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COMMAND, EXAMPLE, OR NECESSARY INFERENCE

DEAN BULLOCK

The religion of Jesus Christ is a teaching religion. No informed person will deny this. One must be properly taught in order to enjoy covenant relationship with the Lord." . . . And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45). An individual cannot come to God without instruction; neither can he live the Christian life without further instruction. Hence, the Master commanded that baptized believers be taught "to observe all things" (Matthews 28:20). But I raise the question, how does the Bible teach a thing? What methods does God employ in making known His will to man?

Faithful brethren have long recognized that the Bible teaches man in three ways: (1) direct statement or command, (2) inspired approved example, (3) necessary inference (not simply an inference, but a necessary inference or conclusion). This position advocated in books written by representative men, proclaimed from the "house tops" for years, and stated repeatedly in debates is now being called in question. In response to the article on the front page of the August number of THE PRECEPTOR, we are told that the "position is illogical and untenable". We are also told that there are many practices in our religion for which we cannot give command, example, or necessary inference. This comes from one endeavoring to justify organizations (area wide board orphan homes) unauthorized by the Bible through

which churches are urged to do their benevolent work. Some brethren seem acutely aware that God's word makes no provision for such arrangements. Hence, when we say that God limits the "how", and advocate doing God's work in God's way we are asked "What about a preacher's house, a church building, etc.?" Do we have Bible authority (command, example, or necessary inference) for these? The answer is yes.

The command to support a preacher involves anything of the nature of support (including a house in which to live). The command to assemble necessities a place. It's lawful then to provide a place to meet (a church building or any other suitable place). But where is the scripture that necessitates or authorizes forming organizations other than the church to do the work of the church?

The plea for primitive Christianity and the unity of all believers must be maintained on Bible ground. This means that the only way to prove a thing is to show command, example, or necessary inference for it. This is "familiar territory"; it is the basis upon which the brotherhood can stand united. Let's do God's work, but in the way divine wisdom has specified. Organizations that are strangers to the Bible are not needed in order for the church to do its work. Personal attacks on those who call for chapter and verse indicate a lack of scriptural authority. Such has ever been characteristic of men who occupy indefensible positions. Lovers of the Lord will not be satisfied with anything less than the Lord's will!



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EDITORIAL

CARING FOR WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

I am in favor of the church caring for widows who are widows indeed and for orphans or fatherless children. It is a work of the church to support widows who are widows indeed and to care for fatherless or orphans. This work is a fruit to be borne by Christians. However, it is not the responsibility of the church to support or care for all the widows and orphan children in the world. I suppose there are enough widows, orphans, needy and unfortunate in the world to take all the money contributed by all the churches of Christ to care for them. If this is true, and the churches should spend all their contributions for the care of the needy of the world, where would the church be in a short time? If we should just quit supporting the preaching of the gospel, I am not saying that any one is advocating this, but if such should be done, and all the money contributed should be used to care for widows and orphans of the world, the church would cease to exist, for it continues in existence through the teaching of the gospel.

So, there must be a line drawn as to just what work the churches are to do in the way of benevolence. Where is the line to be drawn? The New Testament draws the line on caring for widows as recorded in I Timothy, chapter 5. The line is drawn here as to what widows are to be supported fully by the church, and they are those who are "widows indeed." To meet the qualifications in order to be supported entirely by the church as stated by Paul a widow

must be three score years old, well reported or for good works, etc., not having children or grandchildren, or any woman that believeth to relieve her. But what about fatherless children? It is the responsibility of the church, according to its ability, in any locality to care for the fatherless who are its obligation. This obligation would include, at least those orphans whose parents had been faithful members of the church. If the father, a member of the church, should die, survived by his wife and children, if the widow were a widow indeed, it would be the responsibility of the church of which the widow is a member to support her and her children. If the church where the widow is a member were unable to support the mother and the children another church or other churches could send to the church in need so it could care for the needy mother and her children.

However, it is somewhat different from the above for a congregation to create a need by receiving fatherless children from other localities and then to beg other churches of Christ for money to support "your" orphans. Each church is to provide for its own; for those who are its responsibility. This is, also, different from a church shifting its responsibility to a human organization for it to do the work the church is ordained to do itself. Would there be any difference in principle in a church contributing to a human organization through which to do its benevolent work and in contributing to a human organization through which to do its evangelistic work? If so, what is the difference? On what grounds will God's will allow the one and disallow the other? I am against the church shifting its responsibility to a human organization in the preaching of the gospel, and I am opposed, and on the same grounds, to the church shifting its responsibility to a human organization in doing its benevolent work.

But how shall a congregation care for widows who are widows indeed and for orphan children who are its responsibility? The example of the Jerusalem church caring for the needy widows in its membership would be a good example to follow. But some one says, give us something concrete. The local church may make, under the directions of its elders, and in harmony with New Testament teaching, whatever arrangement is necessary to care for its needy. The orphan children may, if possible, be adopted by Christian families, they may be placed in foster-homes, a couple may be employed to care for the fatherless in a place provided by the church, whether the place be rented, built, or bought by the church, the church paying the necessary expense of such arrangement, and for the care of the needy children. If one congregation is not financially able to care for its own needy, then, sister congregations may be asked for help and they may send the help to the church in such need on the basis of scriptural teaching as II Corinthians 8 and 9, and I Corinthians 16:1, 2.

But to organize a human institution with a board of directors made up of men from various congregations to which churches may shift their responsibility in doing benevolent work would be no more scriptural than to organize a human organization with a board of directors made up of men from various churches to which the churches would shift their responsibility to do evangelistic work. Why would it be scriptural for one work of the church to be shifted to a human organization, and not be scriptural to shift other work of the church to a human organization? If one is scriptural, the other is also. If one is unscriptural, the other is, also.

