the Holy Spirit. George S. Hendry describes the work of the Spirit as Christocentric and observes, "**There is no reference in the New Testament to any work of the Spirit apart from Christ. . . . The New Testament knows no work of the Spirit except in relation to the historical manifestation of Christ**" (*The Holy Spirit is Christian Theology*, The Westminster Press, 1956, pp. 22, 29). This article (and one to follow) will focus attention of the Son.

THE SPIRIT AND JESUS' EARTHLY WORK

Conception. The first connection between the Spirit and Jesus' earthly life was at Jesus' conception. According to Matthew 1:18, 10, Mary "was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit," and "that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." Luke's version of the conception presents the angel's words as a parallelism:

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you,

And the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (1:35).

The parallel statements equate "*the Holy Spirit*" with "*the power of the Most High*." The designation "*Holy Spirit*" emphasizes His person, while "*power of the Most High*" emphasizes His performance. The conception of Jesus in a virgin was the powerful work of God, and in particular, the work of the Holy Spirit. The activity of the Spirit in Jesus' conception resulted in the birth of a "*holy offspring*" who was to be called "*the Son of God*." Note carefully that the Spirit's work did not mean that Jesus would become the Son of God, but would enable the Son to be manifest in human form and thus would be called the Son of God.

Baptism. Chronologically, the Spirit is mentioned next in Scripture in connection with Jesus' baptism. At the baptism, the Spirit of God descended from heaven as a dove and came upon Jesus (Matthew 3:16). Luke supplements this information by noting that "*the Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove*" (3:22). John adds the idea that the Spirit "*remained upon Him*" (1:32). These references do not imply that the Spirit had not been with Jesus previously. In fact, the meager information that is available about Jesus' youth seem to indicate that the Spirit was with Jesus in some sense, though this fact is not stated explicitly (cf. Luke 2:49, 52). What the text does state is that the descending of the Spirit of Jesus' baptism was to identify Jesus as the one who "*baptizes in the Holy Spirit*" (John 1:33). The symbolic manifestation at Jesus' baptism marked a new phase of Jesus' earthly life and work.

According to Acts 10:38 Peter described Jesus as Him whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit. This is probably a reference to the Spirit's activity at Jesus' baptism. What the Spirit did on that occasion did not make Jesus God, it simply designated Him as the one who would baptize in the Holy Spirit. This was similar to the anointing of the kings of Israel (1 Samuel 10:1, 15:17, 16:13; 1 Kings 1:39, etc.). The anointing did not change the king's character, but simply marked him as God's representative to rule His people.

Jesus referred to Himself as being "*anointed*" in Luke 4:18-21 when He applied the words of Isaiah to Himself. In Isaiah 61:1,2, the prophet described his role as God's "*anointed*" to proclaim a message of liberty to his people. It is likely that Isaiah perceived the "*Spirit of the Lord*" as the Lord's special presence with himself (cf. Psalms 51:11; 139:7). Jesus saw the words of Isaiah as applicable to Himself. Isaiah, as the Lord's anointed, was a type of the Messiah and used language to which Jesus could and did assign a fuller meaning. Similarly, Jesus would have understood the reference to the Spirit in a fuller way than Isaiah.

Ministry. The Spirit and the Son are described in conjunction with one another at several points in Jesus' earthly work. Jesus is described as being "*full of the Holy Spirit*" (Luke 4:1) and as having the Spirit without measure (John 3:34, see the NIV). Jesus was "*led*" (Matthew 4:1) or "*impelled*" (Mark 1:12) by the Spirit to go into the wilderness where the temptation by Satan took place. While in the wilderness Jesus was led about "*in*" the Spirit (Luke 4:1, see NASB margin). After the temptation, Jesus "*returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit*" (Luke 4:14) where news about Him spread quickly. When the seventy returned from their successful preaching tour, Jesus "*rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit*" (Luke 10:21). Jesus described His work of casting out demons as being "*by the Spirit of God*" (Matthew 12:28) or, expressed another way, "*by the finger of God*" (Luke 11:20). After His resurrection, Jesus gave orders to His apostles "*by the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 1:2). Throughout Jesus' earthly activities there was complete concurrence between the Spirit and the Son.

In Matthew 12:17-21, Jesus applied other words of Isaiah to Himself. Isaiah's words in 42:1-4 were originally spoken about "My servant" which was likely God's way of referring to Israel (cf. Isaiah 41:8, 49:3, etc.). Israel, as the recipient of God's "Spirit," was to be a light to the nations (Isaiah 42:6, 60:1-3), a responsibility that was rarely fulfilled. Jesus understood the words

about Israel as applicable to Himself. Language was used in the Old Testament passage that was capable of both immediate and remote application. Jesus saw Israel, at least along the line being considered, as a type for which He was the antitype.

Jesus worked in close and constant connection with the Spirit, as He did with the Father as well. It was, in fact,

in the teaching of Jesus that the tri-personality of God came to light. Whatever Jesus did while He was on earth, He did in full collaboration with the Spirit.



111 Oak Avenue
Dickson, TN 37055

You **MUST** Read This Book!

--A Book Review

by David E. Pratte

Let me tell you about a book you **must** read. If you are a parent with children in public schools, you **must** read this book! If you someday will be a parent with children in public schools, you **must** read this book! If you have grandchildren or any children who you love and who are in public schools, you **must** read this book! If you are an elder, preacher, or teacher in a congregation that has children who attend public schools, you **must** read this book! If you are concerned about why so many young people who are raised by Christians end up rejecting the faith, you **must** read this book!

What does this book contain? It is official testimony from parents and teachers who testified to the U.S. Dept. of Education in official hearings held all across the U.S.A. in March of 1984. This book thoroughly documents the reasons for the problems that exist in public schools, and one major reason why so many Christian parents have so many problems with their children during their school years. The book proves beyond question that the handful of preachers and parents who have been warning people about the dangers in many public schools, were not "crying wolf" when there was no wolf.

Jesus said, "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true" (John 8:17). And, "in the

mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Cor. 13:1). This book contains the personal, first-hand, eyewitness testimony of 108 parents and teachers about problems in the schools. Clearly the Bible recognizes this as a valid way of determining the truth with regard to historical facts. If so, then this book unquestionably proves the following to be facts:

(1) It is a **fact** that many schools lead our children to believe it is morally acceptable to practice premarital sex, extra-marital sex, homosexuality, divorce, and prostitution and to read pornography.

(2) It is a **fact** that many schools lead our children to believe it is morally acceptable to practice abortion, mercy-killing and suicide.

(3) It is a **fact** that many schools teach our children that it is morally acceptable to enjoy the "moderate" use of alcohol and drugs.

(4) It is a **fact** that many schools use texts and assigned reading that are full of profanity, sexual suggestiveness, violence, and filth.

(5) It is a **fact** that many schools encourage our children to believe in or experience with the occult. Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, and Oriental religions.

(6) It is a **fact** that many schools lead our children to believe in evolution and reject creation.

(7) It is a **fact** that many schools use Behavior Modification and other psychological brainwashing techniques to lead our children to reject the beliefs taught them by their parents and by the Bible.

(8) It is a **fact** that many schools use "Values Clarification" and similar values education methods to lead our children to believe in situation ethics.

(9) It is a **fact** that many schools use teaching methods that alienate children from their parents, that teach anti-Biblical concepts about parenting, and that teach anti-Biblical concepts about family roles.

(10) It is a **fact** that many schools lead our children to accept all the tenets of Secular Humanism, while at the same time discouraging faith in God, Christ, and the Bible!

No, we do not claim that **all** students in **all** schools face all these problems. But many students in many schools do face them. And many schools cover it up so parents will not find out about it. And many students will not tell their parents because they fear their teachers and peer pressure. Do you **know** what is being taught your child?

What book is this? It is *Child Abuse in the Classroom*. It is edited by Phyllis Schlafly, but 99 and 9/10 per cent of it is verbatim testimony of witnesses without comment from anyone. I urge you to borrow it from a library, or send \$4.95 to: Pere Marquette Press, P.O. Box 495, Alton, IL 62002. It is also available from religious bookstores.

This book is the proverbial "bombshell." It is dynamite! It will motivate you to find out what's going on in your child's school and do what you can to make sure it's good for your child. You **must** read this book! You absolutely, positively **must**!

7021 Omaha Ct.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46804

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

Why Volunteer to Write a Column?

Having never been especially confident of my abilities, including those of a writer, I sit here wondering why I ever wrote Bob and volunteered to write a monthly column. Was I sick last February the 12th when I wrote him? Hadn't I had enough of deadlines trying to edit a weekly bulletin several years ago at Huffman in Birmingham? Wasn't my schedule so full now that I did not have time for more homestudies? Didn't my wife, Linda, pass out when she understood the purpose of my letter that day? Yet, I went ahead and mailed it! After I came somewhat back to my senses, I somehow hoped that the mailman would lose it, or if it reached Bob's desk that he would not like the idea. But the inevitable happened, he wrote back and said to go ahead.

But all my misgivings have to be cast aside because I perceive a tremendous need. Back in December of 1984, at the insistence of Ed Harrell, I wrote several articles for *Christianity Magazine* on the subject of "Things That Work". In one of the articles I asked for readers to share with me things that had worked for them in the area of building up the body of Christ. The response was tremendous, even though I got a lot more questions than I did suggestions. I heard from preachers and elders, but most were simply devoted Christians who have a love for the souls of men, and they felt helpless as to how to go about saving those souls that they loved.

It took a tremendous amount of time to answer all those letters that came in, so I thought a monthly column on church growth would be a good way to handle this interest.

After considering many titles, I decided on "EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work of Service" I

did not want to limit myself to what we commonly call "personal work". In fact one purpose of this column will be to help redefine some terms. All work for the Lord is personal. Each man will be judged for what he has done in the body. "Soulwinning" is more than teaching a lesson outline over the kitchen table. All work that God has given Christians to do is designed to help the church save itself. Everything we do, whether we use our mouth in teaching or hands in service is to be aimed at saving the lost and keeping the saved saved. We all have different gifts and talents, but every gift in order to serve its purpose, must be aimed at winning souls.

Our title is taken from Ephesians 4:12. The context tells us that God gave gifts to men; some were apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. God gave these gifts to men for the purpose of "equipping the saints for the work of ministering." Here again, we must redefine terms. For too long we have let denominationalism influence our thinking. We speak of "the" minister of a congregation. In the New Testament there was no such thing as "the" minister. God used men with special gifts to equip every saint to be "a" minister. Although having different abilities and functions, every saint was to be perfected for acts of service.

The word Paul used for "equipping" is very interesting. KATARTISMON is a term used in surgery for setting a broken limb or for putting a joint back in place. In politics, it was used for bringing two opposing factions together so that the government could function. In the New Testament it is used of "mending" nets (Mk. 1:19) and "restoring" a brother to his place

again in fellowship (Gal. 6:1). The basic idea of the word is that of putting a thing into the condition in which it ought to be.

It is the function of special servants in the church (elders and evangelists), to see that the members are so educated, so guided, so cared for, so sought after when they go astray, that they eventually become what they ought to be. Each member must become mature, complete, useful, and ripe for the Master's use. A saint must be equipped for the work of service for which he is best suited. The special servants must not be men who simply talk theology, their function is to see that every member is active in practical service for the building up of the body of Christ.

It is only when this gospel is being accomplished that churches will grow and obtain a perfect unity. It is only when every saint is being mended, equipped, and perfected for works of service that the church can reach a stature which can be measured by the fullness of Christ. To train a few to do "personal evangelism" is shortsighted if we are not producing a body where every member has in himself a reflection of Jesus Christ. To search land and sea to make one proselyte and bring him into an unhealthy body is to be as guilty as the Pharisees. We will make him two-fold the child of hell that he was.

Please send me your questions and suggestions for equipping the saints for the work of service. I will not be able to answer all letters personally but will try to use this column as a sounding board for those who are interested.

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- GOODNESS

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

The last fruit we discussed was "kindness." Closely associated with that fruit is "goodness." It has been said that "kindness" is a quality of heart, whereas "goodness" is a quality of conduct and action. W.E. Vine defines "agathosune" as: "goodness, signifies that moral quality which is described by the adjective agathos." William Barclay concludes, "Agathosune is the generosity which springs from the heart that is kind" (*Flesh and Spirit*, p. 107).

The word is found only four times in the New Testament, all in the writings of Paul. To the Romans he said: "And I myself also am persuaded of you my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (15:14). Though they had differences among them, Paul was persuaded that they would act with generosity toward one another. Think how badly this fruit is needed today! Disagreement often brings out the worst within us instead of the best. The Romans had their differences over "days, and meats" but they were good people and Paul commended them for that disposition.

The Christian is not to be a partaker with evil works, because "ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth)" (Eph. 5:8,9). The "goodness" in this verse seems to be a general goodness, uprightness or generosity which is characteristic of those who put off "darkness" and become "light" by talking on the characteristics of Christ.

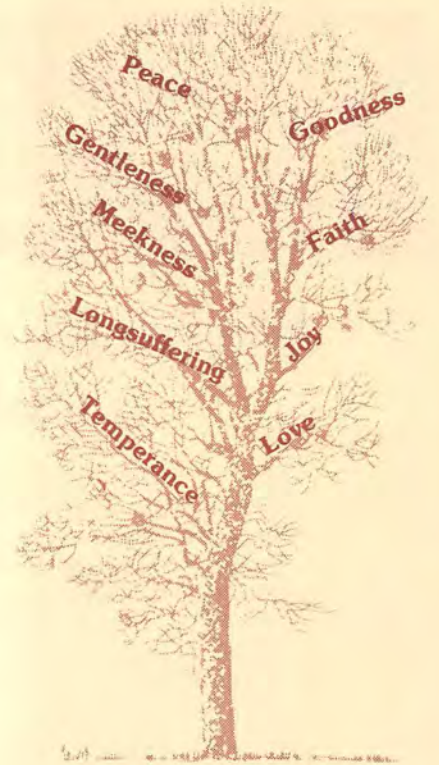
The last occurrence of the word is II Thessalonians 1:11. Speaking of the second coming of Christ and the glory that awaits the righteous, Paul said:

"To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power." The expression, "desire of goodness" may be subjective, in the sense of an attitude of goodness, or it may be objective, referring to a desire after goodness. In either case, Paul's prayer for them was that God would fulfill this fruit of their lives.

The meaning of the word may be more clearly seen by comparing it with the word "justice." Justice is the quality that gives a man what he deserves, whereas "goodness" gives him what he could never deserve. God's generosity is seen in His forgiveness of the penitent sinner, but his justice is seen in his judgment of men according to their works. "In justice there is no real room for pity and mercy, for pity and mercy would do no more than interfere with the course of abstract justice. In goodness, pity and mercy are integral parts, for goodness is the generosity which is undeserved" (Barclay, p. 106). This fruit in the life of a Christian will cause men to be generous and kind instead of harsh and judgmental.

Goodness is generosity that comes from a kind heart, but lest someone get the idea that it is some kind of mushy sentimentalism, let it be noted that Jesus was doing good when he cleansed the temple (Matt. 21:12,13). Those who were driven out may not have considered the action "kind," but it was from a heart that was kind. Likewise, the rebukes of Matthew 23 may not have been considered "kind," but they were spoken from a heart that was generous and willing to forgive even those who hanged him on a tree.

Nehemiah said that Israel "did eat,



and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness. Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations" (Neh. 9:25, 26). May we learn that the "goodness" of God does not excuse sin, but is generous in forgiving it. Then may we have the same attitude toward our fellow man.

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Proud Parenthood by Joseph L. Felix. Are your children a blessing or a burden? The author of this book seeks parenthood as something in which to take great pride! With expertise in child psychology and lots of practical experience (he's father of eight), the author helps parents to feel good about the job they're doing.
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THE BOOK SHELF



“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

Silence of the Scriptures Review of Previous Lessons

We appreciate your continued interest in what the Bible says. As an expedient for a little while now, let's review some facts from the Bible we have previously studied. First, several lessons have shown that we have a New Testament, and our law is not from the Old; It was also emphasized that all Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled. Our standard for today is in the New Testament, which contains all necessary for perfection. . . which gives access to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3). We must continue to insist that authority from must be established in all our religious affairs (Col. 3:17). That authority stems from divine commands (precepts), approved apostolic examples, and that which is inferred and necessary to fulfill some requirement. We have also shown that a command or example may illustrate or teach either generic or specific authority. Specific authority excludes any change or modification on our part, whereas generic authority includes. . . leaving man with a choice. Our church building is authorized in the command to assemble, but the architecture of it falls into opinion wherein we have a choice. An illustration of this from Acts 20 indicates that the church met on the second floor, and had many lights. I need to emphasize to you, however, that these optional aids, methods or expedient matters do have limitations, and must not violate other principles of truth. The church is not in the entertainment business.

As we talk about establishing Bible authority, a big problem concerns the silence of the Scripture. Silence, my friend, does not constitute authority. If it did, we could use coke and ice cream on the Lord's Supper, for the Bible doesn't say NOT to do this. Noah was not told he couldn't use pine or oak when he built the ark, or any of a hundred other kinds of wood, but God did specify Gopher. Noah was not at

liberty to change that, even though God was otherwise silent. Practical examples today are as follows: The Bible does not say we cannot use a missionary society or a sponsoring church type program, but it does illustrate the autonomy of the local congregation which eliminates these concepts to one who loves the truth. The Bible does not say we cannot use a string band or piano in worship to Him, but it does specify vocal music and silence does not constitute authority. The danger of going beyond that which is commanded, exemplified or necessarily inferred, is taught in several places. II John 9 says, *“whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God.”* Again in Matt. 15:9, Jesus said, *“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”*

Thus when we talk about authority not being in the silence of the Scriptures, this helps us understand the limitations to generic authority. Our limitations revolve between that which is **LAWFUL**, within the confines of that which does not conflict with a specific requirement or prohibition; and that which is expedient, or suitable for the circumstances. The best illustration I can think of concerns our command to go teach people: It would not be lawful for me to steal a car to go, even to preach, nor would it be expedient to charter a jet, say to go from Fort Worth to Dallas. . . although I know of nothing unlawful about flying a jet airplane. An expedient matter is one that is highly desirable to the circumstances at hand, but it also must be in complete harmony with all other required matters in the New Testament.

We are called on every day to make judgments, but the Bible teaches us to do this by considering all the principles we have just reviewed. May the Lord help us to do that with an open mind.

Authority and Brotherly Relations

The Bible says, in Romans 14:1,

“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters” (New International version).

In our lessons recently we have talked about establishing Bible authority, and related points of concern. The passage I just read indicates that there is to be a special relation between brethren, and, as Galatians six teaches, those who are spiritually strong should do the best they can to support and teach those that are weak. Concerning generic authority, as we make our judgments from time to time, we do so considering the thoughts, feelings and opinions of others. Sometimes a matter might be just unexpedient, whereas in other cases it might be classified as unlawful if it causes a stumbling block or violates someone's conscience. (Romans 14 and I Cor. 8 teaches these principles). We must be mindful, nonetheless, that there are extremes even in this realm. When a certain action is judged to be within the law of Christ, yet non essential, we must be very careful - never dogmatic. On the other hand, a brother cannot be allowed to bind something that is really only his opinion. A careful study of Gal. 2:3-5 indicates that it is just as sinful to create laws where God has not legislated, as it is to disobey where He has. Let's consider a couple of issues that have been trouble spots among the churches of Christ in past years, seeing if we can apply the principles we have just reviewed.

Some Christians do not believe it is Scriptural to use more than one container when we observe the Lord's Supper, and our starting text from Romans 14:1 says for me to *“receive him”* even though I judge him to be weak in faith. On the other hand, the passage from Galatians two shows that he cannot be allowed to bind this doctrine on others. Paul said, *“To whom we gave place by way of subjection, no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you”* (Gal. 2:5). The one cup of the Lord's Supper is a figure of speech naming the contents, not the container, for it can be divided and drank. Individual containers are incidental, authority being inherent in the command to observe the memorial. We use individual containers mainly for sanitary reasons.

The same principles can be used to illustrate some things about teaching the

Bible. Teaching the Bible is a requirement, but particular methods have not been specified. Therefore, we may preach on the radio, pass out tracts, or any of many other different methods. Our Bible classes, where the Bible is taught to age groups, is thereby authorized. An extreme that would pervert the true organization of the church would be wrong, as a sponsoring church or a missionary society, and even a Bible class which has organization within organization, or forms charters

and missions. However, just meeting to study the Bible is certainly an expedient method in a required matter. The brethren who object, sometimes called anti-class churches, are certainly at liberty to choose the method that best suits their needs, but they sin in trying to make a law where God has not bound. I can study the Bible without a special class, or even observe the Lord's Supper where only one container is used; but I hasten to say one is wrong who teaches that this is a requirement

of the gospel.

Paul talked about expedient matters in First Corinthians six, stating that even within lawful matters some things are not desirable; moral requirements were no greater to him because he was an apostle. But we are taught to consider the feelings of others, while at the same time not allowing them to make or loose laws of either requirement or permission.

Route 11 Box 243C
Tyler, TX 75709

Some Haunting Realities From The Dominican Republic

by Royce Chandler

This Spanish work is really marvelous, all things considered. New doors are opening constantly, and everywhere the people are the same: poor, humble, loving, hospitable, and hungry to learn the Word. During our visit to the Dominican Republic (May 1-10), Ross Conley and I worked among some of the Lord's **good** people. We preached among five congregations in and around Santo Domingo, the capital, and met other brethren who came in from outlying parts of the island to be with us. We met several young men who give as much time as possible to preaching and teaching: intelligent, capable, dedicated young men--most of whom have to get by on very little in order to have time to study and teach.

Two major concerns face those brethren. One, the harsh reality of what true centralization efforts are all about; i.e., one church (and its preacher) trying hard to control all the local churches in the country, as that one church is itself controlled by an institutional church in Tennessee. Two, the question of the spiritual condition of over 90% of the country's married population, who never obtained a legal marriage certificate. As a great majority of the Christians

are in this situation, the question is whether those saints are living in adultery if they did not obtain their legal certificate. Obviously, the one issue is an imported one; the other, purely culturally inspired.

We met the brethren who are the primary leaders and teachers of the saints there, brothers Santiago del Villar and Pacio Blanco. Both are well versed in the Word and are fearless and tireless in trying to help others learn. Both are self-supporting, Santiago by a pension and Pacio by his little pharmacy business. Other young men are following suit, and we were quite taken with the depth of conviction and understanding of these men.

One thing is truly worthy of note: in all the conversations we had, from breakfast to bedtime, a good 95% of all that was said through the day was spiritual talk. That was true whether Ross and I were around, or whether we were in a room studying for the night's lessons and listening to the brethren in the next room as they continued their discussions. Little or no frivolity or triviality surfaced in their conversation. Their preoccupation is with "redeeming the time", and Ross and I felt like we had almost entered a time machine and gone back to when the

saints searched the Scriptures daily in order to learn and grow. It was an experience I had not had in such concentrated form before--and one that I have never had in my own country, among my own brethren here.

Perhaps it is the hard reality of poverty and of a government in severe economic trouble that leads these brethren to such sustained concentration. Many of them are jobless and live in shells or in a small lean-to made of tree leaves. The hospitals are closed. They have a saying, "If you get sick, just take your bed to the cemetery." Every day is one of poverty, of concern for children and for sick and needy brethren, of a threat of national economic disaster. For such saints there is no thought of going to McDonalds or "out on the town; no vacation, no new clothes. . new car. .new home. But there is constant prayer, and a smiling confidence that God will provide and sustain, and a daily concentration upon the Word of the Lord.

I know that Ross and I went to study with them, but--without a doubt--we were the ones helped. If those brethren are in "need" of visits from us, may we ever be so needy! It occurred to me that perhaps many of our own USA brethren might start reviving if some of those brothers from the Latin world would make trips here to teach us how to love, and trust, and give of ourselves to the Lord and to each other.

Lord willing, Wayne Chappell, and I will visit brethren in Columbia and Venezuela, July 6-23. Please pray for us and for the brethren we hope to encourage.

3891 Bunnell Rd.
Lebanon, OH 45036



Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

INDESTRUCTIBLE FOUNDATIONS

(Chapter 11)

This short but beautiful psalm was dedicated simply "To the chief Musician." It is a psalm of David.

HIS TRIAL (v. 1-3)

We find here that David was tempted to distrust God. We do not know the occasion to which he here refers. Perhaps it was during that period when Saul pursued him and his life hang constantly in the balance.

"In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?" First, he laid down his own resolution. He would continue to trust the Lord. He would never put his trust in gold, or horses and chariots, or man, but in the living God.

He had been warned to flee, but David resisted such counsel. He seemed surprised that anyone should suggest such: "How say ye. . ." With another faithful servant of God's, his attitude was: "Shall such a man as I flee?" (Neh. 6:11).

When troubles come, the immediate reaction of many is to "flee as a bird," perhaps on a big jet. "Let's just get away from it all," people often say. There are times when people need to get away. There were times when David fled. But the advice here went deeper than strategy. He was being advised to distrust and give great joy to the enemies.

"For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart." The danger was real and it was imminent. He was as a hunted animal. Today, our spiritual enemies ever make ready their arrows. Let us arm ourselves with the

shield of faith that we may quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Eph. 6:16).

"If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do?" The foundations of law and justice were destroyed. The enemy was resourceful. Out of his arsenal he brought the mighty weapon of discouragement. "What's the use?" he chided.

In our day, the question continues to haunt us. Indeed, if the very foundations of our society crumble, what can we do? And it seems that just such is happening all about us. The home, the very building block of society, is crumbling. Even Christian homes (?) are falling into ruins by the score. Basic morals are being uprooted by the winds of situation ethics and amoral philosophies of men. The foundations of education of our young and justice in our courtrooms are being undermined. "What can the righteous do?"

Let David tell us. Remember, he is the same David who had smitten a giant as Israel trembled. He would not now flee from a fight like a timid bird,

WHAT THE RIGHTEOUS CAN DO (v. 4-7)

We can remember that the true foundations can never be destroyed. First, there is the foundation of God's existence: "The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven..." Here's the source of David's courage. He knew that God was still on the throne. When the righteous saints were undergoing severe trials within the Roman Empire in the latter days of the first century, John was shown the

vision of God's throne (Rev. 4). Never forget. There is a God in Heaven! He is out of our sight, but He reigns.

Secondly, there is the foundation of His knowledge: "...his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men." We do not see Him, but He sees all. He never slumbers. He tries the actions, words, yes, even the very thoughts of men. He not only sees men. He sees through them. He not only knows what they seem to be. He knows what they are. David knew His danger was not hidden from God.

Thirdly, there is the foundation of His justice: "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth." The righteous are tested and refined by afflictions (I Peter 1:7). But wicked and violent men are abhorred by God. Why should we fear such men, knowing that God is in the battle?

Fourth, there is the foundation of His wrath: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." God is righteous and will therefore punish the wicked.

Fifth and finally, there is the foundation of His love: "For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright." He not only defends righteousness, but by His very nature, He loves it.

No, the true foundations shall never be destroyed. So when we are tempted to be ashamed of the gospel, or to hide our light under a bushel, or to refuse to enter the fray for truth and righteousness let us resist the devil. He will flee from us. Let us remember that the true foundations of God are established forever.

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The Poet's Page

CONSIDER THE LILIES

Consider the lilies of the field,
They toil not, neither spin;
Yet God gives them royal raiment,
Why are we so anxious then?

He gives us strength an courage,
A shield of righteousness;
He girds our loins with simple truth,
He knows just how to bless.

Consider now, the price He paid,
His life on Cal'vry's tree;
The helmet of salvation,
He bought for you and me.

So let us wear this glorious robe,
And handle it with care;
Many souls are in dire need,
And many souls are bare.

We must hold fast to all that's true,
And never let it fade;
Then may we be with Christ ascend,
Immortally arrayed.

--Mary F. Liggin
Panama City Beach, FL

I FIND NO FAULT TODAY

Lord there is just one thing I pray
That with others I will find no fault
today

I know one thing and that's for sure
That finding fault I need to cure

I know it will destroy every friend
And lead me to the bitter end,
So help me Lord in what I have to say
That I will find no fault today

Don't let my soul feed on selfish pride
And from this hobby try to hide
I must learn not to tear others down
And at their throat just hound and
hound

So help me Lord just for today
To think before I have something to
say
Help my soul to feed on nothing less
But to see in others the very best.

--Sonny Taylor
Granada, MS

IN A HUNDRED YEARS OR SO. . .

In but a hundred years or so,
Who of the world shall know
Whether I faired with beauty and grace
Or cast my vote with the party that lost the race?

A hundred years from today,
Who'll be around that may say,
"He was brilliantly educated and went to school"
Or, "Lost he millions and became a poor wretched fool?"

And in a century or two,
As folks pause and recall as they so often do,
Will they care what kind of car I had,
Or that my favorite show was but a passing fad?

Oh friend, how we do worry and fret
About the things this old world never regrets.
Political races and pretty faces
T.V. shows, new shoes and a matching suit
In a hundred years or so, won't be worth a hoot!

In a hundred years one thing is clear,
We must obey the Bible with a God-like fear.
While our earthly bodies will have departed from hence,
Our eternal soul will have been living ever since.

A home for the faithful has been prepared by Him
To shine through the ages as a heavenly gem.
For this must we always seek,
Doing what's right every day of each week.

To waste this life in dreadful woe,
Is to the flesh we sow.
Thinking of only this life is a tragic end
For to Hell's fiery gate He shall send.

Heaven-ward let us set our mind
For in a hundred years we shall find
That with God is our only stance
For there will be no second chance!

--Roger Shouse
Greenwood, IN

SURE-CURE

I seem to stand up pretty well
When trouble comes to buffet.
Until friend's "sure-cures" make me
doubt
If I've the strength to tough it.

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

ATTAINABLE GOALS

Don't hold a faith that sets it's goal
So high none can't achieve it.
If your faith can't bring joy through
works,
The, good friend, don't believe it.

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

DESPITE HIGH PRICES ISRAEL'S TOURISM GROWS

Despite relatively high tourist prices, Israel's tourism industry continues to grow. A recent report indicated that 1.1 million tourists visited the Holy Land during the first 10 months of 1984, up seven percent from the same period in 1983.

The highest number of tourists came from the United States—307,800, an increase of 22 percent. Israel is a comparatively expensive place to visit (160 percent the cost of visiting Greece), but more than two million tourists are expected this year.

POPE JOINS CRITICS OF FILM 'HAIL MARY'

Pope John Paul II has joined critics who say French-Swiss director Jean-Luc Godard's film, *Hail Mary*, is blasphemous and offensive. The film depicts Joseph as a taxi driver and Mary as the daughter of a gas station owner; Mary is featured in several graphic nude scenes.

The Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* said "It is inconceivable and sacrilegious to dare to represent the holiest Mary totally nude."

Angry Catholics began protesting the film as soon as it opened in Rome. Demonstrations outside theaters, messages condemning the film, and prayers for reparation are among signs of disapproval being expressed. A local judge in the central Italian city of Pesaro has already banning showings of the film.

AUTHORITIES TRY TO CLOSE MAIL-ORDER CHURCH CLUB

County officials in Seattle, Washington have gone to court in an attempt to close the Monastery, a teen nightclub, after undercover police allegedly found drug dealing and other vice within the club. The Monastery

operated as part of the mail-order Universal Life Church, based in California.

Papers filed with the court indicate that numerous kinds of illegal drugs, including cocaine, marijuana, opium, amphetamines, LSD, and others were available at the Monastery. In an affidavit a mother who was looking for her 14-year-old son said she saw a sex act in progress in a booth.

In 1981 more than 250 arrests resulted from police raids of the building; all but three of the charges were dropped. The Monastery opened as a gay membership club in 1977, but authorities say the operator has changed the character of the club to attract teen-age discotheque business.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE STUDENTS DIE, MEASLES MAY BE TO BLAME

A measles outbreak at Principia College caused at least one death, and may be responsible for two others, according to the county coroner. The tiny campus of the Christian Science school was quarantined late last month. Seventy-five of the 712 students with the infectious disease have been isolated on campus.

Most of the students have refused to be vaccinated for measles. Christian Scientists believe that disease is caused by mental error and has no real existence.

SCIENCE TEACHER DENIED HONOR BECAUSE HE TAUGHT CREATIONISM

High school science teacher David Bolhuis was denied consideration for being selected as the "State High School Science Teacher of the Year" after the Michigan Science Teacher's Association found out that Bolhuis taught creationism in his classroom. According to the Freedom Council, Bolhuis had been a top contender for

the award until the Association learned of his belief in creationism.

RFK STADIUM REVERSES DECISION, WILL ALLOW RELIGIOUS BANNERS

RFK Stadium management has dropped its restrictions against the display of banners with religious messages during National Football League games.

RFK Stadium officials had banned religious messages on banners after receiving complaints from the CBS television network. One banner which displayed a Bible reference "John 3:16," was reportedly destroyed by a CBS employee who said no religious signs were to be viewed on their broadcasts.

The stadium officials' decision to not discriminate among banners on the basis of religion came in response to pressure from the Rutherford Institute and Senator Paul Trible, Jr. of Virginia.

POST OFFICE SUES PORNOGRAPHER TO STOP DELIVERY OF UNWANTED MAGAZINES

The Postal Service has filed suit to stop *Hustler* magazine publisher Larry Flynt from sending complimentary copies of his pornographic magazine to Congress members who did not want them. The lawsuit names Sens. Robert Byrd (D. W. Va.), and Phil Gramm, (R-Tex.), as well as House members who have asked that the magazine not be sent to them.

UNIFICATION CHURCH MOVES FISHING FLEET TO AVOID PAYING PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES

The Unification Church has moved its fleet of 81 fishing boats out of Norfolk to avoid paying thousands of dollars in personal property taxes.

Last year the city collected \$37,736 in taxes on the boats, trailers and motors because they were not being used for religious purposes. Revenue Commissioner Sam Barfield explained, "When they don't use it, I tax it."

OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD BURIAL PLANS

A new wrinkle has been added to that most basic of human occupations — death. The Celestis Group, an unlikely coalition of morticians and space engineers, has developed a plan to provide space burials by placing several thousand cremated humans in orbit about the earth.

Through a special "recreation" technique, human bodies will be reduced to ashes that will fit in a capsule 3/8 inch in diameter and under two inches long. At a projected cost of \$3,000 per burial, the company will need 5,000 bodies per launch to break even.

SUPREME COURT SAYS FUNDAMENTALIST SCHOOL CAN'T GRANT DEGREES IN NEW JERSEY

Shelton College, a small New Jersey school founded by fundamentalist radio preacher Carl McIntire, has lost its final bid to become a degree-granting institution. The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to review a lower court ruling upholding the right of the state to license all colleges and universities in its jurisdiction.

Shelton College had contended that such licensing violated its right to free exercise of religion. The school's ability to grant bachelor of arts degrees was cancelled in 1965 after the New Jersey Board of Higher Education determined that the college was not meeting minimum educational standards.

State courts have ruled that the school can call itself a college, recruit students, teach courses, and award credits for coursework. But the state can prohibit the school from granting baccalaureate degrees.

HIGH COURT WON'T REVIEW DISMISSAL OF BISEXUAL TEACHER

The Supreme Court has let stand the dismissal more than 10 years ago of a bisexual public school teacher in Ohio.

Marjorie H. Rowland was fired by the Mad River Local School District board in 1974 after telling her secretary and some fellow teachers that she is bisexual. Rowland sued, and a jury found the firing was based solely on her admission of bisexuality. The judge ruled that Rowland was entitled to be reinstated and awarded damages.

But the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed that decision, concluding that the school board was entitled to dismiss Rowland for talking about her bisexuality, even if it had not interfered with job performance.

Rowland then appealed, unsuccessfully, to the Supreme Court, which decided not to hear the case. Four of the nine high court members must agree to hear each case. Two justices, William J. Brennan Jr. and Thurgood Marshall, dissented from the refusal to schedule the case.

EVOLUTION COMING UNDER ATTACK FROM SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, long the object of attack by creation-science advocates, is now coming under attack from the scientific community as well, according to the current issue of Newsweek magazine.

"So heated is the debate," said the magazine "that one Darwinian says there are times when he thinks about going into a field with more intellectual honesty: the used-car business."

Though Darwin's theory of biological change coming about through evolution is still widely accepted in secular scientific circles, his teaching that natural selection is the mechanism responsible for evolution is now greeted skeptically by many secular scientists. "When it comes to accounting for life on earth, natural selection should be 'relegated here to the [explanation of] last resort'" Newsweek quoted from a Harvard biologist's book.

The article also said "Some critics go so far as to liken Darwinism to creationism because of its slipperiness: it does not make specific predictions about what sorts of organisms evolution will produce, they charge, and so it is never vulnerable to disproof."

SMOKELESS TOBACCO HEALTH ALERTS STUDIED

The government, which has required health warnings on cigarette

packages since 1971, may order similar alerts for smokeless tobacco.

The Federal Trade Commission asked Surgeon General C. Everett Koop on Tuesday to conduct a comprehensive review of chewing tobacco and snuff, now used by an estimated 22 million Americans.

Koop wrote the FTC: "Smokeless tobacco, including snuff, does indeed pose a cancer threat and is associated as well with certain other pathologic oral conditions."

Koop's letter came in response to a plea by the Public Citizen Health Research Group, a private organization, that he support its 1-year-old petition to the FTC for warnings on smokeless tobacco.

The commission said in a recent statement that it believes smokeless tobacco—chewing tobacco and snuff—"raise very serious health concerns."

It urged Koop to appoint a panel of experts to examine existing evidence on the health effects of the popular product.

A similar panel appointed by the surgeon general in 1964 concluded that cigarettes are hazardous. It led to a ban on cigarette advertising on radio and television as well as health warnings on packages and on printed ads.

"We hope the surgeon general will give us a definitive answer (on smokeless tobacco), as was done with cigarettes, so we can then decide what course of action to take," an FTC spokeswoman said.

"Koop has already gone on record that he thinks smokeless tobacco causes cancer," said Dr. Sidney Wolfe, director of Public Citizen Health Research Group. "What we need is action, not more delays."

The tobacco industry contends there is no positive evidence that cigarettes or smokeless tobacco is hazardous.

COACH FIRED FOR TEAM PRAYER

A high school coach who was fired for praying with his undefeated girls' basketball team recently said the practice helped unify the team and win games.

Robert Bone, the principal of John F. Kennedy High School, said however helpful prayer may be, he had to fire the part-time coach because it has no legal place on a public school basketball court.

He said Jim Arnold, a 24-year-old ordained Southern Baptist minister, persisted in praying with his junior varsity girls' team despite being told it is against the law.

Bone recalled that Arnold once took a practice break and, "instead of having a team meeting he wanted them to pray that the girls not be tempted by drugs or sex or any kind of immorality."

"He was told he could not do these kinds of things as a school employee on school property, but he went ahead. It's clearly illegal. I said to him, 'Jim, you realize there are kids on your team who are Buddhists.'"

Arnold said none of the girls, including the four Buddhists, ever complained to him about brief prayers at practice, before games or at halftime. Arnold said he was the only one who prayed audibly.

"It seemed to me like it really brought us together," he told United Press International. "I would ask the Lord to keep us safe, protect us from injury, help us be thankful, and to do our best."

"The girls never said they disagreed. In one game, when we weren't doing so well and I was philosophizing about it, one girl said, 'We didn't pray before the game.' So we had prayer about it. She's not a Christian."

Arnold, whose teams compiled a record of 38-8 over the last three years, said he applied the Biblical principles of teamwork and victory.

"The Lord said, 'If you honor me, I will honor you,'" he said.

The principal said none of the girls complained to him about Arnold but he learned of the prayer sessions through the varsity coach. Bone said he suspended Arnold on Jan. 11 then reinstated him under a no-prayer agreement. He said he fired Arnold the next day because he had changed his mind.

HIGH COURT WILL HEAR CASE OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST BLIND MAN

The U.S. Supreme Court agreed April 1 to review a case involving a blind man in the state of Washington. Larry Witters, the victim of a progressive eye disease, qualified for state aid under a program designed to assist the blind with vocational training, but was told that he could not use the aid to pursue his vocational goal: a pastor, missionary, or youth worker.

"We were doing cartwheels around

here on Monday when we heard they were going to hear it for review," said Jordan Lorence, an attorney with Concerned Women for America (CWA), which will handle the case. "We're very excited. Since we have lost at every level we think this means the Court does not like what the lower courts have done. Otherwise they wouldn't have taken the case."

CWA's head attorney Michael Farris has been involved with the Witters case from the first, as a part of his private legal practice. Because CWA believes the case raises important first amendment questions involving religious freedom, the organization will provide legal aid in the case.

According to Lorence, the state has already conceded that the program has a secular purpose — getting handicapped people off welfare — and that Witters' proposed program of study would meet that secular purpose. But the state argues that aiding Witters would directly advance religion, and is therefore unconstitutional.

Witters lost at two administrative hearings, at a state trial court, and at the state's Supreme Court. The state's high court voted 7-2 against Witters last October. But because the state court ruled that helping Witters would violate the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court has an interest in the case.

CWA believes the implications of the case go beyond state handicap benefits, and could also involve use of the G.I. Bill and other educational aid at religious schools, and conceivably even religious involvements of welfare recipients.

"What the state is asserting is a dangerous principle," explained Lorence. "The state is selectively denying benefits on the basis of religion. We think that this is going to resolve a very significant constitutional question."

WOMAN'S FAITH PROMPTS RECANTING OF RAPE CHARGE; BUT COURT REFUSES TO FREE MAN SHE ACCUSED

Although she said she was raped in 1977, Cathleen Crowell Webb says today that she lied. Webb, whose testimony sent Gary Dotson to prison six years ago, recanted her testimony that she was raped, explaining "Prior to my decision to become a Christian, I didn't have a conscience about this. I hardened my conscience and trust to forget what I had done."

Webb said she decided to set the

record straight because "The Lord would not leave me alone. The guilt just kept eating at me. I couldn't take it anymore, I had to."

Webb said she lied about being raped because she feared she was pregnant, and did not want her foster parents to discover she had had sex with her boyfriend. But although Webb's admission that she lied about the rape has been supported by lie detector tests, the judge that sentenced Dotson in 1979 has refused to reverse his conviction.

"He's innocent! He's innocent! I told the truth!" Webb screamed after the judge announced his ruling. Dotson, who had been freed on bond following Webb's admission, was returned to prison. Before being taken away, Dotson left a message for Webb and her attorney. "I forgive them. . . I hold no ill will toward them."

The judge, Richard Samuels, said Dotson has "failed to sustain his burden [of proof] and I cannot find that perjury was committed." Recanting testimony is often regarded as unreliable, but there may be something else at stake in Samuels' decision. "The legal system doesn't like to be made a fool of," explained University of Texas law professor Mike Tigar. "A judge who sentenced a guy to 25 to 50 years in the pen doesn't exactly like to stand up and say I was fooled and my court was fooled."

A petition drive is underway, urging Illinois Gov. James Thompson and the Prisoner Review Board to grant clemency to Dotson.

COURT UPHOLDS UNIVERSITY RULE BANNING DOOR-TO-DOOR BIBLE STUDY INVITATIONS

The U.S. Supreme Court refused April 1 to hear a case involving North Carolina State University, thus upholding a lower court's decision affirming the school's ban on door-to-door invitations to Bible study groups. The Court's decision upholds the University's right to ban door-to-door solicitation in its dormitories.

Jim Parker, editor of the Christian Legal Society's Religious Freedom Reporter, says the case is not a blow for religious freedom. "We don't have a problem with this ruling," he said. "The student was not treated differently on the basis of religion. It's not a case where some students can go door-to-door, but a religious student can't. Everybody is being treated the same."

FIELD REPORTS

**James H. Shewmaker, P.O. Box 38,
Wheelersburg, OH 45694**

I have been working with the church in Wheelersburg for the last eleven months. For several months now, I have been working without full support. My financial obligations demand that I secure full support, if I wish to continue preaching here.

As the son of a gospel preacher and as one who has been preaching full-time for over three years, I know the problems congregations can have. This congregation has relatively few problems. There is unity among the members.

My desire is to continue working with this congregation as long as possible. I believe that there is a lot of growth potential here. Growth begins with those who are already members growing spiritually. The members are definitely willing to examine themselves and their beliefs in light of the Bible.

My current regular monthly support is \$500 from this congregation plus \$150 in outside support. I need \$1800 per month in support. I have never been able to afford Life or Health insurance. My request for \$1800 per month is not in order to get rich, but in order to fulfill my financial needs for my family.

If you need any further information please feel free to contact me. If you prefer to call instead of writing, my phone number is (614) 574-4876.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. Please pray for the work here to prosper.

**Johnnie P. Mock, RD #3,
Milton, VT 05468**

There is a group of the Lord's children that meet in a storefront in Hudson, New York. Their number is small, about 15, but their need is great. They have asked my family and myself to come to Hudson and work with the church and I have accepted. This is my first work. I presently am employed at IBM and am ready to leave there and labor for the Lord. I know that those who love God and His Son rejoice in seeing His Kingdom grow. Because the church in Hudson is not able to support an evangelist I seek the help of my fellow laborers in this effort to spread the gospel in New York. To meet the needs of my family while I labor in the work I am seeking \$2,000.00 a month. This should take care of our living expenses allowing me to devote full time to sowing the seed which is desperately needed here. Anything that you can do to help me in this effort will be greatly appreciated and received with thankfulness.

**Keith Stormont, 808 Bond Avenue,
Barnesville, OH 43713**

On June 30, 1985 I will conclude just over two years of work with the W. Main church here in Barnesville. The Lord has really blessed our efforts here. As best I can count, seven have been baptized, fourteen restored, and one couple has

placed membership with us. In addition, a serious internal problem has been at least partially brought under control. The work has not been without its negative aspects: a small minority that rejected us and our work without a hearing, a few that have left us either for other churches or the world; but all in all, it has been a good and fruitful work -- twenty five months well-spent. I would recommend this work to any mature, faithful gospel preacher.

July 1, we plan, Lord willing, to move and begin work with the Lord's church in Gibson City, Illinois. We are really looking forward to our new field of labor. The Gibson City church will have two good men serving as elders (my first opportunity to work with elders); and has an active program of work including a Sunday morning radio program. So the prospects seem good for another fruitful work. We invite all who might be in that area to stop and worship with us. The church building is located on highway 47 south in Gibson City next to the Pizza Hut restaurant. After July 1, our new address will be 125 W. Walnut, Gibson City, IL 60936.

**Royce Chandler, 3891 Bunnell Rd.,
Lebanon, OH 45036**

I don't believe I would trade very many things in this world for the experiences I enjoyed while visiting the brethren in the Dominican Republic. In many ways, it honestly was like taking a trip back in time, to the days of Acts and the N.T. epistles.

We speak often of "restoring the N.T. church", of "doing Bible things in Bible ways." And we claim to be "just like the original Christians"---but I have never before been around Christians whose conversation, from dawn to dusk, was of nothing but the will of God. Perhaps it is hard to believe that there are really saints who are like that, but I lived among a lot of them for ten days. Out of approximately 8 hours of conversation during a day, no more than 15-20 minutes was given to things like the weather, sports, hobbies, leisure activities, school, social activities, etc. Unusual.

Santiago del Villar and Pedro Blanco are the primary workers in the capital city of Santo Domingo, and neither is "full time". Ross Conley and I preached among five local churches, meeting well over 100 brethren, many of whom followed us around every night to hear the preaching, despite difficult public transportation services and regardless of great distances involved for many.

It was a spiritually invigorating trip, and I look forward to getting my slides and giving a more complete report of this fertile field.

**Gardner Hall, 267 Paterson Ave.,
Paterson, N.J. 07502**

Every week thousands of new arrivals from Latin America, both legal and illegal, pour into New York City looking for a better life in the United States. It's not too difficult to distinguish

the new arrivals from the long term Latin residents because they lack the confident swagger, the irreverent manner and the faddish clothing that five or ten years in the big apple have given their veteran counterparts. Their children haven't yet learned to run through the streets in gangs or to say the common obscenities in English. Instead they stick close to their parents as their eyes and ears absorb wonders both good and bad that they could have hardly imagined in their poor villages or barrios in the Dominican Republic, Columbia, Equador, El Salvador or whatever country they have recently left.

Unfortunately the children as well as the parents soon lose their innocent ways. The money and corruption of New York City soon become overpowering and often in five or ten years they have adopted the same shallow, gaudy and sometimes violent lifestyle that shocked them when they first saw it in others upon their arrival.

Before such immigrants get washed away in the tide of American materialism it is sometimes possible to snatch a few out of the morass and help them begin living a life for Christ instead of the superficial attractions of the world. Two factors in particular favor these new arrivals.

(1) They have left their homes, their families and their countries and are therefore sometimes willing to consider leaving their traditional religion as well. In this new country a lot of the old pressures to stick with tradition are no longer present.

(2) As they face tremendous difficulties in their first year or so in the States, they sometimes realize their need for God's help.

We often come in contact with these new arrivals and wish we could find more ways to contact more.

The prisoners from Sing Sing keep me busy as they ask all kinds of questions and plow through as many courses as I can furnish them. They are usually the best students on the correspondence courses, but so far we've only had one contact who turned out to be worth our time. Some people call that problem "jailhouse religion". At any rate, maybe someone in this current batch of students will be a truly good contact for us.

The brethren at Upper Manhattan are really keeping me busy with classes. In addition to the Thursday class on Revelation, they have asked me to teach a Men's training class on Saturday nights which is going real well. Last month they asked for a special class on the dangers of institutionalism, which I feel shows that they are firming up nicely in their understanding of that problem.

Victor Grado and I have decided that the young people's class needs more stimulation. We were getting good participation from about half the class and none from the other half. I suggested to Victor that we try the old Martin Broadwell approach. (I don't mean to imply that Martin is old, though he may be somewhat older than his approach.) Last Sunday for the first time the class was divided into small "teams" each with different responsibilities and challenges. Though I wasn't present for the class since I had to be in the Bronx, I heard that it went real well after some initial confusion. We have a nice group of young people at Upper Manhattan, and we need to plan more projects as well as social gatherings for them (apart from the church) so that they will become closer to each other. We have an outing for them scheduled for this Sunday.

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I am interested in relocating with a faithful church, preferably in the Louisiana or Texas area but I will gladly talk to other sound brethren from other areas. Please contact me by writing to: Mike Hughes, 4507 Voss, Bossier City, LA 71111 or call me at (318) 742-6299.

PREACHER WANTED

The Lower Richlands Church in Columbia, South Carolina, is interested in finding a faithful, mature preacher that can assist us in our work. Little outside support would be needed. We have several men in the congregation that can, and do, preach on a part time basis. We are looking for someone that can live in the area and work full time. If you are interested in this challenge, write to Ernest Porter, 7268 Fontana, Columbia, SC 29209 or call (803) 776-2229.

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“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

July 1985

Number 7

GOD'S RELIGION AND THE CIVIL STATE

by Jerry F. Bassett

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads, “**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . .**” The authors of this document were indeed familiar with the tyrannical oppression produced by a political state's establishment of a particular religion which all of its citizens were obligated to recognize. Consequently, they expressly forbade the Congress of the United States to set up any religious system which by that very act would become this nation's state church.

On the other side of the coin, Congress was forbidden to prevent any individual citizen from exercising the religion of his free choice. Every citizen of this nation was to have the right to pursue his or her religious convictions (commensurate with the rights of others) without fear of governmental interference.

GENERAL AGREEMENT

It is safe to say that most citizens of this country, regardless of their religious convictions, agree with our founding fathers. We do not want the government to force some particular religion on us. But we do expect it to maintain the freedom of every

individual to live and worship in harmony with his own convictions.

For example, practically no one is ready to see the United States name Roman Catholicism as this nation's official religion. (The same could be said about any other religion, including secular humanism.) Who among us is ready to accept a pope's manipulating elections and elected officials in the interests of the papacy? On the other hand, neither are most of us ready to use political force to deny the individual Roman Catholic the political right to be a Roman Catholic if he so chooses. As individuals we might disagree with him, and try to teach and convert him, but we would strongly resent any effort by the state to proscribe him. After all, if the government could so treat a Catholic, it could do the same to me or you.

JUMPING THE TRACK

From the fact that the state should not establish a religion some now seem to think that those individuals who work in our governmental system, including elected officials, should keep their religious convictions from influencing their work. This, however, is not the same thing. It certainly is not what our founding fathers had in mind when they wrote the First Amendment.

A state established religion is an ecclesiastical organization. It is nourished by the state, and enjoys the unfair advantage of governmental favoritism in achieving its purposes.

However, religion as practiced by the individual Christian includes his own convictions, conscience and morals, and thus the ethics by which he conducts his daily life. This includes the attitude and responsibility of every human being to “. . . *do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with. . . God*” (Micah 6:8). In the words of Paul, it requires all to accept the teaching of God's grace, “. . . *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,*” and therefore to “*live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age*” (Titus 2:11-12).

To be sure, the conduct of many government officials may leave the impression that divestiture of moral conviction and scruple is prerequisite to running for public office, but who is ready to argue seriously that this is the way it ought to be? For instance, would you want to do business with a religiously moral real estate broker who thinks his moral convictions are out of place in the business world? By no means! (You may be saying, “I already have.” If so, please allow me

the illustration anyway.) Why, then, would we want to be governed by people whose religiously based moral convictions are considered out of place in governmental affairs? Something is surely wrong with such thinking.

A MISCONCEPTION

True, it is unconstitutional for Christians to try to influence the government to show favoritism to the church. Moreover, from the church's viewpoint, it would be unscriptural as well since the New Testament does not authorize an organizational tie between the church and the civil state. This does not argue, however, that an individual Christian, or anyone else, entering those somber halls must shed his religious convictions like a man checking his topcoat at the door.

For example, Erastus, treasurer of Corinth, was not expected to use his office to give special recognition to the church, but he was nonetheless recognized by Paul as a Christian (Rom. 16:23). Likewise, Cornelius was a Roman army officer of some influence in Judea who apparently was able to continue in that capacity as a Christian without being expected to work for Imperial recognition of the church (Acts 10:1f). Recall that when Emperor Constantine did just that about three-hundred years later, it wasn't all that good for the church anyway.

And notice the Philippian jailer. When he was baptized he took Paul and Silas out of jail and into his house (Acts 16:34). However, the next day,

when the city magistrates sent for them, they were back in jail (Acts 16:35-40). The jailer had become a child of God and a brother to Paul and Silas. Regardless, he was not expected to use his position to show favor to his brothers, nor to the church in Philippi. To the contrary, the very fact that he was a Christian required him to pursue his office with diligent integrity.

NOT LESS, BUT MORE

Of religion in this form (the moral strength of the individual Christian) we do not need less in government, much less none at all. What we do need is a great deal more.

Solomon wrote, "*It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established by righteousness*" (Prov. 16:12). Again, "*A wise king sifts out the wicked, And brings the threshing wheel over them*" (Prov. 20:26). And again, "*Mercy and truth preserve the king, And by lovingkindnesses he upholds his throne*" (Prov. 20:28).

According to God's word by Solomon, it is essential to the wellbeing of a nation that its king be a man of integrity before the Lord, and that he demand the same conduct of those who serve under him. While this nation is not a monarchy, it is nonetheless accountable to the same Lord and subject to the same divine principles (Dan. 4:25).

GOD'S WILL BE DONE

At the root of this question is the attitude that secular matters belong to

a civil government which exists and functions independently from God while religious matters belong to the church with little, if any, application in the secular realm. According to this thinking, secular matters and religious matters have no relationship to each other, and should be kept totally separate. Thus, secular matters have to do with the "real world" while religious matters are relegated to the netherland of idealistic fantasy.

The solution to the problem this kind of thinking produces is the realization that the eternal God by whom the church exists is the same God by whom the civil state exists, and by whose will man must be governed in both. Paul wrote, "*For he (the civil ruler) is God's minister. . .*" (Rom. 13:4). This being true, those who govern have a responsibility to execute their duties in a manner consistent with the God whose servants they are. This will not tie the church and the state together as institutions, but it will bring the religious principles of individual righteousness into the affairs of government as it works to accomplish God's purpose in the civil realm.

"*Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people*" (Prov. 14:34). We therefore say again, let us not have less of this, but more.



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BIBLE CLOTHING

by Johnie Edwards

The word clothing is used in the Bible to teach a number of needed lessons. Let's take a look at some of these.

1) **Scribes In Long Clothing.** Jesus referred to those in long clothing to teach that some just wanted to be seen of men. ". . . Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces"

(Mark 12:38). We must not do things to just have the praise of men.

2) **Wolves In Sheep's Clothing.** To cause us to be aware that there are false teachers who are hard to detect sometimes, Jesus said, "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*" (Matthew 7:15). It would be hard to tell a sheep from a

wolf if a wolf had on sheep's clothing.

3) **Gay Clothing.** James refers to "gay clothing" in James 2:3 to teach us that we must not be partial to the person who wears gay clothing. There is more to a man than his clothing.

4) **Clothed With Rags.** To get us to see the results of being a drunkard, a glutton and lazy, Solomon said, "*For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags*" (Prov. 23:21).

5) **God Clothes The Grass.** To help us see our dependence on God, Jesus said, "*Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*" (Matthew 6:30).

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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

DEBATE SCHEDULED ON CREATION-EVOLUTION

Frank L. Lovell, Jr. and Harry "Buddy" Payne, Jr. have signed propositions for a public debate to be conducted in Louisville, Kentucky, on August 12-13, 15-16. The debate will be conducted in the auditorium of the Highland Middle School, 1700 Norris Place.

Two propositions will be discussed over four nights:

1. Resolved, that evolution provides a more effective scientific explanation of the history of life on earth than does scientific creationism.
2. Resolved, that scientific creationism provides a more effective scientific explanation of the history of life on earth than does evolution.

This debate will be unlike anything else held prior to this date. It will not be a debate over the existence of God; it will be over whether or not the available scientific evidence supports the theory of evolution or the belief of creation.

Mr. Lovell, a chemist by education, is a manager in technical services with the General Electric Company in Louisville. He is an outspoken evolution and atheist and has been very active in his opposition to creation being taught in public schools or anywhere else. He is a member of the American Chemical Society, corresponding secretary of the Louisville Freethought Society, and contact person for the Kentucky Committee of CEASE (Committee for Effective Action in Science Education), which is an affiliate of the National Center for Science Education (which was formed specifically to advance evolution).

Mr. Payne is a faithful member of the Lord's church. He serves as Dean of Students and Professor of Mathematics at Florida College in Temple Terrace, Florida. He holds a Master's degree in Science Education from Harvard and a Doctorate from the University of South Florida.

The debate is sponsored by the Committee for Justice in Government. Numerous Christians, including several gospel preachers, are members of this committee. Allan Turner, preacher for the Wendell Ave. Church of Christ in Louisville, serves as the president; Gene Frost, preacher for the Birchwood Ave. Church of Christ in Louisville, serves as the vice-president. Grover Stevens, a gospel preacher in Lubbock, Texas, recently had this note in his bulletin: "I am a member of this committee and I highly recommend it and its work to all who are interested in 'fairness' and 'justice' in our lives, schools, communities, and nation." Gene Frost, in his *Gospel Anchor* editorial for July, said: "The committee was formed as a medium of expression for Christians who cannot conscientiously join sectarian, religious organizations committed to fight godless propositions and immorality in society. There are areas where individuals have responsibilities, not the work of the churches, and they may desire to join with others in concerted efforts to combat the powers at work who undermine faith in God and values precious to the Christian. The forces of Humanism are well organized and funded; some. . . have specific goals of controlling the education system in promoting evolution (and denying God as Creator)."

The format for this debate is unusual, allowing Bro. Payne to have the last argument of each session. On Monday and Tuesday evenings, each disputant will have 45 minutes each in which to present his material, both affirmative and negative arguments, the evolutionist position first and then the creationist position. On Thursday and Friday evenings, each disputant will have four alternating speeches (two 20-minute and two 10-minute speeches).

Creationists everywhere are very excited about the debate. Each man is taking the challenge of presenting his material very seriously. I was recently told that Mr. Lovell attended several nights of a special series on evolution at the Manslick Road Church in Louisville. He is really trying to get geared up for this debate. He's not taking his task lightly, but neither is Mr. Payne. Plans are being made to publish the debate in book form so it will have wider influence. A video recording is also being planned.

It is hoped that a secular forum like this will allow both speakers to avoid the "Science Vs. Bible" division that this subject seems to invariably become bogged-down in. Both speakers understand that they are to address themselves to the science of this issue. Do the facts of science support the evolution theory of origins or creation?

Individual Christians who have an interest in helping defray the expenses of this debate are encouraged to send any amount to: The Committee for Justice in Government, P.O. Box 33201, Louisville, KY 40232. An accounting of the expenses will be sent to all who contribute.



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This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.
Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH

I have read many articles on "Entering the Church" and "Characteristics of the Church." We usually talk about Christ dying for the church (Eph. 5:25), the church being purchased by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), Jesus being the head of the church (Eph. 5:23), and that it stands out from the world and all human denominations, organizations, and churches in name, worship, doctrine, work and organization.

Is there not one more characteristic of the church that is often overlooked? In Jerusalem and many more places we find only one church to each town (Acts 2:41; I Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:2). Jerusalem had many members, but had only one congregation. Should we have more than one congregation in any town today? Is it in harmony with God's Word to have two or more congregations in the same town? Please get someone to reply to this.

--Refugion Rangel, Jr.
Ft. Stockton, TX

THREAT OF HUMANISM

I appreciate the balance that seems to characterize your paper. My wife and I are homeschooling our children, and we have devoted a great deal of time warning people about the humanism taught in the Public Schools. There is some radicalism among some connected with the homeschool movement, but at the same time there is a real and persistent danger to our children by their exposure to state educators. So far, very few Christians seem to have an awareness of what is currently going on in the public schools or have the courage to do something about it. We have only homeschooled for one year but our experiences have been very positive. I am glad to see that your paper tries to keep people informed as to what is going on in society today and warns people about certain dangers Christians face.

The radicalism and spiritual ignorance of some so called "Christian" groups should not prevent us from gaining information and sharing in their concern for real dangers that many of them saw even before we. But the real battle is the Lord's and will be won by those who are genuine Christians of the New Testament order, and for too long we have sat on the side lines while others carried on the fight. I am not for dropping everything and going out and joining the sectarians in fighting social and political battles; but I am for letting our voices be heard regarding all of the spiritual and moral issues of our time while at the same time keeping a clear eye on our goal--the salvation of souls. As the church becomes more involved in the saving of souls, it

will be able to see with greater clarity those forces that are at work destroying souls. For too long we have allowed the world to establish our standards and have not challenged such. We can no longer afford such blind conformity.

--Lindy McDaniel
Kansas City, MO

HAS RECOMMENDATION FOR AN ARTICLE

My family thinks *Today* is the finest magazine being published among the brethren. We almost fight to see who gets to read it first. One of the most exciting things about your paper is the fact that practically each issue brings a new column or feature. I was especially thrilled to see the new section, "Postmarks", in the May issue. I hope you will encourage your readers to not just use this section to agree or disagree with articles that have already been printed, but to also make suggestions or recommendations for future articles.

I would like to see someone write an article on church autonomy and independence. It seems that we have been doing more preaching on the subject, but less practicing of it. Or am I misunderstanding the subject?

--Charles Sydnor
St. Louis, MO

ARTICLES ARE HELPFUL

The *Today* is super. I really enjoy it each month. The different approach and features make it unique to other publications. I would like to see more articles about the history of our songs. The ones that have been printed were very interesting. Many people think the song book is sacred and that all the songs were written by Christians.

I am also enjoying the series on Psalms by Ken Green. It is very helpful to me right now since we're studying Psalms in our Bible class. Keep it coming!

--Chris Fleming
Jackhorn, KY

MAKES A CHALLENGE TO OTHER READERS

I have subscribed to religious journals off and on for the past twenty years. I have known several of the editors personally and know that every one of them has said that the first two or three years of a religious paper are the crucial years. It is important to continue getting new subscribers in order to meet all the bills each month. I'm sure this is why some good papers have had to fold after a year or two. I hope this

will never happen to *Today*. I am really enjoying your paper. It would be a shame for the readers not to promote the paper among their friends. I am enclosing payment for three gift subscriptions. I would like to challenge every reader to send in two or three gift subs this month. *Today* deserves to be read by more people.

--John McCarey
Tampa, FL

BOTHERED OVER A SITUATION

There are things that really aggravate me, but these things need to be answered by someone else and not me. One big issue is "Should A Woman Baptize?" I know of a situation where it happened and it has bothered me for a long time. I am of the persuasion that a woman should not do it. I can find no New Testament example of a woman ever baptizing; there is no example of anyone other than a "man of God" who did baptize.

--Charlene Manco
Jackson, TN

ENCOURAGE THE TEENS

Just a quick note to let you know how much I am enjoying *Today*. I hope brethren everywhere will get behind you and encourage others to subscribe...I enjoy every article so much, but I want to especially commend bro. Royce Chandler for his article, "You May Not Believe These Kids--But They're For Real!" in the March issue. My job causes me to travel all across this country and I'm seeing lots of young people in the church with an indifferent attitude. I'm worried about the future of the Lord's church. I believe more elders, preachers, parents, Bible teachers, and interested brethren must say more and do more to encourage our youth in the church.

My children are all grown and gone, but I want to do what I can to strengthen the teens in the church here. I wish more congregations would start a program like bro. Chandler wrote about. Our teens need more opportunities to develop their talents.

I hope you can encourage bro. Chandler and others to do more writing along this line. It will help us in trying to help others.

--John Mahuron
Nashville, TN

NEED SACRIFICE

This is my first time to write a letter to the editor of a religious paper. I just want to let you know how much I am enjoying the many features of your magazine. My favorites are the Word Studies, History of Hymns, and the Old Testament Survey. I don't care much for the Teen Talk and wish you would leave the jokes out, but maybe somebody else likes these things. My all time favorite section is the interview page. I turn to this section first. I'm always disappointed on the months that you don't have this page.

I would like to see a follow up to Mark Moseley's article on "Identifying The New Testament Church." I think more needs to be said about Christians being willing to sacrifice. I've never sacrificed, that I know of. I give every Sunday, but I don't do any real sacrificing. Maybe we need more teaching on this.

--Billy Gruss
Athens, AL

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- FAITHFULNESS

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

The word translated "faith," or "faithfulness" is defined as: "fidelity, faithfulness, i.e. the character of one who can be relied on: Mt. 23:23; Gal. 5:22; Philemon 5" (Thayer). It is conviction, conjoined with obedience, hence faithfulness, reliability or trustworthiness.

Paul wrote the Romans that though man may not remain faithful, God remains faithful (Rom. 3:3). He always keeps his word. You can depend on Him! "God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Cor. 1:9). "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it" (I Cor. 10:13). Faithfulness is always a characteristic of God and should be the goal of every Christian. When we follow the Spirit's teaching we will be faithful to God, our fellow man and the church.

Perhaps the importance of faithfulness can be seen more clearly if we consider the opposite characteristic. The writer of Hebrews said: "Take heed brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God" (Heb. 3:12). Since faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17), faithfulness demands a continuance in that word. In contrast to unbelief, we see Abraham who "believed God" (Gen. 15:6), and is called the "father of them that believe" (Rom. 4:11) because he continued to follow God's word. Mental faith in God is worthless without "faithfulness." That may involve giving up one's life, rather than

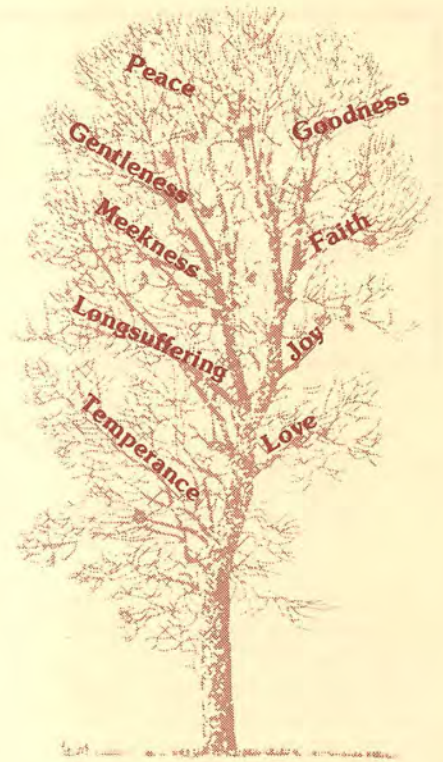
his commitment to God (Rev. 2:10).

Those who are faithful will also manifest it in their attitude toward their fellow man. "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). Note that the word "men" here is from "anthropois," which refers to human beings, male and female. All stewards are expected to be "faithful" (I Cor. 4:2). We were taught, to teach; and saved, to save. The fruit of the Spirit in our lives is seen as we faithfully teach the word to others.

We are also to be faithful to the church. We cannot separate faithfulness to Christ from faithfulness to His church. When Saul was persecuting the church, Jesus said that he was persecuting Him (Acts 9:4). Christ loved the church and "gave himself up for it" (Eph. 5:25). When we love the church as we ought, we will faithfully support it with our attendance, money and service.

Those who are not dependable in attendance are failing to produce this fruit in their lives. God's word teaches us to "forsake not our own assembling together" (Heb. 10:25). To "forsake" means to wilfully abandon. It is the opposite of "faithfulness" or the "character of one who can be relied on." If a husband is "faithful to his wife" only ninety percent of the time, is he really faithful?

We are to be faithful in supporting the local church with our giving (I Cor. 16:1, 2), and by the use of our abilities in building up the Lord's cause. Paul told the Corinthians that each part of the body is to contribute its part in order that the whole body may function properly (I Cor. 12:12-27). To the Philippians, he wrote: "Only let your



manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). My purpose in being a member of a local church must involve being of "one mind" and "striving together" for the success of the gospel. Those who are "pulling apart" instead of "striving together" are not faithful to Christ or to His church.

God never lets us down. He is faithful to every promise and commitment. This is the standard to which we strive as we produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. We are to be faithful to God, to our fellow man and to the church. This is a large "fruit" and will demand a total commitment from each of us.

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a friend.**



Studies About The Spirit

by David Holder

More On The Spirit And The Son

The interrelatedness of the "persons" of deity is an eternal phenomenon, though it became a subject of revelation only in the New Testament. There were hints of the tri-personality of God in the Old Testament (to be dealt with in a future article), but the idea was not explicitly drawn out until the New Testament. The collaboration of the persons of deity -- Father, Son, and Spirit -- in the New Testament pertains especially to salvation for humankind. Previously attention was focused on the Spirit and Jesus' earthly work, here attention will be given to the Spirit's continued work after Jesus' ascension.

THE SPIRIT AND JESUS' HEAVENLY REIGN

The Sending of the Spirit. Jesus' last discussion with His apostles (John 13-16) was dominated by references to the Spirit (14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-15). Jesus spoke of His own going away and coming again as well as the coming of the Father and the Spirit.

The Spirit is referred to in this final discourse as the Helper, the Spirit of truth, and the Holy Spirit. What Jesus said on this occasion about the Spirit's work had special reference to the apostles because the world "does not behold Him or know Him" and thus cannot "receive" Him (14:17). The apostles, however, had been specially prepared for the Spirit's work with them. To the apostles the Spirit would be sent to teach and remind (14:26), bear witness of Jesus (15:26), guide them into all the truth (16:13), and glorify Jesus (16:14). The Spirit's work with the apostles would be to convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment (16:8). The Spirit's work

would be Christ-centered and salvation-oriented.

Notice that Jesus referred to the Spirit as "another Helper" (14:16) and to the Spirit's work as being both present and future (14:17b). Jesus could not remain with His disciples indefinitely in His human state, but He made provisions for the Spirit to be with them "forever," i.e., as long as they lived. The Spirit would take up where Jesus left off. Of course, it must be recognized that the Spirit was already working with the apostles -- "He abides with you" (cf. Matthew 10:20). But the Spirit's work would soon take on new features -- He "will be in you." The new aspects of the Spirit's work with the apostles depended on Jesus' going away (16:7).

A careful reading of what Jesus said shows that Jesus perceived the sending of the Spirit as the coming of Himself (cf. 14:18, 25-26, 28). The Holy Spirit would be sent by the Father in the Son's name (14:26). The Spirit would proceed from the Father and bear witness of the Son (15:26). The Spirit "will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; . . . He will glorify Me [Jesus]; for He shall take of mine, and shall disclose it to you" (16:13, 14). As "another Helper" the Spirit would take up and continue the work of Jesus, and in that sense Jesus would "come."

The Receiving of the Spirit. Jesus spoke of the Spirit's work with the apostles and with all believers. The coming of the Spirit to believers was also connected with the glorification of Jesus. According to John 7:39, "The

Spirit was not yet [given], because Jesus was not yet glorified" ("given" being supplied by the NASB translators). The words of Jesus about thirsting, drinking, believing, and flowing rivers of living water were interpreted by John as being connected with the Spirit (John 7:37-39). **Believing** in Jesus was to result in **receiving** the Spirit. None of what Jesus spoke of would occur, however, until Jesus was "glorified."

Certainly the Spirit was already active with Jesus (John 1:33; Luke 4:1, etc.) and with the apostles (Matthew 10:20). But in John 7:39 reference is made to the work of the Spirit in relation to those who believed. This work of the Spirit would be defined later when it became a reality, but John makes it clear that it was dependent upon the glorification of Jesus. At the time that Jesus spoke these words, the Spirit was "not yet" in that sense that this aspect of His work had not begun. It is essential to know that the presence of the Spirit in the lives of believers hinged upon the glorifying of Jesus.

The work of the Spirit with the apostles and with all believers was contingent upon and is concurrent with the saving work of Jesus.

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Protestant and Catholic Stage-Coaches

by Luther W. Martin

Without question, the title of this article is absurd. Just as absurd and out-of-place, as the violence and animosity demonstrated between Catholics and Protestants throughout Northern Ireland. Both groups claim to be "Christian" in their beliefs and philosophy, yet blood continues to be shed, lives continue to be taken. . .and this condition has prevailed for several centuries. Bear with me while I try to describe the background of history and events that have brought this sad and unhappy state into being.

One other point before we begin. Both Catholics AND non-Catholics have guilt upon them, in the Irish struggle! Neither side has "clean hands!"

"SAINT" PATRICK

It was supposedly in the year 432 A.D., that "Saint" Patrick arrived upon Ireland's shores. In his writings, he made no acknowledgement of Papal authority. In fact, although there was a bishop of Rome, there was yet no universal bishop claiming to rule all Catholicism. If Patrick was a Christian, he was a "pre-papal-Christian". Patrick combined some Bible teaching with some Druid mythology. The Celts, Norsemen, Normans, Picts and others, all contributed to the culture and religion of the Irish. I can think of no race of people who continue to accept ancient superstitions in modern times, more than the Irish. Yet, this is one of the characteristics of the Irish that makes them such a lovable society. There is much to admire about the Irish people, however, their belief in banshees, goblins, elves, ghosts, leprechauns and "Little People", becomes most compatible with the allegations of Roman Catholicism, wherein the priest can "magically" change the communion wafer into the "very body of Jesus", or exorcise a "demon" right out of a person.

In 1844, a critic of the priesthood wrote: "a pastor (is) armed with such all-powerful weapons as confession, penance and absolution" (*Ireland in*

1843, Edinburgh Review, lxxix (1844), page 215.) The priest was referred to as "the Lord's anointed", and the clergy themselves spoke of their "sacred character". B.W. Noel wrote in his "Notes on a short tour through the midland counties of Ireland in the summer of 1836",-- "a persecuted and sympathising priesthood had been the object of almost idolatrous veneration." (Page 81.)

Irish folk-lore attributed to the priest magical or wondrous powers. . . not only in religious matters but other ways. The priests "power" protects the land of a Protestant who befriended the priest. The priest places a 'curse' on a landlord who ousts a tenant, while those who curse the priest or are not friendly toward him, will be dogged by misfortune. (*Peel, Priests and Politics*, by Donald A. Kerr, page 43.)

KING HENRY VIII, MIS-TREATS IRISH CATHOLICS.

If you recall your English history, King Henry the 8th, was the ruler who was legitimately married to his Catholic Queen, Catharine of Aragon, the daughter of the King of Spain. Inasmuch as Catharine had not produced a living son to succeed Henry on England's throne, the King was quite disappointed. He became involved (immorally) with a woman of the English Court, and Henry petitioned the Pope of Rome for permission to divorce Catharine and marry his paramour. The Pope rightfully rejected Henry's request, although he took several years in doing so. Therefore, Henry wrongfully took matters into his own hands. . .after all, he was the King!. . .and proclaimed himself to be the "Head" of the English Church. . .totally separating himself and what had been the Roman Catholic Church in England and other British Dominions, from Rome.

The property formerly held by the Roman Church and by many of Rome's supporters, was confiscated. . . stolen, taken away from Catholics and given to Protestants. This was particularly the procedure in Ireland. .

it happened in 1536. This was called the "Act of Supremacy", and it deprived the Pope of his position as "spiritual sovereign of Ireland". In 1541, King Henry VIII took the title of "King of Ireland".

Henry's eldest daughter, Mary, the offspring of Catharine, was Catholic. So, when she came on the throne of England, Protestant blood flowed in the opposite direction. Ultimately, Queen Elizabeth (Anne Boleyn's daughter) came on the English throne, and matters were again reversed. In 1569, she found herself involved with the "Confederation of Munster, for the defense of Ireland and the Faith." This was solved by a 'scorched earth policy' and by dividing up some five million acres of lands, formerly owned by Catholics.

In 1588, the Spanish Armada was enroute to conquer England and restore Roman Catholicism to the land. But a terrible storm destroyed the Spanish fleet. . .and was looked upon by the English Protestants as "an act of God".

During the time of Mary Tudor, "plantations" had been established in Ulster in the northern part of Ireland. English farmers from Yorkshire and from Scotland were settled into two counties of the North. This became an enduring stronghold of Protestantism. . .and it is, still today (1984).

There was much conflict from time to time, between the former Catholic landowners and the Protestants who now held the land. Three times in one century, rebellion and revolution had plagued Ireland. In 1695, the Treaty of Limerick, was granted by King Charles II. This was supposed to give equal treatment for the Catholics and Protestants. But "penal laws" soon changed all this.

SOME OF THE RESTRICTIONS PLACED UPON CATHOLICS.

(1) The Roman Catholic could not cast a vote nor run for an elective office.

(2) The R.C. could not serve in either the army or navy.

(3) The R.C. could not enter the major professions. For example, he could not become a lawyer.

(4) The R.C. was limited as to ownership of property and he could not bequeath them except under very restricted terms.

(5) The R.C. was not permitted to carry a sword or own any arms.

(6) If a Roman Catholic owned a horse that was worth more than five pounds, any Protestant could appropriate the animal for the sum of five pounds, whether the Catholic wanted to sell or not.

(7) The R.C. was forbidden to teach. Trinity College in Dublin would not issue a diploma to a Catholic, even if he succeeded in gaining admission to classes.

(8) It was a crime for the R.C. to send his son abroad to be educated.

(9) The R.C. clergy was forbidden to exist. Most of the "Clergy" became outlaws.

(10) Fees were set by the Government, that rewarded informers whose reports led to the apprehension

of priests, prelates and Catholic schoolmasters.

(11) Separate stage-coaches were operated for Catholics and Protestants.

(12) The same was true for inns and hotels.

One of the great factors in this harsh treatment, was the opulence of Catholic cathedrals and edifices, all of which had been paid for by the poor and poverty-ridden Irish parishioners. So the obvious wealth of the "Church" was taken away and bestowed upon the Church of England or Church of Ireland. These were now "Protestant" institutions.

MODERN CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Now, perhaps, some of us who are neither Catholic nor Protestant, can begin to understand just a bit of the background of this century's fighting in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is 70% (or more) Protestant. To the south, the Republic of Ireland is 95% Roman Catholic. Therefore, Northern Ireland does not wish to be governmentally combined

with the Irish Republic, because by so doing, the North would lose its Protestant majority. Northern Ireland desires the protection and friendship with England, viewing England as in the majority a Protestant nation. The Catholic minority in the North is discriminated against, by the Protestant majority. The Protestant minority in the Republic of Ireland, is discriminated against by the Catholic majority.

Extremists among the Catholics as well as among the Protestants, continue to promote violence. Politics as well as religion is involved. English culture as well as Irish culture is also involved. It is an ancient and modern problem. It is a complex and difficult problem.

IF ALL PARTIES would lay down their arms as well as their hatreds. . . and if **ALL PARTIES WOULD UNITE UPON NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING AND PRINCIPLES. . . there could be peace!**

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WHERE HONOR IS DUE

by Leslie Diestelkamp

We read frequently of those pioneer preachers who gave themselves so completely to the service of Christ. They moved about from place to place, they travelled by the very primitive means that was at their disposal, they preached with very little support and sometimes went home with nothing at all. They deserve our respect, as do those who, even today, deprive themselves of various advantages in order to serve God and humanity.

But when that pioneer preacher went home after weeks of absence, carrying almost no remuneration, who suffered most? It was not the preacher himself, but his family. While he had been sheltered and fed in the homes of brethren, his family had to carry on at home without his help and without the income that the average man would have provided.

Even today the same principle applies. If God had promised special rewards to those most deserving, then it is certain that the preachers would not receive the greatest reward, but surely their families would be the beneficiaries of God's greatest and most abundant benefits. And this is written,

not to diminish from the appreciation we should have for those who devote themselves to preaching the Word, but rather to stimulate brethren who read these lines to deepen their respect for those wives and children who willingly deprive themselves of so much in order to make the preacher's life and work possible and fruitful.

It may be that some preacher's wives, living in luxury and knowing no real sacrifice, become spoiled by affluence and selfishly demanding of their husbands and of the church. But those wives who go with their husbands into the remote and hard fields of labor, who leave the places of security, who endure the long, lonely years, far from "the old home ties," and who must look each month to the mail box for the checks they hope will not fail to come, deserve our admiration and respect.

Some Ways To Help

1. Support the preacher in the remote field more generously. With our abundance here at home, how can we expect those in such fields of labor to be deprived?

2. Be considerate regarding the

"cost of living increase" each year or oftener. Don't wait for a request from the preacher, for he and his family may be unwilling to beg.

3. Communicate. By that I mean, keep in touch with the family, not just with the preacher. (Women often complain that there is nothing for them to do in spiritual matters. Well, you could do a great service by writing frequently to those wives who live far from homelands. And when you write, ask how you can help, and, without receiving a request, enclose a gift. Your personal gift won't be tax-deductible, but God won't forget it and it may produce joy in a lonely heart and encouragement to a weary worker.)

4. Pray for those workers in the far-away fields. Let them know you pray for them and even that knowledge alone will help more than money, sometimes.

Finally, if any of you who have read this (either men or women) have not been moved with genuine sympathy for those about whom I have written, then for the sake of your own soul I beg you to pray for forgiveness of your selfish unconcern and bring forth fruits of repentance.

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EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

Send Them Out In Pairs Have We Neglected This Pattern?

God has given to the church certain gifts in the form of special servants, whose job it is to equip the saints for the work of service (Eph. 4:7-12). If the church of God exists today it will still be using gifts and allow them to function as God designed. Two of the gifts that God gave to the church were servants called apostles and evangelists.

The Mormon Church makes the claim that they are the true church because they have apostles, while the "Church of Christ" does not. But the fact that there is no living apostle today does not prove that this gift is absent! Sixteen centuries after Moses death, Abraham was able to say to the rich man concerning his living brothers, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." How could they "have" Moses and the prophets except through their writings (Lk. 16:27-31)? The church of Jesus Christ today has apostles and their names are Peter, Paul, etc.

When these apostles were alive, we notice a very interesting example in the way they worked. Jesus "summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs" (Mk. 6:7). Later, when 70 other bearers of good news were sent out, again it was "two by two" (Lk. 10:1).

This PATTERN of two by two continued in the book of Acts, but has been, for the most part, neglected in the Lord's church in this century. We like to show off our knowledge by referring to the preacher as an evangelist, and not "the Pastor" like our denominational friends, but are we willing to learn from this example of the Lord?

In Acts we see Peter and John going together to the temple where the lame man is healed (Acts 3). In Acts 8,

Phillip is the only one mentioned as going to Samaria, but when the apostles in Jerusalem hear of his work, they send "two" of their own number (8:14). When the Gentiles began to respond to the gospel in Antioch, the church at Jerusalem sent Barnabus to help. But it was not long before he sent for fellow worker, Saul (Acts 11:22-26). Later these two men teamed up to go through Cyprus and Asia (Acts 13-14). Even when Paul and Barnabas parted ways, they did not go to the work alone. Barnabus took John, Mark and Paul took Silas (Acts 15:36-41).

I once heard of a man in a business meeting object to supporting two preachers in one place because he doubted its scripturalness. The fact is, one worker by himself, even though scriptural, is the very exception to the rule in the New Testament. Paul had company everywhere he went except Athens, and even though persecution was more severe in other cities, his discouragement was probably greater in Athens. Paul treated his isolation in Athens as a big sacrifice that he allowed for the benefit of the brethren in Thessalonica (I Thess. 3:1-5).

It seems to me that more men would be willing to go into areas where the gospel has not been preached if this "two by two" was practiced. We must reshape our thinking. If Paul and Barnabus were alive today, we would stick one in the biggest church in Louisville and one in the biggest church in Birmingham, instead of both being sent together to the state of New York or overseas. We would want them in churches where men like Peter were already elders. To cry for adherence to the New Testament pattern in regard to benevolence and cooperation, and then totally reject the

pattern of "sending in pairs" is highly hypocritical.

Even the great preacher of the Old Testament recognized the importance that "two are better than one" (Ecc. 4:9-12).

"Two are better than one: because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him; two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken"

One brother, in defending the practice of not supporting two men in the same city defended it by saying, "Don't throw all your eggs into one basket." That may be sound advice in some circumstances, but listen to the scriptures: "Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor" (9). Fellowship makes labor more effective, whether it be in business, the family, or the kingdom. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Prov. 27:17). Work is always more effective when there is unity, brotherly kindness, mutual help, consideration, praise, and constructive criticism. What one worker can not accomplish the other can supply.

"For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow" (10). Do we truly understand that we are at war! Would we send a soldier by himself? "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up" (10). When two are together; the healthy can uphold the sick, the brave can cheer the timid, the more spiritual at the time can restore the fallen. This principle is also valid for continued, steadfast zeal in the Lord's cause. "If two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone" (11)? An evangelist in an area away from other workers can no more survive without Christian love and zeal than we can. The Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons have put us to shame in recognizing this principle. Zeal is contagious. Courage is multiplied when we have a fellow worker. Even in areas where Christians are more plentiful, we would do well to have a fellow worker. I may plan to go make a visit or to knock on doors, but find many excuses why it is not convenient

tonight. But if I make an appointment to meet another brother or sister for this work, I would be embarrassed to make such excuses. Many gospel preachers have missed wonderful opportunities to train more workers by not calling and getting another member to go with them to teach a home study. This one failure in my own life has probably cost the kingdom many faithful workers. We ought to so train men and women that when we move on to "regions beyond", they don't lose

their only worker. Barnabus and Paul left Antioch (Acts 13), and no replacement came. Antioch did not lose their only workers, they were just two among many. Paul told Timothy, *"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also"* (2 Tim. 2:2).

"And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him" (12). Working together can guard against

apostasy. On many nights in taking a partner with me to make contacts, we did not find a single person home. But the time was not wasted. This "working together" allowed for a deeper bonding of love and laid the groundwork for greater edifying and bearing each others burdens.

Brethren, think on these things!

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TEEN TALK

A Column for teens and by teens

"My father was recently asked by the congregation to allow his name to be put before the church to consider as an elder. I don't really think I would enjoy the pressure of being an elder's child. What should I do?"

Troy Reece
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 15



I believe you should feel pride not pressure over your father being considered for an elder. If you are living as you should there would be no additional pressure. Christians are tempted every day and the temptation is going to remain the same even with your father being an elder. You might feel extra pressure to live right if he becomes an elder.

Don't take the attitude that you are going to live better only because your father is an elder. You should always strive to do better and try to please your Father, in heaven. Doing the things you should will help your Father in his new experience. If he does become an elder, support him because being an elder isn't always going to be easy. Encourage him so he can be a

good, responsible elder. If you still feel there will be too much pressure, the best thing to do is talk to your Father. Don't discourage him, just talk it over with him. Remember he is feeling pressure just like you are. A good talk could help both of you. Never forget to live a Christian life and if there is a lot of pressure, pray about it. Feel proud of your father because he is being considered for the highest position on earth.

Sonia Ennis
Smiths Grove, KY
Age: 17



If you are living a Christian life and putting forth a good example, you shouldn't feel pressure over your father's name being put up for an elder. You should be honored and feel proud that your brethren would choose him. Pray that if he becomes an elder, you can help him by doing the things you should do. Also pray that he will be a good elder: that is patient, loving and kind and never forgets his responsibility in any area. Try to become more involved in the church activities and grow in the truth. This would be a way to help your dad and you will enjoy being a child of an elder.

Paul Schreiner, Jr.
Oxford, OH
Age: 17



The first thing to remember is that ultimately it's your father's choice. Perhaps it has been a life-long dream of his to become an elder. Do you have the right or the desire to take that away from him? The thing to do is talk. Good communication can solve a lot of problems. Let him know how you feel.

Being an elder is one of the most rewarding and important jobs for a Christian. If your father wants the position, even after talking to you, be happy and encourage him. If you really love him, you'll be able to put up with a little added pressure to allow him the experience of being an elder.

Michelle McClelland
Sparks, NV
Age: 17



Being an elder is the pressure, and if your father wants to take on that responsibility it's up to him. Also, if he is qualified then he has an obligation to try and be an elder. As long as you are living a Christian life there should be no extra pressure if your father becomes an elder. I think you should stop thinking about yourself and be proud of your dad. That's quite an accomplishment.

What Terms Should Be Used To Refer To Preachers?

by David Pratte

Every religious group has people who preach and proclaim the doctrines believed by that group. Different groups have different ideas about what these people should be called, how they should be selected, whether they should be paid, and if so, how much. In these articles we hope to investigate the Bible teaching regarding these matters. The principles we will study apply to all people who claim to publicly preach and teach God's word, but the emphasis will be on those who are financially supported, since so many perversions exist in such cases.

Remember that all religious practices must be authorized by God's word, not just invented by men. We please God only when we practice that which He has ordained, and we must reject practices that cannot be found in God's word (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Matt. 15:9, 13; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 John 9-11; Col. 3:17; etc.)

Let us begin by examining the words we use to describe preachers and their work.

SOME TERMS THE BIBLE USES

The Bible uses various different terms to describe the church ("body", "temple", "kingdom", etc.), and it likewise uses various terms to refer to Christians ("children of God", "disciples", "Saints", etc.). In the same way, the Bible uses several terms to refer to preachers and their work. The chart below summarizes some of these terms:

TERM	REFERENCES	POINT EMPHASIZED
"Preacher"	2 Pet. 2:5; 2 Tim. 1:11	Authority of message's source
"Evangelist"	Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5	Nature of message--good news
"Teacher"	Acts 13:1; Heb. 5:12	Knowledge imparted to hearers
"Minister"	I Thess. 3:2; I Cor. 3:5	Service rendered by teaching

Note how these different terms, while referring to the same work, yet emphasize different aspects of that work. A "preacher" conveys an official message from one party to another (as from a king, military commander, etc.). The messenger himself is not the source of the message; hence, the authority behind the message is that of the sender, not that of the messenger. In religion, the message is conveyed from God to man through the preacher. The power of the message does not lie in the preacher, but in God who originated the message.

The word "evangelist" is related to the word "gospel", and emphasizes the nature of the message--it is "good news." "Teacher" emphasizes the effect or benefit produced by the message--it imparts knowledge, instruction, or information to others. "Minister" emphasizes the work as being a service rendered to others. A preacher serves both God and man in that He does a work on God's behalf to deliver to man a message of salvation.

Note that all these terms, as used in these passages, refer to the work of teaching, not to such works as doing janitor work, visiting the sick, or running general errands for the church. All members of the church should be involved in these various works simply because they are Christians, but the fact a man is a preacher does not (as some people seem to think) give him special obligations in these other areas.

SOME TERMS MEN SOMETIMES MISTAKENLY USE

People often have mistaken ideas of the work and role of preachers, and this is often reflected in their use of incorrect terms. Please consider some of these.

PRIEST

Some people consider preaching to be the duty of a special class of Christians whom they call "priests". The Old Testament had such a special class of people, but we today follow the New Testament not the Old Testament (Heb. 7:11-18; 10:9, 10; Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:2-7; etc.). The

New Testament tells us that:

All Christians are priests to God--I Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:5, 6.

All Christians offer sacrifices to God (which is the duty of priests)--I Pet. 2:5; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15, 16.

Jesus is our High Priest and the only mediator between God and men--Heb. 5:4-10; I Tim. 2:5, 6.

Hence, there should not be, according to the New Testament, a special class of "priests" through whom other Christians worship God, with the priests being mediators between God and those people.

PASTOR

Some denominations set up a preacher as "pastor". He is considered to act as an overseer or shepherd who supervises the church. Other churches may deny that this is a scriptural practice, yet they sometimes practice essentially the same thing without officially admitting it. But the Bible teaches:

Pastors are listed as a separate work from that of evangelists--Eph. 4:11. The work of pastor is different from that of preachers, just like the work of apostle is different (though sometimes the same man may do both works--I Tim. 5:17, 18). By definition, an evangelist is simply one who preaches the gospel. By definition, a pastor is one who shepherds or guides a flock. This involves oversight and supervision of other people, which is more than what is involved in simply preaching.

"Pastor" is another term that refers to the same work as "elder" and "bishop"--Acts 20:17,28; I Pet. 5:1, 2. Those who "feed" (Greek verb form of "pastor") the flock or local church are the elders, who are also responsible to be "overseers" (often translated "bishops"--cf. Phil. 1:1). Pastors or bishops should teach, of course, but their work also involves guiding or overseeing a local church. Simply being a preacher would not necessarily give a man a right to supervise other people in the general work of the church. The authority of preaching, remember, is in the message and the One who sent it, not in the messenger.

Pastors or bishops must meet

special qualifications--I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9. But not all preachers must meet these qualifications. Paul, for example, was a preacher, but could not have been a pastor (bishop) because he was not the "*husband of one wife*" nor did he have children. Also Timothy was an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5), but could not have been an "elder" because he was a "youth" (I Tim. 4:12).

When a local church appoints pastors (bishops), it must appoint a plurality--Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; Phil. 1:1; etc. Never in the Bible was a local church overseen by just one man alone. Yet congregations in denominations often have just one man whom they call "pastor".

Some men who preach have also met the qualifications of pastors and have been appointed (along with at least one other man) to do that work in a local church; but this is not true of most preachers. To call a man a "pastor" simply because he preaches, would be a perversion of scripture.

FATHER & REVEREND

Terms such as these are often used to exalt men as though they are more righteous or are somehow spiritually superior to other Christians. But the

Bible teaches:

Jesus condemned the use of terms such as "Father", "Master", etc., to exalt men religiously--Matt. 23:6-12. God is our Father and Jesus is our Master. They possess Deity and deserve to be exalted. But men are equals--"brethren". We ought not to allow men to exalt us or God will see to it that someday we are humbled. If we humble ourselves and recognize other Christians as our spiritual equals, then God will exalt us. (Cf. Acts 10:25, 26).

We should not glory in preachers and exalt them simply because they are --I Cor. 1:12, 13, 31; 3:4-7, 21; 2 Cor. 4:5, 7. Preachers are **servants** of God, just like all Christians are. They did not die to save us, nor are we baptized in their name. They only plant the word, but God's power is what makes it grow and save people's souls. Glory in **God**, not in men.

God's name is "reverend"--Psalm 111:9. But the Bible nowere calls men "reverend" as a title to exalt them above other men religiously. Such would violate the principles in all the verses we are considering.

Bible descriptions of preachers simply describe the work they do, but do not glorify the men as being more

holy or more important than other Christians. Here are a few examples of how preachers are referred to in the gospel:

I Cor. 16:12--"*our brother Apollos*".

Eph. 6:21--"*Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord.*"

Phil. 2:25--"*Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.*"

Col. 4:12--"*Epaphras...a servant of Christ.*"

2 Pet. 3:15--"*our beloved brother Paul.*"

All faithful Christians are equally holy, equally important to God, and equally destined to eternal life. It displeases God for us to exalt preachers as being spiritually superior to other Christians.

The term "clergyman" is often used for preachers to describe men who have a special calling and who have been specially ordained to preach. We will discuss these concepts more in the next article.

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"Greater Works Than Jesus": What and How?

by W.C. Sexton

"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).

At times we read a passage of scripture and at first it SEEMS to say something **other** than what it actually does--sometimes more and sometimes less.

1. At first, the above passage may appear to say more than it actually does: how is it that any man can do **greater** acts than Jesus did. He raised the dead, (Jn. 11:19-44), walked on water, (Matt. 14:25) multiplied food to feed 5000 with but "*five loaves and*

two fishes" (Matt. 14:15-21), etc. Many more things could be mentioned. If we are thinking in terms of quantity--the magnitude of the miracle--we have trouble seeing how such could be surpassed, do we not?

2. Depending on our preconditioning, we may find in the passage JUST WHAT we are looking for. "Say, there is the passage claiming that I can do miracles." Or the "Bible surely teaches that miracles can be done by any and all of Jesus' disciples, because this passage says '. . . He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also; . . .'" If we recall from another passage, however, "Are all apostles?

are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" (I Cor. 12:29) we become confused, knowing that the word of God does NOT contradict itself.

3. The explanation of the above claim of Jesus is found in **understanding** the plan of God: 1) After Jesus ascended to the Father, the Apostles did have power to perform miracles, to "confirm" that the message was from heaven; 2) After He was received into heaven, salvation from sin was presented to the whole "world" in His name--all were invited to receive on the same terms (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 10:34-35). 3000 obeyed on Pentecost (Acts 2:22-47); the number reached more than 5000 (Acts 4:5). Salvation of the soul is much **greater** than feeding and/or healing the body (Matt. 16:24-26). Yes, disciples can do a greater work today; but it is **not** in miracles; helping one save his/her soul by obeying the gospel.

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

Greek Word: *deiliao*

Meaning: be cowardly, timid

As Jesus prepared his apostles for His crucifixion and subsequent return to heaven He said to them: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn. 14:27).

He was saying more to them than that they should not be nervous or unsettled about the radical changes that were about to take place in their lives. He was warning them against turning into timid cowards.

The verb, "be afraid" (*deiliao*), is used only in Jn. 14:27 in the Greek New Testament. But it is fairly common in the Septuagint Version (early Greek translation of the O.T.). And from its use there we can get the taste of this word.

In Deut. 1:21 Moses tells the Israelites to "fear not, neither be discouraged" as they prepare to go into the promised land. In the following verses Moses clarifies the meaning of our word by pointing out the failure of ten of the twelve spies originally sent into Canaan to return with a favorable report (cf. Num. 13:33). He says that the people of Israel had believed the cowardly report of the ten instead of the courageous report of Joshua and Caleb (cf. Num. 13:30). And he says that the essence of this spiritual failure on their part was the fact that, "...in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God" (Deut. 1:32). And herein lies the marrow of our word, *deiliao*. It is cowardice whose root is a failure to fully believe and trust in the Lord God.

There is an adjectival form of this word used three times in the Greek Testament. It is *deilos*. In Mt. 8:26 and Mk. 4:40 Jesus rebukes His apostles during an awful storm on the Sea of Galilee saying: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Here, again, is the idea of cowardice resulting from failure to believe and trust in the Lord. And the fatal consequence of this kind of fear is described in Rev. 21:8 where we are told that the "fearful" will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

And there is a nominal form of this word that occurs once in the N.T. It is *deilia* and is found in one of the most challenging passages in the epistles. Paul tells Timothy to "stir up the gift of God" which is in him "for God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. 1:6-7). The cowardly mindset, the spirit of cowardice, does not come from God. On the contrary, He gives power, love, and a disciplined mind--But only if we believe and trust in Him completely.