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UNQUESTIONED RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

OSCAR ELLISON

Through the years, one of the most interesting and encouraging things about the faith and practice of churches of Christ has been the general acceptance of them. This does not mean that there have been no objections to them. Nor does it mean that people believe we are right in doing only the things done. But, it is generally agreed that what we do is right in religion. This is no argument that that would establish the right of our religious practice. Nothing but a thus saith the Lord will do that. But, from the point of view herein set forth, ours is an infallible position. Let us think about it.

Justification By Faith

The Bible teaches that we are justified by faith. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1. And, so far as I know, there is no one who professes faith in the truth of God's word that denies it. This, gospel preachers teach, and churches of Christ everywhere, accept. It is unquestioned religious practice. Differences arise when men add the word *only* to the idea. One popular creed says: "That we are justified by faith *only* is a wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort." Not one objection is raised when justification by faith is taught. The objection comes when justification by faith *only* is taught. Churches of Christ stand here on unquestioned ground.

Baptism

The act of baptism, as it is taught by religious people today, may be performed by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Both Catholics and Protestants have much the same idea about it. But, there has always been much disputing about sprinkling and pouring. No question exists and no debate has ever been conducted on the question: "Is immersion baptism?" Paul plainly calls the act a burial. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." Rom. 6:4. Scholars are almost unanimous in testifying that the ancient practice was immersion and that the Greek word means immersion. Churches of Christ practice immersion. There is no doubt about it being right. The doubt arises over sprinkling and pouring. So, again there is the unquestioned religious practice.

This is also true in regard to the subjects of baptism. Many baptize infants and small children. Others only baptize adults, believers. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Peter, in the sermon on Pentecost, said: "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." Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38. That a penitent believer in Christ is a subject of baptism no one doubts. This is unquestioned religious practice. The doubt arises when someone other than a believer is baptized. Churches of Christ baptize only believers. Therefore, the religious practice everyone acknowledges to be right.

Music In Worship

There are two kinds of music, vocal and instrumental. Religious organizations are divided in their use of these in the worship of God. Some use vocal music only. Others use both vocal and instrumental. There has always been some objection to the use of instruments of music in the worship of God. Such men as John Calvin, John Wesley,

Adam Clarke, and many others have left in print their protest against their use. But, there has never been any doubt about singing. Paul taught the Colossians: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Col. 3:16. Singing the praise of God is unquestioned religious practice. Churches of Christ use only singing. This again is unquestioned worship of God. Many other examples might be given but these furnish the examples needed.

Why Is It So?

This question is of vital importance. Why is one practice accepted and another rejected or questioned? Fortunately for all of us, the answer is easy. Unquestioned religious practices always have the unqualified endorsement of the New Testament. We have shown this in the examples cited above. Men may believe something else is just as good. They may think themselves wise enough to choose a substitute or to make an addition. They may even be presumptuous enough to say a thing is not necessary that is plainly taught in the New Testament. But, all agree that if the New Testament says it, then it is certainly an accepted practice and right for us to do it.

This gives us the clue to right practice. If God has said it, if it is taught in the New Testament, it is infallibly right to practice it. And no amount of argument can make it either safe or right to do what does not have New Testament endorsement. Churches (even churches of Christ) may do it,—the practice may be hundreds of years old—it may be endorsed by leading scholars—our own pioneer preachers may have thought it was right—but, only a thus saith the Lord gives us the right to do it. Too often we argue from the practices of uninspired men. Such argument proves nothing. The word of God is the only criterion of right. Let us seek the will of God as there revealed.

This Rule Applies To All

It is easy to make this argument when baptism or justification by faith is being discussed. But, the rule that we apply to others must also be accepted as the rule by which we should be governed. Our own practices need to be established by the word of God. And, it is a poor rule that applies to others in the things they do but does not apply to me in what I do. We must therefore learn to "Walk by the same rule." Much that is being done in churches of Christ today needs scriptural endorsement. Such would make it acceptable to all of us. Nothing else will.

Problems of Today

Where is the scriptural statement, example, or necessary inference that will establish the brotherhood evangelistic and benevolent projects now being pushed by brethren with such fervor? Where is New Testament endorsement for the recreational and entertainment programs being carried on? What part of the mission of the church does this carry out? Where do we find proof to support us in church supported institutions constantly pleading our help? These are questions that cannot escape our eyes. They cannot be shrugged off. We cannot leave others to deal with them and at the same time fulfill our own duty to God. We cannot argue from the practices of the past, unless they be New Testament practices. The rule we have so urgently pressed upon our denominational friends concerning their practices now urges itself upon us. Shall we honestly and fairly apply it to ourselves? May God help us to do so.

This is not a time for hedging. Nor it is a time to avoid the issues. It is a time to face up, honestly and fairly, to

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Restoration

and

Reaction

THE SEARCH FOR THE SPONSORING CHURCH

BILL J. HUMBLE

There are few of our brethren who would deny the proposition that God's work must be done in God's way, but within recent years, there has been much discussion of what constitutes God's way for congregations to cooperate in his work. There are some who affirm that many congregations may send funds to a "sponsoring church," which forwards these funds on to some distant work. Others deny that the New Testament authorizes such cooperation.

Those who defend the "sponsoring church" have recently presented widely different, and even contradictory arguments, in attempting to justify their practice. Some argue that the New Testament has no "pattern" for congregational cooperation, and they consider anyone who seeks such a pattern a "hobbyist." Others accept the New Testament as a "pattern" but they insist that the New Testament actually furnishes us with examples of the "sponsoring church." It is this second position which we shall consider in this article.