There are other words that are translated "fear" from the Greek New Testament. For instance, the word *eulabeia*, godly fear, occurs twice (Heb. 5:7; 12:28). It is a wholesome reverence for God. And the word *phobos* from which we get our word phobia occurs often, sometimes in a good sense (Phil. 2:12), sometimes in a bad sense (1 Jn. 4:18). Its full meaning is determined by its context. But our word *deiliao* in its three forms and five occurrences in the N.T. is always bad, always wrong because it bespeaks the lack of faith in God without which salvation is impossible, for "he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6, emp. mine, D.B.).

"TEMPERANCE"

Greek Work: *enkrateia*

Meaning: self-control

Recently a sign in a flower bed in a park was brought to my attention. It said: "Do not pick (twist off, sever, cut, clip, snip, snap off, pluck, pinch off, pull, bend, crush, pare, cleave, divide, break, touch or take, borrow, steal, remove or otherwise harm, mutilate or endanger) the flowers."

Now why on earth would a sign of this sort be necessary? Isn't it because many people have shown themselves unwilling to exercise self-control in

recent times? Surely a simple "Please Don't Eat the Daisies" would have been sufficient if a sign was needed at all. But because human beings continue to behave as beasts they must be hedged about with fences, signs, and volumes of rules and regulations. Modern man is strangled and hog-tied by regulations. And the bureaucrats and legislators and paper-shufflers who manufacture them would have no excuse for their ever-advancing paternalistic statism if all men behaved with such mature self-control that petty regulations were beneath them. People must govern themselves or somebody else will.

And our word *enkrateia* teaches us to do that very thing. It is found in the list of virtues listed in 2 Pet. 1:5-11 as "temperance." It comes from the word *kratos* which means strength and so means, literally, inner-strength. It is a requirement for the man who would be an elder (Tit. 1:8). It is a requirement for the man who would be saved (Acts 24:25). And it is a requirement for the man or woman who would remain saved (Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6).

Paul gives us one of his most vivid word pictures using *enkrateia*. He likens the struggle of the Christian and the proclaimer of God's word to the ancient Olympic or Isthmian athlete who endured the unendurable in order to prepare for the games: "Now every athlete in the games practices complete self-discipline. They therefore do so to win a crown that quickly fades away; we do so to win a crown that never fades. I therefore so run as one who knows his goal; I fight, not like one who shadow-boxes; but I batter my body; I make it my slave; lest after I have preached to others I myself should fail to stand the test" (1 Cor. 9:24-27, Barclay).

There is no more difficult battle to be fought in life than the battle to subdue self. Nebuchadnezzar fought three long years to subdue Jerusalem in 589-6 B.C. It took Titus, the Roman, four years to do the same thing in A.D. 66-70. The ultimate downfall of ancient Tyre

required the combined efforts of Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great over a period of nearly three-hundred years (605 B.C.--A.D. 323, cf. Ezek. 26). But these victories are nothing compared with the conquest of self: *"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city"* (Prov.

16:32).

And I believe it is important to point out that this most difficult of all battles, the battle for self-mastery, is fought out daily on very common turf. It is fought and won by the housewife who does not want to cook supper but does so anyway, by the young mother who does not want to wipe noses and

change diapers any more but does so anyway, by the man who wants to run away with his secretary but goes home to a wife who may not appreciate him, and so on, and so on--to victory--over self.

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Is God A Respector Of Persons?

by Charles E. Davis

Contrary to public sentiment and the unscriptural teaching that is being propagated by some of the world's most influential religious leaders, *"God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him"* (Acts 10:34-35). Even though men like Minister Louis Farahakan, who is the leader of the Muslim faith; Bud Wilkerson, who is the Grande Wizzard of the Klu-Klux-Klan; and other well known T.V. Evangelists, who claim God is a respecter of persons, the Scriptures say differently. Nothing could be further from the truth. I contend that their assertions are unfounded and incorrect. God cannot be described as having race or color. Neither can He be attributed with having human characteristics which would make Him male or female gender. The term for such characterization is anthropomorphic: *"God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth"* (John 4:24).

Man shows complete incompetence and total irreverence toward the Majesty of the Most High God when he foolishly tries to color him black or white. By doing so, man places Omnipotent God on the same level with corruptible man. In Gen. 1:26 God said, *"Let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."* Therefore, according to Genesis ALL men reflect the glory of God, their creator. All men, regardless of race, having the image and likeness of the

Almighty God. This means mankind is superior to all other creatures on this planet and he is a free moral agent.

It is the sole purpose of this article to candidly and definitely set forth God's eternal truth on this vital subject. Does God show partiality based on an individual's race or color? If the answer is affirmative, then our Heavenly Father is the author of bigotry and racial prejudice. If the answer is negative, then our adversary, the Devil, the father of lie, is the author of such teachings, and those who embrace these teachings are eternally lost (Gal. 5:19-21).

In light of the severity of this subject let us examine the Scriptures in search of the truth. There are several reasons why I believe it would be contrary to the nature of God for Him to show partiality towards his creation.

Firstly, in Titus 1:2 the Scriptures state, *"God cannot lie."* We have already stated that God is no respecter of persons. If God cannot lie, and He says He is no respecter of persons, that should be sufficient proof of impartiality. However, the Holy Scriptures positively affirm that God shows partiality to repentant baptized believers (Mk. 16:15, 16). He places them in a saved or protected state in the body of Christ, which is the church (Acts 2:47). He calls these individuals His children, who have their robes washed by the blood of the lamb. To them He promises eternal peace in the celestial kingdom.

Secondly, in Acts 17:26 we find these words, *"And hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth and hath*

determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations." Generically speaking, all men have the same blood. The difference in blood type is not a racial distinction, but rather a biological characteristic. Adam and Eve are the father and mother of all; therefore, all men are paternal brothers.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ, the son of God, came to this earth to redeem ALL men. He did so by shedding His precious blood that ALL men might have access to the saving power of the gospel. There is only one gospel and one Lord, Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:12). Friends, there is not one gospel for the Jews, and another one for Blacks, and another one for Whites. Throughout the history of our nation, various races have suffered slavery, humiliation and exploitation, but the time has come for us to make peace with all men. As long as men continue to harbor ill feelings or prejudice and bigotry there will be religious parasites to manipulate man.

Finally, God has reserved a place in the fiery furnace of hell for individuals who are bigots and who are racially prejudiced. A man cannot enter into heaven and be where God is if he sins and refuses to repent or turn from sin. There is only one church and it is the Lord's church (Rom. 16:16), the body of Christ (Eph. 4:4). The New Testament church, which we read about in the Bible, was never Jew or Greek or bond or free. They were all one in Christ. We are all to be one in Christ. I believe we can honestly and forthrightly say that God is no respecter of persons. Are you? If you are then you are not a faithful child of God and your precious and priceless soul will be lost to eternal damnation. *"For whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer and you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him"* (John 4:3-15).

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THE HISTORY OF EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT by Bert Thompson (Apologetics Press: Montgomery, Alabama), 1981, paperback, 192 pages, \$3.00.

This book may be small, but it is a powerful tool to be used in understanding the entire history of evolutionary thought. The little book is really an encyclopedia of information on this atheistic philosophy, from 700 B.C. through 1981 A.D. Fully documented, the book contains over 330 footnotes (these alone are worth the price of the book), as well as a comprehensive index of subjects and personalities.

Thompson discusses many of the people who made evolutionary theory popular, as well as discussions of those people who ardently opposed the theory. Men such as Darwin, Huxley, Simpson, Goldschmidt, Gould, and many others are discussed in great detail. Landmark events (such things as The Huxley-Wilberforce debate of 1860, the Scopes trial of 1925, and many others) are documented and fully explained.

This work will take you to the very heart of the creation-evolution controversy of days gone by as well as that of today. It should be required reading for our students from Jr. High thru college. Parents should also read it to understand what kind of garbage is being shoved off on our students. I'd recommend buying several of these as gifts.

THE BOOK OF ROMANS by Jim McGuiggan (Montex Publishing Company: Lubbock, Texas), 1982, paperback, 490 pages, \$9.95.

McGuiggan is a native of Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 1965 he and his family came to the U.S. and he attended the Sunset School of

Preaching in Lubbock, Texas. Upon the completion of his work, he returned to Northern Ireland and taught in the North Ireland Bible School for six years. In 1973 he returned to the Sunset School of Preaching as part of the faculty. He is now back in Ireland, where he spends much time in reading, writing, and preaching. McGuiggan is fast becoming one of the most prolific and readable authors among churches of Christ.

The author wrote his first commentary on Romans in 1974. This second edition is much improved and much enlarged (the original one contained only 203 pages). McGuiggan has maintained the same basic viewpoints, but he has made himself clearer and developed in greater detail some issues which demanded the attention.

This book takes the approach that Paul is dealing with three basic themes in the letter to the church in Rome. The first theme deals with the doctrine of justification by faith apart from the works of LAW. The second has to do with a defense of that grand doctrine. The final part deals with what the author calls the "Jewish problem." How can Paul preach a gospel of pure grace through a crucified Christ who offers Himself for His (Jewish) people and yet the bulk of the nation be unblessed, severed from the Messianic blessings and under condemnation before God?

One of the attractive things about this book is that McGuiggan deals with the terms in the epistle before he starts his commentary. He gives a thorough, though not extensive, look at "Law," "Righteousness," "Faith," "Sin," "Works," "Sanctification," and then a good treatise on Paul's use of "Jew" and "Israel."

The author has included a paraphrase of the entire epistle at the end of the commentary. In addition, the book contains three appendixes dealing with "Wine," "The Mosaic Covenant," and "Circumcision."

This book is a wonderful addition

to any library. It will be a good commentary, study aid, provocative sermon source, or just good reading.

THE BOOK OF I CORINTHIANS by Jim McGuiggan (Montex Publishing Company: Lubbock, Texas), 1984, hardback, 314 pages, \$12.95.

This volume is the very latest in the *Look Into The Bible Series*. This is possibly McGuiggan's greatest work. He shows what all can be learned from a study of I Corinthians. We learn that an assembly of God's people is, in practice, often quite different from what we wish it to be. The Corinthian congregation was a wild and woolly group. They had problems of divine discipline, lawsuits, fornication, eating of meats sacrificed to idols, insubordinate women and the wearing of veils, selfishness, division, abusing the Lord's Supper, misuse of spiritual gifts, and misunderstandings of the resurrection. Although their problems may seem different than those in any congregation today, McGuiggan feels their basic problems are the very same problems we face today.

McGuiggan feels that if we can understand Paul's attempt to "save again" an assembly which he began and which just about broke his heart, we can understand how to work with our own brethren today.

The author has added a section of questions prior to each section. This aids the reader in seeing where the author is going. They are challenging and thought-provoking.

Appendices dealing with women, tongues, the resurrection body, and "baptized in the Holy Spirit," are included. The author has also included a paraphrase of the epistle.

MIND OVER EMOTIONS by Les Carter (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, paperback, 176 pages, \$5.95.

All people are emotional. Some display their feelings openly, while others hide them. Yet we all experience them in our own way. We have a

choice: let our emotions control us or we can learn to control our emotions.

Carter is a psychologist that believes we can master our emotions. His down-to-earth style of communication makes him a favorite on radio and television talk shows and in various seminars and this book is destined to be a favorite among counselors for individual reading or for group studies.

People are different! They are unique in the way they exhibit their emotionality. Some people have an explosive and dramatic way of showing their feelings; others hold their feelings in so carefully that they appear stone-faced to even those who know them best. But all of these individuals have a common desire to change. They are seeking avenues to a new life. They are tired of a topsy-turvy lifestyle controlled by uncomfortable moods and they want to learn to control their emotions in order to have something steady. This book is designed to help.

Carter deals with such emotions as anger, depression, envy, grief, guilt, impatience, inferiority, loneliness, phoniness, pride, worry, and more. This book is written in such a way as to help you turn your emotional enemies into allies. You'll learn how to take control and channel your emotions constructively before they run away, or before they cripple fragile relationships.

THE WYCLIFFE HANDBOOK OF PREACHING AND PREACHERS by Warren W. Wiersbe and Lloyd M. Perry (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 325 pages, \$18.95.

Someone once wrote: "The fact that many preachers do not diligently study the history of preaching is a major reason for so many failures in the pulpit." It has also been said that one way of learning to preach is to study the preaching of others. This volume is a small encyclopedia on preachers and their preaching.

The book begins with a general historical survey of preaching as can be divided into nine chronological periods. It starts with the apostolic period and concludes with the contemporary preachers. The second section includes four chapters dealing with rhetoric and the five parts of oratory (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery). The authors have also included capsule biographies of many preachers, past and present. One of the most interesting sections is

a study of the methods and messages of some of the better-known preachers.

CHILD ABUSE IN THE CLASSROOM, edited by Phyllis Schlafly (Pere Marquette Press: Alton, Illinois), 1984, paperback, 445 pages, \$4.95.

Phyllis Schlafly is not some off-the-wall woman that is so emotional and hysterical that one can easily brush aside. She is a member of the Illinois Bar, the District of Columbia Bar, and of the Administrative Conference of the United States (a federal advisory panel of administrative law experts). She is the president of Eagle Forum, a national pro-family organization, and has written a monthly newsletter since 1967. She is the author of more than 1,000 syndicated columns, has delivered more than 1,000 network television and radio commentaries, has lectured at hundreds of colleges and universities, and has testified before 50 Congressional and State Legislative Committees. Since 1977, she has been listed by *Good Housekeeping* as one of the 10 most-admired women in the world.

This book consists of selected excerpts from the Official Transcript of Proceedings before the United States Department of Education in the matter of the Proposed Regulations to Implement the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (Section 439 of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S. Code 1232h), also known as the Hatch Amendment.

In March of 1984, hundreds of parents traveled to one of seven locations (Seattle, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Phoenix, Concord, Orlando, and Washington D.C.) to testify at the U.S. Department of Education Hearings. More than 1,300 pages of testimony were recorded by court reporters as parents, public school teachers, and interested citizens spelled out their eyewitness accounts of the psychological abuse of children in the public schools. They related how classroom courses have confused schoolchildren about life, about what's right and wrong, about religious loyalties, and about parental authority.

These Hearings explain why the American people are so dissatisfied with public schools today. It explains why we have 23 million adult illiterates who graduated from public schools; why young people are experiencing

high rates of teenage suicide, loneliness, premarital sex, and pregnancy. It explains how schools have alienated children from their parents, from traditional morality and religion, and from an appreciation of our American heritage. These hearings explain how children are learning, not your basics of reading or writing or spelling, but how to be sexually active, take illegal drugs, and to rationalize immoral conduct.

It was not easy to select portions of the 1,300 pages of Hearings and condense it into a book like this. Enough has been included to scare all concerned parents of school-age children. Many will not want to read this book; some will be afraid to read it; some don't want to know what is really going on. This book is for those who do want to know what is being taught at school!

THE LAND OF THE BIBLE, edited by James Packer, Merrill Tenney and William White, Jr. (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, flexiback, 170 pages, \$5.95.

Have you ever wondered what it is like in the Bible lands? Is it nothing but dirt and dust? Does it ever rain? How cold does it get? How high are the mountains? How many insects do they have? What would a typical garden contain? How do they harvest their wheat?

The Land of the Bible now answers all of these questions and more, satisfying the curiosity of hundreds of Bible readers who want a clearer visual picture of the land where Jesus walked. The book is divided into five main sections: Geography, Minerals & Gems, Animals & Insects, Plants & Herbs, and Agriculture.

The topography of the Middle East and its effect on the people are examined closely. The book draws upon the latest knowledge of archaeologists, historians, language specialists, and various religious beliefs. The book contains many full-color and black and white photographs.

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

WHEN TIMES ARE BAD

(Chapter 12)

The title reads: "To the Chief Musician upon Sheminith, A Psalm of David." If the reader has saved these articles, he may refer to our study on the sixth psalm for the term Sheminith.

The days were evil. Godliness had become a dying virtue. We find here the cry of a trusting soul when all around him seemed to be going to the dogs.

THE TREACHERY OF HIS AGE (1, 2)

"*Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*" This man was shouting for help! Not too often do we find ourselves in situations where we must literally scream for help, fearing for our very lives.

But David was not crying for physical rescue. Neither was he crying to man. He was crying to the Lord.

Why did he need help? Because the times were bad. And why were the times bad? Were they in a depression? Or a recession? Was business poor? Were interests rates high?

None of that. Times were bad because "*the godly man ceaseth*" and "*the faithful fail.*" It's a lot harder to serve God when all others are serving themselves. Godliness refers to reverence and proper fear of God. Faithfulness may refer to one's conduct in human relationships. His worthiness of trust, honesty, and integrity. When godliness ceases, faithfulness among men will decline as well.

The story has been related of two neighbors who were completing a business transaction. "Let me give you a bill of sale," said one.

"That won't be necessary," replied his neighbor, "Our transaction was witnessed by God."

"But I don't believe in God," responded the first.

"In that case, give me a bill of sale!" came the reply.

Times are bad when godliness and faithfulness fade out of fashion!

"*They speak vanity everyone with his neighbor: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.*"

What does it mean to speak vanity? Among other things, to fill one's speech with frivolous, foolish nonsense would be to speak vanity. To speak falsehood is vanity. The flattering of which the text speaks is vanity. The flatterer is said to be the beast that bites smiling.

The doublehearted person is one who pretends one thing and intends another. We see it in politics and business. We surely see it in religion. He who has one heart for the church and another for the world is doublehearted.

Times are bad when conversation is corrupted to such an extent!

JUDGMENT WILL COME (v. 3-5)

"*The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things: who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?*"

Those who have this attitude will be destroyed. Oriental Monarchs would literally cut off a criminal's hands, or other members, by which some crime was accomplished. Allusion is perhaps being made to such here.

The godly realize that their lips are

not their own. Our lips and our complete bodies belong to the Lord (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

Pharoah said, "Who is the Lord that I should serve him?" He soon found out. So shall all who strive to "break their bands asunder" (Psalm 2). The yoke of the Lord is easy, but it will never fit a proud man. But the iron bands of Satan are tailor made for him. That answers the question: "Who is lord over us?"

Times are bad when such an attitude prevails!

"*For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.*"

"*Now will I arise,*" says the Lord (Compare 9:19, 20; 10:1, 12). In due season God will hear the cry of His elect ones. Those who oppress the poor shall be cut asunder. "*Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them*" (Prov. 22:22, 23).

Ten judgments were brought upon Egypt for their cruel oppression of God's people. The Egyptians puffed and sneered, but God set them in safety.

Times are bad when the poor and needy are abused!

GOD CARES FOR HIS OWN (v. 6, 7)

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."

Observe the contrast between the vain words of men (v. 2) and the pure words of God. There is no alloy, no impurity in God's words. His words have passed through the furnaces of persecution, literary higher criticism, philosophical doubt, scientific dogmatism, and such like. And it comes forth shining brighter, for it is pure.

The "then" refers to His words. They shall be kept and preserved forever.

WICKEDNESS CONTINUES (v. 8)

"*The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.*" Wide-spread renewal was not promised. The vilest of men were being exalted to high and prominent places and wickedness was running rampant.

Times are bad when the worst of

men are promoted to positions of trust!

Is there no hope in these passages? Oh, yes indeed, there is. When others fail, we still have a God to whom we

can cry, "Help, Lord!" (v. 1). We are promised that He shall reckon with the false and the proud (v. 3). We are assured that He will deliver His people in due time (v. 5). We know that

though men cannot be trusted, God can ever be trusted (v. 6).

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Sometimes Even Good Men Are Wrong

by Ben M. Shropshire

There has always been a tendency on the part of some to pin their religion to the coattails of men instead of relying solely on the authority of God's word, and this has caused many to be lead astray. It is much easier to choose a person or group of persons to do one's thinking and decision-making than it is for a person to do the hard work of studying for himself to learn what the Lord would have him to do. This tendency made it necessary for Jesus to warn His disciples against following the Pharisees: "*Let them alone: they are blind guides, and if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into the pit*" (Matt. 15:14).

Undoubtedly someone could have argued with Jesus that the Pharisees were "good men," and that their sincerity was manifest in their strictness in keeping the law (Acts 26:5). Such a statement concerning their goodness and sincerity would imply that one could not, therefore, go wrong in following them. This is the way many people think today. But Jesus' point was, regardless of how good or careful they may have been in keeping the law, they were also seeking to bind their own laws on men along with, or in the place of, the laws of God, and this would jeopardize anyone following them. It is simply not safe to follow men on the basis of what we perceive as their goodness and sincerity.

A favorite response on the part of denominationalists over the years to obvious truth pointed out to them has been, "But how could so many good people be wrong?" Or, when faced

with the realization that they have been taught error, they counter with the statement, "But my minister is such a good and sincere man." Often, the person reasoning in this way cannot bring himself to accept the truth.

A few years ago when so many churches were yielding to liberal and institutional trends, and when the lack of authority for such was pointed out to the members of such churches, the response frequently was, "But our elders are such good, sincere men, and they would not let us do anything wrong." Sometimes problems arise in a local congregation, and brethren have such confidence in the elders thereof that they will not even entertain the idea that the elders may have been wrong in decisions made or actions taken. It is much easier just to conclude that, since they are good men, they can not have done any wrong, and then seek to cover up whatever inconsistencies may exist between the elders' actions and truth. Such blind confidence in men - any men - is fraught with many dangerous pitfalls.

Other people suffer from "preacher-itis." They are so fond of a certain preacher, maybe the one who taught and baptized them, that they allow themselves to believe virtually anything he says, and accept anything he does as being right without ever questioning for themselves whether his teaching and practices are in harmony with the word of God. It is much easier to let him do their studying, thinking, and decision-making than it is for them to have to study God's word for

themselves to learn what God would like them to do. When the preacher makes a mistake or is obviously wrong in a matter, they refuse to accept the fact and will move heaven and earth to cover up "their" preacher's shortcomings with the explanation, "But he is such a good man. . ."

The Apostle Paul was certainly a "good man," but he advised others against following him without limitations: "*Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ.*" Paul is saying that he should be followed and trusted only to the extent that he was, himself, following Christ, which implies, then, that every person must seek to learn for himself what is involved in following Christ, and that Christ is really the only safe, infallible guide for men to follow. There is great danger in following the leadership of men, without constantly checking their leadership against the leadership and teaching of Jesus Christ as revealed in the New Testament.

Along this line the Apostle Paul, in a short, sobering statement, said: "*So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God*" (Rom. 14:12). The host of good people in the world who may be wrong religiously - denominational ministers, elders of local congregations, and even your favorite preacher - cannot give an account for your religious beliefs and actions. You must give an account yourself for these things, and, if you must account for these things yourself, surely you will not want blindly to follow the lead of any man without being sure, as the result of your own study of God's word, that his leadership is in accord with the will of Jesus Christ. If another man cannot answer for you in the judgment, why should you let him do your studying, thinking, and make your decisions for you now? When the consequences are so far reaching and eternal, you dare not trust anyone to lead you except Jesus Christ, who is the only true and living way (John 14:6).

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

NEHEMIAH

by David Holder

There are some psalms and a few prophets that are post-exilic, but Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the only historical books of the Bible from that era. The events of Nehemiah date from the twentieth year of the Persian king Artaxerxes (465-424 B.C.) or about 445 B.C.. The book of Nehemiah records two visits of Nehemiah to Jerusalem and probably spans about fifteen to twenty years' time. Nehemiah is a book about **rebuilding** the wall of Jerusalem (1-7) and **reviving** the people of God (8-13). Nehemiah, a military officer and a spiritual leader, was especially suited to his role in rebuilding and reviving. This article will be a survey of the major events of the book of Nehemiah and the role of Nehemiah himself as God's man in a time of special need.

REBUILDING

Identification (1). The book of Nehemiah opens with the identification of a serious problem in Jerusalem -- "*The remnant there in the province. . . are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire*" (1:3). Though Nehemiah had remained in Persia while many of his kinsmen had returned to their homeland, he was a loyal Jew and the news about Jerusalem greatly disturbed him. Awareness of the condition of Jerusalem and its inhabitants resulted in Nehemiah's **prayer** (1:4-11) and the king's provisions (2:1-10).

Inspection (2) Nehemiah did not act on second-hand information. After arriving in Jerusalem and getting settled, Nehemiah made a secret inspection of the Jerusalem wall. Before presenting a proposal to the people, Nehemiah surveyed the situation to see what would be involved in the rebuilding process. Also, his covert activity was likely due to the fact that Nehemiah wanted to keep his plans from the enemy as long as possible. After the inspection, a plan of action was submitted to the people

and they got busy with the work.

Organization (3). Nehemiah's efficient and effective leadership ability came to light as he organized the work. The labor force was divided, assignments were made, and the work began. An excellent map to the studied along with chapter 3 is found in **Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary**, Derek Kidner, Inter-Varsity Press, 1979, p. 85.

Protection (4). Rebuilding the Jerusalem wall was not popular with the nations surrounding the city. A strong Jerusalem posed a threat to the nation's own security. They were perfectly content to leave Jerusalem in shambles. Nehemiah's military prowess emerged as he arranged for adequate protection while work on the wall continued. A guard was posted, the workers were armed, half the people continued to work while the other half readied for defense, a warning system was established, and the people were reminded that God was with them and would fight for them.

Solution (5). An internal problem had probably been brewing for some time and came to a head during the pressures of the rebuilding process. The problem resulted from the exploitation by the rich and taxation by the king. Nehemiah took the problem under advisement, met with the people involved, and proposed a solution. Also, Nehemiah set a good example by his own actions. Neither the external nor internal problems were allowed to deter the important work at hand.

Completion (6). Outside opposition intensified as work on the wall progressed. Nehemiah understood the greatness of his work, however, and was not distracted. The rebuilding work was completed in a remarkable 52 days. This was possible because every man participated in the work, some sections of the wall only needed repair, the people worked hard and

fast (hurried construction on the eastern wall has come to light from archeological work), and most importantly, God was with them in the work.

Enumeration (7). A genealogical list very similar to the one in Ezra 2 is included in chapter 7. The variations in the lists may be explained by the need to update the list in Nehemiah's time. Nehemiah was interested in the enrollment of the people in order to know the population, make necessary assignments, and provide for the repopulation of Jerusalem.

The rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall was successful to a large degree because Nehemiah **cared** (1:4), **prayed** (1:5-11, 2:4, 4:9, 5:19, 6:9), **organized** (2:12-3:32), **worked** (5:16, 6:3), **persisted** and **trusted** (4:14, 20; 6:3).

REVIVING

Restoration (8). Strengthening the city wall did not ensure the strength of the people. Restoring people takes even more time and energy than rebuilding walls. Nehemiah (with the help of Ezra and others) led the people to spiritual revival. The restoration of spiritual awareness and activity occurred with the **reading** of the law (8:1-8) and the **remembering** of the feast (8:13-18).

Confession (9). Involvement in a right relationship with God required **confession** (9:1-37) and **covenant** (9:38-10:39). Again, the law of God was read, the people worshiped the Lord, and their history was recalled. The **past** was remembered in order to affect the **present**. In light of a regrettable heritage, the people determined to do better in the days ahead.

Obligation (10). A document was drawn up and signed which specified areas for special attention. The people bound themselves with both an oath and a curse to walk in the ways of the Lord and obey His commandments.

Enumeration (11). Provisions were made to repopulate the city of Jerusalem and lists are given which enumerate the heads of provinces who

lived in Jerusalem (11:3-19), officials who lived outside of Jerusalem (11:20-24), cities where some lived outside of Jerusalem (11:20-24), cities where some lived outside of Jerusalem (11:25-36), and priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel (12:1-26). These lists leave the impression that there was organization and stability in Jerusalem and its environs.

Dedication (12). Plans were laid and preparations were made for the dedication of the Jerusalem wall. Levites were brought to Jerusalem, singers were assembled, and the priests and Levites purified themselves, the people, the gates, and the wall. In

elaborate procession the wall was joyously dedicated and the necessary appointments were made for carrying on the temple service.

Correction (13). On a second trip to Jerusalem several years later (13:6, 7), Nehemiah found several areas in which the people had slipped and correction was needed. In particular, foreigners were excluded (13:1-3), the temple was cleansed (13:4-9), Levites were restored to their work (13:10-14), the Sabbath was observed again (13:15-22), and mixed marriages were forbidden (13:23-31). The passing of time always brings the danger of compromise. Nehemiah came on the scene a second

time to call his people back to their God.

Revival occurs when there is the **reading** of the law (8:1-8), **observing** of the feast (8:13-18), **confessing** of sin (9:1-37), **committing** to obedience (10:29-39), and **correcting** wrong practices (13:1-31). There is a tremendous need today for rebuilding and reviving -- "*Let us arise and build,*" putting our hands to the good work (2:18)!



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Caring For the Church

Elder's Care For the Church

by David Holder

Elders have a special and significant role of caring for the church. In I Peter 5:1-4, the apostle exhorted his "*fellow-elders*" to "*shepherd the flock of God among you*" in view of the appearing of "*the Chief Shepherd*." In a previous article, Christ's care for the church was described in terms of His shepherding, guarding and cherishing the church. As Christ cared for the church with sacrificial and personal care, so elders are to care for the church. Elders' care for the church is emphasized in three ways.

THE DESIGNATIONS OF ELDERS EMPHASIZE CARE

Elders are described by two of the same terms used in reference to Jesus. In I Peter 2:25 Jesus is designated as "*the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls*." According to Acts 20:28 and I Peter 5:2, elders are "*shepherds*." Like Jesus, elders feed, tend, and otherwise provide for the flock of God's people. According to Acts 20:28 and I Timothy 3:1, 2, elders are also "*guardians*" or "*overseers*." Elders care for, protect, and guide the church over which they are appointed. As Christ is "*the Shepherd and Guardian*," so elders are shepherds and guardians. Both of these terms used to designate elders focus on the idea of caring.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS EMPHASIZE CARE

If a man is qualified to be an elder, he is one who, among other things, "*manages his own household well*" (I Timothy 3:4, 5). The point Paul makes about this qualification is that a man's ability to "*manage*" his own family demonstrates his ability to "*take care of the church of God*." The word "*care*" here is the same word used in Luke 10:34, 35 in regard to the Samaritan who "*took care*" of the half-dead victim by providing for his needs. It is also the word used in Luke 15:8 to describe the woman's careful search for her lost coin. The word implies concern, providence, and diligence. The man who assumes the position of elder is to have the **ability** of managing and the **quality** of caring.

It is unfortunate that in many studies of the qualifications of elders that we miss the **point** of this qualification. The discussion often degenerates to the point that attention is focused on whether a man should have more than one child or if he does have more than one whether they should all be Christians. When this happens, we miss the focus of the qualification. A man is qualified to be an elder, at least along this line, if he demonstrates in his home-life, the ability of managing and the quality of caring.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS EMPHASIZE CARE

Among the many responsibilities assigned to elders, caring is certainly one of the most essential and important. In Acts 20:28, Paul charged elders to "*be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock*." The word translated "*guard*" or "*take heed*" means to turn one's mind to, to pay attention to, and so to be concerned about and to care for. Elders must do such "*guarding*" both with themselves and the entire flock.

The writer of Hebrews describes elders as those who "*keep watch over your souls*." The word "*watch*" carries with it the idea of being awake and alert. In fact, in II Corinthians 11:27 the same word is translated "*sleepless*." Elders have the responsibility of caring to the point of losing sleep. There is no doubt that many good and godly elders have spent many sleepless hours studying, thinking, and talking about the church. It is no wonder that these men are to be appreciated and esteemed "*because of their work*" (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13).

Notice that elders "*keep watch over your souls*." This puts the work of elders on the level of each Christian. The work of elders is not so much with buildings and budgets as it is with people. Taking care of the meeting place and money spending are merely incidental to watching over souls. Churches everywhere are in need of leaders who do their work because they care deeply for Christ and for His people.

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A Woman's Point Of View



A SURVEY OF PREACHER'S WIVES

by Delores Buchanon

As if it were not hectic enough to be the wife of a preacher, my husband decides he's going to edit a religious magazine. And guess who he tries to draft to write some articles? Now, I don't mind helping advertise, address, bundle, and mail the paper--but I've never felt confident enough with my articles to see them in print. But after much coaxing and my inability to see my husband cry, I did agree to compile the statistics and put together this article. It turned out to be real interesting as I was able to read the responses from the wives from all across the country.

We distributed questionnaires to 200 preachers' wives. We tried to scatter these into as many states as possible and a cross section of ages, number of years preaching, and size of congregations. Not all of the 200 sent their survey back in, but from the ones who did we got some interesting statistics:

Age: Thirty-nine percent are in their 20's-30's; forty-six percent are in their 40's or 50's; and fifteen percent are 60 or over.

Length husband has been preaching: Nineteen percent indicated under 10 years; twenty-three percent indicated 10-19 years; twelve percent indicated 20-29 years; and by far the largest group with forty-six percent were those 30 years or more.

Size of congregation: Forty-six percent are with churches under 100 in attendance; forty-six percent are with churches averaging 100-200; and eight percent are with churches over 200 in

attendance.

Number of churches worked with: The respondents went all the way from the wife of a preacher in his first year of preaching to one who has moved 28 times. The average number of churches the preachers had worked with was 8.

THE JOYS

Ninety-eight percent of the preachers' wives gave an unqualified "Yes" when asked if they enjoyed being a preacher's wife. But even the other two percent said things like, "For the most part, yes; only occasionally would I say no" or "Yes, most of the time."

There are a few problems unique to being a preacher's wife (as we shall look at later), but practically all of the wives said, in effect, that the problems are outweighed by the joys.

*"I am proud of him and the work he is doing. I am pleased to have a small part in saving souls for the Lord. We have had many opportunities to travel because of his preaching and, as a result, we have many dear friends and brethren all over the world."

*"I enjoy being my husband's wife. I'm not sure that the two (man and profession) could be separated in my answer."

*"I feel I am helping in the greatest work there is."

*"I decided in high school that I wanted to be a preacher's wife."

Eighty-eight percent of the wives feel fairly well equipped to be effective as a help-meet to their preacher-husband. Thirty-eight percent of the wives had completed some college

work and another thirty-nine percent are college graduates. The answers, however, seemed to indicate that their confidence comes from their faith and lots of experience.

*"Only after 20 years of marriage and 15 years of being in full-time work can I say yes! When we started full-time work 15 years ago I would have said no--and I'm really not sure when the transition occurred."

*"Any requirement to be a help-meet for a preacher should be an attribute of any woman who is a Christian. We all, as women, should be equipped to be a helpmeet to our man."

*"We have always tried to work as a team. I accompany him to his Bible classes where practical, have maintained an 'open house' for brethren, visiting preachers, etc., have done most of his office work thru the years, and when our children were little we would trade off-- I would do the typing and he would cook the supper."

*"I attended a school operated by the brethren where Bible was taught daily and I was reared by a Christian mother and father. This was a good foundation for growth as a Christian and preparation for service in the kingdom."

One of the negative responses was because she felt she was not a good actress. She said, "If I'm mad or upset, I don't hide it well. I also have to work at being more hospitable; unexpected guests usually throw me off balance."

The most rewarding aspect of being a preacher's wife is, according to fifty-eight percent, "watching people grow in Christ."

*"The joy of witnessing a new birth."

*"Seeing and witnessing people converted to the Lord, watching them grow in the knowledge and understanding of His word and the applying it to their daily living."

*"Just being able to see the power of the gospel in people's lives and to know I had a part in helping my husband take that gospel to the lost."

The second most rewarding aspect of being a preacher's wife was a tie between "meeting new friends" and "teamwork with my husband."

*"In the past 38 years we have lived in various states and have met so many wonderful Christians who are friends for life. Any visiting Christian we meet usually knows of a mutual family

we've both known previously."

*"There is nothing more important to me than the Lord--and I always wanted to marry a preacher--so I am happy with my situation. There are many rewards, but the greatest to me is a lack of secular distraction and a real focus on daily spiritual growth. (No bosses to dinner who swear and encourage compromise, no cocktail parties, no rushing to cram in some Bible study between business engagements)."

*"The association with other Christians is a great blessing."

*"Knowing that part of my service to God is 'holding up the hands' of one of his servants; helping him and encouraging him in his commitment to God."

*"The greatest reward is living the Christian life with a man that has the greatest reward waiting when his job is over."

THE STRUGGLES

Ninety-two percent said their children often felt extra pressures due to being a "PK" (preacher's kid), but "never" or "seldom" complained about it.

*"They don't like the double standard people use between them and other children. We have always tried to teach them to do right--not because they were PK's, but because of their love for God."

*"Some of our children thrived on the added attention they sometimes got, others felt very pressured. They all feel they have benefited by living abroad, even though it seemed hard at times being different."

*"Most of our six children were reared overseas and had no problem there except maybe moving around oftener than they would like. One daughter in particular remarked that the longest she had been in one school was two years. She feels it the most."

*"They joke about it at times, but I don't think they would change places with anyone."

*"I know there were times my younger two were persecuted because of who they were, but I believe they would have had similar problems if their father had not been a preacher as I hope we would have had the same principles in our training of them."

Eighty-eight percent felt that they lived in a fishbowl for all to see and that there are more expectations and increased pressures than on other families.

*"We are probably the only family in the congregation that has our finances made public to the business meeting."

*"Just because I am the preacher's wife, I'm expected to teach more Bible classes, do more entertaining, keep the visiting preacher, etc. One of our biggest problems has been trying to arrange a wedding shower or other social affair when we didn't have the money that week to do it."

*"I live with the fear that if things don't go right at church, my husband will get blamed for it all. I start looking for the U-Haul truck coming up the driveway."

The single biggest problem facing preachers' wives is that of friendship.

*"I am miles away from my family and it takes a long time for me to build up to a close friendship. Some brethren are 'scared' to get too close to the preacher's family and others are too busy and involved with their own affairs. They are good to give 'things,' but slow to give themselves."

*"We are usually given nice gifts for anniversary, Christmas, and a few other occasions, but I would prefer more time in their homes. I get a little sad when I see their families all together on the 4th of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other holidays, and they never think about allowing my husband a special holiday off. He has to be in the pulpit 50 Sundays out of the year."

The second biggest problem seemed to be finances and/or time.

*"Mine is the feeling of insecurity, financially speaking. Some people think that's a lack of faith, but I don't. My husband doesn't consider money a thing to worry about. He has never asked for a raise or let money influence him. People tend to think we are satisfied if we never complain."

*"Some of the members just drop by my husband's office because they have a little time they want to kill. This means they kill my husband's time and then he has to stay at the office that much longer at the end of the day in order to get his work done."

*"I have this fear that I will out live my husband. The church owns our house and I know that if he were to die I would be asked to move out of the church's house."

THE FUTURE

Forty-six percent have a side income or retirement plan. The other

fifty-four percent express concern for what the future holds.

*"We have nothing saved and that bothers me. My husband has worked harder in all these years than some on a job with a big retirement. But God has always taken very good care of us and He always will."

*"I know someday I'll be going back to work (when the kids are older) so I can supplement our savings and ease the pressure on my husband to be the sole provider. It's awfully hard for a man to provide for a family alone these days."

*"We have an extra income. Honestly, I'm glad our sole source of income is not from the church."

*"My husband jokes that he plans to preach until he dies. My fear is what is going to happen if he doesn't."

*"No preacher should depend on a congregation to care for him in his later years. Even if they (the church) have honorable intentions, people come and go, congregations change, and promises are forgotten or ignored."

*"We have a fifty-five acre farm in Alabama that we plan to some day make our home."

*"We've owned a home at the various places we've lived in the past few years, so some equity from houses have been invested in land or C.D.'s."

"No church my husband has worked with has ever considered a retirement plan for him."

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Short and to the Point



The Proper Attitude Toward Preachers And Preaching

Attitude is the state of mind toward a person, doctrine, or a practice. We have many problems in this world just as we have many problems in the church. However, most would agree the number one problem that we are faced with in the community we live in or the church that we are a part of is an attitude problem. Attitude is something we all possess. It is powerful in determining our actions toward things and one another. It is known and an expected fact that a person can alter his life by altering his attitude of mind. We are what we think, "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). We should make a diligent effort to cultivate the proper attitude toward preachers and preaching.

To have the proper attitude toward preachers we must be understanding. We should understand the importance of the job they are striving to do and the work that it takes to do it. We must understand their disappointments and heartaches they suffer when many hours of work go seemingly unappreciated and very little, if any, results are seen. We should realize that preachers are Christians, too, and are subject to the same basic needs, desires, and temptations. However, they will also have different needs.

Patience is a virtue that seems to be low in supply but great in demand. We expect and demand patience from others but want to return very little ourselves. It is a must that we be patient to demonstrate the proper attitude toward those who preach the gospel.

We live in a time when most of us have been extremely blessed with worldly goods. We should be quick to demonstrate our thankfulness by sharing those possessions with others. An attitude that reflects generosity toward those who devote their lives to the preaching of the gospel is a good place

to start.

A very obvious problem the most of us have to deal with is the lack of optimism. We truly cannot enjoy the many wonderful things we have in life for fear that we might lose them. Let us be optimistic about those that preach the gospel and the good they can accomplish. A positive attitude toward preachers and preaching will not only be a wonderful asset to each of us, but a good influence on others.

We should strive to be one who is thought of as having a good attitude, especially toward those who preach the gospel. This is not always easy to do. It will require much effort and we must be convinced of the need for preachers and the preaching of the gospel. Be patient with those who engage in this work. Demonstrate our love by sharing our possessions with them. Continue to work hard to be optimistic that through their efforts much good will be accomplished.

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Love

Love thy God! Love thy neighbor!
Love thyself!

Jesus is the perfect example of love. The highest degree of love is, "as I have loved you" (John 13:24-25:15:12).

While Jesus is the example of love, he manifested that love in various ways. His love for his father caused him to do his father's will at all times. Love then is an instigator of submission and obedience. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

His love for us caused him to offer himself that we might receive eternal life. There is another love that is often overlooked. It is the love for Truth and Right. Why did Jesus who was usually so mild and gentle, who shed tears of

empathy at the grave of Lazarus, so caustic with the Pharisees? He spoke to them with words that seem to indicate no feeling of love. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

The reason is simple. He loved truth. We must develop a love for truth that will transcend the emotional ties that bind us to mother, father, husband, wife, etc. Jesus's love for truth caused him to defend it against all its enemies. One of the pathos of the War Between the States was the loyalty that often pitted brother against brother. There are causes which are stronger than family ties.

Again, why did the gentle Messiah overturn the tables of the money changers and drive them from the temple? His respect and concern for the proper use of his father's house impelled him to defend it against those who would pervert its use.

So it is with false teachers. It would be much more simple if all false teachers were repulsive in nature. However, Jesus warned us, "beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves."

It is only after the false covering is removed that the false teacher appears as he/she really is, a "wolf." If we love the sheep we will expose and oppose all such masqueraders.

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Search The Scriptures

The Bereans were called "noble" (Acts 17:10-11) because they "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily. . .".

The Bereans searched the scriptures in order to check up on Paul, and see that he was teaching the truth. This is a good motivation for Bible study since we must "try the spirits" realizing that "many false prophets are gone out into the world" I John 4:1.

How effectively can we search the scriptures if we do not know what they say? Too few Christians really search the scriptures. Lack of knowledge

results in less appreciation of the Bible, thus lack of motivation for study. In turn, ignorance of God's word is perpetuated.

How well do you know the scriptures? Can you show from the Bible what one must do to be saved? How to identify the New Testament church? What the real hope of the Christian is? In Matthew 22:23-29 Jesus rebuked the self-proclaimed "experts" who erred "*not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*"

Some know the contents of God's word, but do not know how to use the scriptures. We are instructed in 2 Timothy 2:15 to "*rightly divide the scriptures.*" The Hebrew Christians were chastised for not having kept in memory the "first principles" Hebrews 5:12-14. You may know many things the Bible says, but you should also be capable of applying what the Bible says.

Do you know the difference in the testaments? How to establish Bible authority? How to use a passage in context? Search the scriptures with a view toward proper use and application of the truths you learn.

--Tom Moody
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Pray What You Mean, Mean What You Pray

Could it be that we are guilty of the things stated in the brackets below, as we are called on to pray? **"Dear Lord, We are daily mindful of our dependence upon Thee.** (Even though this is the first time I've prayed in six weeks). **Help us to be content with such things that we have.** (If I can't get that new car next week, I'm going to die trying). **Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.** (I have forgiven everyone except Bert, Emmitt, Sally, Jane, and the man at the grocery store). **May we meditate upon Thy word each day and night.** (I work all day, and watch TV all night). **We are thankful for the many good things that we have received from Thy bountiful hand.** (I simply can't live on what I'm making. I don't know where my next meal is coming from). **And help us to get much from the sermon that is about to be delivered.** (I hope the old buzzard makes it short, I want

to get ahead of that chow line at lunch). **And bring us back together to worship Thee at the next appointed time.** ("The next appointed time" will catch me flat of my back on the couch watching a ball game). **And when Thou hast worn us out in Thy service, take us home to meet Thee and all the saints in heaven.** (Heaven? I don't know anybody in heaven. And "wear us out in Thy service"?? I am already worn out from staying up most of the night. I can hardly hold my eyes open now). **In the name of Thy Son and our Savior we pray, Amen.**" ("Our Savior"?? Is He really my Savior, after all?).

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Immersion Is Prescribed

"Christ commanded Baptism by water. He did not prescribe the manner of applying water but left its administration to the prudent judgment of the Church. The present law for Catholics makes Baptism by pouring obligatory. Immersion and sprinkling, though valid, are forbidden" (*The Question Box*, by Bertrand L. Conway, page 153.)

The above statement, is from a Catholic Book and teaches Catholic doctrine. The Catholic Church teaches that Jesus did "not prescribe the manner of applying water" in baptism. However, if we will study the word "baptism" and instances of baptism, we will be able to conclude that Jesus did indeed prescribe the manner of applying water in baptism.

So far as this writer knows, the lexicons and dictionaries of the original language are unanimous in defining the word baptism, "**to dip, to plunge, to immerse.**" It is never rendered, "to sprinkle" or "to pour". The original word for "sprinkle" is *rhantizo*. The original word for "pour" is *ballo*. Neither of these words is ever used of the act wherein remission of sins is accomplished.

It is interesting to note that the translations of the Bible into English did not translate the word *baptizmo*. Rather, they Anglicized it. They simply added the English ending to the word and transferred the letters into our language. If they had translated the word, we would have, "John the Immerser"; Repent and be immersed

for the remission of sins," etc.

When we study the New Testament use of the term baptism, we will note it takes "*much water*" (John 3:23); we will note the one to be baptized and the baptizer "*both went down into the water*" (Acts 8:38); we will note it is a being "*buried*" and "*planted*" (Romans 6:4,5). This is Bible baptism. That being so, neither pouring of sprinkling of water is valid - no matter who authorizes it!

So, we have seen that Jesus did prescribe the "manner of applying water" in baptism. It is applied when one is immersed, not when one has water sprinkled or poured on him. Let us be content with the Lord's will and not add to, take from, or substitute for what God has asked.

If you have not been scripturally baptized, you are yet in your sins. Why not do as Saul of Tarsus? He was told, "*Arise, and be baptized, and wash thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16).

--Michael Garrison
1100 3rd. St. G.A.
Andalusia, AL 36420

If You Die In Your Sins-- What Then?

Jesus answers "*Where I go ye cannot come*" (Read John 8:21). There could not possibly be a clearer answer to this question. If we die in our sins we cannot go and be with Jesus where he is in heaven.

It is horrifying to think of being rejected of God and being banished in eternal hell. However it becomes a stark reality to every person who dies in their sins. To die in your sins is to die without forgiveness of your sins.

If we could only get people to realize what is beyond the death of our bodies, it may help them to face the gruesome facts of their destiny. These are sobering thoughts, but nevertheless needful for us to seek and secure forgiveness of our sins before it is eternally too late.

--Dorval McClister
8230 South Laramie Avenue
Burbank, IL 60459



The Poet's Page

I LEARNED A LESSON

I used to read the Bible
And oh, how I would labor
To pick out all the scriptures
That would condemn my neighbor.

But one day I chanced to notice
The verses I'd picked, you see
Were written not to him or her
But were begun with "ye"

So now when I point my finger
At whoever my neighbor might be
I'll try to remember as well as I can
That three point back at me.

--Jean Blackford
Owensboro, KY

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

When there are times my burden
Seems more than I can bear
I take a few moments for meditation
And think of those who care.
And when I look into the blue
Above, there "God from One
who loved me, so, he gave
His beloved Son.

Even if I had no place my head to lay
Consider the sparrows, he watches
Over them each day.
There's the twenty third Psalm And
David of old.
And the song we sing
It is well with my soul.

When the rains come and streams
over flow
There will be still water again
And on we go!
Sickness, death, hearts filled
With sorrow.
Like a flower, here today, gone tomorrow.

Then when I visit the sick
And stroll down the hospital aisle
It's really those, who need
Our patient smiles.
When I see those who are depressed
Even with wealth and gold
Makes me appreciate more
That I have a portion of health
And it is well with my soul.

--Wilma Bray
Columbus, IN

PRAISES TO GOD

Glory to God;
Yes, glory to You,
Splendour and Majesty,
Righteousness too.
Eternal dominion,
The praises of men,
Are Yours forever,
And forever again.

For Thine is the Kingdom,
The power and the glory.
Thine is creation;
The redemption story.
Thine is the love,
In Christ that we see.
Thine is the beauty,
Of Christ in me.

Glory to God;
Yes, glory to You,
Splendour and Majesty,
Righteousness too.
Eternal dominion,
The praises of men,
Are Yours forever,
And forever again.

Give me compassion,
For souls that are lost.
Give me a mind,
That has counted the cost.
Give me the courage,
To master my whim.
Give me the spirit,
That means Jesus within.

How can I thank You,
For all You have done?
For Jesus who died;
For my heavenly home.
For the love of the faithful,
For Your word so true.
For the prospect of glory,
Forever with You.

Glory to God;
Yes, glory to You,
Splendour and Majesty,
Righteousness too.
Eternal dominion,
The praises of men,
Are Yours forever,
And forever again.

--Steve Kearney
Firhouse, Dublin Ireland

A PSALM

I will lift up my heart to thee in
Thanksgiving, O Lord.
I am a child of your creation,
My joy is full because of the beautiful
earth;
for the colorful birds,
for the beautiful flowers,
for the owls hoo,
for the pigeons coo,
for the pretty blue sea,
for my faith in thee,
for the rain that helps make things
grow,
for the cats that meow,
for the cows moo,
for the setting sun,
for the dolphins chirp,
We love thee and praise thee,
for making this world for such sinners.
I honor thee for all our blessings
And for making this world.

--Laura Chandler
Lebanon, OH

TESTED TIMBER

When I was just a little fellow
And my world was mighty small,
A big oak tree near my window,
Grew real straight, and awful tall.
Nothing looked so big and powerful
And I always seemed to find
That when strength and power were
mentioned,
That big oak tree came to mind.

But one day the storm clouds gathered
And the winds began to blow;
Things got rough, and when 'twas over
I peeked out my door and, lo. . .
My big tree lay flat and broken.
Though it looked real hale and prime,
I discovered, when 'twas fallen,
It was hollow all the time.

I'm glad I grew up near that forest,
'Cause that old tree made me know
That some things just can't be trusted;
They are mostly pomp and show!
Life is full of sudden tempests,
They hit both the short and tall.
When they blow, good trees grow stronger
But the hollow ones will fall!

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

HAPPENINGS

News and Notes From Around The World

ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT DRIVES 50,000 FROM RELIEF CAMPS

Ethiopia's largest famine relief camp was evacuated by force and burned by the government at the end of April. The camp's population of more than 50,000 people—including several thousand children under five years old—was told to find their way back to their native regions.

Ibnet, a camp in Ethiopia's central highlands, had been a general feeding, child nutrition and medical center run by four private relief agencies and the Ethiopian government. Now it is a blackened plain. Government workers set fire to the grass huts in which famine victims had been living after the forced evacuation.

The evacuation was ordered by the Workers Party of Ethiopia, which governs the Gondar region under Ethiopia's Marxist system. Party officials said the camp was cleared to allow residents to take advantage of recent rains by returning to their homes and beginning to farm.

Evacuees were given 33 pounds of dry rations for the trip home. About one-third of the refugees are reportedly heading east and north, through Ethiopia's rough mountain terrain, to drought-stricken Wello and Tigre. Those headed for Wello will walk three to six days; those going to Tigre face up to 14 days walking.

Relief officials described the government's action as "ruthless," and estimated that as many as half of the walkers may die because of the forced march. Bodies have already been sighted along travel routes.

ABORTIONISTS WILL FACE MOCK TRIAL THIS SUMMER

The quiet Pennsylvania village of Nuremburg with a name symbolic of Nazi war crimes trials, will be the site of a mock trial this summer for U.S.

Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun and other abortion advocates.

Joseph M. Scheidler, founder and executive director of the Chicago-based Pro-Life Action League, said Blackmun and others will be "tried" for "crimes against humanity."

"We believe abortion is definitely that," said Scheidler. Following World War II hundreds of Nazi officials were tried for "crimes against humanity" in the ruined West Germany city of Nuremberg.

Blackmun, who authored the majority opinion in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* case that legalized abortion, is not expected to be present for the mock trial. Scheidler said other prospective defendants include abortion doctors, pro-abortion politicians, and feminist leaders.

'THE CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN'

On a recent Sunday morning, members of First Church in Kingston, Oklahoma, noticed a shabbily dressed, bearded man wandering near their building, poking in garbage cans. The man finally came to rest on the building steps. His pants were worn, his cap and coat dirty, and his shoes old and worn.

A few church members commented about "that old bum." The morning service started, and after the special music the members were surprised to see the "old bum" wander in the door and start down the aisle. Someone whispered, "Look there, that old guy's come inside!" Another said, "There he is...he's the guy who was sitting on the steps."

The man walked right up to the front of the church, and walked behind the pulpit. Then reaching to remove his cap and a wig, the "old bum" revealed that he was in fact the church's pastor, Bobby Rice, Jr. Rice proceeded to preach his message on compassion for

humanity, and the sin of unconcern.

Rice said only two members of the church had approached him in his "bum" disguise. Former Oklahoma governor Raymond Gary had offered to buy him a meal; another member who was to be baptized that evening—invited him to church.

"I was amazed at the reactions," Rice told Baptist Press. "No one got mad, but they had their eyes opened to 'who is your neighbor.'" Rice used a similar technique while a member of a church in Texarkana, Ark. "Some of the church members there actually pushed me aside as they hurried into the church," he recalled.

FALWELL SIGNS CONTRACT TO MAKE AND DISTRIBUTE 50,000 COPIES OF 'SILENT SCREAM' FILM

Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell has signed a contract with American Portrait Films (APF) to duplicate 50,000 videocassettes of "The Silent Scream" film for distribution to activist protestant pastors across America.

The film contract allows Falwell to produce \$5 million worth of video cassettes on a quantity discount basis for his cost plus \$575,000 in royalties, according to APF president and executive producer of "The Silent Scream," Donald S. Smith. The controversial film features an on-camera ultrasound imaging of a 12-week old unborn child being aborted by the suction method.

Falwell will distribute the films during the upcoming 12 months to emphasize the "Year of Pain" campaign being adopted by many pro life groups that say "The Silent Scream" proves the unborn child feels pain during the abortion, and makes purposeful movements to avoid the abortion instruments.

"For eleven years prior to the

release of 'The Silent Scream,' pro-abortion organizations have enjoyed being on the offensive in the abortion debate," says Falwell. "In less than 120 days this explosive film has turned the tables, placing the pro-abortion movement on the defensive for the first time since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision unleashed abortion on demand."

Falwell added "The film is going to be the instrument that breaks the back of the abortion industry. All we have to do is get the information to the people."

NON-PROFIT MAILERS MAY FACE POSTAL INCREASE

Postal rates for non-profit mailers may rise significantly next fall as a result of budget cuts passed May 23 by the U.S. House of Representatives. The House approved an \$840 million subsidy to the U.S. postal service to help cover costs; the figure falls \$141 million short of what the Postal Service says it needs to maintain the subsidy at its present level.

Postal increases of 15 to 20 percent for non-profit mailers could result from this subsidy shortfall. Greater increases could result from the dramatically lower \$100 million approved by the U.S. Senate May 10. The gap between the two versions of postal subsidy will be resolved in conference committee.

A settlement in the \$600 to \$650 million range could result in a 25-35 percent postage increase for non-profit mailers.

COURT WON'T ADDRESS CHURCH PROPERTY DISPUTE

The U.S. Supreme Court won't hear a dispute involving ownership of church property in St. Louis. As a result, a Presbyterian congregation there gets to keep its property after splitting with its mother denomination.

Memorial Presbyterian Church in St. Louis voted unanimously in 1980 to leave the United Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A year later the local presbytery tried to assume control of the church's property, invoking a newly-adopted church rule which causes local property to revert to the denomination when a congregation decides to leave. Attorneys for the congregation successfully argued that the provision did not apply since it was written after Memorial's decision to withdraw.

Many of the church property disputes that reach civil courts have involved Presbyterian congregations that leave their denominations, citing increased liberalism. The Supreme Court has generally declined to resolve disputes within church hierarchies, but has agreed to resolve church property disputes when denominational ownership is unclear.

MASSACHUSETTS POLICY BANS HOMOSEXUAL FOSTER PARENTS

Massachusetts has announced a new policy essentially prohibiting placement of foster children with homosexuals. The Department of Human Services will ask potential foster parents their "sexual preference," and will seek to place children only in "traditional family settings," meaning "relatives, or in families with married couples, preferably with parenting experience and with time available to care for foster children."

The decision follows two weeks of controversy that erupted when the public learned that two young brothers had been placed with an openly homosexual male couple. Governor Michael Dukakis said the new policy does not discriminate against homosexuals. "We're not talking about sexual preference here, we're talking about what's in the best interest of the children."

Massachusetts is the first state to adopt a policy of inquiring into the "sexual preference" of potential foster parents. Existing foster home placements will be evaluated twice yearly with reference to sexual preference.

A bill passed by the Massachusetts House and under consideration by the Massachusetts Senate would ban the placement of foster children with homosexuals on the grounds that a homosexual atmosphere poses "a threat to the psychological well-being of a child."

SCIENTOLOGISTS GATHER BY THOUSANDS TO PROTEST \$39 MILLION AWARD

Thousands of Scientologists, including actor John Travolta and jazz musician Chick Corea, gathered May 20 to protest a jury's \$39 million fraud judgement against the Church of Scientology and founder L. Ron Hubbard. The purpose of the rally was to "send the message out that attacks on religion have to stop," said Ken

Hoden, president of the Los Angeles Church of Scientology.

The focus of the protest was a \$39 million fraud judgement against the church handed down by a jury on the preceding Friday. Julie Christofferson Titchbourne, 27, was awarded the largest punitive damage award in Oregon history when a jury decided the church had made fraudulent misrepresentations to her during her nine month membership. Titchbourne maintained that the church had promised to increase her I.Q. and creativity, and improve her eyesight.

John Carmichael, head of the church in Oregon, said "Major disasters in which hundreds of people are killed don't get \$39 million judgements. This is akin to burning a witch, to nailing somebody to a cross—an outright attempt to exterminate a religious group.

Carmichael said that he did not know if Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard was aware of the judgement. "He just finished a 10-volume work of fiction, and frankly he's got better things to do," he said.

Hubbard has not been seen in public since 1980, prompting speculation that he has died. Published reports say that he is living in Southern California with three people in their 20s. Church members say they still hear from him. "He contacted us on his birthday in March to say 'Hi,'" said Vaughn Young, who is preparing a Hubbard biography.

Reports about Hubbard's health are mixed. Archivist Gerald Armstrong, who worked with Hubbard from 1971-1979 told the Los Angeles Times, "I saw a deterioration through the years I knew him," and described Hubbard's present condition as "a blithering idiot."

RELIGION-RUN BUSINESS MUST PAY MINIMUM WAGE

In a unanimous ruling, the Supreme Court April 23 decided that when a religious organization operates a business, it must obey federal minimum wage and hours laws, even if its workers object to being paid.

Constitutionally-guaranteed religious freedoms don't exempt church-owned businesses from paying minimum wages and time-and-a-half for overtime, the justices concluded.

The decision came in a suit filed against the U.S. Secretary of Labor by the Tony and Susan Alamo Foundation

of Alma, Ark., a non-profit evangelistic organization infamous for distribution of anti-Catholic literature.

The foundation is supported by businesses it owns, including hog farms, roofing and electrical companies, clothing stores, sand and gravel operations, and a restaurant. These commercial ventures are staffed by about 300 "associates" of the ministry, many of whom were drug addicts, derelicts, or criminals before conversion and rehabilitation by the foundation.

In exchange for working in the foundation's businesses, associates received food, clothing, shelter, medical services, and child care. In testimony, the associates said they worked voluntarily, and protested vehemently against accepting money for their work.

But Justice Byron White wrote for the Court that such protests were irrelevant. "If an exception to the [Fair Labor Standards Act] were carved out for employees willing to testify that they performed work 'voluntarily,' employers might be able to use superior bargaining power to coerce employees to make such assertions, or to waive their protections under the Act," the Court said.

ECKANKAR MAY MOVE HEADQUARTERS TO CHANHASSEN, MINNESOTA

Eckankar, a fringe religious group which emphasizes out-of-body travels, hopes to make Chanhassen Minnesota, the permanent home of its international headquarters.

Eckankar has a purchase agreement to buy 175 acres in Chanhassen, and plans to erect an administrative center and a publishing building on that property. Plans to develop the land have been approved by the Chanhassen City Council, and the city planning commission is expected to approve Eckankar's plans.

Why Chanhassen? Local Eckankar leader Heidi Skarie explained that the present headquarters area, Menlo Park in California, has been increasingly built up in recent years, prompting the Eckankar leadership to look for a new location. "We like the environment and the people here, and the quality of life," she said. "It's an ideal site with rolling hills."

Attorneys for Eckankar also cited "the values and work ethics of the

people of Minnesota," as major factors in the choice of a site. Chanhassen was selected from a list of several possible sites, all in the Midwest.

Eckankar, which literally means "The Path of the Spirit," was founded in 1965 by former Scientologist Paul Twitchell. The group has about 50,000 members in over 100 countries. There are 295 Eckankar centers in the world.

Jim Castleberry, director of public safety for Chanhassen, investigated the current Eckankar headquarters in Menlo Park, California. "Anyone that I spoke to about the organization had nothing but positive things to say," he said. "They like to be autonomous but will become involved in community events and are very supportive. They're not evangelistic, and mostly want to be left alone."

Brooks Alexander, founder of Spiritual Counterfeits Project, a cult research organization in Berkeley, California, has a different perspective. "It's a matter of concern because the organization is essentially misrepresenting itself," he said. "They go very far out of their way to create a public image that says they're tolerant of other religious groups, but the truth of the matter is that they very intensely put down other religions, particularly Christianity."

BRITISH METHODISTS TOLD TO AVOID FREEMASONRY

A British Methodist Church committee has called the international fraternity of Freemasonry a competitor to Christianity and counseled church members not to join the centuries-old society whose members have included 13 U.S. Presidents.

"There is a great danger that the Christian who becomes a Freemason will find himself compromising his Christian beliefs or his allegiance to Christ, perhaps without realizing what he is doing," said the report issued by the church's faith and order committee on instructions. That report is expected to win approval as church policy.

Michael Higham, grand secretary of Freemasonry's United Grand Lodge of England, said, "I most sincerely hope the Methodist Conference will recognize the illogicalities contained in the report and the lack of evidence used to support the committee's conclusions."

Freemasonry has also been frowned on by the Roman Catholic Church. In

addition, the Church of England and the Baptist Church in Britain have questioned whether their members should be Freemasons.

FEDERAL JUDGE BARS PRAYER AT IOWA HIGH SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT

A federal judge in May barred an Iowa high school from including a prayer in its graduation ceremony.

Attorneys for the school district said most students considered the invocation "a cherished tradition." But U.S. District Judge Harold Viotor said the prayer proposed at Leon High School would violate the First Amendment's guarantee that government will not establish a religion.

Viotor said it made no difference that most of the 49 graduates of Leon High School wanted to include a prayer in commencement exercises. "The enforcement of constitutional rights is not subject to the pleasure of the majority. The Constitution protects all of us, including those in the minority," the judge wrote.

Graduating senior Rebecca Graham and her parents filed a suit objecting to the proposed prayer. They were represented by the Iowa Civil Liberties Union.

CONTROVERSY OVER LICENSE PLATES

Atheist Arnold Via has been told he must give up his "ATH-EST" license plates, but he plans to fight in court for his right to the tags.

The state Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) here wrote to Via in April, informing him that a complaint had been filed regarding his license plates. "The complainant believes this refers to 'atheist' and is offended that we allow such a license to be displayed," the letter said. "It is our policy not to issue licenses that may be offensive to any person or group of persons."

Via conceded that "ATH-EST" does stand for atheist, abbreviated to fit the six-character limit for plates, but said he does not plan to comply with the DMV's request that he select another tag. "I love the one I have," he said.

Via says "ATH-EST" was not his first choice for a license. He initially wanted a plate reading, "No God," but was turned down because the words "God," "Jesus," "Lord," and

"Allah" are not permitted on novelty plates.

Via, 59, is state president of the American Atheist Organization. He has contacted the Atheist Center in Austin, Tex., for legal aid in his fight to keep his plates.

CHARITABLE GIVING SETS RECORD IN 1984

U.S. Charitable giving in 1984 jumped 11 percent over 1983 to a record \$74.2 billion, according to the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel.

The Counsel's story shows that charitable giving has steadily increased over the last five years. Individuals contributed \$61.4 billion last year, 82 percent of total charitable giving.

The study cites publicity on federal cutbacks, increased disposable income, and intensified fund-raising efforts as factors in increased giving. A demographic shift, with more Americans in the prime giving age bracket (35 to 65), is also cited as a factor.

SCIENTOLOGISTS RALLY TO PROTEST \$39 MILLION JUDGMENT

Hundreds of Church of Scientology members rallied in Portland, Oregon, May 19 to protest a fraud judgment against the church. A jury awarded \$39 million to ex-member Julie Christofferson Titchbourne, 27. Titchbourne claimed that the church and its founder, L. Ron Hubbard, made fraudulent promises to improve her IQ and eyesight.

Church spokesman John Carmichael promised to appeal the decision, and called the award "an outright attempt to exterminate a religious group."

Hubbard, who has not been seen in public since 1980, did not appear for the trial. A default judgment was entered against him, meaning that he is liable for damages to Titchbourne arising from her nine-month involvement, ending in 1976, with Scientology.

At least six former Scientologists testified on Titchbourne's behalf, including a former personal secretary to Hubbard, Laurel J. Sullivan. Sullivan testified that despite a 1972 church policy statement that Hubbard did not accept income from Scientology organizations, Hubbard used a Liberian corporation to collect

fees "in the tens of thousands of dollars" per month from Scientology reserves. Sullivan said Scientology organizations in Europe and Africa funneled reserve funds to the Liberian corporation, Religious Research Foundation, through banks in Luxembourg and Liechtenstein. Hubbard then billed the foundation for services and the foundation transferred funds to Hubbard's personal bank accounts in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Martin L. Samuels, former head of Scientology in Portland, testified that much of his 1979 testimony against Titchbourne was false, and that Scientology witnesses were coached by the national office to lie.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF MOTHER AND FATHER DIVINE

A man known as Father Divine, famed black religious leader who fought racism and poverty in the slums of Harlem during the Great Depression, died in 1965. But to his followers, who view him as "God on Earth," he is still very much alive.

"We don't believe in death," explains Rona Graveur, a church secretary in the inner circles of Divine's Peace Mission movement. "We believer Father Divine is right here now, and that puts us on a different footing from other religions."

The church teaches that its members won't die if they are righteous. Those that die anyway are known to have lived "imperfect lives." If pressed, church members will acknowledge that Father Divine "threw off his body" in 1965, for that body is enshrined on the 73-acre estate of Enda Rose Ritchings, Mother Divine. Followers speak of Father Divine in the present tense and lay a place for him at their tables.

Father Divine, whose real name may have been George Baker, fed thousands and sheltered the homeless through his network of Peace Mission branches. He was reputedly Harlem's biggest landlord, and his movement's vast business empire generated millions of dollars. He preached civil rights, Americanism, and abstinence from sex — a teaching that may be contributing to the church's declining membership.

Though the movement never kept membership records, Father Divine once claimed that he had 22 million

supporters. The church doesn't discuss current membership, but only about 200 supporters attended this year's celebration marking the wedding anniversary of Mother and Father Divine. Mother Divine sheds little light on the church's present following with her explanation, "Everyone is a follower to the extent that they follow."



ROY E. COGDILL

Luther Blackmon once described Roy E. Cogdill as one who sat "tall in the saddle." This typical western talk aptly described one who stood in the van as he represented the cause of Christ as a gospel preacher, teacher and helper. Brother Cogdill is gone now to meet his reward for his earthly labors. He died May 12, 1985. He had fought for the cause of Christ for over fifty years, the last few were also fought against increasing physical ailments. His body is interred at the family cemetery in Hobart, Oklahoma.

Among many things that could be said of him, Roy Cogdill was a man among men in the pulpit. He left us with many sermons preserved on tape recording and with books he authored. But of all the fine things that could be said, possibly one is often overlooked. He was a helper. As a young preacher, I attended the debate between brethren Guy N. Woods and the late W. Curtis Porter. Roy was also in attendance. While many were trying to corner him for either a visit or a discussion, he took time out to help me understand some of the points that had confused me. Several came up to Roy as he talked with me and he said, "I'll be with you fellows in a few minutes, but this young man has asked me to help him." We sat over in a corner of the auditorium for a long enough time for me to start feeling guilty for occupying so much of his time, but Roy had time to help. And, I am eternally grateful that he did.

In 1982, he held a meeting here in Bowling Green at the West End congregation and proclaimed the great truths of the Word. His preaching was still powerful and helpful. A passage that comes to my mind as I think of him is Isaiah 66:2. God said, "But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." For what is it worth, I believe our heavenly Father looked with approval on this man of God. Our condolences to the family are extended with our love.

--Dudley Ross Spears,
2081 Old Scottsville Rd.,
Alvaton, KY 42122



FIELD REPORTS

**Glenn Jones, Eckener Platz 8,
D-2300 Keil 17, West Germany**

On Sunday evening, March 17th, we rejoiced to greet Jerry Earnhart at our door. We had not seen each other for about 13 months, so we had considerable catching up to do. Jerry had come to Keil as a part of his annual preaching tour in the German-speaking countries. He had already completed a meeting in Berne, Switzerland, where he worked as an evangelist for many years. After having made visits with brethren in several German cities, he had arrived in Kiel for a week's visit, including a four-night gospel meeting.

Before Jerry arrived, we had undertaken several measures to advertise the meeting. Of course, we personally invited numerous friends and neighbors. Since this was the first meeting in our newly rented facilities, we printed 2,000 handbills for the meeting and distributed them in mailboxes in the immediate vicinity of the church building. Also, we placed a 2.5" x 3.5" ad in the weekend edition of the local newspaper, costing about \$200 for one appearance. In addition, the church started renting a display case near the train station for about \$20 per month. The case measures almost 8 ft. long, 4 ft. high, and 2 ft. deep. In March we used the case to advertise the meeting, and in the future we will use it to advertise information about the church, our correspondence course, and private Bible studies.

What were the results of these efforts? Seven non-Christians from Keil visited the meeting. Six came through personal invitations, one through the newspaper ad. As in the past, personal invitations accounted for the most results.

Jerry's sermons from Acts 2 were uplifting and informative for the church. As usual, we spent many hours with Jerry discussing the Lord's work in the German-speaking countries. While he was here, the brethren suggested several sermon topics especially suited to northern Germany, and we are looking forward to these lessons when Jerry returns in the fall of 1986, the Lord willing.

**Jack Holt, 12910 McBurnett,
Corpus Christi, TX 78410**

On May 20th and 21st, brother Bob LaCoste of the Wonsley Drive congregation, in Austin Texas, debated brother Bill Jackson of the Southwest congregation, also of Austin. The discussion was held, one night in each building, on the subject of church benevolence. Brother LaCoste affirmed: "*The Scriptures teach that the church may grant benevolent aid only to those persons who are members of the church*"; while brother Jackson affirmed: "**The Scriptures teach that the church may grant benevolent aid to a person who is not a member of the church.**"

Brother LaCoste's general demeanor was excellent, and his speeches dealt with the issues. Brother Jackson's behavior was beneath that of a Christian gentlemen in several particulars. His speeches were filled with language that could only serve to widen the gap between brethren, and in the last speech of the debate he introduced six new arguments and ridiculed brother Elmer

Moore, who was brother LaCoste's moderator, for making a point of order concerning the new material.

The truth prevailed in an outstanding fashion during the debate. In his first speech, brother Jackson charged that brother LaCoste believed that we must have specific authority for everything that we do. Brother LaCoste corrected brother Jackson on this, but brother Jackson continued to make the charges throughout the debate. In the course of making this charge, brother Jackson continually attempted to identify brother LaCoste with the anti-class, anti-located preacher, and anti-women teacher movements.

In his first negative, brother LaCoste took 2 Corinthians 9:13 away from brother Jackson so effectively, that brother Jackson did not dare mention it again until the final speech of the debate. Brother LaCoste showed that PANTAS ("all") could not have reference to alien sinners in the context of that passage.

Of course, brother Jackson brought out several passages which described individual duties in benevolence, and tried to apply them to church benevolence. Brother LaCoste demonstrated from I Timothy 5:16 that God has made a distinction between the benevolent duties of individuals versus the benevolent duties of the churches. All brother Jackson could do, again, was wait until his final speech when Bob would have no chance to answer, and the ridicule the idea that there was any distinction between individual and collective duties in benevolence.

When brother Jackson brought up Galatians 6:10, he charged that brother LaCoste was inconsistent to contend that the verse spoke of individual action only, since he authorized collective action in regard to paying the preacher from Galatians 6:6. Brother LaCoste pointed out that he didn't even believe Galatians 6:6 was talking about the preacher's salary. He further explained that he looks to passages like I Corinthians 9:3-18; 2 Corinthians 11:8; and Philippians 4:10-20 to authorize a church paying his salary, and not Galatians 6:6. But apparently brother Jackson did not hear him, for even in his review of the debate (published June 20, 1985, *Gospel Advocate*), he charges brother LaCoste with looking to Galatians 6:6 to authorize the church paying his salary.

Brother Jackson spent the first 22 minutes of his first speech without even referring to a passage of scripture. He argued from the basis of history that "antism" was wrong. Brother LaCoste simply pointed out that the proposition did not say, "History teaches that the church may grant benevolent aid to a person who is not a member of the church," but that the proposition did say, "The Scriptures teach. . ." By referring to brother Jackson's recent opposition to an Austin congregation's building of a swimming pool, brother LaCoste got brother Jackson to admit that he was an "anti" too.

On the other hand, brother LaCoste made a well organized presentation of the truth while in the affirmative. After demonstrating the New

Testament pattern in regard to whom the church may believe, brother LaCoste pressed brother Jackson to see the parallel between his own position in regard to musical instruments in worship and the Bible's pattern in church benevolence. Brother Jackson never dealt with the argument.

Oh yes, written copies of an earlier exchange between bro. LaCoste and Jackson are available. Also audio and video tapes are available upon request of this discussion. Contact bro. LaCoste in Austin: 7300 S. Ute Trail 78729.

**Tim N. Newton, 15506 N.E. 22nd Street,
Vancouver, Washington 98684**

I am contemplating a move to the Montana area and I noted a dearth of conservative congregations listed in the 1984 directory.

I am in the process of getting leads for work in Montana and am choosing firms in the following cities to which to send resumes and letters of application for employment. I am centering on Great Falls, Butte, Bozeman, Missoula, and Helena as potential places to contact and am wondering if any one knows of congregations in those cities which are conservative, do not use instruments, do not support sponsoring church arrangements, missionary societies, orphans' homes and other more liberal pursuits?

Any information that can be supplied will be greatly appreciated. If any one could also provide me with some other people to write to for information concerning the existence of churches in these areas, I would also be grateful.

I am currently a member of the church in Brush Prairie, Washington, and before this was a member of the church at 50th Street in San Diego for some 23 years, and am searching to work with a congregation as a member which is of that same conservative faith.

**Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville, Cape 7530
Republic of South Africa**

My family and I just returned from another 3-week 2,500-mile preaching tour of South Africa where I was able to fulfill preaching appointments in Port Elizabeth, Pinetown, Springs, Brakpan, Lebowa and Alra Park. The first four congregations listed are white, while the last two are black and coloured, respectively. Unfortunately, due to the current unrest in the native black townships, we were unable to enter, even for "evangelistic purposes", Kwa Thema, Daveyton, Katlehong or Tembisa (though there was another baptism in Tembisa while we were in the area). This restrictive situation is very unusual and has now only occurred twice in my past 11½ years of labor in this land! We were however, permitted to worship with and encourage our native black brethren in the Driekop area of northern Lebowa and also our coloured brethren in the location of Alra Park.

During this trip, I used sermons entitled, "IS YOUR RELIGION TRUE OR FALSE?", "3 EASY STEPS TO HELL", "ARE YOU 'SO SOON REMOVED' FROM THE TRUTH?" and "THE POWER OF PERSONAL INITIATIVE!" I was also able to deliver to the coloured brethren of Alra Park 1,500 copies of a bi-lingual tract entitled, "PLEASE READ THE PLEA OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST" which I had typeset, printed and folded for them recently. Thanks to one and all for your fellowship in the gospel making our work in this land meaningful and possible!

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Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

August 1985

Number 8

GOD'S BREATH: THE ORIGIN OF SCRIPTURE

by Jon Quinn

I am sure that most of us, watching some news or talk show on television, have heard a few terribly ignorant statements made about God, the Bible or some moral/social issue. There are plenty of such statements being made today about abortion, capital punishment, Peter's alleged rule as the first pope and prayer/evolution in the public schools. If you are like me, you sit there and wince and wish you could be there to straighten out a thing or two. As you continue to think about it, you come up with several sound and accurate arguments with which you wish you could go back in time and confront the culprit face to face and put his false ideas to rest. And no doubt some of you even sat down and wrote an article about it all. That's what I'm doing right now.

It was on the Phil Donahue show; the one about the lawsuit being brought against the church. I very seldom watch the show because Phil always makes me angry and sad at the same time. I've never seen one as one-sidedly "fairminded" as he. Anyway, the statement was made by the other woman involved in another case. A community church pastor had refused to perform her wedding ceremony because she had posed for some "soft porn" magazine. Though the

statement she made is familiar, it sounded much more dangerous on television. She expressed the idea that she's a "Christian" and "believes in God" and that the important thing is to "pay attention to whatever is printed in red in your Bibles because that's the important part." We sure are lucky that red ink was invented otherwise we wouldn't know two things: when our accounting ledgers show a deficit and if what we are reading in the Bible is important!

Is the Bible (other than the red words) God's revealed mind or is it simply man's fallible accounts of his dealings with God? First, some definitions would be in order:

(1) **Theopneustos** is translated "inspiration" usually but its literal meaning is "God-breathed", hence the title of this article. This word is used with reference to how "all scripture" is given to us by God (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

(2) **Navi** (Hebrew), **Prophetes** (Greek) are both translated "prophet" and designate one who acts as God's **mouthpiece** or **spokesman**. In the Bible, both words refer to those who utter the exact message that God has given them without any modification or interpretation on the speakers' parts (Ex. 4:15, 16; Duet. 18:18; II Pet. 1:20,21).

(3) **Apostolos** is translated "apostle" and signifies "one sent forth". The "one sent" is the fully authorized representative of the sender. The word is used in two senses in the New Testament: in the official sense referring to one of the "Twelve" (Lk. 6:13) and rarely, in a broader sense referring to any messenger (Acts 8:23).

In I Pet. 1:10-12 we find prophets making diligent search into the things that they had received from the Lord. They were seeking to come to a greater understanding of those things. This is interesting because it shows us that even though a prophet was inspired, he did not always receive a perfect understanding of the things he spoke or wrote. In fact, there seems to be at least four different relationships between the prophets and the messages that they received. Consider:

(1) Sometimes, the words of the writers were the result of careful investigation by human methods into the facts of which they wrote. Certainly, the end product is a result of God's providence and direct guidance, in accordance with the definitions already given above, but one wonders if Luke, for example, even realized he was being infallibly guided by inspiration. He appeals, after all, to his

careful investigation of the facts as reason to believe his message rather than to inspiration (Lk. 1:1-4).

(2) Most often, the revelators were aware that their words were divinely inspired and also understood their full significance (I Thess. 2:13; I Cor. 2:13).

(3) At times they did not fully comprehend the import nor the meanings of their words but knew them to be from God (I Pet. 1:11; Dan. 12:8).

(4) Finally, there were even those who spoke by inspiration who neither understood the true significance of their words nor that they were given by inspiration (Jn. 11:49-52).

Actually, the Bible represents itself as God's word in the narrowest sense of the term. Moses, for example, set before the people the words "*which the Lord commandeth him*" (Ex. 19:7) and "*wrote down all the words of the Lord*" (Ex. 24:4; see also Lev. 26:46; Deut. 4:5; 11:18). The Psalmist Asaph proclaimed that the origin of the Law was God Himself (Isa. 30:10-12; 34:16; 59:21). Jesus identified the things taught in the Old Testament as having their origin with God (Matt. 22:31,32). Peter mentions that it was the Holy Spirit who foretold by the mouth of David concerning the betrayal of Jesus by Judas (Acts 1:16). Many other passages could be brought to bear on the subject including I Cor. 2:13,14; 14:37; I Thess. 2:13; 4:1-3; Heb. 3:7.

Oh, but most of that above isn't worth anything because, after all, very little of it is in red print! What a strange reason to discount so much of God's word! But, for the sake of argument, lets appeal to our red-lettered editions and see what Jesus actually said concerning the words of His inspired messengers. Now remember; these are statements Jesus made Himself and are printed in red for those of you with mere black and white versions. Speaking to his apostles (Matt. 10:2-5), Jesus tells them much concerning their mission as His spokesman, including, "*He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me*" (vs. 40). How could Jesus have expressed it any more clearly? Later, Jesus told His apostles that "*Whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in Heaven; and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven*" (Matt. 18:18). In the

"limited commission", Jesus appointed seventy disciples to precede Him from city to city. He told them "*The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me*" (Lk. 10:16). And, so no mistake would be made in the New Testament revelation of God's will, Jesus promised His apostles foolproof guidance! There would be nothing omitted, nothing forgotten and nothing given to chance. The Spirit would assure the world of a perfect revelation (Jn. 14:25,26; 15:26,27; 16:12-15). Then, just before His

ascension, this all-important promise is made again (Acts 1:8) and fulfilled just ten days later. And its all in red!

So, its going to be difficult to accept "just what is printed in red" without accepting the rest of the New Testament as being of equal authority. Jesus Himself has so decreed! Certainly, more respect, reverence and awe is needed today as men and women approach the Bible, God's Word to man.

2619 Mackin Road
Flint, MI 48504

CROTCHETINESS IS NOT GODLINESS

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

"Crotchety" is by definition an adjective which means, given to crotchets: subject to whims, crankiness, or ill temper. "Crotchet" denotes an out-of-the-ordinary attitude or habit: an opinion usually of little ultimate importance and often serving to mark off a person from others: a strange or peculiar trick, dodge, or device. The "crotchety" person is usually given to outspoken crankiness.

"Crotchety" is apt to find fault with the Lord. It is the disposition to be always of the contrary sort. Fault-finding is its major claim to fame. Even should its demand be based on scriptural premise, its right may be lost in rejection and resentment caused by ill temper. The "wolf" cry has been heard so often it no longer receives an immediate hearing.

The "crotchety" person tends to work against the purpose of God. He disrupts harmony for the trivial. He substitutes egotism for constructivism. He views conclusions, which others may have seen, examined and discarded as erroneous. as "new" truths which must be argued, demanded and enforced. He would never concede that a sharp tongue and a dull mind are usually found in the same head. The scriptural admonition to "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye*

ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6) applies only to those with whom he may disagree in the selfcentered thinking of the "crotchety" person.

Brother Paul wrote, "*For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth himself*" (Gal. 6:3). When a person conjectures that constant complaining crotchetyness constitutes godliness, he deceives himself.

"*If any one advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. But godliness actually is a means, of great gain, when accompanied by contentment*" (I Tim. 6:3-6 NASBP).

Hmm--I sure hope "they" get the point, don't you? Why not make a personal application and "go thou and do **not do** likewise"?

147 Creekwood Drive
Florence, AL 35630

EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

LOOK OUT DISNEYWORLD-- HERE COMES ORAL ROBERTS

Many of you can remember when Granville Obadiah "Oral Roberts was just a small-time itinerant faith healer with a tent and a truck. In fact, on several of his television shows and in some of his writings he delights to tell how little he had when he first started preaching. When he started as a shouting Pentecostal Holiness faith healer, his little tent would only seat 300. He slowly, surely, gathered in the sick, the halt, the lame and the dollars. He worked his way up to a 10,000-seat canvas tent and a weekly television show in the late 1950's. But look at him now!

Today, the suave, fashionably tailored United Methodist minister presides over an ever-increasing empire that includes the \$150 million university named after him, an athletic program that can stand up there with the best of them, a multi-million dollar medical complex, television productions, *Abundant Life* magazine, a retirement village, and a worldwide ministry reaching into virtually every corner of the earth. The Oral Roberts Evangelical Association, Inc. is the umbrella organization which covers all the varied activities. In one tax return just a few years ago, it was made public that this association listed investments in 38 corporations totaling \$1.19 million.

A few years back, Jerry Sholes published a book entitled *Give Me That Prime-Time Religion*. Sholes worked very closely with Roberts for three and one-half years and describes at length the personal aspects of Roberts. He wears \$500 plus Brioni suits and drives \$25,000 cars that are replaced every six months. He enjoys a million-dollar home in Palm Springs, plus his very expensive home in Tulsa and a cattle farm. He is a member of the Thunderbird Country Club which both he and his son joined when memberships were only \$20,000. Artists have used an air brush on his photographs to hide the

diamond rings and solid gold bracelets he wears.

In 1977, Roberts announced that Jesus had directed him to build a \$120 million medical complex in Tulsa. In 1979, he reported talking to a 900-foot tall Jesus who assured him the project would be completed. This 'vision' came right after the city and state officials said the hospital wasn't really needed in the area. Roberts claims that he had a seven-hour conversation with Jesus and Jesus had picked him to find a cure for cancer at his Tower of Faith research center. There was only one thing lacking--money. Roberts quotes the Lord as saying: "Ask each friend and partner for \$240 to be given now or to send \$20 a month for the next 12 months. . . . Do as I tell you. Obey me. Tell the partners to obey me and I will show them spectacular things of my miracle power."

Lewis Grizzard, a syndicated columnist, told about Roberts sending a letter to Mrs. Rose Emmett of Atlanta. He sent it to the last address he had for her, a nursing home. He didn't receive a donation from Mrs. Emmett after the first letter, so he sent another one. In the second letter, he asked Mrs. Emmett for \$100. He suggested that if she did not have that much money, she could go and borrow it and pay it back in monthly installments. Mrs. Emmett's son-in-law sent a copy of the letter to Mr. Grizzard. Mrs. Emmett certainly didn't need it. She had died three months earlier of a brain tumor.

But brace yourself for Oral's newest "miracle" to be unveiled in 1987--a \$15 million "Christian" theme park. The 7-acre Healing Center will feature special effects recreations of miracles from the Bible, as well as scenes from Oral Roberts' life.

Exhibits are being designed by Peter Wolf Concepts of Dallas. During a Walk Through the Bible, tourists will see God's creation of the world, the parting of the Red Sea, and Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Wolf said the exhibits will create the illusion of real miracles.

Another exhibit, Journey into Faith, will portray the life and healing ministry of Oral Roberts. The development will also include a restaurant, gift shop, television studio, and marriage counseling center.

Wolf said he doesn't like calling Healing Center a theme park. He said, "Our challenge is to give people an experience they haven't had before." Jan Dargatz, spokeswoman for Roberts, agreed and said, "It's not Six Flags Over Jesus. Providing people with fun is not our sole purpose. . . None of the figures will walk or move."

Dargatz said that financial problems facing Roberts' ministries were a motivation for building the Healing Center. Although Roberts raises \$60 million annually from 750,000 donors, revenues have been down. A steady flow of tourists to Healing Center would help finance Oral Roberts University, the City of Faith Hospital, and would do wonders for his bank account.

Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth
— Proverbs 27:1

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Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
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How Should Preachers Be Chosen Or Selected?

by David Pratte

Many denominations believe that, in order to become a preacher, one must have a special "calling" from God that "separates him to the ministry." The some body in the church officially ordains him to the "clergy." However:

A. THE BIBLE NOWHERE TEACHES THAT PREACHERS ARE DIRECTLY CALLED BY GOD OR THAT THEY SHOULD BE OFFICIALLY ORDAINED.

1. Elders and Deacons Are Especially Ordained.

Local churches consider the qualifications of men for these offices, and ordain men if they are qualified--Acts 14:23; 6:1-6; Tit. 1:5-9; cf. I Tim. 3:1-13. But these offices are a different work from that of preachers (Eph. 4:11). It would be unscriptural to use the ordaining of elders or deacons to prove preachers must be specially ordained.

2. Apostles also Were Especially Chosen & Appointed. However:

Again, the work of apostles is specifically identified as being distinct from that of evangelists--Eph. 4:11.

Jesus Himself had to directly reveal which specific men He chose to be apostles--Lk. 6:13; Acts 1:24f; 10:40f; 26:16; Gal. 1:1, 15; etc. We will see later that no such direct revelations are occurring today.

Apostles had to be eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ--Acts 1:22; I Cor. 9:1; 15:4-8; Acts 10:39-41; etc. This is not required of other preachers, and no one today possesses this qualification.

Apostles were empowered to perform miracles to prove they were apostles--2 Cor. 12:11, 12; Acts 3:1-10; 9:32-42; 5:12-16; etc. This was not true of all preachers in Bible times, and we will soon see that today it is not true of any preacher.

The fact that apostles had a special calling does not prove that other preachers must have. It would be a perversion of scripture to use passages referring to the call of apostles and try to use those scriptures to prove that all preachers must have such a calling.

3. Miraculous Direct Revelations Would Be Needed for God to Individually Call Preachers.

Most preachers who say God has

"called" them, cannot give any real evidence of a specific individual call, such as apostles received, even though this kind of evidence would be needed to validate their claim to a direct, personal call. Usually, they offer only vague impressions or experiences that are of doubtful or inconclusive significance. If they claim more than this, they cannot give verifiable proof for their claim (such as can be done for apostles). The fact is that the kind of direct revelation, such as would be necessary for any man to receive such a direct, individual call today, simply does not occur today.

Direct revelation occurred only before the New Testament was complete. Men at that time needed such revelation so they could know God's will when it had not yet been recorded in writing. See Matt. 10:19, 20; I Cor. 14:37; Eph. 3:3-5; I Thess. 2:13.

As this revelation was delivered, its divine origin was confirmed by miracles--Heb. 2:3,4; Mk. 16:17-20; Acts 14:3. No one today performs the kind of signs that are impossible by natural law, yet they did occur in the first century (such as raising the dead, walking on water, calming storms, instantaneously and completely healing people born blind or born lame, etc.)

When the Scriptures were complete, direct revelation & miraculous confirmation ceased because they were no longer needed--I Cor. 13:8-10; James 1:25; Jude 3.

Men received the power of direct revelation by the laying on of apostles' hands--Acts 8:14-18; 19:1-6; 2 Tim. 1:6. But there are no apostles today because no one can meet the qualifications of apostles today (as discussed earlier). Hence, there is no way for men today to receive the power of direct revelation.

Today the Scriptures provide us completely unto salvation--2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:3; John 20:30, 31; Jas. 1:18-25; I Pet. 1:22-25. In particular, today the call to preach comes, not by direct revelation to individuals who have been specifically chosen by God, but the call comes

through the teachings of the Bible that are addressed to all Christians.

B. ALL CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO TEACH.

People today are called to be teachers and preachers of God's word in the very same way that we are called to be saved from sin, called to study His word, called to pray to Him, etc.--we are called by the teachings of the Scriptures.

Some Scriptures that Call Us to Teach:

Heb. 5:12-14--All babes in Christ are expected to grow to maturity, and when we do we are expected to become teachers.

Acts 8:1, 4--Disciples (not including the apostles) who were scattered by persecution, went everywhere preaching the word.

2 Tim. 2:2, 24-26--Faithful men who are servants of God should be taught to teach others.

Heb. 3:12, 13--All are responsible to exhort one another daily.

Eph. 4:14-16--Each part of the body should grow up in Christ, speak the truth in love, and so build up the body.

(See also Phil. 2:15, 16; I Pet. 3:15; Jude 3; Prov. 11:30; Heb. 10:24, 25; I Thess. 5:11, 14).

Some Conclusions Based on These Scriptures:

The concept of a special class of "called and ordained clergy" separate from the "laity" is an unscriptural concept. All Christians are stewards who must use their abilities for the Lord (Matt. 25:14-30; Rom. 12:4-8; I Pet. 4:8-11). In particular, all Christians are able to develop some ability in teaching, so they should work as they have ability and opportunity. Some Christians have more teaching ability than others (especially so in regard to public teaching), so these should emphasize this work more than others.

But as with many other areas (such as financial giving), each person must evaluate his own abilities and circumstances in accordance with the Bible principles of stewardship. He must then personally decide how much

time and effort he can put into teaching. If a man believes he is able to devote his full time to teaching and believes this would be a needed and profitable use of his talents, he may choose to do so. If he finds a congregation(s) that agrees he has the

ability and can work profitably, they may agree to financially support him, as discussed in the next section. Such a man, however, becomes nothing more than a preacher or teacher like other preachers and teachers in a congregation. The only difference is

the amount of time he spends in the work and the financial support he receives.



7021 Omaha Ct.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46804

TEEN TALK

A Column for teens and by teens

"I have been dating this boy for over two years. I am madly in love with him, but he is now saying that he wants to become a preacher. I'm not interested in being a preacher's wife. Shoud I quit dating him or tell him to give up his plans of being a preacher?"



Becky Norris
Russellville, AL
Age: 18

If your boyfriend is determined to become a preacher, it would be a shame to discourage him from furthering the cause of Christ. According to the parable of Matthew 25, we are commanded to use our talents. You could explain to him that you do not desire the lifestyle of a preacher's wife and would therefore become a hindrance rather than a helpmate if you were to marry him.



Paul Schreiner, Jr.
Oxford, OH
Age: 17

If you're even considering to quit dating him in this situation, I think it would be wise to examine your feelings

for him again. If you truly love him, you will be willing to become a preacher's wife for him. A good relationship involves sacrifice on both sides and a general feeling of unselfishness. To quit dating him because his dream doesn't fit your dream perfectly is selfish. Usually dreams are compatible if you work at it.

Once again good communication is important. Talk it over. Find out how you both feel about the situation. And above all, be willing to sacrifice for the person you love.



Sonia Ennis
Smiths Grove, KY
Age: 17

If you really love your boyfriend you will continue to date him.

Try your best to be interested in becoming a preacher's wife. Discuss this with other gospel preacher's wives. They may make you see things in a different light. You may feel this isn't what you want but if you love the Lord and your boyfriend and have a desire to go to heaven this could be the beginning of a great future.

In Mark 16:15, 16 it tells us to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." If you were married to a preacher, what better could you ask for than to be by his side working together saving souls for the Lord? Encourage him and pray for his desire to preach the gospel and don't you miss out on this great chance. It may be your **only chance** to be his wife.



Ginger Clark
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 14

Who to marry is a big decision for anyone and needs to be given much prayer and understanding of what marriage really involves. It looks like she may have an attitude problem. By studying the Bible to find out that any wife must be supportive, loving, and in subjection to her husband, she may find that being a preacher's wife requires the same attitudes as being a wife to anyone else would. I think if she talked to other women who are happily married to preachers she may change her mind about not being interested in marrying one.

Romans 10:15 indicates that much honor is due to a preacher of God's word. Rather than discourage him from such a fine profession, she needs to decide if she really loves him and if so, prepare herself to be worthy of that role. If not, she should not hinder him by marrying him.



Michelle McClelland
Sparks, NV
Age: 17

You should not quit dating him or tell him to give up his plans. If you are "madly" in love with him you'll accept his dreams and encourage him to obtain this goal. I would be proud to be a preacher's wife and you should also be. I respect your boyfriend for having such a great goal for his life. Don't be selfish; accept his dream as yours also.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- MEEKNESS

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

The Greek word "prautes" is difficult to translate into English. It is commonly translated "meekness," or "gentleness." W.E. Vine said: "The meaning of prautes is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness. . . , whereas prautes does nothing of the kind. Nevertheless, it is difficult to find a rendering less open to objection than 'meekness;' 'gentleness' has been suggested, but as prautes describes a condition of mind and heart, and as 'gentleness' is appropriate rather to actions, this word is no better than that used in both English Versions. . . Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest." Two words best describe the meaning to me - gentleness and submissiveness.

Submissiveness is suggested in James 1:21. "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." It is the humble in heart who will submit to the will of God. This attitude was demonstrated on the day of Pentecost when "those who gladly receive the word" were baptized (Acts 2:41). Just as the physical body may reject an "implant," the spirit will reject the truth, unless it is "received with meekness."

The manner of life of the Christian is to be submissive. "Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom" (Jas. 3:13). Among the actions that indicate a "good life," James said that we are to be "easily entreated" (v. 17). Look back at the definition of "meekness" and you will see that the opposite of it is "self-assertiveness and self-interest." "Submissive" is the word

that best describes the meaning of "prautes" when it is applied to our reception of truth.

Gentleness is suggested in our attitude and actions toward others. Paul told Timothy: "And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves, if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. 2:24, 25). Here the idea is gentleness, rather than submissiveness. When we give a verbal defense (answer) "for the hope that is within" us, we are to do this with "meekness" (I Pet. 3:15). Our manner is to be gentle, kind, or meek.

When we go to those who are overtaken in a trespass, and try to restore them, we are to do it with "gentleness" (Gal. 6:1). This "meekness" is the fruit of power. It takes courage to go to your brother and point out his faults. "Meek as a mouse" certainly does not describe the kind of action suggested in this word. Moses was called the meekest man on the earth (Num. 12:3), but he was a leader who showed courage and gentleness. Jesus himself is described as "meek and lowly in spirit" (Matt. 11:29). This did not mean that he was weak and helpless. We must never confuse "meekness" with a spirit of cowardice, or weakness. W.E. Vine said: "The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His command."

The strength of "meekness" is seen in the courage it takes for wives to live faithful, godly lives when their husbands do not give them the spiritual support that they should. Peter said, "Whose adorning let it not be the



outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit. . ." (I Pet. 3:3,4). It takes submissiveness and gentleness for a wife to remain faithful while living with an unbeliever, but by showing this fruit of the Spirit, she may win her husband "without a word."

William Barclay summarized the word in this way: "The root meaning of prautes is self-control. It is the complete control of the passionate part of our nature. It is when we have prautes that we treat all men with perfect courtesy, that we can rebuke without rancour, that we can argue without intolerance, that we can face the truth without resentment, that we can be angry and yet sin not, that we can be gentle and yet not weak" (*Flesh and Spirit*, p. 121).

We are to receive the word with meekness (Jas. 1:21), and defend it with meekness (I Pet. 3:15). We are to give rebuke with meekness (Gal. 6:1), and receive rebuke with meekness (Jas. 3:13-17). Such a manner of life can only come from a total commitment of the will to the Spirit of God.

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

ESTHER

by Nolan Glover

The title of the book in which we are studying comes from the name of a very remarkable lady, Esther. The books of Ruth and Esther are the only two books in the Bible that bear the name of women. One contrast between the two books is the lowly people and rural life of the book of Ruth as compared to Esther where you see Kings and Queens and the great city, Shushan. Esther is remarkable for her willingness to risk her life to save her people.

Some suggested authors are Ezra, Mordecai, Joikim but the actual author is unknown. The date is sometime after the reign of King Ahasuerus who died in 465 B.C. as Esther 1:1 suggest. Some place the date around 450-440 B.C. **"The language of the book closely resembles that of Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah which were written about that time. . . Altogether, it seems most probable that the work was composed about the middle of the fifth century B.C., or a little later when Xerxes had been dead about 20 years"** (*Pulpit Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. iv).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- * The Persian King Cyrus decreed that the Jews could go home (Ezra 1:1-4) and in 536 B.C. the first group did.
- * In 485 B.C. Darius I was succeeded by his son Xerxes, who is known as Ahasuerus in the book of Esther.
- * In 482 B.C. Herodotus said, **"In the third year of Xerxes reign was held an assembly at Susa to arrange the Grecian wars"** (Vol. 7, p. 7). Esther 1:3.
- * In 478 B.C. Esther was made Queen (Esther 2:16-18).
- * In 472 B.C. Haman plotted against the Jews (Esther 3:7).
- * Under Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, the 2nd return of Jews under Ezra took place in 458 B.C.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Esther - She was a beautiful girl. Hadassah was her Hebrew name but

when she came to the Persian court, she was called "Esther" which signifies a "star". Esther was raised by her older cousin, Mordecai. (2:7) Because of her great beauty she was chosen to be Queen of Persia. However, Esther had more going for her than her good looks. She had courage, faith and determination which many women today seem void of and will not learn from the television stars.

Mordecai - A gracious Benjamite who raised his cousin Esther (2:5-7). He apparently was the gatekeeper, since he was closely connected with the harem (2:11, 19, 21 6:10). But Mordecai was hated by Haman because he would not bow down to him. Yet Mordecai had deep faith in God as shown in his words to Esther, (2:13-14) that the Providential God would bring deliverance for His people.

Haman - He was an arrogant and immature child as most proud people are. Haman, angered that Mordecai would not bow to him, plotted to kill Mordecai along with all the Jews. Those who think too much of themselves get real upset when they are not treated as they think they should be. Haman's plan backfired and he was trapped by his own devices. (Romans 12:3, Proverbs 16:18)

EVENTS OF THE TEXT

During a great feast, King Ahasuerus showed the glories of his kingdom. He also wanted to display another of his possessions of great beauty, his wife Vashti. But she refused to display herself as if she was another piece of the King's property without dignity and modesty, before the drunken crowds of Shushan (1:5-12). With anger he asked the big question, **"What shall we do to Vashti since she disobeyed the King?"** To discourage the other women from acting in a similar matter, Vashti was dethroned and another sought in her

place among the eligible young virgins.

Esther was among the virgins chosen and given a twelve month beautification treatment (2:12). (Women have not changed much over the years. They still want to look pretty, and men still like them to look pretty, even after marriage. But it is a two way street fellows.) Esther **"obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her"** (2:15). The King chose her and honored her with a feast bearing her name (2:16-18).

Afterwards, Mordecai spoiled a plot on the King's life by telling Esther, but Mordecai was never rewarded (2:19-23). A similar attempt on the King's life was successful in 465 B.C. (*Unger's Bible Handbook*, p. 265).

Later, Haman was promoted to the King, but in Mordecai's mind he was still not worthy of reverence and would not bow to him. Haman sought to destroy all the Jews as a result (3:5-6). Haman obtained from the King a decree for the slaughter of all Jews in the 13th of Adar. This was a big change for Persian Kings. Cyrus had let the Jews go home (Ezra 1:1-4). Darius I was also helpful (Ezra 6). Later, Artaxerxes let Ezra and Nehemiah rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. (Neh. 2:1-6) As a result of the King's decree, all of the Jews mourned while the enemies rejoiced. No doubt the enemies of the Jews in Judea welcomed this news. They had been trying to stop the Jews from rebuilding in Jerusalem since the beginning (Ezra 4:1-5).

Mordecai entreated Esther to ask the King to save the Jews. Simple enough, except the Persians had a law that anyone who approached the throne without being called would be killed, if the King did not extend his scepter. Another complication was that Esther had not been called in thirty days to see the King. Esther knew what had happened to Vashti, so there was no guarantee that the same or worse would happen to her. Esther with

determination said, *"I will go to the King. . . and if I perish, I perish"* (4:16). But the King did accept her and she requested the King and Haman to come to a banquet. At the banquet, she again invited them to come the next day (5:1-8). Happy was not the word to express how Haman felt until he saw Mordecai, who still refused to bow. Haman's wife and friends suggested he ask the King to hang Mordecai (5:9-14).

That night the King could not sleep, so he had the records of the chronicles read to him. He learned that Mordecai had never been rewarded for saving his life. **"Such neglect being a gross breach of Persian law and a great dishonor to the king who had allowed it"** (*Pulpit Commentary* vol. 7 p. 115). Early in the morning, Haman had come to ask the King to kill Mordecai, but the King had a request of his own. *"What shall be done for the man whom the King delights to honor?"* (6:6). Haman thought the King meant him. The King astonished Haman by having him lead Mordecai through the streets on the King's horse with Mordecai wearing the royal robes. After this humiliating task, Haman went home and told his wife the miserable day he had had, but it was not over yet. That night at the banquet, Esther told the King of Haman's plot on her life and the life of her people. So Haman was hung on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. (7:8-10)

But the decree of destruction for the Jews remained steadfast according to Persian law (8:8, Daniel 6:15). So another decree was made by the King that said the Jews could protect themselves on the 13th of Adar (chs. 8-9). In all 75,000 enemies of the Jews were killed. The 13th and 14th was declared a yearly feast known as Purim (9:18-28) since this day was turned from sorrow to joy, from mourning to a holiday. The book ends with Mordecai's promotion to 2nd in the Kingdom.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

1. Feast of Purim (Esther 9:18-28)
A two day celebration on the 14th and 15th of the twelve month of the Jewish year (Feb.-March). It was to commemorate their deliverance from destruction at the hands of wicked Haman. It was called Purim after the name of the lost or Pur cast by Haman to determine the time of the Jews destruction. The book of Esther is read

in the Jewish synagogue today during the feast. The congregation participates by making noise when Haman's name is pronounced (*Unger's Bible Handbook* p. 266).

2. Providence of God - In both the Song of Solomon and Esther, the name of God is never mentioned, however, His providential hand is seen throughout. If the decree had been carried out, all of God's promises would have failed and there would have been no Messiah. What if Haman had come to the King a few minutes earlier, or if the King had not been sleepless that night or if Esther had refused to go to the King or if Esther had not been queen or if Vashti had not been degraded? This all did not come about by chance but was God's providence.

In Esther 4:14 I see two good points about providence: 1. Mordecai said that *"deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place,"* if Esther refused to help. It is comforting to know that God's deliverance is not dependent upon one or one thousand who may prove faithless. 2. Mordecai says *"Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this."* We can look back on this event and say I know God was using Esther to deliver his people. But Mordecai did not know that for sure, he said, "Who knows" "maybe". We need to remember this today. We can not point our finger at some event in our lives and say "that's the providence of God" because we don't know that it is. We will get ourselves in deep trouble if we try. It should be enough to know that He does and not worry about the "how".

3. Leaders for Today - Maybe the reader is come to the kingdom for such a time as this. We need good leaders with the faith, courage and determination of Esther and Mordecai. Many times Christians wait for someone else to do what has to be done. That someone should be you. When you see all the sin in the world, maybe you can do something about it. When you see Athiesm in our schools, maybe you as a parent are in the kingdom for such a time as this. Apostasy occurs in the church, and everyone waits for the other person to do something about it. You could if you would. Even our women are in the kingdom for such a time as this. We need women who will be good mothers, love their husbands, be keepers at home. This kind of woman

is definitely needed in the Kingdom today. Too many are working outside the home, instead of fulfilling their God-given responsibility. The excuses in the day of judgement will not hold up, for forsaking a very special and needed work in God's kingdom.

We must remember one thing, either help with God's deliverance or leave it to someone else. God's deliverance doesn't depend upon us, but we either help him or perish. We need to realize that each of us has a God given work to do today and we need to do it for we are in God's kingdom for a reason.

CONCLUSION

Esther is more than a good story to read. It has great characteristics to pattern our lives by and great lessons to remember as we live those lives.



2077 Packerland Dr.
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HEY EDITOR!

DON'T HOLD BACK!!
Let us know what you think.

If you have News, or Opinion (or just the Spare Time to Write) send it in.

We want to hear from you, Pro or Con.

**WRITE:
TODAY
P.O. BOX 237
BOWLING GREEN, KY
42101**



Dear Rachel,

Recently I visited a denominational church with my friend. I was pleasantly surprised at the warmth and genuine affection shown between the members there. The feelings of godliness, reverence, and love for God and His Word were so strong I felt as if I could almost touch them.

This was such a contrast to the atmosphere surrounding the congregation I attend. Here it seems there is always one or more problems festering into potential hostilities. Our members are either afraid of or indifferent to each other. Oh, there is a small group here and there who cling together much like the old time clans. I sometimes wonder if the Hatfield and McCoys aren't meeting here!

Why is it that the people who have the facts of procedure concerning the way of salvation, the organization of the church in accordance with God's plan, do not have His foremost commandment--that of love?

Just Wondering

Dear Wondering,

There is an old saying, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." Things always look better somewhere else. However when you become one of the "gang" you will begin to see the situation as it really is. Every organization of people whether family, church or club has it's "skeletons" in the closet, which are carefully buried with company manners.

Showing respect and love for God will definitely please him. However He has always required obedience above all else. Beginning with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and on thru the Bible this point has been emphasized repeatedly. Thru obedience we show our love for God and receive his love. (John 15:10) At the same time we are commanded to love one another. (John 15:12) It seems obvious that if we must

obey to abide in the Lord's love and He has commanded us love one another, we must love our fellow Christians in order to earn the Lord's affections and rewards.

The type of love we are commanded to have naturally includes all the duties and pleasures of friendship but goes one step further to include a forbearance of one's own will as a matter of principle.

We are also commanded to be of like minds with one another (Philippians 2:2 and of like minds with Christ. When Bible study is approached in the spirit of love for one another as mentioned in John 15:12, Christians should and can study with each other until a meeting of the minds takes place. This can be done with-out the strife which is condemned in the 3rd verse of Philippians the second chapter.

The first step to any change is the admission of the problem. This you have already done. Admission with out action will net little if any results. This applies to each of us whether seven, seventeen or seventy none are exempt from action. Use the Bible as your guide to plan out a course of action which will bring about the change you wish to see in your home congregation. Share these ideas with your elders or preacher. The book of Ephesians is devoted to Church unity. As you read ask yourself what you can do to promote the unity God wants for his children. It is often the simple things we do for each other that are the most appreciated. Offer your time and assistance to help someone in need. Be specific! It is much easier to accept help when it is specific than to ask for help after a vague, "If there is anything I can do.". Volunteer to mow an elderly brother's lawn or to sit with a Sisters young children so that she might have a few moments to herself, take a hot meal to an ill brother or sister living alone. The possibilities for

kindness are endless. Love and concern must be nurtured in order to grow and spread. Someone must start the process, why not YOU?

God bless your endeavors.

*Love,
Rachel*

Dear Rachel,

It's hard to write to someone you don't know, but I need to talk to someone. You see I'm a preacher's son. Everyone I know and most of the new people I come to know, know my father and what he does for a living.

When I try to confide in someone to get advise, they all have the same answer. "But you're the PREACHER'S SON! You know better!" Not that I do anything really bad, I just have the same doubts and fears and make the same mistakes as everyone else my age does.

I'm tired of living in a fish bowl! Thanks for letting me get this off my chest. Sign me,

Not a Gold Fish!

Dear Not,

We all know better than to do most of the things we do. Yet most of us still want to believe that somewhere there are people who are strong enough to resist temptations. We want a living example of someone who has "made it". Unfortunately it has become a common belief that preachers are next to heaven or at least have a direct connection with it! Being a preacher's son, you have become part of his expected "perfect" image.

It might help you to know that a majority of the people who are listed in the book of Who's Who, were preacher's children. Think of your position as a training for greatness. Any other position in life has to be easier after this, right!?

*Sincerely,
Rachel*

"Rachel" is a real person, but chooses to write under a pseudonym. She is a godly Christian woman with a desire to answer complex situations one may find in his or her life.

If you have a question or problem you would like to see dealt with in this column, just send it to "Dear Rachel" in care of Today, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

THE RAPTURE

by Grover Stevens

The doctrine of the "Rapture" is only a small part of the doctrine of premillennialism. Premillennialism is the doctrine that the second coming of Christ will be "before the thousand years." The word "premillennialism" has four parts to it: (1) "pre" — which means "before"; and (2) "mille" — which is the Latin word for "thousand," and (3) "annum" — which is the word for "year," hence pre-mille-annum means "before the thousand years." So, premillennialism is the doctrine that the second coming of Christ will be "before the thousand years." And, the "ism" on the end of the word is a fair indication that the doctrine is of MEN and not of God. The Bible certainly does NOT teach that there will be a 1000 year period of time AFTER the second coming of Christ.

The apostle Peter makes this clear in 2 Peter 3. In verse 4 he says that scoffers ask "Where is the promise of his coming?" Then in verses 9 and 10 he answers this question by saying, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (of his coming), as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord (the day of His coming) will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." So, the apostle Peter certainly does not think there will be a 1000 years of time AFTER the Lord comes. He says that the world will come to an end and be burned up when the Lord comes. HE did not believe the doctrine of premillennialism.

Our study at present is centered around that part of this doctrine that is called "the Rapture." The word "rapture" is not in the Bible. Its primary meaning is "to seize," or "to be lifted, or transported." The doctrine of the "rapture" is that Christ second coming is imminent — that is, it is about to occur at any moment, and when it does, all his saints — living and dead — will be caught up into heaven

for a 7 year period of blessedness. This is the "Rapture." The living saints will be changed and the dead saints will be resurrected for this rapture. And, during this same 7 years that the saints are away from the earth for the rapture, the "Great Tribulation" will be blasting away its fury on the earth and those who are left on it. This 7 years of tribulation is supposed to come to an end with the great "Battle of Armageddon." In the midst of this battle, and in the nick of time to save the human race from annihilation, Christ will call an end to the rapture, and He will "come again," bringing all the saints with Him, back to the earth to Mt. Megiddo in Palestine where the Battle of Armageddon is in full swing, and will promptly destroy all the enemies of the Jewish state of Israel and "all ungodly nations." At this time, ALL the Jews will be converted to Christ, and He will set up His throne in Jerusalem, and reign as king over all the earth for 1000 years. This is the millennium. During this millennium those who have been in the Rapture will be in their eternal bodies and all others will be in their flesh and blood bodies. So, some will be as angels and some will be human beings with all the troubles of the flesh. (That doesn't sound like too fair a deal to me.) Then after the millennium, there will be a "little season" during which Satan will be "loosed" and will be extremely successful in turning a great multitude away from Christ to himself, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, and he will gather them together to battle against the saints. Then, after the little season, Christ will come again to bring an end to the world. At this time there is supposed to be the resurrection of the WICKED dead, then the judgement day, and then eternity. That is the doctrine of "premillennialism" and the "rapture." You will notice according to this doctrine that there will be THREE "Second Comings of Christ." One BEFORE the rapture, another AFTER the rapture, and another AFTER the 1000 years. That sounds like THREE "second comings" to me; or, instead of "second comings," we have a third

and fourth coming!!! But premillennialists explain this by saying that they are different "phases" of the second coming. The Bible only speaks of TWO comings of Christ in which He "appears" to the people of this earth. In Hebrews 9:26-28 we read these words, "But now ONCE in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear THE SECOND TIME without sin unto salvation." So the Bible says that He HAS appeared once, and that He WILL appear a "SECOND TIME" unto salvation and judgement. But premillennialists have Him coming four times. (Such a confusing doctrine is just not taught in the Bible.) They refer to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th comings of Christ in their theory as "phases" of the second coming. First, they say, that Christ will come "as a thief," at which time he will NOT be manifested, or seen, but will come secretly and unobserved and will meet the saints in the air and take them away to somewhere in the heaven for the rapture. This is the coming that is FOR the saints, and is NOT manifested. This, is the First Phase of the Second Coming. Then, they say, that AFTER the rapture, Christ will come back again WITH His saints and set up His millennial kingdom. In this coming, He will be manifested. This is the Second Phase of the Second Coming, according to premillennialists. Then, after the millennium and the little season, Christ will come again to bring an end to the world. This is the Third Phase of the Second Coming. I say, call it what you will, it looks like four comings of Christ to me: One, when He died on the cross; two, BEFORE the rapture FOR the saints; three, AFTER the rapture WITH the saints to establish the millennium; and, four, AFTER the millennium to end of the world.

Of course, friends, the Bible teaches no such doctrine. Premillennialists are quick to accuse anyone who denies their pet theory of "not believing in the

1000 years," or of "not believing in Revelation 20." This is a false accusation. I believe in the 1000 years of Revelation 20, but I do not believe that the 1000 years that premillennialists believe in is the same as the 1000 years of Revelation 20. Premillennialists do with this passage of scripture what evolutionists do with three or four pieces of bones. Evolutionists take three or four pieces of bones and construct a whole man out of them, and then they present him to the world as the missing link. If any one denies their theory, they accuse him of not believing in SCIENCE. In like manner, Premillennialists take the expression "1000 years," and a few other words and phrases from hither, thither and yon in the Bible and construct the doctrine of premillennialism. Then they charge that all who do not accept their theory do not believe the BIBLE.

Before we examine the claims of premillennialists about the Rapture, let me refer you to Mr. Hal Lindsey's book, **THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH**. This is the most popular book ever written on the subject.

Chapter 11 is the chapter dealing specifically with the rapture. Let me quote a few paragraphs from this book. The name of the chapter is "The Ultimate Trip." Mr. Lindsey says, "...astounding as man's trip to the moon is, there is another trip which many men, women, and children will take some day which will leave the rest of the world gasping. Those who remain on earth at that time will use every invention of the human mind to explain the sudden disappearance of millions of people. . . 'Project Disappearance.'" Then Mr. Lindsey gives us a few examples. He imagines someone saying, "There I was, driving down the freeway and all of a sudden the place went crazy. . . cars going in all directions. . . and not one of them had a driver." Then, he imagines another telling it like this: "It was the last quarter of the championship game and the other side was ahead. Our boys had the ball. We made a touchdown and tied it up. The crowd went crazy. Only one minute to go and they fumbled — our quarterback recovered — he was about a yard from the goal when — ZAP — no more quarterback — completely gone, just like that."

Then, Mr. Lindsey explains what this is all about — it's the Rapture. He says, "The word 'rapture' means to

snatch away or take out. But whether we call this event 'the Rapture' or the 'translation' makes no difference — the important thing is that it will happen. It will happen!

"Someday, a day that only God knows, Jesus Christ is coming to take away all those who believe in Him. He is coming to meet all true believers in the air. . . These believers will be removed from the earth before the Great Tribulation — that period of the most ghastly pestilence, bloodshed, and starvation the world has ever known. . . we refer to the event when the church will meet Christ in the air as the Rapture."

Mr. Lindsey then refers to 1 Cor. 15:50-53, and says, "This will take place 'at the last trump' . . . The idea in this passage is that when God has the last trumpet blow it means He will move out all the Christians — and at that point, we shall be changed. . . When the Scripture says, 'the dead will be raised imperishable,' and 'for this perishable must put on the imperishable,' it refers to the Christians who have died physically. They will be resurrected to meet Christ in the air. However, when it says, 'this mortal must put on immortality,' it is referring to those who are alive at the coming of Christ. That's the mystery, the Rapture or translation."

Then Mr. Lindsey cites I Thess. 4:13-18 to show that "Christians who had died, will join the Lord first. Then the Christians who are alive at that time will be caught up 'together with them in the clouds' to meet the Lord in the air."

And finally Mr. Lindsey tells us that all this could happen at any minute.

Since Mr. Lindsey based this whole chapter on I Cor. 15:50-53 and I Thess. 4:13-18, let us examine these passages from the Bible.

I Cor. 15:50-55 is talking about the end of the world, and NOT some 7 year period or rapture and tribulation. In the first place, Paul says that "THE DEAD shall be raised." Premillennialists say that only the RIGHTEOUS will be raised at this time for the Rapture, and that the WICKED dead will not be raised until AFTER the Millennium. That's a thousand and seven years and a little season between them. But this passage is talking about ALL the dead— "THE DEAD shall be raised." Indeed, the Bible nowhere

teaches the resurrection of the righteous at one time and the resurrection of the wicked at some later time, as the theory of premillennialism does.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "for the hour is coming, in the which ALL that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). Thus, both the good and the evil will be resurrected at the same time.

And in Matt. 25:31-46 we read that WHEN Christ comes, then all nations will be gathered before Him and he will judge them. Verse 46 says, "and these (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." So, the righteous and the wicked will be resurrected and judged at the same time.

So, I Cor. 15:52 does not teach Mr. Lindsey's theory of the Rapture on this point.

Furthermore, this scripture says that the resurrection will take place "at the last trump." Remember that the theory of premillennialism says that the righteous will be raised BEFORE the Rapture, and that the wicked will be raised AFTER the Millennium — over 1000 years later. BUT, according to the Lord Jesus, those who have eternal life will be raised up "at the LAST day." "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. . . No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draws him: and I will raise him up at the last day. . . Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40,44,54). And again we read in John 11:24, "Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in THE resurrection at the last day". The theory of premillennialism puts the resurrection of the righteous over 1000 years BEFORE the LAST DAY, but the Lord says that it will be "At the last day." Which will you take? They are 1000 years apart.

Let's notice further, that the wicked will be judged at the last day. Again, we hear our Lord Jesus saying, "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." Thus, we see according to the Bible that the resurrection of the righteous and the judgement of the wicked will both be at the very same time — on the very same day — the LAST DAY. But premillennialists get over 1000 years between them. The Bible says that both the resurrection of the righteous and the judgement of the wicked will be on the same day — the last day, — but premillennialists say there will be over 365,000 days between them!

Let's notice one thing more from I Cor. 15 that proves Mr. Lindsey's pretty theory to be wrong. In verse 54 the Bible says, "*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.*" So, according to I Cor. 15, the resurrection of the dead and the changing of the living will take place WHEN "*death is swallowed up in victory.*" In verses 23 to 26 of this same chapter, we learn that the very last enemy that will be destroyed in death, and that THAT will occur at the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world. Mr. Lindsey says that this coming of Christ (mentioned in I Cor. 15) is a "mystery, a secret" and therefore is not visible to the whole earth, but only to Christians (page 143), and that only the righteous dead will be raised and only the righteous living will be changed at this time, and that these will be caught up to heaven for the Rapture, BUT that death is not destroyed until AFTER the Rapture and AFTER the Millennium. That's more than 1000 years AFTER I Cor. 15 says that death will be destroyed. Obviously, Mr. Lindsey is wrong about it. That is more likely the reason that he did not quote verse 54, but stopped at verse 53.

Let's summarize. Mr. Lindsey says that the coming of Christ in I Cor. 15 is "a mystery, a secret" and is known only by Christians and not by the world in general; BUT THE BIBLE says that this will take place with the sounding of the trumpet. And therefore announcing it to all the world.

Again, Mr. Lindsey says that only the righteous dead will be resurrected and only the righteous living will be changed at this time, and that the wicked dead will be resurrected and the wicked living will be changed more

than 1000 years later; WHEREAS, THE BIBLE teaches that ALL the dead — the righteous and the wicked — will be resurrected at the SAME TIME and judged on the same day.

Mr. Lindsey's theory has Christ coming and resurrecting the dead and changing the living 1000 years before death is destroyed. But the Bible teaches that death will be destroyed when the dead are raised and the living changed. (I Cor. 15:23-26, 52-54).

Let's look at I Thess. 4:13-18. Mr. Lindsey says, "*the dead in Christ will be raised first.*" That's what the scripture says alright, but first before what? Premillennialists say that the dead IN CHRIST will be raised "first" before the rest of the dead are raised. They say that the righteous dead will be resurrected BEFORE the Rapture and that the unrighteous dead will not be resurrected until over 1000 years later. And they quote THIS passage of Scripture to prove it. But, this passage does NOT teach any such thing. Rather, this Scripture teaches that the dead in Christ shall rise first before the living shall be changed. The point of comparison in this Scripture is between "we which are alive" and "them which are asleep" — between the dead in Christ and the living — NOT between the dead in Christ and the dead out of Christ. AS Premillennialists contend. (See Lindsey's LGPE, ch. 13, The Main Event, pp. 177-178). Read it and see; "*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep.*" Notice that the point of comparison is between "we which are alive" and "them which are asleep." Now, the next verse, "*FOR the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ — "the ones that are asleep — the dead in Christ" shall rise first; THEN we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*" (I Thess. 4:15-17). So, Premillennialists use this verse to teach something that it does not teach.

Furthermore, Premillennialists say that the coming of Christ before the Rapture will be a secret coming and will not be known to the world in general. But this passage says that

Christ will "*descend from heaven with a SHOUT, with the VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL, and the TRUMP of God.*" That certainly does not sound like a secret coming of the Lord to me; but a coming that is announced by the archangel and heralded by the trumpet of God, and shouted by the Lord Himself. No, this passage of Scripture certainly does NOT teach the doctrine of the Rapture.

Furthermore, this Scripture says that the resurrected dead and the changed living will "*meet the Lord in the air, and SO shall we EVER be with the Lord.*" There is no Rapture period, nor Millennium period, to come afterwards, as the Premillennialists teach.

We need not be led astray by the cunningly devised theories of men. The Bible teaches that when Christ comes again, it will be the end of the world and the end of man's probation.

The apostle Peter said that God is not slack concerning the Lord's Second Coming, but that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance: "*but the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.*"

If you are looking for a Rapture and a Millennium when the Lord comes again, you have a false hope, a hope that is built on the theories of men and not on the word of God. You are standing on the promises of men, and not on the promises of God.

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EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

What Is The Church And How Can It Grow?

Why does denominationalism exist? Why do new denominations continue to appear? Why do movements toward restoration of the ancient order eventually turn into denominations themselves? Why do divisions between brethren continue to occur? Attitudes that lead to division and develop into apostasy result because people do not know what the church is!

When we usually talk to our neighbors about what the church is, we get into a discussion of organizational structures and patterns for worship. We talk about the triangular forms of government of the Roman Catholics and mention the conventions and synods of the Protestants; comparing these to the autonomous and independent congregations of the first century. With institutional brethren we argue about centralization and sponsoring churches. But when we start talking about organization and pattern, we have skipped two important steps. Before we can understand God's plan for the "organization" of the church, we must ask about its identity and its purpose. We have been quick to emphasize the "proper" organization and have forgotten **why** it is important.

Of course it is important to follow God's instructions whether or not we understand the reasons. But it will help us to realize that God did not set up patterns and rules arbitrarily. To try "better ways" as David did in the days of Uzzah is to fail every time (1 Chron 15). Our problem is that we don't see immediate failure as in the case of David. Sometimes we go through a life time thinking we are doing God's will, always busy in religious activity, and then will find out we were not acting according to his will (Matt. 7:23). We can avoid this unhappy ending, if we

would really study to see what is the church and what is its purpose?

God's purpose for the church is that it might be saved. Centralization and institutionalism take away from the individual responsibilities that we have. But those of us who oppose such innovations on the grounds of the silence of the scriptures, have failed to emphasize that they are wrong also because they change the identity and purpose of the church. As a result, while opposing the outward forms of institutionalism, we have still "institutionalized" the local congregation. We still are guilty of practicing religion by proxy. We still view the church as something besides the called out people. We "join" the church without being knit together with its members, we attend the church without giving attendance to the needs of people. We speak of the church as "them" instead of "us". We pay our money weekly as if it were rent for our pew.

WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH CHURCH GROWTH?

God did propose that the church is to grow (Eph. 4:11-16), but unless we understand the nature and purpose of the church we will misunderstand what is true growth. The apostasy of institutionalism and the social gospel are direct results of not understanding these things. Church growth has been defined in many ways. We will see that our different definitions of church growth are all related to a different definition of what the church is. To some, church growth is a new or bigger building because they can not think of the church without visualizing real estate. To others, church growth is people moving in from out of town or from the inner city to the suburbs. These people view the church as

something that can shrink or fatten according to where people live. It is not uncommon for congregations in newer parts of town to grow at the expense of congregations in the older sections, but this is not church growth. Still others think the church grows when more congregations are started. To them the most important characteristic of the church is that it meets close to their home. Is the church growing when a 300 member congregation, (with elders and fully supports several preachers) swarms into three groups with no elders and two new building payments? It is true that when the saints grow in number new buildings may be called for and new congregations need to form, but these events are not in themselves things to rejoice about.

I think we can see from the above paragraph that to determine how the church can grow, we have got to define what the church is. The English word church is derived from the German "Kirche" which means building. In the middle ages the word was solely associated with buildings set aside for religious purposes. We must go to the Greek word "Ekklesia" to get the real concept of what the church is. The word ekklesia in the first century had nothing to do with buildings and had no religious overtones. It was never used to refer to the hierarchy of a religion or to a denominational body. The word literally meant "called out ones". The word was used by secular writers and a couple of times by the Holy Spirit to refer "to an assembly of the citizens summoned to transact public business" (see Acts 19:32). But the Holy Spirit also chose this word as one description of the people that belonged to God. One by one, brown, yellow, black, and white; individuals are "called out" of the world by the gospel. When we think of Ekklesia we must think people, not a building, not an organization, not an institution. When we talk about the church of Christ, we are talking about a kind, type, or quality of people that listen to Christ and obey him.

What is the purpose of being called out? **TO BE LIKE HIM!** (Rom. 8:28) Now that we know that the church is people and our purpose is to be like Him, we can define church growth. The church is growing when saints are growing both in number and in likeness to Christ.

Those who view church growth as a

new or bigger building will give generously if they like the real estate, but it will not help them be more Christ like. Those who view church growth as families moving in, will show more of a loyalty to the group than to Christ. Those who view church growth by the number of congregations started fail to see that congregations are started many times without men becoming more like Christ. Some are started out of convenience, some start because brethren could not get along, others start because of a desire of a few to run things. Many times congregations are multiplied and concentrated in one part of the country to the point where needless money is spent on buildings and these congregations serve as sponges to soak up all the preachers. Preachers that want to go to countries that have not yet heard the gospel are turned down because of so many high

building payments. We simply add to the elder shortage when we can't stand to have a congregation with over 100 members.

We must use the gifts (Evangelists and Pastors) God has given to us correctly or die spiritually (Eph. 4:7-16). These gifts were given to "Equip the saints for the work of service" and to "build up the body of Christ". The church grows when saints grow to be more like Christ. There are no shortcuts. The church's growth is not directly related to better filmstrips, flip charts, and door to door work, Radio programs, Bible Tape messages, and mass mailings will not make the church grow unless Christ is being produced in those who use them.

In future articles in this column, as we talk about ways that work and different tools for accomplishing our tasks of equipping the saints for the

work of service, let us not forget what the church is. Methods will matter little if Christ is not being formed in us. It will mean our doom, as well as those we convert. Heed the warning Jesus gave the Pharisees, "*Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on land and sea to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourself*" (Matt. 23:15). It will do little good to fill our houses with projectors, personal work charts, and tracts, if we do not first fill our lives with genuine prayer, love, praise, thanksgiving, and joy. We will convert others when we are converted ourselves.

Send Questions and suggestions for Equipping the Saints.

15 Princeton Circle
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"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel. . ."
(Romans 10:15)



C.A. BURCHAM, SR.
FLORENCE, AL



Clarence A. Burcham was born, 1928, in Franklin Co., Alabama. His parents were not members of the church of Christ and seldom attended the service of any religious organization. They were highly critical of the church as were most of their relatives. The first favorable contact C.A. had with the church was at the beginning of a school year when he was in High School. He

walked home from school with a new boy in the neighborhood who invited him to the Wednesday night Bible Study of Washington Ave. church of Christ in Russellville, Alabama. He attended and was received with genuine welcome and interest. He continued to attend and study and was baptized by Granville Tyler in 1947.

He married Delores Ferguson whose parents home in Belgreen, Alabama was a favored stopping place for Gospel preachers who might need a meal or bed or just refreshing conversation.

C.A. and Delores moved to Peoria, Illinois in 1950 where both obtained work at Caterpillar Tractor Co. It was in July, 1956 that C.A. preached his first sermon. It was the first anniversary of the death of Delores' mother, who for many years had encouraged him to preach. He did some fill in preaching at Paris Ave in Peoria and other churches in the area.

Caterpillar moved them to set up a new plant in Aurora, Illinois. C.A. began to preach regularly at Plano, Illinois while continuing to work at Caterpillar. He also preached several

meetings in the surrounding towns. Eventually, it became necessary to make a decision and he decided to leave secular work and move to work with the Hessville church in Hammond, Indiana. Local work since then in chronological order has been in Santa Susana, Ca.; Appletree Street, Dothan, Al.; Twelfth Street, Bowling Green, Ky.; Lakeside, Ca.; and presently he works with Helton Drive, Florence, Al. They are back within 30 miles of where they grew up. On a few occasions during these years C.A. has gone back into secular work temporarily while continuing to engage in a full load of local preaching. They are in their third year at Florence.

C.A. enjoys preaching in Gospel Meetings. His meeting schedule has never been real heavy, but he estimates that he has preached meetings in more than fifteen states. He is concerned as are many gospel preachers that some churches now consider Gospel Meetings a thing of the past and, consequently, are missing opportunities to study and learn with many men who are dedicated and truly capable and eager to preach the Word.

One of the joys of the Burchams' life is that both of their children are faithful children of God with mates who are also faithful Christians. Their eldest grandson, the only grandchild of accountable age, recently obeyed the gospel. C.A. rejoices that he was granted the privilege of baptizing all of these.

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OXFORD BIBLE ATLAS, edited by Herbert G. May (Oxford University Press: New York, New York), 1984, hardback, 144 pages, \$16.95.

One cannot study the Bible without noticing the many references to mountains, rivers, cities, and various lands. The Scriptures are filled with extensive historical materials and innumerable allusions to the geographical background of that history. It is not surprising, therefore, that most Bible students reach for an Atlas during their studies.

A good atlas must be a historical atlas. Some atlases simply show maps, giving a nice convenient scale and showing the physical geography of the area. A historical atlas, however, uses successive maps of the same area, showing the historical changes which came about through the rise and fall of various empires, the changes in the geographical names, the appearance of new cities and villages and the disappearance of others.

This new edition has been thoroughly revised so as to keep it up to date with regard both to biblical scholarship and to archaeology and topography. The maps of Jerusalem and Palestinian sites excavated to date have been completely revised.

The maps are excellent. They are colorful and the illustrations are well chosen. The many photographs show the life and history of the Bible lands.

DOCTRINE OF THE GODHEAD by J.J. Turner and Edward P. Myers (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1985, paperback, 141 pages, \$4.95.

First published in 1973, the book sold out within a few short years and has been out of print until now. Every Christian searches for a better under-

standing of God and this book is an excellent guide that can help each of us accomplish that goal.

Chapters deal with such subjects as "Grounds For Belief In God", "The Nature of God as Revealed In His Names", "The Triune Godhead", "Attributes of God", "The Pre-Existence and Diety of Christ", "The Holy Spirit in the Testaments", and much more.

A practical approach is employed by the author's discussions on the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit. Questions are included at the end of each chapter to enhance the practicality of this fine book.

GROWING THROUGH CONFLICT, edited by Jerry and Becky Gross (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1984, paperback, 143 pages, \$5.25.

This book contains the material from five contributors as was given at the annual lectureship of Southeastern Biblical Institute in Doraville, Georgia. Conflict is an ever-present reality. The editors feel: "Most of us have felt the pain associated with (conflict) and have seen the damage done to peace and unity as a result of it. But is really the conflict that is so damaging, or is it the way we manage the conflict that causes such harm?...we now believe that conflict is not inherently evil, but is, in fact, an essential ingredient in any spiritual growth and development".

Most Christians face some kind of conflict every day. Sometimes overcoming the troubles we face can become a stepping stone toward our spiritual growth and development. This book looks at conflict from a point of learning from our errors.

THE AVENGING OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS by Arthur M. Ogden (Ogden Publications: Louisville, Kentucky), 1985, hardback, 405 pages, \$12.95.

For those interested in challenging their thinking on the book of Revelation, this book is a must. Whether one agrees or disagrees with the author's conclu-

sions, he will return to this book many times to study the clearly logical exposition of the Apocalypse.

This book contains two parts: Introduction and Commentary. The Introduction is divided into three sections: Section I contains the normal introductory remarks plus scriptural argumentation designed to establish the identity of the events "shortly to come to pass" (1:1). Section II shows that the identified occurrences were foretold through fifteen hundred years of Old Testament history. The author feels it should not be considered strange that one entire book of the New Testament was written to show the fulfillment and completion and these Old Testament Scriptures. Section III establishes the historical background in which these affairs were realized.

Ogden did not intend for this to be just a book for preachers; the language is penned with the average member in mind. Most anyone can read and understand this presentation. It was not intended to be an exhaustive study of the Revelation.

This book is the strongest defense I've ever read for the early date of the writing of the Revelation. Ogden makes application to national Israel in ways that are more logical and scriptural than any other writer has been able to do. If you've read Foy Wallace's commentary and defense of the early date, you've got to read this material. Ogden does a far better job in defending the early date. The argumentation is strong enough that you will want to read and study it several times.

Numerous professionally-drawn illustrations are scattered throughout the book.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT by Arthur M. Ogden (Ogden Publications: Louisville, Kentucky), 1983, paperback, 60 pages, \$2.25.

This is a well-written booklet dealing with valuable information which the average Christian is always looking for but takes too much time to find. The

book begins with the events of 26 A.D. and closes when the Spirit had directed the apostles into "all truth."

This study follows the chronological development of the New Testament in its oral and written presentation. The first part of the book establishes the historical background in which the New Testament order was revealed, showing that the Holy Spirit fully guided the apostles and early Christians into all truth before any of our New Testament books were written. The second half portrays the chronological development of our New Testament books as they were being written, discussing the circumstances as they existed at the time. Efforts are made to prove that our New Testament books contain nothing that had not already been revealed orally to those addressed.

Chronological tables pinpoint many events of the first forty years of Christianity, placing each book in its proper setting. Dates are set. The information in this book will be a valuable asset to serious Bible students.

This booklet was originally distributed by the Guardian of Truth Foundation and sold for \$2.95. Being now distributed by the author himself, the price has been reduced to \$2.25. You will want to order several for a class.

DIVORCE & REMARRIAGE by Wayne Jackson and Truman Scott (Apologetics Press: Montgomery, Alabama), 1983, paperback, 158 pages, \$4.00.

This book is the printed version of a debate which occurred in September of 1982 at Martinez, California. It contains the exact word-for-word discussion between Jackson and Scott.

Jackson defends the position that baptism does not cleanse an adulterous marriage. Scott argues that baptism does cleanse a "previously adulterous" marriage and that two people who have previously been living in adultery may continue to live together scripturally after repentance and baptism.

During the public discussion in California, Scott went beyond his assigned time limit in both of his presentations. In his last speech, he went overtime fourteen minutes. Some of those attending the discussion were dismayed at this breach of the rules. In order to compensate for what many believed to be an inequity, the publishers of this discussion have allowed Jackson the opportunity of

adding some appendices at the end of the book. There are approximately 30 pages regarding what constitutes adultery, who may remarry after divorce, etc.

This book is small in comparison to some others on the same discussion, but this one gets right to the point of disagreement. The issue is "What constitutes adultery?" I'm sure you will enjoy reading this discussion.

JESUS OF NAZARETH by William Barclay (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1981, paperback, 287 pages, \$12.95.

The story of Jesus' life is told in six parts: The Coming; Preparing the Way; Fisher of Men; The Twelve Are Sent Out; The Road to Calvary; and The Prophecy Fulfilled. The simplicity and the drama of the Gospel is retold with the aid of 124 full-color photographs selected from among 5,000 stills taken for Franco Zeffirelli's film, *Jesus of Nazareth*.

First published in hardcover in 1977, this book is once again available in this top quality paperback edition. Barclay was associated with the University of Glasgow before his death in 1978. He was a world-renowned scholar and expositor. He wrote his own translation of the New Testament in a clear and direct way that captures the mood, the emotion, and the enormity of Jesus' earthly mission.

The photographs and author's own translation seem to make the life of Jesus "come alive". This would be an excellent book to add to any church library or resource center for visual aids.

AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL WORDS by W.E. Vine, Merrill Unger, and William White, Jr. (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, hardback, 1138 pages, \$16.95.

Now, Vine's enormously popular *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* and Nelson's *Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament* are combined in one volume, making this one of the most useful reference books available for the serious Bible student. It features an all-new typeface and an easier-to-use two-column format.

This new reference tool makes it possible to study the meanings of biblical words in the original languages,

with little or no formal background in either Greek or Hebrew. English equivalents are listed alphabetically throughout the text, along with either Greek or Hebrew words from which they are translated. The book is organized in such a way that it becomes at once a dictionary, a commentary, and a concordance.

Greek and Hebrew indexes have *Strong's* numbering system and references by page numbers to the Brown, Driver, and Briggs (Hebrew) and Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich (Greek) lexicons.

A BEAUTIFUL GIFT: YOUR AWAKENING SEXUALITY by Joanne E. DeJonge (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, paperback, 95 pages, \$4.95.

This book is designed for the eleven- or twelve-year old whose biological time-clocks are already beginning to equip them for physical adulthood. Correct terms are used and illustrations are realistic. The book may be offensive to a few people because of the pictures or some of the subjects discussed (abortion, birth control, homosexuality, rape, etc.), but the author has stated: "Correct terms and realistic illustrations are used with the assumption that anything less would indicate embarrassment about a subject which need not be embarrassing. Sexual intercourse is dealt with openly, but is placed within the limits God has imposed on us."

The author emphasizes that our bodies are wonderful creations designed by God and every body part and process is good. She feels we can be as open when we talk about sex as we are when we talk about other body functions, such as digestion.

DeJonge is employed by the Grand Rapids Christian School Association. She has tried to take a very delicate subject and be frank in the discussion, but tactful and proper taste. It speaks to the child about his or her relationship with God and with others.

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

"GODLINESS"

Greek Word: eusebeia

Meaning: devotion, piety

I suppose all of us have at one time or another heard it said that "cleanliness is next to godliness? I am afraid it may fall into that "Oh, everybody knows what **that** is" category.

The truth is that probably not everybody could offer a clear, concise definition of godliness if put on the spot to do so. Yet among the thirteen uses of this noun in the N.T. is a command to add godliness (**eusebeia**) to our patience (2 Pet. 1:6-7). We had better find out what it is.

Eusebeia is an "example of pagan words adopted by Christians and made specially their own" (Nigel Turner, *Christian Words*). In New Testament times, among Greek-speaking peoples, it sometimes signified religious devotion, as various papyri of the period indicate (Moulton-Milligan, *Vocab. of N.T.*, in loc.). The Romans, speaking Latin, used the word **pietas**, from which we get our "piety," as a synonym for **eusebeia** to indicate devotion to their pagan gods and faithfulness to their families. And the basic meaning of the word is loyalty or devotion to another.

Paul uses our word extensively to show **what it is not**, for Christians. For Christians, godliness is **not** fruitless time-wasting among non-biblical religious theories and fables. ". . . *Refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness*" (I Tim. 4:7; cf. 6:3). For Christians godliness is **not** pre-occupation with the care and keeping of the physical body. ". . . *For bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things*" (I Tim. 4:8).

For Christians godliness is **not** pre-occupation with worldly advantage but with Christ. Paul warns against men "*corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain: for we brought nothing into this world, for neither can we carry anything out. . .*" (I Tim. 6:5-7; cf. 6:11).

And, finally, godliness is **not** hollow religion. Paul wrote of those who were "*holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof*" (2 Tim. 3:5). The pagan society of the first century, B.C., was characterized by a pervasive sadness, however much superficial merry-making there may have been in it. Men no longer believed in the silly gods of the Greco-Roman pantheon, and they had no living God with whom to fill the vacuum these fallen idols had left. They simply went through the same old religious motions--without faith, without hope. Paul says the godliness or devotion of the Christian is different. It is infused with the power of genuine faith in a genuine God.

Well, if godliness (**eusebeia**) is not all these things, what is it? The word itself is a combination of the prefix **eu**, well, and the verb **sebomai**, to be devout. But devout or pious toward whom? William Barclay wrote, "**The great characteristic of the word eusebeia is that it looks in two directions. The man who has eusebeia always correctly worships God, and gives God his due; but the man who has eusebeia always correctly serves his fellow man, and also gives men their due. . . it is piety and religion in their most practical aspects**" (*Daily Study Bible*, 2 Peter).

So, getting back to our beginning point--it would be better to say that cleanliness is a **part** of godliness, not next to it, and not because a clean body is important in itself, but because the man who takes a bath at least every Saturday night is doing his neighbor a service! Godliness (**eusebeia**) looks outward, not inward. It is devotion to God and neighbor, not self.

God has graciously supplied us with all that is necessary for godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). And we can find this full supply in His word (Tit. 1:1) and the revealed example of the godliness of the Christ (I Tim. 3:16). And He expects us to exercise it actively as we look for the coming of His Son (2 Pet. 3:11).

"MASK" (a covenant)

Heb. Word: karath

Meaning: "to cut off, cut down, fell, cut or make" (a covenant or agreement)

It is interesting that the idea of making a covenant, in the Old Testament, is conveyed by a word whose primary meaning is "to cut." When the Hebrews spoke of making a covenant they were literally saying, "cut a covenant."

The background of cutting in connection with covenants in the Bible may be seen in two places: 1) In Gen. 15 Abraham was told to divide (cut in two) a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram (v. 9). Then God revealed some long-range plans He had for Abraham's descendants to Abraham while he was in a deep sleep (vv. 12-16). Then a "*smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces*" (i.e., the pieces of the animals, v. 17). Then we are told, "*In the same day the Lord made a covenant* (lit. 'cut a covenant') *with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land. . .*" etc., etc. (v. 18).

2) In the late 7th century, B.C., the Lord reminded the men of Judah that they made (lit. "cut") a covenant before Him "*when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*" (Jer. 34:18).

This way of establishing a covenant was used on occasion by non-Hebrew peoples and seems to have been a widespread phenomenon in the Ancient Near East. Documents discovered at Mari in lower Mesopotamia indicate that the Amorites of the 18th century, B.C., cut donkeys in two and passed between the pieces to signify the making of a covenant (E.A. Speiser, *Anchor Bible*, Genesis).

With the passing of time the word **karath** was used occasionally to signify the simple making of an agreement in writing (Neh. 9:38). But the word still carried the idea of cutting and invoked memories of the earlier examples of Gen. 15 and Jer. 34. And what did the cutting of these animals and passing between the parts signify?

E.A. Speiser writes, "The contracting parties--at least in an agreement between equals; otherwise perhaps only the weaker of the two--passed between the sections of the dismembered animals. . .and thus left themselves open, by extension, to the fate of the sacrificed victims in the event of future violation" (Ibid.). And, as has been observed in the case of the Mari documents, there is good evidence for this interpretation.

But I believe Keil and Delitzsch offer an interpretation that may explain both of the Biblical examples (i.e., Gen. 15; Jer. 34) better: "The division of the animals probably denoted originally the two parties to

the covenant, and the passing of the latter through the pieces laid opposites to one another, their formation into one; a signification to which the other (i.e., first explanation above) might easily have been attached as a further consequence and explanation" (Comm., Vol. I, First Book of Moses). This interpretation seems to me to explain the account of Gen. 15 far better than the others, in view of the fact that it was not Abraham but fire sent by the Lord that passed between the parts of the animals.

And the point of all this is simply that the making or "cutting" of a covenant is a serious matter, whether the covenant is made by or with God,

or with other human beings. Christians contemplating divorce for an unscriptural cause would do well to reflect on the fact that their marriages are the result of their having made a covenant with their spouses (Mal. 2:14; cf. Mal. 2:16). And, of course, any Christian contemplating a departure from the Lord, Himself, would do well to consider the fact that in so doing he will violate the conditions of a solemn covenant ratified with the blood of Jesus (Heb. 9:1-15).

3646 Highway 96 W.
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Caring For the Church

Christian's Care For the Church

by David Holder

As Christ cared for the church, so those who are Christ's are to care as well. Also, elders have special responsibilities of caring for the church, though no more so than every other Christian. Every Christian is to care for the church as intensely and as deeply as elders, though their care is demonstrated in different ways.

PAUL'S CARE FOR THE CHURCH

In a brief biographical sketch of his experiences as an apostle of Christ, Paul listed a number of "dangers" he had encountered and then added, "Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches" (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). Lenski suggests that Paul's use of "apart from" or "besides" minimizes all the "dangers" enumerated and magnifies the thing that was most significant to him -- "concern for all the churches."

In further comments in verse 29, Paul showed that his care for "churches" was actually care for the Christians who composed the churches. The apostle asked, "Who is led into sin without my intense concern." His concern was not for institutions but for individuals. The KJV translates "intense concern" with the word 'burn.' Paul's concern was so intense that he burned with indignation over the sin and was inflamed with

sympathy for the sinner.

In I Thessalonians 2:7 Paul described his care for the "church of the Thessalonians" as "gentle. . .as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children." The word Paul used here was the same word he used in Ephesians 5:29 in his description of Christ who "cherishes" His church. It is a word that literally means to keep warm and thus signifies tender and loving care. Paul cherished the church as Christ cherished the church.

OUR CARE FOR THE CHURCH

The whole idea of caring for the church comes down to our care for the church as members of it. Christians' care for the church means our caring for **one another**. Involved in this, of course, is our care for the church as a collectively, that is, care for the work, the condition, and the image of the church. But in back of all this is our care for one another. It is only in our caring for each other in working and worshipping together that the work, condition, and image of the collectivity are manifested.

In a discussion of spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 12, Paul used the "one body/many members" analogy. To emphasize the correct use of the gifts, Paul considered it important to discuss the Christians' relationship with one another. In the course of the discussion Paul stated that "there should be no

division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another" (12:25). The interrelatedness of Christians is to be such that the suffering of **one** results in the suffering of **all** and the honoring of **one** in the rejoicing of **all** (12:26).

It is doubtful in our independently-oriented world that many churches come close to the care Christians are to have for one another. We shy away from sharing and thus from caring. This is obvious from the dividing and dying churches all around us. We might preach the gospel and be "sound" on the issues, but if we do not care for each other the Cause will suffer and the church will die. When will we learn to care as Christ cared? When will we stop "grumbling and disputing" and get on with our worshipping and working? Christ cared enough to give His life for us. Do we care enough to give our lives to Him and to one another?

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Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

3575 Pickett Court -- Tallahassee, FL 32301

THE NEED FOR EVANGELISM

- I. **The Need for Evangelism Is Universal**
 - A. All have a sin problem
 - B. Sin is destructive to man's well-being
 - C. Man is incapable of solving his sin problem
 1. Can't deny he is a sinner
 2. Can't make someone else responsible
 3. Can't remove sin by good deeds
 4. Can't abolish sin by finding sins in others
 5. Can't eliminate sin by destroying one who informs of sin
 6. Can't solve sin problem by allowing time to pass
- II. **The Need for Evangelism Is a Personal Responsibility**
 - A. Acts 8:4; 2 Tim. 2:2
 - B. Every Christian bears the burden of lost souls
 - C. Do we still feel that the man who preaches must have some sort of call?
- III. **The Need for Evangelism Is a Local Church Responsibility**
 - A. In New Testament, local churches acting independently, were the only "missionary organizations"
 - B. The success of 1st century would have been impossible without the concern and active participation of local churches

Conclusion

To evangelize the world in our generation, there are three musts:

1. Overseers of local churches must inspire a deep sense of responsibility for evangelism
2. Every Christian must see himself/herself as a proclaimer of the word
3. All this must be based on the recognition that:
 - a. All have a sin problem
 - b. Sin damns the soul
 - c. Lost men and women without the gospel are without God and without hope

PROBLEM AREAS IN EVANGELISM

Introduction

1. The church cannot claim now what it could just thirty years after its establishment - Col. 1:23
2. Why?
 - a. Opportunities abound
 - b. Communication and transportation are at their zenith
 - c. Are numerically strong
3. This lesson will deal with some problem areas in evangelism
- I. **Insensitive, Luke-Warm Church and Individuals Content to Keep House for the Lord**
 - A. The Lord cannot abide such - Rev. 3:15-16
 - B. We must be motivated to evangelize

- II. **Not Knowing Where to Expend Our Efforts**
 - A. The field is the world - Mark 16:15-16
 - B. Our area of consideration and concentration begins at home but must be broadened
 - C. We must cover as much area as we can using what resources we have, not neglecting local responsibilities or spreading ourselves too thin
- III. **Professionalism**
 - A. Preaching is not a profession
 - B. A superior intellect is not required to preach
 - C. Competition is no part of gospel preaching
- IV. **Lack of Knowledge**
 - A. You cannot teach what you do not know
 - B. Study is necessary

Conclusion

Evangelism is a necessary work for the sinner and the saint. We must recognize our responsibility to Christ and His gospel.

THE DEVIL'S PLACE IN MAN

Introduction

1. Text: Ephesians 4:25-27
2. Text suggests Satan can gain a place in man and that man must resist his efforts to do so
3. He indwells man through sin - I John 3:8
4. What are some characteristics of the devil's place in man?
 - I. **A Sought Place**
 - A. Satan continually seeks an opening
 - B. He desires to have all men as he desired Peter - Luke 22:31-34
 - II. **A Given Place**
 - A. The only place Satan can have in man is that which man gives him
 - B. Every person can have power over Satan
 - III. **A Growing Place**
 - A. Sin begets more sin
 - B. Sin blinds and hardens and thus perpetuates itself
 - IV. **A Distracting Place**
 - A. Diverts ones interest and attention
 1. From things above to things on this earth - Col. 3:2
 2. From God and others to self
 3. Hinders singleness of mind
 - B. As "thorny" soil of Luke 8:14
 - V. **A Destructive Place**
 - A. Satan's aim is to devour - I Pet. 5:8
 - B. Serving Satan results in sharing his fate - Matt. 25:41

Conclusion

We must not give place to Satan in our hearts. We must live our lives for the Lord.

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SAINTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

by Steve Kearney

"Saint", in popular jargon would not apply to any living person; it is exclusively reserved for dead people. Of course, its not just any dead person, but only those who in their lifetime have lived their faith to a heroic degree, and since their death have been canonized "Saints". To hold any other view on this subject would almost be heresy in the present day.

SAINTS ARE LIVING PEOPLE WITH EVERYDAY PROBLEMS

Even though this fixed image is deeply entrenched in our thinking, you may be surprised to learn that it is not scriptural in content. The New Testament concept of a saint is of a living Christian. For instance, in Acts 26:10 Paul, while reviewing his persecuting days, says, *"And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them."* These men and women were "saints" before their death. Apparently they were also "saints" without any canonization. When Paul wrote to *"the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae"*, he was not writing to the dead and the living; the "saints" were the faithful ones living at Colossae. Similarly, when the churches of Galatia were directed to make a *"collection for the saints"* (I Cor. 16:1), it was for the poor Christians living in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26). Obviously then, during apostolic days, saints were living people with everyday problems. Now either one of two things can happen at this point. We can alter our thinking on saints, to bring it in line with the inspired Word, or we can accuse the Holy Spirit of being wrong.

SAINTS ARE PEOPLE SET APART FOR GOD

The word "saint" can simply be defined as "a holy one". It comes from a family of Greek words meaning "holy", "sanctified", "set apart for God". So whenever the Holy Spirit

uses the term "holy", its primary meaning is, "set apart for God". For example, in the Old Testament, there was a holy temple, but it is obvious that bricks and mortar cannot of themselves be good in a spiritual sense. It follows then that the temple could only be holy in that it was "set apart for God". Even in the case of humans, the New Testament called the fleshly and imperfect Corinthians *"holy ones"* or *"saints"* (I Cor. 1:2), not because they had faith in the heroic degree, nor because they were perfect, but because they were "set apart for God". This sanctification takes place when one becomes a Christian. The Corinthians, before they became "saints" were fornicators, idolators, homosexuals, thieves, drunkards, swindlers, etc., but in the process of becoming *"holy ones"* they *"were washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ"* (I Cor. 6:11). That means their sins were washed away by the blood of Christ in baptism (Acts 22:16). They were "set apart" from their world of sin and consecrated to God through Jesus Christ.

SAINTS - NOT BY PERFECTION BUT BY FORGIVENESS

As you can see, people are not saints by perfection, but by forgiveness. If it were not for God's mercy, no one could be called "a saint". He has provided His Son Jesus, as a *"sin offering"* for the whole world (I John 2:2; Matt. 26:28) and it is on the basis of this sacrifice that He offers us the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:36-38). Even when we become saints He will continue to cleanse us from the occasional sin through the blood of Christ. I John 1:7 says, *"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."* In this way God has provided for our continuation in holiness. Consequently, we are never saints because of our own perfection, but only because of God's

forgiveness.

SAINTS MUST STRIVE TO PERFECT HOLINESS

Passing on from the primary meaning of "holy", there is yet another aspect of the word to be explored. The scripture illuminates as follows, *"Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"* (2 Cor. 7:1). As this command is given to Christians, the holiness required only comes into the picture after the initial "setting apart". So what we therefore have is a command directed towards "saints" to "perfect holiness in the fear of God".

To the saints in Thessalonica Paul wrote, *"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not . . . like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we have told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification"* (I Thess. 4:3-7).

Saints are not perfect, but they are striving for it.

SAINTS AND THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Since all true Christians are "saints", set apart from sin by the blood of Christ, and in their on going struggle with sin need the constant forgiveness of God, naturally they will be the occasions when they need to share their problems together and pray for one another. James says, *"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much"* (Jas. 5:16). This passage only allows saints to pray for each other, it does not give us a license to pray to each other!

Nowhere in God's holy book do we

ever find one disciple kneeling down before another and praying to him. Peter refuses Cornelius the permission to even kneel down before him, saying, "Stand up; for I too am just a man" (Acts 10:25-26). Peter realized that to receive that type of homage was to put himself in the place of God.

Even now that he is dead, for us to give him that kind of homage and/or to pray to him for help is to repeat Cornelius' mistake. For even as the Holy Spirit teaches, ". . .there is one God and one mediator also between

God and man, the man, Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). No other can mediate for us; no other could qualify for the unique and solitary role as mediator. Therefore to pray to a dead Christian (saint) is unscriptural and dishonouring to Christ.

CONCLUSION

Saints are living people with everyday problems. In obeying the gospel they have been set apart from the world and consecrated to God. These people have not become saints because of their heroic faith or because they

were perfect. They are saints because God has and continues to forgive them from all their sins. While He does this, they, in turn, strive to perfect their holiness in the fear of the Lord. To pray to a saint either while alive or dead is wrong. For in both of these cases one is putting this person in the place held solely by Christ.



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What Is The Church?

by Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.

People in the world get all kinds of ideas when one mentions the word "church". There are many misconceptions concerning what the mission of the church should be in our world today. To get the true idea of what the church is all about, one has to search the book that tells of its origin and purpose. One has to examine the New Testament. There are many groups in the world today that refer to themselves as a "church", but which do not resemble what we read about on the pages of God's revelation. I believe that if I were going to refer to a group or organization as a "church" that I would want to make sure that it really deserved that designation.

To begin with, I would like to look at what the church is not. People today have grown accustomed to seeing the church as something that it is not. This is because the religious world has perverted the mission and design of the church.

First of all, the church is not a social club. When one mentions the church to some, they begin to think of ice cream suppers, coffee and doughnuts, parties, or other such activities. The church has become a clubhouse for youth groups or senior citizen groups. But in the New Testament, we find no mention of this type of activity carried on by the church. As a matter of fact, we are told that this type of activity is not proper for the church. (See I Cor. 11:22).

Some see the church as a recreational organization. It is not. But we see many "churches" building and

maintaining ball fields and gymnasiums to provide for recreational activities for their members. Many also maintain church buses to take their members to recreational camps, amusement parks, athletic events, and other such events. But when one looks in the New Testament, one does not see the church providing any form of recreational activities for its members.

The church is not a welfare organization. Many view the church as an organization to provide relief to all the world's needy, hungry, and destitute. It is true that all Christians are to do what they can to help their fellow man in need. But the church is only to look to the needs that may be among its own members and even that if the need can be taken care of in some other way, the church should not be burdened with taking care of that need. (See I Tim. 5:16). This may sound harsh and cruel to some, but taking care of the world's fleshly and material needs is not what God directs the church to do.

Finally, let me say that the church is not a business. I am constantly bombarded with people selling products in order to raise money for this "church" or that. I read almost every day about some business venture that some "church" is involved in. Is this the manner in which the church is to raise funds for its work? In the New Testament, we read of only one way for the church to raise funds. That is through the free will offering of its own members. (See I Cor. 16:1,2).

Since this is the only method of raising funds for the church, that would exclude soliciting money from the world at large, whether by asking for donations, selling products, involving the church in business ventures or any other unauthorized method.

Well, if the church is not a social club, a recreational organization, a welfare organization, or a business, what is it? The church is a collection of saved people (Acts 2:47). It is the body of Christ (Eph. 5:30, 32; Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4). It was put here for a purpose. It was designed by God to fulfill a spiritual mission, not a physical one. It's mission is not to feed, clothe, and entertain the people of the world, but to lift them up out of spiritual darkness and sin. It's mission is to teach the gospel to a lost world and to guide its own members to spiritual completeness. (See Eph. 4:11-16).

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

HOW LONG?

(Chapter 13)

Four things in the first two verses of the short psalm, the plaintive cry, "How long?" is heard. David expected pressure and problems. But he expected relief as well. His question is one that is often heard as we listen to troubled saints in our persual of God's word. There is comfort and aid here for the perplexed soul.

THE ANXIOUS QUESTION (v. 1, 2)

"How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" David was not always emotionally up. And when a fellow is down, time does creep.

It's terrible to be forgotten in this world. And there are so many forgotten people in the hospitals, rest homes, and other institutions who are never visited and never remembered with a letter. But how very tragic to feel forgotten of God. I say "feel" for God does not really forget. The disciples may have believed the Lord had forgotten them as they were tossed in the storm upon the tempestuous deep (Mark 6:48). Yet, ". . . he saw them toiling in rowing. . ." and He soon came unto them and the wind ceased. He sometimes lets us row for a spell.

We read of one man who had an infirmity for thirty-eight years (John 5:5) and a woman who suffered for eighteen years (Luke 13:11). But the Lord did not forget them.

According to Isaiah 59:1, 2, it is our sins that causes God to hide His glorious face from us. When we neglect the word and prayer and walk in the way of unrighteousness, we are spiritually separated from God.

"How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be

exalted over me?" He had talked things over with himself on a daily basis but had not produced any answers. Meanwhile his enemy was exalted and perhaps mocked and reviled him.

THE EARNEST PRAYER (v. 3, 4)

"Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. . ." David may be speaking literally. Eyes become dull and weighted in days of sorrow and sickness. Perhaps, however, he is speaking of the eye of faith (Eph. 1:18) and pleading: "Help me to look beyond present troubles."

". . . Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him; and those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved." Who was the enemy to which he refers? We don't know. But let us make personal application and think of our great enemy (I Peter 5:8). May we live and pray that Satan will not prevail in our lives and those in his corner will not rejoice. We can be more than conquerors. (Rom. 8:37).

THE FAITHFUL SONG (v. 5, 6)

"But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation." Is there anything other than salvation that can enable one to rejoice and sing in the midst of sorrow? What a change we suddenly behold in David's verbal countenance. The rain is over. The birds are singing. The skies are blue. The sea is calm.

Many of the psalms are like this. The prophet begins with a sign and closes with a song. Let's not miss the point that the calm is better appreciated after the storm. The joy is greater after the sorrow.

"I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with

me." James later wrote: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (5:13).

God had not forgotten (v. 1). David's mood had moved from weeping to rejoicing. The turning point was prayer.

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“THE BIBLE SAYS”

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by Clint Springer

Jesus Is The Way

In John 14 verse six we read, *“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”*

All through the Old Testament we can find prophecy concerning the greatest event ever to take place on this earth. That is, the coming of Jesus Christ, the son of God. After His perfect life, cruel death and resurrection from the dead, Hebrews 5:9 says he became the Savior of *“all them that obey Him.”*

The eternal purpose of God is declared in many passages of Scripture, especially Eph. 1:10, 11; 3:11 and II Tim. 1:9. Thus the gospel we preach today is the culmination of heavenly providence starting with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, and foretold that through the seed of Abraham *“all nations of the earth would be blessed”* (Gen. 12:3). Paul tells us in Galatians three that Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of that prophecy. He is the way, the only man has been given for eternal life. He is the true and living way.

Looking back to creation, God said *“Let us make man in our image”* (Gen. 1:26). Contrary to the belief of some, Jesus Christ did not have His beginning as the Babe in Bethlehem. This was His fleshly origin, but His spiritual existence dates back further than the mind of man is capable of understanding. Christ was the intermediate force through which God spake all matter into creation. John 1:1-3 says, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.”*

So, my friends, we preach God made flesh - who lived the perfect life - made the perfect sacrifice for sin - and has now become the *“way, the truth and the life.”*

I've been told that the true sense from our text, John 14:6, tells us Jesus

is the true and living way. I also quoted Heb. 5:9, the context of which insists that Jesus, as a man, learned obedience, thus being made perfect, and is Savior to only those who obey Him. Many love to sing about Jesus. . .but actual obedience to His will may be something else. Remember, we cannot come to the Father except by Him.

In relation to obedience, consider the teachings of Romans ten. Verse 13 says that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, and most folks think that simply means to speak His name, believe, or to pray. However, Matt. 7:21 says *“Not everyone that saith unto the Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”* Actually, the context itself of Rom. 10 tells us this truth, for verse sixteen speaks of faith that causes one to obey, or to respond by doing what the Lord requires.

Since Christ is the only way, and this is the truth, how can we obtain the life that is given by coming to the Father? The gospel plan of salvation is really quite simple, requiring that we believe, repent of past sins, confess our faith before men, and then be baptized for the remission. The Bible teaches that we are then added to the church, the body of Christ (Acts 2:47).

Have you done that? We invite you to cast off the shackles of denominationalism and do only that which the Savior teaches; no more, no less. Jesus said, *“no man cometh to the Father but by me.”*

The Coming Of Christ

The Bible says, in Genesis 49:10, *“The scepture shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”* The word “Shiloh”, here, “is a description of the Messiah, as the Prince of Peace.” Another translation says “until he comes to whom it (the scepture or ruler's staff) belongs.”

This passage is a prophecy that the kings of Israel would come out of the

tribe of Judah, as would the King of Kings. . .The Son of God. Although Jesus Christ was *“in the beginning”* (John 1:1), man did not know a great deal about Him until the physical birth in the little town of Bethlehem in Judia. There are many prophecies, however, of a Redeemer, a Savior, a King of the Jews. All the Jewish scholars knew this, but were looking for an earthly king and kingdom, making the same mistake so many make today. However, Jesus plainly said *“my kingdom is not of this world”* (John 18:36).

There are several significant prophecies along this line in the book of Genesis, besides our text from chapter 49:10. Genesis 3:15 foretold the brusing of the serpents head, and since Satan is called a serpent this undoubtedly foretold the binding of Satan - when men would be given forgiveness of sin, and Gen. 12 makes the promise to Abraham that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed.

The covenant of promise made to Abraham was renewed through Isaac, and again through Jacob whose name was changed to Israel. The twelve sons of Jacob or Israel became the twelve tribes; but, as quoted, it was Judah who would bring forth the lentage of our Lord.

You will notice that the promise to the patriarchs was one of a four-fold nature: A mighty nation in number; a land to possess; a name to be remembered; and a Savior to all nations. Through the history of the Jewish people and the birth of Jesus Christ we can see the ultimate fulfillment of each of these. All through the books of history about Israel, the foremost of the promise to Abraham was the *“seed”*, the Savior of all nations. Hundreds of verses take the form of prophecy foretelling His coming. Moses, the great leader and giver of the law, recognized by divine revelation that another and greater prophet, in some ways like unto himself, was to come forth. This he spoke in Deuteronomy 18:15-19. The people were to hear and obey this new prophet. A significant parallel to these words is found in Matthew 17:5. After Christ was transfigured the voice from God in the cloud spoke, saying, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”*

After the giving of the law of Moses

and the Hebrews had fully possessed the land of Canaan (Joshua 21), the nation of Israel came into its prime. Many times they strayed into false worship and were taken into captivity, but always, with a return to the commands, they were able to triumph over their enemies. Again, many times during these years the inspired

prophets spoke of the coming Messiah - the ultimate hope of Israel. There is a parallel in religion today, for when folks go astray from the truth of God's Word, they are still overcome by their enemies. However, our enemies presently relate to sin, and we are looking for the second coming of the Lord. So, we plead restoration of the

true order and doctrine of the Lord - complete obedience to the gospel. Are you really sure you are a member of the New Testament church? Give that question careful consideration, for your salvation depends on it!

Route 11 Box 243C
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The Problem Of Suffering

by Mason Harris

It was not yet daylight, and outside the speeding ambulance I could see the pulsating reflection of the red light as we raced through the darkness in an effort to save our son, Charles. As I stared into the night, the flashing red light reminded me of the time some years before when this all started. Louise and I, with Charles and Lisa, were returning from Memphis. We were almost home when suddenly and without warning a truck pulled into our lane and hit us head-on. I would not know it until the next day, but Charles was treated and flown by helicopter to Memphis. By skillful hands, fervent prayers, and the grace of God, his life was spared.

Now, a few years later, he was being rushed back to Memphis. Just a few minutes earlier a spinal tap had revealed a severe case of meningitis. After his recovery and surgery that followed, we would learn that the old injury had caused an opening to appear behind the upper sinus area, allowing meningitis to develop.

During this short ride that seemed like it would last forever, my mind jumped from one thing to another as I reflected on the events in our lives. And while I thought of the good times we had shared together, I kept returning to his painful experiences from the accident until now. And what did the future hold? On the brink of death and blind, would he beat death again? and if so, would his blindness be permanent? Suddenly the trip was over, and I watched through tears as skilled hands rushed him away to do what they could to help in his battle for life.

A few days later as I sat by his bed, Charles put into words what I had thought about already and asked the

hardest question I have ever tried to answer. He asked, "Dad, why has so much happened to me? I am not perfect, but I do try to live right. Why does so much happen to me?" My answer was so short of what I wish it could have been, but the problem of human suffering is hard to understand, to say nothing of trying to explain it to a young person. As I see other people facing similar situations, I keep remembering his question. And for what it might be worth to some of you, I'll share with you my answer to him.

The first thing we need to understand is that human suffering is not an exclusive problem with the ungodly. This is apparent to anyone who is acquainted with Job. In the opening verse of Job it is said, "*that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil*" (Job 1:1). He was a very good man, and a very rich man. But suddenly and without warning, his financial kingdom was shaken to its very roots. Even his ten children were killed at the same time. Then to add to his sorrow, his own body was smitten with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. Job did not understand, but you and I are allowed to look behind the scene to know what was taking place in regard to Job. But we may continue to wonder about our own afflictions.

Since we can not speak intelligently about what goes on outside our area of knowledge, we can not always speak with absolute assurance regarding causes of suffering. But one thing is clear from this case of Job: Suffering is not a sign of an ungodly life, or the anger of God being expressed.

Paul suffered from something which he called "*a thorn in the flesh.*"

He prayed to the Lord three times that it might depart. But the Lord simply answered, "*My grace is sufficient for thee.*" Why was Paul given this thorn? It was not because he was a bad person! Paul said it was "*lest (he) should be exalted above measure*" (2 Cor. 12:7-9). I do not know all that is involved in that. But the Lord did assure Paul that His grace was sufficient for him. And I believe that God's grace is sufficient for us, too.

It may be that by learning to overcome obstacles and solve problems, we develop real strength. Paul did say in regard to himself, "*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong*" (2 Cor. 12:10). Helen Keller gained worldwide recognition as she turned her weakness (a soundless and sightless existence) into strength. And for those who will learn, there are many lessons in the bitter experiences that may come our way. When life seems to offer nothing but lemons, let us learn to make lemonade.

It is so easy for us to feel sorry for ourselves and think life is so cruel if our comfortable life is interrupted. But consider this: Where the sun shines all the time, there is a desert. Granted, we enjoy sunshiny days. And we are inclined to equate sunshine with happiness and rainy days with gloom. To be sure, we do not want rain every day, but neither do we want to be completely without it. And who knows?--perhaps our lives are made richer and more meaningful by things which are unpleasant for the moment. And how well we come through any crisis depends greatly on our attitude--and our faith in God. So, whatever the storm clouds bring into your life: sickness, poverty, marriage problems, --look to God's grace, and be strong.

1006 Davy Crockett
Dyersburg, TN 38024

Short and to the Point



A Happy Home, Built Upon The C's

Marriages are crumbling, divorce is rampant. Many are pointing to the happy home as a relic from the dark ages. Is there no hope for the home? Is a happy home merely a thing of the past? No, we believe there is hope. But the future of our families depends on us. To assure ourselves of a happy home, we must build upon the C's.

A HAPPY HOME IS BUILT UPON CHRIST. Our Lord is the ultimate and final foundation for all things good and proper. *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (I Corinthians 3:11). Christ is always a partner in every happy, heaven blessed home.

A HAPPY HOME IS BUILT UPON CONSIDERATION. Selfishness destroys relationships; selfless love builds them up. The Christ-fulfilled husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church. (Ephesians 5:25-33). The Christian wife has learned to love her husband. (Titus 2:4.) This love is more than mere emotional infatuation; rather, it is the will which freely gives itself up in service to the one loved.

A HAPPY HOME IS BUILT UPON COMMITMENT. "As long as we both shall live" has been replaced with "as long as we both shall love," and the word love is used as nothing more than a weak substitute for "turn each other on." God still hates divorce. (Malachi 2:16.) He that made them at the beginning, who made them male and female, still joins husband and wife together in marriage today. *"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (Matthew 19:6.) Those contemplating marriage had best be mature enough to understand the nature of lifetime commitment. Marriage is not a suit of clothes, but rather a second skin.

Yes, a happy home is possible, but not without effort - not without your

help. As someone has said, "Marriages aren't made in heaven; they come in kits and have to be put together."

--Dalton Key
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Liberal, KS 67901

Probabilism

It may be that you have never heard of Probabilism, nevertheless it is the basis upon which many people have built what they call their religion. Webster defines Probabilism as. . ." the doctrine that certainty in knowledge is impossible and that probability is a sufficient basis for action and belief. In matters where there are more than one opinion, it is lawful to follow either." In essence it is the religion of compromise. It is the attitude that feeds apostasy and robs an individual of convictions.

This is the religion most people desire because it places the blame for error upon others. After all, if even our scholars cannot agree upon a principle of truth, who am I to attempt to solve the matter. Some religions teach that there is indeed a heaven and hell, while other religions teach there is neither. Probabilism says believe either one, it doesn't really matter that much anyway.

It is possible that many members of the church embrace the doctrines of Probabilism. Many view such matters as institutionalism and mechanical instruments in worship as probably being irrelevant to the question of our salvation. The reason why many become unfaithful to the Lord is because they have assumed that their unfaithfulness probably will not be questioned when they stand before God in the judgment.

When we get to the point where we consider God's word to be based upon probability, then the compromise of convictions become easy. But remember, the Devil does not require of us to abandon our faith completely and suddenly. He wants us to first

doubt, or at least adopt the sentiment that probably God doesn't really mean what He says. But before you are lost, you should consider that God's word is truth and there are no probabilities involved when He speaks.

--Dorval McClister
8230 South Laramie Ave.
Burbank, IL 60459

There's A Hypocrite In The Church!

For a time perhaps, the zeal of the new convert blinds him to any weakness or fallacy among his brethren. After all, "they" believe the same gospel and led him to his salvation. The new convert did not initially question whether or not everyone was as dedicated and sincere as he was. He just naturally assumed they were all strong, fruitful soldiers of the cross.

But after a while, the new convert began to notice some things which were difficult to explain. He was dining at an area restaurant, and saw some members of the church sitting in the bar area drinking alcoholic beverages. In Bible class, he heard some young people endeavoring to justify drug abuse and immodest apparel. And there was this one member who constantly told him all the "garbage" about everybody in the congregation.

There are two reactions which are likely to follow such circumstances for the new convert, and both will cause him to lose his soul. First of all, such conduct coupled with superficial religion may be repulsive to the babe in Christ. As a result, he is likely to reason, "If that's what Christianity is all about, I don't want any part of it!" As a result, he leaves the Lord.

Or, he may be one who has a background of worldliness and immorality. As the temptations lure him to return to the pleasures of sin for a season, the new Christian may point out to the hypocrite in order to justify his own sinful activities.

How can Christians cope with this crisis for new converts? First of all, congregations need to be committed to Paul's instructions to *"purge out the old leaven"* (I Cor. 5:6, 7). Secondly, the new convert should be further educated in the doctrine of Christ. He was converted to Jesus Christ - not to a particular group of people. Jesus will not fail him, nor forsake him. If every

member in the entire congregation apostatizes the new convert should be able to maintain his trust in Christ. Also, the new convert needs to understand that no member of the church is perfect. (1 Jn. 1:8-10) Just as the young Christian will stumble and fall on occasion, other Christians will have similar experiences. The answer is not to overlook the sin, but to maintain a proper attitude toward loving brethren who are struggling to please the Lord (Gal. 6:1).

One of the best ways to help the new convert is to live a pure, godly life, and do not give him occasion to stumble. The problem of hypocrites in the church is not imaginary - it is all too real! Let's be sure we are not contributing to the problem, causing someone else to lose his salvation.

--David Thomley
213 E. 12th Street
Bowling Green, KY 42101

To Young People: Dare To Be Different

"The greatest challenge to American youth today is to dare to be different. It has become too fashionable to have an assembly-line personality in this country." The statement you have just read was made by Mrs. Katie Louchheim, Vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee of 1958. It still needs to be applied. Young man, you can look like something that crawled out from under the floor if you want to, but it is indicative of your conforming to the fads and foolishness of the day. Young lady, you need not take any personal pride in your appearance and look like a washed out mop on the back yard clothesline if you like, but you demonstrate that you are conforming to those around you in the world. But, dress and appearance, are not quite as important as actions.

When you are invited to a prom or a dance, **dare to be different!** Tell the one who invites you that you have Christian parents, belong to Christ and are trying to uphold Christian principles. You never know, you might influence someone to become a Christian.

When someone asks you to take a drink, **dare to be different!** Young Daniel in Babylonian captivity, could have filled his every desire known to

man, but the sacred record of his beautiful life tells us that *"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. . . ."* (Dan. 1:8). Take a tip from Daniel and do not defile your own soul and hamper your future by engaging in sin.

When you are in a crowd of boys or girls who curse and tell filthy stories, **dare to be different!** Sit down right now and memorize Eph. 4:28 and then quote it to those who curse. Don't comment on it or apply it--just quote it.

When others cheat in their studies, **dare to be different!** It would be better to fail a grade than to dishonestly make it and lose your soul.

Don't be an assembly-line personality, **dare to be different!**--dare to be a Christian.

--Dudley R. Spears
2081 Old Scottsville Road
Alvaton, KY 42122

When The Children Have Grown Up

One of these days you'll shout, "Why don't you kids grow up and act your age?" And they will. Or, "You guys get outside and find yourselves something to do...and don't slam the door." And they will.

You'll straighten up the boys' bedroom neat and tidy...bumper stickers discarded...spread tucked and smooth...toys displayed on shelves...hangers in the closet...animals caged... And you'll say out loud, "Now I want it to stay this way." And I will.

You'll prepare a perfect dinner with a salad that hasn't been picked to death and a cake with no finger traces in the icing and you'll say, "Now, there's a meal for company." And you'll eat it alone.

You'll say, "I want complete privacy on the phone. No dancing around. No pantomimes. No demolition crews...Silence! Do you hear?" And you'll get it.

No more plastic tableclothes stained with spaghetti. No more bedspreads to protect the sofa from damp bottoms. No more gates between door to stumble over. No more clothespins under the sofa. No more playpens to arrange a room around. No more anxious nights under a vaporizer tent. No more sand on the sheets or cartoons on TV or comic books. No more iron-on patches; wet

knotted shoestrings; tight boots; or rubber bands for pony tails.

Imagine a lipstick with a point on it, or a work shop with all the tools in their proper place. No more baby-sitters. Washing only once a week. Seeing a steak instead of ground beef. Having a dress that's not wrinkled or wet because of the baby on your lap. No PTA meetings. No car pools. No blaring radios. No hairwashing at midnight.

Think about it. No more birthday presents made out of toothpicks and paste. No more sloppy oatmeal or juicy kisses. No more tooth fairy. No giggles or pillow fights in the night. No knees to heal or boo-boo's to kiss and make well--no responsibility.

Only a silent voice keeps crying loudly, "Why don't you grow up!" and the silence echoes back--"I did!"

Moms and Dads, are you taking time to really enjoy your children? You should!!! Oh, how quickly they grow and go. Have we or will you do a good task in their rearing and upbringing? *"Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord..."*

--Luther Bolenbarker
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Houston, TX 77015

I Can Do All Things

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

- * I can visit the sick and shut-in.
- * I can help to restore those who have fallen away and become unfaithful.
- * I can encourage sinners to obey the gospel.
- * I can teach the truth to friends, neighbors, or even total strangers.
- * I can pray without ceasing.
- * I can attend every service of the church.
- * I can be a positive influence on those about me and show them the importance of being a Christian.
- * I can abstain from every appearance of evil.
- * I can help to strengthen the church by encouraging others, rather than discouraging them.
- * I can fight a good fight, finish my course, and keep the faith.

--Roger Hillis
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Olney, IL 62450

The Poet's Page

MAY I ALWAYS COUNT MY BLESSINGS

Lord may I always count my Blessings
As You give them day by day
Help me not to be complaining
When things don't come my way.

If some day I feel down hearted
Bring to my mind, You give me Health
The greatest of all your Blessings
And far more precious than Wealth.

When the day is dark and dreary
May I pause, and recall
All the others that were sunny
And not mind the day at all.

When I can't have the things I want
Please make me able to see
You give me more than I deserve
And I give so little to thee.

If I forget to count my Blessings
Maybe think I merit more
Make me search my heart to see
If I'm worthy of all you've given before.

If ever I should feel self pity
When others more lucky I see
Let me remember others I've seen
So much worse off than me.

If sometimes I feel discouraged
Think I have too much to bear
Help me to seek out others
And offer their troubles to share.

Please help me to remember Lord
All my blessings come from You
And if I count them every day
I'll always find some new.

--Mrs. Euna Mongan
Troy, IL

I HAVE HEARD, OH LORD

I have heard the voice of God,
And I believe.

I have heard the voice of God,
And I obey.

I have heard the voice of God,
And I am His.

--Richard Williams
Taft, CA

THE QUEST

Tho' man may search for a million years,
A million years and a day;
He cannot find the happiness,
With which to pave live's way.

He may search the heavens above,
And roam the earth below;
But he cannot find this precious gift,
No matter where he may go.

Happiness is such an elusive thing,
And most of us never learn;
How to fill this emptiness,
For which our sad hearts yearn.

Some would lie and cheat and steal,
In honor of this quest;
Some would even stoop to kill,
Their souls refuse to rest.

If we'd only look to our Maker,
And to our ourselves be true;
We'd find that while we toil and search,
Our own heart holds the clue.

God's wisdom placed in each man's heart,
The desires to do and be,
His great power placed them there,
But He gave us the key.

--Mary F. Liggin
Panama City Beach, FL

SOMEONE TO LAUGH AT

I like to be with funny folks
Who'd rather laugh than moan.

I like to hear their jolly jokes
That tickle my funny bone.

Whose good clean humor never lags,
Who know some ridiculous riddle,

Who're always full of goofy gags
To bring a girlish giggle,

Or who can make up tricky tales
Or describe a silly sight,

At them my laughter never fails,
I laugh with all my might.

Yes, it's very pleasant
In cheery company,
But most of all I'm happiest
That I can laugh at me.

--Jean Blackford
Owensboro, KY

INVITATION

I'm grieved to know my children grope
with eyes that do not see.
With ears they hear, but do not heed,
they fail to rev'ence me.

They lie and steal, and worship not,
they do just as they please.
They scorn my love, forsake my name,
then pray for sympathy.

The world I've given to their charge,
to populate and rule,
But they wage war, pollute and spoil,
and think of me, a fool.
I'll bide my time until that day,
when judgment doth prevail.
Then will I garner honest hearts,
and sinners I'll assail.

I'll turn deaf ear to everyone
who lived in infamy.
And spurn the ones who slew my son,
despite his, "Follow me".
A place prepared will chain their souls,
throughout eternity,
And there they'll gnarl and wail
and sear by fire they cannot flee.

None will escape unless they seek
the pathway, straight and true.
The invitation goes to all,
especially to you!

Your days on earth go swiftly by,
you've no time for delay.
Repent, confess, and be baptized,
there is none other way.

--Duane D. Huntley
Athens, AL

KILLING TIME

"I'm killing time", I sometimes say
But, in reality
I have no power to effect time.
'Tis time that's killing me!

But, if too many days and weeks
With idle hours are filled
My years fly by before I learn
'Tis life itself I've killed!

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

SUPER AMERICA STORES DROPS PORNO MAGAZINES

Pornographic magazines are no longer being sold through Super America convenience stores. The Board of Managers of Ashland Oil Company, which owns Super America, decided to drop pornographic magazines effective July 1.

George Townsend, vice-president and general manager of Super America midwest division, said the decision was in response to "a significant volume of customers who have expressed displeasure with these products." Townsend added, "We have struggled with this issue for some time."

One Super America area manager suggested, "My feeling was that they didn't want to see Super America picketed like 7-Eleven stores have been."

Allan Wildmon, of the National Federation for Decency, which has targeted 7-Eleven stores for anti-pornography picketing, praised the change in Super America's policy. "Regardless of the reason, it certainly is appreciated," he said. "Their action shows that they do care about their customers, and their action indicates that they do care about the moral values of their communities."

The change at Super America is not likely to affect policy at 7-Eleven convenience stores. "We usually don't consider the actions of our competitors in making product merchandising decisions," explains Doug Reed of the Southland Corporation, which controls 7-Eleven stores. "What would affect our decision on these magazines would be our consumer. If they no longer wish to purchase the products, then we would take a look at the continued usefulness of that product line."

Super America, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ashland Oil, operates nearly 400 stores in Illinois, Indiana,

Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

RAPIDLY GROWING 'PARTY OF GOD' MAY HAVE BEEN BEHIND TWA HIJACKING

The Party of God, a pro-Iranian Islamic fundamentalist movement whose followers are believed to have been behind the hijacking of a TWA jet June 14, is rapidly gaining influence in the war-torn country of Lebanon.

"We strive to be in the vanguard of the people that are engaged in holy war for independence and freedom," said Sheik Ibrahim al-Amin, the key political leader of the movement.

Though the Party of God claimed no official tie with the hijackers, Sheik Amin said he supported their cause. While they were holding hostages, the hijackers issued a statement calling the United States "the Great Satan."

The Party of God believes that both capitalism and communism are evil, and that "the only answer lies in the mission of Islam," according to the party's manifesto, which adds, "We are headed for dealing with evil at the roots and the roots are America."

AGCA REPEATS CLAIM TO BE CHRIST, OFFERS TO PERFORM A RESURRECTION

Mehmet Ali Agca, convicted assailant of Pope John Paul II, is continuing on the witness stand in a trial involving a possible conspiracy to assassinate the Pope.

Agca, who is the state's key witness in a case against seven other men in the alleged conspiracy, repeated claims June 24 that he was Jesus Christ, and added that he was prepared to prove it by raising a body from the dead in the presence of President Reagan and Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Agca said that he would "raise up some man who is scientifically dead" in the presence of Reagan and de Cuellar, "provided the Vatican tells the absolute truth that I am Jesus Christ."

Agca insisted that he was "not crazy" and threatened to cause the "collapse of all Christendom and Western civilization."

HIGH COURT STRIPS WORKERS OF SABBATH PROTECTIONS

Workers do not have an unqualified right not to work on their Sabbath, the U.S. Supreme Court decided by an 8-1 vote June 26. The Court invalidated a Connecticut law that gave workers their Sabbath day off, declaring that the law imposed an undue burden on employers and nonreligious employees. The Court also held the 1976 law ran counter to the First Amendment's ban on establishment of religion because it had the primary effect of advancing religion.

The Connecticut law at issue stated that "no person who states that a particular day of the week is observed as his Sabbath may be required by his employer to work on such a day."

Writing for the majority, Chief Justice Warren Burger decreed that the state requirement that "Sabbath religious concerns automatically control over all secular interests at the workplace" violated the constitutional principle that Government "must take pains not to compel people to act in the name of any religion." Burger added that the Connecticut law "takes no account of the convenience or interests of the employer or those of other employees who do not observe a Sabbath."

The sole dissenter from the opinion, Associate Justice William H. Rehnquist, did not file an opinion.

The decision is expected to have

little impact. While 30 states have laws requiring employers to accommodate Sabbath observances in some way, only Connecticut's statute makes that obligation absolute. Most other Sabbath laws follow the Federal law in this area, which requires employers to make "reasonable" accommodation of Sabbath observers. In a concurring opinion joined by Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall, Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said she believed the Federal law would withstand a constitutional challenge.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State Executive Director Robert L. Maddox said, "The Court seems to have struck a reasonable balance. The Court has reaffirmed past decisions which strictly uphold church-state separation. Yet the justices have left the door open for protecting employees who want to observe their Sabbath."

The American Jewish Committee also hailed the decision.

BISHOP TEST UNITED METHODIST BAN ON HOMOSEXUAL MINISTRIES

Two Western bishops of the United Methodist Church have announced appointments of self-avowed homosexual ministers, creating the first test cases of a new denominational law forbidding such appointments.

The new church law, which took effect Jan. 1 after being passed by the denomination's convention last year, prohibits ordination or appointment of "self-avowed, practicing homosexuals."

Bishops Roy I. Sano of Denver and Jack Tuell of Los Angeles say the appointments are justified by a ruling of the denomination's Judicial Council. The Council ruled that last fall that bishops may not deny an appointment to a homosexual minister until his or her character has been successfully challenged under the denomination's due process procedures.

Sano appointed Julian Rush as a half-time associate pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Denver. Tuell appointed Morris Floyd, a leader in the denomination's homosexual rights caucus, to a noncongregational post. Several complaints have been filed against Rush's appointment. No complaints have been filed against Floyd's appointment to Awareness

Development, Inc., an organization that helps corporations work with gays and lesbians.

AUCTION HOUSE WILL RECALL HEBREW BOOKS IT SOLD

Sotheby's, a New York auction house, will recall from buyers a collection of rare Hebrew books and manuscripts sold at an auction last summer, and will redistribute them to institutions where they will be available for viewing by the public.

This agreement was part of an out-of-court settlement with the New York State Attorney General. The settlement comes about a year after the Attorney General, Robert Abrams, sued Sotheby's for "persistent fraud and illegality" in auctioning 56 rare Hebrew books and manuscripts in June 1984. Abrams charged that Sotheby's knew that the seller, Dr. Alexander Guttman, had smuggled the books out of Nazi Germany 45 years ago, did not own them, and therefore had no right to sell them.

Abrams said he was satisfied with the agreement, "The rare books and important manuscripts which were in the Sotheby's sale, and that were available for study prior to the Nazi terror period, will be restored to their rightful place in public institutions, and will not fall into private hands where they would be unavailable forever," he said.

A spokesman for Sotheby's said he was pleased with the settlement as well. "It involved reasonable compromises by all parties. There's no lawsuit, no finding of wrongdoing, and we haven't had to change any of our policies. We're very pleased."

Under the agreement, Dr. Guttman, professor emeritus of the rabbinical seminary in Cincinnati, who smuggled the books out of Nazi Germany "at great personal risk" will receive \$900,000, about half the sum raised by sale of the items. Sotheby's will waive all profits from the sale.

THE POLISH GOVERNMENT WILL PRINT DOBSON'S BOOK

This spring the Polish government signed a contract to print the family book *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions*, by Dr. James Dobson. (Published in English by Tyndale House Publishers).

In an unprecedented move, the communist government of Poland will

use its printing presses to run off approximately 20,000 Polish copies of the question-answer book written with a Biblical perspective on marriage and family relationships.

The negotiation to print this family manual started about two years ago when Catholic and Protestant church leaders from Poland met with Chuck Rogers, executive director of EuroVision, based in Pasadena, California. The church leaders expressed a great need for material to help the Polish people who are having serious breakdowns in marriages and family relationships. They specifically asked for a book that was practical rather than theoretical. *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions* was chosen as the most practical handbook because it contains more than 400 questions and answers in a comprehensive reference format. The book deals with communication, sexual, and discipline problems that apply not only to Westerners but to Polish people too.

Polish church leaders asked EuroVision to help with this large undertaking. EuroVision raised the funds for the printing and took *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions* to Poland to be translated by a university professor of English. A psychologist checked the technical psychological terms while a philologist made sure the Polish grammar was correct.

EuroVision then proposed a contract with the communist government of Poland which owns and operates the few presses large enough to do the job. With severe economic hardships in Poland, the government accepted the printing contract that will be funded with Western currency.

The Polish version of *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions* will be printed this year and will be distributed in early 1986 through the local Polish churches.

EGYPT ISSUES BAN ON RELIGIOUS BUMPER STICKERS

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's ban on religious bumper stickers went into effect without incident July 8, despite fears that Moslems and Christians might defy it.

Interior Minister Ahmed Rushdi said most motorists had respected the ban, and that any defying it "would be dealt with quietly." Offenders can lose their licenses for one year, or be fined

the equivalent of \$12.

Moslems, a majority in the Egyptian nation of 48 million people, have traditionally adorned their cars with slogans such as, "To God, Religion is Islam." Many of the six million Coptic Christians have responded with, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Although many Cairenes said they felt removing the bumper stickers was tantamount to blasphemy, endorsement of the ban by Moslem and Christian leaders appeared to have eased its enforcement.

Mubarak faces a campaign led by Sheik Hafez Salama to put Egypt under Islamic law. He has promised to crack down on Moslem fundamentalists if they create unrest.

DANVILLE CHURCH OFFERS TENTH YEAR OF IN-DEPTH BIBLE COURSES

The Lord's church in Danville, Kentucky, has asked that we announce their tenth year of classes for anyone who wishes to have in-depth Bible courses. There will be three trimesters of 11 weeks each, 15-18 different courses. The cost is free. Each student is responsible for his own living expenses and study materials. The work is solely the work of the local church in Danville and is taught by Steve Wolfgang, the local preacher, and Kelly Ellis, one of the elders of the congregation. If you desire more information, write to the church at 385 E. Lexington Ave., Danville, KY 40422.

THAYER STREET CHURCH ANNOUNCES ANNUAL BIBLE LECTURE SERIES

The dates of September 16-19 have been chosen as the time for the annual Bible lectureship conducted by the Thayer Street Church of Christ in Akron, Ohio. Jeff Smelser will have three lessons on "The Nature of the Church"; Bob Buchanan will have three lessons on "Christian Suffering"; Frank Perkins will have a lesson on "Self Deceit"; Bobby Graham will have two lessons on "Marriage"; Roy Diestelkamp will have three lessons on three topics: "Church Buildings, Authority For and Use Of," "Behavior in the Assembly," and "Church Fads"; Ray Farris will have three lessons on "Patterns for Work and Worship of the Church,"

"Patterns for Benevolence," and "Patterns for Evangelism." Congregational singing will be led by Wayne Walker.

The members of the Thayer Street Church open up their homes to provide hospitality for out-of-town visitors. Each person will be responsible for their own meals.

For more information, call (216) 376-2818 or write 640 Thayer Street, Akron, OH 44310.

FAITH ASSEMBLY COUPLE SENTENCED IN DEATH OF THEIR DAUGHTER

A judge gave suspended sentences to a faith-healing couple convicted in the death of their daughter from untreated kidney disease. The couple withheld medical treatment from their daughter for religious reasons. Their 15-year-old daughter died Sept. 16, 1984, at the couple's rural Warsaw home.

Kosciusko Superior Court Judge Robert Burner sentenced James Menne, 38, to suspended terms of five years on a conviction of reckless homicide and six months for misdemeanor criminal recklessness. His wife, Ione Menne, 45, received a six-month suspended sentence of six months for misdemeanor criminal recklessness.

The couple are members of Faith Assembly, a church which teaches that modern medicine has evolved from devil-inspired witchcraft. The group was led by Hobart Freeman, who allegedly told followers that he would never die. He died recently.

RELIGIOUS SECT RAIDED, STOLEN CREDIT CARDS FOUND

The FBI July 16 arrested 25 members of the Chicago-based Black Hebrews religious sect, and recovered "bags and bags" of stolen credit cards, plane tickets, and phony passports.

The arrests followed an 18-month probe that included infiltrating the group. The FBI arrested 18 members in Washington, D.C., three in Baltimore, and four in Chicago. Ten others are sought. Those arrested face multiple counts of theft and fraud involving airline tickets, credit cards and checks, telephone tolls, televisions, videocassette recorders, computers, rental cars, passports and false IDs.

Proceeds from the illegal activities were apparently used to support sect

members living in colonies in Israel, said Norman Zigrossi, head of the FBI's Washington regional office. The estimated 25,000 members of the Black Hebrews claim to be descended from the original tribes of Israel.

EXPORTERS PLEAD GUILTY TO KICKBACK SCHEME INVOLVING SALVATION ARMY OFFICIALS

Two executive officers of a used-clothing export firm pleaded guilty July 30 to charges of mail fraud and conspiracy, admitting they paid kickbacks to Salvation Army officials for 13 years in return for preferential treatment in the buying of used clothes.

The company run by Harry Usatch, 72, of King of Prussia, and his son Gerald, 46, of Narberth, also pleaded guilty to shipping cast-off clothing to Third World and European countries for resale. The Usatches also admitted to an effort to defraud shipping companies and foreign governments, and will have to make restitution of \$449,307.

"We are incredibly distressed, and of course each time it hits the press further damage is done to a fine organization," said William Moss, attorney for the Salvation Army. Moss said he understood that three Salvation Army officers in the Philadelphia area may be the subject of grand jury presentments, and that the organization was cooperating in all aspects of the investigation.

The Salvation Army, a nonprofit Christian charitable organization, has 25,000 employees at 5,000 offices nationwide.

JUST SAY NO

The U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse has a free "Just Say No" children's packet, which contains a pamphlet on peer pressure that teaches young people how to say NO to drugs. The packet also includes six flyers that give information about various drugs of abuse. To order, write Kids' Packet, P.O. Box 1635, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

Some of our information for this page is taken from church bulletins. If you are publishing a bulletin, please see that our name is added to your mailing list.

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Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

September 1985

Number 9

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE – "COOKED IN THE SQUAT"?

by Royce Chandler

Speaking of his depression-era childhood in southern Mississippi, Zig Ziglar contrasted his own family's poverty with the "rich folk" next door, saying: "I knew they was rich 'cause they had a cook--and they had something to cook! The cook's name was Maude. . .and she liked me. So every chance I got, I'd go over and sometimes Maude would give me one of her prize biscuits. Well, one mornin' I went over and she was just pullin' a pan of biscuits out of the oven, and they were as flat as a quarter! I said, 'Maude, what in the world has happened to your biscuits!' She gave a big belly-laugh and said, 'Well now, I'll tell you--these biscuits squatted to rise, and they just got cooked in the squat!'"

It seems to me that that's a poignant description of what's happening to many of our young people in the Lord's church--they squat to rise, but just get cooked in the squat. We can throw out the biscuits, but what will we do with the Lord's young people?