Passage In Question

Recently one brother, who teaches Greek in one of "our" Christian colleges, wrote an article on the support which Paul received from Philippi, attempting to prove that "Philippi received money from other churches and sent it on to Paul." His conclusion is that we "have a precedent for one church to receive funds from several congregations and forward those funds to another work," and thus "a clear instance of that collective cooperation which some brethren will not now allow." But let us see whether the facts actually support such a conclusion.

The two passages in question are Phil. 4:15, 16 and 2 Cor. 11:8. Describing his support, Paul wrote, "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need" (Phil. 4:15, 16). To the Corinthians he wrote, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you" (2 Cor. 11:8).

It is the argument of our brother that after Paul left Macedonia and went to Corinth on the second missionary tour, he received support from "other churches;" yet Philippi "only" had fellowship in the matter of giving and receiving. Thus, the argument goes, the "other churches" sent their funds to Philippi, and Philippi forwarded them on to Paul. "Shades of a receiving church," concludes our Greek teacher.

Proof Required

As we begin a study of these passages, we see immedi-

ately that two specific points must be proved before we can accept our brother's conclusion. (1) It must be proved that Phil. 4:15, 16 refers to two different incidents; for if Philippi "only" sent to Paul while he was "in Thessalonica," these verses have absolutely nothing to do with Paul's work at Corinth. (2) But even if it could be shown that v. 15 refers to a contribution subsequent to those at Thessalonica, it would still be necessary to prove that it was while Paul was at Corinth that Philippi "only" had fellowship with him.

Both of these points are essential to make Philippi a sponsoring church, but neither of them can be proved!

Two Incidents Or One?

The translations which we have in the King James and American Standard versions seem to indicate that only one incident is being described by Paul in Phil. 4:15, 16. Paul says, "When I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need." (ASV) We know that after Paul left Philippi, he went next to Thessalonica; and the expression "for even in Thessalonica" seems to explain when it was that Philippi "only" sent to his need. The King James has the identical expression, "For even in Thessalonica," and it differs from the ASV only in making this the beginning of a new sentence. Thus, our common English versions indicate that Philippi "only" sent to Paul "once and again" while he was "in Thessalonica," and if this is the meaning of the passage, it has no reference to Paul's stay at Corinth.

But there is one problem which must be considered in connection with this view of the passage. Paul says, "when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me . . . but ye only." It has been pointed out that Thessalonica is located in Macedonia, and that if Paul had already left Macedonia when Philippi sent to him, this cannot refer to the contribution when Paul was "in Thessalonica." It is said that this must refer to a contribution subsequent to the ones "in Thessalonica" (v. 16), and thus, the door is left open to try to identify this with the occasion when "other churches" aided Paul at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8).

Let us see whether the expression "when I departed from Macedonia" implies that Paul had actually crossed the boundary separating Macedonia from the southern provinces. What do the words *hote ekselthon* (when I departed) actually mean? H. C. G. Moule says, "*hote ekselthon* . . . 'On my leaving Macedonia;' not 'when I had left,' for he proceeds to refer to an incident at Thessalonica, in Macedonia. He means the general period of his removal from Macedonia into Achaia. For the narrative see Acts 17:1-15. He is looking back now over some ten years." (Moule, Cambridge Greek Testament, Epistle to Philippians, p. 87.)

Dean Alford says, "*hote ekselthon* . . . 'By this is not meant, as commonly understood, the supply which he received at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9), . . . *ekselthon* being the aorist marking the simple date: when I left Macedonia.' Commenting on v. 16, Alford says, for even in Thessalonica (which was an early stage of my *ekselthon* apo Mak., before the departure was consummated. The *hote* gives a reason for and proof of the former assertion—ye were the only ones, etc.—and ye began as early as en Thess., i.e. when I was in in Thessalonica." Alford observes that in such constructions "the preposition of rest, as belonging to the act accomplished, overbears the preposition of motion." (Henry Alford, Alford's Greek Testament, Vol. 3, p.193.)

R. C. H. Lenski states, "The clause 'when I left from

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

THOMAS B. WARREN

Fort Worth, Texas

The Bible teaches that the truth is to be defended (Jude 3). Down through the years gospel preachers have been zealous to do that very thing. And the manner in which they have done so has almost always been commendable. Perhaps there have been a few instances to the contrary, but, by and large, their conduct, so far as I have been able to observe, has been highly commendable. I have been proud to be associated with such men.

But the devil is never asleep! He is ever ready to strike a blow against whomsoever he can. Certainly he is very anxious to strike a blow against the cause of Christ. It was in connection with that thought that a fellow gospel preacher and I recently engaged in a conversation. During the course of that conversation, the following question was raised: Has the devil been successful in leading brethren to believe that they are attacking error when, as a primary thing, they were attacking the person who taught the error (or what they sincerely believed was error)? Truth is precious—and how keenly aware of that ought every child of God to be! So precious is truth that it must be fought for even at the cost of life itself, if necessary! Yet if the devil, in failing to wreck our ship on the rocks of error, can succeed in leading us to attack each other instead of doctrines espoused, he will as surely have led us to damnation. Often men, in seeking to avoid one catastrophe, plunge headlong into another. It can happen to us. Is it already happening to us? Dear brother, I hope you can assure me that it isn't.