If you read no more of this article, at least read the paragraph at the end labeled "suggestions". It may provide the key to an "awakening" where you worship by unchaining the pent-up talent, energy, and enthusiasm of the

children there, refreshing the whole family with renewed interest and zest for serving the Lord. But I hope you'll take the time to read the entire article.

It is significant that so many Bible heroes were just "young people" when the Lord first singled them out for special service. MOSES was a baby. JOSEPH was seventeen. SAMUEL was about three. DAVID was just a young lad. SOLOMON was around fourteen to eighteen. JOSIAH was eight. DANIEL and his cousins SHADRACK, MESHACK AND ABEDNIGO were only twelve to fifteen. MARY was probably fourteen or so. JESUS was twelve. TIMOTHY was likely a late teenager. At such tender years these servants were set apart to special and even great spiritual service. Not aged, wizened, experienced, or seasoned workers these youngsters--but full of talent, confidence, commitment, and love for their God.

Now what does that teach us about local churches and our young people? Even the blind can see the application, but let's pursue this a bit further.

We treat people exactly as we view them. If I see a man as being "great", my conduct toward him will reflect my mental image of him. If I see him as not worth my time, my behavior toward him will communicate that

concept, too. I heard of a study done years ago in a school in Maryland, where two groups of students were labeled "genius" and "average". One teacher was told, "Congratulations, you're in luck! Your whole class is made of high-achievers; the brightest, the sharpest, the most capable students in school. These kids are so smart, they'll be answering questions even before you ask them! They'll practically teach themselves! Oh, they'll complain and act like you're killing them, but pour it on! They can really do the work!" If you were a teacher, how would you feel about getting that class?

The second teacher was told: "Your kids are just average students, so don't expect too much of them. They're not too bright, not too dumb--just average. You may have to go a little slower with them than you'd like, but don't get too discouraged. Just hang in there and do the best you can." If you were a teacher, would you be excited?

The results were interesting. At the end of the year, the "genius" students were one full year ahead of the "average" kids. But the key to all this is that there were no "genius" kids--they were ALL just average. The study has been designed to see how a teacher's

image of his students would affect his own teaching and the students' performance. You see, we treat people exactly the way we see them.

And the brother-principle is that we reap exactly what we sow. We get out of people only what we put into them. If we sow respect, confidence, enthusiasm, and high expectations, that's exactly what we're going to reap. If we sow disrespect, disinterest, and distrust; we reap inactive, disinterested children with a poor self-image of their value to the local church and to the Lord's work generally. The result? They leave the Lord when they leave home, and few are ever of much spiritual value in the Lord's service.

Which message is being communicated to the young people where you worship? Are they being ignored, passed over, and put on "hold"? Do they have to wait until they are late teenagers to get any opportunity to be in front of a class or a larger assembly? Are your young people seen as "the church of tomorrow"? If that is your view of them, don't be surprised when they quit and are not in "the church of tomorrow".

ALTERNATIVES

It's about time we change our glasses so we can see our own "acres of diamonds" right in our own back yard. Our young people--(and I'm speaking about all of them, from pre-school and up, both boys and girls)--are bursting with ability and may not even be aware of it. They have been taught that they are not a vital part of the local family of God. They have learned that they have to wait until they grow up. Simply put, that's called "garbage-dump thinking."

It's past time to start mining and refining their talents. They must be convinced of their worth and ability and then be trained, developed, encouraged, and used. . .and, may I add. . .used for far more than just occasionally reading a scripture, passing out bulletins, or leading a song in a training class. At the risk of being misunderstood let me also suggest we need to shelve traditional "training methods" that have brought such poor results. A little creativity can go a long way without being unscriptural.

SUGGESTIONS

Churches commonly schedule a weekend for a special teacher-training series, a singing school, a series of

lessons on a particularly relevant theme, etc. Have you considered devoting a week or weekend to a "developing-our-young-people" series? Tremendous gains could be made by scheduling eight to ten hours of concentrated effort in stimulating them to identify, develop and use their talents in spiritual ways.

Each spring have a brain-storming session with them to plan a series of both spiritual and social activities for the summer. They will be spiritually active, and the social outings will knit them closer together in ways that will produce even spiritual benefits.

Take a serious look at your present Bible classes. It's my experience that most are of exceptionally poor quality due to unmotivated, boring teachers and low-quality study materials and

methods. Maybe it's time for an overhaul.

CONCLUSION

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "The great tragedy in America today is that the average man goes to his grave with his music still in him, and the most beautiful melodies are those buried melodies that were never allowed to come forth." How tragic if we "bury" the Lord's young people in the local churches and never allow their great melodies to see the light of day. Maybe there's a young Samuel, Daniel, Timothy, and Mary buried where you worship. If they are now "squatting to rise", how will they turn out where you are?

3891 Bunnell Rd.
Lebanon, OH 45036

Annoying Drivers

by David Thomley

If you have done much driving, you have, no doubt, met the guy under consideration. First, he pulls out in front of you, so you brake. As he begins to slowly accelerate, you pass him. Soon, he passes you, but quickly slows down again. He cannot seem to make up his mind whether he wants to drive in front of you or behind you. The exchange of position goes on and on.

Christians who lack stability are much like the driver who cannot make up his mind whether he wants to speed (and worry about a ticket) or drive the speed limit (and arrive ten minutes later). Those who come to Christ for salvation are asked to leave their sins behind, and follow after Christ. Paul emphasized this message to the saints in Rome when he said, "*Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin*" (Romans 6:6).

Israel of old was noted for her lack of stability in faithfulness to God. Time and time again, God called upon these fickle people to make up their minds and declare for one side or the other. When Israel was in Egyptian bondage, they cried to God for a Deliverer. God sent Moses. When Moses got there, the situation worsened temporarily. The people

complained. Then they left Egypt; they were happy. Pharaoh pursued; they cried again. They crossed the Red Sea; they rejoiced. They needed food and water; they murmured. They never could decide if they were going to trust God or trust themselves.

Unfortunately, we are all too familiar with the Christian who takes his religion in "spurts". For several weeks, the fellow will attend every service. Then he goes out with some worldly friends to share the "gusto" of life. He misses the next several assemblies. Soon he is back again, this time asking to teach a class. After a few weeks, however, he "does not have time" for the class and passes it to someone else. One week he visits seven delinquent members; the next week he misses services to attend a ball game. This Christian suffers the same frustration as the annoying driver who cannot make up his mind; and, like that driver, he has the potential of having a terrible wreck, and causing others to wreck also. "*Therefore 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 Corinthians 15:58).

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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

WE NEED LEADERS LIKE NEHEMIAH

Every society, regardless of how large or small, must have some kind of government; without government there would be absolute chaos. Even the smallest of the insects have accepted a form of government by dividing into a colony. Watch the ants or the honeybees; it seems that each one has his own particular duty and someone has been appointed as a leader.

Just think what our civil society would be like without rulers, governors, judges, magistrates, kings, presidents, or other heads of government. No one, not even the outlaw, wants to live in a disorganized society. Every body of people must have a system of civil control and some leadership.

But what about the Lord's church, who must do the ruling? Just as in civil society, everyone cannot be a ruler; everyone does not know how. God has decreed that certain men be appointed to lead the congregation. These men are called elders, pastors, or bishops. To be a leader in the church of Christ, there are certain things a man must be. First of all, he must be a Christian. One can not rule others if he himself is not an example.

The progress of the church depends on its leadership. No congregation will ever surpass its leadership. Many businesses that were on the brink of ruin have been saved and made to grow and prosper by changing the men at the head of them. Congregations that are on the verge of spiritual bankruptcy could be made thriving congregations with good leadership.

One can not be an elder by constraint. Paul said, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Timothy 3:1). He must want to be an elder; one cannot do anything for the Lord if he does not desire to do it. He must understand, too, that this is a work, not a title. Many men would like to have their name

on a piece of church stationery or on the back page of the church's bulletin; they want to accept the title "elder" (which is not a title at all), but have no idea as to the duties associated with the term.

The Holy Spirit has recorded for us the qualifications a man must meet before he can be considered as a leader of the congregation. These are found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Too many Christians have spent too much time arguing about a few of the domestic qualifications and have failed to look at other characteristics of the man. It is possible that a man may be married, have children, get his taxes paid by April 15, be a good neighbor, attend every service of the church, and still lack qualities that are essential to good leadership. Not all Christians are good leaders. That doesn't mean they can't go to heaven; it just means they can't be leaders.

One of the musts for being an elder or overseer of the flock is the ability to lead. The Bible states, "Obey them that have the rule over you..." (Heb. 13:17). The word "rule" in this passage means "to lead, to lead the way, go first; be leader, chief" (*A Critical Lexicon and Concordance*, by E.W. Bullinger, pg. 653). Competent leaders must have certain characteristics. Let us look at an Old Testament character, Nehemiah, and see some of these qualities:

1. **Leaders must feel the burden.** The events in the book of Nehemiah took place near the close of Old Testament history, roughly 445 B.C. During the last century of Old Testament history three waves of refugees moved to resettle the homeland of Israel. The first group was under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 538-537 B.C. They rebuilt the second temple, smaller and more modest than its splendid forerunner inspired by Solomon. Some eighty years later, by traditional dating, Ezra led a second company from Babylonia to Jerusalem. Repair on the foundations of Jerusalem's walls started in those days. However, political pressure from neighboring enemies led King Artaxerxes I of Persia to issue an edict that the construction was to cease "and that this city be not builded" (Ezra 4:6-22).

As we look at Nehemiah, we find him in chapter 1:2, asking Hanani and certain men of Judah, "concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem." Nehemiah was not ready for the answer: "The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the walls of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire" (vs. 3). His response is found in verse 4: "And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven."

Nehemiah was serving at this time as loyal cupbearer to the King of Persia. Nehemiah didn't know exactly what he needed to do, but he knew he had to do something. His concern for Jerusalem showed in his face. The king asked

Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."
— Proverbs 27:1

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.

\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:

P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

him, *"Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart"* (2:2). Why not appeal to the ruler for a reversal of his former decision? Why not ask for the legal papers to authorize the rebuilding of Jerusalem? If his monarch were suspicious of his motives, Nehemiah knew he could lose his job as cupbearer, and maybe even lose his head. But at the risk of it all, he obeyed the feelings of the burden. He was moved to do everything possible to correct the situation in Jerusalem. In the moment of crisis, the king trusted him and gave him all he requested. He even appointed him the new governor of Judah, splitting the province from Samaria. In 445 B.C., Nehemiah led the third party of refugees from the land of captivity to Jerusalem.

The man that is going to lead today must also feel the burden. He must give his heart, mind, love, time, money, and his all to one goal. Think of the urgent needs of today—for a great spiritual and moral awakening; for godly and capable leadership in many churches; for developing godly fathers and mothers who will build strong homes; for creating an effective teaching program in our Bible classes; for evangelizing over three billion people who need the gospel; and more. We need men today who will spend anxious hours wrestling with the problems of the church; we need men that will drag into the house late at night after being in the home of the weak and unfaithful; we need men that are willing to practice Scriptural discipline as it is needed.

2. Leaders must deserve respect. Nehemiah was successful as a leader of the Jews because he was respected by them. No one can be an efficient elder unless he is respected by the flock he is to shepherd. Just to appoint a man an elder will not make people respect him. The man is not to be appointed in hopes that he will eventually do something; he is to be appointed because of what he has been and done before he was appointed.

3. Leaders must keep the people informed. Notice what Nehemiah did: *"Then I said unto them"* (2:17), *"Then I told them"* (2:18). Notice the results: *"And they said, Let us rise up and build"* (2:18). In order for elders to be effective, they must relate to the deacons, preacher, Bible teachers, song leaders, and other members. Leadership **must** inform! There must be effective and constant communication that enlightens and challenges. The leadership in Acts 6 informed the people of the problem, then suggested a plan for correction. They then called upon the people to get involved.

I have heard of congregations where elders never meet with anybody. There is no way that a good working relationship can be had between the elders and the preacher, or the elders and the deacons, or the elders and the Bible teachers, without there being an open door of communication. There must be some meetings to discuss the work of the church.

Weldon Warnock has observed that in some places *"even the elders meet infrequently, and then the time may be consumed talking about material things. Or, they huddle in a corner for a few minutes after or before worship and try to discuss the work of the church. A few matters might be decided in a huddle, but no serious and in-depth plans can be worked out to move the church ahead"* (*Searching the Scriptures*).

It is a sad mistake for elders to fail to keep the church

informed about what is going on: new building program, preacher's salary, change in Bible class curriculum, gospel meetings planned, members needing encouragement, etc., etc.

4. Leaders must make some plans. Nehemiah made some plans, but he did not stop there. He said, *"Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem"* (2:17). I don't care how good the archer is, he can't hit a target if there is not one in front of him. Too many churches don't have goals; the elders are content to just drift.

L.R. Wilson once wrote: *"Sometimes the preacher catches the vision, generates the power, and gets the congregation all steamed up, but the overseers fail to properly direct the accumulated energy; instead they try to throttle it, and the inevitable happens--an explosion takes place and the congregation is torn to bits. Elders who are not interested in making any progress should always select a minister who is content to drift along"* (*Congregational Development*, pg. 30).

In too many congregations, the preacher is telling the elders what to do. We need to remember that the preacher is **not** one of the pastors. The elders must be making the plans. They must loof for the opportunities to stimulate the talents and potential of the members. Good leaders will be making plans for where they want the church to be in three months, one year, three years, ten years from now.

5. Leaders must be enthusiastic. Nehemiah was full of enthusiasm and this seemed to be contagious. Many good works of the church are killed by the indifference of the elders who ought to be pushing it. It is possible to hinder a good work and never open his mouth in opposition to it. All that is necessary to throw a bucket of cold water on the fire is to simply remain indifferent to it.

I have known of elders planning special classes on the home, or dividing the congregation into small study groups, or having all-day lectureships and then wondering why there wasn't better attendance. One of the reasons was because the eldership didn't "talk it up" and attend the events themselves.

6. Leaders must be men of prayer. When Nehemiah first heard of the condition of Jerusalem, he fasted and prayed (1:4). He prayed before he spoke (2:4-5). He prayed when others laughed at his work (4:1-5). He prayed when the opposition tried to stop the work (4:8-9). He prayed when Sanballat tried to get him to compromise (6:9).

We need elders that are willing to call the church together for special "prayer meetings." We need our leaders to be examples to the members in their prayer life. We need to hear more sermons on the good that comes from praying saints.

CONCLUSION

The church today faces some of the greatest challenges. May elders of the Lord's church strive to be the kind of leaders God would want them and may the sheep follow their shepherds in all things that are right.

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We love your magazine and so does our 15 year old daughter. Keep up the good work of keeping the content of the magazine so **positive**. With so much negative in this crazy world, we need all of the **positive** we can get. God bless you in your efforts.

--Mrs. Otis R. Reynolds
Kettering, OH 45429

LOOKING FOR A QUOTE

As a Christian I have constantly heard some of the brethren say that the Catholic Church calls the Pope "Lord God". Brother Charles Holt is the most recent brother that I have heard make such a statement (see his book *Is Baptism Essential To Salvation?*, p. 30). Being raised a Catholic I never used such an expression and neither did any of my teachers who taught me the Catholic faith. Also, since becoming a Christian I have never read in all my reading of Catholic books where any writer ever called the Pope by this title. Are you familiar with this quotation - where it is found and the authority of the one who said it? If so, please let me know where it is to be found so I can see for myself that such a title as "Lord God" is a proper way for Catholics to address their head. If it cannot be found then perhaps through the medium of your paper you can tell the brethren that they misrepresent the Catholic Church every time they say such a thing. And, surely there is enough error within this organization for us to attack without building strawmen to destroy.

--Kieran Murphy
Dublin, Ireland

CONSEQUENCES OF HOME SCHOOLING

Much has been written recently about the advantages of homeschooling. Many parents have become quite concerned about the humanism being taught in the public schools. I graduated from a public high school two years ago and I believe I am a stronger Christian because of attending twelve years of public schooling.

Sending a child to public schools puts a tremendous amount of responsibility on the parents since there must be a good, open line of communication with the child. I remember coming home from school and telling my parents what I was being taught. These conversations were used by my parents to teach me, from the Bible, the error that was being taught. I learned an invaluable lesson of proving my faith in God's Word.

Our children have to live in this world and face temptations. No matter how much we, as parents, try to shield our children from drugs, alcohol, humanism, etc. eventually our children will be on their own. What will they do then? If a

child is kept home for the first ten to fifteen years of his life and then thrust into the world, he will not know how to deal with temptations. However, when a child is five or six and begins to attend school at the same time all the other little ones are beginning, your child and all the other children will go through the same adjustment period. The other children will learn from the beginning that your child is different and will accept him. If you start your child in school when he is much older, the other children will already have adjusted to school and your child will have a much more difficult time being accepted. A small child is not as self-conscious as a teenager and can adjust to being different. A teenager will be wondering what his peers are thinking and be more likely to give in to peer pressure. If a child has not had to face temptations until he is a teenager, he will be confused with the sudden temptations to engage in sex, drugs, alcohol, etc. The temptation to engage in these activities is much greater at the junior high and high school level.

I believe that many of the parents who have elected to teach their children at home have failed to look at the long-term effects and consequences. When and how are you going to teach a child to be different? When are you going to teach a child how to resist temptation? I know two children who have been taught at home and who are now old enough to be out on their own, but they do not know how to deal with society and temptations. All they know is their own little world made up mostly of mom and dad. What will they do when mom and dad are gone?

I am grateful that my parents sent me to public schools. They were there to teach me to live a Christian life in the face of many temptations. I urge every parent to consider the consequences of home-schooling. Some day your child will be exposed to humanism and will be forced to deal with a godless society. If you have a good relationship with your child, he will adjust to public schools and at the same time be taught an invaluable lesson of resisting temptations and proving God's Word.

--Debbie Whitsitt
Indianapolis, IN

READY TO GO TO NORWAY

Based upon the command of Matt. 28:19-20 of "go teach all nations" my wife and I are making plans to move to Norway for the purpose of spreading the gospel there. Many ask "Why go to Norway?". The answer to this lies in the same reason any one is concerned about teaching in any community in the U.S. It is our concern for the lost and our compassion for them that compels us to work for the Lord wherever they may be. In answering why I desire to move to

Norway and work there are several reasons. The first being I can already speak "Norwegian" and being able to speak the language I feel compelled to go teach the Norwegian people. Secondly, there is a great need for more workers there. The population of Norway is a little more than 4 million. That number of people is scattered over a land mass stretching the same distance as our eastern coastline from N.Y. city to Miami, FL. Trying to teach the people in Norway today is but one man that is my father, Tom Hunting. I do recognize the great need for gospel teachers in our own land, but with my ability to speak Norwegian and my awareness of the land and the people there I feel the need to leave this great land and serve our Lord in Norway.

Living in Norway before and having family living there now enables me to know what kind of work that I will be undertaking. It will be a very slow and trying work but having faith in "God who gives the increase" we plan to labor there patiently and faithfully. Our tentative plan is to be in Norway for many years not the usual two or three years in mission work. One can spend their whole life there teaching and still have more to do.

Norway is dominated by the state church - the Lutheran church and has been since the 1500's 95% of the population is listed as being members of the Lutheran church. Even though there is religious freedom in Norway, there seems to be a tightening of entry by the government to others desiring to move there and teach other faiths. In fact we are still awaiting our final approval for our move. Placing our trust in God we have set our departure date for Jan. 1986 and are now trying to find funds for our move to Norway.

If you are interested in spreading the gospel to regions beyond our own country please contact me. I will send you further information about our plans. I will also provide the names of several references to contact concerning my abilities and service in our Lord's Church.

I hope you're interested in becoming a "fellow worker" with us in Norway. We would deeply appreciate any fellowship you might share with us. You may not be able to go into all the world and teach. . .but you can help send others. Hope to hear from you real soon; please respond as Jan. 1986 draws near. We pray God's richest blessings upon you all everywhere as we all labor for the Lord wherever we may be.

--Terry Bunting
Manchester, TN 37355

DESERVES TO CONTINUE

I encourage you to keep up the good job you are doing with the paper. The balance of material and the general approach of the paper is, in my opinion, unique (in the good sense of that term), and it deserves to continue. Your editorials are always good, and I always look forward to the "Happenings" page (although I must confess that I often, but not always, disagree with the thoughts expressed in the "Thoughts On Phrases" column).

--David McClister
Midlothian, IL 60445

ENJOYED THE ARTICLE

I think you are doing an excellent job with the paper. We just got our latest edition yesterday and Janice and I really enjoyed the survey taken among preachers' wives. They really are a special breed aren't they? Thank God for them!!

--Rob Harbison
Mt. Vernon, IN 47620

Molding The Clay

by Linda Barnett

Early Training

There's nothing as precious as a little child learning, exploring, experiencing the world around him. Proverbs 22:6 says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.*"

When an athlete is training, he uses every available minute and begins as early as possible to be the best he can be. So it should be in training our children about God and His Word --- to begin as early as possible. It is important to realize that the training falls principally upon the parent; however, the time spent in organized Bible classes should be quality time in studying and training children.

Like the athlete, to begin as early as possible is the ideal. If you do not have a "Cradle-roll" class, you might want to consider these suggestions and think about beginning one.

First of all, if you think a baby or child below the age of two cannot learn, then you have never been around children very much. Consider how much they learn physically in that short span of life---they go from doing nothing but sleeping, eating, and crying to walking, talking, obeying, disobeying, etc. What more important things could a child learn than about His heavenly Father. A cradle roll class is **not** a babysitting class. It is a **beginning**---a beginning in training for the child.

There are several good series out with ideas for setting up this special classroom and the materials needed. One in particular is the *See & Know* material published by Sentinel Publishing with Bible class procedures for ages 0 through 2 years. A low U-shaped table with shelving to the inside provides the work and storage space. Suitable chairs are "jumper" chairs for the youngest with the older children progressing to a small regular chair.

This is in preparation for the transition to ages 2 and over.

A child who begins in a cradle roll learns about God, His creation, His wonderful love, His Son, His special book - the Bible; all through visuals, flannel graphs, songs, and lots of repetition. He learns that this is a time for studying and listening and learning --when everyone has his own special class to attend. A child who begins in a cradle roll will seldom balk at going to class even when visiting another congregation. After all, whether we wish to admit it or not, it requires a certain amount of discipline to attend a class and behave, sit, listen and participate. A child cannot learn this type of discipline except by being in that situation. The earlier the training is begun, the less likely bad habits will be formed to conflict with the "Classroom attitudes" needed to gain the most from an organized Bible class.

Most literature gives ideas for teaching materials (to be purchased or made) such as posters, a ticking clock to begin class, i.e., "Tick-tock, says the clock, We're glad that you are here. Tick, tock says the clock, we know that God is near." (*See & Know*); as well as a variety of other songs, "glove" stories, etc. **Repetition Is The Key!** Since babies are learning many things, they don't tire of the same procedures as quickly as older children. Some of the ideas given in these materials can even be carried over to a 2 and 3 year old class. Remember, "**Research now indicates that a child's mental development is most rapid during his first 18 months, and that therefore this is one of the most important learning periods of his life**" (*Parents Magazine*, "Babies Love to Learn", Sept., 1968.)

What more important training to begin with than to show them and allow them "**to see, to touch, to smell,**

and to do -- to sense and love -- to be loved and cared for -- to be quiet -- to be happy -- to talk to God" all in a "cradle-roll" class. (*See & Know*, p. 2).

I don't propose to be an authority on training or teaching children and if you would like to share an idea through this column, you're most welcome to send your ideas to me for sharing.



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A Piece of Clay

I took a piece of plastic clay
And ildy fashioned it one day,
And as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again when days were
past—
The bit of clay was hard at last,
The form I gave it, it still bore,
But I could change that form no
more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day,
And moulded with my power and
art
A young child's soft and yielding
heart.

I came again when years were
gone—
It was a man I looked upon;
He still that early impress wore,
And I could change him never-
more.

—Author unknown

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

JOB

by Johnny Felker

Who among us has not asked these agonizing questions in the face of suffering, "Why? Why has this happened to me? Why does God allow His children to suffer pain and tragedy?" And, where can we find the strength to remain righteous in trial? Where can we find a theology that delivers us from our hard feelings toward God? Where can we find an example of someone like us who patiently endured? The answer to these questions is the book of Job. In it we hear the echoes of our own misunderstandings and frustrations, and find clear answers to the questions that haunt us in our trials and in the trials of those we love.

However, there are questions about the book itself that do not have answers so clear: Who is the human author? When was it written? When did Job live? Definitive answers cannot be given to these questions; but, that does not hinder the usefulness of this dramatic masterpiece. We do know that Job was a real man (Cf. Eze. 14:14-20; Jas. 5:11) with real problems, problems that transcend the boundaries of time and place. Hence, the book of Job continues to speak cogently and effectively to God's people in every generation who suffer.

The story of Job is both touching and interesting. It begins one day when the adversary of man in his relentless manner accuses Job of serving God for the many blessings God has given him. God, in response, allows Satan to afflict Job with loss almost beyond comprehension. Who among us could endure as did Job the sudden and unexpected loss of all his animals, most of his servants, and ten precious children! And yet, "*Job did not sin nor did he blame God*" (1:22). Amazing!

But the devil doesn't quit. He contends that Job would give up everything for his life and should his person be afflicted he would curse God to His face. Again, God gives Satan power over Job and he afflicts him with sore boils from head to foot. Even

Job's wife's faith fails and she becomes part of his trial by urging him to curse God and die. (Let every godly woman beware!) And even in this Job did not sin with his lips.

Now begins the dialogue section of the book (Cpt. 3-42:6). Job is visited by three noted friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, & Zophar) who come to sympathize with and comfort him. Unfortunately, their "comfort" further adds to Job's torture. Each in turn advocates from varying aspects the same inadequate vindication of God's ways to man. Affirming God's holiness and justice, they press the view that these attributes of God demand that the sinner be punished for his sins. And since Job suffers, he must be a sinner.

Job knows, of course, that he has committed no sin such as to bring such suffering. As his friends press their view Job himself sometimes goes too far in his own self-justification adopting what may be perceived of as an air of self-righteousness and irreverence for God. But before we cast stones at him let us remember our own failures in this respect.

After the dialogue between Job and his friends is completed, a young bystander named Elihu interjects his views. He contends that Job is wrong for seeking to justify himself in such a way that almost makes God the sinner. Furthermore, he suggests that Job's friends are wrong in their simplistic view of divine retribution. Rather, God sometimes inflicts suffering, not as punishment for sin, but as a means of discipline, to perfect one's character.

At this point in the dialogue we are left with one burning question, namely, "Who is right?" Is Job? The friends? Elihu? God appears in a whirlwind with answers of His own. Through a series of penetrating questions emphasizing His own omniscience and omnipotence God reminds Job of his own

smallness and insufficiency and the impropriety of his challenges to God. Job in turn is left with a sublime example of God's own condescending love and a sense of humility and remorse for his defiance of God. As for Job's friends, God rebukes them for their misrepresentation of Him and commands Job to offer sacrifices in their behalf for forgiveness.

The story ends as God restores the material fortunes of Job twofold and gives him ten additional children. Job dies "*an old man and full of days*". A truly marvelous story.

Job then is a book about suffering. It cautions us of adopting a simplistic view of divine retribution. No one can point to his success as evidence of his righteousness; nor can any man point to one's adversity as an evidence of his wickedness. Only the judgement will fully vindicate the justice of God in His dealings with men. The book of Job teaches that suffering can serve a useful purpose in God's scheme of things. It may serve to test our faith, to reveal what we are made of, to perfect our character, to create reverence for and dependence on God, to strengthen our longing and hope for the realities of heaven. And yet it seems to me that the ultimate lesson on suffering from Job is this--that although we may in our own limited understanding comprehend what God is doing, or has done, in our lives through our trials, our understanding of such is not essentially to our faithfully serving Him. God's omnipotence, His majesty, His worthiness to be served renders all that would turn us away from that, even the most severe suffering, insignificant in comparison. Job did not need to know why he suffered after he saw and heard God. God's own appearance was proof enough of His love for Job. Likewise, we also have seen the ultimate proof of God's love for us--His own Son suffered on the cross for our sins. Let this then be grounds for us to trust His providence.

Job is a book about Satan. Reading this book should increase our abhorrence of him. How completely he lives up to

his various designations--Satan, "adversary" of men; the devil, "slanderer" of men; and the evil one. Cruel, unmerciful, relentless, calculating; what would he do if his wicked hand were not stayed by God!

Job is a book about patience. Who besides our Lord has suffered more than Job? And yet he patiently endured. But how? He put God on the throne of his life and built a faith that sustained him in trial. He did not forget the blessings God had given in the past when adversity came. He put prosperity into perspective. How encouraging it is to know that faithful men can endure the trials of life and hold on to their faith.

Job is a book about false theologians. Job's friends were guilty of sweeping generality--so intent on making rules that they discarded pertinent facts. Let us beware of this error! And let us remember that we must give an account for our misrepresentation of God to the world, if we should do this. Millions will go to hell because of the misrepresentations of false theologians.

Job is a book about God's mercy. James derived this lesson from the book of Job: "*You have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful*" (5:11). When you are tested by life's trials remember the proverbial "silver lining" is a comforting reality. Indeed as we sing, "**after the shadows, there will be sunshine, after the frown, the soul-cheering smile, cling to the Saviour, love Him forever, all will be well in a little while**".

And so then in this marvelous book we are privileged to gather the facts for a more complete cosmology. We are given a unique behind-the-scenes look at the battle that goes on for our loyalty and souls. The book of Job dramatically sets forth a colossal war between God and Satan; and we are the territory. Satan accuses. God defends. And in the outworking of this cosmic drama is the testing of man. We write our own ending. What shall it be? Shall we relinquish our faith as we suffer or shall our faith grow stronger with each test? Shall we be defeated by our trials or shall we "*overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us*" (Rom. 8:37)? We hope it will be the latter; and to that end let us join in the holy prayer of a wise man of another generation: "**And now Lord. . .may we acquaint**

ourselves with thee, and be at peace. Especially when we are subjected to trials, may we be enabled to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. May faith triumph over sense, and may the example of Thy suffering but faithful saints instruct and encourage us to be submissive to Thy will. Teach us to rejoice in tribulation, assured that it is appointed for our good and when we come up out of the tribulation of earth may we be numbered with those who have washed their robes in the blood of

the Lamb, who shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore, neither shall the sun smite them, nor any heat--but the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water, and Thou shalt wipe away all tears from their eyes. Graciously hear us we beseech Thee in the name of Jesus, our Saviour. Amen."

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Crying On The Inside!

by Roger Shouse

Much of the epistles written to the churches of our Lord address the special relationship shared among brethren. Jesus prayed that there would be harmony within this family (Jn. 17:21). This peace Paul showed was a union of the mind (I Cor. 1:10) and a striving in the same direction (Phil. 4:9). We must never look upon this bond in Christ with carelessness or indifference. In fact the apostle John declared that we truly do not love God if we do not love our brethren, the children of God (I Jn. 4:12, 20).

The Bible is very specific about the union and closeness among brethren. Admonitions are found to help needy brethren (Gal. 6:10), to encourage weak brethren (I Thess 5:14), to settle differences between brethren (Mt. 5:23, 24), to restore fallen brethren (Gal. 6:1, 2) and to delight in the company and fellowship of brethren (I Cor. 5:11). These are blessings and privileges that must be shared and enjoyed outside the gathering of the entire church as well. Let us not confine our faith to the four walls of the meeting house.

Many a kind deed goes undone though. Not because the good intention was missing. Neither because the opportunity was not proper. But rather, simply because the need was unknown to others within the church, the family of God.

We should never feel ashamed to call upon the brethren. They are family. Whether it is a visit to the hospital, an ear to listen to on the phone, a meal for a sick one, a stern kick in the pants, or simply a friend to

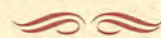
go shopping with, we should and must communicate with one another.

How many times have folks stated, "No one visited me in the hospital?" Did you let it be known that you were in the hospital and would appreciate the brethren calling upon you? Or, "I just don't have any Christian friends." Have you tried making friends with the brethren? Have you invited them into your home? Have you asked them to go with you on social occasions? Do you present yourself in such a way that others would LIKE to be your friend?

Many Christians do share their thoughts with others. Unfortunately though, I find some who prefer to shelter their feelings to themselves, who tend to be loners, who in times of suffering and pain have only to cry within themselves for comfort. This need not be. God's wisdom in designing the church was to have brethren who cared for and helped one another.

There is no reason for any to cry on the inside. If you haven't felt the closeness and the affection of brethren, express yourself. Open yourself up. Let others know you, and be interested in others. If one should call upon you in friendship or in need be sure that you make the time to get with them. Give of yourselves. (2 Cor. 8:5).

"And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (I Cor. 12:26).



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God's Teenage Heroes

by Rob Harbison

JOSEPH

Devotion to God cannot begin too early. No one need wait until adulthood to work for the Lord. Teenagers who do little for God now will likely do little or nothing for Him later.

The Bible records the young adult years of some of its greatest characters. They were **normal** teenagers, yet they possessed faith in God which caused them to stand head and shoulders above their peers.

Joseph was part of a large family (eleven brothers and one sister) which caused terrible family problems. He was younger than most of his brothers and they severely hated him because Jacob showed him favoritism. Jacob loved Joseph more than the other boys, and gave him a coat of many colors.

To further complicate matters, Joseph was a "dreamer" (Genesis 37:19). He dreamed of his brothers and parents bowing down to him (Genesis 37:5-11). His brothers hated him and his dreams. Ultimately they sold Joseph into slavery when he was seventeen years old.

Did Joseph give up on God and his family? When treated cruelly and unjustly did he retaliate and seek revenge? Could he have done that? What would you have done? Joseph would be a much better person to idolize than Michael Jackson or even Prince!!

JOSEPH OBEYED HIS FATHER

Joseph was compelled to obey his father, not because he feared being 'grounded' or losing his allowance, but because he **loved** Jacob (Genesis 37:13). Jacob sent him on a 50 mile errand from Hebron to Shechem, and Joseph offered no excuses, leaving promptly. His brothers were not in Shechem. He could have turned back rationalizing "Well, I did what he told me to do. I went to Shechem and they weren't there", but he pursued them 20 miles farther to Dothan. Would you

have turned back? That was a major trip considering transportation in those days.

God commands children to obey and honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3). God looks unfavorably upon sons and daughters who dishonor their parents, "*The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it*" (Proverbs 30:17; 19:26). Strong language, isn't it?

Joseph could have raised his voice, ranted and raved, and slammed the door to his room, but Joseph wanted to do the **right** thing. Such outbursts of anger are always the **wrong** thing!!

JOSEPH OVERCAME TEMPTATION

Joseph was evidently a handsome young man (Genesis 39:6), about 22-24 years old while in Potiphar's house. He caught the eye of Potiphar's wife and she pleaded with him to "*Lie with me*" (Genesis 39:7). How strong must that temptation have been! He was far from home, lonely, and at the age where sexual temptations are strongest. They were alone. She would certainly not tell anyone about their relationship. He could get away with sin and no one would know!! Her continual advances could have weakened the strongest morals. Have you ever found yourself in such a tempting situation?

Joseph found in himself the moral strength to say "no". He refused to sin against Potiphar or God, "*How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" (Genesis 39:8-9). His decision brought consequences. She lied about him and Joseph was thrown into prison (Genesis 39:10-20).

Chastity and purity are vanishing breeds. Young people succumb to sexual temptations because of the great power of the temptation today. But remember, when you give up your

chastity, you lose something you can **never** get back!! Don't waste such a precious moment and a special time just to satisfy a physical urge. The urges will come **again**, but what you lose the first time you commit fornication will **never** return. Think of how special that intimate time will be with the person whom you have chosen to share your life. And until you marry "*Flee fornication*" (I Corinthians 6:18). You will **never** regret waiting!!

JOSEPH ALWAYS MADE THE BEST OF EVERY SITUATION

Life deals some unfair hands. Joseph handled his problems well. He did not sulk and feel sorry for himself. He did not complain about the injustices he faced and the unfair nature of his problems.

Joseph made the **best** of every unfair situation. After being sold into slavery by his brothers, he became the head of Pharaoh's household (Genesis 39:4-6). After being cast into prison, he became the head of the prisoners (Genesis 39:21-23). After Pharaoh's butler returned to wait on Pharaoh and forgot Joseph, he patiently waited, overcoming his discouragement for two years. After receiving the chance to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, he became second in command in Egypt (Genesis 41:37-44).

How could Joseph meet and overcome such adverse conditions and terrible treatment? No matter where he found himself, he always did the best job he could do "*Whatever your hands find to do, do it with your might*" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). The secret to Joseph's success was his ability to find contentment in his circumstances "*... for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. . .*" (Philippians 4:11-12). Joseph's faith allowed him to see God's hand working throughout all his experiences (Genesis 50:20; cf. Romans 8:28).

Life won't always treat you fairly. You have to make the best of it.

JOSEPH HELD NO HATRED FOR THOSE WHO WRONGED HIM

Guilt feelings evidently consumed his brothers for 20 years following his disappearance. At the first sign of trouble in Egypt, the torture of their guilt over Joseph is manifested in their acknowledgement that their sin had finally caught up with them, "*We are truly guilty concerning our brother. . .*" (Genesis 42:21-22). They had suffered

greatly and Joseph would not lower himself to retaliate or "get even" with them.

He refused to despise his brothers. He only returned good for evil. *"Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath. . ."* (Romans 12:17, 19; I Peter 2:21-24;

Ephesians 4:26-27).

Joseph proved himself to be a **real** man by forgiving his brothers in spite of their cruel sins against him.

The Bible challenges us to be like Joseph. His dedication to God allowed Him to live righteously, even under the most trying circumstances. He proved

that we can "*Flee youthful lusts*" (2 Timothy 2:22). If your life was recorded in the Bible, would it be alongside Joseph's or his brothers?



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"WHAT SEEK YE?"

by Ron Roberts

This question was asked by our Lord to two of John's disciples who had begun to follow Him (Jn. 1:38). "*Where dwellest thou?*" was their response. I believe they sought His dwelling as a primary step to a much greater goal. They desired to speak with Him at length and to learn of Him. This could not be easily accomplished in the street. It was also necessary to find Jesus' abode in order to locate Him again after they left Him to go out and bring others to Him, like Peter (Jn. 1:40-41). We could speculate the actual answer to the Lord's question then as "we seek salvation for ourselves and all others that we can bring to you!" As they say on the Family Feud, "Good answer!"

The Bible contains many thought provoking questions that must be considered in our life time: "*What must I do to be saved?*" "*Why tarriest thou?*" "*What doth hinder me to be baptized?*" And of course, "*What seek ye?*"

Man is inquisitive by nature and asks questions as a form of examination. I was a youth in one of the most questioning times, the 60's. We doubted and examined everything. Dad would say "JUMP!" And we would respond, "What possible advantage could be gained by this proposed leap, and what are the ramifications of such an action?" (It is no wonder our parents turned gray prematurely.)

The questions didn't stop at youth either. We doubted Coke was number one and brought forth the Pepsi challenge. We doubted that a mouthwash had to taste bad and give medicine breath to work. I imagine we are largely responsible for keeping the doctors in sports cars with our constant search for a second opinion. By now you are probably asking your

own question. "What's this guy getting at?" Just this, if we are to be pleasing in the sight of God we are going to have to start asking some questions and not cease until we have a Bible answer for everything we practice in the area of religion.

My nagging questions brought me to the Word of God which eventually resulted in my conversion to Christ. But somehow many of my peers never took the same route that I had taken. Most of my supposedly inquisitive friends remained in the traditional family religion, which was Catholic in my neighborhood. A few quit "church" altogether, and some joined various denominations that were more "fun and entertaining." I asked myself "why the difference?" I believe it is due to the various answers given the Lord when He asks all of us, "*What seek ye?*"

The questions we ask are due to the answers we seek. A simple truth, obviously, but we often overlook it when we look at the diversity of false doctrines and wonder why anyone would believe such ridiculous commandments of men. They are seeking something other than a Bible answer for their religious practices. Some are seeking emotional highs, others an eased conscience with a minimal effort, others tradition or something fresh and new. As you read through this article, I want you too, to honestly answer the Lord's question, "*What seek ye?*"

Do your questions in daily conversation reflect your search for godliness or your preoccupation with the World Series or the Superbowl? One of the greatest blessings in being a Gospel preacher is that in daily conversations the subject always gets around to the Bible. Strangers almost always ask me what I do for a living,

and there is my open door to tell them about my Lord. It is unfortunate that Christians in secular jobs don't get opportunities as easily to discuss their faith although the opportunities are always there if you look for them.

It appears to me that by many Christians' conversation that they are more interested in great gain financially than spiritually. They seek information on deductions, investments, and better job opportunities before any Bible knowledge. Others, like the pagan Gentiles of Matthew 6:31-32, seek the needs of physical life only. I am happy to report that there still are those who do seek godliness, as their questions and conversion clearly reveal. "What do you seek?"

Jesus said, "*seek and ye shall find*" (Matt. 7:7). I believe this statement to be true in many areas of life. One warning however, you must know where to look for your answer and you must be willing to pay the purchase price. Those who are always in pursuit of happiness, contentment, and satisfaction never seem to find it perhaps because they view it as a concrete item, a goal within itself. Such abstract terms cannot be purchased by the pound. They are more like side benefits to a greater goal in actuality. Then there are those who profess to be seeking God, but they never come to the knowledge of truth (II Tim. 3:7). Often the reason is because they seek the answer in man-made religions instead of the Bible. At other times it may be that they seek Christianity at the bargain rate, something short of total commitment. They are unwilling to pay the actual purchase price. I Tim. 6:6 reads "*Godliness with contentment is great gain.*" It is unfortunate that so many in this life seek one of the three (godliness, contentment, or great gain) instead of using the God-given quotation to obtain all three. Any such search is a fruitless endeavor, as it is outside of God's formula.

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“EMULATIONS”

Greek Word: *zelos*

Meaning: zeal, jealousy

In the King James Version of Galatians 5:20 one reads the word “*emulations*”. It is included in a list of “*works of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:19-21). This word is a little unfamiliar to the ears of modern readers in the sense in which it is used in this passage. About the only way we hear it used these days is in its good sense, i.e., when we are challenged to “emulate” someone. About by this we usually mean to see and imitate someone’s outstanding characteristics.

But the English word emulation has two sides to it. It can mean the effort to outdo someone because we are jealous of them. And the Greek work *zelos* is very similar in that it cuts coming and going, too. It has a good side and an evil one.

Zelos corresponds to our word zeal in several passages in the New Testament. And in these passages we see its good side. In the early days of Jesus’ earthly ministry He made a scourge of cords and cleansed the Temple of moneychangers. When His disciples saw this they were reminded of Psalm 69:9 which says, “*The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*” And our word *zelos* appears in both the Septuagint version of the Old Testament and in the Greek New Testament’s quotation of it. In this passage the *zelos* that we find is “**the passion for God which burns a man up, and sets him aflame for God**” (Wm. Barclay, *Daily Study Bible*, in loc.; cf. 2 Cor. 7:11; 9:2).

And our New Testament even employs the word jealousy to translate *zelos* in a passage where its sense is plainly good and wholesome. Paul says he had espoused the Corinthians to Christ alone and felt “*godly jealousy*” over their waverings (2 Cor. 11:2).

But there is an ungodly side to this word and it shows up in two ways in the New Testament. Godly jealousy can slide into selfish ambition, “**the envy which casts grudging looks**” (Barclay, *Ibid.*). This kind of *zelos*

threatened the unity of the church at Corinth. Because of their party spirit and self-centered competition Paul accused the brethren there of babyish “*envying*” (1 Cor. 3:1-3, esp. v. 3; cf. 2 Cor. 12:20).

The bad side of this word shows up in a second way. *Zelos* can be zeal for God, but ignorant zeal (Rom. 10:2). Paul himself had in good conscience persecuted the church with great “*zeal*” in the days of his ignorance (Phil. 3:6; cf. Acts 23:1; 2 Tim. 1:13).

Zelos is a blessing to mankind when it is well-informed, unselfish, and godly zeal for the Lord (Jn. 2:15). It is a tragic harbinger of limitless damage when it is ignorant zeal for the Lord (Rom. 10:2; Phil. 3:6). And it is a shameful disgrace when it has degenerated into nothing more than selfish ambition (1 Cor. 3:3; cf. Rom. 13:13-14, “*envying*”).

“RULE”

Greek Word: *brabeuo*

Meaning: to umpire

In the New Testament there are several terms taken from the language of ancient athletics and the arena (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:5). And among these there is one that occurs only once in the New Testament. It is our word *brabeuo* which means “to umpire” (Col. 3:15).

Paul wrote to the Colossians:

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Col. 3:12-14).

Now if you read back over that passage I think you will agree with me that Paul was setting up a pretty tall order here. He really requires no less than that we live and behave ourselves as the Christ did while He was on earth.

And that sounds fine and preaches

well, but out in the world, in the church, and inside our private selves tempers flare, chest pains throb, and anxieties mount. How can we actually get a good enough hold on ourselves that we can begin to exhibit the kind of character Paul here calls for?

A significant part of Paul’s answer is that we ought to allow the “*peace of Christ*” to rule in our hearts (Col. 3:15, A.S.V.). That word *rule* (lit. umpire, *brabeuo*) was used in ancient times to describe the work of an umpire in a contest. The word of the umpire was final when disagreements arose and things got out of hand.

When my heart is so filled with anger, envy, or anxiety that I cannot function properly or cannot function without doing harm among my brethren or in the world I need to listen to the umpire. And that umpire is “**the peace of Christ,**” i.e. “**the peace that Christ gives**” (Nicoll, *Expository Greek Testament*).

As Jesus prepared to leave the world he said to 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 afraid*” (Jn. 14:27).

When the world gets to be too much; when church problems seem on the verge of an explosion; when our hearts are troubled by anxieties without number, we need to look to the umpire. The peace of Christ--secured by the resurrection of Christ, made known by His word, and optimized by His certain coming again--this supreme umpire, says, “Calm down; be at peace; stop worrying” (cf. Phil. 4:4-7). All the tranquilizers in the world will not do for our troubled hearts and our relationships with others what the peace of Christ can--if we let it be the umpire in our hearts.



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT-- SELF-CONTROL

by Frank Jamerson

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . ."

With this article we conclude our series on the fruit of the Spirit. We have tried to emphasize the practical results of being guided by the Spirit rather than by the carnal desires within us. This final "fruit," self-control, emphasizes this characteristic, probably greater than any of the others. The word *egkrateia* "describes that strength of soul by which a man takes a hold of himself, takes a grip of himself, is in full control and possession of himself, so that he can restrain himself from every evil desire" (*Flesh and Spirit*, William Barclay, p. 123).

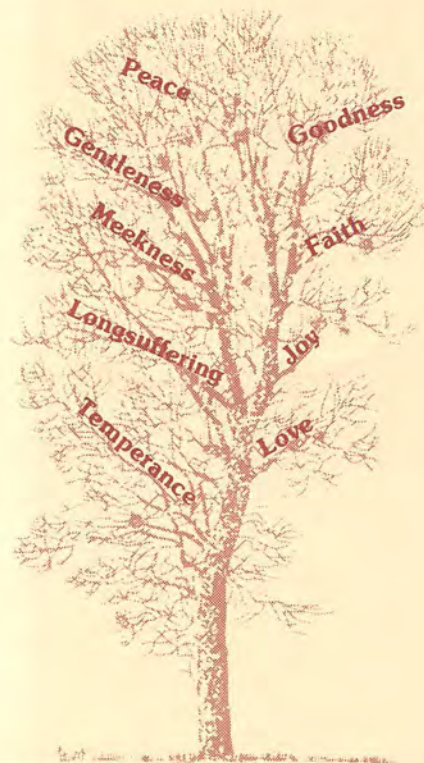
The noun form of this word is found only two other times in the New Testament. In Acts 24:25, Paul reasoned "of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgement to come," and Felix "was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me." We do not know all that Paul said to Felix, but historians tell us that Drucilla was a beautiful woman and that she had left her legitimate husband and married Felix. In this respect, Felix had been unrestrained, instead of showing self-control. I suspect Felix trembled because Paul condemned what he had done!

The other appearance of the word is in the "Christian graces." "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love" (II Pet. 1:5-7). The meaning of "self-control" may be better understood by looking at the two times the verb form appears. In

discussing the "distress" then present, Paul recommended that those who were not married should not marry, "But if they have not continency (self control), let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn" (I Cor. 7:9). In the ninth chapter he talked about athletes and used their discipline as an example to us. "And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (v. 25). Self-control is the ability to rule one's own spirit. The wise writer of Proverbs said: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city" (16:32).

We usually think of "temperance" as referring to drinking, but it is a broad word that applies to every facet of our lives. Paul said: "All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient. All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any" (I Cor. 6:12). The Christian is to have "self-control," which is the opposite of being controlled or dominated by anything else. Other translations bring out the sense of this passage. "I may do anything, but that does not mean that everything is good for me. I may do everything, but I must not be a slave of anything" (*Phillips Modern English*). "Even if I am allowed to do them, I'll refuse to if I think they might get such a grip on me that I can't easily stop when I want to" (*Living Bible*). Brethren, even things that are right within themselves are not to be permitted to control us. When we feel "addicted" to anything, it is time to draw the line and regain self-control.

Self-control is that quality that allows a man to live in the world and use the things that are in the world



without becoming "spotted" with the world. The evil things we avoid. The things that are right and good, we use. But we never become a slave to anything - except to Christ.

The flesh says: "Go ahead and commit fornication; everybody does it, and after all you live only once." The Spirit says "Flee fornication. . ." (I Cor. 6:18). The flesh says; "Go ahead and get drunk, or take that drug, after all, you have a right to feel good." The Spirit says "they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

Paul concluded this section by saying: "against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (Gal. 5:23, 24). There is a law (the law of Christ) against the works of the flesh, but there is no law that condemns the "fruit of the Spirit." The Christian is free to work a lifetime at producing these "fruit." Let us be busy in the vineyard!

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a friend.**



“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

The Birth And Life Of Christ

The Bible says, in Luke 2:11, *“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”*

Only a little is known about the early life of Christ except the events surrounding His birth. In the days of Herod the king all of the people were called unto their own city to be taxed. Joseph, of the lineage of David (the tribe of Judah), went unto Bethlehem of Judah. Here, finding no room in the Inn, they abode in the barn. As the prophets foretold, Jesus had His lowly birth there and was placed in a manger (Luke 2:7). Born of the virgin Mary, proclaimed to be the Son of God, Jesus Christ came in to this world in the little town of Bethlehem. As the shepherds were tending their stock in the countryside, it is indicated that it was during the milder seasons of the year, rather than in December as tradition believes. The wise men also, seeing His star in the east, brought gifts unto the Christ Child.

After all things were fulfilled, according to the law of Moses, Joseph took his family into Egypt to escape the jealous wrath of the king. After Herod was dead, however, they returned to Nazareth of Galilee. In this place Jesus spent His early life as the carpenter's son.

For about thirty years, before the inauguration of His personal ministry, Jesus remained with Joseph and Mary in Nazareth. These are called “the silent years” as only one event during this period of time is revealed. At the very tender age of twelve, our Lord accompanied His parents to Jerusalem to observe the Jewish feast of the passover. Becoming lost from His parents, Jesus was found in the temple talking with the doctors. *“All were astonished at his understanding and answers.”* These events are recorded in the latter part of Luke two. One point just here needs to be pressed firmly: When chided for getting lost, Jesus said, *“wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?”* Even at that

early age Jesus knew who He was and the mission before Him. We would do well to follow that example today. . .to be about the Father's business.

These are some of the events that are revealed unto us about the early life of the Lord; Thus began His personal ministry. When John was preaching *“the kingdom at hand”*, Jesus came to be baptized of him. After this He was tempted in the wilderness, chose His apostles, performed many mighty works, cleansed the temple, taught the sermon on the mount, toured the countryside several times, fed five thousand from five barley loaves and two small fishes, was transfigured before Peter, James and John, instituted the Lord's Supper, and suffered the awful pain and disgrace of the cross. Most important of all, however, is the fact that He arose from the grave on the third day. Peter said in Acts 2:36, *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*

Most like to listen to the story of Jesus, and the teachings He gave are interesting to many. But few really believe such statements He made as is found in Matt. 7:13,14: *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* This passage plainly teaches that the masses will be lost, and only a relative few will be saved. Yes, Jesus is the Savior, born in the city of David (Luke 2:11), but is He your Savior? Are you really sure you're in the narrow way? These should indeed be soul searching questions. You can only know the truth by searching the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11).

Names And The N.T. Church

The Bible says, in Colossians 1:18,19, *“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all*

things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”

For a little while now, study the Bible with me as we talk about the church of the New Testament, over which Jesus Christ is the head. The word church means “called out” and is always applied to the people of God and not a building of earthly origin. The Romans were called of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:6); That is, they had received His calling by obeying the gospel, which made them members of His church or body. (Ver. 5) In this sense the church is a kingdom over which Christ reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Matt. 16:17-19). In this way the church is a universal institution having heavenly or spiritual organization, but no central earthly headquarters or any kind of earthly council or pope. Any effort to vitalize the universal church with earthly organization would be unscriptural.

But the word church, God's called out, is also used to designate local congregations, sometimes referred to by their locality: As the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11:22), or the church at Corinth (I Cor. 1:2). The name of the church is simply the church, but other terms are used to show ownership or the relationship: As church of God (I Cor. 1:2), or church of Christ (Rom. 16:16).

One of the first questions a person should ask, if he begins to wonder if the church in which he claims membership is truly the New Testament church, is, can I read about that church in the Bible - can I find its name there? Paul said in Rom. 16:16, *“Salute one another with an holy kiss, the churches of Christ salute you.”* While the name we wear is not the only identifying characteristic of the true church, it is a very important factor. Individuals who were baptized for remission of their sins were called Christians, a proper noun used three times in the New Testament. The latter part of Acts 11:26 says, *“And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”* Are you a Christian? If you are, then you are also a member of the New Testament church, the church of Christ!

In other lessons I have talked about the need for Bible authority, and there is a very close correlation between this and the name we wear, or the name of the church. Acts 4:10-12 says, *“Be it known unto you all, and to all the*

people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Surely

their doing things in the name of Jesus meant by his authority, but it also should regulate the name we wear both as individuals and as a church. Our beginning text said, "And he" (Jesus Christ) "is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18).

Another good point is the fact that the church is the bride of Christ, and a bride, after the marriage, always wears the name of her husband. This gives

honor where honor is due. Romans 7:4 says, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."



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Tyler, TX 75709

"In The Roll Of The Book It Is Written Of Me"

by Daniel H. King

In his argument regarding the end of the Jewish system, the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews pointed out that Christ by his coming and death had concluded the sacrificial offerings of Temple and Tabernacle in one final Sacrifice. "Lo, I am come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7). He thus ascribed the thought embraced in this quotation from Psalms (40:6ff.) to a higher authority and a more esteemed Person than the immediate writer of the Psalm.

The Jewish Talmud, though an uninspired witness to the fact, declares that "all the prophets have only prophesied concerning the days of the Messiah" (Sanhedrin 34:2). The Jews today yet cherish the hope that their Messiah will appear upon the scene and rescue them from all their enemies. One article of the Jewish creed is this: "I believe with perfect faith that the Messiah will come, and although His coming be delayed, I will await His daily appearance." This faith rests upon the sayings of the ancient founders and restorers of Hebrew religion.

The Old Testament abounds with references which appear strange at first glance. But upon deeper investigation it becomes apparent that they merely transcend the historical circumstances of their original utterance. What they reflect, as one writer expressed it, are "the rays of Messiah's glory." They tell us about Jesus Christ.

A few brief instances of this will suffice to illustrate this characteristic of the Bible. In the prophet Hosea (6:1-2), the people of the prophet's day expressed their penitence in these words: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him." The shadowy relation of this text to the details of the resurrection of our Lord are so obvious as to require no discussion. Yet nowhere in the New Testament is it quoted as fulfilled in him.

In Amos 8:9-10 the Seer speaks of the eventual end of the Northern Israelite Kingdom with the following oracle: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. . . and I will make it as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day." Upon reading this one is at once reminded of the circumstances of the death of the Son of God (Matt. 27:45ff.). The New Testament does not directly cite this passage as fulfilled in the death of the Lord, yet we can easily see how the language of that passage transcended the immediate circumstance of which it spoke and foreshadowed the specifics of the latter happening.

Again, at the beginning of a Psalm of lamentation, composed by King

David in an hour of deeply felt spiritual anguish, there appear these opening lines: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou answerest not; and in the night season, and am not silent" (Ps. 22:1-2). Jews later uttered some of these same words of desperation as he hung upon the cross of Calvary (Matt. 27:46). In so doing he was not merely quoting Scripture, he was fulfilling Scripture. Although the passage in question was no a prophetic forecast in the usual sense in which we use that expression, yet was it a prophecy of Christ. The footstep of the Messiah had fallen across this part of the Old Testament and has forever afterward left upon this text its indelible impress.

Many prophecies of Scripture fit this same description. We have neither the space nor the inclination to treat them all here. But all such serve to confirm the Savior's own remark that "all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). The Messiah (Christ) has therefore come in response to the Old Testament promises. He has fulfilled the Old Testament and its promises about him. There is no further need to look for him, except in his return for judgement (Rev. 1:7). Yet our present hope that he will return for judgement ought to be considered as safely anchored in God's unchangeable promise as the earlier Jewish confidence that he would come in response to prophecy. And we ought to be aware that as surely as He came the first time, just that certainly will He come again!

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NEW TESTAMENT SURVEY by Merrill C. Tenney (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, hardback, 454 pages, \$19.95.

This work was first published in 1953 and then revised in 1961. It has served for more than three decades to introduce the general reader, student, and teacher to the world and message of the New Testament. The purpose of this work is to show how each book fits with the others in the Bible. "Each book is a part of that whole, and can be fully understood only when it is seen in relation to the entire stream of divine revelation that begins with Genesis and that ends with the Apocalypse".

Walter Dunnnett has now revised and updated this standard text for a new generation of students. Undertaken at the request of Tenney and prepared with his full approval, the revision includes an entirely new chapter on the Jewish background of the New Testament, plus several new short sections, including materials on the Gospels, and the canon of the New Testament. The bibliography has been enlarged and updated, and many of the book's numerous illustrations, maps, and charts are new. Great care has been exercised to retain the spirit and quality of the original work, ensuring that the book will remain a standard for years to come.

NEW UNGER'S BIBLE HANDBOOK, REVISED BY Gary N. Larson (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 720 pages, \$29.95.

This volume is simple and concise that should appeal to all classes of people. It is filled with a full array of the latest scientific information about the Bible, such as geography,

chronology, history, archaeology and biblical criticism. Yet the chief emphasis is the message of the Bible itself. This handbook gives a small commentary on each of the sixty-six books of the Bible. Each verse is related to its chapter, each chapter to its book, each book to the entire Bible.

In the original work, Under drew from commentaries, journals, histories, geographies, dictionaries, handbooks, personal study and travels in the Bible lands. The text has now been revised to provide the reader with the most up-to-date, conservative archaeological and theological research in readable, usable style.

The book contains hundreds of new full-color illustrations and photographs, new maps, diagrams and charts. It will be one of the most useful tools in your library. Moody Press has advertised the book by saying: "Next to your Bible, this could be the most important book you'll ever own". I think they are right.

THE CHANGING WORLD OF MORMONISM by Jerald and Sandra Tanner (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1981, paperback, 592 pages, \$14.95.

The authors of this book are former members of the Mormon Church. Their roots in Mormonism go deeper than their former involvement in the church. Sandra Tanner says she is a great-great granddaughter of Brigham Young, the founder of the Mormon faith.

In 1972, the Tanners published, on their own, *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality*, a landmark work exposing the weaknesses, fallacies, and corruptions of the Mormon church. The book sold more than 30,000 copies without benefit of an advertising campaign. The Tanners have now completely revised, updated, and condensed their earlier work to come up with this book. It is a thorough investigation of the history of Mormon leaders and Changes in doctrine and practice, including the most recent developments

in the Mormon Church.

This work includes an eleven-page bibliography that will prove helpful for any student wanting to do more research into Mormonism.

MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES: THE NEW TESTAMENT METHOD FOR CHURCH GROWTH by Waylon B. Moore (NavPress: Colorado Springs, Colorado), 1983, paperback, 129 pages, \$4.95.

"Disciple" was Christ's favorite word for those whose lives were intricately linked with his. The Greek word for disciple is used 269 times in the Gospels and Acts. It means a "taught" or "trained" one. The author of this book believes the key to church growth is in training disciples who can reproduce themselves. He writes, "At the core of multiplication are interceding with God for another disciple, helping him grow to his full potential in Christ, and being available to him."

This little book offers practical guidelines on starting discipling in your local congregation. It covers both the follow-up and growth of young Christians, as well as training them as leaders to continue the discipling process.

The book is divided into four parts: the challenge, the method, the process, and the practice. The author is a Baptist and uses many denominational phrases that I do not agree with, but the main point of the book on discipling training is right on target. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in carrying out the Great Commission.

THE GENESIS CONNECTION by John Wiester (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1983, hardback, 254 pages, \$14.95.

The author is convinced that a war--known as the creation-evolution controversy--is being waged today in the classroom, the courts, and the press. This book is the result of Wiester's quest for truth. He wanted to know whether he owed his existence

to creative acts of God or to random chance? A new way of looking at the scientific history of our origins became necessary in attempting to answer this question.

Wiester's study compares the entire creation account of the first chapter of Genesis with the latest scientific evidence. The book draws upon up-to-date scientific sources to present the major events in the history of the cosmos, the planet Earth, and life upon it.

This work is devoted to focusing on the scientific evidence actually discovered as opposed to the theories of naturalistic causes used to explain the evidence. The fundamental issue being addressed is not creation versus evolution, but a world view that starts with a Creator versus one that starts with no creator.

Wiester concludes that scientists are now furnishing substantial evidence that the biblical account of Genesis I is an accurate historical account of creation.

MANAGING CHURCH CONFLICT by James A. Jones (*Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas, 1985, paperback, 145 pages, \$5.25.*)

A person needs to belong to a group in order to have his needs met; this is one of the strongest needs of man. Groups, whether secular or religious, can have a positive or negative influence on an individual. Most of us will belong to several groups during our lifetime and each of these have the potential for much conflict.

The first group to which a person belongs in his family. As he matures, he will likely become a member of other groups (school, sports, church, business, politics, etc.) for various reasons. Some conflict can be prevented, but it is only an illusion to think there will be no conflict among people in a group. Leaders and group members would experience less frustration and exasperation if they became committed to learning how to manage conflict effectively instead of holding to a false assumption.

This book is an introduction to some of the dynamics which are active in a group. The author points the reader in the direction of understanding group dynamics and group process. Jones details conflicts that arise from attitudes and emotions which may be

felt among some members and leaders of groups within the church. Ideas are presented on ways to solve conflicts and grow through them.

The book is subtitled, "Group Theory Applied To The Church Family". Chapters include such topics as "Conflict Is Inherent In Any Group," "There Cannot Be Conflict Without Emotions," "The Art Of Listening Is Inherent In The Art Of Leading," "Qualities Of An Effective Leader," and much more. This book should be read by every preacher, member, and elder.

SHORT TALKS AROUND THE LORD'S TABLE by Harry Linn Thomson (*Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas, 1985, paperback, 105 pages, \$3.95.*)

The author believes that Christ's crucifixion is the "heart of our faith," and that we should constantly be aware of this fact when partaking of the Lord's Supper. He has observed many congregations using the same words or readings with almost monotonous regularity Sunday after Sunday, year after year, prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper. He fears that too many Christians "break bread" just as a tradition. He wanted to give Christians a series of short talks that could challenge their thinking and their spirituality on the Lord's Day.

This book is filled with short talks from many sources which will help prepare the hearts and minds of worshippers to properly observe the Lord's Supper. These will be helpful tools for the men that will make comments prior to the prayers for the bread or the juice. Elders should consider studying some of this material with the men of the congregation.

MORMONISM AGAINST ITSELF by Maurice Barnett (*Printing Service: Cullman, Alabama, designed for standard 3-ring loose-leaf binder and sold in envelope, 263 pages in the two volumes, \$9.00 per volume.*)

When brethren start studying Mormonism, they will want to start with this material. It is some of the most thorough, but concise work on the market. Barnett fears that too many Christians have looked at Mormons as "unteachables." This work exposes Mormon doctrine for what it is, of purely human origin. The author has designed this material to aid

you in going on the attack, to plant those seeds of doubt in Mormons, to instruct you in fallacies of Mormonism, and answer arguments Mormons may present to you. Instead of being on the defensive, Barnett wants you to put them on the defensive. There is a great amount of information on Mormon doctrine, history, and their "inspired" men that Mormons not only know nothing about, but have been misinformed by their church. Finding out the facts can be shocking to many Mormons, Barnett knows for a fact that Mormons can be reached, as older Mormons are being reached in increasing numbers.

Most of the material in these two volumes is reproduced from Mormon sources. Most is pictured in the context of the quotation. There can be no doubt of the authenticity so the impact of the information is maximum.

If you're interested in converting members of this cult, you'll certainly want to get these two volumes for your library.

BIBLE STUDIES by Robertson L. Whiteside (*Whiteside Publications: Denton, Texas, 1974, paperback, 281 pages in Volume I, 323 pages in Volume II, \$7.00 each.*)

Readers of years past were familiar with the writings of R.L. Whiteside through the "Adult Quarterly" published by the Firm Foundation; his weekly article under the heading of "Doctrinal Discourses"; or his work as the editor of the "Teachers Annual Commentary." His daughter has sought to keep his writings available for future readers.

These two volumes are arranged--by books of the Bible--from the lessons prepared on the Scriptures selected by the International Sunday School Committee from 1928-1944. Volume I contains Genesis thru Deuteronomy; Volume II contains Joshua thru Nehemiah. Both volumes make for some interesting reading from a very interesting man of the past.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

THE CREED OF THE ATHEIST

(Psalm 14)

The word "fool" was used in Bible times as a term of derision. It finds a counterpart in some of the vulgarisms that are often hurled at people today. Our Lord taught that we need to be very careful in the use of such language: ". . . *And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire*" (Matt. 5:22). Yet, God, who knows more of a man than he knows of himself, pulls no punches in telling us exactly who is a fool.

The true fool is not merely ignorant. We are all ignorant of many things. One may be ignorant and yet eager to learn.

The fool is not necessarily unintelligent. People have different levels of learning ability. One is not condemned by God for such as that.

A fool does not merely lack judgment. One may be childish, or silly, and overcome that.

Many scriptures describe a fool. He is one who prefers time to eternity and momentary pleasures to those which shall have no end (Luke 12:20). He does not suffer for lack of information, but refuses to act on the information he possesses (Matt. 7:26). He pokes fun at matters of momentous and grave importance (Prov. 14:9).

But to our text: David tells us that the atheist is a fool. He may be speaking of one who really does not believe in God, or of one who acts as if God does not exist. In either case, he is a fool.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ATHEISM

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Atheists are foolish,

for they grasp for straws in trying to prove that God does not exist. The unbelieving biochemist imagines that he will disprove God if he "creates" life in a testtube. But even if such is someday accomplished, how would it affect God's existence? If man learns the secret of life, he will but think God's thoughts after Him. Such foolish reasoning would be parallel to one scientist producing a synthetic, and another by patient research and experimentation, duplicating the process. Would the latter thereby disprove the existence of the former?

There is significance in the phrase "in his heart." The Bible "heart" often includes the intellect, but sometimes it refers to the emotions as distinguished from the intellect (Matt. 22:37). Atheism is hardly an intellectual exercise. It is based on the affections of the heart. If one loves truth and righteousness he will have no problem believing in God. If he dislikes the good and the right, he will be atheistic, practically, if not actually. A corrupt tree will bring forth corrupt fruit.

Julian Huxley, famous atheist, admitted that he did not choose to believe in God because of the limitations such would place on his personal life. Others who would never say, "No God," say it nonetheless in their hearts (Psalm 10: 4-6, 11). There is no God in their lives, and no God in their thoughts. They are determined to have their own way, and to do their own thing. They "profess they know God, but in works deny Him, are abominable, and to every good work prostrate" (Titus 1:6).

THE CORRUPTING INFLUENCE OF ATHEISM

"They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." This is not the target for which they aimed. But what one believes will inevitably mold and shape how he lives. The word "corrupt" means spoiled, or rotten. For a description of "abominable works" see: Gen. 6:1, 2; Rom. 1:20-32; a newspaper.

There is absolutely none that does good, absolutely. In this context, David is speaking specifically of the atheist. Yet his words find an application in the lives of all people. Paul quotes several phrases from this Psalm in Romans 3:10-12 as he brings a general indictment against the human race. We have all transgressed God's laws. We have failed to do good when the opportunity was present. We have failed to look upon others with love and compassion. Such is the result of ingoring or forgetting God. How easily we are swept along by the changing, shifting rules and values of our society.

"The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Mark the contrast: The mighty and glorious God takes notice of man. Frail and corrupt man ignores God.

As God beheld the children of men from above, He saw that *"their understanding was darkened"* and thus they did not perceive their state, their duty, their destiny, or their true happiness. They did not seek God, though they were created with an innate need to seek and to know Him (Acts 17:23-29).

All have left the flock and gone astray. They have become filthy, rotten, stinking, and putrid. Look at the three-fold negative, *"None, no, not one."* No person can claim perfect goodness. He may do some good things, but that doesn't meet the requirement. One who lays a foundation and builds a wall or two has not built a house until he finishes it. One who does a few good things cannot be said to be one who "does good" so long as his life is still characterized by sin.

The wise man seeks the Lord because he understands his need for forgiveness and fellowship with the

Almighty. The fool believes he can direct his own paths and persists in his lost state.

THE PERSECUTING TENDANCIES OF ATHEISM

"Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD." Those ensnared by iniquity become slave laborers. They are sentenced to hard labor by their master. The toil is heavy; the life is short; the reward is terrible! *"The wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23).

They have no knowledge. Being destitute of common sense they do not fear what they ought to fear. They eat up (devour, persecute, oppress, malign, mock) the people of God with no more thought than one utilizes in the eating of his daily meals. A sure sign of their graceless state is that they do not call upon the Lord. They do not feel a dependence upon Him.

THE FEAR OF ATHEISM

"There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous." There are times when the conscience of the wicked bring them great trepidation. Think of Belshazzar (Dan. 5); Pilate's wife (Matt. 27); Felix (Acts 24).

The company of the righteous is unbearable to the wicked, for they sense that God is with the righteous. The life of the wicked is unthinkable to the righteous for they are aware of their fate.

THE RIDICULE OF THE GODLY

"Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because the LORD is his refuge." Paul said, *"We are fools for Christ's sake"* (I Cor. 4:10). The most foolish thing in the world (to the worldly) is to trust in God. A "wise" man trusts in his wisdom, the "strong" in his strength, and the "rich" in his wealth. But to make God your refuge? How absurd!

A SIGHFUL PRAYER

"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad." Apparently the psalm was written during a time of trouble in Jerusalem, a day of captivity for Israel. David was confident that God would deliver his people and replace their sorrow and anxiety with joy and gladness. The parallelism so common to Hebrew poetry is obvious here as the names "Jacob" and

"Israel" are both used to describe God's people.

From our vantage point we can apply the language to Christ. Our salvation has come out of Zion. Only

in Him may we find release from captivity and sin.

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The Creation – Evolution Debate

by Gene Frost

On the evening of August 12, 13, 15, 16, Harry "Buddy" Payne, Jr. engaged Frank L. Lovell, Jr. in a scientific debate on the models of creation and evolution. The debate was sponsored by the Committee for Justice In Government and was conducted in Louisville, Kentucky. Each disputant affirmed his own proposition while negating his opponent's, so that each speech contained both affirmative and negative arguments. Each argued that his model (creationism/evolution) "provides a more effective scientific explanation of the history of life on earth than does" the other. The attendance was consistently between 400-450 people each session.

The debate was a great success from several viewpoints, but principally because it clearly demonstrated the reasonableness of concluding a creation on the basis of the scientific evidence. It demonstrated the philosophical bias of the highly-vocal evolution community which is determined to ban any consideration of a supernatural power from the educational process. It demonstrated the weaknesses of a purely physical mechanistic approach to the origin and history of life. From the beginning it was obvious that "Buddy" Payne had done his homework and was prepared to present his case.

Frank Lovell was a congenial respondent, who also was well prepared and effectively presented his case for evolution. He provided a forum that well tested the claim made for a scientific basis for creationism. The debate was informative and exciting throughout, as both disputants appealed to evidence and reason, rather than emotion.

This debate was unique. I do not know of a discussion, in recent times, which has provided opportunity to both positions in a fair format to develop and test arguments. The format was unique. The first two nights each speaker had a forty-five minute presentation. The last two nights encouraged the testing of arguments in an exchange of two 20-minute and two 10-minute speeches each disputant, each night.

The importance of the debate probably cannot now be fully appreciated. We hope that by bringing the issue before the public, where it will receive a fair hearing, which is not now the case in the liberal press and with the liberal establishment, that it will have far-reaching effects. The debate cannot be ignored. Both men were qualified. Harry Payne is dean of students at Florida College, has a master's degree in Science Education from Harvard University, and a doctorate from the University of South Florida. He was assisted by David Eakin, who has a doctorate in biology. Frank Lovell is a chemist, and contact person for the Kentucky Committee of Correspondence, an affiliate of the National Center for Science Education. He was assisted by Tom Wheeler, who has a doctorate in biochemistry and is a professor in the medical school at the University of Louisville.

We highly recommend the tapes of the discussion. They are available on five cassettes, and may be ordered post-paid for \$20.00 a set from:

Committee for Justice In Government
P.O. Box 33201
Louisville, KY 40232

712 Victoria Place
Louisville, KY 40207



History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanan

JOY TO THE WORLD

The denominational word truly cheats itself of a great hymn by saving this one to be sung only during the Christmas period. The song is about the solemn realization of what Christ's birth has meant to mankind. It is a paraphrase of the verses taken from the last half of Psalm 98.

This hymn is one of Isaac Watts' works from his well-known hymnal of 1719, *Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*. He first titled this hymn *The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom*. It was Watts' intent in writing this collection to give the Psalms a New Testament meaning and style. He set out to paraphrase all of the 150 Psalms with the exception of twelve, which he felt were unfit for this purpose.

While Watts was still in his teens, he became very dissatisfied with the deplorable, Psalm singing characteristic of the churches of his time. One Sunday after returning from a service of this type of Psalm singing and being deeply critical of the singing, young Isaac was challenged by his father with the words, "Well then, young man, why don't you give us something better to sing?"

Watts, then eighteen years of age, accepted his father's challenge. The next Sunday he produced his first hymn, to which the congregational response was enthusiastic. For the next two years, young Watts wrote a new hymn for his people every Sunday. He published a collection of 210 of these hymns, in 1707, in a book entitled *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*. This 1707 collection and the later 1719 hymnal represent important monuments in the development of English humnody.

Even as a boy, Isaac Watts displayed literary genius and an aptitude for study. At the age of five, he was learning Latin; at nine, Greek; at eleven, French; and at thirteen, Hebrew. In addition to his hymn writing, Watts became known as an ardent student of theology and philosophy, and, during his lifetime,

he wrote many notable volumes which had a powerful influence upon English thinking, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As a seven year old, he wrote an acrostic, spelling out the letters of his name. This acrostic reflects not only the brilliance of young Watts, but also the strong Calvinistic theology which characterized his entire life:

"I" - I am a vile, polluted lump of earth

"S" - So I've continued since my birth

"A" - Although Jehovah, grace doth daily give me

"A" - As sure this monster, Satan, will deceive me

"C" - Come therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me

"W" - Wash me in the blood, O Christ

"A" - And grace divine impart

"T" - Then search and try the corners of my heart

"T" - That I in all things may be fit to do

"S" - Service to Thee, and Thy praise too.

In all, Isaac Watts wrote approximately 600 hymns throughout his lifetime. Because of his bold departure from the traditional metrical Psalms and the use of expressions based entirely on one's own thoughts, Watts was generally considered to be a radical in his day. But today, more than two and one-half centuries later, our hymnals still contain such Watts' favorites as *When I Survey The Wondrous Cross; Come, We That Love The Lord; Alas!, and Did My Saviour Bleed; and Am I Soldier of the Cross?*

It is interesting to make a brief comparison between Isaac Watts and George Frederick Handel, who is generally credited with being the source of this hymn's music. Watts was a frail, sickly, five-foot tall, rather homely but gentle-mannered figure; Handel was a massive, robust, hot-tempered, cosmopolitan German master of the keyboard and opera.

Both men lived in London and evidently knew each other. But neither suspected that their talents might someday be combined to produce one of the world's best-known hymns.

Handel became well known because of his masterpiece, *The Messiah*. In 1741, Handel began writing the music for this biblical text, and, in the course of just twenty-four days completed all fifty-three numbers. *The Messiah* was given its first official public performance on April 13, 1742. It is undoubtedly the most frequently performed number ever written.

In 1836, Lowell Mason, an American choir director, composer, and public school educator, is thought to have rearranged a portion of Handel's *Messiah* to fit the words of Watts' *Joy To The World*. This adapted tune became known as the *Antioch* tune, and first appeared in Lowell Mason's *Modern Psalmist* in 1839. Though various other tunes have been used on occasion with Watts' text, *Antioch* has proven to be the most popular and lasting.

Through the combined talents of a frail English literary genius of the eighteenth century, a German-Born, musical giant of the same period, and a nineteenth-century, American, choir director and educator, another great hymn was born. Statues of Watts and Handel may be seen in Westminster Abbey.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

**Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing.**

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!

**Let men their songs employ,
While fields, and floods, rocks, hills,
and plains
Repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love.**



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

Saving The Church

In order for us to know whether the church is truly growing, we must know the identity and purpose of the church. When we understand that the church is not a building, we will cease to judge progress by the beauty of architecture or a new location. When we understand the church is not an institution, we will cease to be impressed by the "busyness" of organized institutional religion. When we understand that the church is not the hierarchy (The Roman Catholic concept), we will stop equating church growth with the number of workers on the pay roll. As we discussed in our last article, the church is people. The church is growing only when lost people are saved and those that are saved are growing to be more like Christ.

We usually define the work of the church as evangelism, edification, and benevolence. While these three terms are helpful, we need to understand that we can be busy in all three areas, and yet fail in our ultimate goal as the called out of God. In evangelism, we can roam land and sea to make one convert and still wind up making him twofold the child of hell that we are (Matt. 23:15). We can edify in our teaching program to the point where we can all quote scripture like a scribe, but what good is it if we go home like the Pharisee, unjustified (Lk. 18:9-14). Jesus rebuked those who searched the scriptures religiously, yet did not perceive the true Christ as they read (John 5:39). We can devote lots of money to benevolence and still lose our soul (I Cor. 13:1-3).

The Pharisees were not hypocrites because they emphasized tithing, Sabbath keeping, and trips to the temple. They were hypocrites in their trips to the temple because of their wrong motives; to be seen of men (Matt. 6:1-18). Even their own traditions surrounding the Sabbath

could have been acceptable to God if they had not got in the way of mercy (Matt. 12:1-12). Tithing was a command of God and even declaring one's possessions "corban" (Mk. 7:1-13) could have been acceptable to God with the right motives. But when tithing became a substitute for the personal responsibilities of mercy, faith, and justice (Matt. 23:23) and "gifts to the temple" eased their conscience when they failed to take care of their parents, they became hypocrites.

Giving, singing, attending, the Lord's Supper, and Bible study are all good in their own place, but as substitutes for mercy and love for souls they become acts of hypocrisy (See Israel's failure in these matters; Isaiah 1:10-17). There is such a danger in getting so involved in the "busywork" of evangelism, edification, and benevolence that we lose sight of our real purpose. God's purpose for the church is to save itself (Eph. 4:916). Since this is true, my work as an individual is to save myself and others (I Tim. 4:16). Attending services, teaching classes, and having people in my home are means to obtain this end but are not an end in themselves. Unless Christ is being formed in me, it will not be formed in others, no matter how great my Bible knowledge or religious zeal.

Another problem which keeps the church from saving itself is that we tend to look on the local congregation as an institution which accomplishes "our" work. It is true that we can give on the first day of the week and fruit will be born to our account. But this giving cannot lead to a religion by proxy. We can not "pay the church" to do our work. Remember, we are the church. I must understand that the important thing to my own salvation is not whether evangelism, edification, or benevolence gets done, but whether

"I" do them.

We do not receive responsibilities of service in the kingdom because we are a member of a local congregation. To the contrary, we seek membership in a local congregation because of our responsibilities. The local congregation, with its qualified pastors, teachers, and nurturing members is a gift of God to help keep us saved and provide an atmosphere of teamwork where our responsibilities can be exercised with greater success. The church can be saved when everyone begins to realize these principles.

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CLOUDS

by R.C. Smart, Sr.

Do you remember the little character in Al Capp's comic strip who walked around with a rain cloud over his head no matter where he went? Some people are like that. The sun never shines on them spiritually because of the everpresent cloud of despair.

If you try to cheer them up they always respond with "I know, but." Why are these people always melancholy? What keeps the cloud from being blown away?

I am convinced it is easier to feel sorry for oneself than to do whatever must be done to remove the cloud and let God's blessings shine upon them.

The rich young ruler walked away under a cloud because he loved his money more than he loved God.

The person who is in an adulterous relationship with someone they love more than they love God walks under a cloud.

The one who loves some sinful pleasure more than the salvation of their soul walks under a cloud.

Beloved, give up whatever it is that prevents God's blessings shining on you. Walk in sunlight. "...if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus his son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

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Should Churches Give Financial Support To Preachers?

by David Pratte

Some religious groups support preachers financially so they can be freed from secular work to spend all their time in preaching. Other groups say this practice is unacceptable. What does the Bible say?

A. GENERAL PASSAGES ABOUT SUPPORT OF PREACHERS.

I CORINTHIANS 9:4-14

Vv4-6--Paul affirmed he had the right to eat and drink, to be married, and to "forbear working"--i.e., to quit secular work (but not to totally refuse to do any work--cf. 2 Thess. 3:10).

Vv7 - 10--Soldiers, vinedressers, shepherds, farmers, and even oxen all illustrate the principle that workers should be physically rewarded for their work.

Vv11-13--If preachers sow the seed of the kingdom, it is only right that they reap physical blessings as a result, as was done with Old Testament priests. Paul had this power, but for personal reasons he chose not to exercise it (cf. v15-18).

V14--Conclusion:In the same way as all these illustrations, God has ordained that those who preach the gospel should "live of the gospel" (or "get their living from the gospel"--*New American Standard Bible*, or "earn their living by the gospel"--*New English Bible*). Clearly, gospel preachers may be supported monetarily because they do the work of preaching.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:7-9

While in Corinth, Paul chose not to accept money from the Corinthians, but he did receive "wages" from other churches. He "robbed" these churches, not in the sense of committing sin (for he said he would do the same thing again--v9), but in the sense that other churches gave him money, but Corinth got the benefit.

PHILIPPIANS 4:14-18

The church in Philippi communicated with Paul by sending more than once to meet his needs while he was in Thessalonica.

It is true that preachers may choose to support themselves by secular jobs (Acts 20:33,34; 18:3; I Cor. 4:12). But a man also has the right to ask a church to support him, and the church has the right to give the support if it believes the man is worthy. When this is done, it is not just a blessing to the preacher,



but it is also a blessing to the church because it is doing what pleases God (Phi. 4:17).

B. MAY A CHURCH AGREE TO PAY A PREACHER A REGULAR, FIXED AMOUNT OF INCOME?

Some churches agree that a preacher can be given money, but they insist that the people should give the preacher just whatever they decide, whenever they decide, with no regular, fixed amount that the church and preacher have mutually agreed upon.

I Cor. 9:7--Church support of preachers is illustrated by government support of soldiers. But this is often a regular, set amount of pay.

I Cor 9:13--Support of preachers is illustrated by the support of Priests and Levites. But this was formally stated and understood in terms of a fixed percent (Num. 18:8-32).

2 Cor. 11:8--Churches sent "wages" to Paul. The same word "wages" describes the pay of soldiers in Lk. 3:14; I Cor. 9:7.

I Tim. 5:18; Lk. 10:7--The laborer is worthy of his "hire" or "reward" ("wage"--NASB; "pay"--NEB). The same word is used in Matt. 20:8 and James 5:4 to describe wages of laborers in a vineyard or field.

Clearly a church may agree to give a preacher a fixed, regular amount of income, though other arrangements may also be acceptable.

C. IS THERE DANGER IN PAYING A MAN TOO MUCH?

Some big-name preachers become extremely wealthy by the contributions sent to them. They have big, fancy houses and cars, wear expensive clothes, etc. What does the Bible say about this?

WE SHOULD BEWARE OF GREEDY PREACHERS MOTIVATED BY FINANCIAL PROFIT.

Rom. 16:17,18--Avoid teachers who serve their own fleshly appetites.

I Tim. 6:3-10--Some false teachers view godliness as a way of "gain". We should instead be content, free from love of money, because greed leads to all kinds of sin.

Tit. 1:10,11--Deceivers teach for money.

Ezek. 34:2,3--Shepherds should care for the sheep, but instead some devour the lambs.

2 Pet. 2:1-3, 14-16--Like Balaam, many preachers love material wealth, so they "make merchandise" of the people, preaching false doctrines to please people and get their money.

Faithful preachers must not be motivated by greed or by a desire to become wealthy. Men who are so motivated, should not be supported.

ALL MEMBERS SHOULD GIVE SACRIFICIALLY & ACCORDING TO ABILITY.

I Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 11:29--Giving according to prosperity and ability means wealthy people give more while less wealthy people give less. God does not require us to give so much our family is destitute of necessities (people in such circumstances may need to receive help from the church).

2 Cor. 8:11-15--Bible teaching on giving is not intended to lead some people into poverty while others become wealthy. Yet some preachers continually urge people to give sacrificially even when they are in deep poverty, yet the preachers themselves live in the lap of luxury, refusing to sacrifice as they teach others to do. This clearly violates the passages we are studying.

Phil. 4:18; Rom. 12:1--Sacrificing for the Lord's work is something all Christians are expected to do. Preachers should set a good example in this and all matters (2 Tim. 4:5; I Tim. 4:12; Tit. 2:7,8). Preachers who expect other members to make financial sacrifices for the spread of the gospel, therefore, should themselves make sacrifices, rather than expecting others to sacrifice so the preacher can get rich.

Matt. 23:3,4; Mk. 12:40--People who expect others to sacrifice, but will not do so themselves, are hypocrites.

This applies both to preachers and to those who support preachers. Preachers who expect other people to sacrifice, ought to do the same themselves. And members who expect preachers to sacrifice, ought themselves to give and work sacrificially.

Areas of judgement are involved in determining exactly how much to give a preacher. God does not demand absolute equality in how all members live. Preachers should not be expected to live in poverty, nor should they expect to live in wealth. If all people

involved will practice the "golden rule", and expect of others no more than they would expect of themselves, most problems will be solved.

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Consistent Child Discipline

by Berry Kercheville

What kind of person would you be if the Bible said that there were only certain times God would discipline you for your sins? That is, suppose God said, "Sometimes I will be angry with you for your disobedience, but most of the time I won't really care and you will not be held accountable." Can you imagine what that would do to you?

In the first place, such a statement would cause great confusion and insecurity. Just about the time we would feel we could get away with most anything, God would lash out. It would be impossible to know just which disobedience and at what time God would hold us accountable.

Furthermore, this would encourage us to live a very sinful lifestyle. We would always be challenging how far we could go into sin without being disciplined. And then when we were finally disciplined, we would strike back in anger hating the God who dared intervene to hinder us from our lustful passions.

This is the sad results of inconsistent discipline. Fortunately, however, God has not treated us this way. The writer of Hebrews exclaims in 2:2-3, "For if the word spoke by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation. . . ." We know exactly where we stand with God at all times. We know exactly where we stand with God at all times. We know that He will hold us accountable for every disobedience. We also know under what conditions He will forgive us and under what conditions He will not forgive us. At any given moment we can know whether we are accepted or rejected of Him. It is for this reason

that we always feel loved, we feel cared for. We know that God is always watching us and concerned for our welfare. He is our protector and provider. It is a very secure position to be in.

Now we can understand what we are doing to our children when we do not consistently discipline them when they challenge our authority? Paul said in Eph. 6:4, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." There are contrasting statements here. To raise a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord is to practice consistent, firm, loving, moral discipline. To do anything less risks provoking a child to wrath. In Colossians Paul said, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." There are few things more discouraging for a child than to never know when or for what disobedience he will be disciplined. How miserable to not be loved enough to be given specific guidelines that are consistently applied.

Parents, God expects us to treat our children the way He treats us. Our Colossians Paul said, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." There are few things more discouraging for a child than to never know when or for what disobedience he will be disciplined. How miserable to not be loved enough to be given specific guidelines that are consistently applied.

Parents, God expects us to treat our children the way He treats us. Our children deserve this so that they can be happy and be able to grow up well-adjusted and capable of handling their lives in a structured society. The

following are some important questions to test yourself on your ability to be consistent with your children:

1. Who really is running my life, me or my child?
2. Do I tell my child not to do something and then a minute later ignore the fact that he is doing it anyway?
3. Do I find myself repeatedly threatening my child with a spanking but then oftentimes not following through?
4. Do other people not like to be around me or have me into their homes when my children are with me?
5. Do I oftentimes allow my child to go undisciplined after he has directly challenged my authority?
6. Do I spank my child for his childish mistakes, but then ignore a direct disobedience?
7. Do I praise my child when he does good and is obedient?
8. When I take my child to the cry-room when he is misbehaving in services, is it to reward him for misbehaving by allowing him to play, or is it to teach him to sit still and be quiet? (By the way, the cry room is not a place for parents to play either!)

How you answer these questions should tell you whether or not you are consistent in your discipline. Let us truly show love for our children as God does for us by making sure that every transgression and disobedience receives a just recompense of reward, and at the same time, that every good act and obedience is worthy of praise.

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The Family Affair

***THAT'S A BIG SMILE.** Have a family contest this week to see who can put on the largest smile. Measure each person's smile--that is, if you can get them to stop laughing long enough. Give a pack of sugarless gum as a prize to the winner. After playing the little game, read and discuss Proverbs 15:13.

***IT'S BEDTIME.** Gain your child's perspective on bedtime by having everyone in the family trade beds for Friday night. Have the kids tuck you in, read you a story, listen to your prayer, and bring you a drink of water. They'll learn as much as you do.

***GET LOST, KID!** This Sunday afternoon get the whole family in the car and start driving out into the country. Let each family member take a turn choosing a road or direction as you drive. The result should be a cooperative, spontaneous selection of a route that will guarantee an adventure, and you'll probably see things you've never seen before.

***CHECK THE GARAGE SALES.** The falls seem to always be a wonderful time for garage and yard sales. Has it been several months since your family acquired a new table game? Maybe you're overdue. Garage sales are a great place to get games at little cost and often nearly new. Winter will soon be here and you need to have a good supply of family games for those cold, snowy nights.

***ALPHABET ALLITERATION.** This little game is a fun way to improve your child's work skills--maybe yours, too. Give your child an alphabet letter and then ask them to create a sentence using as many words as possible starting with that letter. Then reverse roles. There's really no competition in this game, no winners--just fun, foolishness, and frivolity.

***DINNER AND DEFINITIONS.** This week, Mom or Dad needs to take the teenage son or daughter out to lunch or dinner. Ahead of time, each of you writes five words on a piece of paper. Choose words related to important ideas, goals or problems in your life. At dinner, exchange lists and draft a definition for the other's five words. Then alternately talk about why you chose that word and the definition created. This is also a good game for husbands and wives to try with each other.

***AND THAT'S THE END OF THE STORY.** Fantasy stories are fun to create and will stimulate creativity in your children. Set the kitchen timer or your watch alarm for two minutes and begin making up a story. When the alarm sounds, reset it and the person to your left must continue the tale you began. Keep going until everyone has participated and the story has come to a fitting end.

***STOP AND THINK.** Take a moment on your way home from work today to think of five things you appreciate most about your wife or each of your children. This evening, find a good moment to stop and tell them what they are.

***READY AND WAITING.** Many women have the helpful practice of keeping on hand several items which make good wedding, shower or birthday gifts. They buy them on sale, and when a gift is suddenly needed, they're prepared. Husbands should be so smart! Why not purchase some greeting cards (the little ones that simply say, "I love you") and small gift items which you could keep on hand and spring on your wife at those spontaneous "just right moments" which are lost if you haven't planned ahead?

***A SURPRISE PARTY.** Find out the birthday of an elderly friend who lives alone. Then have the whole family participate in planning and throwing a surprise party with your friend as the guest of honor. Give a magazine subscription (to his favorite sports or gardening magazine or to a paper like *Today*). It's a year-long companion.

***WHISPER TIME.** One of the most frustrating times of the day can be bedtime for toddlers if they haven't settled down from the day. Try announcing a family "whisper time" about half an hour before he or she is scheduled for bed. Everyone must calm down to a whisper until after the little one goes down.

***TNT NOTES.** TNT stands for The Nicest Thing, but they will really be dynamite if you will use them. It will keep your marriage fresh and growing. Every Monday morning leave on the dresser a "TNT Note" in which you express what you feel was the nicest thing your wife did for you that past week and how it made you feel. (And men, don't be surprised when you receive some notes in return).

***SCRAMBLED WORDS.** The next time you are on the highway, have your child select a word, mentally scramble the letters and tell the rest of the family, who then must attempt to guess the hidden word. It's tough and great for stimulating vocabulary, memory, and thinking skills.

***DOING SOME AUTUMN RESEARCH.** A "Question of the Week" can spark some interesting mealtime conversation. Select a character, story or concept from the Scriptures, a historical or current event, or some other theme and assign research to various family members. At the assigned meal, everyone reports. Your 9 to 12 year olds will enjoy this especially well.

***EVERYONE INVOLVED.** A family potluck will make dinner tomorrow night a real adventure. Each member of the family makes one part of the meal. Tiny tots can either work in tandem with older children or give them enough money to enter the grocery store to buy chips or cookies. And after the merriment, everyone helps with clean-up!

Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

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ATTITUDES TOWARD TRUTH

Introduction

1. Truth does not seem as valuable to mankind as it once did
2. While it remains extremely valuable and supremely important, most people reject it
3. Consider some of the reasons people reject the truth and then look at the proper attitudes one should have toward it

I. Reasons for Rejecting the Truth

- A. Ignorance
 1. Can't accept it unless you know it
 2. God would have all come to a knowledge of it - I Tim. 2:4
- B. They cannot fully comprehend how it can be
 1. As Jews were - John 6:41-42, 51-52
 2. Such an attitude common today
- C. They cannot fully comprehend why it is
 1. God has the right to tell us what His will is without telling us why
 2. His ways and thoughts are higher than ours - Isa. 55:8-9
- D. It is not what they want
 1. It doesn't appeal to them
 2. They aren't willing to pay the price for it
- E. They fear men rather than God and love the praise of men more than the praise of God
- F. They think they will condemn their loved ones to hell

II. Proper Attitudes Toward Truth

- A. Know it - John 8:32
- B. Love it - 2 Thess. 2:10
- C. Buy it - Prov. 23:23
- D. Obey it - I Pet. 1:22

Conclusion

What is your attitude toward the truth of the word of God? Why not love it and show that love by obeying it?

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JAMES

Introduction

1. The epistle of James is one of the most practical, hard-hitting books in the Bible
2. Some, though, have always held the book of James to be suspect

I. Author: "James" - 1:1

- A. Four "James" in the New Testament
 1. Father of the apostle Judas, not Iscariot (Thaddeus) - Lk. 6:16
 2. Son of Zebedee, brother of John - Matt. 4:21
 3. Son of Alphaeus - Matt. 10:3
 4. Brother of Jesus - Matt. 13:55

- B. James, the Lord's brother, is the author
 1. Brother of Jude - Jude 1
 2. During life of Jesus, he was not a believer - John 7:5, 10
 3. Witnessed the resurrection - I Cor. 15:7
 4. Became a prominent member, possibly an elder, in church at Jerusalem - Ga. 2:9; Acts 21:18
 5. Died as a martyr in either 62 or 63 A.D. Discrepancies exist as to the manner in which he died.
- C. Book bears the mark of one thoroughly versed in all phases of Jewish law, culture and life
 1. Some phraseology as in Acts 15 speech by James
 2. Appeals to Old Testament characters as illustrations
 3. Striking similarity between book of James and the Sermon on the Mount

II. Recipients of the Epistle

- A. "Twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" - 1:1
- B. Most likely means Jewish Christians
 1. Jews came from many places to Jerusalem for Pentecost - Acts 2:9-11
 2. Jewish Christians were scattered abroad by persecution that arose following stoning of Stephen - Acts 8:1-4; 11:19
- C. Could have reference to church in general "Spiritual Israel" - Gal. 6:16

III. Time and Place of Writing

- A. Time
 1. Early in the first century, possibly sometime between 45 to 48 A.D.
 2. Internal evidence supports an early date
- B. Place
 1. Unknown
 2. Best possibility: Jerusalem

IV. Purposes

- A. To meet the needs of Jewish Christians in the Dispersion - 1:1
- B. To get Christians to live their professed faith by obeying the word of God and doing good works - 1:22; 2:14-26
- C. To get Christians to practice pure and undefiled religion - 1:27
- D. To get Christians to become perfect in Christ - 1:4; 3:2

Conclusion

The book of James contains many valuable lessons for man today, especially the Christian. Let us receive it with meekness so that it may work in our lives to the salvation of our souls.

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TEEN TALK

A Column for teens and by teens

"My older brother has recently started drinking beer, smoking, and doing a lot of other bad things. He refused to change his actions and the church had to mark and withdraw from him. What can I do to bring him to a repentance?"



Paul Schreiner, Jr.
Oxford, OH
Age: 17

The first thing to do is to make sure he knows that you and others do not condone his actions. Don't be afraid to talk to him about the situation, not with a rebuking nature, but with gentleness and concern. Let him know that you care about him and wish him to leave his evil ways.

You may try doing more things with him. Bring him to gatherings at which Christians are present. Let him know that it's possible to have fun in a Godly manner. Activities such as this may show him that other Christians are concerned about his conduct and won't him to be a righteous Christian. Finally, and most importantly: pray for him because the *"prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much"* (Jas. 5:16).



Becky Norris
Russellville, AL
Age: 18

Generally, those who behave as your brother has been behaving are insecure and searching for happiness. Your brother may be troubled, and

these actions are only symptoms of his unhappiness. Try to have him talk about the things that trouble him. Talk with him whenever possible about the joys of being a Christian and the inner peace and hope one can have (Phil. 4:7, Heb. 6:19). By setting a good example in your life, you can show how this peace and hope can help in time of need (1 Pet. 2:12).

Neil Green
Huntsville, AL
Age: 16



In this situation there are some important "do's and don't's. When talking to your brother, **do not** be self righteous. **Do not** be haughty acting self righteously. When talking to him **do not** flood him with scriptures, saying, "You're going to hell if you do not repent".

The best way to handle this situation is to be a good example. Try to maintain a good loving relationship with your brother. If you lose him as a friend then you won't have much of a chance of converting him. But while maintaining your relationship don't compromise on matters of faith. Pray fervently, consistently, and be patient, and keep in mind Gal. 6:1.



Troy Reece
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 15

Remember that your biggest effect will most likely come from your example. You can talk to him all you

want but if he sees you living wrong, your words don't mean much to him. The older brother usually has the most influence but if he sees the younger one doing right he might stop and think.

Talking with him is also very important. Tell him what he is doing is wrong and that the church withdrew from him as a last resort. Explain that the withdrawal was brought upon by his actions and failure to repent. Stress that he needs to repent and establish heaven as his goal. Upon this action the church will accept with open arms and the angels in heaven will rejoice.



Ginger Clark
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 14

Galations 6:1 says that if a brother sins and you know about it you should go to him and help him in a spirit of gentleness being careful that you are not tempted, too. The brother here would apply to a fleshly brother as well as any other brother or sister in Christ. Therefore your duty to him would be no different than it is from any saint, except that you would be closer to him and maybe have a better opportunity to persuade him than someone else.

So, in a spirit of meekness and love you should go to him and talk to him about his serious condition, telling him how much he is hurting himself and others, not only physically but also spiritually. You should make him aware of other people who are able to help him overcome his problems. You should try to set the right example yourself, and you should always pray for him.



Sonia Ennis
Smiths Grove, KY
Age: 17

If my older brother were doing a lot of these worldly things, it would break

my heart. I would have a lot of compassion for him and assure him that, as part of his family, I love him and I want to help him turn from his sins and back to God.

I need to make sure that I am setting

a good Christian example before him. If not, I couldn't have a good influence on him or anyone else. Matt. 7:1-5 tells us to get the beam out of our own eye so we can see clearly to get the mote out of our brother's eye.

I think genuine love and living like a Christian should will help your brother to repent of his sins if he hasn't seared his consciences beyond help.



TALKING TO GOD

by Dennis Tucker

One of the signs of a marriage that is in trouble is non-communication. The husband quits talking to his wife, and she quits talking to him. They only grunt at each other. They do not talk about their daily lives with each other, and eventually they drift away from each other. A common sign of a child who is heading for trouble is non-communication with his parents. The father doesn't have the time to talk with his child, and the child does not make the effort to talk with his father. After a few years, the kid looks at his parents and declares them to be impossible to understand. One of the signs of a Christian drifting away from God is a lack of prayer. A person quits talking to God, and after a while, they declare that God really doesn't care.

Communication is a two-way street. We have to be willing to receive information, and then we have to give out information. By reading the Bible, God communicates to us, but that is only half of the process. He tells us what we need to know, but the second half is left to us. We need first to realize that God wants us to talk to Him, secondly, we need to realize that our prayers matter. Our prayer life is the easiest part of worship for us to neglect. If we quit assembling with the saints, someone will eventually give us a call. If we quit studying, it becomes obvious after a while that we are not studious. If we quit praying, no one else will know except our heavenly Father.

There are some bad habits that develop from not praying to God. The spiritual part of man suffers due to the lack of prayers. We quit talking to God and get bogged down in the daily activities of this life. A person needs to pray for forgiveness and to be thankful for all blessings. We need to pray for the saints who need our prayers and for the work of spreading the gospel. Paul

told the people at Thessalonica that he needed their prayers (2 Thess. 3:1). Most preachers appreciate the prayers that fellow Christians make for them.

As we quit praying, we become more self-reliant. We quickly get the feeling that we no longer need God's help. We try to take care of all our needs ourselves. We try to handle all of life's problems and disappointments without God. As a result, we often get depressed and feel as if we are not accomplishing anything. The problem is that we try to do too much by ourselves. We are similar to the baseball player who wants to win the game all by himself. He wants to throw every ball, catch every fly ball, and hit every home run. He will eventually learn to work with his teammates or become frustrated and quit. So it goes for us. We will eventually learn to rely on God to help us, or we will drift away from Him. God wants to help us and is ready to do so if we ask for His help.

Finally, we become lonely when we quit praying to God. Our friends will not always be around us, but God is always with us. If we have God on our side, we can conquer all. If we do not have God with us, we are truly by ourselves.

Prayer can work for us. In the Old Testament, we have many examples of God listening to his servants and then sending them help. God does not have to work miraculously to be working in our lives. In Exodus 2:24-25, we read of Israel being in bondage and crying out to their God, and God hearing them. He sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt. Often in the Old Testament, we see that the power was limited by the people of God by what they would allow Him to do for them. Many cases can be shown where the hardest part was not getting the job done but was getting the people to let it be done. We need not to limit God's power by limiting our prayers to Him. As we

pray, we need to pray that the will of God be done (I John 5:14) and to pray confidently (James 1:6). We need to realize that His power is not limited by our speech or lack of eloquence, for God already knows what we need even before we pray. *"For your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him,"* (Matt. 6:8).

Our prayers need to be often. God wants us to pray on a regular basis. In fact, our whole life should be filled with the attitude of prayer (I Thess. 5:17). Christians should not pray just the three times that they assemble each week. Instead, we need to pray each day that we have. Our prayers need not be self-centered; we need to pray for others. *"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men"* (I Tim. 2:1). God listened to Moses when Moses prayed for the children of Israel, but the prayer that Moses made to go into the land of Canaan was denied. We can read of instances in the New Testament of prayers being made on the behalf of others. Few prayers recorded were self-centered.

Finally, our prayers need to be filled with ourselves. One of the problems of public prayer is all the phrases that we learn to say. After a while we can be praying and almost put our brain in neutral, while the same old phrases come out of our mouths. This is not to say that those phrases are wrong, but we do need to be concentrating on what we are saying. Phrases that sound good should not be used unless we mean them. *"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition. . ."* (Matt. 6:7).

Many of our best prayers are not in the public assembly or around the dinner table. They are the words spoken at the beginning of the day or the close of the day. They might not be long or eloquent; they may be the simple words "Let Thy will be done". God needs to hear our voices being raised to Him, and we need to be talking with our God.

The Poet's Page

SOMETIMES

Sometimes life seems dark and dreary
And burdens hard to bear,
Sometimes we stagger 'neath the load
And no one seems to care.

Sometimes our faith grows weak and frail
And vision blurred with tears,
Sometimes our faith is torn apart
And overcome with fears.

Sometimes Satan sees this
And laughs with joy and mirth,
Sometimes we just hand to him
The greatest gift on earth.

Let us look to those before us
Faithful fathers, sisters and brothers,
Those who lived and spent their lives
Examples of faith to others.

We read their stories in the Bible
How they trusted in God's love,
So let us rise and then press onward
For that prize in heaven above.

--Mary F. Liggin
Panama City Beach, FL

THE CRUCIFIXION

Upon a dark and lonesome hill
Hung our loving Savior at His will.

That hill of agony,
That hill of defeat,
Is our hope for eternity
When the Lord we shall meet.

If not for our dear God
And His precious Son
We would not have
The chance to be with the Almighty One.

--Beth Reynolds
Kettering, OH

ASSURED SUCCESS

When things go wrong, and I'm beat by
Old failure's chastening rod.
I know I'm doing the wrong thing,
Or...haven't called on God!

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

MY WORK AND MY RETIREMENT

My hair is growing thin and some silver
And my time of toil is almost through;
I have many years and memories behind
me and ahead of me a few.

When I get to retirement sort of dreaming
in the sun
And recall the roads I've traveled and the
many things I've done;
And I hope there will be no picture at
work that I'll hate to look upon,
When the time to make it better or to
change it is gone.

I hope there will be no vision of a hasty
word I've said,
That has left a trail of sorrow like a whip
welt sore and red;
And I hope my work-day dreamings will
bring back no bitter scene
Of a time when I was selfish or a time
when I was mean.
When I get old and feeble and I am far
along life's way
I don't want to sit regretting any by-gone
yesterdays.

I have painted now the picture that I'll
some day want to see
And I am filling in the canvas that will
soon come back to me;
And though nothing great is on it and
nothing there is fine
I shall look it over when in retirement
and can call it mine;
And I do not dare to leave my work
while there is some stress and fret
With a single thing left that I'll later on
regret.

--Eula Coe
Russellville, KY

RAINBOW TO LIVE BY

R ejoice in the Lord always
A sk and you shall receive
I n all things give thanks
N ow is the best time
B ecome as Christ
O vercome temptation
W ithhold not your love for Christ

--Beth Reynolds
Kettering, OH

OUR GREAT EXAMPLE

When you are all alone
And your heart aches with fears
Remember Jesus, our example
Had no one to wipe away the tears.

While in the garden praying
His best friends slept.
Again there was no one
To wipe the tears that we wept.

Then being tried for his life
A friend said, Him I do not know.
There must have been many tears
When he heard the cock crow.

Having to take a prisoners place
From a mob that said,
"Let Him be crucified".
Think of the sad tears
Knowing they had lied.

As He hung between two thieves,
Surely He was very weak.
But He cried, "Forgive them".
Still no one wiped the
Tears from His cheek.

When a cross we have to bear
Many times we too have to cry
But someday that Great Example
Will wipe the tears from my eye.

--Wilma Bray
Columbus, IN

NO REGRETS

Bruises, broken bones and bumps,
Measles, chick pox and mumps,
Tonsils, and adenoids galore,
Vaccinations by the score. . .
All these til I'm fairly dizzy,
Keep quick minds every busy,
Settling fights and quieting noise,
Thinking "Boys will be boys."

Now that those hectic days are gone
And the times I've felt like quitting
Do you know what I've gone and done?
I've started babysitting!

--Jean Blackford
Owensboro, KY

FIELD REPORTS

Carlos Capelli, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Jose C. Paz congregation is very well. There are now 30 members and the gospel of Christ continues to be extended each day to more and more. I am happy to say that another two souls were baptized for the remission of their sins. We have also had one to identify with us and one family to be restored to the truth. I had a two-night debate with Jehovah's Witnesses, but they could not sustain their theories concerning the "Kingdom of God" and "The 144,000 and the Great Multitude." I also preached a gospel meeting for the Boulogne Church and one was baptized there. We had a big tempest to hit Buenos Aires on May 31. One of the zones most affected was Boulogne, where many of our brethren live. The water came up four feet into our brethren's houses. They lost their beds, mattresses, clothes, etc. There is now contamination in the water and nobody can drink it. There are many illnesses among the children. Boxes of used clothing or money for blankets would be helpful.

Glenn Jones, Eckener Platz 8, D-2300 Keil 17, West Germany

Bro. Joachim Kramer is employed as a draftsman with a large ship-building firm in Keil. His talents in this area have been valuable in producing two large posters in our showcase near the train section. One poster offers a brief explanation of the New Testament church, including the goals of our efforts; the other challenges the bypasser to consider some religious topics of current interest, such as evolution, life after death, the problem of suffering, and others, and announces our desire to study such matters with all who are interested. Tentatively we plan to rent the showcase for about one year and then assess the results.

The distribution of our correspondence course last fall gained three new contacts. A resumption of our distribution efforts in early 1985 was slowed down by a severe winter as well as preparation for gospel meetings, studies with contacts, and some personal study projects; however, we intended to resume letterboxing in full force after the summer break. Just two weeks ago I distributed several hundred courses, resulting in one new response.

Searching for those seeking the truth is no easy task. Religious ads seem to drown in the vast ocean of big business advertisement bombarding the German public every day. Our experience continues to show that personal acquaintances are the best source of serious contacts. Nevertheless, we want to get our name before the public and to give as many people as possible a chance to respond to the gospel of Christ. We hope that at least a few truth seekers will take advantage of our offers.

Jim Hartman, 501 Chillihowie Street, Columbia, SC 29209

After 4½ years of working in the Roundhill, Kentucky area, I have now moved to work with the Lower Richland Church in Hopkins

(Columbia), South Carolina. The congregation has approximately 50 in attendance and shows a tremendous eagerness to serve their Lord. Though there existed a moral problem at one time, the brethren have taken corrective action that has removed this problem and harmony has been restored. I look forward to working with the brethren here, as Columbia is a city of approximately 100,000 people and there are many souls to be saved. If you are driving through, do not hesitate to contact us as we would greatly enjoy visitors.

I am happy to report that the brethren of the Highway 70 congregation and the Hunt's congregation (both located in Roundhill) united in fellowship to form one congregation. The merger took place in the smoothest possible manner, as this event was greatly desired. Attendance now runs an average of 75 on the Lord's Day and plans for building expansion will soon need to occur due to the tremendous growth capacity that now exists. Bro. Odell Embry, who was preaching at Hunt's while I was at Hwy. 70, will be taking the work load of preaching. He is a very capable man who loves the Lord and the souls of men.

The congregation will now be known as the Roundhill Church. The building is located on Hwy. 70, approximately 18 miles from Bowling Green, Kentucky, as you follow 185 heading toward Caneyville. The building sits just beyond the intersection of Hwys. 70 and 185.

Paul K. Williams, 18 Fairlie Rd., Eshowe, 3815 South Africa

Two days ago State President Botha proclaimed a "state of emergency" in 36 magisterial districts in South Africa. These districts are mostly around Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.

This is a result of long-standing unrest in those areas, with frequent reports of small-scale riots, stoning of buses, burning of houses, etc. Most of the violence has been blacks against blacks, and the violence seems to feed on itself.

The proclamation gives the police and defense forces wide powers of arrest, detention and search. They are empowered to set curfews, etc. And the press are censored in their reports concerning those areas. This is the first time in 25 years these powers have been used, so no one is sure how they are going to work.

Up until I left Johannesburg May 1, I had no problems in working and preaching in Soweto. However, east of Johannesburg the conditions were not good. I will be able to tell more about Soweto after our trip to Johannesburg for my meeting July 26-28.

Eshowe is located in Zululand, and here there has not been any unrest to speak of. Chief Buthelezi is very solidly set against violence in order to obtain political goals, and his people are listening to him. Zululand is peaceful and there is a good spirit between whites and blacks.

The violence is coming at the time I would expect it. As privileges and rights for blacks are increased, their expectations increase--more rapidly than reality. This makes fertile ground for agitation. In addition, South Africa is

experiencing a severe economic recession as a result of Government economic policies to get inflation under control. The joblessness this has created increases discontent.

The Government seems intent on continuing to increase political rights for blacks, and the economy is due for an upswing in 1986. If the emergency powers are used wisely, and things continue as I have predicted, violence should subside a great deal.

Royce Chandler, 3891 Bunnell Road, Lebanon, OH 45036

Wayne Campbell and I traveled to Columbia and Venezuela during July 6-19 to visit among the brethren in Bogota and Manizales Columbia, and to make an attempt to see those in Barinas, Venezuela, also.

Bogota: The best news of all to come out of this work in the past four years is that Carlos Restrepo (the young man who originated the work in Columbia in 1977 and who baptized around 200 people in the first 3 years of work, and who then fell away from the Lord 4 years ago) has come back to the Lord! About 4 weeks ago he returned to the assembly of the church that meets in the section of Chapinero and confessed his unfaithfulness and has been assembling with them since. His wife, Nora, has also returned. Only time will tell just what part Carlos will play in the continuing work there, but for the present we are absolutely thrilled over his change of heart and his return to his Lord Jesus Christ.

Santiago Castro, preacher in Chapinero, is doing well though discouraged over a "lull" in the attitude of some of the brethren there. I believe that church is still suffering after-effects from all the trouble it went through when Carlos fell away 4 years ago. It was a tremendous upheaval--many churches would have been totally destroyed under similar circumstances: all young people, all babes in Christ, the "backbone" of the work falling away amid heavy tension and conflict, no mature workers nearby to offer help, counsel, etc. Those who know Santi could help by writing him a good letter of encouragement.

The church in San Carlos (south Bogota), where Nestor Bermudez is working, is busting at the seams with zeal, enthusiasm, success, etc. Their little meeting place is packed (about 30 attending) and the work is going very well.

An immediate crisis faces the Chapinero church. Their meeting place has been sold and they have to find new quarters--a very difficult task due to the high price of rent and low income by the young saints. Complications: they were meeting in the bottom level of Nestor's home--the brethren paid half the rent; Nestor paid half. Now, both the brethren and Nestor will have to pay all of their own rent in their separate new quarters. It will be a definite hardship on Nestor and family, as also on the Chapinero saints.

Manizales: Hernan Urdinola has built this work into a very successful and strong one over the past 5 years, one that has escaped serious problems until recently. Hernan has fallen into some great personal, spiritual difficulties. He has sinned and the situation is being well-handled by the brethren there. He needs your prayers.

The work is being done by Reid Braswell and Jaime Restrepo (younger brother of Carlos Restrepo). There have been 12 baptisms in recent months, ranging in age from 17 to mid-20's. They are a zealous, close group and the future looks very exciting for the work here.

HAPPENINGS

News and Notes
From Around The World

RESOLUTION INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS TO ENCOURAGE 'GLEANING' IN U.S.

Citing the biblical practice of leaving part of the harvest in the field to provide for the poor, Rep. Tony P. Hall (D-Ohio) introduced a resolution urging state and local government to enact tax and other incentives to encourage gleaning.

In remarks before the House, Hall quoted the Book of Leviticus: "When you reap the harvests of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien."

The Hall resolution also commends food producers who permit gleaning of their fields, and nonprofit organizations which glean fields for distribution to help alleviate hunger.

A similar resolution is being offered by Senator Paul S. Trible (R-Va.).

Gleaning is a custom which dates to biblical times. Today, gleaning is largely practiced by church groups and other nonprofit organizations that harvest and distribute fruits, vegetables, and other crops that have been left by mechanical harvesters.

According to a study by the General Accounting Office, in 1974 about 60 million tons of grain, fruit, and vegetables worth \$5 billion were left to rot unharvested. That amount of food could feed nearly 49 million people.

"With the growing rate of hunger in this country, we cannot afford to let these opportunities slip by," said Hall, who is a member of the House Select Committee on Hunger and chairman of its international task force.

One of the largest gleaning groups is Senior Gleaners of California, which harvested over 2 million pounds of

food in 1982 which it distributed to over 250 charities in northern California. Other major organizations are the Society of St. Andrews in Virginia, and Sparrow Outreach Ministries in Washington.

"This nation is now experiencing a poverty rate that is higher than any we have faced over the last 15 years," Hall said. "Because we know that poverty is inextricably linked to hunger, we know that a great number of our citizens are living without sufficient resources to assure adequate nutrition for themselves and their families."

RAJNEESH FOLLOWERS WIN ELECTION PANEL RULING

The Federal Election Commission has ruled unanimously that the Rajneesh Foundation and its leaders did not violate Federal election laws by busing several thousand homeless people into their central Oregon commune last year.

Larryann Willis, who was a Congressional candidate last November, charged that the Rajneeshes had tried to indoctrinate transplanted street people to vote against her and other political opponents of Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. The commune's relocation program for the homeless took place before the 1984 elections, and many of the homeless were elected from the commune after the elections, prompting local speculation that the "outreach" to the homeless was really an effort to influence local elections.

But the FEC's general counsel, Charles N. Steele, said in a report, "No evidence, nor even any potential source of evidence has been found to support the conclusion that respondents undertook their relocation effort in connection with a Federal election. There is no evidence, furthermore (that the Rajneeshes) sponsored or conducted any indoctrination of the

indigents in connection with a Federal election."

CATHY WEBB WILL WRITE ABOUT FAKE RAPE ACCUSATION

Cathy Webb, who was unsuccessful in her bid to convince Illinois Gov. James Thompson that Gary Dotson didn't rape her, will write a book about the case for a religious publishing house in New Jersey. The working title of the book is *Forgive Me*.

Webb, now claiming to be a born-again Christian, has vowed not to take any payment for telling her side of the story, but Dotson's lawyer, Warren Lupel says, "There is no question she's getting money from this."

The terms of the contract for the book have not been disclosed. Webb's pastor, Carl Nannini of Pilgrim Baptist Church in New Hampshire, says Webb won't keep money from the book. "I'm positive she won't," he said. "I assume the profits will be used to compensate Gary."

Webb, whose testimony convicted Gary Dotson of rape, later recanted, saying she had made the story up because she feared her boyfriend had impregnated her. Webb said she came forward with the truth because of her religious convictions.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT STUDY LINKS PORNOGRAPHY, CHILD ABUSE

A Justice Department study of pornographic magazines has identified recurring child-related subject matter. Much of the material relating to children involves violent or sexual activities.

According to Judith A. Reisman, who heads the \$734,000 government study, 2,016 child-related cartoons have been identified in back-issues of Playboy, Penthouse and Hustler, the three largest-selling pornographic

magazines. Approximately 75 percent involve children in violent or sexual activities. "Many of these depict gang rape or child victims, fathers sexually abusing daughters, Santa Claus murdering a child, etc." said Reisman.

Explaining why the government was funding a study of pornography, Reisman said, "Many people read sex magazines to learn about sexual behavior. If some sexual-education materials portray children as desirable sex partners for adults, this may be of vital interest to parents and citizens who are concerned about increases in child sexual abuse.

"More disturbing," she continued "law-enforcement officials find sexually explicit materials, including these three magazines, at the scene of large numbers of sexually violent crimes."

PULLING THE PLUG ON ROCK BAND'S PROFANITY

The Minnesota Civil Liberties Union is suing the St. Paul School District and a high school principal who literally pulled the plug in a rock band that used profanity and racial slurs in a performance for a high school dance. The suit claims that Assistant Principal Peter K. Christensen of Highland Park High School violated the band's and the audience's right to free speech, when he stopped a performance by "The Urban Guerrillas" at a dance.

THREE SLAIN IN WISCONSIN CHURCH OVER GIRLS READING BIBLE AT MASS

A priest, a church volunteer, and a church custodian were shot and killed at St. Patrick's church in Onalaska, Wisconsin by a man who apparently objected to the practice of allowing schoolgirls to read Scriptures during a children's mass.

John Rossiter, 64 year-old priest, was kneeling alone at the altar when he was shot in the back of the head. Church volunteer Ferdinand Roth was killed in a small room near the altar. The gunman then went to the basement and killed custodian William Hammes. Two women heard the shots from the basement; one hid in a cooler and the other ran to a nearby school for help.

Shortly after the shootings, police arrested Bryan Stanley, 29. He was captured several blocks from the church building carrying a 12-gauge

shotgun, according to police reports. Stanley allegedly approached Rossiter before mass on the morning of the killings and voiced an objection to having girls read at mass.

Police say Stanley initially identified himself only as Elijah. John Paul of the La Crosse diocese, a high school classmate of the slain priest, said he had received a letter from someone calling himself Elijah. The writer said he was "called by God to go to Israel to bomb one of the holy temples."

Stanley will be charged with first-degree murder.

BIBLE LECTURESHIP PLANNED FOR NEXT MONTH

The church meeting in Zion, Illinois, has announced their plans for a special Bible lectureship to be held October 20-25. The speakers will be Keith Barclay, Maurice Barnett, Gary Coles, Karl Diestelkamp, David Girardot, Craig Meyer, and Gene Taylor. There will be two lessons during the morning, two in the afternoon, plus thirty minutes of singing and a lesson in the evening. Further information may be received by writing to the brethren at 2340 Lewis Avenue, Zion, IL 60099 or by calling (312) 872-7312.

LOOKING FOR A YOUNG PREACHER

The Tenth Street Church in Columbus, Indiana, is looking for a young man who would like to begin preaching the gospel of Christ. The church has had six men go through their training program in the past eight years; all but one are still preaching full time. The church will provide the man's support and give him opportunities to speak on a weekly basis and review his preaching weekly, write articles for the local paper and the congregation's bulletin, study the Word of God intensely, study Bible authority and the issues of today, learn to teach Bible classes, do personal work and have an office at the building to work in. The pay is minimal, therefore the church is looking for a young unmarried man. The program will last about one year or as long as is needed.

The Tenth Street Church has three elders who will work closely with the young man and the local preacher, Joe Shane, will be at the building where his office is as well. If you know of a

young preacher that would be interested in this program, call one of the elders: Larry Brock, 579-5408; Omas Lancaster, 372-2937; Gene Tharp, 376-7368. All are in the 812 area code. Or you may write to the elders at the church building: 3010 East Tenth Street, Columbus, IN 47201.

ABORTIONISTS WILL FACE MOCK TRIAL THIS SUMMER

The quiet Pennsylvania village of Nuremburg (with a name symbolic of Nazi war crime trials), will be the site of a mock trial this summer for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun and other abortion advocates.

Jospeh M. Scheidler, founder and executive director of the Chicago-based Pro-Life Action League, said Blackmun and others will be "tried" for "crimes against humanity."

"We believe abortion is definitely that," said Scheidler. Following World War II hundreds of Nazi officials were tried for "crimes against humanity" in the ruined West Germany city of Nuremberg.

Blackmun, who authored the majority opinion in the 1973 Roe v. Wade case that legalized abortion, is not expected to be present for the mock trial. Scheidler said other prospective defendants include abortion doctors, pro-abortion politicians, and feminist leaders.

WHO OWNS THE TUNE?

The Christian church may have given birth to drama, but it has been known to "borrow" secular music for its own purposes. Modern copyright laws and big bucks, however, make it harder to get away with these days.

Churches all over the country, it seems, are singing a benediction to the tune "Edelweiss" from "The Sound of Music." Religious News Service has learned that Chappell Music Company, administrators of musical rights for the Rogers and Hammerstein work, is unhappy. Company officials won't confirm or deny plans for litigation but say they have "communicated with a number of churches" about infringement of the song's copyright.

Bruce Gold, the company's New York attorney, said the biggest objections would arise if the tune were printed in a songbook or used in a church service on TV or radio.

CLASSIFIEDS

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

October 1985

Number 10

ARE YOU GUILTY OF MURMURING?

by Michael J. Davis

The local weekly paper was purchased and read as it usually is: scan the headlines and the obituaries, then put it down to read it more carefully. Even after the fourth scanning the small article hidden on page five in the lower corner went by unnoticed. The phone rang and the party on the other end asked, "Heard any good news lately?" The reply, "No. Just the same old thing." A couple of days later the paper was picked up again. By chance the paper was opened to page five and there it was just a short article with headlines which read "good deed done." Amidst all the news of theft, higher prices, death and ruin was a single article of good news! Indeed a sweet smell of roses from a pile of thorns!

As a gospel preacher, I know I stand guilty of what I'm about to say. Also, it would not be out of line to assume that elders, editors, and other various members of the body of Christ also become involved in the same plight. Without question, we who on occasion write for various publications are guilty and thus all are affected by this problem. After we have seemingly "toughened our skin" to any situation, we contaminate the brethren with our same condition. The condition of which I speak is **WE FAIL TO LOOK FOR AND**

FIND THE GOOD. As elders, preachers, writers, editors, and others seriously engaged in the work of Christ and the well-being of the brotherhood, we bog ourselves down with trying to solve all the problems, give all the answers, and then complain and murmur to ourselves and others when our "think-so" backfires! Consequently, we end up in a rut. A good elder of the church once explained a rut as "a grave with both ends kicked out!"

All this was clearly brought to my attention by a loving and caring Christian who happens to be my wife. After the third night in a row of the same "hateful attitude" (mine, not hers), she quietly, and yet with tears in her eyes asked, "Why can't you stop talking and worrying about all the wrong that you can't change, and start talking about and advertising the good that is about us?" Friends, that brought it home! I was guilty. And so are many others. Even as Israel of old, we fail to notice that even in the very midst of troubles within our congregations, homes and individuals, God has still provided the manna for our souls and the water from that rock, which is Christ (I Cor. 10:1-4).

I'll not be so blind as to ignore the fact that we have difficulties. Granted Paul was right when he said that the

"later days shall wax worse and worse" (2 Tim. 3:13). There is no question of the fact that some brethren among us seem to delight in causing more and more apostasy. Error needs to be corrected; (Titus 1), but we are to be like the one reading the county paper and even after several scannings, fail to find even one good thing that has happened and take delight therein?

After God had, with a great hand, delivered Israel from their bondage in Egypt, they came to the edge of the Red Sea and murmured to Moses that they were brought out there to die. They didn't notice the fact that God spared them without the loss of one, from the plagues issued upon Egypt. After God brought them across the Red Sea, on dry land caused by His mighty work, they murmured for food and water. Finally, as they continued to ignore the good that God granted them in their journey, all that left Egypt of military age and upward died in the wilderness because of their unbelief (with the exception of two). I feel confident that this unbelief was kindled first by the complaints and murmurings that existed. They failed to take note of the good among them and therefore "murmured" themselves into destruction. Only two, Caleb and Joshua, continued with God and were

assured that God would give them the land of goodness; a land flowing with milk and honey. Dear reader, these things were written aforetime for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Have we yet to learn the lesson?

Also, there is the fact that if we continue to ignore the good about us, we are poor advertisement in behalf of the perfect kingdom, the church. There are some brethren of my acquaintance that are still looking for the "perfect" congregation and have yet to find it. In their search (and many of this attitude can be found) they continue to find flaws among the brethren. Thus another "imperfect" congregation. It would seem they are also contaminated with so much knowledge of the wrong things that they, like others, fail to see the good. By this "standard" they tell another that so-and-so congregation is not "perfect" and they tell another, who tells yet another and so on and so on... POOR ADVERTISEMENT! It is no wonder why so many outside of Christ stay outside of Christ after hearing that even the members themselves murmur and complain and can't find any good within themselves!

Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit told the Romans "let not then your good be evil spoken of" (Rom. 14:6). When all that is spoken of us or by us concerns our "dirty laundry", we have sinned against God. We have "spoken evil of our good". When we broadcast to the world the sin in our encampment, we are shadowing our light that Christ desires should shine (Matt. 5:13-16) in order for others to see our GOOD works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. When Paul wrote to the Ephesian brethren, after telling them that salvation is not of our own works, but is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8-9), he said in verse ten, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto GOOD WORKS, which God hath before ordained that we should WALK IN THEM". Brethren, have we so engrossed ourselves in trying to solve matters of opinion that can not be solved easily and without much time of prayer and study, that we have forgotten to "smell the roses" concerning our good? Have we not in great essence silenced ourselves in the good we do by speaking evil of ourselves, and of our brethren? This only proves we have problems; it does not solve them!!

Again, I am not so naive as to think

all we need to do is ignore the problems and they'll go away. Indeed for nearly eighteen years I've endeavored to teach the truth on all matters that pertain unto life and godliness. I have been obligated to search the scriptures daily to see whether things be so: to prove all things; hold fast that which is good (I Thess. 5:21). I know problems exist among us and they amount to serious danger if not handled properly: in complete study and understanding of God's Word, with prayer and supplication. But I also believe that all these matters should be handled quietly, by the eldership of that particular flock, and without publication to other congregations and brethren; and especially not to those outside the Kingdom of Christ!

Without question we are to "Let (our) conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). In other words, we are to allow our manner of life to beautify the gospel; exalt the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is already a beautiful, perfect and undefiled work of God. And the way we act in accordance with it either makes it more appealing to the alien sinner and the unfaithful, or it sickens them eternally on the notion of obedience to its commands.

I love the church! I love the brethren and sisters within its sanctioned and holy body. I love the Head of the church: the ONE who died to purchase her with His own blood. I know that His bride pleases Him and that come the day of judgment, He will deliver her to His Father (I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 5:21-33). I know she makes mistakes when led away by the whims of people. But brethren, these are "family matters" that should be taken care of within the Heavenly family alone!

Let us strive to do as Peter commanded: "For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil and do GOOD: let him seek peace and ensue it" (I Pet. 3:10-11).

I realize the intent of preachers, editors, writers and others; it is their intent to do good by exposing a false teacher, damnable heresies or particular fallacies within the brotherhood. They feel we need to be aware of these dangers and avoid them. I appreciate their concern and love for the truth and the church. I also realize that apostles pointed out error in their day. But they

also praised the good that congregations accomplished! When they announced error, they did it to the congregation affected and warned them by inspired word how to correct the error. We now have the inspired word. Within it we are given all the solutions of any problem; past, present, or future, that shall hinder the cause of Christ and the minds that desire the truth. Let us leave it at that! Let us preach Christ and Him crucified and stop ruining ourselves in self-pity and self-defilement. Let us start to notice the good among us and proclaim the good and perfect will of God to others! (Rom. 12:1-2).

I deeply appreciate my wife pointing out to me that constant concern over **only** these matters which are wrong does nothing but increase anxiety and distrust. If I am to preach the gospel of Christ, and have it make a lasting impression on the souls whom I teach, I **MUST** speak forth those GOOD things of the church, its people, and the doctrine it lives. I know also that when the people cried aloud, "Speak unto us smooth things" (Isa. 30:10) that ruin and fall came to them. But that is because they had already avoided the truth of God and desired no longer to serve Him as they ought. The good to them wasn't good enough and thus they perished being dissatisfied with God.

Are we not the same as Israel of old? Are we not found guilty of murmuring and complaining instead of noticing the good that is about us and within us? Are we going to lead ourselves to self-destruction because of trying to change the unchangeable? Let us ask God to grant "the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things we can, and wisdom to know the difference." When the work of our life is ended, may it be that the "newsprint of our life" contains more articles of good than it does of contentions, complainings, murmurings and wranglings. May God say to us, "Well done, thou GOOD and FAITHFUL servant"!

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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

THE WORK OF ELDERS

God has great and wonderful plans for His church. The working unit for the Lord is the local church, since the universal church never assembles, has no treasury, etc. In each local congregation there is a place for elders, deacons, teachers, singers, preachers, and workers of all sorts. Each needs to understand the respective duties and functions of the other. Obviously we cannot all be "eyes" else where would the hearing be? (See I Cor. 12:14-17).

The future of the church centers around the proper function of elders in the local congregations. The work of an elder is one of the most difficult tasks ever assigned to any mortal man. It is not a position for the ambitious to crave. It's a work that embraces the most fearful duties in this world.

Various terms are used in the New Testament to describe the different aspects of the work of elders. They are called **elders** in such passages as Acts 14:23 "appointed elders in every city" and Acts 20:17 "called the elders together". The word elder literally means an older man. But how old is older? Does this mean a man has to be able to draw Social Security to be an elder? No, I don't think so. Elders should be men of wisdom, judgment and experience. This writer is convinced that it is a good practice to have proper balance as to age in any eldership. I've seen some churches with all aged elders (almost staring death in the face) and I've seen some with all young elders. I prefer a mixture of the two, understanding that each must meet certain requirements.

It is evident that the term **pastor** is also used in the New Testament with reference to the same men (Eph. 4:11). The word pastor has the same meaning as shepherd. The pastors of shepherds of the flock must be men who are capable of leadership. In order to be leaders these men must have the confidence and respect of the local church.

These same elders, pastors, and shepherds are also

called **bishops**. Paul makes such a reference in I Timothy 3:1. The word bishop literally means overseer. All things in the local church are under the direction of the bishops. The deacons have no power and no authority except such as may be delegated to them by the elders.

The local church is but the lengthened shadow of its leaders! We must be guided, pushed, directed and motivated. The elders' job involves directing, planning, challenging, and inspiring. A dynamic, growing church will have an energetic leadership! But mark it: the church "keeping house" for the Lord has got leaders with little vision and almost no faith.

Elders should be thoroughly informed as to their duties. They need to know them in order that they might not neglect their work; they need to know them so they will do the right things and not the wrong things. It would be next to impossible to overstress the importance of fully qualified and functioning elders. In this regard, it should be noted that the **work** of elders and the **qualifications** are not two entirely separate and unrelated matters.

The first duty of the elder is to "take heed therefore unto yourselves" (Acts 20:28). The elder must set the right example. He cannot lead where he himself has not been. He cannot expect others to do what he is unable or unwilling to do himself. Whether we are talking about our prayer life, or liberality in contribution, home life, personal evangelism, hospitality, or any other area of our Christianity--the elder should be a model for us.

The second duty of elders listed in Acts 20:28 is to take heed unto "all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. . ." Peter commands elders to "tend the flock" (I Pet. 5:2). One version says, "Shepherd the flock." The flock must be guarded and protected. The flock must be carefully and prayerfully guided in the right direction. A good elder attends well to the spiritual needs of the members of the church. He may not always give them what they want, but he will try to always give them what they need!

In order to properly attend a flock, a shepherd should know the flock. Jesus is the Chief Shepherd (I Pet. 5:4). He described a good shepherd as one who knows the sheep and the sheep know him. He "callesh his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (John 10:3-4). An elder should be well acquainted with all of the members of the congregation. He should know their every strength and every weakness and their attitude toward and the church and the work. He should know where every member lives. If a member in distress should call an elder at midnight to rush to his home because of illness, a death, marital problem, or any spiritual need, the elder should be able to drive immediately to that home. An elder cannot tend a flock that he is not familiar with.

James 5:14 says, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him. . ."

Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.

\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:

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There has been much discussion as to whether this refers to physical illness or spiritual. After you have described which one you think it refers to (or conclude that it refers to both), my question is: how many times have you called for the elders? In many areas of the country, this is thought to be almost the exclusive work of the preacher. After all, isn't that what we're paying him for? How far afield can people get? Let's get back to what the Bible says. Do you want someone to pray for you when you are physically and/or spiritually sick? Then why not call for the elders?

Paul also said to "*feed the church of God*" (Acts 20:28). A literal shepherd seeks out the very best grazing lands for his sheep. A spiritual shepherd should see that only the very best spiritual food is allowed. They should seek only sound teachers and preachers to instruct the congregation. An elder must also demonstrate his ability to teach by presenting the word to the flock (I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:9). If an elder can not or will not teach, he's not a qualified elder! He's just a figurehead that loves to wear a title. If he loves the truth, he will resign. If he doesn't volunteer to resign, the congregation should ask for his resignation.

It's not enough for a farmer to throw a few bales of hay into the barn and say, "It's here, now if you cows ever get hungry come and get it." He must see that they eat; he must guard against their dying of malnutrition. The same is true of elders feeding the church. It's not enough to just plan services for Sunday, mid-week, and a couple of gospel meetings a year. The elder must not only be a public teacher, but he should be willing and able to counsel individual members. He should know them well enough to know whether or not they are growing or getting weaker in the faith.

Elders should oversee the worship services and see that everything is carried out efficiently and orderly. The preacher should be appreciative, and never offended, when the elders ask him to deliver sermons on certain subjects. They see a need and desire that certain food is served. If

the singing is draggy and ineffective, the song leaders should also be appreciative that the elders are taking steps to improve it. There should be periods of song practice in which the leaders and the congregation can work at improvement. The singing should edify the congregation, and poor singing does not edify. Members should not "wear their feelings on their sleeves" when it comes to choosing the best song leaders for the Lord's Day services; the most able leaders should be used.

The elders must be overseeing the whole teaching program of the church. They should select the most qualified teachers, require that they are well prepared and are imparting plenty of basic teaching that will keep the church strong through indoctrination of children as they come up. The elders should select the teaching materials to be used and have at least a quarterly meeting with all teachers. If the Bible study hour for Sunday and/or mid-week is a work of the church, then it is a work for the elders to oversee. This duty is not passed off to the preacher, a Sunday School superintendent, or a Bible School director.

Good elders will keep the congregation informed as to what is going on. Secret or hidden plans only frustrate and defeat. It gives occasion to suspicion and jealousy. Leadership must inform! There must be effective and constant communication that enlightens and challenges. The leadership in Acts 6 informed the people of the problem, then suggested a plan for correction. They then called upon the people to get involved.

Elders should give much prayerful thought to the work that is to be done. For men to lead, there must be plans. We must know where we are heading (Matt. 15:14). Frankly, in too many churches the preacher does the thinking, makes the plans, lays them before the elders, and they merely approve. But in many churches, the plans are not even laid before the elders; the elders never even know about what is going to happen until after it happens. Neither of these are the way God planned the operation of His church. He intended for the elders to do the directing, planning, and challenging.

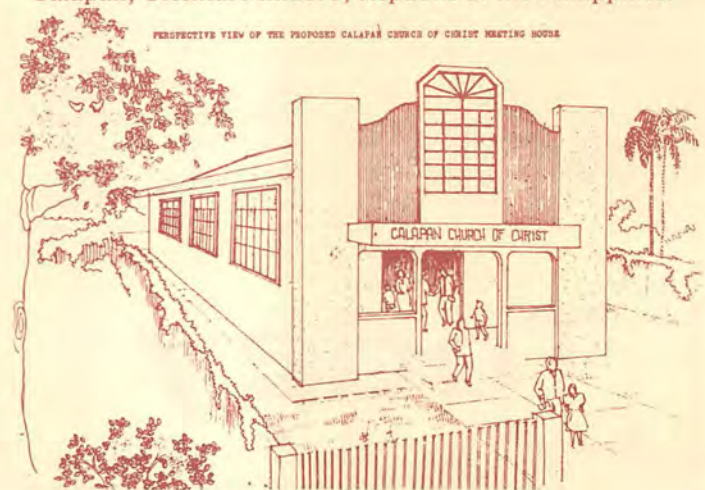
Assistance Needed for Construction of Meeting House

Diosdado P. Menor, evangelist with the Calapan Church of Christ in Oriental Mindoro of the Philippines, informs me that the church there has laid the foundation for a permanent meeting house. When I was with them earlier this year, they were only able to secure a permit for a temporary wall and roof that had to be removed after our lectureship. The brethren in Calapan have set a goal to have a building ready for occupancy for worship in December, but they have run into a financial struggle.

The Calapan Church had worked hard in trying to save as much money as possible for the construction of this building. A firm dealing in construction materials offered them a loan if they could come up with a 30% down payment. The loan would be for P60,000; the down payment would be P18,000. The Calapan Church only had P10,000, so Sister Menor volunteered to put up the remaining P8,000. The brethren are convinced that they will be able to make monthly installments for the P42,000 balance, but they are not able to pay the P2,000 weekly labor pay roll.

Would you be interested in helping? Those brethren in the Philippines that know me well know that I will not ask churches to help them build their building. I have asked churches to provide support for various preachers and to

send them Bibles, reference books, tracts, etc., but I have never asked churches to donate one dime toward the construction of their buildings. I am thrilled, however, to see many individuals helping. If you would like to make a one-time donation toward the construction of this much needed building, send your check to: Diosdado P. Menor, Calapan, Oriental Mindoro, Republic of the Philippines.



EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

Clergy-Laity Distinction: Who Us?

Several years ago I knew of a congregation that began as two families moved from a large metro area where there were several large congregations to a community of 40,000 with no church. The two families had economic reasons for moving, but a great part of their decision to move to this new location was spiritual. They intended to plant the Lord's word in a city where it was not being done. They were both apprehensive and excited as they planned their labor together. Within a year they had found two families in the city who had been unfaithful and had managed to convert three from the world. Three of the men were taking turns with preaching on Sunday, teaching classes, and every member had their task to perform. Everyone was willing to hand out announcements, go by the printer, arrange the newspaper ads, visit and follow up with visitors, etc. Being encouraged, they continued to work and grow until in a few years they numbered in the sixties. That is when they decided they needed a "full time preacher" to come to the work.

A very fine, qualified man agreed to come, and the zeal and excitement reached a pinnacle. His two sermons a week were definitely more polished than what they were used to, his Bible classes were complete with charts, Greek words, and quotes from various commentaries. No one else had the time to match his preparation, so he taught both adult classes on Sunday and Wednesday night. Since he was "free" in the day time, it became his lot to run church related errands, oversee repairs at the building they had purchased, and look after benevolence requests. Now that "their" preacher was doing a good job following up on the visitors, it gave the members more time to plan social get-

togethers and to look at each other's faults.

"Their" preacher brought plenty of new ideas. The first year he was there they had two lectureships, a debate, a teacher training seminar, a soulwinning class, classes three nights a week at the building for advanced students, and a preacher training course. Things were so busy since the new preacher arrived, that no one noticed that their numbers did not increase for the next three years. When it finally hit a few that they were not growing, they began to find fault with "their" preacher, and some suggested it was time for a change.

WHAT HAPPENED

What changed a zealous, active, growing church into an active church that did not grow? Was it the lack of desire to grow? No! Was it a lack of activity? No! Was it the fact that a man was paid to spend full time in the Lord's service? No! What was it? This church unknowingly had developed a CLERGY-LAITY system. The same thing we detest in the denominational world is alive and well in churches of Christ. In this congregation, where many had been preaching, teaching, visiting, and waiting on tables; now one man carried the load of evangelism, edification, and janitor. While the members were busier than ever in attending, planning, filling out blanks in lesson books; they had ceased to be salt and light. While they were spending more time than before preparing for works of ministry, they had stopped serving. They had increased their giving in cash, and stopped giving of themselves. Remember, the Macedonians did just the opposite (2 Cor. 8:5).

The change in their growth pattern took place because of a wrong attitude toward the gifts that God has given to

EQUIP THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF SERVICE (Eph. 4:11-16). They viewed the preacher as one "appointed (ordained) for religious service" (Webster's definition of clergy) and looked upon themselves "as not belonging to any religious profession" (Webster's definition of Laity). During the years of numerical growth, everyone looked upon himself (herself) as a minister (Eph. 4:12). Not everyone preached, but those who had ability and opportunity did. Works of ministry were simply acts of service according to the talents of each member.

They did not make a mistake in paying a man to preach the gospel, but made a mistake in paying him to do THEIR work. When a man leaves secular work and is paid to preach the gospel, it should be done with the purpose of getting MORE work done, not to ease the work of the individual Christian.

TWO EXTREMES THAT ARE WRONG

Some brethren hold the position that it is wrong to have a "located preacher". They object to a paid preacher who stays in a particular location and preaches every Sunday. They believe that the preaching duties should be shared by "all" the men of the church on a rotating basis. This position, while avoiding the clergy-laity distinction, puts unqualified, untalented people in the pulpit. It produces unprepared and boring lessons that drive away visitors and does not edify the church. This position ignores the scriptures that have Paul at Ephesus for three years and have him followed at Corinth by Apollos and Cephas (Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 1:12; Acts 18:27).

However, there is another position which is more popular that is just as damaging. Whereas the first position views EVERYBODY as qualified to teach and preach publicly, the more popular position believes that only ONE man is qualified; the one that is paid full time. This position is the one practiced by the church in our example. Several men were doing an adequate job of teaching and preaching until "the full time preacher" moved in. The only time the pulpit became open to others was while this man was on vacation or holding a gospel meeting somewhere. Whether these brethren admitted it or not, they did not feel that the preacher was working unless he was in the pulpit twice a week. I know of a situation

where two men were supported locally to preach the gospel. Several members got upset because one preacher was sitting and listening on Sunday and not out at some rural church preaching. I wonder if Paul ever listened to Barnabus, Timothy, and Silas; and did they listen to him? A preacher could teach 50 home studies a week, but sit and listen to another brother present a lesson on Sunday and be questioned as to whether he is worthy of his hire. On the other hand, a man could play golf six days a week, teach three services on Sunday, and no questions would be asked.

It is a very dangerous principle to let one man do all the teaching. The teaching and preaching talents of others in the congregation will die if not used. To put all the teaching into the hands of a 20 year old novice is to rob the church of sound judgment that comes with age and maturity. To let a seasoned 60 year old preacher do all the teaching is to despise the youth of our Timothy's (I Tim. 4:12). It is ridiculous that some churches have qualified elders that never address the congregation because it's the paid preacher's job to preach twice a week. This same way of thinking in churches without elders hinders the development of men to eventually do that work.

When we support a preacher, let's let the preacher preach and teach, and not be burdened with "waiting on tables" and holding the hands of the sick. When members get upset because the "paid minister" does not visit them in the hospital, but say nothing of the other members who did not come, we have a clergy-laity system. If an evangelist visits a member in the hospital he is taking time away from his own work or personal time with his family, the same as any other member. When I said this in a sermon once, I hurt people's feelings, but I later asked them which should mean more; a visit from a paid hospital visitor or a minister of the word who took time off from work to show his concern?

We show our acceptance of a clergy-laity distinction when every Christian in the room is introduced by their first name and the preacher as Brother _____. We show this distinction in our gospel meetings when only preachers are called on to lead in prayer and recognized in the announcements for their attendance. Visitors from the community go away thinking

they just attended a preacher convention instead of a service designed to meet their needs.

One important lesson that has taken me years to learn is that as an evangelist, I will not equip the saints for the work of service by my doing more and my brethren less. One member of the body can not perform all the functions of the body. If a man

is paid for full time work in the ministry of the Word, let more seed be sown, but don't retire other good workers.

Please send your suggestions and questions for better ways to Equip the Saints for the Work of Service.

15 Princeton Circle
Longmont, CO 80501

Whatever Happened To Repentance?

by Luther Bolenbarker

The most difficult command to obey is not that of baptism, nor those commands concerning our duties of giving and assembling. The command which causes more of us to balk than does any other is that of repentance. "Except ye repent, you shall all likewise perish," spoken to those Jews who were under the first covenant. However, repentance is required of all who sin. More souls will be lost because of their failure to heed this command than for a neglect to obey other commands. Consider some who fail to repent:

The Bible plainly teaches, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" (Mk. 16:15); and "*Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins*" (Acts 2:38). Why do so many refuse to be baptized for remission of sins? The answer lies in their refusal to repent. They refuse to repent of their past practice of error. They will not repent of having rejected God's simple counsel until now. The problem is not that the gospel is difficult to understand, but that they do not desire to repent (i.e. change) and live the life God has commanded.

Why is it that so many people choose every path except repentance when confronted with their sin? Some get angry with the preacher; others blame someone else for their sin; still, others simply ignore the Word. Their problem is not in the manner in which the message is presented, nor in the actions of others. The root is their lack of desires to truly change their hearts and lives. Whatever happened to the reaction demonstrated by David in 2 Sam. 12:13: "*I have sinned against the*

Lord." Had he not been of the attitude of many, he might have lashed out at Nathan for not finding the proper time or manner in which to talk with him. Perhaps he could have been unhappy with the fact that Nathan had tricked him with the story of the ewe lamb. David, however, was sorry for and desired to repent of his sin. This is the great gulf that separates him from those who would react otherwise.

Some have tried to so wrest the meaning of repentance so as to remove the element of a change of life. Can you imagine Jesus telling the story of the "two sons" and saying of one, "And he came to the second and said the same thing. But he answered and said, 'I will not'; yet afterward he repented and did not go"? The Bible never teaches that a man can repent of a sin and yet not change his life. Any contrary teaching is another attempt to circumvent the most difficult command; repentance! Repentance, confession and prayer are necessary for the Christian to be forgiven of his/her sins (Acts 8:22).

Jesus declared that "*repentance for forgiveness of sins should be declared in His name to all nations*" (Lk. 24:47). It is a necessary part of the life of every man. It is not merely a change of mind or a "good heart," but a sincere turning from sin and a resultant change of life. If you are not a Christian, repentance for you will include baptism for remission of sins. In Christians, repentance prompts an admission of wrongs. **Have you truly repented?**

1020 Maxey Rd.
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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

THE PSALMS

British historian and statesman, Sir Thomas Babington Macaulay, wrote of poetry, "The merits of poetry, in its wildest forms, still consists in its truth--truth conveyed to the understanding, not directly by the words, but circuitously by means of imaginative associations, which serve as its conductors" (*Essay on the Athenian Orators*). Of all the poetic works ever produced, the book in the center of the Bible is by far the greatest conductor of truth to mankind. It is simply called, "The Psalms."

The title of this great work comes from a translation from the Greek Old Testament of the Hebrew word *Mizmor*. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament is called the *Septuagint*. The Hebrew text gives the title to this collection of inspired poetry, "the book of Praises." Martin Luther and most German translations of the Bible call it *Psalter*. It was Luther who remarked, "There you look right down into the heart of saints, and behold all manner of joys and joyous thoughts toward God and his love springing lustily into life! Again, you look into the hearts of saints as into death and hell! How gloomy and dark their mournful visions of God."

Psalms is divided into five books and the division is as follows:

- BOOK I -- Psalm 1 - 41
- BOOK II -- Psalm 42 - 72
- BOOK III -- Psalm 73 - 89
- BOOK IV -- Psalm 90 - 106
- BOOK V -- Psalm 107 - 150.

This division came from the Jewish tradition and is described in the *Midrash*. Commenting on Psalm I, the *Midrash* says, "Moses gave to the Israelites the five books of the law, and as a counterpart to these, David gave them the Psalms, which consist of five books." The *Midrash* is a Jewish commentary on the Old Testament.

The Psalms begin with the blessings from God to mankind and they end with man's praise to God. While praise is a very prominent part of the books, it by no means is the overriding theme.

by Dudley Ross Spears

One finds history, law, mourning, sin and its treatment, the nature of man and most importantly, the prophecy of Christ. Jesus said, "These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44). The prophetic office of Christ is described in Psalm 22:22; Heb. 2:12. His priestly work is outlined in Psalms 40:6, 8 and other Psalms. He is shown to be King in Psalm 2; 21; 47 and 72. To read and study Psalms as a book of mere devotion and praise and ignore the valuable basis it provides for the Deity of Christ is a mistake. The books are without doubt inspired by the Holy Spirit, for Jesus Himself endorsed them as God's eternal word. (See Matt. 22:43-45).

While David is the principal author of these beautiful books of inspired poetry, by no means is he the sole author of them all. Moses is said to be the author of Psalm 90 and Solomon wrote Psalms 75, 76. The Psalms of one called Asaph are found in Psalms 73-83 and also 50. Some of the Psalms belong to a period long after David died and describe things that have to do with the exile period of Jewish history (Note especially, Psalm 73). Some of the Psalms must be regarded as simply anonymously written. During the exile, Psalm 102 seems to have been written. During the exile, Psalm 102 seems to have been written and Psalms 137 pictures the distress of the captive Jews by the rivers of Babylon. Some of the Psalms express the joy of those who returned from exile (Psalm 85, 126). This would place them during the time of the building done by Ezra and Nehemiah. But we should not be so much concerned with the authors of the Psalms as we are with why they were written and what they contain.

The prophetic aspects of Psalm 22

are worth some time in study. Notice the comparison with it and New Testament passages:

Psalm 22		N.T. Passages
22:1	---	Matthew 27:46
22:6, 7	---	Luke 23:35-36
22:6-8	---	Matthew 27:39, 41, 43
22:12-13	---	Matthew 27:36, 44
22:28	---	I Corinthians 15:23-24

When the Psalmist wrote, "I am poured out like water," one almost instantly thinks of the intensity of His sweat as He prepared Himself to go to the cross (Luke 22:44). And when He added, "My heart is like wax," (Psalm 69:20) we can easily understand why. He had to carry the disgrace and shame for others as He was crucified. Also, the thirst He experienced is expressed, "My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth" (Psalm 22:15, Today's English Version). And it is not mere coincidence that the Psalmist wrote, "And in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink" (Psalm 69:21). It takes concentration and much effort to ignore the crucifixion of Christ as poetically pictured in the Psalms.

Among the Psalms that are sometimes referred to as penitential Psalms, the 51st Psalm is one of the more prominent. It is a Psalm of David as he repents of his misdeeds. The record of his sin and of his response is found in 2 Samuel 11,12. David's honesty when confronted by Nathan indicates one ground on which he is regarded a man after God's own heart. Other kings of Judah and Israel sinned, but none demonstrated a more penitent and sincere disposition than did David. The 51st Psalm is a prayer of a sinful man of God and a sincere confession of his wrongs. We learned from it that when we sin, sincere confession of sin and true sorrow before God that leads us to repent (change our hearts and lives) is essential (I John 1:9). God is still

faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The tribute paid to God's revealed word is keenly focused on in the 119th Psalm. In only two verses of the 176 is there no direct or indirect reference to God's revealed word. Martin Luther called this Psalm the "Golden Alphabet of Scripture," because the Hebrew scribes designated each section with one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The great respect paid to the word is seen in the following divisions.

1. It is a blessing to children (Matt.

19-14).

2. It strengthens young men (I John 2:14).

3. It sanctifies and unites all who read it (Ephesians 5:26).

4. It protects the interests of the widow and orphan (Exodus 22:22-23).

3. It honors the aged (Leviticus 19:32).

6. It offers all to seek eternal life (John 5:39-40).

The book has possibly a wider application to human nature than any other writing in the entire Bible. It

reaches into the deepest recesses of human existence and posits the highest and widest possibility for man. It is a book for all people of all nations and cultures. It is not just a book to run to in times of emergency and need, but a book for daily strength and help. What better way to begin any day of life than by reading from the sacred scriptures we have been so graciously provided with in the Psalm.

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Dear Rachel,

My husband appears to be a model Christian. He's considered to be one of the pillars of the congregation where we attend. At home he is a completely different man. When the pressures of office, church or just every day living become too much for him he drinks. Sometimes only a little, but lately it is becoming more and more. The alcohol does seem to help him open up and get things off his chest. However it is also making him increasingly violent. Even the children are afraid of him when he drinks. Last time he threatened my life, I am beginning to believe he just might do it one of these times. I am hesitant to go to the Elders or any one else involved in the church with this. It would ruin not only his reputation but those of our children and my own.

Ashamed

Dear Ashamed,

As I read your letter in which you have poured out your heart, I feel you are asking to whom you should turn for help.

As the society in which we live varies with the times, so do the rules which govern right from wrong. As a result, the advice given as solutions for our problems change, in order to "please" the multitudes. However the Bible gives us numerous examples

which point out that what pleases the crowds does not always please God. God.

Peter asked and then answered this question in John 6:68. "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

God in all his wisdom can certainly give us advice which is much more sound than that of modern day advisers. Your problem is actually two fold. You appear to be in need of some immediate help to prevent the present situation from disintegrating to the point where irreversible damage is done to you or your children.

You are turning away from the very source of strength and support that the Lord has given us. You are a member of the Lord's FAMILY. Each member of this family has a God given responsibility to support and Love every other member, we all support or suffer together (I Cor. 12:25-26).

Like any other family there must be a head, someone to who the members can go for advice. I Timothy 3:1-10 and Titus 1:6-9 give the qualifications of these men and their wives. Take a close look at I Timothy 3:7 ". . . He must have a good report by outsiders" (RSV). Anyone who is a gossip would be known by outsiders and would not be held in high esteem. Learn to lean

on your fellow Christians.

Have you heard of Al-Anon? Al-Anon is a support group for families of alcoholics. They help families understand and cope with the family member who is afflicted with the disease of alcoholism. They believe that only thru God's help, can an alcoholic's disease be arrested. (never cured, only controlled).

There is a similar group for teens with alcoholic family members. Al-Ateen can give your older children the support and information they need to cope.

Please don't over look the many Women's shelters which provide emergency care for you and your children. They can also help you plan out your future with regards to finances, housing and legal. Try to contact the Church for support.

Please remember to "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 body and soul in hell" (Matt. 10:28, KJV). Stay faithful to our Lord, pray often without ceasing and encourage any effort no matter how small your husband makes to over-come this affliction.

I am praying for you.

Love,
Rachel

NEED A SUITABLE GIFT?

Today makes an excellent gift for any occasion during the year. If you have enjoyed studying the articles in Today, then why not send it to your students away in college, your children in the military, or that young person that was recently married? You would do them a favor to start them on good reading material. What better gift could you find for only \$15.00.

Do You Seek Godliness?

by Ron Roberts

Godliness means to be devout, having an attitude that is Godward (toward God). Few churchgoers would say they are without this attribute and all seek to display this godliness by faithful attendance and by living good moral lives. But if we are truly godly we will follow all the commands of Jesus, and we could answer His question, "what seek ye?" with a Bible answer. "I seek the kingdom of God first (Matt. 6:33).

To seek the kingdom first does not mean that we position it on the top of our list only. We must let the desire for the kingdom govern all that is on our list. Godliness demands we get our priorities straight. The idea that God gets the first slice out of our life, time, and energy and we get the rest falls vastly short of what seeking the kingdom first acutally means. All choices made in our lives are determined after considering the kingdom first. Will this activity make me a better Christian? Will these meetings and practices interfere with my church attendance? Is there a faithful congregation of the Lord's people in the area of where we plan to vacation? All problems in our life are resolved by considering the kingdom. Marriage and parental problems can only be successfully solved when the Kingdom is placed first in the home. Putting the kingdom first does not merely mean that you go to church on Sunday morning instead of sleeping in. The Word of God must influence every area of our life.

Do you seek the kingdom of God first? Some parents would answer yes and yet they discourage their sons from becoming preachers because there is not enough money in it! Granted preaching is not the best paying job (in money) but Paul shows our reward is in saving others, not in money (II Cor. 12:14). Parents also discourage sons from the work by the fear of frequent moves, always farther away from Mom and Dad. How can we say we seek the kingdom first when we refuse to give our sons up to the work of full-time preaching for such worldly reasons? We should be thrilled that our young men realize that their home is beyond this world and they are seeking it (Heb. 11:13-16). While we are addressing the subject of children we might ask

ourselves how demanding are we in dealing with the child's school work in comparison to his Bible lessons. It often seems we are too concerned with functioning in our temporary dwelling and have forgotten all about our permanent one.

In our first article we discussed I Tim. 6:6 "Godliness with contentment is great gain". It may not seem possible, but there are those who are somewhat godly, but are not content at all. We have all known brethren who have had just enough religion to make themselves miserable. They drag into church services on Sunday morning and seat themselves in the last pew for an hour of clock watching. At the final Amen they dart from the building not to be heard from for another week. Such brethren are one of the major discouragements in a congregation's evangelistic efforts (not to mention the damage done to the church in the area of edification). The motivation of these miserable saints may be the fear of hell, the preacher, or both. One thing is for sure, it is not the love for God that drives them. They are attempting to save a portion of their life for themselves and they will give a part to God, begrudgingly. Luke 17:33 tells us we will lose our life if we try to save it, (keep it for ourselves) but if we turn it over to God completely He will save us.

Part of the problem, I believe, is not understanding what godliness is in fact. Saints must seek God's pleasure not His level of tolerance. I recall reading somewhere a comment on Matthew 19:1-9 that relates to this point. (The commentary said that Moses allowed divorce because of the hardness of the Jews' hearts. There was an allowance made for the evil attitudes of men. However, the Gospel makes no allowances for the wickedness within men, it cures it.)

If people were truly converted they would not seek what God would allow them to do, but rather what God desired for them to do. Job is an excellent example of the attitude that we are considering. In Job 1:5 we read how he offered sacrifices, not because he knew sins had been committed, but rather on the off chance that one might

have been done. And today saints, claiming to be godly, perform all types of activities based on "God-didn't-say-we-couldn't" type logic. Who are we trying to kid and exactly whose pleasure are we seeking with such reasoning?

Our religion is based on faith which comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Faith is based on what God said not on what He did not expressly condemn! To pass judgements by the silence of the scriptures men must refer to personal preference. There are only two sources of authority. If God did not command it man must have added it. For example: Human institutions were added to the authority of God because man wanted to do things on a bigger scale that the local church could do under God's plan. In reference to instrumental music, one brother told me that he knew it was not authorized in the Bible, but he did not think God would send anyone to hell for using it in worship. If man likes it, and he thinks God will tolerate it, then he will do it. This selfish philosophy has destroyed many a congregation and keeps the brethren divided in my estimation.

Perhaps a brief review of Romans 14:23 is in order: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." If God did not command it, then it cannot be done by faith. If it is not done by faith, then it is done by the will of man and here-in lies the sin. Anytime man follows his will above God's, he endangers his soul. This is true if he knows the will of God and chooses to ignore it, or if he suspects what is God's will and chooses to not search it out for fear of it conflicting with his own preference, or if he is totally ignorant of God's will on the subject and thus performs by his own preference. If God wants something done, rest assured that it is mentioned in His Word, as His Word is sufficient in dealing with all it takes to be godly (II Peter 1:3). We must search His word for all practices in religion and engage in those commanded and abstain from those not contained within the Bible. Seek godliness and be content with the life and the word God has given to you.

God's Teenage Heroes

by Rob Harbison

SAMUEL

The great prophet Samuel was born in response to a prayer and promise uttered by Hannah to God. Hannah's womb was barren and she felt shame and sorrow. During a yearly visit to Jerusalem, she prayed at the door of the tabernacle, entreating God to give her a son. Before God she made a vow *"O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your maid-servant and remember me and not forget your maidservant, but will give your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head"* (I Samuel 1:11).

Eli the priest blessed her (I Samuel 1:17) and soon after that incident Samuel was born. True to her word, Hannah brought Samuel to the tabernacle to minister before the Lord when he was not old enough. Samuel exhibited a godliness in his youth that young people today could show in their own lives.

SAMUEL FULFILLED A COMMITMENT HIS MOTHER MADE FOR HIM

Samuel had absolutely no control over his mother's vow. Yet he was dependable. Even though he never made such a promise, his mother made it, and he kept it. Samuel recognized his responsibility to *"honor his father and mother"* (Exodus 20:12) and he honored that commitment.

Samuel was not disgusted with his mother for "running his life". He was not angry because she never asked him what he wanted to do. He was not jealous of the rest of his friends who got to do their "own thing". Samuel fulfilled his obligation without complaining.

Sometimes parents make commitments for us because they know we are capable of accomplishing the task. Sometimes they are just trying to teach us responsibility. The Bible says *"It is good for a man to bear the yoke*

in his youth" (Lamentations 3:27). Parents volunteer us for certain activities and work because they have confidence in us. How do we respond? Do we "blow our top" or fulfill the commitment they make for us?

SAMUEL MINISTERED TO THE LORD BEFORE ELI

Even as a youth, Samuel realized that his service to God came first (cf. Matthew 6:33). Undoubtedly, he enjoyed the same fun activities as other young people, but recognized there is also a time for serious business. Samuel did not treat the serious things of God lightly or frivolously. He knew their importance and magnitude, *"Then the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli"* (I Samuel 3:1).

Somehow, I cannot envision Samuel laughing and cutting up when the time came to worship God. Worship is a solemn activity, not because it is boring, but out of reverence for the One being honored and praised.

Even as a youth, Jesus recognized the necessity and importance of *"being about his Father's business"* (Luke 2:49). Youth is a time of strength. Therefore, we are encouraged not to put off service unto God until our later years, wasting our precious advantages while we have them. *"Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the different days come, and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them'"* (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

SAMUEL WAS EAGER TO SERVE

Samuel was ready and eager to comply with the wishes of Eli the priest. In the middle of a sound sleep, in the late night hours, Samuel heard someone calling him. Immediately he came running to Eli, saying *"Here I am"* (I Samuel 3:4, 6, 8). He was ready to do whatever was needed. Even though inconvenienced, Samuel was glad to serve Eli in any way.

How would we have reacted in the middle of the night if we were awakened three times? Would we roll over and go back to sleep? Would we think "what does that old goat want now"? "If he didn't want me the first time, then why is he calling again?" "I think I will just stay in bed this time!"??

Parents need help around the house. Work needs to be done and when we have the ability to lend a hand, we need to be ready and willing to do so. The Lord also has much work to be done in His kingdom. Are you willing to serve and be used by the Lord? Isaiah said *"Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying: 'whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me.'"* (Isaiah 6:8).

SAMUEL GAINED THE RESPECT OF ADULTS

As Samuel grew to adulthood he did so with dignity, gaining the respect and admiration of all Israel, *"And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the Lord and men"* (I Samuel 2:26). There was no doubt where Samuel stood. He was on God's side and everyone knew it (I Samuel 3:19-20).

Young men and ladies have to earn the respect of adults. Therefore, while young, we must work extra hard to live completely above reproach. Teens must watch their language, companions, and actions (Titus 2:6-8).

"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12).

Notice that command. Paul does not command adults to respect young people. He commands the young to live such lives that no one will be able to despise you. The weight of that command is upon young people!! We, like Samuel, must gain the respect of our elders by the lives we lead.

Youth is a time full of vitality, enthusiasm and strength. You have advantages now that we tend to lose as we grow older, *"The glory of young men is their strength, and the splendor of old men is their gray head"* (Proverbs 20:29). Don't throw away those qualities on insignificant activities. Use your advantages to benefit the kingdom of God.

Dare to be like Samuel. Make your life as a young Christian really count for something!!



* Geography * Archaeology * People * Religion * Customs

Bible Lands: Past and Present

by Bob Buchanan

QUMRAN

Few places in Israel are visited by more tourists than the fortress of Masada at the southern end of the Dead Sea and the equally somber ruins of Qumran at the northern end. When



the name "Qumran" is said, most Christians will either say they have never heard of it or will immediately think of the 1947 discovery of what is called the Dead Sea Scrolls. Few archaeological discoveries catch the wonder of the world as did the manuscripts found in this area.

The ruins of Qumran are located a mile from the western shore of the Dead Sea, and about three miles from its northern end. The modern city of Jericho and the ruins of two ancient Jerichos are nine miles to the north; Jerusalem lies thirteen miles to the west.

The visitor from Jerusalem, the

usual point of departure, will descend from a dry atmosphere at an altitude of 2,400 feet above sea level to an intensely hot and humid basis 1,300 feet below sea level, by means of a modern road which dips and curves showing a landscape of dry brown hills and plenty of rocks. This is the Judean wilderness, which stretches from the mountains of Judea to the cliffs overlooking the Dead Sea.

Looking south from the ruins, one can see less than two miles away a wide patch of green where the ground is watered by several fresh springs, the main one being Ain Feshkha, which has created an oasis of trees and rushes. It has long been used for watering flocks and herds, and the area is also capable of limited agricultural exploitation. Closer to Qumran, immediately to the south of the out-crop, is the Wadi Qumran, filled once

or twice every rainy season by a brief torrent of water cascading from the Judean hills on its way to the Dead Sea. Within an hour or two's journey from Qumran, lies a shallow valley where not only can flocks and herds be kept, but cereal crops grown.

Archaeologists had shown interest in Qumran from time to time. Some believed this was the City of Salt, as mentioned in Joshua 15:62. Even the more fanciful suggested that this might be the ruins of even Gomorrah! But from the middle of the nineteenth century, when they first worked in the area, until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, they had said there was not much at that desolate site. Some brushed it aside as just a possible site for a minor Roman fort.

The ruins of Qumran could simply have remained unexcavated to this day had it not been for the remarkable





discovery which took place close to forty years ago. The story of this discovery exists in many forms. Today, it is unlikely that we shall be able to reconstruct the exact course of events. The following version may be as close to the truth as we can reach from all that has been written on it.

On a morning in the winter of 1946-47, three cousins belonging to the Bedouin tribe of the Ta'amireh were watering their flocks of sheep and goats at Ain Feshkha. To the north of this area there are several hundred caves, and having wandered in this direction with their flocks, some of the goats were climbing too high. It was getting late and time for the shepherds to head home. One of the three boys, Jum'a Muhammed, climbed up the cliff face and something caught his attention. There were two small openings, one above the other, in the cliff above. They were very small; a man could not get through the lower one but might just squeeze through the upper one. He threw a rock into the opening and heard the shattering of pottery. Now what else could be in those remote caves but treasure? He thought that maybe his days of following the sheep were over. He peered into the black depths of the cave but nothing could be made out. His companions scrambled up to the openings, but since it was already growing dark, the three of them agreed that they would investigate the cave later.

They returned to Ain Feshkha the next day, but it was nearing dark again

when they finished watering their flocks and camped below the openings. At the dawn of the next morning, Muhammed Ahmed el-Hamed, who was nicknamed "The Wolf", woke first. He decided not to wait for his two older companions. He scaled the 350 or so feet up to the cave Jum'a had found two days before. With some difficulty, he managed to squeeze himself through the upper opening. Once his eyes had been accustomed to the darkness, he saw that the floor was covered with broken earthenware. Then his glance fell upon a row of about ten jars, two to three feet high, stacked against the wall. Some of these had their bowl-shaped covers still in place. The first eight jars he opened were empty; the ninth was full of dirt, but from the other Muhammed found two bundles wrapped in linen, and one leather roll. The cloth and the leather were greenish with age. These were all "The Wolf" took from the cave that morning.

Not surprisingly, Muhammad's two cousins greeted his return with disapproval. Not only had he gone without them, but he didn't return with any gold and could present only three dirty bundles. Where was the treasure? Had he hidden it from them? They roughed him up a bit, but Muhammad was able to convince them that there was nothing but these worthless rolls. The three made several more trips to the caves, found several more pieces, and eventually left their finds with a cobbler-cum-dealer in Bethlehem, a town which had a number of dealers in

legal and illegal traffic of various kinds.

Between 1947 and 1956 many manuscript scrolls and fragments were discovered in eleven caves. The texts are of varied interest and importance. There are manuscripts of every Old Testament book except Esther, a thousand years older than anything scholarship possessed before this. The oldest manuscript of a complete book of the Old Testament is the scroll of Isaiah and measures 10½ inches by 23 feet 10 inches. There are commentaries on the prophets, but they are of no great value as commentaries. There is a Manual of Discipline, from which it is possible to gain some notion of the life lived in the desert community. The Temple scroll, the last major one to be translated, was acquired after the Six-Day War in 1967.

The discovery of these scrolls and the recognition of their antiquity prompted the excavation of the nearby ruins of Khirbet Qumran. These proved to be the remains of a complex of buildings occupied around 140 B.C. to 68 A.D., with a break 40 and 4 B.C. The community was probably a group of strict Jews known as the Essenes. A cemetery of over 1,000 burials lying between the ruins and the Dead Sea is now recognized as the graveyard of the same community.

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Commentary On The Free-Will Debate

by Jeffery Kingry

The debate that Methodius carried on between the two pseudonyms of Orthodoxus and Valentinius is a reflection of the controversies of the first three hundred years following the birth of Christ as to the nature of reality and God. The debate as to the nature of free-will and the foreknowledge of God continued for centuries until the day of Augustine (415 A.D.). The Augustinian view of predestination through the foreknowledge of God became official "Church Doctrine". The "error" of Pelagius, Methodius and others did not have much influence over men's thinking from that period forward.

Methodius, in his debate, answers some of the arguments set forth by the gnostics of the day, notably the views of Origen (185-230 A.D.) which were prevalent in his day.

Origen's view on the foreknowledge of God are clearly stated in his response to Celsus the Jew who wrote a detailed attack on Jesus as Messiah and the Church as God's plan. Celsus ridicules the biblical account of Jesus' foreknowledge that Judas would betray him and Peter would deny him. Celsus wrote, "How is it that if Jesus pointed out (these things) they did not fear him as God and cease (from their sin)?"

Origen's response was, "If Jesus foreknew events as a God, then it was impossible for His foreknowledge to prove untrue; and therefore it was impossible for (Judas or Peter) to abstain from their sin. For if they had been able to abstain from their sin, as having been warned of the consequences of these actions beforehand, then His words were no longer true Who predicted these things" (*Origen Against Celsus*, Book ii, chap. 18).

This view of the foreknowledge of God is shared by many brethren - that the foreknowledge of God of future history as a fact - requires a position similar to Origen's. Celsus, being a smart man, saw Origen's argument, and in turn ridiculed it by writing, "If these events", he says, "Jesus predicted as a God, and the prediction

must by all means come to pass, then God led on his disciples and the prophets to the degree that they became impious and unholy men. What is still more absurd is that God himself, through his foreknowledge compelled the members of his own table to become traitors and villains!" (chap. xx).

This view, that God is then responsible for the evil done, was roundly rejected by Origen, but put him in a dilemma. His response to this is weak. "Celsus imagines that an event, predicted through foreknowledge, comes to pass because it was predicted; but we do not grant this, maintaining that he who foretold it was not the cause of its happening, but the future event itself, which would have taken place even if He had not foretold it, afforded God the occasion of foretelling its existence... Now if the learned Celsus says 'by all means the prediction must come to pass' he means 'necessarily' then I cannot agree. For it is quite possible that they might not come to pass. But if he uses 'by all means' in the sense of 'simple futurity' then he does not at all touch my argument. It does not at all follow from Jesus having foreknown the acts of a traitor or the perjurer, that it was the same thing as His being cause of such unholy and impious proceedings." (chap. xx).

Origen was caught on the same horn of dilemma that confronts each age. If one grants that God knows the future as a fact, then one is drawn into the debate of Orthodoxus and Valentinius: What is the origin of this reality? Is it apart from God or a part of God? Is the future a reality with substance and quality, or is it potentiality and possibility? If one says, as Origen does, that the future exists apart from God, and that God is a passive observer of future events that He Himself has no choice in - then the argument goes back to Orthodoxus, "I do suppose that we would both agree that it is impossible for two uncreated things to exist together. If this is true

then we must say that either God is separate from (the continuum of time), or on the other hand He is inseparable from it...Valentinius! If (time) were possessed of qualities (events) as well as substance from eternity, of what will God be the creator?" One cannot speak of the continuum of time as a fact, a reality before it happens without reaching one of two conclusions - either God is the Creator and Willer of all events of time as the Original Cause (and from such a conclusion Calvinism and its conclusions inevitably follow), or that the continuum of time is a reality without origin, co-equal with God in existence, over which God has no power to change any more than man. Then we must postulate, as did Valentinius, two eternal realities: Fate and God (and from such a conclusion Gnosticism and its fruits must necessarily follow).

The Christian, on the other hand, must choose the path of truth. God's foreknowledge is a result of His Omniscience and Omnipotence, and is not a quality of prescience unique in itself. God works in the present through his omnipotence and omniscience to produce a future that He plans and wills. This requires that God "out-think" and "out-plan" both angels and men, who also work in the present to bring about their own ends. God "foresees" not future facts, but future potentialities and possibilities. Man is not the wave held in its bounds by the power of God. Man is not the Sun or the Moon locked in a fixed orbit. Valentinius rightly observed that men do evil. He wrongly assumed that such events are controlled in the same way as the heavens and the oceans. There is such a thing as "chance" (Ecc. 9:11).

My Daddy when compelling me to obey him would ask me if I chose to do his will. I sometimes would say, "Well, I guess I will have to."

"No son," he would caution me, "you don't have to do anything that any man tells you to do. You don't have to do anything. But, I would like you to do what I tell you."

That is true. Clement of Alexandria, Origen's teacher, wrote, "Above all, Christians are not allowed to correct with compulsion the delinquencies of sins. For it is not those who abstain from wickedness from compulsion, but those that abstain by choice, that God crowns. It is

impossible for a man to be steadily good except by his own choice. For he that is made good by the compulsion of another is not good; for he is not what he is by his own choice. For it is the freedom of each one that makes true goodness and reveals real wickedness. Whence through these dispositions

God contrived to make His own disposition manifest" (*Maximus*, Sermon 55, p. 661). God makes His own nature known through the things which He creates. We know something about the manner in which God works and His character by virtue of the fact that man's choice of action is free.

Therefore Judas could have said "no". Peter could have said "Yes, I am a follower of Jesus." Each of us chooses each day what we are. Too bad Origen wasn't listening to that sermon?

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"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel. . ."

(Romans 10:15)



FRED A. SHEWMAKER
WEST LAFAYETTE, OH



Fred Adrian Shewmaker was born one mile east of Stanford in Green County, Arkansas, to L. Glover and Grace (Donica) Shewmaker December 3, 1931. The attending physician, Dr. George Self, dipped his fingers into a basin of water and sprinkled the new arrival, saying, "I baptize you a Methodist." A cry erupted and the father said, "You can see what he thinks of that, can't you?"

Three or four generations of his ancestors were members of the church of Christ. Great-grandmother Shewmaker was a niece of Dr. George B. Croft, who probably was the first physician in Greene County Arkansas and was "instrumental in organizing a church of Christ." It is assumed that her father, Logan R. Croft, also was a member of the church of Christ.

On his mother's side of the family the maiden name of one great grandmother was Houtchen. However,

it is doubtful that she was a member of the church of Christ because her daughter, grandmother Donica, was taught the gospel by her father-in-law, great grandfather Donica. He was from near Bedford, Indiana, but it is not known whether any of the family were members of the church before him.

At the age of 10 Fred was moved from Arkansas to Port Huron, Michigan. The Port Huron church met upstairs in the Machabees hall. Each Sunday morning the chairs were moved from alongside the walls and arranged in the center of the hall. On Sunday morning, January 9, 1943, when the invitation was extended, Fred made his way to the front, going straight ahead through those chairs, sending them to the right and left, as he went. He was baptized that evening, being the first person baptized in the new baptistry of the church at Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. The baptistry proved leaky and someone continually mopped the floor during the services. Baptism was by the late George Johnson, who in later years worked with the church at Wellandport, Ontario, Canada.

In 1944, the Shewmakers moved from Michigan to Long Beach, California. There they were identified with the North Long Beach church until 1949. In the Spring of 1949, Fred graduated from high school and that fall entered Abilene Christian College. Near the end of that year, his parents moved to the west side of Long Beach and became identified with the church which meets at Spring and Delta and are still identified with that church.

In 1951, Fred entered the U.S. Navy and served in California, Hawaii,

Japan and Korea. During that time he was not faithful to the Lord. In November 1954, he received an honorable discharge and shortly thereafter was restored to the Lord's service at Spring and Delta.

In the fall of 1955, Fred reentered Abilene Christian College. In 1957 he received a BS degree in the field of Animal Husbandry.

At Portland, Indiana, on June 16, 1957, Fred married K. Joyce Bechdolt. After the wedding the newlyweds drove to California, visiting churches in Indianapolis, St. Louis, Colorado Springs and Salt Lake City. Following a short visit in California they went to the territory of Hawaii. It was Fred's intention to help with the Lord's work at Honolulu and support himself by secular work. A recession forced a return to California.

Early in 1959, Fred preached his first sermon at Spring and Delta in Long Beach, filling in for Bob Lyman, who was experiencing throat problems. That began a 5 year period of preaching by appointment. In the spring of 1964, Fred located with the Pioneer Drive church at Bakersfield, California. In August, 1965, he located with the church at Wooster, Ohio, where he supplemented his income by secular work. He has since preached at Wilmington, Ohio (1967 - 1969); Williams, Indiana (1970); Evansville, Indiana (1971 - 1977); Lakeview, Lake City, Florida (1977 - 1980) and Parkview, West Lafayette, Ohio (1980 - present). He has preached from Portland, Maine, to San Diego, California; and from Santa Rosa, California, to Merritt Island and Fort Myers, Florida, but has missed many places in between.

For a period of 9 years he edited a weekly bulletin: "THE EVANGEL." Other articles from his pen have appeared in several publications.

Fred and Joyce have 5 children and 2 grandchildren. Their oldest son, James H., preaches at Wheelersburg, Ohio.

The Book Worm



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THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH, edited by Eddie Whitten (Christian Supply Center: Bedford, Texas), 1984, hardback, 355 pages, \$11.00.

This book is the result of the seventh annual "Forth Worth" lectures, conducted by the Brown Trail Church of Christ. It contains manuscripts from thirty-two different speakers on the 1984 lecture program.

The theme of the book may well have been summarized by the editor in this paragraph: "When all of the transactions of the earth have been completed, and the final call for obedience to the gospel of Christ has been issued; when the Lord comes in flaming fire in the final day of judgment, let no one successfully lay the charge at our feet that we have failed to preach the whole gospel to the whole world."

The theme speeches cover about every facet of evangelism: "The Model Church," "The Saving Church in an Unsaved World," "Proper Motivations in Evangelistic Preaching," "Every Member Should be Evangelistic," "Dealing With False Doctrines," "Jesus, The Master Evangelist," "The Cost Involved in Evangelism," and much, much more.

There is a special section called *The Evangelistic Church--The Evangelistic Woman*. This contains three lectures entitled "Making Ladies' Classes Evangelistic," "Saving Our Children Through Home Evangelism," and "Evangelizing Through Helping the Needy."

With the exception of a couple of speeches that steered away from the theme of evangelism and got onto their hobbies, this is one of the finest books that I have ever seen on the need of world evangelism. May the reading of

this book create a new revival in the heart of elders, preachers, or any others that read it toward our goal of saving the lost.

THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF GOD STANDETH, edited by William Cline and John Priola (Firm Foundation Publishing House: Pensacola, Florida), 1984, hardback, 383 pages, \$14.95.

The *Firm Foundation* celebrated its one hundredth birthday the first week of September. As a celebration of this centennial year in publishing a religious magazine, they chose to conduct their First Annual Lectureship. This book is the product of such a lectureship that was held in the building of the Southwest Church in Austin, Texas, where the *Firm Foundation* had its beginning one hundred years ago.

This book contains thirty-three chapters, written by thirty-three different preachers. The men were assigned important Bible themes and doctrinal problems presently facing the church. They covered subjects such as "The All Sufficiency of the Scriptures," "The Nature of Christ," "The Worship Authorized in Scripture," "The Work of the Holy Spirit," "The Unity of All Believers," "A Personal Devil--The Enemy of God," "The Resurrection, Ascension, and Present Rule of Christ," "The Triumph of Good Over Evil," and many more important topics.

The men have written from a conservative, scholarly approach. It would be a good book to add to anyone's library.

THE LION & THE LAMB ON PLANET EARTH by Rodney Miller (Miller Publications: Orlando, Florida), 1981, paperback, 304 pages, \$5.95.

Every time another crisis breaks out in the Middle East, we are reminded by someone in the denominational world that we are getting closer and closer to the world-wide holocaust called

Armageddon. What do you know about this mysterious war that's to come? Is there going to be a world dictator called the Antichrist? What is the mark of the Beast? Are all of the Jews going to return to Palestine? Will there be a thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth? Will the Rapture take half of the people on earth and leave half?

Miller answers these questions and many more. This little book opens the door of Biblical examination on many subjects that keep many Americans living in fear--fear of living and fear of dying. Many people can't understand the figurative language of the New Testament because they can't understand the figurative language of Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel. Miller takes you through the Old Testament prophecy, shows New Testament fulfillments, and explains how to make proper applications to often misunderstood passages.

This book is a reference tool, commentary, and workbook rolled into one. Each chapter includes a series of questions to be answered at the end. It makes for a great classroom workbook. It should be studied by any and all who have read Hal Lindsey's *Late Great Planet Earth*.

CHRISTIAN PARENTING AND CHILD CARE by William Sears, M.D. (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, hardback, 420 pages, \$19.95.

If this book had been available a few generations ago and parents had been reading this book instead of Dr. Spock's, our families might not be in the mess they are in today. This book is totally unlike anything that has been published in this field of child care. The author is a pediatrician in private practice in Pasadena, California, and is the Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Southern California. He and his wife Martha, a registered nurse, are the parents of five children. This book is Dr. Sears' expert, loving

answer to the question of countless parents when they asked: "I want to raise a happy, healthy baby, and I want to teach my child to live a Christian life--where do I start?"

This invaluable resource book will take you through the first months of pregnancy and into your child's growing years. It will provide you with the basics of infant care as well as instilling a loving, secure attitude that will carry your child straight through to adulthood. The first chapter is entitled, "Laying the Foundation." The author starts with a commitment to a God-centered life. He shows what it means to love God and to fear Him and how this will cause us to understand our need to properly teach our children and to discipline them. The first chapter then moves into the commitment to the husband-wife relationship; a lifelong commitment and a fulfilling relationship. Dr. Sears then speaks to the fathers with the need to make a commitment to being a spiritual leader. This section deals with defining priorities, setting goals, and overcoming obstacles.

Dr. Sears talks about how to choose an obstetrician and pediatrician, where to deliver your baby, how pregnancy changes your marriage, emotional changes of fathers and mothers, beginning labor, entering the hospital, bonding at birth, circumcision, postpartum depression, balanced diet, avoiding drugs, the father's postpartum role and caring for the older children. Chapters are devoted to developing a parenting style that works, the dilemma of the working mother, nighttime parenting, sharing sleep, responding to the baby's cries, handling the fussy child, and recognizing early signs of mother burnout. The author then moves into such areas as breastfeeding, weaning, formula feeding, food allergies, junk food, exercise and weight control, and defining childhood obesity. My favorite sections were the ones on discipline, spiritual training, and sexual education. To show how modern and applicable the book is, it might be good to mention that there is even a chapter entitled "Controlling Electronic Influences on Your Child." In this chapter, Dr. Sears discusses television, rock music, and video games and the influence they have on children's behavior.

This book is in a class all by itself.

This would make a wonderful gift for any expectant mother.

HEARING GOD by *Lori Basham Jones* (Zondervan Publication: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, hardback, 366 pages, \$10.95.

The author of this book is married to Dean Jones, the star of many Walt Disney films. The two are members of The Church on the Way in Van Nuys, California, and share a ministry in counseling.

This book is a daily devotional, taken directly from the author's journal. Mrs. Jones agonized over the Lord's question to His disciples, "Could you not watch with me one hour?" and decided to spend an hour each morning with the Lord. Day after day she kept a spiritual diary of this precious personal time.

Each day's reading starts with a Bible passage, followed by a short prayer and then an insight on that topic. The book brings insights on family concerns, sickness, fears, all who read it will share in the comfort and blessings of special moments with God.

NEW BIBLE ATLAS by *J.J. Bimson and J.P. Kane* (Tyndale House Publishers; Wheaton, Illinois), 1985, hardback, 128 pages, \$14.95.

This lovely book is a unique and comprehensive blend of maps, charts, plans, text, and photographs, designed to bring the Bible to life in line with the latest discoveries of archaeology.

This atlas contains special features never before seen in such reference works: a satellite photo of the Bible Lands with sea-level contour and a contour map with geological cross-sections. The atlas always contains some superb color photographs, a reconstruction of the Qumran buildings, and examples of the earliest-known biblical manuscripts, with translations.

The index contains place names with modern equivalents. The extensive time charts are worth the price of the book.

UNGER'S CONCISE BIBLE DICTIONARY by *Merrill F. Unger* (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1985, paperback, 293 pages, \$7.95.

The author of this work is best known for his *Unger's Bible Handbook*, but his dictionary will now be rising in popularity with Baker adding Murray Severance's *Complete Pronunciation Guide to Bible Names*

to this latest edition.

The dictionary provides the essential information for profitable Bible study. Included are short historical sketches and information on biblical customs and sites. The information is concise, accurate, and easy to understand.

The new section indicates spelling variations (sometimes effecting pronunciation) between the King James Version and four other widely used translations (NAS, NIV, RSV, and TEV). The pronunciation guide will enable students to pronounce Bible terms and names correctly. It also offers a comparison of English, Hebrew, and Greek alphabets.

This dictionary is much smaller than several other works, but it is excellent for both teachers and students. It is concise, but clear.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE HOLY LAND by *Kathleen M. Kenyon* (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, paperback, 360 pages, \$11.95.

This work was first published in London in 1960. This fifth edition is the first American printing. Designed as a reference for both serious scholars and beginning students of biblical archaeology, this book outlines the major archaeological sites, discoveries, and research of the twentieth century concerning Israel from prehistory to the time of the Exile.

One of Britain's greatest archaeologists, Kenyon devoted almost half of her life to the archaeology of Palestine. She is well remembered for her extensive work at Jericho. She draws heavily upon the results of her own 1961-67 excavations in Jerusalem which are important in understanding the fall of the Hebrew Kingdoms.

This book has eighty-eight illustrations and thirty-two black-and-white photographs, in addition to an appendix that lists and summarizes the major archaeological excavations made in the Bible Lands.

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

THE QUESTION AND THE ANSWER

(Chapter 15)

We do not know when this short psalm was penned. Some hold the opinion that it was given in that period when the ark of the covenant was transported to the holy hill of Zion. The first attempt to move the ark failed (2 Sam. 6) because God's instructions were not adhered to. The second time, they were more careful, and the effort was successful.

It doesn't really matter when the psalm was written. The application is universal and timeless. God has sent out invitations to men. We are invited to share His blessings and partake of His hospitality. But our Host has laid down some rules that must be examined and followed before we will be welcomed into His house. Let us observe the question that the psalmist puts forward (v. 1) and the answer he offers (v. 2-5).

THE QUESTION

"*LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*" He desires to know who God's friend is. With whom is He in fellowship? Who is the ideal guest in His house? Who is going to heaven? This is a question we all should ask.

The question is addressed to Jehovah. If we are to enjoy God's fellowship and find our way to Heaven, we must look to Him and accept humbly His instruction. Only He has the inherent authority to answer.

Observe the two parts of the question. Each has great significance. First, a question is raised regarding abiding in God's tabernacle. A tabernacle is a tent. It signifies sojourning where there is no fixed habitation.

Israel built and worshipped in a tabernacle during the years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Such was a type of the church. We are now in the wilderness, worshipping, serving, the Lord and fighting our spiritual foes.

Secondly, the question is raised regarding dwelling in God's holy hill. The word "dwell" implies permanent residence. The holy hill of Zion is a type of the church triumphant, the new Jerusalem which is above. "We're marching to Zion" declares the old hymn.

So the question, as it would apply to us today, is: "Who is now in fellowship with God, and who shall go to heaven when this life is concluded?"

THE ANSWER

A quick glance at v. 2-5 will show that faith, repentance, and obedience of many specific commands are not mentioned. David here gives a description of the outward character of God's man or woman. The fruit of such a life is underscored here.

"*He that walketh uprightly.*" First, the walk is spoken of. This common figure refers to one's manner of life. An erect walk is a symbol for straight living. This person's daily conduct has no ragged edges. He walks the tightrope of God's will.

(2) "*. . . and worketh righteousness.*" This person is just. He is a doer of the word and not a hearer only. Faith without works is dead. He does that which is right in his relationship with God and His fellowman.

(3) "*. . . and speaketh the truth in his heart.*" First, his walk is described, then his work, and now his word is

mentioned. He is a speaker of truth. Not only does he speak the truth outwardly, but he speaks it within. "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." There are no double meanings, evasions, and equivocations with this individual. He speaks the truth.

(4) "*He that backbiteth not with his tongue.*" Man is the only creature that can bite with his tongue. Some men's tongues bite with much greater pain than their teeth, and the wound is much harder to heal. A lot of gatherings have been destroyed by such a guest, and God will not permit such to abide in His house.

(5) "*. . . nor doeth evil to his neighbor.*" One who does evil to his neighbor in word or deed is not welcome. Those who enjoy God's fellowship will be keepers of the golden rule.

(6) "*. . . nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.*" If this one hears something bad about another, he doesn't become a human manure spreader. He doesn't even consider the evil report. The original term for "taketh up" here, means to endure. It's a sin to even tolerate talebearers. There is nothing the devil loves more or God hates more than a slanderer. Spurgeon has written: "*Show that man out!*" *We would say of a drunkard. Yet it is questionable if his unmannerly behavior will do us as much mischief as the talebearers' insinuating story. 'Call for a policeman!' we say if we see a thief at his business; ought we to feel no indignation when we hear a gossip at his work? 'Mad dog! Mad dog!' is a terrible cry, but there are few curs whose bite is so dangerous as a busybody's tongue. 'Fire, Fire!' is an alarming note, but the tale-bearer's tongue is set on fire of hell.*"

(7) "*In whose eyes a vile person is condemned.*" The word means despised. This person hates sin. He despises the activities of the wicked, worthless, good-for-nothings. He doesn't flatter them and play up to them. He has no use for them. Observe the treatment Jesus gave the scoundrellous hypocrites of his time (Matt. 23). Paul had the same spirit, (Acts 13:10, 11; 18:6, 7).

(8) “. . .but he honoreth them that fear the LORD.” It doesn’t matter if they are rich or poor, young or old, black or white. He esteems them highly, and desires their friendship if they fear God. The world may ignore them, but he honors and respects them.

(9) “He. . .swearth to his own hurt, and changeth not.” If he promised to do something and later finds it to be disadvantageous, he still keeps his word if at all possible. This person is careful with his word. He doesn’t make promises he does not have the ability or will to keep. He keeps his word even if it costs him dearly. It doesn’t matter if no witnesses were present. God is his witness.

(10) “He putteth not out his money to usury. . .” In those days men didn’t

borrow \$10,000 to make \$20,000. They borrowed only when calamity struck. The law clearly forbade, therefore, making merchandise off the losses and griefs of one’s neighbors. The word “usury” has come to mean exorbitant interest rates, and with that modern definition, the principle remains constant. This person will not eat up the poor, and enrich himself at the expense of the misfortunes of another.

(11) “. . .nor taketh reward against the innocent.” This individual will not be bribed. The law forbade being an “unrighteous witness.” A true man will not wrest judgement for any price. Bribery has been a curse to mankind for a long time. This person judges righteous judgment (Exodus 23:1-3; John 17:24).

CONCLUSION

“He that doeth these things shall never be moved.” No storm will dislodge him, for he is as a tree planted by the rivers of waters. He is fixed. He is firm. He is on the Rock (Matt. 7:21-27). Hope anchors his soul (Heb. 6:19). “the world passeth away and the lusts thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever” (1 John 2:17). Great promises, these, to those who feel life crumbling beneath them.

Are you qualified, dear reader, to abide in God’s tabernacle? to dwell in His holy hill?



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Contemplating Fish

by Gardner Hall



Several months ago I yielded to temptation and bought a used 20 gallon fish tank. “Its for Rebecca,” I told everyone, but truthfully I’m the one who seems to most enjoy watching my two blue gouramies, two catfish and angel fish swimming through the plants and rocks in their own little world.

While viewing them chase each other or poke the gravel looking for leftover food I sometimes wonder, how much do they know and understand? Though they seem to know every rock and plant in their 20 gallon world, their knowledge of the greater world and universe is greatly limited by (a) the narrow confines of their tank and (b) their limited intelligence. I suppose that all they know about the human world is that every morning and evening a fuzzy shape distorted by the moving water approaches the tank, the lid is raised, and food appears on the surface of the water. I doubt they grasp much more. The world of machinery,

automobiles, politics in Latin America, the A bomb, etc. is completely beyond their mental capacity. Though they have plenty of evidence to believe in my existence, if that fact were important to them, comprehension of my human world is out of the question.

APPLICATION

In many ways, we humans are like my fishes. As we peer into the universe and infinity we are not unlike them as they gaze out of their tanks. How much can we discern from our limited boundaries.

To be sure, man’s knowledge of his own world and immediate universe has mushroomed in the 20th century, but unfortunately that increasing knowledge of his “fish tank” has gone to his head and he has begun to cockily assume that all truth is within the grasp of his observation. If things like special creation, infinite wisdom, divine providence, etc. seem beyond human comprehension they are denied as

being “unscientific” as if it were impossible for anything to be true that could not be explained with some complex mathematical formula or high sounding hypothesis.

If fish could reason intellectually, imagine how hilarious it would be for my angel fish to decide that he had come to some “scientific” understanding about why I give him Hartz fish food or about the origins of his water pump demanding that my gouramies and catfish accept such theories or be rejected as ignorant. Yet something like this impossible scenario is what is occurring today among humans.

God has given us sufficient evidence to believe in Him and trust Him in spite of the fact that we cannot conceive many deep truths about him. The parts of the universe that we can apprehend show undeniable evidence of intelligent design as do the simplest life forms on earth. God’s word and the miraculous signs witnessed by thousands of discerning witnesses provide simple yet convincing evidence of His existence and power.

Yet man, from his fish tank with his limited mental capacity, insists on judging God or even denying that he exists whenever he doesn’t understand something. Such presumptuousness would be laughable if not so tragic.

We are as but fish before an infinite God. Remember that the next time you watch fish in an aquarium.

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WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“FRUIT”

Greek Word: *karpos*

Meaning: fruit

It will become obvious to the reader, as he or she reads on here, that this is not a word study in the strict sense of the phrase. But I trust that the following will be of interest to students of the text.

During one of Jesus' sojourns in Jerusalem He spent a night in nearby Bethany (probably in the home of His friend, Lazarus; cf. Jn. 11:1-5). The following morning as He walked the three miles from Bethany back into the city He came upon a fig tree. And he was hungry (Mt. 21:18).

But when He approached the fig tree He was disappointed: *“And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away”* (Mt. 21:1-19).

There are lessons to be drawn from this text; and I know it. But I would like to deal here with a question that Bible students sometimes raise with regard to Jesus' dealings with this tree: Wasn't He a bit harsh with this tree? Mark's account of this incident says, *“...he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet”* (Mk. 11:13). If it was not yet even time for the figs why should Jesus have expected any? And if it was unreasonable for Him to expect any figs was it not equally unreasonable for Him to condemn the tree for having none?

Fred H. Wight, in his book, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, help us with this question. He says,

“The normal habit of the fig trees is that fruit begins to form on the tree as soon as leaves appear...By a show of leaves, it was like many people, pretending to have fruit which was not there” (Moody Press, P. 202).

That helps, but still Mark 11:13 says that the *“time of figs was not yet.”* And so there must be some sense in which leaves might have been expected on the tree and figs not expected. How are we to explain this? The answer, I

think, lies in the fact that the fruit of the fig tree is of more than one kind.

The fig tree is a very interesting bird. Its fruit is actually the product of its leaves. It begins to put out its leaves in the early spring in Palestine. These leaves bloom outward, then turn inward on themselves. As the outer leaves cover the inner leaves these inner leaves become the *“early figs”* or the *“first-ripe figs”* of which the Bible speaks (Isa. 28:4; Jer. 24:2). The Arabs call them *taksh*.

Most of these early figs drop off the tree early in the spring but a few usually remain. Those that remain are left to become fully mature and are very sweet and tasty. But, as I say, most of these *“early figs”* drop off and in a while the *“time of figs,”* i.e. the ordinary figs, comes and the tree bears its crop of them (Mk. 11:13).