The influence which can be wielded by a printing press is indeed tremendous. How mindful of his responsibility should be every editor, be he editor of a magazine, a newspaper, or a religious journal. Perhaps there is a great deal of truth in the statement made within recent months by a brother in Christ (in the light of the treatment which he had received from a leading magazine of this nation). In this statement, he pointed out that it seems that men sometimes need freedom from the press as well as freedom of the press! When news journals degenerate to the point of personal attack it is deplorable. When religious journals resort to such, its deplorable indeed!

Perhaps equally serious is eagerness to hear a wicked report of someone. Love for our fellowman causes us to wish good for them, to be saddened when they fall into error or transgression. Perhaps it would be well for us to question ourselves at this point as well.

May I re-emphasize, lest some should misunderstand and misrepresent, that I believe with all of my heart that the truth must be defended. I personally stand ready to defend what I believe to be the truth of God's Word. I have no interest whatever in attacking any man, certainly not a brother in Christ. I have had occasion to expose what I believed to be serious error. If I know my heart, I do not now have (or have I ever had) a desire to attack my opponent—even though I may have been the object of a false personal attack by my opponent during or following a discussion. I have tried to do my best to expose what I conceived to be false doctrine. But we can, and must, love even those who teach false doctrine.

May I, in love for the truth and the cause of the Lord we all love, plead with brethren everywhere, when they preach or write, to discuss: "WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?" This does not mean of course, that one is never to mention another man. Sometimes it may be wise to do so. But there is a vast difference between attacking what he teaches and attacking him. Surely we can all see the difference! May God help us to that end!

REPORTS

ELVIS BOZARTH, P. O. Box 472, Dana Point, California:

"Enclosed is money for my subscription. Please announce that brethren interested in moving are requested to consider this area. Employment, especially in the building trades is at a peak. Brethren in the business will guarantee first class carpenters and floor mechanics a minimum of \$3.00 per hour to start, with at least 40 hours weekly. We have the ideal all-year round climate. We are striving for the "ideal climate" in the Lord's work. All inquiries will be promptly acknowledged."

DEAN BULLOCK, 319 Austin Street, Borger, Texas:

"Perry B. Cotham preached in our fall meeting (Second at Deahl). Fifteen responded to the gospel. Six were baptized, nine restored."

IRVIN HIMMEL, 1208 W. 41st Street, Richmond, Virginia:

"The Forest Hill congregation has just concluded a meeting in which Denton M. Neal of Jackson, Tennessee, did the preaching. One was baptized. While Brother Neal was here it was my privilege to preach on Lord's days at Arlington and Charlottesville. There are about 25 brethren in Charlottesville who meet regularly in the court house. We now have about 65 members here at Forest Hill. Our contributions average about \$175 per week. We are now completing an addition to our building which cost over \$3,000. A new heating system is being installed that will cost an additional \$2,000. The growth of the church is slow in this section, but we believe much progress will be made throughout Virginia in coming years."

GOSPEL TRACTS

By Perry B. Cotham

The New Birth	25 Cents Per Copy
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THE PRECEPTOR COMPANY

Box 165 — Borger, Texas

THE PRECEPTOR (November, 1953 through October, 1955) is scheduled to be bound soon. A limited supply (\$7.50 per volume) will be available. If you desire to have in one volume the many fine articles which appeared in the paper during the last two years, order now. Delivery will be made within the next few weeks.

THE EVIL OF DANCING

ERNEST A. FINLEY

713 W. Fox St., Carlsbad, New Mexico

The modern ball-room dance has been opposed by devout men and women since its origin. An individual who is giving all diligence to make his calling and election sure will consider this sufficient reason for leaving it off. Young people should remember that the scriptures speak of "those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). One should think a long time before going against the counsel of consecrated Christians of age and experience. Jesus gave us the fruit-principle, "Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). Those who have observed the fruit of the dance assert that it often results in: less love for God, less devotion to the church, less respect for the opposite sex, less Bible reading, less praying, less interest in worship, and less unselfish service in the Kingdom.

What Is Wrong With the Dance?

Did you ever hear of a dance for men only? Do you think the modern dance would be popular or even endure if there were no intermingling between the sexes? Does this not indicate that the basic appeal of the dance is physical? In view of the following quotation, is it unreasonable to charge that the popularity of the dance is largely sensual in nature? "Dancing is an exciting and pleasurable recreation as it affords a partial satisfaction to the sex impulse." This statement was not made by an enemy of the dance but one who was seeking to defend and justify it. Its author is Leta S. Hollingsworth, Professor of Education at Columbia University. Add to her quotation the testimony of a number of young men who have personally confided in me concerning the effect that dancing has had on them; unsolicited testimony has been given to me on several occasions to the effect that dancing kindles unlawful desires. These young men have made no effort to hide the fact that dancing has caused them to sin in their hearts. Why should you close your eyes to these facts?

Dancing can not be followed by Christians because it encourages undue familiarity between the sexes. These familiarities are calculated to break down the wholesome reserves of modesty. What other pastime could a young man follow that would make it appear proper for him to embrace for an extended period of time every member of the opposite sex present? What would a modest young lady think if every man she met on the street were to attempt to embrace her after the fashion of the modern dance? If it is out of place on the street why is it proper in the dance hall?

Dancing is sinful because it kindles lasciviousness. This fact has been established in the two paragraphs above. "Lasciviousness" is defined: "unlawful desire, lust." Paul in speaking of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), lists "lasciviousness" as one of them. He also mentions "revellings," defined by Lidell and Scott's Greek-English lexicon: "A jovial festivity with music and dancing, a revel, carousal, merrymaking." The Twentieth Century Dictionary defines revelling: "Jovial festivity with noisey jolity, carousing, music and dancing." After listing the works of the flesh, Paul continues, "of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." On the basis of these facts we conclude that dancing will keep a soul out of heaven.

Very often one finds bad company at the dance. The very nature of the dance is such that it attracts those who

are basest in character. Who will deny that drinking is the order of the day for many at the dance? This is true not only at the road house but at high school dances as well. It is not uncommon to find gambling at dances. One has well said that "The dance is a sister of drunkenness, lewdness, and divorce—the sister of the wild life." If the facts were known, how many people do you suppose have taken their first drink at a dance? Paul wrote, "Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33).

Dancing and divorce are companions. Why? A little common "horse-sense" will supply the answer. Immodesty in dress is the regular and accepted custom at the dance. Add to this fact the atmosphere of dim lights, soft music, and the close embrace of dance partners and you have your answer. It is much easier for a man to lose interest in his companion when he sees other women through the glitter, glamour and sparkle of the dance. Jealously often follows. Not only divorce results but murder has come about as well.

Some have recommended closer supervision for the dances, particularly those held for young people. While I am sure that closer supervision would result in some improvement, and certainly any improvement is to be desired, yet I am sure that supervision can not cure the evil of the modern dance. Supervision does not go deep enough. It can not go deep enough. Supervision can only control outward actions, at best, but it can not control the mind. It can not control the dance to the point that it will cease to cause lust and unlawful desire. Supervision may control the visible actions of the participants in the dance but it can not control their actions when they leave the hall after the dance.

Why must young people dance today? There are many other activities that are wholesome and good, activities conducive to social, emotional, physical, mental and spiritual development. The young man or woman who insists that there is nothing else to do simply has not tried to find it. Frankly, it is not so much a matter of proving the dance wrong as it is of getting young people and their parents to hold to their conviction and stand for what they know is right.

The Christian has answered the highest calling in the world. We should strive to live worthily of that calling. We bear the name of our Saviour. We are children of God. We should bear the fruit of the Spirit and walk as children of light.

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IT'S NEW TO ME – NO. 9

C. E. W. DORRIS

In 1910, under caption, "Let Preachers and Elders Take Notice," the church at Henderson, Tennessee, sent out the following invitation.

"Fully appreciating the condition of the cause of Christ in West Tennessee and adjacent territory, and knowing, too, what great good can be accomplished by concerted action on the part of both preachers and churches, we desire to call a meeting of all loyal preachers and teachers of the gospel of Christ and all elders, with all who are interested in strengthening the walls of Zion and carry the gospel to the lost, to meet at Henderson, Tennessee, on January 25-28, 1910.

"Let every preacher, with the elders of the various congregations in West Tennessee, Southwest Kentucky, East Arkansas, and North Mississippi, be sure to be present on the above named date." G. A., 1910, P. 59.)

"Some of the brethren last week called for a meeting of the preachers and elders in West Tennessee. We do not doubt that these brethren intend only the best for the churches, for themselves and others. But, I have been through and under these meetings so much that it surprises me to hear of such meetings. I have been in and through many of them in Middle and West Tennessee, others in Kentucky and Texas. I have never seen any good come out of them to any one. The brethren in Obion County have what seems to me an excellent order of evangelizing the county. It would be good to get Brother Williams or some brother to introduce it as far as may be in other counties. It is scriptural to call one man in to teach the members aright. But I never found an inspired man called in at a council of elders and preachers. Let us all individually and solidly try to stand on solid ground." (G. A. 1910, p. 81.)

J. C. McQuiddy and others were holding meetings with different congregations here in Nashville, trying to stir up more interest in church work. A. G. Freed wrote asking for the difference between the Henderson meeting and those in Nashville. McQuiddy explained as follows:

"Permit me to say that the meeting (in Nashville) was simply a meeting of the church, and preachers were present from other churches, teaching just as Brother Freed does in every protracted meeting he conducts. The call at Henderson was not for the church there to come together, but for preachers and elders from other churches to meet there. The brethren who participated in the Nashville meetings stand ready to pass 'adverse criticism' on the Henderson meeting from what a friend and advocate of the meeting, and who attended it, wrote for publications (this article was withdrawn before published—C.E.W.D.) and stated that the Henderson church was to direct the work and take charge of the funds raised by the cooperating churches . . . The Scriptures establish clearly that in New Testament times the church communicated directly with the missionary in the field . . . As in New Testament times churches commended, sent, communicated directly with, and received the reports of the laborers in the field. If we now have proper respect for divine example, we will not turn away from the church of God to a human society to do mission work." (G.A. 1910, p. 329.)

Lipscomb quotes from the Henderson correspondence and said:

"Now what was that but the organization of a society in the elders of the church? The church elders at Henderson constitute a board to collect and pay out the money and control the evangelist for the brethren of West Tennessee, and all the preachers are solicitors for the work. This very same course was pursued in Texas a number of years ago. The elders of the church at Dallas were made the supervisors of the work, received the money, employed the preacher, directed and counseled him. For a number of years they employed C. M. Wilmeth. He then dropped out of the work and the Texas missionary society took the place. Other experiments along the same course have been made. All of them went into the society work.

"All meetings of churches or officers of churches to combine more power than a single church possesses are wrong. God's power is in God's churches. He is with them to bless and strengthen their work when they are faithful to him. A Christian, one or more, may visit a church with or without an invitation and seek to stir them up to a faithful discharge of their duties. But for one or more to direct what and how all the churches shall work, or to take charge of their men and money and use it, is to assume the authority God has given to each church. Each one needs the work of distributing and using its funds as well as giving them.