The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* tells us that,

When the young leaves are newly appearing, in April, every fig-tree which is going to bear fruit at all will have some taksh (‘immature figs’) upon it, even though the ‘time of figs’ (Mk. 11:13, A.V.), i.e. of ordinary edible figs...‘was not yet.’ This taksh is not eaten today, but it is sure evidence, even when it falls, that the tree bearing it is not barren” (Vol. II, p. 1109b, 1939 ed.).

We can summarize all this by looking at the accounts of this incident given in Matthew and Mark (Mt. 21:17-22; Mk. 11:12-14). Jesus was hungry. He saw, from a distance, a fig tree *“having leaves”*. When He approached it and found no fruit He pronounced the tree's doom and it withered away. It was not *“the time of figs”*, i.e. mature figs, but there should have been some *taksh* (*“early figs”*) lying on the ground nearby and there should have been some *taksh* still on the tree awaiting maturity--prior to the development of the full crop, the *“time of figs”*.

A fig tree with leaves but no fruit, not even *taksh*, before the time of the full crop was manifestly barren. Its

leaves were boasting of what it had not produced and would not produce.

“BUSYBODIES”

Greek Word: *periergos*

Meaning: a worker around

In I Tim. 5:11-14 Paul urges younger women (widows) to marry and raise a family lest they fall into idleness and become *“busybodies”* (5:13). This is an interesting word. It can be divided into two parts: 1) the prefix, *peri*, which means *“around”* which we recognize in words like periscope, an instrument submariners use to look all around their ships; 2) the noun *ergon*, *“work.”* One of the few items I recall from my very limited scientific education is a discussion of the term *“ergs.”* Ergs are units of energy that can be used to accomplish work. And we see the word *ergon* in our word *“energy.”* A person with energy is full of ergs. He or she can do lots of work.

But what kind of work? Paul is concerned in I Tim. 5:13 that young widows will become *“workers-around”* (busybodies, *periergoi*). He is afraid they will work all around everywhere doing everything but anything at which they are supposed to be working. And that is what a busybody does. Busybodies work harder at what they are not supposed to be doing in order to avoid doing what they are supposed to be doing than most folks work, period!

And Paul did not save this word for only women. In 2 Thess. 3:11 he uses its verbal form (*periergazomai*) to warn brethren generally against expecting to eat if they will not work: *“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat”* (3:10). Paul says these people are guilty of *“working not at all, but are busybodies”* (*periergazomenous*), (3:11).

When he says they *“work not at all”* the means that they do not work *“at all”* at what they are supposed to be doing. And when he says they are *“busybodies”* he means they work around their real work in order to

avoid it. No doubt many of us live very busy lives. But it is important to ask what is keeping us so busy--the work we are supposed to do, or the numerous activities in which we engage in order to circumvent our real responsibilities.

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You Do What You Want To Do

by Roger Hillis

Do you tend to put things off? Rather than do something you don't really want to do, do you just forget about it for a while? Maybe you make the excuse that you just don't have enough time right now. There just aren't enough hours in the day.

The truth is, no matter how busy you may be, you find time to do something you really want to do. Whether it is watching a special television show, or going fishing, or something else you enjoy very much, if you really want to do it, you will!

That is why we often need to examine ourselves and our spiritual priorities. If the Lord is truly first in your life (Matt. 6:33), you will be working in His service. You will be doing things such as:

- * Studying the Bible
- * Visiting shut-ins
- * Calling friends to invite them to services.
- * Preparing a Bible lesson
- * Telling a neighbor about Jesus Christ
- * Sending a bulletin to a relative
- * Handing a Bible tract to the person next to you at work
- * Admonishing an unfaithful member

"I just don't have the time," you say? That's just not true. If you really wanted to do these things, you would find the time.

The problem is not a lack of time; it is a lack of true desire. You may even convince yourself that you want to work for the Lord, but if you fail to get the job done, it is because you weren't serious enough about doing it. You do what you want to do.

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PATIENCE

by Darrell Haub

Patience is a very important attribute of the person who would be pleasing unto God. It is a trait consistently found in the faithful men of Old Testament times. It is a trait commanded of those who would be godly in our times. What do we know of this trait and what are we doing in developing it in our character?

The English word "patience" translates two different Greek words. One is MAKROTHUMEO which means "to be of a long spirit, not to lose heart; hence 1. to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles: 2. to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; to be long-suffering, slow to anger, slow to punish." The other Greek word is HUPOMENO which means "1. to remain i.e. tarry behind: 2. to remain i.e. abide, not recede or flop; a. to persevere, b. to endure, bear bravely and calmly." The above definitions are from Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon. In this article we want to consider primarily the second word as it is used in the New Testament.

Paul says that the patience necessary to cause us to wait for the fulfillment of the promises of God grows out of hope (Rom. 8:25). How do we develop the hope that will give us the patience we need? According to Colossians 1:5 hope has been taught to us in the Gospel. This then makes patience an attitude which depends on the word of God for its source. This is a firm, sure source. God has never said a thing that is not true. He has never made a promise that either has not been fulfilled or will not be fulfilled. This gives us hope and patience to wait for the fulfillment of all of God's promises.

Patience develops as our faith is tried in temptations according to James 1:2-3. James also makes reference to Job and his patience (Jas. 5:11). Think of Job who held his confidence in God even though Satan was afflicting him terribly. His wife advised him to curse God and die. His friends falsely accused him of being sinful. Through all of this Job retained his faith in God thereby demonstrating patience. We can add to the list of those patient. Remember

Noah who after working to build the ark for several years had to sit in the ark for seven days and wait until the flood came (Gen. 7:7-10). How many of us would have left the ark after one night? We can think of Abraham as he had to wait patiently for God to fulfill his promises concerning his descendants. In Genesis 12:1-5 the promise is made to Abraham concerning the nation to proceed from him. Later Abraham begins to worry about the lack of an heir that he sees and God restates the promise (Gen. 15). His wife Sarah begins to attempt to help God carry out this promise at still a later time (Gen. 16:1-3). This leads to problems in the family and the sending of Ishmael away. At age ninety Abraham laughed at God's promise (Gen. 17:15-19). These things in the life of Abraham show us how easy it is to lose patience with God's promises. Yet we see that God faithfully carried out his promises in his own time and way when Isaac was born.

The New Testament teaches us that we ought to be patient in well doing (Rom. 2:7). We ought to run with patience the race set before us (Heb. 12:1). It is not easy to be patient when there does not seem to be progress. Think of the times we have attempted to influence one for good either by example or in teaching them the Bible and have not succeeded. Remember the word of God is as seed sown in a field which grows slowly (Luke 8). God promises that we will reap in due time according to our sowing. Therefore we ought to continue to do good as the opportunities present themselves (Gal. 6:9-10). This is true even when others do not seem to appreciate our doing good. We ought to be patient in our own spiritual growth. First Peter 2:1-5 teaches us that the spiritual life of a new Christian is one of growth out of sin into spiritual maturity. This may not be as quickly accomplished as we wish. Therefore let us not lose patience in our growth, but continue to progress. Always remember and be encouraged by those who have in times past exercised patience in their service unto God.

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“THE BIBLE SAYS”

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

The Keys Of The Kingdom

The Bible says, in Matthew 16:18, 19, *“Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”*

The rock upon which Jesus build His church was the truth in the confession that Peter had made, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of God,”* not Peter himself, for the words are not the same. Peter was only a small stone, but the foundation for the church is a huge boulder. Furthermore, Paul said in I Cor. 3:11, *“For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”*

Recently I talked about the church, the body of Christ, and the name that we wear. . .our text today also bears out those thoughts, for the church belongs to Jesus who said *“I will build MY church”*, not to some man as to wear his name. Furthermore, the church of the New Testament is of such importance that Jesus said *“the gates of hades shall not prevail against it.”* Hades, given as “hell” in the King James, mean the realm of the dead, but Jesus went into Paradise in that place. But He did arise, He did build His church, and even death itself could not stop Him!

Peter was promised the keys to the kingdom, and the artists picture St. Peter at the gate of heaven itself. However, the kingdom, though spiritual and not of this world, is presently in the world - we are translated into it Colossians 1:13 says. Therefore what Peter was given was the message of the gospel which, when preached, makes disciples of people who become members of the church or kingdom. Peter was given keys, plural, and we find therefore that he preached the first sermons - the very first to the Jews on Pentecost, Acts 2, and the first to the Gentiles, represented by Cornelious, Acts ten. Many Scriptures could be

used to show that the binding and loosing simply meant they were taught the truth. The real sense is, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth SHALL HAVE BEEN BOUND IN HEAVEN.

We also learn from this passage that the church and the kingdom are the same. Some believe that the church was given as a substitute for the kingdom, but there is not one whit of evidence to prove that; besides, the church is not just a substitute, but the body of Christ, (Col. 1:18, 19) that institution wherein is found salvation. . which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

The kingdom came during the lifetime of those to whom Jesus spoke, for He said in Mark 9:1, *“there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”* Colossians 1:13 says *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”*

The kingdom or church was first planned in the mind of God (Eph. 1:10, 11) and was executed by His Son, Jesus Christ (Matt. 16:18). It came as the fulfillment of much prophecy in A.D. 33, Acts two, and any religious organization that was planned, organized, instituted or caused to exist by man either before or after that date is condemned in the sight of God. I know this because Jesus said, in Matthew 15:13, *“Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.”*

Are you a member of the church or kingdom Jesus said He would build? Such passages as Acts 2:47 and Eph. 1:3 indicates that the church is necessary to salvation, that salvation and church membership are synonymous. The Body is the church, and Christ is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23).

Many Preachers Are Infidels

The Bible says, in Hebrews 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God*

must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Some of the following is copied from a church bulletin I edited. As we think about the passage I just cited about faith, the article under consideration is titled **MANY PREACHERS ARE INFIDELS.**

A questionnaire was sent to 10,000 Protestant preachers in 1967, 7,444 of the preachers replied. Their answers are revealing and they show why the religious world is in such a sad state.

51% of the Methodist preachers, 35% of the Presbyterian preachers, and 33% of the Baptist preachers said they did not believe that Jesus arose from the dead. 60% of the Methodist, 49% of the Presbyterian, and 44% of the Baptist denied the existence of Satan. On whether or not the Bible is inspired, we have nothing from the Baptist, but the Methodist preachers denied the inspiration of the Scriptures by an 82% margin; and 81% of the Presbyterians said the Bible was not inspired.

While we are pitying the sectarians because of their preachers who are infidels, let us remember that the church of Christ may have several preachers who are just as unbelieving, and if the trend continues the infidelity will be just as pronounced in a few years. Our brethren started out with **“WE HAVE NO PATTERN”** as if God gave us a work to do and left us with no instructions, then moved to the idea that *“we don’t need Scripture for everything we do.”*

Unless we have chapter and verse for everything we are doing, we cannot believe in the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures. Thus, our brethren will sooner or later come right out and deny what is plainly stated by Paul in II Timothy 3:15, 17.

That is the way the article appeared in my bulletin, being condensed from an article by A.C. Grider. When I first printed it while working for a congregation in Ranger, Texas, I was challenged as to the accuracy of the statistics. As it turned out, we found that the questionnaire first appeared in *Christianity Today*, so far as church papers are concerned, but was taken from the *Tulsa Tribune*, and also in Tom Anderson’s column in the *Southern Farmer*, Tennessee edition. In my correspondence with A.C. Grider, author of the article I printed,

Br. Grider said, "According to one source when the question of the verbal inspiration of the Bible was raised to the Methodist preachers, they not only said NO, but said **emphatically** no!"

In other lessons we have learned that the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven, evidently because one who would go so far as to accuse Jesus of having a devil, or of denying the virgin birth, has gone so far that it is very difficult to call him to

repentance. We have also shown that the Bible, as an inspired book of God, has done more for mankind than any other book in existence. It claims to be inspired, and I believe it! Paul told Timothy, "*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).

Why don't you ask your preacher what he believes about these issues? Remember our beginning text, "*But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*"

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Life and Laughter

Is It His Birthday?

One Sunday night a young boy asked his daddy what Frank Jamerson did with all the presents that they gave him every week. His dad said, "What presents? I don't know what you are talking about." Gavin said, "Mr. Jamerson gets up every Sunday night and says, 'We appreciate the presence of all of you!'"

The Last Book

This one happened in Athens, Ala. The preacher was having a little class before services on Sunday evenings. He was asking the usual kind of questions we ask about Bible facts. What book comes after Matthew? Genesis? etc. Then he decided he would trick them and ask what book comes after Revelation? A little boy excitedly raised his hand and said: "Concordance!"

Is He A New Member?

The following conversation took place between a mother and her 3 year old son on the way home from church.

"Mommy, who is Andy?"

"I don't know what you're talking about, Danny."

"Andy, mommy. The man they were singing about in church."

"Danny, they were not singing about Andy."

"Yes they were. They were singing, Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me, Andy tells me I am his own. . ."

A Billy Goat?

The Memorial Church of Houston, Texas, has a "Bible Call" program where individuals call and request specific tapes to be played over the phone. They reported in their bulletin that one little boy called and said, "I wanta hear Shadrach, Meshach, and a Billy Goat."

Glad I Didn't Say That Dept.

The preacher was becoming more and more animated as the lesson progressed and interjecting more asides to his comments on the subject of knowledge. Finally he let go with this most telling statement:

"I am amazed," he said in his most incredulous, head-shaking manner, "at the ignorance of scripture displayed by those who have been in the Lord's church for years. Years, mind you! And yet they do not know their Bible. I think it's in Isaiah or Jeremiah -- correct me if I'm wrong, but I think it's Jeremiah -- where he says, 'My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge.' " (Actually, it's Hosea 4:6).

No Excuse Week

A group of preachers met together and planned a NO EXCUSE WEEK to accommodate the members of their congregations who have a hard time worshipping regularly. To remove all possible excuses for not attending, the preachers arranged the following:

1. A cot in the foyer for those who

say Sunday is their only day to sleep.

2. Murine for those with tired eyes from watching the late, late T.V. show Saturday night.

3. Steel helmets for those who say, "The roof will fall in if I show up."

4. Blankets for those who think the building is too cool and fans for those who think it is too hot.

5. Scoreboards for counting the hypocrites present.

6. A portable T.V. conveniently placed for those who can't miss the football games.

7. A good selection of wild flowers for those who enjoy the outdoors.

8. "Stamp-out-Stewardship" buttons for those who feel the church is always asking for money.

9. Free T.V. dinners for those who can't cook and attend services too.

10. Isolation booths for those who can't stand crowds on Sunday, but are not bothered by this phobia while shopping the rest of the week.

11. Special telephones to call the relatives many of us have to visit on Sunday.

12. A doctor and nurse on duty for those who PLAN to be sick on Sunday.

13. A doctor and nurse sent to homes where the children are sick. (For some reason, one sick child can keep a whole family from services on Sunday, but not from work or school on Monday.)

NEED A GIFT IDEA?

Today makes an excellent gift for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, graduations, or any other occasion. Your friends would enjoy this gift all year as they read it each month. You send the names and we will send them a gift card and bill you.

The Poet's Page

AS I OBSERVE MY GARDEN GROW

As I observe my garden grow
I learn new truths I would not know
If I had skipped God's school for those
Who plant a seed, or prune a rose.
I push my spade into the sod
And view the handiwork of God.
I unearth knowledge with my hoe
As I observe my garden grow.

As I observe my garden grow
I see life springing from each row.
The tiny seeds, inert and small,
Become green plants, alive and tall.
And from their limbs, where insects cling,
Delights for springtime gourmets spring.
I find there's so much I don't know
As I observe my garden grow.

As I observe my garden grow
I sense that in the roots below
And in the leaves, as they extend,
Are powers I cannot comprehend.
But as I glean each fruit and pod
I realize they come from God.
I feel His gentle breezes blow,
As I observe my garden grow.

--Dwayne Laws
Bowling Green, KY

ALL WORTH WHILE

If we help someone
along life's way.
Whether it be in death or art,
we've been given another day,
Maybe just to do our part.

This is not a dark and dreary world.
as some may see.
Let's put it all together and
get to work, both you and me.

If we could help just one,
to see the other side.
When you say, "I just can't"
Hey! have you ever tried?

Where I fail you might come through
with the right words just from you.
Sometimes just to listen, a pat or a smile
Takes our effort all worth while.

--Jewell Willavize
Flint, MI

A PICTURE OF LIFE

As I was on my way to work one day,;
I was observing different things along
the way.

God has provided many things pleasing
to the sight;

The blue sky and sun by day, the moon
and the stars by night.

The thing that drew my attention in
the end

Was an old man and a small boy walking
hand in hand.

It was such a lovely thing to see,

The old man was teaching the boy
at his knee;

All the things he had learned as he
traveled the highway of life.

So many wonderful things, also some
strife.

I thought what a lovely way to begin
the day

For the boy the highway of life was
ascending;

For the old man the highway was
ending.

--Elizabeth Reinertsen
Bowling Green, KY

IT'S SO EASY

It's so easy to walk
When we walk with the Lord.
Lay aside every weight
That easily besets us.
And take away the Mill-stone
From around our neck.

It's so easy to think,
When we think on these things,
Things that are true,
Honest, just, pure, lovely, and of
Good report, virtue and praise.

It's easy to hear
When we listen to the
Voice of the good Shepherd.
His sheep hear his voice.

It's easy to see,
When we look upon
The needs of others
Before ourselves.
It's so easy with
The Lord by our side.

--Wilma Bray
Columbus, IN

WOE-MAN

Of all the things I hate to hear
In school or church or state
Is a man sneer at a woman
'Tis a thing I truly hate.

Some women may get out of place
And some dress mighty scant
Some smoke and swear as bad as men
And some drink, I blush to grant.

But there are women good and true
Their value far above
The finest gems of all the earth
Equal to man, I'll prove.

When God created the first man
And called on him to name
The birds, and bees and animals
As they before him came,

Not one was found, in all the throng
Equal to him in state.
And then, our God, from Adam's rib
Fashioned for him a mate.

So man, be careful when you sneer
And speak of her to shame.
You better try to lift her up
For 'twas from you she came.

--Hazel A. Dillehay
Newcomerstown, OH

CAN YOU SEE BEYOND

Can you see beyond the wrinkled brow
To the beauty that's sublime?
Or do you only see the lines
As ugly marks of time?

Can you see beyond the faded dress
To riches of the soul?
Or do you only see the things
That can be bought with gold?

Can you see beyond the step that's weak
To destiny sure and bold?
Or do you only see a walk
Of feet that now are old?

Can you see beyond the eye of man
To that which shall live on?
If not, then you can only see
The things that will be gone.

--Verna Leigh
Aurora, IL

You'd give them everything if you could.

But have you checked the price of a future lately?

by Jefferson David Tant

They're great kids—really going after life full tilt. You've always tried to support them with the things you believe would make them stronger and happier.

Now, what about the *really important* things in life—more important than sports or Beta Club or a new car or a good education or a great job? What about the *long term* future? What have you given them to guarantee *that* future, and to assure them strength and happiness in the short term?

Consider one father's advice to his son:
"My son, forget not my law; but let thy heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and years of life, and peace, will they add to thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the tablet of thy heart: so shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. . . .Happy is the man that findeth wisdom. . . .and understanding. For. . . .it is better than silver and gold. She is more precious than rubies: and none of these things thou canst desire are to be compared with her. Length of days is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her: and happy is every one that retaineth her" (Proverbs 3).

Have you invested in your child's future? Have you given them the *teaching* and *example* of a *godly parent*? If not, check out the price of the future! *"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (Matthew 16:26).



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Molding The Clay

by Linda Barnett

To Delight In The Law Of The Lord

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). How precious is God's word and how important for us as teachers and parents to impress upon our children the importance of reading and studying all of the Bible. This may seem an insurmountable task in this day and age of families on the run and TV pablum, but it can and MUST be accomplished. Else our children will die spiritually as will the church.

Because "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..." every chapter has a message worth reading and understanding. The earlier our children learn this, the earlier they begin to "be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Until a child can read for himself, he must depend upon the adults around him to help him hear and study God's word. As parents, we have ample opportunities to read to our children, if we will but take advantage of them. What better "stories" to read and tell during the day or at bedtime. As teachers, we impress our students with the fact that stories we are telling are from God's word when we use an open Bible in presenting these. A cradle roll teacher may use felt booklets to talk about the Bible; what it is, who gave it to us, what it teaches. As a teacher of two's through five's, we can begin to teach the parts of the Bible and its books along with our lessons. We need to encourage them NOW to bring their Bible to class. Most will have some small Bible that is easy for them to carry.

Perhaps we need to return to the practice of asking for daily Bible readers in our classes; not that we are interested in numbers or in embarrassing

a child, but as an encouragement and incentive to spend some time each day in reading God's word. Children are never slack in reminding us of what we as adults may put off or try to neglect. If a teacher is continually asking for daily Bible readers (even in the two's through five's), then the child will be reminding someone to read with him or be reminded to read for himself. Several Bible study series also have the "take home" cards or leaflets that tell the story that was studied and give hints for reinforcing this at home such as the new *Journeys Through The Bible*, published by Sweet Publishing, *The New Living Bible* series and *The Living Way* series published by Lambert House. As a teacher of these younger ages, you might want to contact the parents or send home an overview of what you will be studying for the next month, quarter or session and give suggested readings and activities to help prepare the child for class and reinforce the lessons.

Once the child reaches first grade, however, it is time to provide him with a good, **readable** Bible of his own. Thou dost not realize what thou doest to thine own when thou dost give him God's word in "foreign" linguistics, Yea, verily, even such illegible print. Before you decide upon a small compact Bible or one of the so-called children's Bibles on the market, please make it a point to notice the pages of a first, second or third grade reader. Go to your local bookstore or library and "check out" the easy-to-read or "I CAN READ" books. Simple wording is used and **never** tiny print. We are wanting our child and student to learn to read and appreciate God's word and this cannot be done with a Bible he cannot **see to read** and cannot **understand**.

What this child needs is a large print or giant print Bible preferable

NOT in the King James' English of 1600 England. There are several good Bibles available with as much extra material as one might choose to get. Thomas Nelson Publishers have a giant print New King James version with references, concordance and maps that works quite well for this age. Don't be misled that these are too big or cumbersome for the child either. It is our practice to present one to each kindergarten student as he "promotes" to the age 6 or first grade class and all are very proud of them and have no trouble carrying them. When these are presented by a teacher (perhaps in cooperation with parents), it creates a lasting impression with the child.

Now that they have their own Bible, they must be taught how to use it and how to find their way through it by learning what chapters and verses are and how to find exact passages. This age group can now begin to specifically prepare for class either by studying or by taking responsibility for their lesson books and taking them home to guide their study.

Older children who have learned to use their Bibles will benefit by being introduced to concordances, Bible dictionaries, maps, etc., in connection with their Bible study. By working with these study helps, we continue to build on what was begun in their very first classes; that the Bible is God's word and as such necessitates our vigorous efforts in reading and studying.

At the middle grades and junior high age, our students need some direction in various methods to use in studying and making application of what has been studied. *The Youth Bible Study Notebook* by John and Susan Souter, published by Tyndale House, can be used to point out various approaches to studying passages or subjects. Books, such as *The World Into Which Jesus Came* by Sylvia Root Tester, distributed by Standard Publishing, are excellent for helping students dig deeper into stories they have heard many times and often help them visualize these better. Having them read several different translations will benefit their study also.

Any of these suggestions may be followed with different age groups. Nothing is limited to just the age group in which it was discussed and I have not, by any means, exhausted the sources or methods to be used. As Bible teachers, we merely touch the tip

of the iceberg. As parents, we may progress a little further. However, only EACH INDIVIDUAL can STUDY, MEDITATE and APPLY God's word for himself. We can only hope and pray that by en-

couragement, example and instruction in the "how tos", the student will "...give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Tim. 4:13). After all, if we wait until the child is a middle grader or

junior high student (or an age we think can handle it), we've lost already.

P.O. Box 1173
Artesia, NM 88201

Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

3575 Pickett Court -- Tallahassee, FL 32301

"AND THEY GLORIFIED GOD IN ME"

Introduction

1. Text: Gal. 1:11-24
2. In defense of his apostleship Paul recounted his conversion and effect it had on brethren in Judea and how they "glorified God in him"
3. How did his conversion and life cause God to be glorified
- I. **His Life Was a Manifestation of the Power of the Gospel**
 - A. Demonstrates convincing power in the facts of the gospel
 1. He had been an enemy of Christ
 2. Nothing can explain his conversion short of the absolute truth of the facts of the gospel
 - B. Demonstrates cleansing power of the gospel
 1. Considered himself the chiefest of sinners - Gal. 1:13
 2. God, in demonstration of the greatness of His grace to man, forgave him - I Tim. 1:12-16
- II. **His Life Was a Testimony of the Superiority of the Gospel to the Law**
 - A. His early life lived in obedience to the law of Moses
 1. Had everything to gain in Jewish religion - Phil. 3:4-7
 2. Testified that the law could not save anyone - Gal. 2:16
 - B. Conversion of such an avid leader among the Jews gave glory to God
- III. **His Life Was a Manifestation of the Beauty of Holiness**
 - A. Person's life can cause the word of God to be blasphemed - Rom. 2:24; Titus 2:5
 - B. Good life causes God to be glorified - Matt. 5:13-16

Conclusion

What effect does your life have on those around you? It should be like the life of Paul so that God can be glorified in you.

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES

Introduction

1. Nearly every religious denomination in this country claims to be following the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament yet we have hundreds of conflicting views and doctrines in religion
2. How do we account for such confusion? Is God responsible? - I Cor. 14:33

3. How can all the confusion be cleared up? How can we arrive at the truth?
 - a. By discarding all the creeds, ideas, traditions and doctrines of men
 - b. By going to the Bible to see what it teaches (as did the Bereans - Acts 17:10-11)
4. What does the New Testament teach?
 - I. **The Bible Is the Inspired Word of God - 2 Tim. 3:16-17**
 - II. **The Gospel Is the Power of God Unto Salvation - Rom. 1:16**
 - III. **The Church Is In God's Plan of Salvation - Eph. 3:9-11**
 - IV. **Obedience Is Necessary to Attain Salvation - Matt. 7:21**
 - V. **A Faithful Life Is Required After Baptism**

Conclusion

Open your Bible and see if these things are so. If they are, believe and accept them. If they are so and you do not accept them, be prepared for the eternal consequences.

DETERMINATION NOT DETERIORATION

Introduction

1. Text: I Corinthians 2:1-5
2. With the conclusion of our gospel meeting the tendency is to relax and let our guard down
3. Determination is necessary to keep that from happening
- I. **Determination Defined**
 - A. Decide; having made up ones mind; have strong feelings toward something
 - B. Examples of determination
 1. Old Testament: Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah
 2. New Testament: Paul
- II. **Determined to Do the Right Thing**
 - A. Many determined but not for right thing
 - B. Determination must be guided by word of God - 2 Pet. 1:5
 1. Know more of the word - Heb. 2:1-3
 2. Serve the Lord faithfully - I Cor. 15:58
 3. Grow as a Christian - 2 Pet. 3:18
 4. Love and stand for the truth - I Cor. 16:13
- III. **No Determination: Deterioration**
 - A. As a neglected building begins to deteriorate, so does a soul
 - B. Examples of spiritual deterioration
 1. Heb. 5:12-14
 2. I Cor. 10:1-12

Conclusion

If we are determined to go to heaven, we will be determined to do all those things that are necessary to get there. The grace of God and our determination will get us there.

If you enjoy *Today*, why not send a subscription to family and friends. It will make an excellent gift for only \$15.00.

FIELD REPORTS

**Allan Turner, 2222 Wendell Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40205**

It is with disappointment that we must announce that we have changed our plans about going to South Africa. Due to the continuing unrest in South Africa, wisdom would seem to dictate such a decision on our part.

From the very beginning we realized there was serious trouble in South Africa. But in all honesty, we had no idea that things would get as bad as they have. Currently in Johannesburg, whites are prohibited from entering the black areas. As 70% of the people of South Africa are black, this seriously hampers evangelism among the majority of the people. Although personal safety must be—and has been—taken into consideration, the primary reason preventing us from going is that after all the effort and expense of getting over there, it might be necessary to turn around and come right back because the unrest has turned into actual revolution. There is simply too much effort, too much time, and too much expense to warrant a move to a country with such an unstable political situation.

Originally, we had responded to the plea of the Brixton church of Christ for an evangelist to come and assist them. Currently, white evangelists, who were previously working among the blacks in the surrounding Johannesburg area, are prohibited from going into those areas. Two of them are now working with the Brixton congregation. Therefore, that congregation's need for an evangelist is not as critical as had previously been thought. For this, at least, we can be thankful.

I have followed the developments in South Africa very closely. The whites, up to this point, have been effected very little by the violence. Unfortunately, such will not continue to be the case. Our brethren in South Africa, both black and white, need our prayers at this very critical moment.

From the very beginning, the eldership here at Wendell Avenue assured me that they would not replace me until they were sure my move to South Africa was definite. I cannot even begin to express my appreciation for their peculiar care and understanding in this matter. Since the announcement of my intended move to South Africa, the eldership has been besieged by calls and letters of those interested in preaching here. Therefore, I have appreciated even more their continued desire to have me remain at Wendell Avenue to do the work of an evangelist.

**Clarence W. "Butch" Fell, III, 1812 Boston,
Fort Smith, Ark. 72901**

My family and I are very happy to say that after 2 years of part time preaching the decision has been made to leave secular work on Nov. 27, 1985 and devote our full efforts to the work of the Lord. We will be working with the Church of Christ on Hwy. 45 in Midland, Ark. We are very optimistic about the opportunities in the area to teach others the saving word of God. Midland is a friendly community providing opportunities for home studies, individual studies, and other personal work. We ask to be remembered in your prayers as we strive to do what is simply our duty in Christ.

**Wayne Greeson, 2131 North 62nd Avenue,
Hollywood, FL 33024**

After four years of fruitful labor with the Castleton congregation located in Indianapolis, Indiana, my wife, Chris, my son, Daniel and I have moved to Hollywood, Florida, to work with the congregation meeting at 5828 Harding Street. I want to publically thank those congregations which supported my labor in the gospel.

During the four years I worked with Castleton, the congregation grew from 22 to about 55 members and the contribution went from \$150 to over \$500 a week. Ten precious souls were baptized into the Lord and one soul was restored to faithful service.

The Harding Street congregation is a strong, spiritually thriving congregation of about 95 members. The church is blessed with three fine hard working elders, Norman Henderson, Clifford Jenkins and Mack Maguire. I anticipate a work that is challenging and rewarding with a congregation that is zealous for the Lord. If you are in the Ft. Lauderdale/Miami area, be sure to visit with us.

**Paul K. Williams, 18 Fairlie Road,
Eshowe 3815, South Africa**

As the brethren from Eshowe College of Education are learning the gospel better, they have been trying to teach their fellow-students. Surprise, surprise—their fellow-members of the Student Christian Movement did not appreciate being told that they must be baptized to be saved! Then our brethren began coming to church rather than to the special functions which the SCM often schedules on Sunday mornings. More friction. Last Sunday the matron in charge of the girls told Dudu Dlamini that she could not go to church with us! The matron certainly overstepped her authority, and Dudu came anyway. This test is bound to strengthen these young Christians. Pray for them. And pray that our opportunities to teach students at the college will continue.

**Jaime Restrepo, Carrera 12 9-42, Manizales
(Caldas), Columbia, South America**

Dear brethren, the purpose of this letter is to inform you of a request I would like to make, to the end that you will consider the possibility of helping support me to preach the Gospel. But first, I want you to know something about me.

I am 22 years old, and have been a faithful Christian since my baptism five and one-half years ago. For the major part of that time I have been preaching the Gospel in the congregations where I have been. I have been teaching and preaching here in Manizales for the past year and one-half. Before that I was living in Bogota for two years and also in the U.S. where I was studying English. Here, I have been working with Hernan Urdinola, helping with the work in the church here in Manizales. I have done this work on my own, without financial support. Occasionally, the brethren helped me with a small amount of support (\$20 a month). Brother Royce Chandler can tell you what my work has been, since he has been here and has seen the fruit of my work with his own eyes.

In these days, I am dedicated only to the

work of preaching; I have no other job. I am certified to teach math and chemistry but I am not exercising my profession, because the places where I would have to go to teach are near the Amazon Jungle and in the Eastern Plains. These locations would prevent me from being a part of this good work we have begun in Manizales.

My major desire is to preach the Gospel full time, but I am having much difficulty being able to continue with this desire because of many problems with my family. They do not understand what this desire means to me, and my Mother and brothers and sisters are arguing with me to stop this work and get a secular job.

I only want to tell you that I hope someone will help me to be able to continue preaching the Gospel to these people who need it so badly. I do not wish to give up my plans for the work of our Lord.

**Leslie Diestelkamp, 1730 W. Galena Blvd. #102W
Aurora, IL 60506**

Dear brethren, perhaps many of you have heard that the great multitude of faithful brethren in Nigeria are now unable to secure the fruit of the vine for the Lord's supper. Grapes do not grow in that tropical land and they can no longer import it as before because of government restrictions that do not allow them to send out their money. Consequently, hundreds of churches will not be able to serve the Lord's supper.

Thus it becomes necessary for us to appeal to American brethren to provide the money to purchase the fruit of the vine in England and send it to Nigeria for use by brethren there. If many, many brethren will be sympathetic to this cause and donate to it, Nigerian brethren will be so grateful that they are not thus hindered from having the Lord's supper as before.

Please send your donation to Wayne Payne, P.O. Box 194, Phil Campbell, AL 35581, and make your checks payable to: Ezekiel Akinyemi, Account No. 40568, First State Bank, Phil Campbell, AL.

Brother Payne has graciously agreed to keep a record of donations received and report such. I will be grateful for your consideration and help for these brethren.

**Wayne Payne, P.O. Box 194,
Phil Campbell, AL 35581**

Dear brethren, Brother Leslie Diestelkamp's plea for help to get the fruit of the vine to brethren in Nigeria is a very urgent matter. The situation for many congregations in Nigeria has been an urgent one for several weeks now and I hope that you will give this your most prayerful consideration.

I would say in addition to the appeal for aid to these brethren that we are working on two or three plans wherein we hope to come up with a permanent solution to have the fruit of the vine available in that country. I am working with the USDA and Mississippi State University to see if we can come up with a strain of grapes that we can experiment with in different parts of Nigeria, hopefully finding a suitable area in which they will grow. Also we are trying to get the import situation set up so that individual business people may be able to bring the fruit of the vine into the country and be able to continue to furnish the churches with it as needed.

Brother Ezekiel Akinyemi has been going around from place to place in this country for about six weeks now telling brethren about this need as well as the great need for more full-time preachers in Nigeria. When this need for the fruit of the vine is met I pray that you will consider any help that you can give in that area of the work. I will be happy to give more information about the work there at any time. Feel free to call on me.

HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes
From Around The World*

NEEDING A PREACHER

The German School Road Church in Richmond, Virginia, is looking for a full-time preacher to work with them in the Lord's cause. The membership is about 50, with a Sunday morning attendance of 70 plus. The congregation was established in 1969; only four years mortgage is left on the building. The church has an active personal work program and a strong Bible class program. The congregation publishes a weekly bulletin for the members and publishes its own correspondence course. There are no elders at the present time. The brethren desire a preacher with three to five years of experience, but place no age limit on the man. If you would be interested in discussing this work with any of the brethren, you may make contact with Steve Legat at 6301 Daleshire Drive, Richmond, VA 23234; or call him at (804) 275-5837.

The church has several men who can hold down the pulpit work until a full-time preacher can be located.

MOCK RAID AT CHURCH CAMP RAISES A MEDIA RUCKUS

It was a typical Bible camp. About 60 young people had spent their days in recreation, learning, fellowship, and worship, at Camp Ojibway, near Siren, Wisconsin. But during evening vespers on Aug. 7, six men in military dress burst into the meeting, brandishing weapons. They identified themselves as the "The Anti-Christian Militia" and ordered the young people to quit practicing their religion. The campers were ordered to their cabins and Bibles were confiscated.

The campers huddled in dark cabins, while leaders told them to try to slip away to meet the camp director in a bus at the edge of the camp. A group of campers, moving toward the bus, heard shots, and ran along the shore of Mudhen Lake until they found a

private cabin. They used the phone to call the sheriff.

Responding to the call, the sheriff did not find a camp held by armed radicals. Instead, he found that the "militia" was made up of men from a local Baptist church, that the two shots fired had been shot over the lake, far from the young people, and that the whole "takeover" had been a simulation, designed to demonstrate what life might be like in a country that did not allow religious freedom.

After the kids returned from camp, word of the mock raid began to spread, especially when one parent wrote to Dear Abby, complaining about the incident. Abby said, "Although the raid was mock, the emotional impact of that horrifying experience was very real to those children, who may later need therapy to recover from recurring nightmares. Your anger is justified." Abby went on to suggest that the camp leaders were probably in need of therapy as well. Stories in local newspapers connected the letter with Hope Presbyterian Church in Richfield, Minn., which operates Camp Ojibway.

In an open letter to his church, Robert Dickson, pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, explained, "At no time were the students in danger. No one was physically threatened in any way." Dickson expressed his confidence in Warren Camp, who directs Camp Ojibway, but said, "Let me interject at this point that Warren Camp, the Pastoral Staff, and I as your Senior Pastor want the congregation and community to know that this simulation exercise will never happen again. We apologize for the hurt it caused, and ask your forgiveness." Dickson said his church is trying to ride out the resulting publicity storm, which he called, "a tempest in a teapot."

Lisa Laughton, 13, was among the

campers that ran to call the sheriff. Looking back on the incident, she says it was a positive experience. "I was so scared, but then we found out it was supposed to be a learning experience. I thought it was worth it."

The girl's father, Bruce Laughton, was also positive about the experience. "My daughter came back from the experience owning her own faith, and not feeling bad about the experience at all. As a parent I find that very difficult to complain about."

CLINTON HAMILTON SUFFERS SEVERE HEART ATTACK

Bro. Clinton Hamilton (a faithful Christian, gospel preacher, and college vice-president) suffered a severe heart attack while attending a professional meeting in Orlando, Florida. As we are going to print with this paper, he remains in the hospital in Orlando. As he becomes strong enough to be moved, he will be transferred to his home in Ft. Lauderdale. His convalescence will probably be slow. Keep him in your thoughts and prayers.

FLORIDA COLLEGE TO HOLD ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

The dates of January 27-30, 1986, has been chosen as the dates for Florida College's annual lecture program. The theme for this year's lectureship will be "The Doctrine of Last Things." The speakers will include Kenny Chumbley, James Sanders, Ferrell Jenkins, Oscar Ellison, Homer Hailey, Robert Turner, Almon Williams, Rodney Miller, Phil Roberts, Dee Bowman, Dan King, H.E. Phillips, Ron Halbrook, and Colly Caldwell.

For further information about Florida College, this lecture program, or any of their activities, write to: Florida College, 119 Glen Arven Ave., Temple Terrace, FL 33617.

NEWBORN BABY FOUND IN SCHOOL TOILET

According to *The Tennessean* of September 6, a 16-year-old student at East High School in Nashville gave birth to a baby in the school restroom and left the baby face up in the toilet. The infant was found and taken to Vanderbilt University Hospital where it was listed in good condition.

The principal of the high school, Samella Spence, said: "Up to 15 girls are pregnant at East High School. . . I am very serious about taking a course in childbearing and offering the training to my teachers."

The principal went on to say: "We have 45 to 50 girls every year who are either pregnant or deliver. We've had some narrow misses at commencement. We have 10 to 15 girls pregnant so far this year out of 770 students..."

CHURCH LAWSUIT SETTLED

In September of 1982, the Northside Church of Christ in Del Rio, Texas, was left no alternative but to withdraw from one of its members. All efforts to restore Jane Murray had failed to produce the desired repentance. She was living in open rebellion to the will of God.

Almost two years after the disciplinary actions, the church and five individual members were sued. They were charged with invasion of her privacy, by making public her private affairs in reading a letter of appeal the church sent to her. Murray argued that no one needed to know the allegations of adultery and that the reading of the letter in the assembly caused her severe emotional distress and destroyed her reputation and good name.

The church hired a lawyer in San Antonio for legal counsel and was out \$10,000 when they were advised to search for other legal counsel. Rickie Jenkins, preacher for the church, said: ". . . it was a tough decision. Nonetheless, the case and its outcome were more important than any money we might lose through ignorance. We began to search for other legal counsel. As the members were discussing what to do about our dilemma, one of our men informed us he had obtained knowledge, through a friend, of a lawyer from Dallas who was skilled in civil law. We called this lawyer, and scheduled a teleconference with him and one of his associates. The

teleconference resulted in our hiring these attorneys, Don Campbell and Shelby Sharpe. Our previous attorney was dismissed."

Campbell and Sharpe are members of the Rutherford Institute Foundation, which is a nationwide organization. They are also members of the Texas chapter. The Rutherford Institute calls itself a "Christian" legal defense organization. They are trying to protect what the A.C.L.U. is destroying. They are constitutional oriented and interested in preserving the rights of Christians. The foundation pays all lawyers' fees, and in the case of the Northside Church agreed to pay all court costs. It is illegal for an attorney to finance his client's case, but the Rutherford Institute Foundation can, as a foundation, finance and assist in financial relief of cases. The church had already been out \$10,000, but the legal fees for the later work was over \$50,000. The Rutherford Institute picked up the tab for all of this latter expense.

In looking back over the ten-month ordeal and understanding how slow the process of jurisprudence can often be, Jenkins said: "Each passing day brought new feelings and anxieties. Our self-esteem was often nil. As the newspapers maligned us, we mourned. We sometimes felt there was no relief, but the righteous stood strong. The process of building a case for the plaintiff and building a defense is agonizing. The depositions were grueling and sickening."

After all depositions were taken and the discovery work completed, the lawyers for Murray raised the suit from \$300,000 to \$1,000,000. Just two days later they offered to settle for \$17,500. The church flatly refused. The members had already decided not to settle in any way that would compromise the cause of Christ.

The first pre-trial was on June 20. The plaintiff was absent, the judge was unprepared to hear the case, and another pre-trial date was set for July 26. The original date for the trial has been set for July 8, but it was put off to an indefinite date. At the June 20 meeting, the church filed a counter suit of \$1.3 million against the plaintiff.

On Monday, July 1, the attorneys for the church received a letter from Murray's lawyers. The letter stated they would consider settling out of court by each dropping his or her suit.

The church's lawyers advised that there be two additional stipulations: (1) That they pay \$4,500 out-of-pocket expenses (as opposed to over \$50,000 in legal costs if the church won); and (2) that the plaintiff write a letter of regret for suing the church. On July 5, they accepted.

This is unquestionably a victory for the Lord's church in Del Rio. Ms. Murray's original suit against the church was for one million dollars and she actually paid \$4,500 plus a letter of regret.

Jenkins observed: "No lawyer is going to walk away from a million dollar suit if he thinks he has half a chance of winning. Such also may tend to serve as a discouragement to others who may venture to sue the Lord's people, for the lawyer is obligated to tell his client of the possibility of being counter-sued."

STUDY SHOWS RELIGIOUS LEADERS NOT OPPOSED TO HOMOSEXUALITY, ADULTERY, FORNICATION

Most of the nation's religious leaders do not believe homosexuality, adultery, or fornication are morally wrong, according to a recent study.

The study, conducted by University of Houston law professor G. Sidney Buchanan, showed that only 40 percent of college religion teachers and pastoral counselors believe it's immoral for an unmarried man and woman to engage in sexual intercourse.

Buchanan said he also found that nearly half the people responding to the survey believe homosexual relations are not immoral.

Among the survey's other findings: 87 percent did not believe adultery should be a crime. 91 percent believed the government should not regulate sex between homosexuals.

Only 53 percent thought the legal system should limit marriage to heterosexual couples.

71 percent would approve of a male homosexual teaching in an elementary school.

TWO PAPERS MERGE

As of December, 1984, *Vanguard* ceased publication and Yater Tant, editor, turned his mailing list over to Bob Craig, publisher of *The Expository Review*. Failing health and financial woes has now caused *The*

Expository Review to end publication. Beginning with the November issue, *The Expository Review* will be merged with *The Preceptor Magazine*. *Preceptor* is printed in Beaumont, Texas. Danny Brown is the editor and publisher.

MARINE CORPS TESTAMENT NOW IN ITS FOURTH EDITION

It is as familiar to many a young recruit as a helmet or a pair of Marine combat boots. Aptly named "The Good Word," the recruit is likely to carry it at all times along with standard issue equipment.

It is in fact the Good News New Testament, but with a cover design of simulated camouflage which the American Bible Society created especially for the U.S. Marine Corps, and it is now going into its fourth edition.

As soon as it comes from the bindery, supplies are to be shipped to Marine bases around the country, and every new recruit will be offered a free copy. During this printing, the number of photos of Marine life interspersed throughout the pages is being doubled, at the request of the Chaplain's Department. With each illustration there is a Bible passage. The picture of a Marine giving water to a young child, for example, is inspired by Matthew 25: "I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink".

ABS has supplied Scriptures for men and women in the armed forces since 1817, one year after its founding. Since then it has given more than 55 million Scriptures to the armed forces of the U.S. and its allies.

COMIC BOOK FOR CHILDREN USED AS CHINESE EVANGELISM TOOL

A new 140-page comic book developed by Hong Kong publisher Christian Communications Ltd. is being well received by Chinese Children. "The Greatest Story in the World", based on the life of Jesus, is illustrated by a Chinese artist in a style resembling other popular Chinese comic books.

The Chinese government uses comic books to teach principles of Communism and for biographies of Chinese leaders. Children avidly read comic books. At present, no Christian literature for children is published in China.

WORSHIP WITH FAITHFUL SAINTS WHEN IN ROCHESTER

Rochester, Minnesota is the home of Mayo Clinic and is visited each year by many brethren. Faithful brethren meet there on Sunday only, at 10 A.M., in the Midway Motor Lodge, near the intersection of Highways 14 and 52. Phone: Alden Sagdalen, (507) 545-2554.



WAYNE EARNEST

On September 13, Wayne Earnest passed from this life. He and his wife, Linda, were in Tampa, Florida, at the time. They had travelled there, taking their youngest son, Stephen, to enroll him as a student at Florida College. During the family's stay in the Tampa area Wayne was stricken with a massive heart attack. He was hospitalized immediately and the family was informed that all vital signs were failing and there was little hope. Linda and Stephen were joined quickly by David, Wayne's eldest son, and Cathy Osment, Linda's sister, both from the Memphis, Tennessee, area. Wayne lingered for several days as the family kept their painful vigil at his bedside. He never recovered consciousness.

At his passing arrangements were made to conduct funeral services in Memphis, Wayne and Linda's family home. On the day of the service, September 16, a host of friends and brethren from several surrounding states filled the chapel of the Memorial Park complex in that city. Among them were a large group of brothers and sisters in Christ from the East Central church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with whom Wayne had labored some six years at the time of his passing. Scores of gospel preachers travelled great distances to pay tribute to a highly respected fellow-laborer in the gospel and to offer comfort to Linda and the boys. I was honored by the family with a request to conduct the service.

At this point I find it difficult to continue writing. The same emotions that overwhelmed me and all who were in attendance at the funeral are once again as vivid and heart-rending as they were on the day of the service. The tears flow unbidden down my cheeks as they did on the day I tried to speak to the friends and family of this good man. He was only fifty years old. He was in his prime, ready to accomplish, in the years of his maturity, even more for the Lord than he had in the days of early manhood. I recall the words of one of the aged brethren from Tulsa: "We don't even know where to begin to look for someone to replace him", and I am made to feel anew the sense tragedy and loss that all of us felt on that day.

Wayne was a giver. He gave himself to the Lord, to his family, to his brethren and to his fellowman generally. He gave of his talents in his

preaching and he gave of his material goods, over and over again, to any of whose need he had knowledge. I recall a day in Bowling Green, Kentucky, when I thought my troubles were too many for me to take much time or give much help to a young man travelling through that city. I sent him from my study with nothing. About an hour later I received a phone call from Wayne explaining that a young man (the same young man) had come to him for help. Wayne said he had put the fellow up in a motel room in town (at his own expense, of course) because his house was full up--and did I think there was anything I could do about feeding the man because Wayne had spent all he had! That was Wayne Earnest. I am certain I could find many brethren who would testify that Wayne was taken advantage of, occasionally. But I am equally certain that none is to be found who knows of an instance in which Wayne allowed covetousness, under the guise of caution, to withhold his hand from a neighbor. He simply did not think of himself if he felt others were in need.

As a preacher Wayne was a happy combination of congeniality and courage. On the day of the funeral I heard one preacher after another say, "Wayne was just about the best natured fellow there ever was, but he would not back off from the truth for anybody". And that is certainly so. He was always courteous and cheerful. Yet I have seen him work under conditions that would infuriate many of us. His delightful sense of humor seemed never to desert him, even in the most trying circumstances. But his honesty and his unequivocal commitment to God's truth would not suffer him to compromise it. In all the places he lived and worked locally and in the numerous communities where he preached in meetings there is no question what he stood for nor his willingness to tell it.

I can scarcely write of Wayne's relationship with his family. On the day of the funeral the depth of Linda's love for Wayne and the respect and esteem in which he was held by his two sons was so plainly written on everything they said and did that the hearts of all in attendance were rent with grief for them. In this day of troubled homes and shaky marriages it needs to be said that Wayne set an example for all of us. To see Linda standing by the coffin, stroking Wayne's hair, hour after hour, weeping inconsolably, was to know that she loved him with all her heart. And to see David and Stephen attending their mother's every need while choking on their own tears was to know that Wayne was appreciated in his own home. He practiced the same gospel there that he preached in public. He was the same man in the privacy of his home that he was in the pulpit.

Wayne Earnest was a simple man who made no pretense of being a person of great importance. As Walton Weaver said, on the day of the funeral, "Wayne just did a good work wherever he went..." And by thus humbling himself he became the person of great importance that it was not his primary aim to become. How many mountains Wayne moved by "just doing a good work" we'll have to wait for the judgment to know for certain. But there were many, as those whom he taught, baptized, trained and befriended testified on the day of his burial. I know all who knew Wayne and read this join with me in extending their genuine sympathy to Linda and David and Stephen.

--Don Bassett
Franklin, TN

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Today

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

November 1985

Number 11

A FAILURE TO WEEP!

by Rodney M. Miller

“So what?” When I get discouraged my best friend often tells me, “Miller, quit complaining!”, but that is little comfort when you are really depressed and discouraged. Yet, the time does come when we ought to BE DISCOURAGED as well as BE DEPRESSED. Notice the prophets such as Jeremiah, who was known as “the weeping prophet.” Over and over he challenged the false prophets, because they “prophesy PEACE, PEACE”, when “there was NO PEACE.” They have “healed the wound of thy people only slightly.” Of course, there is the example of our Lord who wept openly over the state of His people and said, “*Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem how I would have gathered you together as a hen gathers her chicks but you would not.*” It would have been wrong for Jeremiah or the Lord to have viewed the world they saw through dry eyes! However, as God’s people today, we continue to look as the condition of “Zion”, and are **failing to weep**. Consider what is so depressing today:

1. First, the fussing and fighting brethren.

Did our Lord come to die on a dirty planet in order to make His people a **self-righteous, intolerant, proud, aggressive and impatient people**? Did our Lord come to breed a **spirit of contention, strife and jealousy**? **NO!** Yet, such is being seen in far too many business meetings on Sunday

afternoons in congregation after congregation. “My way or else!” is the common demand as business meetings degenerate into shouting matches between people that are totally intolerant of anyone’s opinion but their own. Now, what are we fighting over in the first place? Picky little things that will make no difference at all! We fight over what color to paint the building, how full to fill the communion cups, whether to put ferns or daisies in the potted planters in front of the pulpit. Brethren have even gotten up, slammed doors, stalked out, and split up churches over who’s way was going to prevail. I am discouraged over the inborn, self-destructive negativism that permeates our thinking like a thick London fog. We are more critical than “Inspector #12”, and not half as nice. You name it and 30 brethren can each find 10 things wrong with it. Seldom do we see any good in anything! We are mostly certainly against it if it is: (1) new, (2) costs money, (3) demands time and effort, or (4) was thought of by someone other than myself. One way you can exterminate termites is to get them to eat each other. Such is the case in many instances in the church. Why is it we spend so much time looking for the “wrong” that we are seldom if ever able to see “a right?”

I am also very discouraged over Gospel preachers who spend their time trying to ruin the reputations of other

good Gospel preachers because of personal jealousies and envies. They go from church to church, and trouble follows them wherever they go. They never build up because they are too busy tearing down. It seems they want to form their own sectarian clubs in the name of Jesus Christ, solely for the purpose of “getting” a fellow gospel preacher. They exist solely to spread lies, rumors, and even misquotations about another’s work, teaching or “position.” They create “issues” and use them to vent their own personal dislikes on another. However, the most discouraging thing about such conduct is that some brethren cannot see these men for what they really are and continue to use them and uphold them! Paul said that we are to “withdraw” from these divisive types of men.

2. Secondly, I am discouraged over a lack of joy, life, and humor.

One of my best friends said, “I don’t know what the problem is, but there is **just NO LIFE.**” Well, isn’t that well put! The eunuch went on his way rejoicing when Christ Jesus was made the central part of his life. Why then are we such a hostile people? We travel to congregation after congregation, and what do we see? Brethren sitting as far toward the back door as possible, coming in as late as possible, singing as slowly as possible, going to sleep as soon as possible, and leaving as fast as possible! We become as excited about acquiring Christianity

as we would acquiring a bout with the common cold. It is not uncommon to go to a place for gospel meetings and have a fair Sunday AM crowd, and then on Monday night we have less than 25% of the Sunday AM attendance present! Brethren just are not **HAPPY** about being Christians! There is no **JOY** in the hearts of too many individuals, their congregations, or their leaders. We look upon Christianity as a **DUTY** that we must acquire, but which makes us miserable. Our assemblies are cold, indifferent, and a drudgery that we have to suffer through. With this kind of attitude is it any wonder that we are not successful in trying to export it to others in the religious world?

We have lost our sense of **HUMOR**! We are not able to laugh and rejoice in anything! After all we can still remember the last big fight that we had in the business meeting, and who wants to laugh with a brother that we are at such odds with we won't even speak to? Also, in John 17:13 we read that Christ prayed for **His** disciples that they might have **His** full measure of **JOY** in them. Brethren, where is that **JOY**? The New Testament Christians were a joyful people. David praised God with joy and gladness in his heart in worship, and yet we can't rejoice over anything! Is there any wonder when our children have seen and heard this for years that when they become of age they don't want any part of it?

Have we ever stopped to wonder how many people have been repelled by this brand of "Christianity"? How many young people grew up in homes where they saw all too clearly that Jesus Christ meany only blows in business meetings, meant only "what we had to do" as we made the trek to Wednesday night services and fought in the car all the way to the meeting house. How many weak Christians have lost their faith, when all they saw was "what we had to do" externally, and all the while showing all too clearly that our hearts were not in it?

3. Thirdly, I am discouraged by brethren who have missed the point in life.

Stop and ask yourself: "What have I done with my life?" Also, what Spiritual achievements have been acquired in the last 20 years? Such an investigation was made among a particular group of brethren and the results were like this: In the last 20

years one family has lost both their children, influenced no one to be baptized, taught only one Bible Class, and successfully remodeled their house! Think of that! What do they have to show for 20 years of "faithful" service to God? **A remodeled house!** Another family, after losing both their children, sees no hope of a peaceful congregation and wonders about going to an institutional church.

The church has been slowly dying because of a **lack of leadership!** We have no leadership because to be a leader in the Lord's body one must put in years of training and development so they can grow to a point of being able to teach and to influence others in a Spiritual point of view. Yes, we have spent our lives in the pursuit of every other kind of goal in the world other than Spiritual goals. We have become the best salesmen, the top corporate leader, the best deer hunter and bass fisherman, the most active alumni at our Alma Mater, and Jesus Christ was left out in the cold. We are not **committed** to Christ! We want to give Him the leftover of our time, effort and energy. The New Testament Christians gave their lives and we only want to "tip" the Lord and "tithe" the waitress who works where we eat Sunday lunch.

4. Fourthly, I am discouraged by preachers who neglect their families.

It is an illegitimate altar on which we sacrifice our family and call it service to God. The double standard in some lives is all too obvious! There arises a crisis in the family: young children have real needs for their fathers, the wives have real needs for their husbands, and the husband in the midst of the crisis excuses himself "to go preach the Word." The Word needs service right there in the "congregation of his own home." Still, night after night He is away from home. Wives are left knowing that they are in second place and children feel no self worth. Preachers, more than any other group, speak on the home and family, while setting the poorest examples of devotion to their wives and children.

Every preacher and his wife ought to read together a new book: *A Man Of Vision, A Woman Of Prayer*, by Marilee Pierce Dunker. It is the life story of Bob Pierce who was one of the fastest rising men in the denominational ranks in the 1950's, with **Youth For Christ** and later **World**

Vision. This book chronicles the gradual break-up of a "driven" man. His emotional circuitry began to malfunction around 1963 and his temper became harder to control. In 1967, the **Vision** Board asked him to leave, his eldest daughter, age 27, commits suicide, and in 1970 he is legally separated from his wife. At one point in their marriage, she was hospitalized because of a nervous breakdown, and he left for 6 months to go to China on a campaign. We are used to "tell it all" biographies from movie stars and political officials, but brethren, all of us should read the life story of Bob Pierce and then ask ourselves: "**Where are we going?**"

5. Fifthly, I am discouraged over leaders who do not lead.

The prophet of old said, Where there is no vision the people perish." Our Lord sternly rebuked the Pharisees because they could read the signs of the sky and foretell the weather, but they could not perceive what they needed as individuals in the Spiritual realm of life. Isn't that just like us? We can forecast the economy or the progression of the recovery. We can predict the outcome of pro-football games and analyze needs of our political environment. How or why then have we become so blind to the needs of the church?

We huddle together and tell the denominations why they are going to Hell and there isn't one of them there to hear it. Why? Because it is better than looking at ourselves with the same scathing judgments that we make against them! Sadly it can be said we **don't know** where we are!

Brethren, many local congregations are going to have to close their doors simply because in a few more years there won't be anyone there to be "the church." A local congregation is exactly like a bank account. You can't subtract more than you deposit into it, and brethren, we are not baptizing people to make that deposit! The average congregation is not growing! They are not reaching the lost of their communities. The only way they are adding to their number at all is by a few which place membership, which all too frequently is because they couldn't get along with others somewhere else! This isn't growth. It's **SWELLING**. Yet, elders and preachers simply do not care that we are not reaching the lost at all! We just watch another ball game,

or wait for the next business meeting where we can run off another bunch. Too many Eldershops have to be dragged in the correct direction by begging, pleading, or crying, instead of their being out front analyzing the needs of the church and pointing the direction we need to go in. To them, when it comes to the Lord, ANYTHING is good enough: a half-prepared Bible Class Lesson from an untrained teacher is good enough because "we have always done it that way."

Why can't we realize that we need the rod in our own daily lives. We have no vision of daily Bible reading and Prayer. We even argue on how God answers prayer! Many have already decided that He really doesn't, and they are now about to tell us why. A life of communion and dedication of seeking the Father's will in the quiet solitude of early morning, as Jesus did, is unheard of! The result? We don't know who God is or what He wants of us in our lives.

6. Finally, I am discouraged because there is too much pressure and too little time.

There are many good things that one can turn his time and attention to. Yet, as with Mary and Martha, what is the better and what is the BEST? Martha chose only the better, while Mary sat at Jesus feet, or CHOSE the BEST. We must determine our **Goals** and **Objectives** first. Only then will our **Schedules** determine if our **Priorities** are in line with our **Goals**.

I am discouraged because no matter how much I do it is like trying to fill up the Grand Canyon with a shovel. We preach and preach. What changes does it bring in hearts or attitudes? Only God knows. Oh, a few isolated individuals will catch some of the enthusiasm, but all too often it is squelched by the ineptness of the Leadership that cannot and will not be moved an inch off the dime. Intolerance toward new ideas has closed our minds or sealed our creeds of oral traditions which are just as binding as those in neighboring churches. Truly, we must know how John felt "as a voice of one crying in the wilderness."



15 W. Par Street
Orlando, FL 32804



Dear Rachel,

My wife, who is a wonderful mother, is not a Christian. For the past five years, I have tried in vain to teach her. She seems to try all the harder to be everything **but** a Christian.

Every service the children and I attend alone. Recently a young widow with two small sons moved to our congregation and needed transportation to services. Their home is between ours and the meeting house, so it was only natural for me to volunteer to pick them up.

We have found that we share a lot in common. She has helped out tremendously with my girls, showing them what a Christian woman should be. The problem is that we are growing increasingly fond of each other. We want a relationship which is pleasing in the eyes of God, but I am afraid it's getting out of control.

It is easy to say, "Okay, we simply will avoid each other and it will be all over before it began." I have made that statement enough times to know that it alone will not work.

Sinking Fast

Dear Sinking,

You are right! Saying it is not enough, words seldom are. Your letter shows how in many ways you have replaced an "unacceptable" wife with a woman who meets your present conception of how a wife should behave. Matters of the heart are never solved quickly or easily. As with any problem we confront, there must be planning and determination in order for victory to be gained.

First of all I would suggest you speak with your elders or preacher and arrange for another family to help the widow with rides and in any other area where assistance is needed. You should make it a point to only meet at Church functions; NEVER alone!

Secondly, take a good hard look at your friend. It is always easier to love

from afar than to love from day to day. Remember when you were dating your wife? How you combed and recombined your hair to make sure every hair was in place? Is your home attire the old college sweat shirt that even the Salvation Army rejected? Remember how only the best restaurant would do? How is it now? When was the last time you took her out to dinner? (Somewhere other than McDonalds!)

Anything worth having is worth working for. The solution to your problem is going to involve a lot of give and take. So often it is said a marriage must be a 50/50 proposition. Not so, there are no scales to measure how much each partner is giving. Give 100% all the time, forget yourself. Husbands are instructed to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. Christ loved us enough to die for us (Eph. 5:25).

Look to your wife as someone to build your life around-make her the center of your life. Nothing can be too good for her, concentrate on her good points. Begin to "date" her again.

Many people seem to feel that a marriage relationship is at it's peak during the honeymoon and then goes down hill from there. Marriage is what You make of it. Paul has given us guidelines as to what love is and is not (I Cor. 13). Love is not proud or boastful, love is not jealous, selfish or rude. Love is patient, kind and loyal. It believes the best about a person and emphasizes these. It defends the other person from all harm.

None of this can be accomplished without a foundation of honesty and the good lines of communication open. Spend time with your wife each day. Get to know what is going on inside of each other. Learn what God expects of a husband. Let her see you shine as a Christian. Teach her by your example. Love your wife into the Church (I Cor. 7:12).

Praying for You Both,
Rachel

EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

STUDYING THE BIBLE

One of the most difficult problems of our age is to get people to study the Word of God. Many don't know the difference between Bible reading and actual Bible studying. No genuine, profitable study results from a surface scanning of a book or chapter at a 30-minute sitting. This, however, is the general demand of most students in Bible classes. Most of our workbooks are designed with a few true-false questions, matching, and fill in the blank. The student often goes home blank and unfilled. It could hardly be called "Bible study" when a few verses are read, a shallow question is asked and answered, and three or four chapters are scanned during a class period. A restudy of the same verses would produce a wealth of material that many of the students didn't even know was there; this is material that has a direct bearing upon one's faith, his proper obedience to God, and a basis for a real hope after this life is over.

There is no way that one can obtain faith in Christ by which he must obey the truth to be made free (John 8:32) unless he learns and understands the Word of God. Paul said, "*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17). The Bereans were considered more "*noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so*" (Acts 17:11). Timothy was admonished to "*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*" (2 Timothy 2:15).

God fully intended for us to understand His Word. Sure, there are certainly things difficult to understand in the Bible. Peter said so (2 Peter 3:16), but he also said it contains all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). There are many things which God has not revealed, but there are also many things He has revealed

and which are important to us (Deut. 29:29).

When we purchase a new automobile, typewriter, television, or any major appliance or piece of equipment, an instruction manual is provided to assist in the proper operation. Many consumers have discovered that if you don't read and follow the instructions carefully, the equipment will not function properly. The same is true for man. God is our Maker and Creator and He has given us the perfect manual, the Bible. This explains where we came from, where we are headed, and how to live so as to be happy on this earth. Paul says that the Scriptures will furnish us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:15-16). Yet, in spite of this, many go through life paying little or no attention to the instruction book. No wonder so many lives are in chaos.

If we are going to emphasize the need to come back to Bible study. Study is hard work, if it is done right. We shouldn't deny that it takes work and time. Many of us miss the delightful rewards of really understanding the message of the Bible because we do not know how to study the Bible.

SOME SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE RULES OF INTERPRETATION

Certain simple but basic and effective rules of interpretation were emphasized by the pioneers of the restoration movement. Gathered from a few good books on hermeneutics*, the following rules of interpretation should be followed:

1. Who is speaking? Is it God, is it the writer, is it an opponent of Truth, or someone else? Understanding who was being discussed was the problem the eunuch of Ethiopia was having when he read Isaiah 53. When Philip asked the question, "*Understandest thou what thou readeest?*" he explained that he did not. His question was, "*I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?*" Philip explained the scripture to him. (See Acts 8:26-35).

2. To whom, or concerning whom, is the speaker speaking? If his address or speech is in the second person, is he speaking to one person (for this, the KJV and ASV use "you," "your," and "yours")?

3. What is the speaker's tone of voice? Is he bitter or kind or sarcastic? On what word or words in the sentence should emphasis be placed?

4. Is the verse being studied a statement, or a question, or a command, or a request, or something else?

5. What is the historical background of the passage? At what time in history did the event occur? What nations were involved? What individuals were involved? What was the specific situation which the passage has in mind? In studying the Old Testament prophets, one must try to look at the political and religious situations of the time. To get a proper view of a chapter like I Corinthians 7, one must understand "the present distress" (vs. 26) of the time.

Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"
— Proverbs 27:1

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:

P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

6. What is the problem which the biblical writer or speaker faced? In what way did this problem manifest itself in the behavior of the people involved? How does the writer or speaker deal with this problem? Does he deal with it directly or indirectly? (One should constantly keep in mind that because of the complexity of human nature, biblical writers often used the indirect approach, as when Paul wrote Philemon about Onesimus, his runaway slave). Are his statements straightforward or sarcastic?

7. How does the passage under consideration fit into the rest of the book, and contribute to its message? One must be sure that the interpretation of a text is not in direct contradiction to another, or other, plain passage of Scripture. The Word of God is inspired and does not have any contradiction within.

Some of these questions can be answered simply by reading the context of the passage. But often it is necessary to study other passages which provide the historical background, or which come from the same general period. Don't be afraid or ashamed to consult a lexicon (whether Hebrew or Greek) for the meaning of all the words which appear in the text--in short, one must make a word study of all the words in the text. It doesn't do any good to read fifty verses if you didn't understand the words in twenty-five of them. As you have the money and can build a religious library, get you a good concordance, Bible atlas, Bible dictionary, and Hebrew-Greek-English lexicon.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

The first practical principle of Biblical study is to gain a general over-all knowledge of the Bible. It has been said that the Old Testament revealed. The better you understand one of the Testaments, the better you can understand the other. The New Testament reflects the correct interpretation of numerous Old Testament pronouncements. To illustrate, Joel prophesied that God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and Peter, on the day of Pentecost, declared, "*This is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel*" (see Joel 2:28-31; Acts 2:17-21).

For another practical principle of interpretation, the person who would seek to properly interpret the Old Testament should observe how the New Testament writers interpreted the Old. They often did it by direct reference, as in the case of Peter in Acts 2:16; they often did it by indirect reference, as in the case of Paul who referred to

the case of God's curse upon Satan in Romans 16:20; and they did so by general reference, as in the case of Jesus who made a general reference to a number of prophetic declarations by the statement, "*Thus it is written*" (Luke 24:46-49).

CONCLUSION

As we are studying the Bible, we must be sure that we do not impose any presupposition which does not glorify Christ and place Him at the center of the final picture. Some of these so-called modern "scholars" can find mention of the rapture, the battle of Armageddon, the war in the Middle East, the state of Israel, the European Common Market, or some bizarre afterlife experience in every verse of the Bible. We must understand that Christ is the center of the Bible. In the Old Testament, He was the One yet to come; in the gospels, He was the One teaching and performing miracles; and in the epistles and Revelation, He was the One that is going to come again.

Scripture was not written for a select handful who imagine they live at the end of the world. The Bible addressed the problems of the people at that time and was not just a crystal ball telling what would happen in the year 2,000. Various false teachers today try to come up with their own meaning of the passage and it would have meant nothing to its first readers.

But it does little good to study the Bible if the only motive is just to gain some information. The Bible was not written to satisfy human curiosity but to change the human heart. God expected us to take the information we learned and apply it to our lives. Doctrine is important not for its mere informational value, but to impart to us right ideas about how we can respond to God. The Bible was given to be our road map from this earth to heaven. It is the only book that was ever written that explains where we came from, where we are going, and how to gain the happiness that we desire. Take time to study it each day!

***The following good books on hermeneutics would be excellent tools for any student wanting a greater interpretation of the Bible:**

Interpreting the Bible by A. Berkeley Mikelson

Hermeneutics by D.R. Dungan

Principles of Interpretation by Clinton Lockhart

Figures of Speech Used in the Bible by E.W. Bullinger

Hermeneutics by Bernard Ramm

Biblical Hermeneutics by Milton S. Terry



ARE YOU LIKE THE BEARS IN YELLOWSTONE PARK?

The bears in Yellowstone Park get so used to being fed by tourists that when winter snows come many bears starve to death. They have forgotten how to feed themselves. Many "Christians" are suffering from the same problem. They get so used to being fed in the church building that they never learn how to feed themselves. Christians need both--faithfulness in Bible classes offered by the congregation and time spent in study at home. Have you fed yourself on the Bible lately?





WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION”

Greek Word: *astorgos*

Meaning: without family love

This adjective occurs twice in the New Testament (Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3). It is a combination of the prefix *a*, without, and *storge*, family love. *Storge* comes from the verb *stergo*, to love, as between parents and children.

In Rom. 1 Paul is describing the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the Greco-Roman society in which he lived and the path from pure monotheism to idolatrous immorality that led it there. Paul says that in this filthy and corrupt society people were “without natural affection.”

The extent to which family love was lacking in the Rome of Paul’s day is seen in William Barclay’s comments on *astorgos* as it is used in Rom. 1:

“It was quite true that this was an age in which family love was dying. Never was the life of the child so precarious as at this time. Children were considered a misfortune. When a child was born, the child was taken and laid at the father’s feet. If the father lifted up the child that meant that he acknowledged it. If he turned away and left it the child was literally thrown out. There was never a night when there were not thirty or forty abandoned children left in the Roman Forum. Every night in life children were literally thrown away. . . The natural bonds of affection had been destroyed” (*Daily Study Bible*, in loc.).

Barclay describes the fate of these abandoned infants in his *Educational Ideals in the Ancient World*:

“In Rome children were often abandoned by the Lactarian Pillar and in the Velabrum. And there were those, especially in Rome and elsewhere, who collected these abandoned children for their own purposes. Many of them were reared up and then sold as slaves. Some of the boys were nurtured to be gladiators in the arena. A very common fate for girl babies was that they were nourished up to stock the brothels of Rome” (Baker, 1974, p. 265).

Examples of the lack of family affection, *storge*, in the ancient Greco-Roman world could be multiplied here but these will suffice to show how severe the problem was.

Paul uses our word *astorgos* only once more in the New Testament. He says that one of the signs of “*perilous times*” he foresees will be a lack of “*natural affection*” among men (2 Tim. 3:1, 3). And our word seems to have the same general significance here as in Rom. 1:31. But it points to the future, from Paul’s perspective, rather than the past.

Commentators differ as to the precise time Paul had in view here. But the point is clear that where “*natural affection*,” i.e., family love, is lacking in a society it is sick unto death.

And I believe that the United States of America evinces sufficient evidence these days for us to conclude that *astorgos* is one of its major problems. I am not just talking about battered wives, abused children, abortion on demand and rampant divorce. These are surely proof of what I say. But I am also concerned about the lack of affection within families that manifests itself in more subtle ways.

How long has it been since your whole family sat down at home to eat a meal together--and talk and laugh with one another at the same time? Is everyone in too big a hurry to spend an hour or so just enjoying the other members of the family? How long has it been since the head of your household directed the whole family together in a period of prayer and Bible reading? How long has it been since your whole family took a day off **together** traveling, picnicking or just working around the house?

Modern conveniences and entertainments (not the least of which is television) have tempted us to believe that we can do very well without close family ties. The result of this error threatens to produce a whole nation of narcissistic humanoids--unnatural beings--unconcerned about the needs of their parents, mates and children

and unaware of the tragic social and spiritual damage from which they themselves suffer due to their growing lack of natural affection.

If it is true, as I believe it is, that the home is God’s training ground for effective service in the church and in the world, we neglect its careful and conscientious nurturing at the risk of our souls (cf. 2 Tim. 1:4-5; 3:15; Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 3:4-5). And to the extent any of us loses the capacity for the exercise of natural affection he or she becomes an emotional, social and even a spiritual cripple. For the relationship that should exist among God’s spiritual children, the church, cannot be understood or fully enjoyed without natural affection.

It is interesting to note that the only other use of the word system *stergo*, *storge*, *storgos* in the New Testament tells us to “*be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love*” (Rom. 12:10). The phrase **kindly affectioned** in this text is one word in Greek, **philostorgoi**. It is a compound adjective from **philos**, loving, friendly, and **storgos**, having family affection or love. As brothers and sisters in Christ we are to exercise a particularly loving family affection toward one another. If we have not learned this sort of affection in our homes we are at a disadvantage learning to practice it in our larger family, the church. Selfishness and indifference are hard to unlearn.

I am aware that this word study is longer than most that appear in this column. And there is not all that much **scholarly** content in it. My apologies. But the practical necessities of natural affection, *storge*, and the devastating effects of its absence, *astorgos*, merit the extra space.

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Is there a particular word you would like to see discussed in this column? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.

Questions About Preachers

by David Pratte

A. MAY A PREACHER HAVE A FAMILY & PROPERTY?

Some churches teach that preachers must not marry, must not have children, or must not own property (house, land, etc.). What does the Bible teach?

Matt. 8:14; I Cor. 9:5 -- Peter and other apostles were married, and Paul affirms he had the right to marry. Since all the apostles were preachers, if preachers may not marry, then no apostle would have that right. Yet the Bible says they did have the right.

I Pet. 5:1-3 -- Peter was an elder as well as a preacher and apostle. As an elder, he must have been married and had children (Tit. 1:5, 6; I Tim. 3:4). So apparently there was no rule against preachers being married.

Acts 21: 8, 9 -- Philip the evangelist had four daughters and possessed a house.

Heb. 13:4 -- Marriage is honorable in all.

I Tim. 4:1-3 -- Forbidding marriage is a doctrine of apostasy.

Clearly then, like all Christians, preachers have the right to marry if they so choose, and likewise they may own property.

B. HOW LONG MAY A PREACHER REMAIN IN ONE AREA?

Some people try to use the example of Paul or the "limited commission" to try to prove that preachers must continually travel from place to place establishing new churches, but they cannot stay long in any one place. They must just establish a new church and then leave.

Acts 18:11; 19:9, 10; 20:31 -- Paul himself stayed 1½ years in Corinth, and 3 years in Ephesus (including 2 years daily in one spot). Even these stays should be recognized as shorter than necessary because Paul preferred new works, establishing new churches where the gospel had not been preached before (Rom. 15:19-24). But he did not believe this was the only way it could be done. Other preachers often preached in places that already had established churches (I Cor. 3:6,10; cf. Acts 18:1 to 19:1; I Tim. 1:3; see also some examples below). The fact that

Paul preached in new areas and moved frequently, like the fact that he sometimes received no money from the people he preached to, was a matter of personal preference to Paul, and should not be bound on others.

Luke came to Philippi with Paul (as indicated by the pronouns "we" and "they"). But when Paul left, Luke stayed in Philippi and was there when Paul returned about seven years later -- compare Acts 16:12, 40; 17:1 to 20:1-6. This shows that men can preach in areas longer than Paul did, and that they can work with relatively older congregations.

Philip the evangelist was in Caesarea in Acts 8:40, and in Acts 21:8 he is still there (or is there again). He was living in his own house, which implies an intent to remain there permanently (at least compared to Paul).

All the apostles were in Jerusalem when the church began in Acts 2, and they stayed through Acts 8:1. And even then the apostles stayed in Jerusalem when all the other disciples were scattered.

The "limited commission" (Matt. 10:1-23; Mk. 6:7-13; Lk. 9:1-10; 10:1-20) describes a special, temporary work during Jesus' lifetime before the church began. There was an urgency for men to prepare people in cities for the coming of Jesus to personally teach the people in the limited time He had before His death. This commission was "limited" and temporary in several ways: (a) They preached only to Israelites, not to Gentiles (cf. Matt. 10:5, 6 to 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Acts 8:5-12; chap. 10). (b) They preached that the kingdom was coming, not that it was established (cf. Matt. 10:7; Lk. 10:9,11 to Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:6; Heb. 12:28). (c) They performed miracles and were directly inspired (Matt. 10:19, 20, 1, 8; Mk. 6:7, 13; etc.). But we have already learned that these powers were temporary, and do not occur today. Nearly everything about this commission was temporary, including the details of how the men traveled and were supported. Since

those details differ from what was practiced after Jesus died, we must conclude they do not apply to us.

The Bible reveals various durations that preachers worked in localities. The fact that the lengths of time vary, proves that the duration is a matter of judgment and preference.

C. MUST MEN HAVE FORMAL EDUCATION IN ORDER TO PREACH?

Some people think a man should not preach, or people need not believe what a preacher says, unless the man has officially been trained in some seminary or college. What does the Bible say?

Mark 6:2, 3; John 7:14-17 - Jesus was a carpenter with no formal education in religion. People belittled His teaching for that reason, just like they often do to preachers today. But Jesus had the right to teach because His message was from God. People could examine the message, if they honestly wanted to know about it, and determine whether or not it was from God.

Acts 4:13 - The apostles were fisherman, etc., with no formal schooling in religion "ignorant and unlearned". Yet they were effective preachers, useful in God's work. No more should be required of preachers today than this.

I Cor. 1:17-25; 2:1-5 - Paul had formal schooling (Acts 22:3; 26:24), but in his preaching he refused to rely on human wisdom. He simply presented the gospel and trusted in its power (Rom. 1:16).

The important requirement is that a man needs to know and preach the truths of God's word (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2:15; 4:2-4; Eph. 4:15). This can be learned by a man through his own personal study and in the local church where he is a member.

D. MAY WOMEN PREACH THE GOSPEL?

Many denominations have women preachers. Women's Liberation tries to pressure churches to accept women as preachers, and many churches have knuckled under. But we must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). What does God say?

In Proper Circumstances, Women Ought to Be Teachers.

They should teach women--Tit. 2:3,4.

They should teach children--Prov. 31:1; 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:5.

They may impart information to men in private and without exercising authority over the men--Acts 18:26; John 4:28-30, 39, 42.

(See also Acts 2:17; 21:9.)

However, Women's Role in Teaching Men Has Limitations.

Women must be subject to men (Gen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-24; Col. 3:18; 1 Pet. 3:1-6; Tit. 2:4, 5).

Women therefore may not serve as apostles or elders because such positions require exercising authority over men--Acts 1:13; 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, 4, 5; Tit. 1:5, 6.

Likewise, women may not teach the gospel in circumstances that involve leading or directing men (exercising authority over them). And in particular, they may not preach in the assemblies of local churches--1 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:23, 34, 35.

Please remember that greatness before God is not determined by the authority we possess, but by the service we render (Matt. 20:25-27). The limitation on women's authority, therefore, does not make them any less important or valuable than men. Their work and accomplishments are just as needed as those of men (Prov. 31:10-31). They will be eternally rewarded for faithfulness just like men will (1 Pet. 3:7). But their work is fulfilled in different ways and in different roles. God has so decreed it.

CONCLUSION

All Christians should learn to be teachers and preachers of God's word, and those who have the ability to do so, should proclaim it publicly. Preachers who do their work faithfully should be appreciated and respected for their work's sake. And churches have the right to support men financially so they may devote their full time to preaching. But all this must be done in harmony with God's will, not according to the traditions or practices invented by men. Does the church where you are a member have scriptural preachers?



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A Christian's Response To A.I.D.S.

by Richard W. Terry

It is said that the chances of contracting A.I.D.S. is 1 in a million, yet in America today there is well over a million people living with its reality. In the next two years over 80% of those will die. The problem is to prevalent to ignore and yet as a Christian I must realistically assess what my response to this disease will be.

Upon hearing that someone is an A.I.D.S. victim the most common response is to be repulsed and indeed A.I.D.S. is a repulsive disease. Yet we must be able to separate the person from the disease. We must not allow ourselves to fall into the trap of mindlessly condemning every person who contracts A.I.D.S. as a Homosexual. The reality of this disease is that it strikes many innocent people as well as those whose lifestyles are totally reprehensible. We must be able to look beyond the disease and deal with the individual person. Does the A.I.D.S. patient, whose lifestyle is a living contradiction to the principles of Jesus Christ, not have the same right to

hear the Gospel preached as anyone else? Who could need the gospel any more than such as these? We must learn to look beyond the sin and see the person whose soul is most precious in the sight of God. And we must guard against judging the worthiness or the unworthiness of such people. Make no mistake about it, I am not condoning the aberrant lifestyles of those who call themselves "GAYS", homosexuality is plainly prohibited in God's Word (1 Cor. 6:9) we must not flag in our opposition to the immorality that is running rampant in our society, yet at the same time we must seriously appraise what our response(s) will be.

As unpleasant as it might be, how would we respond if we were to discover that one of our closest loved ones has A.I.D.S.? In a recent program on N.B.C. one homosexual told of how a friend of his with "Christian parents" told them that he had A.I.D.S. and no sooner had he done that than his family disowned him, in a state of deep depression this young man went home and committed

suicide. A.I.D.S. is a disease, homosexuality is a sin and we must learn to separate these two if we are to successfully respond to the spiritual needs of those in our community and in our family who are in special need of our love and concern. We can condemn the acts of immorality that led up to the contraction of this disease while lovingly responding to their spiritual needs.

As a parent I must honestly admit I do not know how I would respond, lest any say "Just wait until it happens to you and you'll change your tune," I sincerely pray that it will never happen to me, but if it does I will pray God for the courage to respond as one who has embraced Christ as my Savior. I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet; all I can do is tell you what the BOOK says about our behavior toward those outside the body of Christ. There is as much misinformation being disseminated as there is information and the best thing that we as Christians can do is to secure the most authoritative information available and this will go a long way to alleviating many of our fears and apprehensions about this disorder. Perhaps, a discussion of this subject would make a good class lesson as we as God's children struggle to deal with the physical, mental and emotional effects that this disease is having on our families, our nation and on the Lord's church.

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Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

A GOOD WAY TO LIVE

(Chapter 16)

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25). The sixteenth psalm was, in all probability, part of the Lord's exposition on that occasion. The ancient title is *"Michtam of David."* The definition of the word is uncertain. Some claim it means a mystery or secret; something not yet revealed. If so, we find that mystery fully explained in the New Testament (Eph. 1:9; 3:3-5). Some say it means "gold" and denotes "a golden psalm." Others that it merely means "a writing."

Both Peter (Acts 2:25-31) and Paul (Acts 13:35-38) quoted portions of this psalm and declared them fulfilled in Jesus.

A GOOD PRAYER

"Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust" (v. 1). While these words certainly describe the disposition of David, they are perfectly fulfilled in the life of David's illustrious descendant, Jesus our Lord. Jesus knew the constant need of His Father's aid and preservation. He was tempted as we are in all points. He knew the need of prayer. His trust in the heavenly Father permeated every thought and activity. He did not trust in His own strength, or in His wisdom, or authority, or friends. He trusted in God.

A GOOD CHOICE

"O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my

delight."

From the very depths of His being, Jesus submitted to His Father. *"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things He suffered"* (Heb. 5:8). He honored God, not just with lip service (Matt. 15:8, 9), but from the heart.

But such a service and honor was not for God's benefit. His obedience unto death did not aid God. There is no way one who is infinitely blessed can be further enriched. For whose sake then was this done? It was for our sakes. It is *"to the saints that are in the earth,"* that is, those who are sanctified in Christ (I Cor. 1:2). We become such because we are washed in His blood. It is: *"to the excellent"* in whom the Lord delights. Men think "the excellent" are the rich, the educated, or the powerful. But only the saints are excellent to God. He delights in such as are sinners and know it, and who are willing to confess their sins and be set apart to His service.

"Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips." Everyone sets his affection on something. If God does not dominate his life, something or someone else shall. If one erects and hastens after a false object of adoration, sorrows multiplied will befall him. The "drink offerings of blood" refer to the idolatrous rites of the pagans. Jesus was totally committed to the true God. He had no other gods before Him.

"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou main-

tainest my lot." All He desired was God, and his inheritance He found to be sufficient. His cup overran. We should rejoice to know that we are joint heirs with Him (Rom. 8:14-16). God not only bestows upon us an elaborate inheritance, but He maintains it. This doesn't remove from us personal responsibility. We are not to destroy our heritage.

A GOOD LIFE

"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a godly heritage." When Israel inherited the Promised Land, that land was divided by lot. The twelve tribes received different portions of the country for their inheritance. That event serves as a background for these words. Jesus found that the way of submission and obedience to God led Him into "pleasant places." Though He was a *"man of sorrows"* (Isa. 53), yet peace and joy were His heritage. The two ideas are not incompatible. His was "the good life."

"I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel" my reins also instruct me in the night seasons." Jesus not only prayed, but He praised the Lord with words of thanksgiving. He blessed God for His counsel, for He did not speak of Himself (John 7:16, 8:28; 12:49, 50).

The "reins" refer to the inner man, the emotions, the affections, the feelings. Jesus knew what lay ahead as He spent sleepless nights upon the mountains in prayer to God. The "night seasons" are a time for evil and sin for many, but were a time for prayer and meditation for Him. Jesus knew the way of man was not in himself (Jer. 10:23). He took confidence in the sure counsel of God.

"I have set the LORD always before me" because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Verses 8-11 are quoted in Acts 2:25-28 and the application is made to Jesus. When one knows that God is with him and he has a continual eye on God, he will not be moved from his purpose. Jesus had the Father *always* before Him. The best I can say is that I keep Him oft times before me. But Jesus had the Father ever at His right hand. He was not moved from His purpose but was steadfast unto the end.

A GOOD HOPE

"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope." Even in death, the Lord

rejoiced. He knew He would arise in victory over the tomb.

"For thou wilt leave my soul in hell; (Hebrew = sheol; Greek = hades). The word refers to the general abode of the dead. It is a difficult word, *gehenna*, which refers to the place of eternal punishment *"neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* This prophecy was fulfilled on the morning of Jesus' resurrection. His soul returned from the hadean realm, and His body from the tomb before corruption, or decomposition set in. David speaks here not of himself, but of his descendant (Acts 2:29-31; 13:35-38). Jesus is become the firstfruits of them

that sleep (I Cor. 15:20). We also must die, but we shall also be raised up.

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." God is able and willing to be our guide. We all are strangers, pilgrims, and sojourners upon the highways of life. He will guide us in the strait and narrow way that leads into life eternal (Matt. 7:13,14). It is a way lighted by His illuminous word (Ps. 119:105). It is a straight path for our feet (Heb. 12:13); a way of love (I Cor. 12:31) and of truth (3 John 3). It is an old path (Jer. 6:16). It is a holy way (Isa. 35:8).

The end of that way for the author

and finisher of our faith was fulness of joy and everlasting pleasures. He has ascended into glory. Because He rejected the pleasures of sin for a season. He now enjoys pleasures forever. Jesus has blazed the trail for us. He has left His footprints upon the way. Let us follow His steps. As we do, we shall have joy now in Him, and fulness of joy after awhile when we hear Him say, "Enter into the joys of thy Lord." Then we shall see that the sufferings were not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

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A TRUE STORY

by Wayne S. Walker

Permit me to tell you the true story of a lady of my acquaintance who is, or was, a member of the Lord's body. I know she was a member of the church because I baptized her into Christ the very first Sunday I preached for a congregation with which I formerly worked. Both of her parents and her brother had obeyed the gospel before her, continue to be faithful Christians, and are still good friends of mine. When she responded to the invitation, she had already married a man who was not a child of God and had a couple of children. It was not easy, but this did not seem to interfere with her being regular in her attendance.

After I left the church, she decided to identify with another congregation closer to her home for convenience sake. She even asked that I write a letter to these brethren informing them that she had been baptized and was a member in good standing of the congregation where she had been worshipping. Health problems of her own and those of her children made attendance difficult on occasion. But the last time I talked with her she seemed to be very happy where she was. And the brethren there spoke well of her.

However, I recently had opportunity to speak one night for that congregation in a lecture-type meeting.

When I asked the local evangelist how my friend was doing, I was quite shocked when he responded that she was now going to a Catholic church! Several brethren had been to visit her. When the preacher talked to her, he pointed out that she had not been raised to believe that way. Her reply was, "That is what I believe now." Members of her own family have even pleaded with her but apparently it has all been to no avail. At this writing, the church is contemplating disciplinary action against her.

Why would a seemingly faithful Christian with years of background "in the church" do such a thing? I do not know enough about all the details of the situation to answer that question with any degree of assurance. But I do know that her mother-in-law was a strong Catholic and her husband was raised as a Catholic. Sometimes the pressure just becomes so strong that it seems easier to give up than to continue fighting. That may have happened in this case, and her faith was not strong enough to resist. Someday she may, like the prodigal son, come to herself, repent of her error, and be restored to her Lord. But by that time, her now-small children may grow up, marry Catholics themselves, remain in error for the rest of their lives, and be lost eternally. Such will be a source of great

grief to her.

May I take this as an opportunity to encourage every young person who is a Christian to marry a child of God. Experience testifies to the wisdom of this course of action. Either marry someone who is already a faithful member of the Lord's church or else make sure that your prospective mate obeys the gospel before you agree to wed. Not long ago a man wrote to Ann Landers saying that he had married a smoker whom he thought he could persuade to quit. After nineteen years of marriage, she smokes more than ever. Ann replied, "If something bothers you during courtship, it will become unbearable after marriage." Such changes are more likely to be made before the wedding than after it.

The same is true in religion. "If you marry a child of the devil, you are bound to have trouble with your father-in-law." Or, as the example cited shows, you may end up losing your own faith as a result. You may retort, "Oh, that will never happen to me." It HAS happened to others who undoubtedly said the same thing. *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"* (I Cor. 10:12). Please, do not take a chance with the souls of your possible children, your spouse, and yourself. Make sure that your home is united in Christ. This is the best way to avoid innumerable problems and the only way to have the hope of being together in eternity.

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TEEN TALK

A Column for teens and by teens

"The elders where I am a member threatened to withdraw from a college girl because she went to the beaches wearing a swimming suit. One of the daughters of one of these same elders recently entered a beauty contest and she modeled a swim suit. Isn't there a great inconsistency here? What can I do about it?"

Becky Norris
Russellville, AL
Age: 18



In answer to your first question, yes, there is an inconsistency. I see no difference in a public beach and a beauty contest where the public can attend. According to Matthew 18:15, if you and another are at odds, you should approach that brother alone but with a spirit of meekness. (Eph. 6:11). Talk with that elder and explain to him that you do not understand why one action was disciplined and not the other. As an elder, he should have respect for the Word of God and be ready to listen to a member of the congregation of which he has oversight.

Neil Green
Huntsville, AL
Age: 16



There is a great inconsistency here. To handle this situation you need to set up a time with the elders and discuss the matter with them. During this discussion, talk respectfully and also listen to what they have to say. The

outcome of this matter may not be to your complete satisfaction, but you will be confronting the problem as a christian should. This will be good for both you and the elders to openly discuss this problem.

Sonia Ennis
Smiths Grove, KY
Age: 17



Yes, there is a great inconsistency. There would be no difference between the two girls for both of them sinned. In I Tim. 2:9 it tells us to dress in modest apparel. Also in Rom. 2:11 it states that God has no respect of persons. What would be wrong for one would be wrong for the other.

If this happened in my presence, I would have to point these Scriptures out to both parties and hope they both would have enough faith and love for the truth to make corrections in their lives.

Troy Reece
Bowling Green, KY
Age: 15



I believe there is inconsistency because there is no difference between the two issues. A swimming suit provokes lust anywhere people are present and is therefore a sin.

As for how to deal with this, Matt. 18:15 says if someone sins go to the one and tell her she is sinning. Tell the elder's daughter she is in sin and remind her of the other girl. A talk also needs to be arranged with her father

and try to explain that his daughter was wrong just as was the college girl. If they will not hear you, try having a group discussion with them (Matt. 18:16) because sometimes people are reached better through group discussions. If they still refuse to listen, bring the matter before the church and then, if they don't repent, the elder will have to resign and the next verse of Matthew says to withdraw from them.

Paul Schreiner, Jr.
Oxford, OH
Age: 17



Yes, there is a notable inconsistency in these two events. What is rebuked in one case cannot be condoned in another. Either it must be accepted in all cases or rejected in all cases.

According to the Bible, such attire would fall into the category of immodest dress. It cannot, therefore, be accepted in **any** situation. The action you can take is to note the inconsistency to the elders and ask that they do something about it. The elders and members must certainly take action when faced with such a contradiction. Your actions make a difference. Never be shy about speaking up when you see something which appears to be a violation of God's word. It could mean the difference in your soul or someone else's.



Is there a particular question or subject you would like to have our teen panel discuss? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.

Pornography Reaches New Depths

by Dwane Derrick

Every child of God, who truly loves Him and has a deep respect for His Word, will surely shudder and rise up in righteous indignation at the following article published in the September 16, 1985 issue of the *Pensacola News Journal*.

'THE X-RATED BIBLE' SELLS OUT FIRST PRINTING

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—A new book has apparently met the needs of thousands of readers whose idea of Bible study is to skim through the Scriptures, stopping only at the juicy parts.

"The X-Rated Bible" published by the American Atheist Press sold out its first printing of 5,000 copies.

The paperback was issued with an announcement that it included every "lewd, licentious, and vile" sexual story in the Bible.

Just when one would think he has seen the depth of man's sinfulness, there appears another act that is incomprehensible. Not only are the promoters of pornography reaching new depths where children are used in unthinkable acts of sexual conduct, filmed and peddled publicly, but the precious words of our Maker are perverted by twisted minds seeking to undermine the purity contained therein. The ones responsible for writing and publishing such a book are wholly given over to Satan, and the 5,000 who bought the book stand in the same condemnation.

In our society there are many things being tolerated, excused and even justified which were once recognized by decent, honorable and right thinking people as productive of evil and wickedness. Filth, vulgarity and indecency seem to be on the minds and in the hearts of so many people. You see, hear, and read it in the popular magazines, at the movies and on the television, and even some of the literature that is required reading in our schools is full of it. It seems to be unavoidable. You can hardly go into a public place, listen to the news, or read the paper without having your senses

violated with vulgarity and profanity.

We are living in a "four letter word society," and it seems that our attitude is that there is nothing we can do about it; therefore we are raising little or no protest. It has often been said that "when people are taught that they are mere animals instead of created in the image and likeness of God, they will live and act like animals"; and it seems to me that that is the kind of society we are becoming.

The noble principles upon which our nation was founded seem to be diminishing, and our laws seem to be adjusted to accommodate the enemies of God. Can freedom of the press have no limits? Should the freedom of speech guarantee the right to say anything, anywhere, anytime in the presence of anyone? Christians indeed have a battle on our hands as the athiests/humanists are determined to eradicate God from our hearts and lives by infiltrating our homes, literature, education, politics, and even religion until it threatens the very existence of our nation.

We are told by the promoters of the filth that is so prevalent today that we don't have to buy the magazines—we don't have to read it; and we don't have to go to the movies to see it; and if something offensive comes on the television we can turn it off. I suggest that we all take that advice and encourage others to do the same.

The greatest thing we can do to help our nation is to be a grain of salt and encourage others to be a grain of salt and to pray often. Every Christian can help exalt our nation by living a righteous life (Prov. 14:34). We are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-14). Righteous living on our part can have a stabilizing influence on the lives of our friends and neighbors. Paul said that we should pray for those in places of authority (I Tim. 2:1-2). Imagine how much good could be done if Christians throughout the land would pray for those in high places of influence. We need to be preaching the gospel to those around us, because the gospel has the power to change the hearts and

lives of men, and that is what our society needs.

The way to bring the blessings of God upon our nation and at the same time avoid the condemnation of God is to practice the principles of righteousness. The more people we convert to the Lord the greater change we will see in the moral condition of our nation.

Perhaps this X-Rated Bible is the depth one could think of to undermine God, yet Christians allow the world to influence their attitude toward Diety in subtle ways, The TV brings comics into our homes who belittle religion. We laugh at the jokes and this erodes our respect for things holy. Children hear in school and parents hear on the job God's name used lightly and irreverently, and these same words creep into the vocabulary of Christians if we are not very careful.

Not only should God's name be always used in a reverent manner, "holy and reverend is his name" (Psa. 111:9b), but any reference to Him and His Word should be made reverently. The attitude of the people in Nehemiah 8 is inspiring as verse 3 says they stood from morning until midday, and "the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." Verse 5 shows their reverence for God's Word as Ezra opens the book and "all the people stood up." More touching is their attitude toward their sins when Ezra read God's Word, "For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law" (verse 9). Perhaps if we were deprived of the availability of God's precious Word like these people had been, we would have a different attitude toward it.

Brother Irven Lee once made a statement that has stuck in my mind. He said that whatever sins are prevalent in the world, if we're not very careful they will enter into the church. Christians cannot allow the filth of sexual perversion and pornography to find place in our hearts. We cannot help but be "shocked" at such books as the X-Rated Bible. Their lack of respect for God's Word in this book will give way to "fear and trembling" when they stand before Him in judgment to give account of such works.

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

PROVERBS

by Ray Ferris

The book of Proverbs derives its name in our English Bible from the name given to it in the Vulgate version of the Scriptures. The origin for the thought which the title attempts to express is doubtless the Hebrew word *meshalim* which indicates a set of wise sayings with weight and authority behind them. This is in turn from the word signifying to rule or govern. Our word *proverb*, exclusive of its connotative meaning derived largely by its scriptural use, properly means, "A brief epigrammatic saying that is a popular byword; a maxim; adage" (*New Collegiate Dictionary*, Sixth Edition, Webster, p. 680). The lengthy descriptions, addresses, and continuations of subjects for several verses in this book indicate a much broader meaning for this term than often is accepted, but it is evident that the name is derived from the nature of the material found within its pages.

The author of Proverbs has long been conceded by most people to be Solomon. The claim is expressly made within the book that he was the author of at least portions of the book (See 1:1; 10:1; and 25:1), while other portions of it are attributed to Agur, Lemuel, and some think part of the book is attributed to "the wise" mentioned in 22:17 as a collection from different sources. Others insist that all of these expressions are but figurative expressions referring to Solomon. We know that Solomon was prolific in his production of proverbs during his lifetime (See I Kings 4:32), and this writer has found no evidence that demands a change in the old accepted view that the book may be generally accepted as written by Solomon with the probability that he chose some proverbs that were not original with him. An editor, or editors, may well have compiled them in final form at a later date (See 25:1), with all of this action being under the guidance and

supervision of the Spirit of God.

Much of the effort to disclaim Solomon as the author has come about with the influence of liberal critics who insist upon dating all the books of the Old Testament at a much later date than they were actually written in an effort to discount the inspiration of God with the authors. Proverbs has been dated by scholars at every time from the era of Solomon down to a very late post-exilic period, with many attempting to set different dates for each section of the book. There is no sure way to be really emphatic about the authorship and date of the book.

The identity of the man who wrote the book in its final form is not too significant, since there can be no doubt that Proverbs belongs in the canon of the Old Testament. This is manifested by its inclusion in, and wide-spread acceptance as, part of the Hebrew Scriptures. The matter is demonstrated beyond doubt by the many allusions to it and quotations from it by the inspired writers of the New Testament, and even by Jesus Himself. Space does not permit this paper to make a list of such allusions and quotations, but any good reference Bible will show the accuracy of the statement.

By its very nature there are many differences in this book and in most of the other books of the Old Testament. Two of the most outstanding of these are (1) Its definite emphasis of the individual instead of the nation as a whole, and (2) Its appeal to practical living in this life with human experience cited as the teacher and personal success in this life as one motivation for right conduct. It nevertheless teaches very high ethical standards throughout in every realm. We can note the exaltation and respect for mother and wife and that monogamy is taken for granted; chastity and proper faithfulness in the

marriage relationship is enjoined; intemperance in food, drunkenness, laziness, stealing, and oppression of the poor are soundly denounced; and the oneness of a living God who blesses the righteous and punishes the wicked is found throughout all of its pages. There are even passages which deal with the proper relationship between the king and his subjects and that condemn unrighteous acts of kings and nations. One might truly say this book presents in a practical way the thought that the beginning and all of wisdom is a fear of the Lord as evidenced by a life of blessed and prosperous conduct in accordance with His direction. Note chapter one, verse ten.

The material is presented basically in the form of poetry with a very decided parallelism within most of the verses; that is, two stichs (lines) within the verse and the lines paralleling each other in some way. The three types of this parallelism are as follows: (1) The two lines expressing the same idea in slightly different language-*synonymous* is the term usually applied to this form, and 8:4 is an illustration of it, "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man."; (2) A truth stated in the first line and a contrast stated in the next line-*antithetic* is the term applied to this form, and 11:1 is an illustration of it, "A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight"; and (3) The second line continuing the thought expressed in the first to make a complete sentence on the one subject-*synthetic* is the term applied to this form of parallelism, and 18:22 is an illustration of it, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord".

The first nine chapters of the book are in reality a series of short poems which are "proverbial" in their practical lessons, and are much like the form of the material from 22:17-24:34. The real proverbs of Solomon are to be found

in the sections from 10:1-22:16 and 25:1-29:27. Chapter thirty contains "The words of Agur" and chapter thirty one "The words of King Lemuel", with the first nine verses speaking the admonition of "his mother" to kings, and the last of the chapter extolling the praises of the "virtuous woman".

As a conclusion to this synopsis, we present a very brief outline of the book in seven divisions. (1) A dissertation on the praise and excellence of Wisdom, claimed to be from the pen of Solomon, 1:1-9:18; (2) Practical proverbs of Solomon that can hardly be classified due to their nature, 10:1-22:16, (3)

Similar material to the first nine chapters with no definite topic throughout (sometimes called approbations of justice) and which may have been selected, by Solomon from the sayings of "the wise", 22:17-24:34; and (4) More of the proverbs of Solomon which are said to have been collected by scribes of Hezekiah, 25:1-29:27; (5) "The words of Agur", 30:1-33; (6) "The prophecy that his mother taught" King Lemuel concerning the duty of kings, 31:1-9; and (7) The praises of the virtuous wife, 31:10-31.

The book of Proverbs is a veritable gold mine of practical teaching that

will never grow old nor out of date. It matters not what occupation, age, or other station in life may be characteristic of an individual he can surely read the book profitably. Maxims of truth to guide one's life in all conditions are set forth in such great quantity, with such clarity and impressiveness, and in so many different ways that all who desire may be taught. Study the book of Proverbs and you will find many passages to help in your everyday living.

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"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel. . ."
(Romans 10:15)



HOWARD O. JONES
ADAMSVILLE, AL



Howard Jones was born in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1950 and this was considered his earthly home until after his college graduation. His parents were both Christians and the family worked and worshipped with the Eastbrook congregation, with a strong influence from Kenneth Frazier, the local preacher at that time. Having been taught the gospel from a youth, Howard obeyed the gospel in 1960.

After his high school graduation, Howard enrolled at Auburn University. He alternated quarters in attending college classes at Auburn and working at Lockheed in Marietta, Georgia. While at Auburn, he attended the congregation on Magnolia Avenue; while in Marietta, he attended the Powers Ferry congregation. In addition to the encouragement he received from his parents and Ken Frazier, he feels David Riggs and Rea Pennock had a strong influence on him and helped him reach the decision to preach.

Howard received a bachelor degree in Aerospace Engineering from Auburn in 1973. It was during this same year that he married Cindy Moore. They moved to Tampa, where he taught at Florida College for two years. Howard also preached for one year during this time for the Eureka Springs congregation.

It was not until 1975 that Howard made up his mind to enter into full-time preaching. His first local work was in Fredericktown, Ohio, where he stayed for seven years. He then preached in Paden City, West Virginia, for three years and is currently laboring with the Westwood congregation in Birmingham.

Howard and Cindy have been blessed with three children: Adam, Timothy, and Meghann. They enjoy spending much time with these

"bundles of joy." Howard has said on several occasions that his love for his family and his love for preaching the Lord's gospel is what keeps him going. He especially enjoys personal work and having home studies in which he "can sit at a kitchen table with a pad and an open Bible to talk with someone about their soul".

Howard accompanied Bob Buchanon to the Philippine Islands in February and March of this year. He had always wanted to do some type of foreign work and this gave him the opportunity he had wanted. The deep poverty and bad living conditions almost threw him into a culture shock, but once he got over that he grew to love and appreciate the Filipino brethren, their hunger for Truth, and their desire to serve the Lord. When asked about the trip, he said: "Never have any brethren so deeply touched my heart. There are so many teaching needs there that I hope to return one day to work with them again".

While in the Philippines, one of the native preachers, upon learning that Howard had a degree in Aerospace Engineering, said: "As an engineer, all you can do is try to send a man to the moon; as a gospel preacher, you can try to send a man much farther--to heaven".

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God's Teenage Heroes

by Rob Harbison

DAVID THE SHEPHERD

David lives in our memory as "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22; I Sam. 13:14). Even as a youth, David's heart and loyalties were with God. This early love for God was the force which made him such a great man in his later years.

David sowed the seed of a good pure heart in his youth and reaped the good harvest later (see Gal. 6:7-8). David's example illustrates the benefits of remembering our Creator in the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1).

What profitable lessons can teenagers today learn from David?

DAVID'S HEART WAS PURE

When God sent Samuel to Jesse's house to anoint the next king of Israel, Samuel was impressed by Jesse's stalwart young sons. Eliab, the eldest son, impressed Samuel -- he looked like a leader! Samuel responded, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him" (I Sam 16:6). But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). The tender heart of young David pleased God more than any physical qualities.

God knows our hearts. While men can only make judgments by our actions and what they can see, and can therefore be fooled, God cannot be fooled. God knows more about our thoughts and deep dark secrets than even we know about ourselves (I Kgs. 8:39; Heb. 4:12-13).

God is concerned with our hearts first and foremost. He cares about our actions too, but the heart is the seat of our actions. If our hearts are pure then proper actions will follow. The Bible

says "Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it spring the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). All the sacrifices and worship we may offer God are worthless if not motivated by a good, righteous heart (Psalm 51:16-17; Matt. 15:8-9).

God looks favorably on the tender, innocent hearts of young people "for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). Will you transplant in your bosom the heart of God?

DAVID WAS A RESPONSIBLE, HARD WORKER

David had a tough job as a shepherd. Working a couple of hours after school and on weekends at McDonalds is nothing compared with a shepherd's work! David constantly watched the sheep, rounding up those which strayed from the flock. He was their only protection from predators, having to fight bears, lions, and wolves (cf. I Sam. 17:34-36). He even slept in the fields with them at night -- Shepherding was a tough job!!

While his father and brothers were at home, he was working hard. When Samuel asked about him, they had to send for him because he was still away tending sheep (I Sam. 16:11).

Did you ever wonder why parents have so many jobs and chores for us to do around the house? Why are we expected to go out and find a job? Is it because our parents are lazy and stingy with their money? Actually, they want us to learn responsibility to prepare us for the "real world". "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:27).

Hard work teaches us to be industrious and responsible as adults. In today's society, many people are looking for whatever handouts they

can get. They want money without working for it. Many lazy people who refuse to work, are collecting a government check, and that is as wrong as it can be! "But we urge you brethren. . . that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands as we have commanded you" (I Thess. 4:10-11). "For even when we were with you, we command you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thess. 3:10).

DAVID WAS HUMBLE

David was anointed by Samuel as the next king of Israel, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him that day (I Sam. 16:13). What an exciting, monumental day that was for him! The next king of Israel! Wow!! Everyone ought to treat him special now -- Right? No more herding sheep for him, no more cold nights under the stars, no more lions and bears, no more hard work--Right? Wrong! He went right back out into the fields. Later when Saul wanted David to play music before him, we again find David among the flocks. Saul told Jesse to "send me your son David who is with the sheep" (I Sam. 16:19).

What does that say about David's character? David was a humble young man. Honestly, how would you react if you found out that you were going to be the next king? Would you think yourself "special" and that people should cater to your wishes? Would you expect someone else to take care of your chores? Maybe get the "big head"? The temptation to boast would be very strong, wouldn't it?

Yet, David was not boastful, arrogant, or assertive. He continued to fulfill his family obligations. There is always a grave danger in thinking too highly of ourselves and not seeing ourselves as we really are. "For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith" (Rom. 12:3). God hates a proud look; it is an abomination to Him (Prov. 6:16-17).

God thinks everyone is special--He sent His son to die for us didn't He? Yet no one deserves "special treatment". David was humble enough to recognize that. Are we? "Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man?" (Prov. 20:6).

DAVID FOUND FAVOR IN THE SIGHT OF ALL ISRAEL

Some people have a wrong impression of Christians. They think that Christians are people who just cannot make it in the real world. Especially is this true with **young** Christians. Don't think that only "losers" are religious!

David was not just some goofy religious kid, so abnormal that he could not relate to other people. David was very handsome (I Sam. 16:12), maybe even somewhat of a "heart-throb" (I Sam. 18:20, 28). He was well-rounded, being an accomplished

musician, a mighty man of valor, and prudent in speech (I Sam. 16:18). He was evidently always trying to improve himself -- a real achiever. Today, this young man could be "class favorite" material, or "Most likely to succeed"!

David found favor in the sight of Saul and even all Israel (I Sam. 16:22; 18:5). He was praised because of his morally upright and God-fearing life. He gained the respect and admiration of many mature and wise people.

Young men and women today can find favor in the eyes of adults and God by applying some of the principles of David's life to your own. "Let no

one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12).

CONCLUSION

David had many things going for him, but the greatest of these was his dedication to God. That alone made him a great man. Young people today, who control their hearts as David did, can truly be men and women "after God's own heart". Young friend, where does **your** heart lie?

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Charging The Rich

by Dick Blackford

As a man was leaving worship services he met an old acquaintance whom he had not seen in several years. In their brief conversation he said to his acquaintance, "I understand that you are in great danger." It was said seriously and was heard with much surprise. The friend addressed was not aware of any danger and eagerly inquired what was meant. The answer was, "I have been informed that you are getting rich."

No man can read the Bible and not be impressed by the number of scriptures that warn of the danger of riches. The young preacher was commanded "*Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded nor have their hopes set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed*" (I Tim. 6:17-19).

GENERAL ADMONITIONS

The negative charges of this passage are twofold: (1) **Be Not High-minded**. That means don't be snobbish or smug. Don't value yourself because of your wealth. The fact that this charge is given implies that it is often a tendency of the rich to "think of

themselves more highly than they ought to think." (2) **Nor Have Their Hopes Set On The Uncertainty Of Riches**. This, likewise, is recognized as a tendency or the Holy Spirit would not have mentioned it. Because there are so many things money CAN do, there is the danger of being lulled into thinking there is nothing it CANNOT do. Yet in a moment's time a sudden change in our economic system could knock the props from under all of us. The worst hurt would be the rich. Remember the stock market crash when many committed suicide? However, he who is trusting in riches when the Lord returns will be hurt even more. Jesus said, "*It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Mt. 19:24). While we might be bogged down in a hassle as to what the "needle" refers, there is one obvious truth in Jesus' teaching that must be admitted by all - it will be hard for the rich to be saved!

The positive charges are: (1) **Trust on God**; (2) **Do good**; (3) **Be rich in good works**; (4) **Ready to distribute**; and (5) **Willing to communicate**. In a nutshell, these five positive charges are saying: "Without partiality, be ready at all times (not just seasonally) to help everyone because of your faith in God rather than possessions. You will be laying a good foundation to help you reach eternal life - you'll need it!"

While the covetous nature of many who are rich is often deplored, let us not forget that one need not be rich to be guilty of covetousness. The same chapter warns those who have a desire to be rich: "*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. 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*" (I Tim. 6:9, 10). Those who are not rich but "have a mind to be" are often self-defeated. Hoping to better themselves materially, they frequently succeed in doing the opposite spiritually.

Occasionally one wonders how the love of money can be a root of all evils (footnote, ASV). Stop and think for a moment and it will dawn on you. There is hardly a sin in that great "category of sins" that cannot be connected with money. Some of the "foolish and hurtful lusts" in which the love of money can play a part are: adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, homosexuality, drunkenness, theft, jealousy, strife, revellings, idolatry, gambling, extortion, etc. Sin is expensive in more ways than one. Many have reached after riches and fallen from the faith.

Many of us are too concerned about things, Things, THINGS! "*A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the THINGS which he possesseth. . .*"

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From out of the Past

Torch
April, 1951

"In The Days Of Those Kings"

Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

The objection to the obvious truth that the kingdom established on the day of Pentecost in the days of the Roman kings was fulfillment of the prophecy of Dan. 2:44-45 is based on the claim that it was not in the days of "those kings," but rather in the days of the kings of only one of the kingdoms mentioned in Daniel's prophecy. According to this reasoning the kingdom must of necessity be established when all four of the universal kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and of Daniel's interpretation would exist simultaneously, and in power at the same time. Just who could imagine that? There was never a time, according to such an idea, from the date of the dream until the last of the Roman emperors passed off the stage of history, that the dream and its interpretation by Daniel could have been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the future kingdom theory. The notion makes God utter a prophecy through a dream and its interpretation which it was physically impossible to fulfill. Within the ordinary bounds of history and of reason such a thing could never be accomplished; for it calls for the sway of the four universal kingdoms at the same time. Actually, the sway of the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's image did not overlap; the kingdoms were over the same nations and over the same peoples. The people of Israel were under all four of these kingdoms. So it not only did not historically happen that these reigns were simultaneous, but in the very nature of things it was physically impossible that it could have happened. Can any one imagine four universal kingdoms holding sway at the same time? Such a picture is a worse jumble than an unsolved jigsaw puzzle.

When, then, will the prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and image be fulfilled? Why, in the millennium, of course, we are told. There is no period of time nor age of the earth, according to the things said about it, so elastic, so versatile, so magical and so convenient as this millennium fancy. It solves all difficulties. After all of the speculating on prophecies, if there are any hard questions left over, just pass them on to the millennium, without explanation, and feel satisfied. God is supposed then to straighten out all of the alleged mistakes of six thousand years of rule over the earth, bring forward and adjust all of his postponed prophecies and unfulfilled promises, square his account with the Jews who got in his way and thwarted his plans, and balance the books. Just pass it all over to the millennium!

There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that God will stage a historical pageant in a millennium, and bring all the kings of all the four kingdoms, universal empires, back to the stage at the same time, in order to have the historical background again in a sort of dramatic way to establish his own kingdom here on earth. This manipulating of kings and kingdoms in order to manufacture a setting for a fantastic theory on a few verses in the twentieth chapter in Revelation, which millennialists attempt to make literal, is worse than fantasy, it is foolery.

In this view of such a pageant, God would not only find it necessary to dig up Jerusalem, but the remains of Babylon, Media, Grecia and Rome, and put the nation of Israel under all four of them at the same time before the Christ could come, inaugurate his kingdom and rule over them. In the

millennium just whose wife shall Israel be, for they all had her!

Another thing—this land of America and its Americans were never under any of the four universal kingdoms, nor under David's rule; and since the theory has Christ sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem, exercising David's staff over David's realm, shall we merely be there as strangers? What a mesh of spiritualizing and dramatizing they do in order to make a few symbolic passages literal!

This so-called millennium must needs be a very interesting thing. As a necessary consequence, it demands an extra-special resurrection. The wicked dead, according to the theory expounded, are not to be raised until the **last end** of the millennium; but the kingdom of Christ must be set up at the **first end** of the millennium. But those kings of the four universal kingdoms will be rated among the wicked dead. So a special permit will be required from God to raise up those wicked kings in an extraordinary resurrection, a thousand years ahead of schedule, to reestablish their kingdoms, and kings and kingdoms also imply subjects, so there will be a rather sizeable resurrection which the millennial schedule has not called for until now.

Close observation in the study of God's word will show that God has always accomplished his purposes in the most simple, direct and reasonable way that would carry out his purpose. Miracles were not employed except when and where miracles were necessary. And there can be no necessity for several thousand years and the use of several orders of resurrections, with the stupendous dramatic faking of bringing back into existence make-believe ancient monarchies, just to establish his own kingdom for a mere thousand years. In order to provide a place for their millennium, the theorists will not only re-interpret the Bible, they will rewrite history itself, resurrect mankind back to the days of Eden, and make them live it all over again, just to get in that imaginary thousand years of their theory.

It is certainly the more sensible and sane to believe that Dan. 2:44-45 was to be, and was, fulfilled during the historical period embraced in the reigning of the four kingdoms mentioned in the image, represented to be Babylonia, Medo-Persia,

Macedonia and Rome; rather than to let these kingdoms all perish, their kings turn to dust; their names and achievements erased from the memory of men—and then, after thousands of years, revive their dust and their bones and the ruins of their kingdoms, and in a great pageant stage an act in which they shall all again reign simultaneously. Theories that require such pageantry to be true bear the *prima facie* evidence of their palpable falsity.

When Jesus the Christ proclaimed that “*the time is fulfilled, the kingdom*

of God is at hand” (Mark 1:14-15), he did not herald a premature announcement. The time had come; his kingdom came (Mark 9:1); and his hearers were witnesses who lived to see it and receive it. The Colossians were in it (Col. 1:13); the Hebrews were receiving it (Heb. 12:28)—present participle “*receiving*,” partaking of it, therefore were in it; John, the apostle, was a “*brother and partaker in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ*” (Rev. 1:9); and we are all in “*the kingdom of Christ and God*” (Eph. 5:5) now. And Paul was in it with the

Colossians (Col. 1:13-14), for he said God “*hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son*.” The verb “*hath*” is past tense, not future, and the pronoun “*us*” included Paul himself. Jesus said the disciples would live to see it; John said the seven churches were in it, and that he was in it; Paul said the Colossians were in it, and that he was in it with them. These passages do not indicate any upset of the prophetic timetable, nor any postponement of kingdom prophecies. The kingdom came, and it is the church.

“Pardon Me Paul?”

by David Spiece

How often has this happened to you? You are half listening to someone in a conversation and you think you hear them say something but when you ask them to repeat it, it is completely different from what you thought you heard. Sometimes our study of the Bible can be the same way. You read a chapter and a particular verse strikes you as saying something different and your first reaction is, “Did that verse say what I thought it did?”

Such a verse might be I Corinthians 15:29 where it reads, “*Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead?*” Pardon me Paul, but did you just say that we are to be baptized for dead people? Unfortunately there are religious groups that practice such a ritual. Those who are alive on the earth may be baptized over and over, each time for a different friend or relative that had died outside of their group. The question needs to be asked, is this what Paul is teaching?

Before we answer the question from the context itself let’s examine some passages that will shed some additional light on what Paul is really teaching.

Since the action involved is baptism let’s look at some passages speaking of baptism and what it is for. Acts 22:16, “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. . .*” Whose sins were washed away in the waters of baptism? Paul’s, no one else. Philippians 2:12 reads, “. . . *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*.” Couple this with Ezekiel 18:19-27, “. . . *The soul that sinneth it shall die. . . the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. . .*” From these two passages we can see that each one of us will stand or fall depending on MY actions on this earth. I can’t be lost because of someone else’s behaviour, neither can I be saved.

As well, Luke 16:19-31 teaches that once I have died and passed into Hades (whether Paradise or Torments) I must stay wherever I am. There is no moving from one area to another. Verse 26 reads, “*And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulfed fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us. . .*” Hebrews 9:27 says,

“*And it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment*.” From these verses we can conclude that once a person dies their destiny is sealed and nothing we do here on this earth can change that person’s condition.

Now, back to I Corinthians 15:29. Paul is addressing this letter to the brethren at Corinth (v. 1). The pronouns he uses to describe this group are, “*ye*”, “*you*”, “*we*” and “*your*” showing he is speaking to the faithful children of God. He uses “*they*” only twice. First, to describe those who have already passed from this life, and secondly, to describe those who were baptizing for the dead. Paul does not include himself in the group that was performing this “*deadly*” baptism. He has in a sense placed himself and other faithful Christians, here, and the false teachers, there.

There is no denying that this act was being performed but it certainly wasn’t being practiced by faithful Christians. This whole chapter is answering the false doctrine of there being no resurrection. The verse following the one in question reads, “*And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?*” (v. 30). Once again Paul makes a distinction between faithful Christians and false teachers. In other words, if there is no resurrection then why are **they** baptizing for the dead and why are **we** suffering persecution? For what purpose?

No, Paul is not teaching a doctrine that contradicts other Bible passages but is in reality exposing a doctrine for what it is - false.

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THE BYZANTINE TEXT-TYPE AND NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL CRITICISM, by Harry A. Sturz (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 305 pages, \$18.95.

For more than a century students of the New Testament text have divided themselves into two basic schools: One, adopting the theories of B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort, has contended that the Greek Testament should essentially be based upon the testimony of two 4th century manuscripts (Aleph and B); while the other school, following the lead of J.W. Burgon, has vied for the supremacy of the Byzantine Text (consisting of some 5,000 manuscripts from the 5th thru 14th centuries). The former alleges that the Byzantine Text has been corrupted through modifications and additions - called "conflations"- and should play a "secondary" role in reconstructing the New Testament text. The latter group, on the other hand, is quick to point out that the theory of "conflation" is unproven and that the Byzantine Text deserves "primary" consideration on account of its great numerical strength. The whole controversy becomes relevant to the English Bible reader when he tries to explain the many deletions and alterations found in most modern versions as compared with the King James Bible.

One should not turn to this book for a one-sided endorsement of either position. Sturz seeks, rather, to clear the air of prejudice surrounding the Byzantine Text (also called the Majority Text), which for decades has been clouded by the inaccurate assumptions of Westcott and Hort, and to show that the Byzantine Text is

both "old" and "independent" and that it deserves a fair hearing in the reconstruction of the New Testament text. The author does not believe that the Byzantine is necessarily the best text-type, but that "each of the main text-types (including the Byzantine) are equally old and relatively independent from each other" and that one should "include the Byzantine testimony along with the others in order to determine external weight and spread of testimony" (p. 10).

This book is written on a scholarly level and, like most material on textual criticism, may perplex the novice. Nevertheless, for the serious investigator it is a compendium of valuable information, containing not only Sturz's discussion of the Byzantine Text but also several well-organized appendices and an extensive bibliography of much that has been written on the subject of textual criticism. The book is well-bound with a durable hard-back cover that suggests many years of service, and it is clearly and legibly printed. Thomas Nelson Publishers are to be commended for making this volume available to the public.

PICTURE STORIES FROM THE BIBLE, edited by M.C. Gaines (Scarf Press: New York, New York), 1980, hardback, 144 pages, \$7.95.

This book is divided into two main sections: the story of Jesus as seen in the gospels and the story of the disciples and the early church as seen in Acts. It comes with several maps to aid the reader in knowing where the events took place. The first few pages of the book list the principal events and then give the Scripture reference from which the story is found.

In an attempt to capture the attention of a young reader, this book is produced in full-color comic-strip form. Most stories are told on just one page, consisting of eight to ten strips. The actual Scripture reference is on the

bottom of the page, but conversation balloons are included with the strip to note the conversations.

The editor has done a good job with most of the stories. I was impressed with the way in which the conversion and baptism of the eunuch of Ethiopia was told. I was disappointed, however, with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The importance of his baptism was omitted. The editor also allowed some traditions to be added in addition to what the actual text says. (As an example, at the birth of Jesus we find **three** wise men of the East. The Bible does not tell us how many wise men there were.)

Even with the few complaints I would offer to the editor, I still think it would be a good book for small children. The bright colors of the strips and the shortness of each story will aid in keeping their attention.

PICTURE STORIES FROM THE BIBLE, edited by M.C. Gaines (Scarf Press: New York, New York), 1979, hardback, 222 pages, \$9.95.

Though designed especially for children, people of all ages have been fascinated with this book. The editor has put some of the favorite Bible stories into a full-color comic-strip form without being irreverent in the approach.

This first volume offers all the fascinating stories from the Old Testament--from Adam and Eve to Jonah and the whale. Arranged in chronological order and portrayed in full color, every story has tried to be accurate with the Biblical text.

Millions of young children are growing up without the Biblical knowledge which their parents had. I hope and believe that this book will cause many of them to go to the Bible and read the original stories in their full context. This volume should whet the appetite for a greater Bible knowledge.

ALL ABOUT RAISING CHILDREN by Helen Andelin (*Pacific Press: Pierce City, Missouri*), 1981, hardback, 413 pages, \$12.95.

From the same author that gave us *Fascinating Womanhood* and *The Fascinating Girl*, we now have a book dealing with success as a parent. Mrs. Andelin's concepts are supported by her own success as a parent. She and her husband, the author of *Man of Steel and Velvet*, have raised eight children, all of whom are highly moral, responsible and successful. They also have thirty-three grandchildren who are being raised by these concepts.

The author argues that parents have the power to shape the child as we and as God would want them to be. We can eliminate child failures. We can bring out the finest, noblest elements within him and mold him to greatness. When proven methods are applied, success is assured.

The book is divided into four main parts: What the Parents Must Be and Do, Training, Development, and Guidelines for Parents.

Andelin presents a method of applying firm and consistent discipline balanced with a sensitive understanding of the needs and feelings of children at each age level. It is not, however, a book only of methods. It explains what parents must be themselves, the home background they must provide and the close relationship they must build with their children if they are to influence their lives in a consistent, positive way.

HAPPINESS IN THE HOME by Harold Hazelip (*Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan*), 1985, paperback, 120 pages, \$3.95.

The author of this book is well known as a professor at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, a speaker on the *Herald of Truth* television program, editor of *Up Reach* magazine, and author of several books.

Hazelip is optimistic about the future for the Christian family. In this book, he addresses a wide range of challenges to the family with brief, self-contained chapters for easier comprehension and application. This book is designed for the nonprofessional--for parents and spouses who struggle to raise a secure and happy family in a complex society.

The family, like an individual, has

clearly defined needs. It will face certain predictable crises. This book treats the "tough questions" for which the healthy family must find answers: How can we communicate? Shall there be family rules? Why do we hurt the ones we love? What's to be done when the family falls apart? How can family members encourage each other? How can sexual intimacy be achieved? How can the single parent manage successfully? Can spouses learn to love the "empty nest"?

GIANT STEPS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE by Kenneth N. Taylor (*Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois*) 1985, hardback, 64 pages, \$6.95.

This volume is based on the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments. It is the latest in what I call the "ladybug" series. Carefully and wonderfully illustrated by Kathryn Shoemaker, each page has ladybugs hidden in the illustrations. Children love to search for the ladybugs after reading the stories.

Each theme comes with the short story, a few questions to answer, a sentence prayer, and then the Bible verse to learn.

Picture books are soon outgrown, but Bible verses memorized in childhood last for a lifetime. I'm sure the children will enjoy this book and parents and grandparents can really use it to reinforce some of the great themes of the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments.

BIBLE STUDIES--Volume 4, by Robertson L. Whiteside (*Whiteside Publications: Denton, Texas*), 1985, paperback, 592 pages, \$13.00

Most brethren are familiar with the works of R.L. Whiteside--*The Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy*, *A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome*, *Doctrinal Discourses*, and *Reflections*. For the years 1928-1939, Whiteside prepared the subject matter for the "Adult Quarterly" of the Firm Foundation Publishing House. In the year 1931, he became a staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate* and wrote a weekly article. For the years 1933-1936, he prepared material for the *Gospel Advocate* "Adult Quarterly." Beginning with the year 1937, he began as the editor of the "Teachers Annual Commentary." For

the years 1937-1944, he prepared the subject matter for these books.

Volume 4 is the latest release of Whiteside's *Bible Studies*. These selections tell a continuous story of the life, miracles, and teaching of Jesus Christ; establishing proof of His deity; confirming His as the "Only Begotten Son of God," the Messiah promised to the Jews, The Lamb of God, and the world's Redeemer. This volume, "The Interwoven Gospels," will be a great addition to any library. Volumes 3, 5, & 6 should be ready shortly.

OXFORD BIBLE ATLAS, edited by Herbert G. May (*Oxford University Press: New York, New York*), 1984, hardback, 144 pages, \$16.95.

One cannot study the Bible without noticing the many references to mountains, rivers, cities, and various lands. The Scriptures are filled with extensive historical materials and innumerable allusions to the geographical background of that history. It is not surprising, therefore, that most Bible students reach for an Atlas during their studies.

A good atlas must be a historical atlas. Some atlases simply show maps, giving a nice convenient scale and showing the physical geography of the area. A historical atlas, however, uses successive maps of the same area, showing the historical changes which came about through the rise and fall of various empires, the changes in the geographical names, the appearance of new cities and villages and the disappearance of others.

This new edition has been thoroughly revised so as to keep it up to date with regard both to biblical scholarship and to archaeology and topography. The maps of Jerusalem and Palestinian sites excavated to date have been completely revised.

The maps are excellent. They are colorful and the illustrations are well chosen. The many photographs show the life and history of the Bible lands.

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EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

SOUL WINNERS LIKE PAUL

It has been encouraging to see the renewed emphasis on saving souls in many congregations. But many times "personal work" turns into groups meeting at the building to organize, plan, and talk about soul winning, but very little gets done. If we really want to be fishers of men, we must learn to imitate the greatest soulwinner of all, the apostle Paul.

Not everyone will have the abilities of Paul to preach and teach, but there were other characteristics that helped to insure Paul's success. Whatever role we have as a soulwinner; whether we are apt to teach, given to hospitality, good at encouraging interest in spiritual things, or cheerfully bestowing acts of kindness; we can model our lives after Paul and be more effective. Paul said, "*Be ye followers of me even as I am of Christ*" (1 Cor. 11:1). Will you imitate Paul in as many characteristics as you can so that you might be a fruitful soulwinner?

Paul preached the truth. Paul received the truth by a direct revelation from God (Gal. 1:11-12), but instructed others to "*give attendance to reading*" (1 Tim. 4:13). Jesus told the apostles that when they gave an answer for the defense of the faith, they would not have to be anxious about what they spoke because the Spirit would tell them what to say (Matt. 10:19-20). Our only relief from the anxiety that comes from talking scripture with others today is to also "*be filled with the Spirit*" (Eph. 5:18-19). This does not happen by a direct revelation from God, but by letting "*the word of Christ dwell in us richly*" (Col 3:16). Paul's message was revealed directly by the spirit, but we must read Paul's words

to understand (Eph. 3:3-5). Paul said, "*We believe, therefore we speak*" (2 Cor. 4:13). If we will fill our hearts with the word of God, our faith will cause us to speak boldly and with less anxiety.

Paul preached the whole truth. After his three year stay in Ephesus he could say with all good conscience, "*I am free from the blood of all men, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God*" (Acts 20:26-27). Soulwinning efforts are not through when a person is dipped in water. We are not free from our neighbors blood (Eze. 3:18) until we have done our best to see that he has excess to the whole purpose of God in his life. Part of soul winning is keeping the saved saved. We must also teach a well-rounded gospel. Much of the perversion of denominational doctrine is not so much that they tell an absolute lie, but that they don't tell the whole truth. They emphasize the mercy of Jesus with stories like the woman taken in adultery (John 8), but neglect the cleansing of the temple and the rebuke of the Pharisees. They emphasize belief but not obedience. But we have been guilty as well. We have sometimes emphasized the water without the cross, confession without commitment, and attendance without repentance. We have taught the importance of giving on the "first" day without teaching the need to "first" give ourselves. Our denominational friends are proud of "teaching the Man and not the plan". But many times we teach "the plan without the Man". I have assumed many times that people knew the story of Jesus when they didn't. Even those who have been taught the life of Jesus from a denomi-

national perspective have a distorted view of who Jesus is. Arguing about baptism before they understand who Jesus is can be a huge mistake.

Paul hated false teaching. "*From thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way*" (Ps. 119:104). "*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*" (Prov. 8:13). Paul loved his kinsmen in the flesh and confessed that they had a zeal for God; but they were lost due to the fact they followed their own system of righteousness (Rom. 10:1-3). Paul hated false teaching because it led people to hell. When we really realize that our religiously zealous friends are lost due to the false doctrine they have believed, we will hate false teaching also and be willing to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2). We must hate false doctrine more than we love friendships. We must be willing to risk friendships in this world in order to save the souls of some. Are we true friends when we do not warn our neighbor or relative (Eze. 3:18)?

Paul was an example. "*The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things*" (Phil. 4:19). We will only be a successful soulwinner if we can say with Paul, "*Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ*" (1 Cor 11:1). Jesus said, "*A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, when fully trained, will be like his teacher*". This is one reason why soulwinning is necessary for our own salvation. When we are constantly concerned about the souls of others, we must keep a constant watch of our own lives. Paul said, "*But I buffet my body and make it my slave, less possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified*" (1 Cor. 9:27).

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Short and to the Point



365 Thanksgivings Every Year

Surely God is pleased when a nation sets aside a day for thanksgiving to Him for blessings. Certainly no country in the world's history has had more cause for gratitude than we in the U.S.A.

One of the first steps toward complete national ruin is a total rejection of God by failure to acknowledge the Creator by thanksgiving (Romans 1:18-22). An important part of the Christian's life is giving thanks to God (Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:17, 18). Every prayer should be prefaced by a word of thanks for that which we have already received (Phil. 4:6, 7).

Yet, I wonder if God is pleased when some individuals observe Thanksgiving Day? Some can rightly be classified with those of whom Jesus said, *"This people draws near to me with their mouth, and honors 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"* (Matt. 15:8, 9).

Do you **really** appreciate God's bounties? Do not deceive yourselves -- God is not fooled by one day of thanksgiving followed by 364 of indifference and disobedience to His will.

Where will you be found next Lord's day? At home, busy with pleasure and comfort? How many who call themselves Christians pay pious homage on special holidays, yet forsake the Lord's work and His people the rest of the year? Have you considered giving the same quality of devotion and service to your spouse, family, or job? What do you think they would think of your attitude if you did? Poor ostriches -- thinking that God is as blind as they!

God should be honored as Creator and Giver by all His creatures (Psa. 148). Thanksgiving comes from a grateful heart. A grateful heart cannot help but express itself in service. Is

your service "in spirit and in truth"? Or, is it "in vain"?

YOUR LIFE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

--W.B. Tooley
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Getting Along With Others

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (James 1:19-20).

The ability to control one's temper is essential for a Christian. Especially in our relationships with other Christians, it is important not to grow angry and say things that might harm someone spiritually.

Here are some suggestions on how to control your temper.

1. **Think Before Exploding.** Count to 10. Too many people talk before their brain has decided what to say. Remember that you can never take back what you say - no matter how sorry you may be.

2. **Do Not Raise Your Voice.** This makes you seem angry even if you are not. *"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger"* (Proverbs 15:1).

3. **Do Not Exaggerate The Importance Of A Situation.** Things seem bigger when you are angry than they really are.

4. **Leave An Angry Person Alone.** Come back when they cool down.

5. **Do Not Seek Revenge For Words Spoken In Anger.** *"See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all"* (1 Thess. 5:15).

As the song says,
Angry words! O let them never
From the tongue unbridled slip;
May the heart's best impulse ever
Check them ere they soil the lip.

These principles apply to every relationship of life - church, family, work, school. Nothing is ever accomplished by losing your temper.

"Be angry and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26).

--Roger Hillis
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Our Care For The Church

The idea of caring for the church means our caring for one another as well as ourselves. Involved in this of course is our care for the church as a collectivity, that is, care for the work, the condition, and the image of the church. But in back of all this is our care for one another. It is only in our caring for each other in working and worshipping together that the work, condition, and image of the collectivity are manifested.

In a discussion of spiritual gifts in I Corinthians 12, Paul used the "one body/many members" analogy. To emphasize the correct use of the gifts, Paul considered it important to discuss the Christians' relationship with one another. In the course of the discussion Paul stated that *"there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another"* (12:25). The interrelatedness of Christians is to be such that the suffering of one results in the suffering of all and the honoring of one in the rejoicing of all (12:26).

It is doubtful in our independently-oriented world that many churches come close to the care Christians are to have for one another. We shy away from sharing and thus from caring. This is obvious from the dividing and dying churches all around us. We might preach the gospel and be "sound" on the issues, but if we do not care for each other the Cause will suffer and the church will die. When will we learn to care as Christ cared? When will we stop "grumbling and disputing" and get on with our worshipping and working? Christ cared enough to give His life for us. Do we care enough to give our lives to Him and to one another?

--David Holder
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“Exposing Our Children To Evil”

by Lindy McDaniel

One young Christian woman recently wrote a letter published in “Today” about the bad consequences of homeschooling. She charged homeschooling parents with being “overprotective”, and she believes that children who are homeschooled will not be able to cope with the real world. While admitting that the public schools do teach humanism and contain other bad influences, she argued that it is good for children to be exposed to evil at a young age. I must take strong exception to those statements. My wife, Alice, and I do homeschool our youngest two children, and we have heard these arguments against homeschooling many times. What we think about this is not very important, but it is important to hear what God has to say.

First, God’s word places the responsibility for the moral training and education of children squarely on the shoulders of parents, especially the father (see Deut. 6:4-6; Pro. 22:6; Gen. 18:19; Col. 4:6; etc.). Some may be surprised to learn that no such instruction was ever given to the church or to the state. If public education is essential and parental education is bad (although this is the oldest teaching institution in the world), why did God somehow fail to mention that?

Secondly, God does not agree that children ought to be exposed to evil as some kind of educational tool. In fact, the Bible teaches just the very opposite. Here are some passages about children that we need to consider carefully:

“Moreover your little ones and your children, who you say will be victims who today have no knowledge of good and evil, they shall go in there” (Deut. 1:39).

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matt. 18:6).

“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (I Cor. 13:11).

“. . .that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men,” (Eph. 4:14).

From these passages it is clear that children do not have the capacity to make clear distinctions between right and wrong, that they are easily influenced and caused to stumble, and that this is simply a part of being a child. Therefore, children must be protected and trained by godly parents.

In our public schools, our children are being exposed to evolution and other types of humanistic teaching by trained professionals at a young age. Just ask your typical 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders about dinosaurs. They will be glad to answer. They will tell you that dinosaurs lived millions of years ago and became extinct long before man came along. What’s so bad about that, you might ask. It’s a lie! It calls God a liar! The source of such teaching is godless evolution. Yet, it is believed by children. This is just a small example of what young children are constantly exposed to in the average public school.

To say, as the young woman wrote, that young children are better able to cope with peer pressure than are teenagers demonstrates very naive thinking. Daniel was a young teenager in Babylon, but he coped quite well. Joseph is another example of tremendous teenage strength in a strange land. But both of these young men were well trained at home before they had to face such tests. The Catholic church says, “Give us a child until age 10 and he will always be a Catholic.” That is not an empty boast.

If this “expose your children to evil” argument is true, then the more the exposure the better. But this ignores the nature of children. God will surely hold parents responsible for such deliberate exposure to evil. Contrary to much of modern educational philosophy, exposing children to evil is not education. Here is what God says about such:

“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil Company corrupts good habits.’” (I Cor. 15:33).

“Blessed is the man who walks not

in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scoreful” (Psa. 1:1).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.” (Eph. 5:11-12).

Do we apply that same reasoning to exposing our children to the moral garbage on T.V., movies, rock music, pornography, etc.? Have we accepted the modern philosophy of the humanists that all censorship is bad? How misguided those people taught by Paul must have been when they burned their books of magic, etc. (see Acts 19:19). What does adjustment to the real world mean? Does it mean that our children become desensitized to evil? Does it mean that they ought not be “shocked” by the world or that they lose their ability to “blush”? Is this what it means to cope? Brethren, we ought to be shocked by many things that are going on today. But I deny that this means such people are maladjusted or that they will be more easily influenced by Satan. Just the opposite is true. We do not have to be saturated with evil in order to recognize it and combat it. I find it difficult to understand why most Christian parents are very particular about what their children are taught in the Bible classes, but yet they often take little interest in what their children are taught in the Public Schools.

Some argue, “Shouldn’t we send our little Suzie or Johnny to school in order to be a good influence on other children?” Folks, it just doesn’t work that way. Christians are to be the salt of the earth, but we first must be filled with salt. Our little children are not ready to evangelize the world. They first must be trained, and then they can be sent out. Do we send out soldiers without first preparing them for battle. Believe me, the public school has become a moral and spiritual battleground.

Christian parents, I challenge you to find out what your children are being taught and exposed to in the public school. That is your

responsibility. Do not trust the precious souls of your children to atheistic and agnostic educators. Do not rely on what your children tell you, for they are very naive. Some adults have a difficult time understanding the subtleties of "values clarification" techniques, arguments for evolution, and other humanistic doctrines. My wife and I accepted this challenge over two years ago. That is why we are homeschooling today. I do not contend that every Christian parent ought to homeschool their children, but I do believe that every parent ought to know what their children are being

taught, and that it is the God given responsibility of parents to teach, train, and protect their children.

The education and training of our children in the ways of God is a subject that needs a lot more attention. In fact, the future of the church depends upon godly parents accepting their full responsibility in this matter. Fathers need to be restored to the spiritual headship of the family. I have had to face my own failures along this line. I would be happy to correspond with the young lady who wrote again homeschooling or with anyone else on this particular subject. I realize that this

article has merely touched the surface of some very real and significant problems. Brethren, we need to walk up to the dangers that threaten our families. My wife and I cannot express the joy that we have experienced in homeschooling our children. In no sense are they socially deprived, except in exposure to that which can only corrupt. Rather than raising social misfits, we are, in the fear of the Lord, preparing the leaders of tomorrow.

5025 Osage
Kansas City, MO 64133

Ethics And The Bottom Line

by Ralph Eldridge

"To be successful in business, one has to be dishonest." A truism?; not according to Robert V. Krikorian, Chairman and CEO of the Rexnord Corporation. In an article appearing in the Gary Post Tribune Plus, February 13, 1985, Mr. Krikorian said, "I believe that doing business in an honest, ethical manner is a necessary ingredient to success as a business. . . ."

Mr. Krikorian cited a recent survey of fifteen companies which have written, codified statements of ethical conduct. These companies had averaged 11% earnings growth over 30 years--3 times the average growth in the Gross National Product!

I believe that many people hold to the myth that only evil men succeed in business. It is exactly that--a myth. Was not the father of all faithful men, Abraham, a man of great wealth (Gen. 13:2)? We need to emphasize that to be happy and successful in **all** aspects of life, one must be faithful to God's

ethical standards--honesty, diligence, and hard work. Solomon said, "Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich." (Prov. 10:4).

Mr. Krikorian goes on to say in his article, "Many people. . . believe ethical conduct makes it tougher to do business. Yet what a company can ultimately lose by believing in this myth is a continuing erosion of trust. . . and that adds up to bottom line effect."

Sometimes evil men do prosper. But, the Bible teaches us that this will only be for a short time. "As a partridge that hatches eggs which it has not laid, so is he who makes a fortune, but unjustly; In the midst of his days it will forsake him, and in the end he will be a fool." (Jer. 17:11).

By contrast, it is the righteous business man that will endure--for himself, and his posterity. The 37th Psalm is a contrast of righteous and evil men. Here is some of what David

says about evil doers.

1. They will wither like grass (v. 2).
2. They will be cut off (v. 9).
3. They will be no more (v. 10).
4. Their arms will be broken (v. 17).
5. They will perish (v. 20).

But look at what David says about the righteous. "*But the humble will inherit the land, and will delight themselves in abundant prosperity*", and again, "*Mark the blameless man and behold the upright; for the man of peace will have a posterity*" (Psa. 37:11, 37).

Finally, Mr. Krikorian suggests that business, ". . . follow a written code of conduct that fits as tightly at the top of the organization as at the bottom. Be sure its enforceable--and enforced." I am happy to see some business leaders recognizing the importance of ethical conduct in our market place. Let those christian men and women in business have faith that the ethical, Godly, honest way is the best way. Let us as christians encourage and insist on this kind of conduct from all that we do business with. "*With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord. . . .*" (Eph. 6:7, 8).

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The Lunacy Of It All

by Dennis Crawford

218 Pine St.
Bobbinville, GA
January 18, 1985

Editor Edwin Jenkins
Tooth and Toenail for the Truth
Rayford, GA

Dear Brother Jenkins;

Keep up the good work you are doing with "Tooth and Toenail for the Truth." We love you and don't know what the church would do without you.

It has come to my attention that you are the clearing house for faithful Gospel preachers. As our faithful Brother Hayden accepted the work at Elmyra, GA after spending a wonderful eleven months with us at Bobbinville, we are looking for someone to come and strive with us against false doctrine. The men here are fearful with so many uncertain sounds in the air and so many not walking in the old paths, that we'll get a liberal preacher. We had a very successful year last year having withdrawn fellowship from all other congregations in the area over the denominational practice of air conditioners in the building. We don't want anybody coming in preaching a watered down Gospel.

Please help us. You are the only one we trust.

Sincerely for Truth,
Robert Brumley

January 25, 1985

Mr. Robert Brumley
Dear Brother Brumley,

Greetings to you from Tooth and Toenail! It was good to receive your letter of Jan. 18, 1985. I will be pleased to help you locate a sound Gospel preacher. Let me assure you, you came to the right place. I appreciate the problem you're having finding a man who walks in the old paths. They're as scarce as back issues of "Tooth and Toenail." (By the way, several have been writing for the September, 1984 issue about "Asphalt Parking Lots." We have reprinted this issue and it is available now. Brother Don Melton has an especially incisive article in this issue about the direct correlation between adultery, Jereboam's calves, and asphalt parking lots. As you know,

all our problems of late started with the asphalt controversy. I have bundles of this issue ready.)

But back to your preacher problem. I think I have just the man for you at Bobbinville. If anything, I think he walks older paths than your former Brother Hayden. His name is Brother Donald Whitney of 309 Maple Street, Valley View, GA. He has been asked to leave there because they cannot tolerate the truth. Brother Whitney is one of the soundest preachers I have been blessed to know of late. He is so sound he fellowships only six other congregations of the church in North America. Truth is, as it were, his middle name.

Please contact me if you make arrangements for Brother Whitney to come and work with you.

Sincerely for Certain Sounds,
Edwin Jenkins
Editor

P.S. Please give me Brother Hayden's address. I must write some of the faithful brethren in the area and see where he stands on church parking lots.

February 20, 1985

Dear Brother Jenkins;

Thank you so much for your letter dated January 25, 1985. I hope your work is going well. I just don't know what we'd do without you. What with all this modernism and error that needs to be exposed. You are doing a wonderful job!

We did get in touch with Brother Whitney. I assured him we were for sound doctrine and the old paths and in a letter dated February 15, 1981, he accepted the work at Bobbinville. We are so relieved to have this sound Gospel Preacher coming our way. He is even more faithful than you thought. In letters dated January 11, 12, and 13, he disfellowshipped three other congregations over water fountains in the church building. (I have copies of these letters if you can use them.)

Incidentally, just to prove where we are, Brother Whitney will begin his work with us April 12 with a Gospel meeting centering around the parking lot issue. Please come over and visit

one night if you can.

Sincerely for the Old Paths,
Robert Brumley

P.S. Please send me a bundle of 9 issues of the Asphalt Parking Lot issue for the congregation.

March 29, 1985

Dear Brother Brumley,

Thank you for your good letter dated February 20, 1985. Sorry for the delay but I've been tied up with disfellowship proceedings with eight congregations in Missouri over fluorescent lights in the Church. How tiresome it is. Sometimes I feel like Elijah and ask "why I have been chosen to rout out liberalism, modernism, and asphaltism?" But then I do receive new strength. If it weren't for the letters of support I receive each month (see back pages of "Tooth and Toenail") I would discontinue my striving.

I am glad Brother Whitney has accepted the work with you in Bobbinville. (I spoke with him February 18, 1985 by phone.) Since your letter from him dated February 15, 1985, he has disfellowshipped another congregation. This makes Bobbinville and Rayford the only two congregations Brother Whitney will fellowship. One certainly can't find one iota of liberalism or denominationalism in him! But just imagine, just two faithful congregations in North America! It is exactly as I warned them! Liberalism, denominational, and creeping uncertain-soundism has taken us over. May many more faithful old paths men like me and Brother Whitney be raised up to fight this horrible thing!

Sincerely for Truth,
Edwin Jenkins
Editor

April 26, 1985

Dear Jenkins,

It saddens my heart to have to withdraw fellowship from the Bobbinville congregation, you and Rayford. I cannot believe you would recommend my locating in a hotbed of liberalism like Bobbinville! But then I didn't know how far you had strayed from

the old paths! What a charming grip this modernism has on you. To think just a few short years ago there were hundreds of faithful congregations in the world. Now there's just me! Even you have bowed at the altar of modernism, liberalism, asphaltism, and uncertain-soundism.

I will explain my actions briefly and close this letter and our relationship. Two weeks ago it came to my attention that Sister Hattie Rayburn received a free copy of the putrid, perverted, Good New Bible at the County Fair seven years ago. She did not throw it away but it found a prominent place in

her bookcase! This is versionism, pure and simple. In a letter dated April 16, I asked her point blank about her stand on versionism and the pivotal question of her interpretation of the Hebrew word 'almah' in Isaiah 7:14. Well, she had her nephew write back (she can't write) that she doesn't know what I'm talking about. Oh, don't the liberals know any other defense than "I've been misunderstood" or "I don't know what you're talking about"!

So the congregation at Rayford should receive a letter dated April 26, 1985 concerning my withdrawal of fellowship of that congregation for

fellowshipping the corrupt versionism I found at Bobbinville.

The Faithful One,
Donald Whitney

P.S. One final note. Just two days ago, in a letter dated April 24, 1985, I disfellowshipped my wife and family over the ladies short-sleeve blouse issue. I am sorry they would not stand for the truth. Oh, there is so much to do and so little time to do it!



1006 Robin Haven
Bentonville, AR 72712

What Do Members Of The Church of Christ Believe?

by Raymond E. Harris

Members of the Church of Christ believe there is ONE TRUE GOD. Their belief or faith in God is based (1) upon their knowledge of this word and the universe about us; and (2) upon the testimony of the Bible.

Astronomers and archaeologists alike continue to heap up evidence in favour of creation. Consider the precision and clock like working of the sun, the moon, the stars and the earth. Honesty demands that we acknowledge that a master architect had to have set the whole thing in place and in motion (Col. 1:16-18; Heb. 1:1-2).

If the "tilt" of the earth were just slightly different it would change the tides and seasons with catastrophic effects upon the planet. If the earth were just a few miles closer **OR** further from the sun, it would make life on earth impossible. If the earth were a little further from the sun it would be one gigantic ice cube. If the earth were a little closer to the sun, it would be one great burned out cinder. Yes, even a casual look at the universe and into the working of nature demands that we acknowledge that a higher power is responsible. In Rom. 1:20 Paul wrote: *"For the invisible things of Him (God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."*

Furthermore, the testimony and the internal evidences of the Bible declare that "God is!" Nearly 1,500 years B.C., Moses foretold the future coming of a great prophet of God (Deut. 18:15-19) some 7000 years B.C. Isaiah foretold the birth of Jesus, (Isa. 7:14). And shortly later Isaiah foretold the death of Jesus (Isa. 53). These are but three of hundreds of examples of bible prophecy being fulfilled. Mortal man does not even know what shall be on the morrow. Hence, the Bible itself is unmistakable testimony that the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the one true God. This is the God worshipped by the Church of Christ.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

The Church of Christ - is just that. (1) **It is a church.** It is made up of Christians committed to restoring and perpetuating the church found in the New Testament.

A careful reading of the New Testament reveals that the church established on the first Pentecost after the ascension of Jesus (see Acts 2) was committed to (a) evangelism (preaching the gospel to lost sinners), (b) edification (teaching Christians to be spiritually stronger day by day), and (c) benevolence (caring for poor saints).

That is the commitment of the churches of Christ today. Like the Church of Christ of the New

Testament we understand that our primary mission is saving souls. Therefore, the Church (as an organized group) does not busy itself with political, civil, social or recreational activities. We understand the foregoing should be the business of the individual, including all Christians. To divert the church into such would be to turn it away from its high calling that God commanded and turn it toward secular and worldly affairs that should be dealt with by the home, the school, the government, etc.

And, the Church of Christ is (2) **of**, (or belonging to) **Christ**. New Testament writers make it clear that God made Jesus the **HEAD** of the Church (Eph. 1:19-23). Jesus is truly the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. In Matt. 28:18, Jesus announced that, *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* And in Col. 3:17, Paul wrote: *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."*

The Church of Christ is not a denomination and has no tie with other religious groups. The Church of Christ is in no way aligned with Pentecostalism, the Holiness movement or the Christmatics. We have no organization beyond the local congregation. Hence, we have no state, national or international headquarters. We have no catechism, creed book or church manual. Our work and worship is based solely upon the commandments and examples of the New Testament.

We believe you would find a church totally committed to the saving of the soul, spiritually refreshing.

825 West Second Street
Bloomington, IN 47401

The Poet's Page

I AM THE DOOR

If you should answer a knock at your door
and Jesus was standing there
Would you welcome him with open arms
and offer him a chair?
What would you say if he asked you
to fill out a questionnaire?

Have you repented and been baptized
in the
name of Jesus for remission of sin?
Do you go to church on Sunday and take
of the loaf and cup in memory of
Him?

Have you visited the sick today
or called them on the phone?
Have you visited the patients
living in the nursing home?

When you depart from this life,
would you like to live with Jesus
ever more:
He said, "I am the good shepherd,
I am the door."

When you are all alone and your
mind is not trouble free.
Remember Christ your Savior
who was hanged on a tree.

THE PERFECT RULE

There's a rule that will guide every purpose
A rule that will fit every clime
A rule that will guide every person----
A rule that is truly sublime.

A rule for the daytime and night time
In the north, south, the west and the east.
A rule for the rich man and poor man
For those who are greatest or least.

In sorrow or joy 'twill guide us
Through changes seen and unseen
In the valley, upon the high mountain
'Tis the staff upon which we may lean.

'Tis the word of the Lord pure and perfect
A lamp to the stumbling feet,
A guide to the path of the righteous
To lead us to joys replete.

--Hazel A. Dillehay
Newcomerstown, OH

When Pilate asked if he was King of
the Jews,
they didn't believe what he said.
They plaited a crown of thorns
and placed on his head.
They spit on him and with a reed
smote him on his head.

Some may not believe
there is life after death.
But, they really do not know.
Everyone has always heard
there's just two places we can go.

He lets us live the life we choose.
We should count the cost.
Jesus says it is not the Fathers will
that they should be lost.

Wouldn't it be sad for those who don't
believe
to wake up on that day
See their loved ones enter in
and they were turned away.

Let not your conscience let you linger.
Now is the time Jesus said,
"I AM THE DOOR." John 10:9

--Russell Thacker
Spencer, IN

MAN HAS A LIMIT

Did you ever look around at the
Flowers and the trees?
Did you ever wonder how they came
to be?
Man has made many great things upon this
Earth;
But he could not create a Universe.
God created the Universe you see,
He also created you and me.
Without God all the beautiful things
we take for granted would not be.
Because man cannot create such things
as these, the moon, the stars, a flower
or even a tree.

--Elizabeth Reinertsen
Bowling Green, KY

AUTUMN

The earth has felt the Master's touch,
Trees glow with many hues;
Some lazy "cotton-candy" clouds
Dot skies of varied blues.

The fields are dressed in goldenrod
And pretty Queen Anne's lace;
While sumac and the dogwood trees
Are setting nature's pace.

The squirrels are scurrying to and fro,
Preparing winter's nest;
Photographers are snapping scenes
Of nature at her best.

The lovers' famous "Harvest Moon",
Adorns the sky at night;
And very soon the birds will take
Their yearly Southern flight.

On distant hills a gentle breeze
Causes leaves to fall;
A songbird breaks the silence
With his well-known mating call.

The hay is safely in the barns,
Frost flirts with crisp night air;
The larders now are brimming full
With summer's bill of fare.

As I survey, with awe-struck mind,
God's beautiful creation,
I bow in humble gratitude
And praise and adoration.

--Fay Mobley
Bradhead, KY

DANDY DANIEL

His parents named him Daniel,
So we never call him Dan.
We do not know what he will be
When he grows to be a man.
A carpenter or musician,
Or a preacher like his dad;
I know he'll be a good one;
This precious little lad.

It really makes no difference
What he'll decide to be.
If he always walks uprightly,
That's good enough for me.

--Jean Blackford
Owensboro, KY



HAPPENINGS

News and Notes From Around The World

CHECK BEFORE YOU GIVE

An investigative reporter on television showed how gullible the American public is and how easy it is to raise money for your favorite "charity". He stood on a street corner with a bucket and a sign that simply said "Give". He was able to collect several hundred dollars within just a few hours. He said not one person asked what the money was being donated to.

Take the above gullibility, work on the tenderness of the brethren's heart, add a few sad stories about famine, disease or storms and PRESTO! -- you've got a chance of getting rich. The above thing is happening with many individuals and churches.

Many in Third World countries are able to obtain copies of American religious periodicals. They are able to find names and addresses of sympathetic Christian people. They write requesting support for themselves, their relatives, or some "deserving" brethren. Thousands of dollars are often sent to one individual because he has written to many churches. Each church that sends a benevolent aid operates with the assumption that they were the only church solicited.

Not all who ask for money are what they claim to be. A letter from a Filipino preacher was sent to the elders of a Florida church just this past month. He told of a native preacher that had received and misappropriated over \$4,000.

Too much emphasis could not be given to the need of investigating before sending funds to nationals in another country. We want to help those who have valid needs, but not encourage charlatans. Surely it is not out of place for donors to confirm that a request is legitimate by checking with at least one other source.

If you know little (or sometimes

nothing) about that preacher from South Africa, Nigeria, Philippines, Australia, or anywhere the request comes from, check him out before you give!

IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Karl Reidelbach is working with the Parrish Street Church of Christ, 638 Parrish Street, in Urichsville, OH 44683. The church is offering free Bible correspondence courses and a teaching bulletin in the community. The work is progressing, but the congregation is unable to provide full financial support for Karl. He is in great need of outside assistance. If you would be able to provide any help, contact Karl at the above address. He would be glad to answer any questions and provide references.

PREACHER BEING SOUGHT

The Ashley Heights Church of Christ is in need of a full-time evangelist. Bill Benge has worked with this congregation for five years. Those that might be interested will have to raise most of their financial support from outside sources. For further information, write the church at 2605 S. Oakridge Circle, Charleston Heights, SC 29405.

THE POPE MAY BE WEARING OUT HIS WELCOME

Pope John Paul II, known as the "traveling pontiff" for his many foreign excursions, may be wearing out his welcome as a guest worldwide. Although countries consider it a great honor to host the Catholic Pope, many feel such a visit would be too much of a strain on their pocketbooks.

Since he became pontiff in 1978, John Paul has made 27 pilgrimages, and visited almost 50 countries. His visits have left many dioceses in debt, struggling to repay loans taken out to prepare for a papal visit.

"Unfortunately, dioceses feel they have to spend money on the Pope's visit," explained a Vatican official. "This often includes quite necessary expenses that have become a tradition, like presents or elaborate decorations."

The tiny duchy of Liechtenstein put out \$1.5 million, more than a tenth of its annual revenue, to pay for the Pope's recent 10-hour visit.

For a two-day papal visit to Genoa, local parishes spent \$1.1 million. The money was used to decorate the city, and to remove parking meters, which were considered an eyesore. Funds were also used to renovate an ancient church building, which was used just for the occasion.

Dioceses also try to outdo one another with expensive gifts. The city of Catanzaro gave the Catholic leader a \$14,000 gold rosary. The small town of Crotona presented an ancient icon worth \$20,000.

A group of priests from the Alpine region of northern Italy recently voiced their concern, saying, "We can't afford to invite the Pope."

"It would be absurd to spend \$1.5 million on preparations for such a visit when there are still people living in huts here and many youths are unemployed," concluded Antonio Bellina, a parish priest in Basagliapenta.

SOVIET OFFICIAL SAYS USSR HAS NO AIDS

There are no recorded cases of AIDS in the Soviet Union, according to Pyotr N. Burgasov, a Soviet Deputy Health Minister. In the trade union daily newspaper *Trud*, Burgasov attributed the prevalence of AIDS in the West to dissolute and unnatural sex lives.

"We have not registered any cases of this illness," he said. "The whole point is that the problem is in many

aspects social, because it is connected with sexual dissolution." Burgasov added that such dissolution, "is, alas, tolerated by certain circles in the West, but for our society it is unnatural."

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is transmitted by intimate sexual contact, contaminated needles, and blood products. High risk groups include homosexual men, intravenous drug users, and hemophiliacs.

MORMONISM DIGS IN ITS HEELS AS WORLDWIDE OPPOSITION GROWS

Thousands of Orthodox Jews in Israel turned out to protest a proposed Mormon study center, to be erected near Jerusalem.

A council of ministers in Vail, Colorado, voted to ban the Mormon faith from an ecumenical chapel, because of Mormon beliefs.

In the island nation of Micronesia, a state legislature passed a resolution demanding that Mormon missionary efforts be halted.

Around the world, critics of the Mormon church are voicing their opposition. The number of anti-Mormon organizations has grown in recent years. And critics, many of them former Mormons, are raising questions about the authenticity of Mormon founder Joseph Smith's "revelation."

Recently discovered letters and diaries of early Mormons lend credence to old accusations that Smith was obsessed with buried treasure and folk magic. The documents cite his interest in evil spirits, and relate his use of a "seer stone" to search for hidden treasure. Smith is said to have boasted of knowing secrets to foil spirits that guarded buried treasure.

Stan Larson, a scholar of ancient languages, was recently ousted from the church's translation division. Larson says his resignation was forced because of his research concluding that Joseph Smith copied portions of the King James version of the Bible. These criticisms strike directly at the base of Mormon theology, which is based in Smith's teachings, and on the Book of Mormon, his "divine revelation."

The Mormon hierarchy, gathered recently in Salt Lake City for the church's 155th Semiannual General Conference, says that the increasing opposition poses no serious threat to the 5.8 million-member Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The "handful" who leave the church is easily offset by roughly 200,000 new converts per year, they maintain.

BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH ARRESTED WHILE FLEEING THE COUNTRY

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, Indian guru and spiritual leader of a sect that claims 500,000 adherents, was arrested Oct. 28 as he was trying to flee the country, authorities said. Rajneesh was charged with covering up sham marriages to keep illegal aliens in the country.

The guru and six followers were arrested in Charlotte, N.C., after they arrived from Rajneeshpuram, a commune in Oregon. About 3,000 followers of the Bhagwan live on the 64,000-acre commune, formerly Antelope, Ore.

A 35-count federal indictment unsealed in Portland, Ore., charges Rajneesh and seven followers with conspiring to defraud the United States and with ordering others to lie to the Immigration and Naturalization Service to cover up 15 sham marriages between U.S. citizens and foreign disciples.

Among those indicted was Anand Sheela, the guru's former personal secretary, who fled the commune after a falling-out with the Bhagwan. Sheela and two others were arrested near Freiburg in southern West Germany Oct. 28, in a separate Oregon indictment. They are charged with first-degree assault, and conspiracy in alleged attempts on the life of Swami Devaraj, Rajneesh's personal physician.

Other Rajneeshes have been arrested around the world. One woman surrendered to Scotland Yard in London. Four other women who face federal immigration charges turned themselves in in Portland.

Rajneesh has also been charged with lying to the INS to conceal his intent to remain in the U.S. permanently. Rajneesh entered the U.S. in 1981 on a three-month medical visa.

If convicted of all federal charges, Rajneesh faces a maximum sentence of 175 years in prison and a \$350,000 fine. Each of the other defendants face a maximum sentence of 165 years in prison, and a \$330,000 fine.

The Bhagwan and his party were

allegedly trying to flee to Bermuda when they were arrested.

Investigators in Oregon have been probing alleged crimes at Rajneeshpuram, including racketeering, drug dealing, wiretapping, voter fraud, attempted murder, immigration fraud, election fraud, and more.

COLORADO MINISTER BATTLING ZONING ORDINANCE THAT WOULD PROHIBIT HOME BIBLE STUDIES

A Colorado Springs minister is battling a city zoning ordinance that prohibits religious activities in private homes. Richard Blanche has been cited several times for holding religious meetings in his home, and is presently appealing the rulings to the Fourth District Court.

"If we lose this case, first I go to jail, but let's look at it on the scope of this country," Blanche said in an interview with the *Pike's Peak Messenger*. "It would set a precedent that zoning codes across this country could shut down Bible studies of every sort. That is the magnitude of it."

Blanche's church, Faith Bible Fellowship International, Inc., has been cited several times for "maintaining an establishment for the conduct of religious activities" in Blanche's home. Blanche says, "What they're saying is, in essence, you cannot have a Bible study in your home or a church bar-b-que or any type of fellowship. We had a dessert fellowship that we were cited for. We were also cited for a Tuesday night Bible study and a Saturday afternoon fellowship. I was even cited for having a Little League baseball team over. A team that I was coaching came over to visit and my neighbors were out there taking license plate numbers!"

Blanche has been sentenced to 90 days in jail and fined \$500 for each of the violations; execution of the penalties has been stayed while the charges are appealed. The city obtained a temporary restraining order Oct. 29, forbidding religious services in Blanche's home; Blanche could face contempt of court citations if he continues to hold home meetings. The restraining order is in effect until the Fourth District Court hears the case March 6.

A hearing will be held Nov. 22 on a charge by the city that Blanche is guilty

of contempt of court for defying a temporary injunction. A Nov. 13 hearing on criminal charges for the same offense will deal with Blanche's motion for a new trial.

The church has not been cited for noise or parking problems, but only for violating the zoning ordinance concerning "religious activities." Blanche said, "The judge even said, 'If I could get you on a noise or parking violation, this would be very easy; but since I can't. . .you're a nuisance.' Well, that's very difficult. . .to be charged as a criminal for performing as a pastor."

The independent full-gospel congregation includes about 30 adults. Blanche has a large home, and can fit 75 people in his recreation room on chairs. Church members park behind the home during meetings.

PAT BOONE'S WIFE PRAYED FOR ROCK HUDSON

The wife of singer Pat Boone visited Rock Hudson at his home shortly after he died, prayed over his body, grasped his legs, and began speaking in tongues, according to an article in *People* magazine.

Shirley Boone and members of a Pentecostal church in Van Nuys, California, arrived at Hudson's Beverly Hills home about 20 minutes after his death, Oct. 2, according to the magazine. They reportedly chanted, "Get the disease out of the body."

The night before Hudson's death, a Pentecostal prayer group which included the Boone's visited him and prayed for his recovery. "After a while, when we were all standing around his bed, he raised up off his pillow and smiled at us," said Shirley Boone. "It was a real turnaround. Because of this sign of rejuvenation, one of the nurses. . .laid out some nice clothes for Rock to wear the next day."

WEST HOLLYWOOD REMOVES CHRISTMAS FROM LIST OF OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS

It was not the "Grinch," but the city council that stole Christmas in West Hollywood, California.

The removal of Christmas started when the city council voted to make Yom Kippur a city holiday, in March, 1985. Local attorney Ira Stein objected, claiming that the city's promotion of a religious holiday

violated the Supreme Court's principle of church-state separation. Stein's objection was backed by the American Jewish Committee.

As a result, the council decided to repeal the law — and to remove Christmas from the list of official holidays as well. City Manager Paul Brotzman explained, "The council is saying that all religious holidays are on the same footing. We understand that the U.S. Supreme court considers Christmas a secular holiday, but the council takes issue with that and views Christmas as a religious holiday."

City employees can still take a holiday on Christmas. The council has adopted a system which provides four-and-a-half days each year for holidays; days are chosen by the employees. Mayor John Heilman explained, "It's a floating holiday system. City employees can take Yom Kippur, Christmas Day, Hare Krishna Day, whatever day they want."

CHURCH-STATE CASES NOT AS PROMINENT THIS TERM, BUT COURT SESSION STILL HOLDS MAJOR BATTLES

Church-state cases will not be as prominent in this year's Supreme Court term as they were last year, but several cases on the docket could have a major effect on church-state relations in the U.S., according to legal experts.

"The issues they took last year were all reinterpretation cases," explained John Whitehead, president of the Rutherford Institute, a legal organization specializing in religious liberties. "This year's cases present new issues. They picked these because they were important issues."

Four cases scheduled for review this session present religious liberty questions for the Court. In *Bender v. Williamsport*, the Court will be asked to decide if a student-led Bible and prayer club should have the same access to school facilities as similar non-religious student clubs. *Witters v. Washington Commission for the Blind* invokes a man who was denied vocational education benefits because of his decision to study for vocational Christian work. *Goldman v. Secretary of Defense* will weigh the importance of military dress code against an Orthodox Jew's right to wear a yarmulke, or skullcap, as part of his religious practice. And in *Roy v. Heckler*, the Court will consider

providing welfare benefits to an American Indian child whose parents will not use a social security number because of their religious beliefs.

Whitehead is optimistic about the church-state cases facing the Court this session, but says the Court is hard to predict. "You never know what they're going to do," he said. "In my ten years specializing in [religious liberties], I've found that the Supreme Court does whatever it wants to. It can come up with an off-the-wall reason to deny religious benefits to anybody."

Sam Ericsson, executive director of the Christian Legal Society, agreed that this is an important term. "The Court last term reaffirmed 40 years of precedent; they made no new law. This term the Court can clear up at least 20 years of confusion surrounding the issue of voluntary school prayer.

Ericsson said that the volume of church-state related cases had increased as a direct result of the Court's decision that it had jurisdiction over state governments, as well as federal matters. "During the first 150 years of the Court, until 1940, there were four religion clause cases brought before the Supreme Court," he explained. "So far in the 1980's we've had 28, and 11 of those have been in the last year. Something is happening, and I think it's the fallout from the decision in the 1940's that the Bill of Rights applied to all levels of government. In the last 40 years we've seen states having to readjust relationships between church and state that had been developing for 300 years. We're going through a transition here to conform to one national federal standard."

Michael Farris, an attorney who works with Beverly LaHaye's Concerned Women of America, says that while the volume of Church-State cases is down this term, the significance of the cases involved may be higher. "The *Bender* case is much more important in practical terms than [last year's] silent prayer case. And I think the *Witters* case is probably the most overall important church-state case in 20 years. The issues are: can a religious individual be singled out for disparate treatment? Those two cases combined with the Solicitor General's request to overturn *Roe v. Wade* [the decision which, in effect, legalized abortion], may make this a more interesting term than the last one."

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— Proverbs 27:1

Volume II

December 1985

Number 12

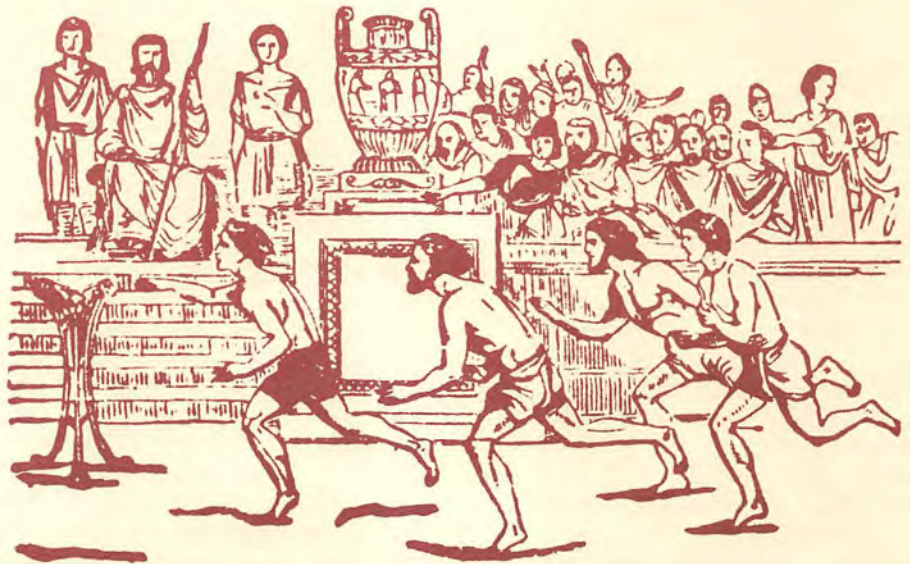
CHRISTIAN LIVING — A RACE

by Lindy McDaniel

In various places in the Bible, the life of a Christian is compared to the running of a race. Many things that characterize a race also characterize the Christian life. Of course, the life of the Christian is spiritual, but sometimes we can better understand the spiritual when it is compared to something physical, as a race or a battle. We know that the running of a race requires: (1) rules to govern the race, (2) qualified runners, (3) an approved race track, and (4) a judge who determines the winner. These conditions are also true in running the Christian race.

CHRIST IS JUDGE

In the first place, Christ is the judge and lays down the rules. "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18-19). "For as the Father raiseth the dead and giveth them life, even so the Son also giveth life to whom he will. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:21-22). Also consider Eph. 1:22-23 and Acts 17:30-31. Christ will judge us by the rule book he has authorized, or his word. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the



word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). The word of Christ is his gospel which he authorized the apostles to preach. "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ." (Rom. 2:16). See also Mark 16:15-16 and Rom. 1:16. Therefore we have learned that **Christ** will be the **Judge** and he will judge us in the light of his **word** or **gospel** - the New Testament - **GOD'S AUTHORIZED RULE BOOK**.

RUNNERS MUST BE QUALIFIED

Next, we must have qualified runners. A person must become a Christian before he can enter into the

Christian race. The gospel or rule book of Christ sets down the requirements necessary to be qualified for entering the race. First, we must **believe** in God and Christ. "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him" (Heb. 11:6). Also we must **repent** of our sins, turning to God. "I tell you nay: but, except you repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13:3). God's rule book requires us to **confess**

Christ. "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33). And finally, the last step that qualifies us for the race and makes us Christians is **baptism**. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16). See also Acts 2:38 and Rom. 6:3-6. No one in his sins can enter the race, for the same qualifications which make us Christians also free us from all sin. **So the great qualification for the running of the race is to be free from sin, which we obtain through obedience to the gospel of Christ, thereby having access to his cleansing blood.** You will notice that baptism also puts us into Christ (Rom. 6:3) which is the only proper place to run the race. It would do no good to enter the race and then run it on the wrong track (outside of Christ). There are many race tracks or churches today, but only one is authorized by God. Some are too wide, others are too narrow, but only that one authorized by God has the proper dimensions. The race is therefore to be run **in Christ**, being also called his **body** or **church**. (Eph. 1:22).

MUST RUN LAWFULLY

After we have met the qualifications and have already entered upon the proper race track, then comes the actual running of the race. First, it stands to reason that we **must run lawfully**. "And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5). Many religious groups call us "legalists" because we contend that a man must run lawfully. Sincerity is good, but sincerity alone will not win the race. We will not be crowned unless we run according to the rules set forth by the gospel of Christ. "But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers" (John 4:23).

MUST EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL

We must also exercise **self-control** in the race "And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things. Now they do it to

receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (1 Cor. 9:25). "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself be rejected" (1 Cor. 9:26).

MUST LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT

We must lay aside every weight. "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). Sin keeps us from running as we should, and many times we stumble and fall. Sin can certainly keep us from reaching the finish line, but it does not automatically disqualify us from the race. Neither does it mean that we have to go back and start all over, but thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord we can pick ourselves up from the spot where we fell and continue running the race, having received the forgiveness of our sins through Christ, (1 John 2:1-2). However, if we do not pick ourselves up and gain forgiveness through Christ, we can not hope to finish the race, thereby receiving the crown.

MUST KEEP EYE ON GOAL

Now while we run, let us **keep our eyes on the goal** and not be swerved to the right or left. "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things that are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14). Read also Luke 9:57-62.

TAKES SUPREME EFFORT

There is never a time when we can take a vacation or sit down on the job, for we will not receive the crown unless we **run all the way**. "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Also, let us not deceive ourselves into believing we can run with little or no effort. It will take a **supreme effort** on our part. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, to

present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1). "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). It not only takes a **supreme effort**, but our efforts must be **in the Lord**.

ALL CAN WIN

We know that only one wins in an athletic contest, but all can win in the race of life, for God judges according to ability and the invitation is extended to everyone. "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). "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20).

RACE COMPLETED

The Christian race will be completed when we die or when Christ comes back to judge the world. Christ will judge us according to how we have run the race. All who did not qualify themselves to run or who ran unlawfully, will be destroyed (Matt. 22:11-14; 7:21-23). But those who ran lawfully and through patience endured to the end will be given eternal life. "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

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EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

UNDERSTANDING FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

The wise man said, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver" (Proverbs 25:11). This is a picture of Oriental decoration. This is as brilliant a piece of decoration as can well be imagined--fruit carved in gold being set in dainty work of silver. This figurative language is chosen by the writer in order to give the highest possible praise to "the word fitly spoken."

This little proverb shows the immense value set upon a word. Words have weight to crush, force to drive, sharpness to pierce, brightness to illuminate, beauty to delight, consolation to cheer. We cannot value words by the length of them, nor weigh them by their bulk. Preachers need to grasp this in their preaching; it is not the quantity of words used that is important, but the quality of the words. Many words may be worthless, while one word is beyond all price--if only it be the right word.

Such decoration as is described in the text could not have been often witnessed even amid the splendor of Solomon's days. It is not often that the best words are spoken. We are surrounded daily by speech; it rains words. But most of the words we hear are neither gold nor silver.

GOD SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE

God spoke to the people in their own language and respected their own literature. He used words that they could relate to. He revealed His truth in such diverse literary styles as poetry, songs, prose, narration, and dialectical conversation. Many Bible readers in today's society complain that they cannot understand such symbolic or figurative language. Why not? We use much of the same kind of figurative language in our modern writings.

Whether we are dealing with the Old Testament prophets, the teachings of Jesus, or the symbolic language of John in Revelation, we must always remember that these men were preachers and teachers. They were careful about **what** they said and **how** they said it. Being guided by

the Holy Spirit, they said exactly what their audiences and/or readers needed. They had to be careful to say it in an attitude and with an emphasis which God intended and to make sure that their hearers or readers understand what they said correctly and clearly.

As John T. Willis said, "They subscribed to the principle that **teaching** does not take place unless **learning** takes place. Thus, they used the words and phrases, the ideas and facts, the approaches and techniques, with which their audiences were already familiar. The messages. . . were often despised and rejected, but they were not misunderstood. (They) were outstanding preachers and teachers because they used the most effective methods when they delivered their words publicly" (*My Servants The Prophets*, page 28).

FIGURES OF SPEECH

The purpose of this article is to call attention to methods used by some of the writers in the Bible. To properly interpret the language of the writers, we must have a basic knowledge of, and a familiarity with, the more common figures of speech.

The **simile** is one of the most common forms of figurative expression. It is a statement in which one thing is likened to another, dissimilar thing by the use of "like" or "as." Hosea said, "*The princes of Judah are like them that remove the landmarks*" (Hos. 5:10). That was just a figurative way of saying the princes were lawless men as was the case with men who moved the landmarks of the property of others.

The **metaphor** is the second most common form of expression. While the simile states that one thing or person is like another person or thing, the metaphor boldly declares that one thing **is** another. It is not as true to fact as the simile, but it is truer to feeling. To illustrate, the simile would say, "Herod is like a fox," whereas, the metaphor would say, "Herod is a fox." Metaphors are quite numerous in the Old Testament. The most familiar one would be from Psalms 23:1, and read, "*The Lord is my shepherd*" (that is, He tends His people as a shepherd tends his flock).

The **similitude** is a drawn out, or a prolonged, simile. It is a list of comparisons of one thing to another, in contrast to the simile just naming one thing. Isaiah used a similitude in a description of Christ when he wrote, "*And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*" (Isa. 32:2).

The **parable** is a repeated simile--a comparison by continued resembles. It is often defined as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." It is a placing side by side for the purpose of comparison--a resemblance of one thing with another. While the history, or story, may be true or imaginary, the events must be possible. Christ employed

This magazine is published *monthly* by Today Publishing Co.

Annual subscription price: \$15.00 U.S.A.
\$25.00 Foreign

Postmaster, Send change of address to:
P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237

the parable as a means of spreading His message more extensively and more effectively than any other teacher. When we think of the Lord's parables, we think of The Good Samaritan, The Rich Young Fool, The Barren Fig Tree, The Lost Coin, The Prodigal Son, The Mustard Seed, The Sower, The Great Supper, The Ten Virgins, and many, many more. Although Christ employed the parable more than any other, He did not invent the parable. One of the most famous Old Testament parables of the Old Testament is Nathan's story to David about the little ewe lamb. Nathan was able to present the truth in such a way as to keep David from seeing the point until his mind had given assent to the truth involved and then Nathan said, "*Thou art the man.*"

The **fable** is a story in which the actors are unreal. Unlike the parable, which describes that which is likely or probable, the fable is used of impossibilities, such as animals, plants, or inanimate objects. It is a fictitious narrative intended to illustrate the truth. There are at least two fables recorded in the Old Testament: (1) the case of Jothan with the trees of the forest, an olive tree, and a vine (Judg. 9:7-15), and (2) the case of Jehoshaphat's fable of the cedar and the thistle (2 Kings 14:9).

The **synecdoche** is the exchange of one idea for an associated idea. The part is put for the whole or a whole is put for a part. It involves putting a singular for a plural and a plural for a singular. Hosea wrote: "*They are all adulterers*" (4:11). That is, most of them, or, as a whole, the lot of them were adulterers. In Exodus 9:6 "all" is put for the greater part. The reading is: "*And all of the cattle of Egypt died*"--that is, all kinds of cattle died, not that all the individual cattle died.

The **hyperbole** is an exaggeration. It is the case when, in order to heighten the sense, more is said than is meant to be understood as a literal fact. It is a very common figure of speech throughout the Old and New Testaments, as well as a very common figure of speech today. Have you ever been hungry and said, "I think I could eat a cow"? Now, isn't that a big exaggeration? Or what about, "I'm so tired, I could sleep for a week"? A classic Old Testament example is in Numbers 13:33 when the size of man is said to be as grasshoppers. A classic New Testament example is when John said: "*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written*" (John 21:25).

The **proverb** is a short popular saying that has become commonly recognized. These commonly recognized statements may be true or false statements. That's why Simon Peter said, "*But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire*" (2 Peter 2:22, emphasis mine, bb). We see several Old Testament examples of where the prophets frequently used proverbs, or rejected popular proverbs and replaced them with their own. In order to emphasize the sin of Judah, Ezekiel used the proverb, "Like mother, like daughter", which meant that Judah was full of sin, like her Hittite mother (16:44-45). Jeremiah (31:29-30) and Ezekiel (18:2) both rejected the popular proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge", which meant that God held the present generation guilty for the sins of a former generation. In place of this, they

declared, "*The soul that sins shall die*" (Ezekiel 18:4,20), that is, God holds each person guilty for his own sins.

There are still other figures of speech--sarcasm, puns, the allegory, the personification, the apostrophe--to mention just a few. Space will not allow a discussion of each of these.

THE USE OF NUMBERS

One of the most intriguing areas of symbolism throughout the Bible deals with numbers. People in the ancient world had a greater respect for numbers than we do. We only connect them with inflation, a raise in pay, population growth, or something statistical. But numbers fascinated ancient man. The Bible also uses numbers in more than mere statistical ways. When God is said to have the very hairs of our heads numbered, it is something more than a statistic. Jesus says it reflects God's concern about our welfare (Matt. 10:30-ff). When God says to Israel "*the cattle on a thousand hills (are mine)*" (Psa. 50:10), He is not saying that the livestock on the thousand-and-first hill are somebody else's! It is a poetic way of saying, "All cattle are mine." Peter speaks in the same metaphorical way when he says, "*with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*" (2 Pet. 3:8). He only means that time is not a binding factor on God. When Job says that a person arguing with God could not answer him "once in a thousand times," he does not expect to be successful the thousand-and-first time. Moses' request for a thousand-fold increase of Israel in Deuteronomy 1:11 means only that he desired the nation to grow.

How many times have we said, "I've told you a thousand times not to exaggerate"? The number 1,000 is simply used to mean a large but indefinite number. Nobody is really counting.

All of this is to prove most helpful as we consider the number 1,000 and its multiples in the book of Revelation. It helps us see that the thousand-year reign spoken of in Revelation 20 cannot be literal--certainly not in this most symbolic of books! It simply refers to a long, indefinite period.

CONCLUSION

The writers in both the Old and New Testaments used much figurative language, but we are still doing that in our writings today. It can and it must be understood. We must distinguish clearly between the message and the method. Methods can and do change, but the divine message is the same.

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COMMENDATION OFFERED

I am slowly and painfully recuperating from double surgery and am not supposed to do much, but I wanted to offer hearty commendations to two items in your most recent paper: (1) your editorial on the function of elders and (2) the article by Darrell Hymel on the Clergy-Laity. Thanks a lot for a good paper every time, but these two items were most significant to me.

--Leslie Diestelkamp
Aurora, IL 60506

QUOTE FOUND ON POPE

In case no one has responded to bro. Murphy's letter, I'll pass along what I've found. The pope is called "Lord God" by a Catholic writer who was quoted by the Anglican Bishop Newton in *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, xxii. Albert Barnes quotes Bishop Newton in his comments on 2 Thess. 2:4: "Our Lord God the Pope; another God upon earth; King of kings and Lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and the Pope. To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree as he decreed, is heresy. . . The Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more than God." I, too, would like to know who that Catholic writer was that Bishop Newton quoted. I wonder if the pope accepted or claimed the above blasphemous statements as being true?

--Frank Walton
Camden, SC 29020

AGREE 100%

I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate your editorial in the September issue of *TODAY*. I agree 100% and believe you hit the "nail on the head" when you wrote "no congregation will ever surpass its leadership".

Keep up the good work.

--Richard W. Terry
Houston, MS 38851

POWER OF THE GOSPEL

This is a TRUE STORY of how a rebel (New Peoples Army) and a government militiaman (Civil Home Defense Force) became brothers in the faith. It is only the gospel of Christ who can change the hearts of men as what happened in this incident.

The preacher responsible in their conversion is bro. Filipino. His life was at stake during those times but his efforts brought these two souls to obey God in baptism. This happened in Zamboanga del Sur. The church attendance is more or less 140. Bro. Filipino is a good soul winner.

Going back to the incident, brother A who is a rebel was on a mission to liquidate (kill) 3 government soldiers and one of them is brother B. Two of the government soldiers were already

killed. While bro. Filipino and his companions were cutting lumber for the meeting house brother B approached him and poured out his fear. Bro. Filipino just told him to be ready for heaven just in case he gets killed. After a month of Bible study brother B was baptized and is now faithful to the Lord. Brother A who is a rebel stayed and ate with bro. Filipino's family without telling them his purpose. Because he is a known rebel bro. Filipino did not drive him out for fear of his life. But as time permits, bro. Filipino always taught him God's word and the evil of what a rebel is. After a month bro. A obeyed the Lord in baptism. Brother Filipino could not believe what brother A was saying. After his baptism bro. A began to confess to bro. Filipino about his mission. Bro. Filipino kept all secret unto himself until one Lord's Day after their worship brother Filipino brought brother A and B together face to face.

When brother A saw brother B he wept because he is the last man he was about to kill. Brother B was innocent about everything until bro. Filipino told him that it was brother A who was on a mission by the NPA to liquidate him. It was only after this that brother B felt relieved and they hugged each other with tears falling from their eyes. Now both of them are Christians and brethren in Christ.

Bob, this is only a story that I would like to relate in so short a time and space. This is only a summary. Both brethren were formerly Roman Catholics.

Should you decide to write about this incident or publish it please use fictitious names and places for the security of the brethren and the Lord's children here in our country. I hope I could write this clearly and in detail.

Glory to His Name!

--Jonathan R. Carino
Pagadian City, Philippines

FAVORS HOME SCHOOLING

I am writing to you in reply to a woman's comments on home schooling on the Postmarks page (261) of the September '85 issue.

I am age twenty-three. I graduated from a public high school in 1980. My wife also graduated from high school in 1980 with a 4.0 GPA as co-valedictorian of her class. We went through the entire public school system; yet neither of us will ever give any credit to the public school system for making us stronger Christians.

It was said that "sending a child to public school puts a tremendous amount of responsibility on the parents, since there must be a good, open line of communication with the child." I must reply that a tremendous amount of responsibility is on the parents regardless of whether or not they send their children to public school. A good,

open line of communication is necessary in all circumstances (public school, private school, or home school). I hope I won't need the public school environment to spawn conversations with my children. No doubt, it is always good to turn a situation where error was taught into an opportunity for the truth to shine and teach a lesson, but I don't think we should let our children be taught error so we can have opportunities to teach the truth. We teach the truth always, in season and out of season!

It was suggested that "if a child is kept home for the first ten or fifteen years of his life and then thrust into the world, he will not know how to deal with temptations." Now, wouldn't the NEA love that statement? Another purpose of the public schools is to teach children ". . . how to deal with temptations" or, at least, to provide them the training grounds. It was inferred that a child who has been home-schooled will not have had to face temptations until their teen years and that a child who begins public schooling at age five or six will have adjusted better and be more easily accepted by their peers. Since when are we as Christians so concerned about being accepted by the world? Why should we want our children to be accepted by the world? Aren't we as parents responsible for teaching our children how to deal with temptations while at the same time protecting them from as many of those situations as is realistic? No, we are not to go out of this world (become hermits from society), but we are to give no occasion for sin, avoid evil companionships, and flee every form of evil!

The author of "Consequences of Home Schooling" stated that many of the parents who have elected to teach their children at home have failed to look at the long term effects and consequences. I must be blunt. I assure anyone who feels this way that the parents who have elected to home school have considered the future effects and consequences of educating in this manner far more than most parents who have elected to turn their children over to the public schools at age five (as society dictates).

We will teach our children to not be conformed to this world from day one by using a "different" teaching method (home schooling). We will teach our children to resist temptation; at home as they interact with the family members, and outside the home as they interact with other Christians, people within the community, etc.

An example was given of two individuals who had been home-schooled and were socially maladjusted and unable to handle temptation. Unfortunately, I know of many more than two who are socially maladjusted and unable to handle temptations and they were "public-schooled"! I know of a lot of kids who depend on Mommy and Daddy all the way through public high school, college, and the remainder of their lives. Please consider that a young man who is home-schooled and completes his education on his own schedule develops a self discipline that many of his public school peers may not have.

I pray that my children will be grateful to me for taking the personal time to see to their education rather than sending them off into the land of peer pressure, fads, temptations, humanism, and immorality to receive their education. Educating my children is my responsibility, given to me by God, and God will judge me according to how well I accomplish this task.

--Andy Diestelkamp
Zion, IL

וּבְמִלְרֹדָה עֵלֶם אִשָּׁר קָרָב
צִוְנוֹ לְיַעֲמֹדֵעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפֵר דָּ



WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“NATURALLY CARE”

Greek Word: gnesios merimnesei

Meaning: will care for genuinely

Some years ago I overheard a young preacher berating himself for his lack of knowledge, his lack of skill and his lack of experience. He was working with a small church that other preachers left early or would not come to. He was telling an older, very well known preacher his troubles. The young man felt he had no future as a preacher and the church he was working with had no future as a church--down-and-outers--linked together in a hopeless downward spiral.

The older man knew that he was expected to encourage the young fellow to find another place to go and to help him do so. Instead he set the young man back **and** pushed him forward with an interesting observation: “Boy, I know you’re not much yet--and they never have been. **But** you are the first preacher they have ever had who really cared about them at all. Everybody else has just used them for a stepping stone to other things. Keep on caring for them and see what it will do for them and what it will make of you”. In subsequent years some beautiful fruit grew from the seeds the old preacher sowed that day.

Paul uses two very interesting words to indicate the unique commitment to service that characterized Timothy. The first is the verb **merimnao**, “to care for”. The verb comes from the root **merimna**, a noun that denotes anxiety or undue concern in five out of six occurrences in the New Testament. In I Pet. 5:7 we are exhorted to cast all our “*anxiety*” upon the Lord knowing that He cares for us (A.S.V.). In Mk. 4:19 we are told that the “*cares of this world*” can choke the word of God and make it unfruitful in our lives (cf. also Lk. 8:14; 21:34; Mt. 13:22).

But there is another turn to the noun **merimna** that is seen only once in the New Testament. Paul tells us that among other hardships he endured in gospel work was the “*care of all the*

churches” (2 Cor. 11:28). I believe that when we have laid the noun **merimna** in 2 Cor. 11:28 and the verb **merimnao** in Phil 2:20 side by side we’ll come away believing that Paul was talking about intense godly concern for the churches, not anxiety or undue concern.

The verb **merimnao** runs a course similar to the noun **merimna** in the New Testament. In most places it means to be anxious, unduly concerned. For instance, Jesus said, “*Be not anxious for the morrow...*” (Mt. 6:34; cf. also Mt. 6:27, 31; Lk. 12:25; Phil. 4:6). But like its noun root this verb takes a positive turn, in several passages. In I Cor. 12:25 members of Christ’s body are told that they “*should have the same care for one another*”. Here is godly concern, not anxiety. (In I Cor. 7:32 there is a mixture of the negative and positive connotations of **merimna**, **merimnao**. On the one hand Paul does not want the Corinthians to experience “*carefulness*”, i.e. anxiety, but does want them to “*care for the things of the Lord*”, i.e. have godly concern.

In Phil. 2:20 it is clear that Paul is saying Timothy would manifest an intense but not an anxious concern for the Philippian Christians. It is helpful to lay 2 Cor. 11:28 and Phil. 2:20 side by side to determine what kind of concern Paul entertained for “*all the churches*” and what kind of care Timothy would show for the Philippians, as I have already suggested.

But in Phil. 2:20 Paul helps us further to see the nature of Timothy’s concern by modifying his verb with the adverb **gnesios**. Timothy would “*naturally care*” for the state of the Philippians. What does he mean by “*naturally*”?

This adverb **gnesios** (long o) is used only once in the New Testament. But the adjectival form **gnesios** (short o) is used four times in the New Testament (Phil 4:3; I Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; 2 Cor. 8:8). The adjective means properly, “*lawfully begotten, born in wedlock*” (Abbot-Smith). By derivation it came to mean “*true, genuine, sincere*” (Ibid.). The idea of the word is that the conduct

it governs is conduct that comes from the very nature of the doer. It is done in a natural way or, using the adverb, “*naturally*”.

Commenting on Phil. 2:20, J.B. Lightfoot tasted the flavor of the root of the adverb so fully that he translated: Timothy will care for your state “*as a birth-right, as an instinct derived from his spiritual heritage*”. And though he may have been over-literal here he has caught the beauty of Timothy’s character and held it up for us to see.

Timothy was being sent to the Philippians because Paul knew that others he might send, “*...seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s*” (Phil. 2:21). But Timothy would show an intense godly concern for them that grew out of his very nature as a new creature in Christ. Being a totally committed Christian he could no sooner offer half-hearted or self-center service to the Philippians than he could live on a diet of marbles. He was not so constituted.

“LOOKETH”

Greek Word: blepon

Meaning: looking

Jesus said, “*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*” (Matt. 5:27-28).

Every now and then you hear someone ask when “*looking*” becomes “*lust*.” I think there is a little help to be had here by considering the tense of the verb Jesus used. “*Looketh*” in Matt. 5:28 is a translation of the present active participle of the verb **blepo**. If rendered literally it comes out like this: “*Whosoever keeps on looking at a woman. . .*” I know there is more to be said on this subject but you get the idea.

GETTING TO KNOW GOD

by David McClister

The development of a personal relationship with God is at the heart of the religion of Jesus Christ. This means that man is one who must come to know God in a personal way, not vice versa. God already knows each one of us better than we know ourselves (cf. Matt. 10:30). The problem is not that God does not know man, but that man does not know God as he should.

You may notice that I equate a personal relationship with a certain sense of the term "know." It is impossible to become good friends with someone without knowing anything about them; and so it is in developing our relationship with God. We will never have the right kind of relationship with God unless we first get to know a little bit about Him. And the more we know about God, the sweeter our relationship with Him becomes.

It is in this sense of a personal relationship that the apostle John often employs the term "know" (Greek *ginosko* and related forms), and a correct understanding of the problems which lay behind the first epistle of John sheds a great amount of light upon this fact. As best as can be discerned, John was opposing Gnosticism and its effects in 1 John. The Gnostics claimed, among other things, that it was their special intellectual knowledge of God that saved them, and that anyone who did not share in their boastful and proud intellectualism could not be saved. In refuting this false notion the apostle often makes a play on the term "know" differentiating between the Gnostic knowledge of God on the one hand (an intellectual knowledge), and the true knowledge of God on the other hand (a personal, close knowledge and relationship).

An example of such a play on the meanings of the term "know" is found in 1 John 2:3, "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." John says, if I may be allowed to paraphrase, "By this (which follows) we know (with our minds, intellectually) that we know him (with our hearts, truly and personally): if we obey his commandments." The Gnostics believed that they had a true knowledge of God, but they did not obey God's commands. John says

that the one who **really** knows (and this is a legitimate nuance of the tense John used in the Greek) God is the one who obeys Him. If one obeys God, he can know with his mind that he has the proper relationship with his heart toward God.

How is it, then, that obedience to the commands of God results in one having a personal relationship with God? The answer is simple. God's commandments may be described as God's instructions on how to live like God in all we do. As the apostle Peter admonished, "*as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy*" (1 Pet. 1:14-16). If we obey God's commands, the result is that our thoughts, character, and actions become patterned after God's. We become living copies of what God is like, and it is through this adopting of God's ways that we really come to know what God is like. Like Hosea of the Old Testament, we come to think as God thinks, react to evil as He does, etc. by living as God lives and by experiencing, in our own finite way (Isa. 55:8), what God experiences. We really come to know God when we come to be like Him.

Thus by adopting God's ways we come to know what God is like, and thus we come to know Him personally. It is important to understand, however, that such an experience gives us a good insight in the **character** of God without really helping us to understand about God's attributes (such as His omnipotence, His omniscience, etc.). One may, through his obedience, have a good idea of what it means to say that "God is love." But while his own experience of love helps him to understand the loving character of God, it may not at all help him to understand how God can create something-even the universe-from absolutely nothing. Yet there is no problem or flaw here,

for God is not really concerned that we be able to fathom his omnipotence or omniscience. We must understand, as the Gnostics did not, that an intellectual knowledge of God is fine and good, but not essential. A **personal** understanding of God, a knowledge of His character, is what we need. As a matter of fact, we may go through our entire lives without ever mastering an intellectual knowledge of God and still have a wonderfully close relationship with Him. What is really important to God is that we know his character. God said through the prophet Jeremiah, "*let him that glorieth glory in this, that he hath understanding, and knoweth me, that I am Jehovah who exerciseth loving kindness, justice, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith Jehovah*" (Jer. 9:23). **These** are the things which God wants us to know about Him. We do not have to know about God's power and abilities before we can cultivate a personal relationship with him.