"This employing evangelists to serve a section of country by organizations not churches has been tried in Middle and West Tennessee. None have done so well as while leaving those who do the teaching as God left them, to work with the churches. This is true for Nashville or West Tennessee . . . I write and publish these things for the good of all who will read and consider them. The great question between God and man is: which shall rule. Every introduction of human power and arrangement into the churches or their work pulls down God's work and overthrows his authority. So if we err, let us do it by clinging closely to God's word. We make a start today; tomorrow we go further, until we separate from God. Let us be faithful to God." (G.A. 1910, p. 364.) In this same article Lipscomb shows, from the earliest history, that unscriptural meetings slowly developed into the papacy. If Henderson church should repeat her purpose today just as she published it in 1910, she would be called a sponsoring church; but she was not so called at that time for the reason that sponsoring churches were never heard of until recent years. Lipscomb killed at Henderson what would now be called the sponsoring church plan, and that too, by the same arguments that kept the missionary society from advancing very far in Tennessee. The same scripture that kills the missionary society will also kill the sponsoring church plan, for the reason that both are unscriptural and use to a large degree the same methods.

"But," says one, "Is it not a fact that Lipscomb, in his deposition in the Newbern church trial, gave the example of New Testament churches cooperating in feeding a famine stricken nation as authority for churches cooperating today?" Yes, that is true, but he never applied it to such cooperation as is done by sponsoring churches of today. In fact, his writings down through the years have been against such cooperation as seen in the Henderson affair. But, he speaks again of the famine in Judea in replying to McGarvey.

"When the churches of Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia contributed to the same end of relieving a nation of poor, failing to bear in mind that each church acted in this matter individually, collecting its own gift and sending it by its own messengers, he (McGarvey) sees an example of 'church cooperation.' In this example of work, the churches under

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PRECEPT PERCEPTIONS



WHEN IS IT AN EXAMPLE?

L. WESLEY JONES

In reality the thesis of this article concerns apostolic examples. But the principle within the proposition has a much broader application, and it will be illustrated with examples in at least one other field, before it is specifically applied.

If the meaning of "example" is correctly understood, one should not inquire, "When is an example binding?" For if it (an incident, a narrative, etc.) is an example, it is either to be followed or avoided. An example is a pattern that must be followed or avoided. An examination of the word in the New Testament, coming from several different original words, will reveal that there are some of both. If one proves that a series of occurrences does not have to be followed, or is not to be avoided, he has proved that these occurrences do not form an example. Consider an illustration of each use of the word:

The "ensamples" of I Cor. 10 are types (tupoi) for us to avoid. Vs. 6, 11. (The word is similarly used in I Tim. 4:12 and II Thess. 3:9 of examples to be followed). It is worthy of notice that many Bible students have always realized the danger of calling something a "type" unless the Bible actually calls it that.

The second illustration is in I Peter 2:21. In this case it is a metaphorical expression. The figure has its basis in the copy of a scribe or teacher, to be traced over by a student. The Lord left us a copy, and we are to diligently trace over it.

With this introduction consider the vital importance of this theme. There is no line of thinking that should challenge men who want to go back to Jerusalem like this one. Conservative thinkers among brethren pretty generally agree on the interpretation of commands; but, presently, many of these brethren, all of whom love the Lord and would restore New Testament Christianity to the fullest, disagree energetically about the use of examples. This disagreement centers around the decision every conscientious Bible student must make about any passage of scripture that is pertinent in any given case. That decision usually is in the form of these questions: Do the incidents of this text form a binding pattern or example? Must they be followed (or zealously opposed and shunned) or are they merely incidents?

Many Methods Employed

Here it is necessary to dissent from the views of many as to how these questions may be answered. This is not said to disparage the efforts of anyone, but because the desire of all is to make such contributions as are possible to the understanding of brethren everywhere.

For instance, some have thought that we may determine when a text contains an example and is therefore binding

by separating the incidentals from the really important matters. But as is indicated by the brief study of the meaning of the word example, this is begging the question.

Again, it is said that if incidents are "dated," if they belong to a particular age, as a method of transportation might, they do not comprise an example. But unfortunately this is not helpful because of a line of thought pursued for many years by liberal thinkers. It has always been their contention that 20th Century Christians aren't obligated to be every particular about following the New Testament in detail for that very reason—it can't be done because of the enlargements of society, etc.

In testimony enter this one quotation from "Growth of Church Institutions," by Edwin Hatch, distinguished University of Oxford scholar and liberal theologian of the last century. "The difference of outward form between primitive and modern Christianity have been a frequent theme of comment and of misconception. There are some persons who have endeavored to base upon the existence of such differences an objection against Christianity itself . . . There have been, from time to time, large bodies of earnest men who, being unable to see a justification for this or that particular point of difference, have separated themselves from the main body of Christians, and formed separate communities, in order to restore, as they have thought of their own practice the uncorrupted simplicity of primitive usage.

"The justification of the existence of differences is to be found in the nature of Christianity itself. It was designed to be at once universal and permanent, to embrace all races of mankind, and to meet the needs of successive ages. The presumption is that, this being so, it was also designed to adapt its outward forms to the inevitable changes of human society, and that its earliest institutions were meant to be modified when it gathered new races of men into its fold, and came into close contact with new elements of human life."

On this basis Mr. Hatch and thousands of others would argue that the divinely ordered eldership of first century churches, for instance, was a dated system, "meant to be modified." He thus justifies diocesan rule.

Such a standard as this would be of no assistance in determining when a Bible text constitutes an example and is therefore binding, if one were trying to reach such a person as this. Whatever our solution it must have force upon all—the liberal and the conservative alike.