From this fact it follows that daily Bible study is essential to knowing God personally. If we are to know God's character, and especially it that knowledge is best appropriated by copying it ourselves, then daily Bible study, in which we open our ears to His words, is absolutely necessary. We will never learn what God's character is like if we do not read and study His revelation of it, and we will never be able to copy His character in our own lives if we do not know what it is we are trying to copy! If one sincerely seeks to attain a close, personal relationship with God, he must get serious about Bible study. The more time spent in study and meditation of God's word, the closer one may get to God.

It is important that we come to know God personally. More than that, however, it is essential. Jesus said, "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.*"

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And I will profess unto them, I never knew you" (Matt. 7:21-

23). The word "knew" here is the same word that John used in his first epistle when referring to a personal relationship with God. Rote recital of good deeds is simply not enough in order to obtain salvation. There must exist a

personal relationship with God and Christ, a personal knowledge of deity, and obedience is the key to it all.

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LIFE UNDER THE SUN

by Richard W. Terry

Everyone loves a story. We are especially drawn to stories with happy endings. We can endure sadness and hardship if the pay-off is justice and triumph. We are always cheering for the good guys to come out on top and the villains to receive what's coming to them. Think for a moment of the stories and shows we grew up with. . . .

The Ugly Duckling, Robin Hood, The Lone Ranger, Snow White and the seven Dwarfs. In each of these the hero wins and the villain loses. Sadly, that is not the real world. Our's is a world of unparalleled cynicism and injustice. "Good Guys" don't always win and you can't tell a villain from a hero by the color of his hat.

We do not live in a world of black and white values, but in a multicolored world of varying hues and shades. To differentiate between right and wrong is sometimes rather complex.

Solomon viewed life from its cutting edge, there were no rose tinted glasses here. This was life at its worst and at its best. No fairy taled fantasies, just an ample serving of life as it really was.

The book of Ecclesiastes is a remarkably relevant and meaningful book. It is, basically, the chronicle of Solomon's life as he sought the answer to two great questions in life. "What is it that makes life successful?" and "What is it that gives meaning to life?" Make no mistake about it, God saw in Solomon a collage of humanity. Solomon was like every man, with one exception, he possessed the ability to seek the answers to his questions. If pleasure brought success and meaning to life, Solomon was undoubtedly the most successful man to walk the face of the earth. If material possessions provided meaning and purpose to life then Solomon must have led a full and purposeful life. If knowledge was the

stairway to happiness then Solomon had reached its zenith, yet none of these provided him with lasting satisfaction. He begins his writing by declaring "*Vanity of Vanities! All is Vanity.*" Like water upon the ground, so was life "under the sun".

Solomon begins his chronicle with a personal observation that life "under the sun" is empty and meaningless and ends his chronicle with a recommendation. . . "*Fear God and keep His commandments.* . . ." That which is contained between these two great truths provides us with insight into our own human struggles and reaffirms what Jeremiah wrote, "*Oh Lord, we know the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his footsteps*" (Jer. 10:23).

When viewed from the vantage point of life "under the sun" there is a certain monotony to life a certain futility to our labors. Nothing ever changes, there will always be suffering and death and injustice and oppression. There will always be that unquenchable thirst for knowledge that cannot be completely realized. Like digging a hole in search of something that is not there all you have left after all your labor is an empty hole, so is man's search for wisdom and knowledge "under the sun". Who better than Solomon knew the penetrating truth of such a statement. His search and taken him to the very brinks of debauchery and yet human pleasures offered no lasting satisfaction. He had pursued wisdom and pleasure and declared that it was "*striving after the wind*" (Eccl. 2:26).

Human life, like man himself, is a compendium of contradictions. The incidents, purposes, plans and events of a man's life are many and varied and at times seem diametrically opposed to one another. Solomon

realized that regardless of man's pursuits "under the sun" that God has given order in the affairs of mankind. Birth would be naturally succeed in due course by death, planting by harvesting, wounding by healing, breaking by rebuilding and so forth. For every good event that mankind experiences he can just as surely expect to be visited with equal portions of misfortune before his earthly pilgrimage is over. It is interesting to note that in Ecclesiastes 3, Solomon mentions 14 positive occurrences in our lives and 14 negative occurrences and concludes his observation with these words "*What profit is there to the worker from that in which he toils?*" In other words, "life is empty and meaningless" when lived strictly "under the sun".

Four words, perhaps better than any others, describe the relationship of God to the world; Dependence, Variety, Order and Beauty. Regardless of how far from God man may roam he is still dependant upon God. There is nowhere that man can hide from the face of God (Psa. 139:7-12). Life "under the sun" may be wearisome and humdrum but when viewed from "above the sun" the variety of God's creation is clearly visible (Psa. 19:1-4). Our lives are not the product of accident, but the order of God in the affairs of mankind (Psa. 37:23; Prov. 14:12) and the beauty of life is the product of the infinite wisdom of our Creator (Eccl. 3:33).

Between the cradle and the grave man will experience many events that will alter and illuminate his life, the moral choices that he makes will determine not only his eternal destiny, but his temporal happiness as well. Many of the choices that man will make will affect not only himself but others as well. Consequently, it is imperative that man make those moral and spiritual decision with great caution.

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OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

ECCLESIASTES

This book was written by Solomon or by one who represents Solomon as speaking. Certain language technicalities indicate it was written in a period later than that in which Solomon lived. It involves a discussion on different problems of life. Some say the writer was a pessimist, but a careful reading of the book shows that he is impressing the vanity of the search for happiness when that search is based on the acquiring of things which belong to time and sense (Compare Lk. 12:15). Sometimes it is suggested that the satisfaction of sensual appetites is the best course, but the conclusion is that true happiness here and hereafter comes as the result of righteousness and service to God. The materialist believes it is all of life to live and all of death to die, so to him all is vanity and the only good to be gained is that which relates to the flesh and its appetites. He sees no responsibility to God nor to his fellow man and recognizes no moral values; he's just existing and can't help it. This is one view of life examined in Ecclesiastes. Another view, the true one, is also presented — God is, eternity is a reality, all actions of man will be brought to judgment, and life's goal is to "*Fear God, and keep His commandments.*" Without acceptance of these principles and without holiness of life, truly all is futile and vain.

CHAPTER 1. The writer makes his introduction with the theme that "*all is vanity.*" and refers to the continual repetition of the cycles of life (1:11). It is impossible for man to change this or profit from the acquiring of wisdom and knowledge (12:18).

CHAPTER 2. It is folly to turn to mirth and laughter; to the beauties of architectural and agriculture art; to an abundance of money and material possessions. The writer had all these things and declares that he kept not from himself anything his eyes and heart desired; but again "*all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun*" (1-11). Even

by Derrel Shaw

as light is greater than darkness so is the wise man greater than the fool, yet he, like the fool, must die. Thus, from a materialistic standpoint, the wise man's work is vain (12-17). All of life's gain will be left to others, and they may be foolish. "*This is also vanity.*" It is vexation of spirit to eat, drink and enjoy life (18-26).

CHAPTER 3. There is a proper time for each activity in life, and God has designed all so "*that men should fear before him,*" for there is likewise a time when He will judge all men (1-17). One way in which man has no preeminence above the beast is that he too must die (18:22).

CHAPTER 4. Sundry statements regarding social relationships again indicate the vanity of life here apart from the consideration of future life. There are powerful oppressors, and those not born are better off than those oppressed (1-3). Those who labor are envied, but only fools do not labor (4-6). Riches do not bring satisfaction; companionship is desirable; even a king has no assurance of lasting fame (7-16).

CHAPTER 5. Instruction is given regarding prayer, the paying of vows, and the permission of judgment (1-8). There is no satisfaction or lasting benefit to be gained from riches — only vanity (9-17). God has given life and its blessings and they are to be enjoyed (18:20).

CHAPTER 6. One may possess riches, wealth, honor and long life and still live in vanity, without seeing good (1-6). Man labors but never fulfills his desires. This experience is common to all — the wise, the foolish, the rich, the poor (7:10). Many things increase vanity and no one can foretell the future (11-12).

CHAPTER 7. A good name is precious; so is the day of death (1). It is better to have the mind on serious things than to laugh as the fool (2-6). Extortion, bribery, pride and anger are to be disdained (7-10). Wisdom is good. In prosperity

and adversity God's providence is operative, and "*he that feareth God shall come forth of them all*" (11:22). The writer applied his heart to wisdom but could not learn the deeper things. He did learn that wickedness is folly, that an evil woman is to be avoided, and that God made man upright (23:29).

CHAPTER 8. In spite of injustices seen in man's government it is the way of wisdom to submit to the rulers (1-11). The conclusion of the book is anticipated when it is said, "*it shall be well with them that fear God*" (12). The wicked shall not be blessed. This is true even though it might sometimes appear otherwise and some would conclude that there is nothing better than to eat, drink, and be merry (13-15). The ways of God are "*past finding out*" (16-17; Rom. 11:33).

CHAPTER 9. All, regardless of station or spiritual condition, must die and be separated from this world's activities (1-6). In view of this, one should make the most of life (7-12). Wisdom is often despised, nevertheless it is great and powerful (13-18).

CHAPTER 10. A little foolishness is harmful to the reputation of a wise man (1-3). Rulers sometimes are unjust in their reign and one must be discreet in his reactions to such (4-11). A wise man's words are very different from those of a fool (12-15). The land is blessed when the rulers operate on just principles; when it is otherwise "*curse not the king*" because it shall be told (16-20).

CHAPTER 11. After considering life's difficulties and mysteries the writer builds toward his conclusion. Everyone should practice benevolence toward the needy, recognizing that today's giver may be tomorrow's receiver (1-6). Life is pleasant and can be enjoyed, though the future may be dark; there will be a judgment; put away sorrow and evil; youth is vanity (7-10).

CHAPTER 12. Serve God in the days of youthful vigor, before old age, and before death finally brings an end to opportunities; "*all is vanity*" (1-8).

The preacher was wise and taught the people knowledge. The grand conclusion is that man's purpose is to fear God and keep His commandments, knowing

that every work will be brought into judgment (9-14). This course will bring happiness here and eternally, for, as he said in Chapter 8, "*it shall be well with*

them that fear God."

Do You Seek Contentment?

by Ron Roberts

When John's disciples responded to the Lord's question in John 1:38 they answered with what they immediately sought, their current goal at the particular time. I believe most men today answer questions in the same way. If you asked some young man "what do you look for in life?" I doubt many would respond with thoughts like: contentment, peace of mind, or I desire to reach the age of seventy and see all of my grandchildren marry. Most people seek more immediate goals in their lives and they would answer your question with what they seek just around the bend. "I would like to sell this house, get my bills paid off, and find a good paying job with plenty of opportunities for advancement." In actuality both of the answers are quite similar. The immediate goal to pay off the bills is a stepping stone to the longer range goal of finding contentment which is what we all seek. We all desire to have our needs and desires satisfied to the greatest possible extent.

Although we all seek contentment most of us believe different things will make us content. We disagree on the more immediate goals on the way to the great gain of contentment. Many feel that contentment is to be found in fame, being loved by everyone. This is a goal that no one has ever accomplished. No matter how famous or talented you are someone will not like you. This idea of fame seeking is not as new as some of you might imagine. The pagans in the earliest forms of literature sought fame also. You see the pagans did not believe in the immortality of the body or the soul, so they sought immortality of name. If they could perform deeds that were great enough then others might remember their name forever. Consequently fame was one of the most sought after goals in the pagan

circles. I wonder why a Christian should be so desirous of fame.

I suppose most people believe contentment can be found in the accumulation of physical possessions and money. Money is supposed to be the answer to all the world's problems. It has been my experience that the more money a person has the more he spends and the more he thinks he needs. Jesus said "*beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth*" (Lk. 12:15). True fulfillment in life is not going to be found in anything you own or can own in this world (Matt. 6:19-24).

If you recall in our first article we quoted Matt. 7:7, "*Seek and ye shall find...*" And I followed up that passage with this warning: you must know where to seek, and you must be willing to pay the full purchase price. I honestly believe that the average man in this world could become a millionaire if he wanted to bad enough. He would need to research certain fields in order to determine in what area he is going to pursue his fortune, and he would then need to devote his life to the accomplishment of that goal. After years of hard work, scrimping and saving, and sacrificing all frivolities, at the age of about 65 he could be a millionaire. But before you try to put this method to work in your life consider the sacrifices: He could not date or marry, women cost money. He must give up vacations, he couldn't afford to not be making more money. Recreation is definitely out, it reduces the amount of energy one has for working. I believe it is obvious to all of us that this man's entire life was spent in exchange for his million and that it was by no means

worth it. We have only one life to spend. How are we going to invest it?

In Luke 16:1-13 Jesus relates the parable of the unjust steward which answers our investment question better than E.F. Hutton could. The steward was informed by his master that his job would be taken away from him soon. The steward considered his options for the future and determined what he must do. He used his current position to assure himself of a comfortable future. He gathered his masters debtors together and gave them great discounts on the amounts that they owed to his master. He realized that after his job was terminated all of these wealthy businessmen would owe him a favor and he would call upon them to reciprocate. The steward's master commended him for his wisdom and his foresight and Jesus explained "*the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light*". I believe the point of the parable is rather clear. The sinner uses all the elements at his disposal to reach his goal, to see that his future is secure. Although the sinner may not know where true contentment may be found, he will obtain the goals that he equates with this contentment. The children of light, on the other hand, realize that eternal life is the only goal worth having, but they will not use all the tools God has given them to secure that goal. In fact some of the tools they will covet and make them obstacles rather than helpful devices. Christians have found the pearl of great price that they were seeking. Are they willing to sell all they have in order to possess it? (Matt. 13:45-46). We can only determine the answer by the way we answered our original question. What seek ye? If the contentment you seek is in this world you will never pay the price to obtain the greater prize.

Contentment is a reasonable goal for anyone, but only when it is added to godliness can it produce the great gain of heaven. Will you be content with less than eternal life? What seek ye?

Short and to the Point



Spiritual Delinquency

Often we hear or use the term "juvenile delinquent" in our day to day conversations, to describe the failures, wrongs and/or crimes of a young person. But, have you ever considered yourself as being delinquent? A dictionary would define delinquency as failure, omission, or violation of duty or of law. Spiritually then, I think many of us can quite properly refer to ourselves as delinquents.

In the book of James, we are told "therefore to him who knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin." What are some of the good things we could be involved in, but often are not?

1) **PRAYER**--How many of us pray at least once a day? If we put giving of thanks for our food at the table aside, (and I am not in any way minimizing it's importance) how often, each day, do we send up petitions, praise, and thanksgiving to our Father? Three times a day, as was Daniel's practice (Dan. 6:10)? Twice? Possibly in the mornings and at night before going to sleep? Surely at least once a day! So many of us though are lazy and forgetful. We may have good intentions and may indeed be knowledgeable of the great power of prayer, but alas! . . . we are delinquent.

2) **BIBLE STUDY**--In Acts 17 we learn of the nobility of studying the Scriptures to see what things are true. Satan, I feel assured, is pleased to find the followers of Christ ignorant of their leader's commands. It is no great marvel then that ridiculous innovations, false doctrines, and outright heresy can be so easily introduced among the ranks of the faithful. We suffer because of the lack of knowledge. How often, other than during the assemblies of the church, do we open our Bibles? Can we say that at least once daily I spend a few moments in reading God's truth? I might add that many of us are not very good

when it comes to opening them during the services. No one among us will say that Bible study is a bad thing, therefore it must be good. We know we ought to do good. To fail to do so is sin! Are we delinquent in this also?

3) **HELPING THE NEEDY**--Matthew 25:31-40 gives the account of our Lord talking about the judgement of mankind. It is interesting to notice that the statements made by Him in regard to the destinies of all, pertained to the benevolent acts of each one. Their lack or abundance of "good deeds" were determining factors in Christ's judgement of them. We therefore cannot deny the importance of helping one another when in need and visiting those that are in difficult situations. When we do so unto even the least of our brethren we do so unto Christ. Do we excuse ourselves of this obligation when it is not convenient? Are we too busy to go and visit or aid our brother or sister in distress? If so, then we are TOO busy.

Delinquency is a problem that many of us have. It may be in one or more of the above, or in many of the other good works that every Christian should involve himself in. Let us not be slothful or grown weary in well doing. Let us not put off till tomorrow, what we should be doing today. Should tomorrow never come would we be found delinquent?

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GOD..... my father

GOD, MY FATHER. Meditate on that thought and it becomes more than one can comprehend. Think of the special relationship that we have with God as our spiritual father. He cares for us, but also has authority over us.

One of the most frequent comparisons in the Bible is that of the

father/child relationship. The Bible describes God as a father who loves His children (Psa. 103:13); as one who chastises the children He loves (Deut. 8:5, Prov. 3:12); and one who desires that the chastized children return to Him (Jer. 3:22; 31:20). By His preserving power we have our very being (Acts 17:28). He sustains us and takes care of our every need (Mt. 6:25-33). God is love (I Jn. 4:8, 19). He is good and perfect (Mt. 5:48; 7:11), and is the ideal of perfection that we should strive to attain (Mt. 5:48). Such is the general character of God that is manifested in the father/child relationship.

However, not all can call God their father. When we are born into this world we are given our name. We receive the name of our family. In order to wear God's family name we must be born into His family. We do this by being born again of the "water and the spirit" (Jn. 3:5). In order to be born again of the water and the spirit and thus become children of God, we are baptized (Gal. 3:26-27). Then and only then, can we call God our father, and thus receive the blessings of that relationship.

Lord willing, in future articles we will look at our responsibility as children of God and also at our relationship with Jesus as our spiritual brother.

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Changing Party Affiliation

Recently, a friend from Texas told of five politicians who changed their party affiliation. They denied having left the political party in which they had held their membership for many years. They insisted the party had left them. The only way they could be consistent with their belief was to identify with another political party.

Many of us have experienced the same situation with our religious belief. Thirty years ago I held gospel meetings for churches where I am no longer welcome. I hold forth the same principles today which I did then.

I recently found an old letter from a very dear friend cautioning me not to become involved in any of the brotherhood projects which were becoming so prevalent (this was in the 50's). He is

now completely involved with such promotions.

Many Christians today must leave congregations they have labored to build up and either worship with a different fellowship or worship in their homes.

Why have these brethren changed so drastically? Why do they refuse to discuss with us? I have written several letters over the years which have been unanswered.

When these unscriptural practices are questioned we receive platitudes instead of scriptural reasons. One brother who I asked to discuss with me responded by saying, "I think we should pray about it." I responded by saying, "So do I, but when we finish praying we still need to talk about it." He was willing to pray, but refused to discuss our differences.

Others say: "I think we should stop all this bickering and division." Correctly interpreted, this means: "If you will keep still about the practices which I have no intention of either defending or stopping, we can get along."

This is the same attitude which got the religious world in the mess of denominationalism. I have no desire to become part of any such homogenized fellowship. SELAH

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"Don't Push Me!"

How many times have you heard that excuse? How many times have you used it? People that put off obedience to the gospel often use this excuse to beg a little time from someone. And, we friends often back off for fear of driving them away.

But wait a minute! Where are we pushing from? Our friends think and maybe we assume that we are **behind** pushing them **into** Christ. In reality we should be in front pushing them away from a course that leads straight to Satan. The Devil dangles all sorts of things in front of us to entice us to follow; just like the donkey following a carrot tied on a stick. All that can be seen is what's on the end of the stick; nothing else matters.

We need to cause our friends to look beyond the end of the stick to the final end of the journey they are on.

Instead of pushing them in any direction show them the choices available and the results of each. If they are honest in seeking the truth no pushing is necessary. Let's get their attention off the carrot long enough to show them their options. We need to warn them and teach them. If we can accomplish that task they will push themselves away from Satan's grasp.

Paul said, "*I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth*" (I Cor. 3:6). Our duty is to teach the gospel (Mark 16:15). God will apply the force to draw men to Him (Jno. 6:44; 2 Thess. 2:14).

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The Wisdom Of Solomon

No one enjoys being corrected if they have been doing something wrong. No matter how loving or pleasant the rebuker is, there is always a feeling of "who are you to tell me I'm wrong". Sooner or later, all of us have this happen to us and it is at that time to see whether or not we are foolish or wise.

Proverbs 9:8 says, "*Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*" When I am reproved, do I fly off the handle or get angry at the person that is correcting me? That is like killing the messenger because the message is bad.

What I need to do is show a proper attitude. Take what is said weighed against how I have been living and God's Word and if need be, change. A wise man will appreciate the concern someone shows in trying to help.

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The New Harmony Project

The early 1820's proved to be a very exciting period for the young Hoosier state. Indiana was experiencing growing pains as settlement after settlement literally sprang up everywhere. Federal grants provided the necessary funds to establish permanent roads throughout the state. Plans were made to move the state's capital from Corydon to Indianapolis.

It was during this time that

European industrialist Robert Owen bought a large tract of land in Southern Indiana which included the village known as "Harmony". Owen renamed the town "New Harmony", a name which became synonymous with communal living. Owen experimented with developing a new society based upon community ownership and equality of work and profit. The New Harmony project brought together the best minds of science, philosophy, and education that America and Europe could boast of.

By 1827 the New Harmony society had failed. Confusion and arrogance splintered the little group into several factions. Through the years historians and sociologists have studied the concepts of New Harmony. Many factors attributed to the defeat of this idea. One that nearly all authorities agree upon is the poor spirit of work that prevailed in that Southern Indiana community.

With all the intellectual minds that New Harmony attracted came an attitude of preeminence and dominance. The basic tasks of pioneer living and the very elements necessary for survival were left undone. These "prominent" citizens of New Harmony did not feel obligated to help out. They considered themselves above and beyond that type of labor.

Sadly we often find that same spirit in the church today. For one reason or another certain Christians feel that they do not have to attend a meeting, invite their friends, teach classes, or help the needy. They feel compelled to tell others of all the work that needs to be done but they themselves would never "stoop" to actually performing the tasks. This poor attitude will bring many local churches to their knees as it did the society of New Harmony (Rev. 3:14-22).

Let us learn the lesson from history. Let us take up the work together. The work is too much that only a few should be left to do it.

"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).

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"THE BIBLE SAYS"

Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

Gift Of The Spirit

The Bible says in Acts 2:38, *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*

Peter, you remember, had been promised the keys to the kingdom, and here, as recorded in Acts two, opened the door of the church to the Jews by preaching the first gospel sermon. After convicting the Jews, who in conjunction with the Romans had murdered the Son of God, they were told to be baptized for remission of sins. To repent means to turn away from sin, but further action in obedience was also necessary.

In sermons on this subject I have always taught that the "gift" of our text is the same as the "earnest of the Spirit" as mentioned in Eph. 1:14. Whatever the gift is, we have it as a result of obedience, but other Scriptures teach that we should not expect supernatural manifestations today. That which we do have is sonship, translation into the kingdom, perpetual forgiveness - all of which can be summed up with the word sanctification. This is certainly the hope of eternal life, the gift of God. Romans 6:23 and Eph. 2:8 tell us that this gift is eternal life. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"* (Eph. 2:8). This text tells us we cannot earn or merit God's favor, yet it should be obvious that we must respond in obedience in order to appropriate it.

So, we must believe, repent and are baptized for remission of sins, and in the process are given the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of God, which is sonship, sanctification and hope of eternal life.

Those who believe some supernatural indwelling of the Spirit is inferred from Acts 2:38 need to remember the principle *"it is written again."* Acts 3:19 is parallel to Acts 2:38, and there Peter calls it *"seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."* Thus, again we conclude that

the "gift" is the promise of perpetual forgiveness so long as we *"walk in the light"* (I John 1:7).

A moment ago I equated this "gift" to the "earnest of the Spirit" in Eph. 1:14 and other passages. The word "earnest" is defined as "a portion of something, given or done in advance as a pledge of the remainder." The Greek word is very well so translated. I do not believe that either the gift or the earnest relate to the Spirit Himself, for we presently do not walk by sight. . . we walk by faith (II Cor. 5:7), and other verses specifically state the indwelling of the Spirit today is only by faith. Earnest money is usually considered as a part of a down payment, although there is a difference. I have already shown that we cannot earn or merit God's favor, however, and the earnest of the Spirit is a gift, God's grace, and not something we can earn as being paid. However, God does confirm His promise with a pledge, and obedient Christians have that portion of His grace in the present tense.

That the gift or earnest is not the Spirit Himself I said was stated in other verses, so now notice Eph. 3:16, 17. *"That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."* Thus God, Christ, and the Spirit, dwell in us only by faith, and faith comes from the Bible (Rom. 10:17).

D-con Religion

The Bible says, in James 2:10, *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."* James is not telling us it is necessary to be perfect, but rather the necessity of being law abiding. While

these principles relate to the law of Moses, under which system there was no permanent forgiveness for trespasses, the gospel of Christ is also a system of law, believe it or not, for Galatians 6:2 plainly says so. Therefore, we must keep the whole law, we must have authority for everything we practice, and many passages of Scriptures so teach.

My wife and I own an old house which occasionally gets infested with mice. Several times we've had to rid them by using D-con, a bait said to be a "scientifically balanced blend of natural ingredients." The label says that less than one percent is toxic, the rest being nutritious grain. There seems to be a good lesson in this, as we hear people reasoning that where there is so much good, a small part of bad cannot be harmful. That, of course, is exactly what we want the little mouse to believe - to kill himself! The truth is that the 99% nourishment cannot offset the fatal effect of the active ingredient.

Now, the lesson for us presently: Is this not exactly the way many of us look at what we believe and practice religiously? I've heard it said, "but we're doing so much good. . . ." Yet the Bible plainly teaches that if we do not love the truth the Lord will allow us to save our conscience with a lie. (II Thess. 2:10, 11). Something that appears wholesome and desirable may have just enough error to cause folks to lose their souls. The person who rejects all the truth is NO WORSE OFF than one who rejects only a small portion of a major doctrine in the New Testament. The Bible says in Romans 6:23, *"the wages of sin is death."*

Other Scriptures teaching the necessity of complete subjection to the will of the Lord include Matt. 15:9, where Jesus said, *"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."* And again from the sermon on the mount, Matt. 7, we read: *"Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast our 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."* Thus it is required of us that we try to

observe all the commands of the Lord. The problem is, many are not even trying.

I said that our text, James 2:10, is not demanding sinless perfection on our part, and such passages as First John one and verse seven shows that to be true, for to have forgiveness we must walk in the light. If walking in the light meant sinless perfection we would

have no need of forgiveness. But, again, many are not even trying.

The plea of true churches of Christ is restoration of the ancient order in name, plan of salvation, organization and all other Bible doctrines. We challenge you to study carefully about these points of doctrine, and read your Bibles daily to find whether or not the things being spoken are so. "For

whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10).

Why not reject your "D-Con religion". . . remember, less than 1% can destroy you!

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"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel. . ."
(Romans 10:15)



L. BRUCE TAYLOR ZION, IL



L. Bruce Taylor was born July 22, 1939 in Barberton, Ohio, fifteen miles southwest of Akron. His mother came from a family of Methodists and was a member of the Methodist church. His father came from a family who were members of the church, but was not a member and had not attended since childhood. Bruce's aunt, Bessie Wise, has raised his father from age ten, when Bruce's grandfather had died.

Aunt Bessie began taking Bruce to services with her when he was about five or six years old. The story is told that even at that early age his attention to the lessons taught by Brother Gattton, the local preacher, impressed many to say he would grow up and become a preacher.

When Bruce was about ten years old his parents began attending services, too. They were both baptized in 1951. Bruce was baptized in September, 1953, at age 14, by George Le Masters. He began to be very active in the work of the local congregation and by age 15 he was the regular song leader and continued so for 7½ years.

During this time also while teaching a grade school children's class he met his future lovely wife-to-be. She was a student in the class! Needless to say this romance waited a few years to blossom.

After graduating from high school and working about four years at a steel manufacturing plant, Bruce went into the Army Medical Corps. When he returned from basic training, he found that the girl from his class had grown up into a fine young woman. Bruce and Barbara Elaine Hall were married July 18, 1964. Later on, two lovely daughters, Shawn Elaine (now 17) and Shannon Eileen (now 14) became part of the family. He has had the pleasure of baptizing both into the body of Christ.

He continued working for the steel plant another six years. During that time he began attending some training classes at Brown Street church in Akron, taught by Cecil Willis, Connie

Adams and Ferrell Jenkins. He had opportunity to do local appointment preaching many times and worked with the church in Mansfield, Ohio, from July 1966 to July 1968, and Brunswick, Ohio, from March to December, 1970.

Leslie Diestelkamp talked to Bruce of the need for men in the Chicago area and so a decision was made to enter preaching on a full-time basis. Bruce moved to Illinois and worked with the church in Joilet for 2½ years and in July, 1973, moved to Zion, IL where he is now into his 13th year with the church there.

During his time at Zion, he and another man have developed and published a three year Bible Study Program for all the children's classes and a four year adult program study. This has been a major undertaking. During this time also he has worked in the training of four young men to preach the gospel. He has preached by appointment and/or in gospel meetings in the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Minnesota, Arizona and Canada.

His hobbies include serving on the local grade school board for this last two years and now running for a four year term on the local High School board. He also writes a Bible question and answer column for the local newspaper.



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Worry Warts

by Bobby Witherington

I do not know the origin of the term "worry wart." I do know what worry is. The American College Dictionary defines a wart as "a small, usually hard, abnormal elevation on the skin, caused by filterable virus." Warts can be a bit unsightly. They are usually painless. And their disappearance is sometimes as unexplainable as their original appearance. They very seldom cause any real physical harm.

But it is possible for a grown, perfectly healthy person to become overly distraught or worried over a little wart, which in all probability will cause no bodily harm whatever. I presume that some people can become so obsessed over a wart that he (or she) becomes miserable within and miserable to be around.

Of course, the situation thus far described doesn't just border on the ridiculous; it IS ridiculous! You wouldn't be so unstable emotionally nor so weak spiritually that you would let a tiny wart make you miserable, would you? "Of course not," you are probably saying to yourself.

Now, let us forget about warts. At least for now. I can think of better subjects to think about. So can you. However! Perhaps our description of this subject is not too far off base. For example, consider the case of sister Worry Morbiditus (a name I made up). Sis. Morbiditus (and it could be "brother") professes to be a faithful Christian. She is in good physical health. She has a nice house. Her husband has a good job. Together they have a number of luxuries. Their bills are paid on time. She hasn't missed a meal in 20 years. But for 20 years, more or less (depending on her age), she has been worrying about everything imaginable (that is every MUNDANE thing imaginable. For some reason she doesn't worry about the plight of lost souls). She just knows that the proverbial "wolf is at the door;" the family could lose the car, or house, or worse yet, they may all go hungry. Every mole on the skin is bound to turn into cancer, or every bout with indigestion is a sure sign of heart disease. Oh yes, "the whole world is going to the dogs;" the church is falling apart, and nobody can be

trusted - especially preachers, elders, and Bible class teachers. In fact, it seems that "everybody is a bit crazy except me and my husband -- and sometimes I have doubts about him!"

Please do not misunderstand! I know that people do have legitimate concerns. I know that people do suffer financial reversal. I know that people do develop terminal illness. I know that preachers do make "shipwreck" the faith; churches do divide; marriages turn sour; the world is filled with problems, and some day, if the Lord does not come first, I am going to die.

But I also know that Christians are supposed to be happy (Phil. 4:4), and they are supposed to cast all their cares upon the Lord Who cares for them (I Pet. 5:7). I also know that "godliness with contentment is a great gain" (I Tim. 6:6), and that Jesus said "do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor yet for your body, what you will put on" (Matt. 6:25; New KJV). And it seems that I can recall the words of an imprisoned apostle who was so close to the Lord that he could say "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Either way he was a winner! If he lived, Christ would be glorified and His gospel would continue to be preached. If he died it would be "gain". Hence, he knew how "to be abased" and he knew "how to abound," and whether he was "full" or "hungry" his faith was such that he could confidently say "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13, 14).

I can easily understand why an atheist would worry constantly. To begin with, he doesn't know where he came from, why he is here, nor where he is going. He is adrift upon the sea of life with neither chart nor compass. If he is unhealthy, jobless, broke, and alone, his unbelief in the existence of a Supreme Being is such that he usually loses confidence in people. Moreover the world is filled with seemingly insurmountable problems; man seems unfit to rule in the affairs of men and (according to his thinking) there is no

overriding Providence at the helm. On the other hand, if the atheist is healthy, wealthy, and famous, I can easily understand why he, too, would worry continually. If he has any brains at all he is bound to realize that fame is a fleeting thing. Today's hero is tomorrow's proverbial "goat." Health will eventually fail. He could go broke. Ultimately he will die, and someone else will get his wealth. According to his philosophy he is on a down hill roller coaster rushing full speed to oblivion. And this "roller coaster" has no brakes nor a reverse gear! So what is to keep him from worrying?

And I can understand why a person who believes in God, but who is not a Christian, would worry constantly. He, too, is on the same brakeless, gearless, "roller coaster" -- except he is not headed for oblivion, for if he believes and understands the Bible, he knows that he is headed for hell! Unless he can humble himself to obey the gospel he knows that circumstances will never really get any better -- at least, not for long, and ultimately matters will get a whole lot worse! So what is to keep him from worrying?

But a Christian? I mean one who is really a Christian. One who knows he serves a God Who has assured the righteous, saying, "I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). One who knows Jesus said, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). One who knows his name is "written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). One whose destiny is that place where there is no death, sorrow, or pain, where "he that overcometh shall inherit all things" (Rev. 21:4,7). For such a person as this to be constantly singing the blues, down on everybody, and down on life? Obviously something is wrong. Why should a child of God and an heir of heaven have the same sour disposition, temperament, and outlook as those who are children of the devil and heirs of hell?

If Jesus were on earth and He heard the anxious, fretful mouthings and mumblings which so often fall from our lips, what do you think He would say? You can be sure it would not be

complimentary!

Friend, are you more of a worry wart than a Christian? Do you really want to overcome your problem? Well, cheer up! You can be helped. Provided you "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18), and

thereby increase in the faith that "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Provided you really are "in the Lord" (Phil. 4:4). Provided you live and serve so that your conscience is clear. And provided you "in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let

your requests be known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

I've written enough. The next move is yours. And mine!

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Sermon Outlines

by Gene Taylor

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IS GOD MALE OR FEMALE?

Introduction

1. The outcry of the women's movement is great against religion in general and against Christianity in particular for "preserving sexism down through the centuries"
2. They and other groups advocate the idea to stop referring to God in masculine terms
3. Does the Bible discriminate against women in its presentation of the Divine? Is God male or female?

I. The Maleness of the Divine

- A. Male terms and male metaphors are applied to God, Christ and the Spirit throughout the Bible
- B. We must recognize these things to be "established"

II. The Femaleness of the Divine

- A. God is portrayed with female images and qualities in a number of passages
- B. In at least one passage (Matt. 23:27) Jesus uses a female figure in referring to Himself
- C. Jesus presents the Holy Spirit as a mother from whom all who would be children of God must be born - John 3:3-5

Conclusion

We can answer the question "Is God female?" with a definite "NO." But neither is He male, not in the sense that we recognize male and female. Both sexes were created in His image (Gen. 1:27) and both reflect His glory and eternal attributes. God is God and we must allow Him to be God. When Moses asked of God, "Who are you?" while on the mountain, God said, "I am that I am." (Ex. 3:13-14).

UNITY IN THE CHURCH

Introduction

1. Text: Philippians 2:1-11
2. There must have been either some sort of division in the church at Philippi or grave danger that it would develop
3. Unity stressed as essential - verse 2
4. Extent of desired unity described
 - a. "Same mind"
 - b. "Same love"
 - c. "One accord"
 - d. "One mind"

I. Causing Disunity - Verses 3-4

- A. "Faction" (KJV: "strife")

- B. "Vainglory"
 - C. Concentration on self
- #### II. Curing Disunity - Verse 1
- A. "Exhortation in Christ" (KJV: "consolation in Christ")
 - B. "Consolation of love" (KJV: "comfort of love")
 - C. "Fellowship with the Spirit"
 - D. "Tender mercies and compassions" (KJV: "bowels and mercies")
- #### III. Copying the Mind of Christ - Verses 5-8
- A. The self-obliteration of Jesus Christ - verses 5-7
 - B. The humility of Jesus Christ - verse 8
 - C. The obedience of Jesus Christ - verse 8

Conclusion

Consider the teachings of Proverbs 6:16-19 and I Corinthians 3:16-17. If we as brethren do not earnestly strive to work together, the results will be tragic in this life and the life to come.

PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS

Introduction

1. Being a member of a physical family brings blessings (privileges) but also demands certain responsibilities (obligations)
2. The Christian, as a part of God's spiritual family (I Tim. 3:15), has privileges bestowed upon him and obligations required of him

I. The Privileges

- A. God is his Father - Matt. 6:9; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Rom. 8:17
- B. He may rightfully wear the proper name - Acts 11:26; 4:12
- C. He enjoys the protection of God - I Pet. 3:13-14; John 10:27-30
- D. He receives the proper provisions
 1. Water unto eternal life - John 4:10-14
 2. The bread of life - John 6:51; Acts 20:32
- E. He enjoys the promises of God - 2 Pet. 3:9

II. The Obligations

- A. He must respect the authority of God - Matt. 4:10; 28:18-20; Col. 3:17
- B. He must honor the name - Jas. 2:7; I Pet. 4:14-16; Matt. 5:16
- C. He must defend the cause of God - Phil. 1:17; Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Cor. 10:1-6
- D. He must be learning the will of God - 2 Tim. 2:15; Col. 3:16; I Pet. 2:1-2; Matt. 5:6
- E. He must obey the commands of God - I John 5:1-3; John 14:15; Jas. 2:18

Conclusion

As children of God we should not expect to enjoy the privileges without shouldering the obligations. May each of us be a responsible member of the family of God.



Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

I'LL BE SATISFIED

(Chapter 17)

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccl. 3:1). In the psalms we read of seasons of weeping and seasons of laughing. We find recorded times of praise and times of prayer. It was a season of prayer when David penned these words. David was a man of prayer. He could not have been a man after God's own heart and been otherwise.

GIVE ME JUSTICE (v. 1-4)

"Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry; give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips." Three times in this verse David appeals to God to hear him. He was persecuted. He was hunted like a game bird (11:1). And in this controversy, he was in the right. It's wonderful to know your cause is right (7:1-5). David was in such straits that he did not merely speak words in prayer. He cried. He lamented. His prayer was underscored with the eloquence of tears. It was spoken with sincerity. How fruitless it is to try to deceive God! One speaks out of feigned lips when he prays, "Helps us apply these truths to our lives," and twenty minutes later speaks mean, unkind things to his neighbor. Or when he prays, "we put our trust in Thee," and then declares, "I'm worried sick, what on earth am I going to do?" David was fervent and honest in his petitions to the Father.

"Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal." We all must undergo three judgments: (1) ourselves; (2) our neighbors; (3) God (Luke 7:1-10; I Cor. 4:1-4). David wanted God to be the judge. He knew that He would judge in righteousness (Acts 17:31). He will not use false weights in the balance,

either against us or for us. We may be abused and misrepresented by unrighteous men, but a righteous God remains the court of highest appeal.

"Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing: I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress." David knew that God knew his heart. The Lord had seen him when no one else was around. That is the ultimate test of character. What are we when no one else is around? Of what do we think when our sleep is disturbed in the night? God knows. He found nothing hypocritical in David. He was pure in heart, and he had resolved that he would be pure in speech. Would that all would purpose such!

"Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." David had stayed clear of the power, ambition, worldly lusts, etc. of men. He had not set his affection on these. Through what means had he accomplished this? By the word of God's lips. He had chosen the high road of the divine word. The only roadmap for those who would avoid the paths of destruction lies neglected on most shelves. Shall we follow the book of life or the paths of the destroyer?

HELP ME BEHAVE RIGHTLY (v. 5, 6)

"Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." It's pretty hard to behave as one should when he is under pressure and trial. It's not easy to keep the light burning while contrary winds are blowing. One essential is prayer. Let us follow David's example and cry to God: "Hold me up. . . give me strength! Help me so

live that when men speak ill of me, no one will believe it!" We need God's help that we will be surefooted in slippery places.

"I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech." With David, let us recall past victories and build our confidence for the times ahead.

PROTECT ME FROM MY FOES (v. 7-12)

"Show thy marvelous loving-kindness, O Thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them." The word "loving-kindness" is from one word that includes more than love; more than kindness. It is amplified by the adjective, "marvelous". The "right hand" refers to the ever present power, and authority, and ability, to deliver.

"Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings." "Apple" in the Hebrew may be rendered "little man." When one focuses his sight upon us, we are reflected in the eyes of that beholder. David wanted to be the little man in God's eyes. He desired to be kept or protected, as one carefully guards his own eyes, He wanted to be hidden even as a parent bird shields her brood.

"From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about." His enemies were wicked people. They were deadly. They compassed him about. There was no way out but up.

"They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly." They were people who satiated themselves in gluttony and luxury. Or this may refer to their heart being "waxed gross," encased in spiritual fat so there is no feeling, no conscience. They are prosperous and vain, speaking words of self-adoration.

"They have now compassed us in our steps: they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth" Note the plural pronoun. These were enemies not just of David, but of all the righteous. They are "bowing down" like a bull ready to attack.

"Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places." The lion is the great enemy of the sheep. He is full of wiles and conniving snares. Satan himself is the chief lion who seeks those whom he may devour. We should be thankful we have a Good Shepherd

who cares for His sheep. But let us beware of our foe. He may be lurking in the place where we feel most secure.

DISAPPOINT HIM (v. 13, 14)

"Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down; deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword" There is no need to fear the lion if we know God is there. Let him then attack.

There is a sense in which the wicked may become a sword in the hand of God. The Assyrians were used by God as a rod of anger against Israel (Isa. 10: 5-7). But most translations render the verse differently. The NASB, for example, reads: ". . .with thy sword."

"From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the word, which have their portion in this life, and

whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes." This verse must be read with the preceding one. Again the NASB translation is a bit clearer: *"From men with thy hand, O Lord. . ."* David cried out for deliverance from men of the world whose portion was in this life. That makes for a mighty puny portion for creatures made in God's image! Wise men choose that which will last a lot longer. Their gods are their bellies, and they are content with having them filled here and now. They have plenty of children to pass their estate on to. As Spurgeon comments, they are penny wise and dollar foolish. They remember the present and forget the

future.

CONFIDENCE (v. 15)

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." David did not envy a dog his bone or these men their monetary happiness. He knew his satisfaction would come. He and we shall sleep for awhile. But when our body awakes from the grave, we shall see God and His glory; we shall participate in that glory, for we shall be like Him who died for us (Phil. 3:21; I John 3:1-3); and we shall be satisfied.

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The Constancy Of The Lord Jesus Christ

by Jim King

In a world rife with change and riddled with uncertainty, the soul gropes for something to cling to. It reaches out for a sure and steady presence, something or someone who will be there tomorrow, and the next day, and the next. In the midst of turmoil, what a blessed comfort that the soul can take refuge in the constancy of the Lord Jesus Christ!

There is no friend like the Master. There is no guide so sure. There is no shepherd so protective of His sheep as our Chief Shepherd. Truly, as long as *"the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"* (Psa. 23:1). Though there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24), there is none to match the loyalty of the Lord, *"for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"* (Heb. 13:5). And again, *"I will be with you always, even to the end of the world"* (Matt. 28:20).

He is the author and captain of our salvation, our hope, our peace, our rock, our mediator, the bearer of our cares, and the sacrifice for our sins. *"Surely, He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows"* (Isa. 53:4). Whenever we hurt, Jesus is touched; when we are tempted, He understands; when we are lonely, we have recourse

to Him who suffered the agonies of the garden alone. And Jesus is unchanging—absolutely and always dependable.

Not so with man. The arm of flesh is weak and apt to disappoint. Selfishness, pride, indifference, and a host of other besetting sins often conspire to make us shift and drift and change, until our friends sometimes don't know where to find us. The best of men err. And who has not suffered the pain of having disappointed or of having been disappointed? Paul had his Demas and Jesus His Judas. And an unchanging landmark in the Lord's church is that there will always be brethren and sisters who are much less dependable, much more vacillating than they should be. This is not a sour view of brethren, but simply a recognition of fact. And it serves to illuminate the Lord Jesus in an even more glorified light.

When everything and everyone around us fails, we can turn to Him. We can grasp that *"anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast,"* in Him (Heb. 6:19). We can so establish our friendship with Him that if all men forsake us, we can say with Paul, *"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me,"* (Tit. 4:17), and *"I can do all things through Christ*

who strengtheneth me," (Phil. 4:13), and *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* (Rom. 8:31).

The road to heaven is indeed a narrow road. But it is wide enough for the Saviour and the one that He leads. And it is imperative that we walk it hand in hand with the Lord. Let us as God's people, in an uncertain world in uncertain times, reach out for the only sure thing we have. Let us *"hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end"* (Heb. 3:6). And let us thank God daily for the wondrous mercy and love which so graciously bestowed upon us the unchangeable constancy of Jesus our Lord.

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PREDESTINATION ALTERNATIVES

by Mark Nitz

Few Biblical doctrines have been more misunderstood and maligned than the Bible doctrine of predestination. Even mentioning the word causes some to squirm. Though the Bible clearly teaches it in such passages as Romans 8:29 and Ephesians 1:5, some consider it unscriptural. This is probably the case because, in the minds of many, "predestination" is equated to a particular interpretation of it, namely, that taught by John Calvin referred to as "unconditional election."

Most of the questions concerning election revolve around the individuals relation to the process of predestination. Does God elect individual people to be saved and if so, in what way? The following chart may help to visualize some predestination alternatives.

ELECTION →	A CONDITIONAL	B UNCONDITIONAL
PREDESTINATION →	C GROUP	D INDIVIDUAL

ALTERNATIVES:

B & D (Calvinism)

By far the most popular view of "predestination" is that developed by Augustine and made popular by John Calvin. According to Calvin, God **unconditionally** selected certain **individual** sinners and predestined them to become believers. God alone knew the basis of His decision, according to Calvin, choosing not to reveal it to man. Note the emphasis on the UNconditional nature of this selection--"God was moved by no external cause--by no cause out of Himself--in choice of us; but that He Himself, in Himself, was the cause and author of choosing His people" (John Calvin, *A Treatise on the Eternal Predestination of God*, p. 46).

A & C (Thought to be the Arminian view and considered by some to be the only alternative to Calvinism)

According to this view, there are certain **conditions** which anyone may meet (not just the select few) in order to be saved. However, notice that it is

only a certain class or group that is predestined, not specific individuals. "God predestines the plan, not the man" according to this view. It is the way of salvation that is predestined (ie. the boundaries are set), not individuals. Robert Shank appropriately summarizes this view of election as "potentially universal, corporate rather than particular, and conditional rather than unconditional" (*Elect in the Son*, p. 122.) While this view certainly has some merit and effectively counters the Calvinistic error, there is another view which I believe to be more Biblical.

A & D (The Biblical view, I believe, and the one espoused by Jacob Arminius)

In this view, God selects all believers (ie. those meeting His conditions) and predestines them to become his children in glory. Thus election is

conditional and predestination is **individual**.

While the Calvinistic doctrine of "unconditional election" is definitely contrary to scripture, it is likely that with many the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction. Biblical election is certainly conditional but it is also individual or personal. The distinctive element of Calvinistic election is its unconditional nature, not that it is individual. Only the former must be rejected; to reject the latter also is an overreaction and a distortion of the Bible's own thinking.

Note from the following scriptures that salvation is always in terms of persons. In Romans 8:29-30 Paul is speaking of **persons**. The same individuals who are predestined are also called, justified and glorified. In 2 Thess. 2:13 Paul said, "*God hath from the beginning chosen you*" the Christian people in Thessalonica, "*to salvation*." While Ephesians 1:4, 5, 11 speaks of God's predestination in relation to His plan, it is specifically

stated that God predestined **us** (persons) to adopt as sons in **accordance with** His purpose and plan.

Frequently, though not exclusively, the Bible speaks of predestination in terms of specific individuals. In Rom. 16:13, Rufus is indentified as an elected person. In I Peter 1:1-2 Peter greets elect Christians in certain specific geographical locations. Again note that to the Thessalonians Paul said "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation". Especially noteworthy is Rev. 3:5 and 17:8 which refer to the names of people written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Their very **names** have been known by God from the beginning. What can this be but the predestination of individual people.

Some may object saying, "How can this be if man is a freewill agent?" The key is in the inseparable connection between predestination and God's foreknowledge (Rom. 8:29-30). One brother put it this way,

"God, before the world began, looked ahead and saw that certain persons would obey His word and that others would not. I do not mean that God foresaw that some would and some would not obey; rather, God foreknew exactly who would and who would not obey His word. Yet, foreknowledge is not predestination. Furthermore, for God to foreknow what a man with free will is going to do is no more difficult for his almighty power and omniscience than for him to know what a mere robot would do. Hence, I see no problem in admitting that God knew before the world ever began all persons who would be saved and all who would be lost. To teach that God predetermined both of these groups, however, causes untold problems for the disciple of the Biblical text" (Truth Magazine, Vol. XXII, No. 35, p. 564-565).

Simply stated, my point is this. The Calvinistic error is avoided by teaching conditional election. However, the Biblical doctrine of election includes the conditional election of **individuals** to salvation. Through His foreknowledge God has seen who will believe in Christ and become united with Him in baptism; then, before the creation of the world, He predestined these believers to share the glory of the risen Christ.

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: For The Work Of Service

by Darrell Hymel

Why Was Paul Such A Good Soul Winner?

Paul said, "Be ye followers of me even as I am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). Will you imitate Paul in as many characteristics as you can so that you might be a fruitful soulwinner?

Paul prayed. You will not win souls without prayer. We can plant and water but God must give the increase. Paul prayed for the lost (Rom. 10:1) and continued to pray for the saved (Col. 1:9). If you have a difficult task finding the time to win souls or you lack the courage or can't seem to find the opportunity, then follow this suggestion. Make a list of individuals that are lost that you would like to influence for Christ. Make the list short at first and everytime you pray that week, ask God to grant opportunity to introduce the gospel to them. Ask for wisdom and patience. Mention them by name in your prayers. Ask other Christians to petition God on behalf of you and your prospects. If you pray sincerely, your request will be granted.

Paul did not become discouraged. After we have prayed that an opportunity will be granted for us to introduce the gospel, how are we going to react if no interest is shown? First, be patient. Seed that is sowed takes time to germinate and produce new life. As I was sitting here writing this article, I received a phone call from a lady who wants to study: I left an advertisement at her door six months ago. I had a four hour study with a couple last night who called me on the phone asking for the study, but had quit taking a correspondence course eighteen months earlier. Her call this week was spurred on by a public service newspaper advertisement she saw about us last Friday. The lesson: a

"no" answer is not necessarily permanent. Keep praying and keep making yourself available. Make social ties if possible and use every opportunity to have a spiritual conversation. Meet the person where they are. If they are drawing water, talk about living water. If they are eating lunch, talk about how well nourished you were by the sermon Sunday. Yes, we can run the risk of driving away people by talking religion all the time so some care should be taken to avoid this, but we can second guess ourselves to the judgement day if we are not careful. Often times, "looking for the best moment" causes us to never find that moment. Today is the day of salvation.

Second, another reason Paul did not become discouraged was he realized that his acceptance with God did not depend on "how many" souls were saved but on "how much seed was sowed". Let's stop counting baptisms and start counting home studies and the leaflets left on doors. Let's stop worrying about a refused invitation and begin to concentrate on the characteristics that made Paul such a successful soulwinner. If he got thrown out of Philippi there was always Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. Paul realized that he must be careful how he built on the foundation and he did not want a life's work to be burned up, but he also realized that his soul salvation did not depend on others accepting the message (I Cor. 3:12-15).

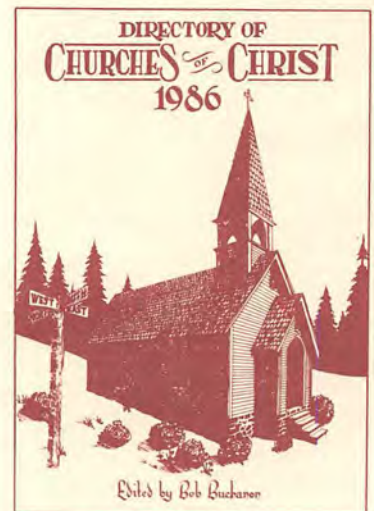
Paul loved the souls of men. If possible, he would have given his own soul for his Jewish brethren in the flesh (Rom. 9:3). Paul willingly suffered to save the souls of men. "For which I

suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this cause I endure all things for the sake of those who were chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:9-10). When we look at the list of sacrifices and persecutions Paul was subjected to in 2 Cor. 11:23-28, we should be ashamed we can not give up one meal time or a favorite T.V. program to teach the gospel or to set up a study for some other teacher.

Paul did not become a stumbling block. "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more" (I Cor. 9:19). After showing that he would alter his lifestyle to win some to Christ (vs. 20-22), he said, "I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it" (vs. 22-23). Many are not soulwinners because they love their "rights" more than the souls of men. When I model my life after Paul, my rights take second place to my neighbors greatest need. When we know what it means to be the slave of men, we will win souls, and not before.

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FROM PAUL TO PHILIPPI, WITH LOVE by Anna M. Griffith (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1985, paperback, 132 pages, \$4.95.

Paul's letter to the Philippians addresses the need for oneness in Christ, growing together spiritually, and reaching heaven with one another's help. Griffith illustrates with her own goals and challenges how we as Christians today may meet these needs.

This little book takes a devotional-type approach to the book of Philippians. The author has included an examination of key Greek words which provides for a deeper study. It was not intended to be deep or scholarly. This volume does not purport to bring out any new truths about the letter. The purpose is merely to point out areas which the author considers relevant to today's Christian.

GOD'S MAN IN TIME OF DEATH by Rex Kyker (Abilene Christian University Bookstore: Abilene, Texas), 1982, paperback, 91 pages, \$5.95.

Gospel preachers are often asked to assist in the difficult assignment of preaching a funeral. These are difficult for anyone, but even more so for the young gospel preacher that has never experienced tragedies like this before. Kyker felt that a book was needed to help encourage the young minister in his need for comforting families at the time of death.

The author deals with the funeral service itself, everything from selecting the text to conducting the service with appropriate songs and/or poetry. He deals with the pre-need and the post-need periods and how the preacher can

truly give the family a shoulder to cry on and a hand to hold.

This book shares with the reader actual cases in the author's ministry of comfort. He has devoted one chapter to "Services for Those Young in Years." He deals with the stillborn death, infants that die from various causes, a teenager killed in a game of "chicken," a young man who wouldn't accept Christ, a Marine veteran who saves his brother in death, the death of an only child, and other important cases. Another chapter is devoted to "Services for Those Mature in Years." Kyker tells about the death of faithful gospel preachers, hard-working elders, an apostate, one killed in God's service, a suicide, etc.

Few books have dealt with this important theme. It would be an excellent book for all ministers (whether they are preachers or not).

GOD'S WOMAN by C.R. Nichol (Abilene Christian University Bookstore: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 186 pages, \$5.00.

This work was originally published in 1983 and has enjoyed numerous reprintings. It has proven to be a favorite for ladies' Bible classes. Questions and topics for discussion are included at the end of each section.

Nichol deals with pertinent issues like proper subjection, the dress of women, working women, customs and symbols of sex relationships, the deaconess, and woman's role in teaching. Although written nearly fifty years ago, the material needs to be studied by every generation.

PREACHING THROUGH REVELATION by John Stacy (Stacy Publications: Lake Station, Indiana), 1983, hardback, 240 pages, \$7.00.

The last book of the New Testament has been a breeding ground for many false doctrines. Many people view Revelation as a dark and mysterious book that can't be understood. Stacy preached a series of sermons with the conviction that God's people must

have a basic, overall understanding of the Apocalypse to keep from being swept away into the false doctrines that are associated with this great book.

This volume is not meant to be a scholarly commentary; it is meant to be a book of practical sermons that can be read and/or preached.

SERMONS ON HEAVEN AND HELL by John Stacy (Stacy Publications: Lake Station, Indiana), 1982, paperback, 91 pages, \$3.00.

Heaven is pictured in the Bible as a home the Lord has prepared for the righteous, and hell is described as a place for the wicked. Both will be for eternity. There will be nothing more beautiful than heaven and there will never be anything more horrible than hell. We need to be well informed concerning both so that we might make a wise decision as to the one we chose for our future dwelling place.

This book contains thirteen sermons that cover a range of subjects from facts about heaven, recognition in heaven, those that will and will not be in heaven, hell is no joke, the horrors of hell, and much more.

PARENTS AT THEIR BEST by Clyde M. Narramore (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1985, paperback, 192 pages, \$6.95.

Parents are the foundation for a strong, stable family. But social pressure and our uneasy culture all contribute toward making the responsibilities of parenting less than the joy it should be. The author of this book, a noted psychologist, gives sound, encouraging advice to parents on how to provide a solid home for their children.

Narramore recognizes the pressures that make parenting difficult today, and he discusses what makes a family healthy--and then describes what can go wrong and why. He has included a comprehensive checklist containing the features that characterize a happy family, including self-respect and mutual respect among family

members, expressing and showing love, spiritual fulfillment, and the identification of personal and family goals.

With the help of this book, family members can learn their strengths and weaknesses and work on the areas in which they fall short.

In addition, Narramore uses the knowledge he has learned during years as a family counselor to discuss the problems that most often arise in families. For example, he discusses what to do if a child runs away from home, how to tell if a person needs professional help, and how to deal with a situation where you suspect physical abuse, or drug or alcohol dependency.

LEADERSHIP LIFESTYLE by *Ajith Fernando* (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois), 1985, paperback, 171 pages, \$6.95.

This book is the latest release in the Living Studies Series, book of high quality that are timely and relevant to today's problems and challenges. The author has thought clearly, read widely, and written practically.

Fernando sees our great need for good religious leaders. He knows that they must be spiritually prepared, biblically grounded, and practically alert. His work is well based on a masterpiece of leadership training. Paul's letter to Timothy is God's inspired gift to us. Paul shows how leaders should be sought, taught, encouraged, warned, and directed.

One message that comes through loud and clear is that the church needs real leaders--men who are more than just managers of people, money, and a bunch of charts or statistics. This book is a clear call to a return to the biblical perspective of leadership.

Much of the material in chapter one is taken from the author's talk "The Ministry of Multiplication," which was first given at the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam in July 1983. It has been renamed "Leadership as Parenthood" for this book. The material in this one chapter is worth the price of the book.

TELL IT TO THE CHURCH by *Lynn R. Buzzard and Laurence Eck* (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois), 1985, paperback, 218 pages, \$6.95.

22,000 lawsuits are filed every day! A woman in Texas brought suit against

a veterinarian for negligently shearing curls from her pet Afghan. She sought and won damages of \$468.00. The doctor arrived with the money in pennies, and began to count it out penny by penny, whereupon the woman's attorney called in the news media. When the press appeared, the doctor threatened a further suit for libel. This case took three years and three sets of lawyers.

Gail Dickie, a gymnast, filed suit against the *Guinness Book of World Records* and ABC for \$5 million for failing to list her record of 13,104 sit-ups in a contest in California. That is \$381.56 per sit-up.

These are just two examples in the introduction of this new book. Suing is news. It is big business. Our culture's best legal advice seems to be, "When in doubt, sue!" This is advice which the church has come to accept as a normal response to conflict. Why is it happening? What can we do about it? *Tell It To The Church* shows how the church can follow Christ's command in Matthew 18 to settle disputes among believers.

The authors deal with the dilemma of suing, the challenge of reconciliation, the dimensions of peacemaking, readiness for reconciliation, and much, much more. Although the book contains a few denominational jargons that all will not agree with, it is packed with useful material for all members of the church to read.

BAPTISTS AND THE BIBLE by *L. Russ Bush and Tom J. Nettles* (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1985, paperback, 456 pages, \$10.95.

The most recent conference of the Southern Baptists drew national attention to the problems they have over the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible. Traditionally the Baptists have held to a strict fundamental approach to these issues, but of late, division has fractured that very prominent protestant body. The authors take the reader through historical documentation of the early days of their Baptist history. Such great names as Broadus, Judson, Toy, Matthews, and many more are among the vast number of principals in the Baptist Church who have had an impact on the issues undergirding the current debate over the Bible. The book tries to seek middle-ground, as it

appears to this reviewer, realistically dealing with problems one encounters with a literal acceptance of the Bible as directly coming from God's own handwriting. On the other hand, it is difficult to understand how the authors deal with the question of authority, condemning such things as infant baptism, while justifying many similar things. It is a good historical account of the issues involved and draws some interesting conclusions for Baptists and all others to consider regarding the Bible.

RUN WITH THE HORSES by *Eugene H. Peterson* (Intervarsity Press: Downers Grove, Illinois), 1983, paperback, 213 pages, \$5.95.

The author is a fluid writer with a great command of words. He is the author of several similar books which mostly consists of printed sermons. In this book, Peterson deals with the trials, tribulations and triumphs of the prophet Jeremiah. One of the fascinating things about this is the way in which the ancient truths are fitted into a modern setting. It is a book for all and swings from looking at us as mere weak human beings to the God-given and promised possibilities we have as we live for Him. It is a very helpful book for today's hectic and often humdrum existence.

BOOK OF CULTS by *Bob Larson* (Tyndale Press: Wheaton, Illinois), 1984, paperback, 428 pages, \$8.95.

An extensive review of most of the major and a large number of the minor cults, this work deals with the origin and rise of cultic groups that have targeted the USA in the last few years. Larson analyzes these cultic groups historically, sociologically and theologically. One useful aspect Larson uses in the argumentation showing how these groups deny Scripture or deviate from it. Readers of this book may find some of his reasoning self-contradictory and lacking to some degree, but the vast amount of research and study will be of help to anyone interested in dealing with modern day cults.

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A Woman's Point Of View



I DID NOT MARRY A CHRISTIAN

Name Withheld by Request

Several months ago an article appeared entitled "I Married a Christian." I read the article with great interest and it drove home some very sobering thoughts. As I read the article I could not help but think of what a contrast my own life was, for you see, I didn't marry a Christian.

No one told me of the unhappiness I was due in marrying a non-Christian. At the time I married, my parents were not faithful and consequently neither was I. I cannot put the responsibility for my actions on them. I was eighteen years old and knew what the Bible taught on marriage.

Now after having lived with a non-Christian for almost ten years, I have been made aware of how important it is for our young people to marry Christians. These ten years have not made me an expert on the subject but they have made me realize that I should try to teach and/or discourage others from making the same mistake.

When I fell in love with my husband I could not think about those things that **could** lie ahead. The only thing I knew was that I loved him with all my heart and that no one knew or had experienced **this** kind of love. Ours was different — I felt there was nothing that could ever come between us that we could not overcome. The love that we had for each other would always be there.

After we were married, I was soon to realize how our attitudes and thinking varied. We rented a small apartment and were soon entertaining other non-Christians in our home. The

drinking and dancing were all part of the things I had been taught to abhor. And yet right in my own home I was consenting to, **and becoming a part of**, things that a Christian has no business doing, I was getting further and further away from the church. I knew what I should be doing as a Christian and yet I was doing nothing to change. **We** were happy by most people's standards, but I was miserable. I knew my husband did not share my love for the truth and he was not serious minded about things like that. I loved him so much and I was learning a hard, cold fact — that love was not enough. I wanted to return to my "first love." We talked about my return to the church and I realized another fact - he had no intention of going with me in spite of his promises (before marriage) that he would. I decided to wait about returning and try to work things out as best I could. In the meantime, we found out we were expecting our first child. I was elated! I also was made aware of the creation of God within me. I was soon to become a mother and have a life truly influenced by me. I was going to get my heart right with God again.

I repented of my sins and started trying to live the life I so wanted to live. It was hard. First, because I had no encouragement from my husband. Secondly, we still had all our non-Christian friends in and out. My Christian friends from the church came but not too often because my husband openly did not like them. I loved them and wanted them in my home. I needed them. Somewhere about this time was

when the hostility began. I was seeing and hearing a different guy from that wonderful guy I married. There was a wall building between us. We both could sense something changing, but didn't know how to handle it. Where was the love that was going to make all this right? Out of love for my husband, I again stopped attending church. I did not attend for months. I was miserable inside again. After the birth of our daughter, I wanted to get started back to church. My husband's answer was "No." He wanted me to start going to church with him where he went as a child — a denominational church that did not follow God's Word. We really had problems there. I knew the error they taught and I could not worship there. He insisted; I resisted. I then began to try to teach him the truth. He resisted. The next few years were good sometimes, bad sometimes. I was faithful for a while and then unfaithful for a while. When my faithfulness began to put a strain on my marriage, I would slack off and be unfaithful. My husband became jealous of the church and my time there. He could see no reason for attending **every** service. We began to have verbal fights every time I started getting ready for a church service. He would say mean and cruel things about the church and about people there. We were constantly "going at each other" about church related things. Before long the strain was showing in everything. We fought about money, church, drinking, drinking friends, church, how to handle our daughter, church. The list could go on and on. Here again I stopped attending church.

Three and a half years ago I repented again and started to live the Christian life. I thank God that He spared my life and let me live long enough to get back. There is no turning back for me now. We have three children now and I want more than anything to have a Christian home for them. This presents another problem. My husband and I do not agree on how to bring up the children. I say one thing, he says another. We are both pulling in different directions. He approves of daughters in swim suits, shorts, etc. I disapprove. I believe in teaching them to put God first in their life and to be faithful. He still can see no reason to attend every service and openly overrides me when I insist the children go. Where was the love that

was going to work all this out?

Our marriage has deteriorated greatly over these last few years. This "church problem," as my husband puts it, has moved into every aspect of our marriage. We find ourselves fighting over simple things. We both keep things bottled up inside and find that we can't talk things out anymore. I am ill with the children much too often. I know it's because things are not right between my husband and myself. There are periods of time that my husband chooses to sleep on the couch in the den — not because I want him to, but seemingly as a form of punishment to me.

My marriage has reached a disastrous point. My husband has given an ultimatum. I have to make a choice - him or the church. Those of you who are Christians know what a rough decision I had. I, of course, have chosen the Lord. I still love my husband with all my heart and have prayed that God would open his heart to understand the truth. I know I have

to remain faithful and do what God has commanded me to do. It looks dark sometimes and yet I have "to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:4). I'm so weary from being torn between my husband and the Lord.

My husband and I have both realized that we made a mistake. He has said many times that if he had it to do over that he would never have married me. This hurts, but I must confess I would not either. Most couples we know where a Christian is married to a non-Christian say the same thing—"Don't do it!"

So many times, the one who is not a Christian pulls the Christian away. In a survey I read not long ago based on 49 mixed marriages, 29 left the Lord, and 21 remained faithful. Of the faithful only 9 converted their companions, 12 have not converted their companions. Another survey stated that 25% of those who contracted a mixed marriage leave the church altogether. That is

frightening.

To our young people I would say that God frowns on mixed marriages. In 2 Corinthians 6:14, 15, we are taught not to become unequally yoked together. The damage done is not just to yourself, but to your husband or wife and then to your children.

I know that my husband and I have not had the marriage God intended. We will always be two instead of one in soul and spirit.

Love is wonderful, but marriage consists of everyday living together. There are enough things to contend with as newlyweds without adding a mixed marriage to the list.

My prayer is that this article may in some way make our young people, or anyone planning to marry, to marry a Christian. I can't do mine over again, but I can teach my children and others how important it is to marry a Christian and to make that home the kind the Lord intended for it to be.

Can We See The Bible Alike?

by Aude McKee

Several years ago the AP carried a story from a large city about a man that was shot to death in an argument over whether Lucifer (Isa. 14:12), was male or female. Such things as this are sometimes used to prove that we cannot see the Bible alike. Others will point to all the denominations in America and then make the observation, "People can't see the Bible alike." The truth is, we have inherited a situation (a divided religious world), and instead of trying to do something about it, we look around for a way to justify it.

But worse than this, there are times when people will even argue that God did not intend for people to see the Bible alike. But for an argument like this to "hold water," either God made His revelation to man so difficult that man lacks the ability to understand it, or, He made people so different that a common understanding is impossible. We deny both positions. What would be the sense of God's giving man a revelation that was impossible to understand either because of the

complexity of the revelation or man's intellectual incapacities? What a cruel and ignorant god that would be! That would be like a school board deciding to put a text book, written on the level of people seeking a PHD, in the required studies for a group of 1st graders. That would be a cruel and ignorant thing to do! Our God is neither cruel nor ignorant!

GOD EXPECTS MAN TO UNDERSTAND HIS WILL

In Matthew's account of the Great Commission, Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations. . ." Why would Jesus, the Son of God, tell His apostles to go and teach people if what they were going to teach could not be understood? Did not Jesus, in the command, necessarily imply that the material to be taught was simple enough to be understood and that those to be taught were capable of understanding?

One of the answers to our present-day situation was given by Jesus a long time ago in Matt. 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their

ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Jesus placed the blame for not understanding squarely at the feet of those who heard the teaching. They closed their own eyes, stopped their own ears, and hardened their own hearts so that they did not understand!!

Incidentally, had you thought about the fact that if a thing is **understood** by two individuals, they necessarily will understand it **alike**? If two people disagree on something, one or the other (or both) did not understand! If one person "understands" baptism to be sprinkling, another "understands" it to be pouring, then neither of the two really understands what the New Testament teaches. Why even the Greek word for baptism means "immersion." In other words, it is impossible to "understand" baptism incorrectly. So if you and I disagree over something the Bible teaches, we both need to keep studying. When we both **understand** we will agree.

The Poet's Page

AN APPLE

I come in red, yellow, or green;
 I can be bitter or sweet.
 I must be washed,
 before you can eat.
 I make teeth white.
 I give you good health.
 They put me in cans,
 and then on a shelf.
 I think I am the
 most popular of all,
 and I am picked
 in the early fall.
 If the story is true
 of what they say about me,
 I am a delicious gift
 from God to thee.

--Arthur Semlow
 Chardon, OH

TIME

There is a precious thing we are granted
 in life
 It is not our children or our wife
 And it is not very often that it comes to
 our mind
 That precious thing is our time

We should use it wisely every day
 Because it will never come back our way
 We can use it to gripe or use it to fuss
 But it is sure to run out for each of us

There should not be a day to waste
 For it is surely passing in haste
 So spend it trying to accomplish
 something great
 Don't put it off, there is no time to wait

Why not enjoy this precious time
 And always to others be good and kind
 As the years go swiftly passing by
 Make the most of them before we shall
 die

Never live our lives in such a pace
 And let our precious moments go to
 waste
 For life on earth will come to an end
 And we will never have a chance to live
 it again

--Sonny Taylor
 Grenada, MS

WHEN I MUST LEAVE YOU

When I must leave you
 For a little while—
 Please do not grieve
 And shed wild tears
 And hug your sorrow to you
 Through the years,
 But start out bravely
 With a gallant smile;
 And for my sake
 And in my name
 Live on and do
 All things the same,
 Feed not your loneliness
 On empty days,
 But fill each waking hour
 In useful ways,
 Reach out your hand
 In comfort and in cheer
 And I in turn will comfort you
 And hold you near;
 And never, never
 Be afraid to die,
 For I am waiting for you in the sky!

--Derek Griffin
 Athens, AL

A CHARTED COURSE

As you walk life's path together
 And chart your course day by day,
 There'll be lots of blue skies
 But also clouds of gray.

When troubles come to threaten
 Your happiness and peace,
 Hold fast to one another
 The storm clouds soon will cease.

Just always remember your Maker
 And stick to your charted course,
 In every crisis trust Him
 For strength, He'll be your source.

Take time to enjoy life
 Ne'er forget in life's busy hour.
 The voyage of life is brief
 Our destiny is in God's power.

May you sail through golden mornings,
 Cool twilights, evenings fair,
 And then with new day dawning
 A golden shore out there.

--Mary Frances Liggin
 Panama City Beach, FL

TOUCH OF THE MASTER'S HAND

I care not for riches
 Nor the world I do not know.
 Just an humble cottage
 To live in, while here below.
 Doing and giving the love I understand.
 Receiving the touch of the Master's hand.

The Master knows my every need
 And the vessel he chooses
 To do the good deed.
 He knows it's never by demand,
 Just another touch of the Master's hand.

I do not wish or want
 Things that cannot be.
 The showers of blessings,
 Are enough for me.

If I just sleep at night
 And awake to a new day,
 There will be someone to
 Love and be loved on my way.
 Love is a command!
 A touch of the Master's hand.

--Wilma Bray
 Columbus, IN

GRANDMA'S EXAMPLE

Thank you God, for giving me
 Grandma. She scrubbed my face and
 walked me to worship when I was a
 child.

She grew old and faithfully
 attended worship.

She grew sick and talked of how she
 longed to return to worship.

Thanks to you, Father, she gained
 strength and one last time attended
 worship with us.

She grew sick again, she left us with
 one last word to hold on to, one last
 word to grow on, one last word to
 encourage us to attend worship.

She left us with a word to fight for,
 a word to hope for, a way for us to
 desire.

Grandma's last word to us ----
 "HEAVEN".

--Brenda Gentry
 Sumner, IL

HAPPENINGS

News and Notes From Around The World

ARGUMENTS HEARD IN EQUAL ACCESS CASE

Oral arguments have been heard in what may be the most important church-state case before the Supreme Court this term, **Bender v. Williamsport**, a case involving Bible clubs in public schools.

The case, which will have an impact on the Equal Access Act passed last year by Congress, involves a group of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, high school students who were prohibited from holding Bible club meetings during scheduled school activities periods. The school board held that allowing students to meet for religious clubs would be an unconstitutional "establishment of religion." The students argued that prohibiting the meeting interfered with their constitutionally-guaranteed "free exercise" of religion.

Attorney James M. Smart, Jr., said "the crucial distinction is individual versus state action. Is the government acting to promote or conduct (the meeting) or are private individuals?" Smart, an attorney with the Christian Legal Society, successfully argued a similar case, *Widmar v. Vincent*, before the Supreme Court in 1981. In that case the Court ruled that public universities must permit student groups to meet on campus without regard to the subject matter being discussed.

The Williamsport students seek to establish the same right for high school students. But Attorney John C. Youngman, former Williamsport school board member, told the Court that this case differs substantially from *Widmar*. Youngman argued that not all high school students would understand that a religious meeting in a classroom was student sponsored, and that such a meeting could give the impression of support for religion by school administrators.

Youngman was challenged by Chief

Justice Warren Burger and Associate Justice Byron White. If students formed a group called "Students Against Taxation." White wondered, "would the public think that the views expressed at that meeting were the school's?"

Smart was questioned about the possibility of Equal Access being used to push religion on children who are too young to initiate their own meetings. He responded, "There is some age at which any school religious activity may be reasonably interpreted as having been sponsored by the school, such as kindergarten prayer."

The Equal Access Act, passed last year by Congress, is not directly at issue in this case, since the case began before the law was in effect. But a decision against the students would probably doom the law, while a decision for the students would firmly establish Equal Access as a right in public schools.

CONCERN OVER SPREAD OF DISEASE AFFECTING COMMUNION PRACTICE

The use of a common cup for communion is losing popularity as fear of possible disease transmission increases.

Concern from some Episcopalians that they could contract AIDS from the common cup used in communion prompted the Episcopal Bishop of Minnesota to issue a pastoral letter dealing with the issue.

Robert Anderson, head of the 40,000 member church in Minnesota, said that while the AIDS virus has been found in saliva, no evidence existed to indicate that the virus could be transmitted through saliva. Anderson noted that AIDS victims had reason to fear the common cup as well, since any disease transmitted through the cup, such as a cold or influenza, could prove fatal to a person with AIDS.

A gay and lesbian Lutheran group has stopped using a common cup, but says fear of AIDS is not the reason. Leo Treadway, ministry associate at St. Paul Reformation Lutheran Church, said a decision to make grape juice available as an alternative to wine has resulted in a new practice. Members now dip their bread into the chalice of their choice.

Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, recently discontinued use of the common cup after a task force studied the theological and public health aspects of the practice. The seminary, America's largest graduate-level Lutheran Seminary, now uses a pouring chalice with individual cups during Holy Communion.

According to Campus pastor Paul Knutson, the decision was not motivated by fear of AIDS, but because of general concerns over health aspects of the common cup. "After even a few communicants have been served from the common cup, the cup becomes heavily contaminated with millions of bacteria and viruses," wrote retired professor of Public Health George Michaelson, an American Lutheran Church layman. "For about a dozen illnesses, the major means of disease transmission is the common drinking cup or glass."

COUPLE SUES CHURCH WHEN WORLD DOESN'T END AS PROMISED

A couple from Lowry, Minn., is suing the Worldwide Church of God for \$5 million, alleging that church officials told them the world was going to end and defrauded them of 160 acres of farmland.

Gilman K. Anderson and his wife Gladys say they gave away much of their farm in 1969 when representatives of the California church told them the world was coming to an end.

The Andersons said they were told

in 1969 that they would have to move to Petra, Jordan, for safety when the call from the church came. In 1971 they were told that there would be a famine so severe that people would eat their own children to survive. They also say they were told that Germany was going to attack and destroy the U.S. in 1975.

Attorneys for the church argued that the court has no business determining the truthfulness of religious beliefs, and also argued that the federal statute of limitations for fraud claims is six years.

CITY ORDINANCE BARS CHILDREN FROM SOME ROCK CONCERTS

The City Council in San Antonio, Texas, has passed an ordinance barring unescorted children from attending rock concerts at a city arena if the musicians depict certain sexual acts in their performance.

"What we are saying with this is that we as a council do not approve of blatantly and purposely obscene performances where children are present," explained Mayor Henry Cisneros.

The ordinance restricts those age 13 and under from attending concerts at the city's convention center, if those concerts contain songs referring to exhibitionism, bestiality, incest, sadistic or masochistic sex, or rape. Concerts displaying any of those acts on stage are also affected.

Nancy Myers, a local representative of Concerned Women for America, told the council "Your foresight and concern for decency will set a precedent in America."

STUDY FINDS TEXTBOOKS ARE BIASED AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

Public school textbooks are biased against religion and traditional values, according to a study by Paul C. Vitz, a New York University psychology professor.

Vitz reviewed dozens of textbooks commonly used in public schools and found that "public school textbooks present a very biased representation of both religion and of many traditional values."

Among 40 social studies textbooks for grades 1-4, "not one. . . had one word of text that referred to any religious activity representative of contemporary American life." said the

report. Vitz was joined on the project by other professors, including Donald Oppewal of Calvin College.

Oppewal contrasted the treatment of religion with information about sex in health books. He quoted one text which said, "Although homosexual acts have traditionally been categorized as deviant or unnatural, there is no evidence that they are any more or less so than heterosexual acts."

The report also said that in several sixth-grade world history or world culture texts, "Mohammed's life gets much more coverage than that of Jesus."

PENTHOUSE, PLAYBOY BLAME CIRCULATION LOSSES ON NFD

Penthouse and *Playboy* magazines have both suffered serious circulation drops, and both attribute the drops to efforts by the National Federation of Decency, according to a report in NFD journal.

The report cites an article in *Advertising Age*, which said, "*Playboy's* current 4,202,324 circulation is far below the 7.2 million it claimed at its peak in 1972.

Penthouse's circulation, which peaked at 4,711,849 in 1979, now stands at 3,200,863. . . Executives from both magazines say these circulation drops are in large part a result of boycotts by groups, such as the National Federation for Decency, that have lobbied to prevent distribution of the magazines at convenience stores."

NFD reports that single copy sales, in stores such as 7-Eleven, account for 93 percent of all sales for *Penthouse*, and nearly 40 percent of *Playboy's* distribution. NFD estimates that sale of pornographic magazines brings 7-Eleven an annual profit of \$30 million.

FUNDAMENTALISM'S GROWTH LINKED TO TV SALES SAYS SOCIOLOGIST HADDEN

Fundamentalism and the "New Christmas Right" will become a major social movement in America in coming years, according to sociologist Jeffrey K. Hadden, past president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

In a paper titled "Religious Broadcasting and the Mobilization of the New Christian Right," presented to a joint congress of the 1400-member society Hadden formerly led and the smaller Religious Research

Organization, Hadden cited television evangelists as a major factor in fundamentalism's strength.

"Media access is a critical resource in a social movement and. . . the 'televangelists' have greater unrestrained access to media than any other interest group in America," he said.

Hadden cited a recent study by the A.C. Nielson company, which reported that more than 61 million homes (40 percent of all U.S. households with TV sets) watched one or more of the top 10 syndicated religious shows for at least six minutes during the survey period (Feb. 1984). This audience estimate is much higher than analysts had previously thought.

Hadden said, "At about the same time Billy Graham decided to go on television, two itinerant evangelists from Oklahoma and Arkansas also recognized the potential of television. . . Oral Roberts brought the television cameras into his revival tent; Rex Humbard sold his tent and built a cathedral especially equipped for broadcasting. A new era was born."

ATHEIST CHALLENGES OFFICE OF U.S. SENATE CHAPLAIN

Atheist Paul Kurtz has challenged the office of U.S. Senate Chaplain in a pair of federal district court lawsuits.

In one suit, Kurtz asked that the Senate chaplain be restricted from using language that would disparage atheist beliefs. Kurtz also asked the court to afford him an opportunity to address the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Ronald A. Lindsay, an attorney for Kurtz, argued that his client should be given the same opportunity as guest chaplains from across the U.S. who are invited to open Congressional sessions. Kurtz would open the sessions with an "ethical statement."

Senate legal counsel Michael Davidson said the congressional rules and history make no provision for an individual demanding to be heard. He also said that the function of guest chaplains is limited to an opening prayer "evoking divine guidance," rather than outlining a philosophical view.

In a second suit, Kurtz challenges the use of public funds for printing the Senate chaplain's prayers in book form. A publication prepared by the government Printing Office contains

the opening prayer from each Senate session as well as other official prayers and comments by the chaplain. Lindsay said an estimated \$20-30,000 is spent each year to print Senate prayer books. Lindsay further argued that using public funds for the publication unconstitutionally advanced religion.

Defense attorney Sandra Schraibman argued that the publication serves the secular purpose of making the public aware of what is being said by the chaplain.

BHAGWAN DECLARED HIS RELIGION DEAD SHORTLY BEFORE HIS ARREST

Shortly before fleeing Oregon to avoid immigration charges, Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh burned copies of the Book of Rajneeshism, told followers they can stop wearing their trademark red clothing and their malas (bead necklaces with lockets bearing the Bhagwan's photo), and declared the religion of Rajneeshism dead.

"I am against all religions, because they have done only harm to humanity," said Rajneesh. The guru told the crowd at the book burning, "I am not your leader, you are not my followers. Just being friends is enough."

Rajneesh said that meditation, not religion, was his message. Asked by a follower if meditation was necessary now that the religion of Rajneeshism was dead, Rajneesh said, "Without meditation, what are you doing here? Get lost. Go to the country road which goes directly to hell."

FALWELL VISITS PHILIPPINES, PRAISES PRESIDENT MARCOS

Jerry Falwell expressed support for Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos, telling citizens of that country, "I don't think any fair person can deny the fact that if it had not been for the Marcos family, the chances are that the freedoms you enjoy now would not be here."

Falwell spent two days in the Philippines, visiting primarily with Marcos and his wife Imelda. He called the Philippines "a great land and a free country," and "one of the best friends America has in the whole world."

Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority, said that he hoped to heighten American support for the Philippines as he had tried to heighten

support for South Africa during a recent visit there. "I hope we can do here what we have tried to do in Central America and South Africa," he said at a news conference. "That is awaken the American people and particularly conservative Christians in America to the serious threat of Communist expansion in the free world."

He praised Marcos for calling for elections early next year, and urged the U.S. government to do "whatever is necessary" to stop the spread of communism in the Philippines, saying that if that nation fell to Communists, "forget it - there will never be another election, and neither the United States nor anybody else will ever, ever liberate the country."

Marcos has come under heavy criticism recently, both in his own country and in the U.S. Marcos, whose constitutional term as president of the Philippines expired years ago, has maintained power by placing the country under martial law. Critics say his military dictatorship has killed several hundred student activists, peasant leaders, union organizers, human-rights lawyers and journalists, and more than a dozen priests. Charges of official corruption have been growing, and a Senate Intelligence Committee noted that while "enriching oneself while in office has been a commonly accepted practice" in the Philippines, Marcos has "well exceeded social norms."

SEX EDUCATION TEACHER SUES CRITICAL PARENTS

A Pennsylvania high school teacher whose methods have been criticized by local parents, preachers and community leaders, has sued her critics for defamation of character and invasion of privacy. The suit includes 113 parties, including a local newspaper, a religious television station, and many citizens who signed a petition against her.

Early last year, parents of high school students approached the school board with complaints against Marlene Stein, who teaches health education at Red Lion High School near York, Pennsylvania. Parents complained about some of Stein's methods and about viewpoints expressed during the sex education segment of her health course.

People in the community circulated

a petition calling for an investigation of Stein's conduct. By unanimous vote, the school board refused to take action against Stein. The citizen's group then took their case to court, where they were told that their proper redress was to elect school board members who agreed with their petition.

Stein has now turned the tables on the citizen's group with her lawsuit. Beverly LaHaye's Concerned Women for America has volunteered to supply legal defense for the defendants who have not obtained other legal counsel.

A fund-raising appeal distributed by CWA detailed allegations against Stein. According to the letter, Stein required members of the girl's swim team to practice naked if they arrived late to practice, and had the team swim nude in the school gym—on one occasion a male was present. Stein also reportedly used foul language in class, and encouraged the use of sex-related slang. The letter also says Stein gave students detailed descriptions of positions for homosexual acts, and said homosexuality was preferred to heterosexuality. Stein also allegedly compelled girls to sit on her lap and kiss her, and "encouraged the kind of relationship with the girls on her team where they brought her adult-oriented, sexually-deviant gifts". Stein also allegedly told students that they could "come to her house if they wanted to get drunk".

Beverly LaHaye said, "We are not merely defending the right of Christians to speak out against unrighteousness. We are not merely opposing a radical and immoral style of teaching. We are also protecting children from immoral indoctrination which could destroy them".

A BLASPHEMOUS BUMPER STICKER

A woman has been found guilty of violating the blasphemy paragraph of West Germany's criminal code. Birgin Roermann, who manufactured a bumper sticker critical of the Catholic church's ban on contraception, was convicted for violating the law, which prohibits a person from showing contempt for an established religious faith in such a manner that public order is likely to be disturbed. Roermann is appealing the verdict. At least five other West Germans have been found guilty of similar offenses.

HONORARY DEGREE AWARDED TO MOON EARNS DISDAIN FOR DIVINITY SCHOOL

A black Baptist organization that supports Shaw University Divinity School has denounced the seminary's decision to award an honorary degree to Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church.

In a resolution passed by the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the organization went "on record as vehemently viewing with disdain" the divinity school's decision to accept a \$30,000 gift from Moon's church, which may have prompted the award. The convention added, "We hereby further express grave concern with any criteria used to justify the awarding of the honorary doctor of divinity degree to Sun Myung Moon."

J.C. Harris, vice president of the state convention and member of the seminary's board of trustees, felt the resolution should have been stronger. He wanted the convention to deliver an ultimatum to the divinity school's president and executive vice president, that "they either disassociate themselves from the Unification Church or disassociate themselves from Shaw Divinity and Shaw University." Harris' remarks were stricken from the minutes of the convention.

E.B. Turner, president of the convention and chairman of the divinity school's board of trustees, said that the degree honored Moon for his "humanitarian contributions in several areas: social justice, efforts to relieve human suffering, religious freedom and the fight against world communism." Turner also maintained that the degree did not represent an endorsement of the Unification Church or Moon.

COURT WILL EXAMINE EQUAL ACCESS IN CASE OF WILLIAMSPORT BIBLE CLUB

The U.S. Supreme Court will directly address the constitutionality of student-run religious activities in public schools this term, when it reviews *Bender v. Williamsport*. This case gives the court a chance to clarify its position on religious observance in the schools. The case involves a student "Bible club," called Petros, that was denied access to school property because of the religious nature of their activities.

In 1981 the Williamsport student group sought permission to meet

during the school's activity period to "promote spiritual growth and positive attitudes." School board lawyers advised that such a meeting would be an unconstitutional government establishment of religion, and the board denied the group's request for permission to meet.

The students then appealed to Federal District Court, which held that the students' constitutional right to freedom of speech would be violated if they were not permitted to meet. The school board did not appeal the decision, but a member of the board appealed to the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

On July 24, the day before Congress passed the Equal Access Act, which guaranteed religious groups the same access to school facilities enjoyed by nonreligious groups, the Third Circuit overturned the District Court and ruled that the group could not be permitted to meet. The students then appealed to the Supreme Court.

The case may be dismissed by the court for procedural problems. The school board itself no longer opposes the students' position, and the individual who brought the initial appeal is no longer on the board, so the case may be dismissed for lack of an active controversy.

The case does not deal directly with the federal Equal Access Act, because that act was passed after the Williamsport case was initiated. But the future of Equal Access legislation could be affected by the court's decision in this case.

"The constitutionality of equal access is at issue," explained Christian Legal Society Executive Director Sam Ericsson, who is counsel of record in the Williamsport case. "It's a bedrock case, and if we win that spells good news for the equal access act. If we have a tie, a draw, or a loss, we'd have to read the opinion carefully to see to what extent the court is trying to roll back the legislation."

Ericsson said the chances are good for the Williamsport case being decided in favor of equal access. "We feel very, very good. The university equal access case (*Widmar v. Vincent*) was decided in favor of student clubs by an 8-1 margin. We see no reason why this won't come out at least that well."

Critics of Equal Access say they fear a wave of religious groups

requesting permission to meet, and overwhelming school facilities. Ericsson said, "That was the same fear in the *Widmar* case, but after four years there has been no wave of religion on university campuses. Generally less than two percent of the student body wants to get involved in Bible clubs during their free time. That's not a big wave of interest."

Another frequent criticism of equal access provisions, is that by allowing a religious group to use school facilities, the government may give the appearance of supporting a particular religious group to use school facilities, the government may give the appearance of supporting a particular religious group. Ericsson says, "If the Court says it's too dangerous to let kids pray, because it gives the impression of government endorsement of religion, they're selling a lot of high-schoolers short. They're not that stupid. Is there somebody so naive that they think that when six students gather around the Bible, suddenly it's the new state religion?"

Ericsson said the case gives the Court a chance to explain what it meant by earlier religion-in-schools cases. "The Court can say that it's okay to have religion on school grounds during the school day, religion is not going to be censored on school grounds during the school day," he explained. "I hope the court says 'we never intended to censor religion, what we wanted to address is state religious action.' In this case it is private religious action, and that is the critical difference between our case and what's gone before in the last 40 years."

CONVICTS HIT THE JACKPOT

Ministers should be aware of a scheme perpetrated by prisoners to fraudulently raise money, according to the Church of God. Inmates in an Indiana prison and some in a prison in Alabama have been involved. Preachers are contacted and asked to help a prisoner save family property, not by making a donation, but by purchasing a cashier's check with a fraudulent money order sent to the preacher. The preacher is told that the prisoner is not allowed to purchase a cashier's check, so the preacher is asked to purchase it and send it for the prisoner. One Church of God preacher lost \$5,000, and others have been contacted.

FIELD REPORTS

Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville, Cape 7530, Republic of South Africa

I just completed one of the most exhausting preaching trips of my entire 11½ years in this country as an "overseas evangelist"! In just 2 short weeks my family and I have covered over 2,500 miles of South African roads. . . This time instead of encircling the country via Port Elizabeth, Durban, etc. we took a "straight shot through the core", fetching the Votaws in Springs and then proceeding up to the areas of Vendale, Gazankulu, Louis Trichardt and Elim Hospital. While in this region, I was able to make personal contact with Peter Khangala, Godfrey Mabunda and numerous other students of the Lemana High School who are currently enrolled in the "Know your Bible" correspondence course. In fact, while surrounded by about 20-30 students at the Elim Hospital Post Office, I was able to get in a very fruitful hour of teaching, answering from the Scriptures questions regarding: heaven and hell, self-control, "666", false prophets, etc. Our studies were also given a good boost whenever one young lady in the crowd gave her name (Lovinia Khangala) and cited her "K.Y.B." reference number (#923). I then promptly traced this information in my "K.Y.B. recordbook" (which I always carry with me on trips like this) and then referred the crowd to comments and questions which she had made while completing the lessons of the course. There's nothing like a good question to steer a study like this in an appropriate direction and Lovinia had on file a "whole set" regarding the mode and purposes of scriptural baptism! She had asked about "trine immersion"; how often a person should be baptized, once or three times?, buried or sprinkled?, and how often should one do or redo their baptism if done incorrectly? Well as you can easily see, these soul-searching questions laid an excellent foundation upon which to build much truth! This I did and intensely pray for a fruitful harvest from the sown seed...

Also while in the Vendale area, I was able to make contact with brother Timmy Rigigisi (a 26-year old native black brother from the Shangaan tribe). Timmy is #225 in my "K.Y.B. recordbook" (I now have @1,200 students) and was baptized in November, 1982. Since his conversion, Timmy has rescued numerous members of his own family from the Presbyterian Church, including his mother, brother, sister-in-law, and (at last count) 3 cousins! This is the first time I had met him since brother Frank Ramavuha had baptized him three years ago, so we spent many pleasurable hours in personal studies together during this trip. What a zealous, conscientious child of God he is! Though normally over 1200 miles separates us geographically, we are certainly united in active zeal for the Lord! We also contacted brother Jim Munyai, an old faithful soldier of the cross (and Timmy's future father-in-law). Before our return home, I left with these two fine black brethren a complete list of the advanced "K.Y.B." students we had seen as well as the ones we missed, so that they can establish further studies with them on a regular basis.

Carlos A. Capelli, Casilla 83, 1665 - Jose C Paz - Buenos Aires, Argentina

I am writing you to recommend to you Bro. Sergio Piccola, whom I baptized in 1971. He has decided to give full-time to preaching the gospel. He is a young man who is more sacrificial in getting the gospel preached to the lost.

Bro. Piccola has been supported by the Valley Church in Arizona, but the church notified him that they are in need of reducing his support next month, January 1986. Bro. Piccola needs to get \$150 monthly in order to continue dedicating his full-time to the preaching of the gospel in the Spanish language.

I urge you to give him every consideration; he is a worthy man, and in full time can be very instrumental in getting the Gospel to many people. If you have any question, we will be happy to answer you. You can write me, or you can write to Bro. Sergio Piccola, Hipolito Irygoyen 1012 - 1629 Pilar Buenos Aires - Argentina.

God bless your labors in the Lord and prosper you all in every way.

Johnnie Mock, P.O. Box 573, Hudson, NY 12534

The days seem to be flying by. The attendance at our assemblies is holding at 16 members on Sunday, which is 100% and about 14 on Thursday evening (we have some that have to work late from time to time). The weekly offering is averaging about \$145.00.

My family, myself and Bob Nichols Jr. (he works with the Southern Dutchess Church in Poughkeepsie, NY) recently headed north to Vermont, about a 3½ hour trip. The purpose of the trip was to help brother Keith Clayton in Bristol, Vermont, who had a study set up with two members of the Unification Church. The problem was they were Japanese and brother Clayton was having difficulty in explaining some of the bible teaching. Bob has spent a number of years in Japan, where his father, Bob Nichols, Sr., is presently proclaiming the truth, so he was helpful in explaining when difficulty arose. The purpose for my going was to show Bob the way to Bristol. It was an interesting study. The Japanese people read out of their Japanese bibles then we all discussed what the passages meant. Brother Clayton tried to set up another study with them, but they did not commit to anything.

On the 20th of November we closed on our parcel of land and are now landowners. After we save \$2600.00 we are going to order our house. We hope to be in the house by April '86.

Mike Scott, P.O. Box 53, Middletown, IN 47356

My family and I have presently been working in Middletown, Indiana since July, 1982. We have now close to 25 members. It is difficult to attract people to our services due in part to our small size. I also feel that the locals think we are some kind of religious cult or sect. Therefore it takes some time for them to trust us and to convince them that we have a message worth

hearing. In short, I am convinced that growth would be made easier after we obtain a degree of respectability. Our immediate need - even more than financial support - is for more people to be aware of what it is to labor among difficult conditions. Too, our prayer is that some individuals might move up here to better aid us in our labors. Although the work would be hard, I tend to believe that with much determination, grit, devotion, and God's help we would accomplish much. Even one couple (i.e. family) would make a difference - and together we all could spread God's word in this community.

We know that God wants us to spread the gospel, it is only His people who many times are unwilling. Now we have a choice. What might it be? Please brethren - think.

Andrew G. Berendt, P.O. Box 1003, Woodland Park, CO 80863

I am the "full-time" evangelist at the Peak View Church of Christ, in Woodland Park, Colorado. This is a new work, which began in early May of this year. The church started with 3 families, consisting of 11 souls. We have since grown to 5 families, as well as some single men. We also have 2 other families attending here, who have not placed membership as of yet. This gives the Peak View Church of Christ an average attendance of 25 to 30 souls.

Woodland Park is situated at about 8500 feet. "The City Above The Clouds" has a population of about 10,000 at present, but, as you may know, the state of Colorado is growing rapidly, and the city of Woodland Park is one of the fastest growing areas in the entire state! We are anticipating further rapid growth in the Peak View church as more people move into the area, as well as continuing to work diligently among the current residents. One local construction company is building 1200 new housing units right outside of town, as the population, by all current projections, will double in the next 5 years. This is just one company, and there are many others. Colorado Springs (with a population of over 350,000) is just 18 miles away.

I am 30 years of age. I have been preaching for about 6 years. I moved to Woodland Park in May of this year, to begin "full-time" work with the new Peak View church. I met brother Harry Pickup, Jr., when he was in Colorado Springs for a Gospel meeting in May of this year. He is a fine man of God, and an excellent preacher of the saving truth. I left a very promising career with the fire department in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to "preach the Word." I have a very good wife, Kathleen; a son, Adam (age 8); and a daughter, Heather (age 6). I study day and night, to "show myself approved". My family and I have left "house, brothers, sisters, mother, and father", to come here to Colorado to work along with the brethren here, to spread the word of God in this area.

As to our personal needs, we have found that the cost of living is quite high; surprisingly so! For our family of 4, \$2000 per month will not be excessive, but we will live on this amount, if we can raise it. We will be very happy to provide an itemized report of our requirements to any and all who may be interested. At the present time, we have the following monthly support raised: \$500 per month from Northeast church, Colorado Springs? \$400 per month from Peak View church, here in Woodlawn Park; \$100 per month from a sister in Florida. So as you can see, we are about ½ the way there!

CLASSIFIEDS

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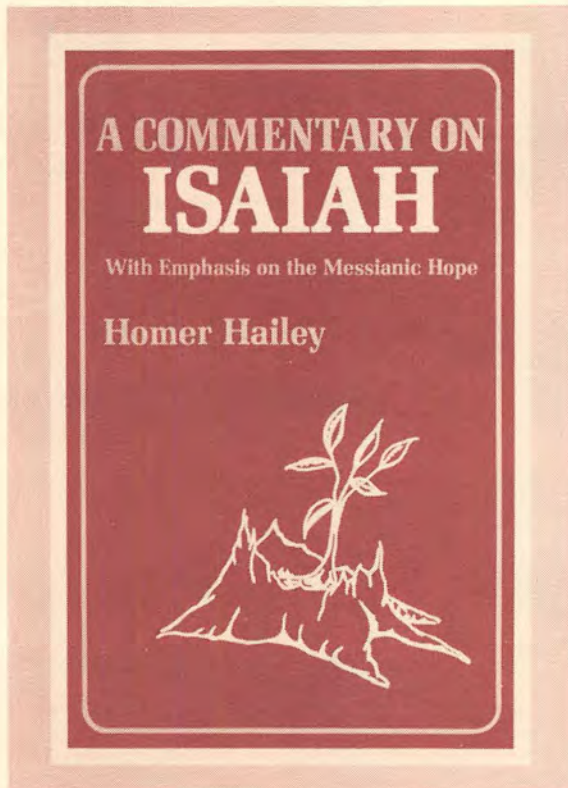
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