"In His Steps"

Many modes of interpreting Christ's conduct will be immediately obvious which will make farcical the claims of present day Christians to follow in His steps. There should be no desire to shelter hypocrisy with a method of interpretation, but before everyone is declared a hypocrite the method of arriving at the conclusion ought to be examined diligently.

Jesus said, "Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Luke 9:58. The context here concerns following Christ. How many do you know that follow Christ in this respect?

Here is a fact, in a Bible text, in the life of the Lord. Is it an example? If it is, must we not be homeless in order to follow it? Are we being hypocritical to claim "to follow in his steps," and yet insist upon relatively permanent homes and reasonable comforts of life? What proper method

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WHO WAS CRUCIFIED FOR YOU?

O. J. RUSSELL

A common penchant of humanity seems to be the desire to group all men in some class or clan, clique or party, label them accordingly, close the case and leave them forevermore branded and marked by titles of their choosing. In no instance is this fact more clearly seen than in the use of the odious term, "Campellite," which sectarian preachers and bigoted enemies, despite strong repudiation and protests, have cunningly sought to bind upon the people of God. That such vicious and arbitrary action in some cases has done irreparable damage to the Lord's cause is reflected in the continued use of the term by those friendly toward the church, but who, by continued use of the term, in ignorance, rob Christ and the name "Christian" of the glory due.

That this highly obnoxious disposition should exist in sectarian circles is indeed lamentable; to see the same tactics being pursued within the pale of the church is tragic! Moved neither by love nor reason, many who are "fellow-citizens with the saints," rather than study with grace and wisdom the issues involved, choose rather to take names of men, papers and works (good and bad), and with words "set on fire of hell" apply distasteful brands and odious titles to their brethren. If such tactics are elements of Christianity, we have been grossly misled! If such course leads to heaven, we have been reading from the wrong book!

In legislating against the division in the Corinthian Church (I Cor. 1:12, 13), Paul asserts by means of rhetorical interrogations (questions asked for the purpose of emphasizing truth) that two things were essential before the Corinthians could be "of Paul". First, Paul must be crucified for them; and second, they must be baptized in his name. Since neither of these conditions obtained, the Holy Spirit's logic forbade the Corinthians being "Paulites."

This is the premise upon which we stand in repudiating the name "Campellite." Before one can say we are "of Campbell," he must prove: (1) That Campbell was crucified for us, and (2) that we were baptized into his name. Since neither condition is true, we deny all men the right to so brand us.

It is precisely upon this same ground that all of us should seek to stand today. Christ has been crucified for us and we have been baptized into His name. Therefore, we should be "of Christ." The paper we write for, the men we befriend, the colleges we attended have not been crucified for us and we have not been baptized into their names. Hence, it little behooves us to so identify ourselves or to allow others to so label us as belonging to them! We that belong to Christ are Christians and Christians only. With that we shall be content.

CATHOLIC ERRORS EXPOSED

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IT'S NEW TO ME

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inspiration repudiated the Tri-Provincial Eleemosynary Society, a general organization under which all would act, and each acted independently under its own divinely appointed order, and if Brother McGarvey had not been hunting for something like a society, he never would have seen here 'still another ground' for the species of 'church cooperation' he was seeking to justify. If he had not been up before a society convention 'covering the whole ground of our existing missionary cooperation,' he might have seen that if the true church cooperation was illustrated in the great work of feeding a nation and consisted in a church acting independently under its own organization, without even consulting any other church, then that which puts the churches of a state or nation under one general organizations for the small work of feeding and sending a preacher is a base counterfeit Brother McGarvey is witness that there are examples of individual church action in mission work, and that there is not a single example of two or more churches cooperating in missions. Hence all the testimony which the word of God gives on this subject is in favor of individual church action. Did the New Testament churches do their duty? Can we do ours and not do likewise?" (G.A. 1892, p. 38.)

Again, he said:

"I say I never published, or approved without publication, the assumption of the elders of one church sending out a man to induce the members of other churches to direct their means from their own church treasury, and to take it from the direction of their own elders, and place it under the elders of that one church. I have never approved concentrating the control of all the means and preachers of one State, under the authority of the elders of one church All such concentration of power is destruction of the activity and the true liberties of the church. It tends to exalt the elders of one church and degrade and dishonor those of the other." (G.A. 1890, p. 295.)

Did I dream, or did someone say: "That no changes have occurred in the method of supporting missionaries?"

EDITORIAL

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Through the law of expediency (for a thing to be expedient it must be lawful) various ways may be used in doing work authorized by Christ. But another organization than the church may not be organized, and could not be expedient, to which the church may shift its responsibility in doing its work, for it is not lawful. There may be two lawful ways of doing a thing authorized by Christ, but one may not be expedient, and the other may be expedient. It is lawful for a church to rent or own a place for assembling for worship. But in some instances renting a place may not be expedient. But it is not lawful (scriptural) for a church to shift its responsibility to a human organization, and make contributions to same, in doing its work. If so, where is the scripture that authorizes it? As was preached by Paul, and by gospel preachers for the past century, the church is sufficient to do all the work God has authorized to be done for the salvation of souls from sin and for caring for those in need who are the charges of the church.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES—CHAPTER II

GEORGE P. ESTES

Maplewood, Missouri

Faith

Faith is a central doctrine in the epistle of James, as it is in Paul's epistles to the Romans and Galatians. Because of the kind and degree of faith, one in the sight of God is either approved or disapproved, justified or condemned. This can be determined by comparing James with Galatians. Faith and believing occur nineteen times in James and twenty-two times in Galatians. Proportionally, about the same, for Galatians is larger in content.

A study of the verses reveal that they belong to the very heart of James' message: Trials are to be counted a joy because they are testing of One's faith and perfect it (1:2-4). Faith is the heart and center of the Christian life. Prayer is to be in faith. It is the only possible relationship that can exist between a Christian and God who gives to all freely. It is the basic to his access to God and his assurance of being heard (1:6). Chapter 2 is a chapter of faith. It is because God is concerned with His people's faith, that He deals with works. Abraham believed. The poor, the objects of God's love are rich in faith (2:5); that is why the lowly brother can glory in his high estate (1:9). Faith is the sole determining factor in a Christian's existence. Therefore, the prayer of faith and the prayer of the righteous are side by side, as equal to each other (5:15, 16). This is found in Paul's letter to the Romans (4:5) and proves that there is no conflict between James and Paul. For these reasons, James is stressing faith in the gospel of Christ. Old Testament men are used to stress the kind of faith required in the Christian era, (Elijah and Abraham); but James does not demand that one believe the same commands that they did. In James it is the word of truth (1:18, 21) which is the gospel (1 Pet. 1:22-25). In James, the word of God is the norm and guide for the Christian life and accordingly, Christianity is nothing other than a life of faith (ep. Gal. 2:20). The works which he demands are the obedience of faith, the proof and fruit of faith. James, chapter 2 is to insure and enforce this. From the beginning, from the obedience of the gospel to the end of the Christian life, faith and obedience are inseparable. This is James' message. The epistle of James, on the basis of its doctrine of God, the word of God, salvation, faith and works, and Christian living, belongs in the canon of the New Testament; this is beyond dispute. If one rejects James, he must upon the same grounds reject the epistles of Peter and Paul.

True and Acceptable Faith

The requirement for a Christian in James is this: with singleness of purpose he must devote his life in service to God and man. The imperative to live this life separated to God is inescapable and the demands to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) are boldly and plainly set forth. "Perfect" is a word used frequently. It means completeness, wholeness or ended. Thus, "And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing" (1:4); "If any man stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man" (3:2); "And by works was faith made perfect" (2:22). Also on God's side: "Every good and perfect gift" (1:17); "The perfect law of liberty, (the gospel, not the Mosaic law" Heb. 7:19)."

In James, faith in the God who gives, the Father of

Lights, who gave the word of truth; faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, such faith does not bring a man out of the domain of Satan and negative sin merely in order that he might stand upon neutral ground, or that he might rest at the center of non-sinfulness. Obedient faith carries one into the full activity of positive goodness, just as in Paul, it is not enough that he that stole, steal no more; he is to go on the positive part, "rather let him labor working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28). And not only must "corrupt communication" cease to proceed out of the mouth, it is replaced by words that "may minister grace unto the hearers," (Eph. 4:29).

The child of God in James does not merely bear up under trials grimly; he counts it all joy when different trials befall him (1:2), and in the patience which the trying of his faith calls forth, he sees himself being trained by God to that perfection and completeness that is wanting in nothing, (1:4) . . . His prayer is no mere cry of desperation; he asks in faith "nothing wavering", no wind-swept, uncertain and inconstant wave of the sea (1:6). If he is a brother of low-degree, as a child of God, he is not to take the attitude of resignation which is the ideal of some; but rejoices that he is exalted (1:9). If he is rich, he counts his riches as refuse and rejoices that he is made low; that his height is no longer measured by wealth but by what he has in common with the lowliest Christian. He sees in God, the giver of every perfect gift and never the source of evil (1:13-17). In conversion and in the Christian life, he receives the word of God in meekness and 'does' the word of God in complete submission to His will (1:19-21) The perfect law of liberty shows him himself as he is and as he ought to be, and he does not forget what the mirror has revealed. What he has seen leads to action in reconstructing his life in order that it might conform to God's will. Part of this is offering helpful mercy to the orphans and widows of the church, if such there be (1:27). This is put on a strictly personal basis. In fact the singular is throughout the chapter, thus stressing individual responsibility.

Since a Christian is one who has been born again, in the nature of things, he cannot be partly born of God and partly of another. All of him, including his tongue is Christ's and his tongue must now bless and not curse. He cannot be God's and let his tongue be an unruly evil, a deadly poison, a thing set on fire of hell (3:1-12). His wisdom too, is a perfect wisdom which descendeth down from above from God and brings forth works done in meekness. Here too, there can be no divided loyalty; there is no room for secular wisdom. If wisdom is earthly and sensual, it is thereby a devilish wisdom (3:15). To claim to be following God's wisdom while engaging in bitter envy and strife; to seek to combine it with confusion and evil works is to live a lie, a lie which vaunts itself against the truth (3:14). The wisdom from above has the marks of Jesus Christ upon it, being pure, peaceable, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy (3:17).

The Christian in the wholeness of his faith cannot adulterously divide his heart between God and the world; that there is the same either-or here as in all Christian existence—"whosoever . . . will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (4:4). That He who brought Christians forth of His own will, is jealous over that which He made to dwell in them (4:5). Therefore, He resists the proud but giveth grace to the humble (4:6). Repentance is a constant factor in the Christian life. He who needs must heed the admonition, "Draw nigh to God . . . Cleanse your hands

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CHRISTIANS OF FULL AGE

ROBERT H. BUNTING

A few weeks ago a preacher from the Christian Church heard me deliver a sermon on the theme "Music in Worship." Immediately following the sermon, the preacher and I had a two hour public discussion of the subject. In addition to the usual arguments used by those advocating instrumental music, this member of the Christian Church gave three arguments that seem to be the basis for all types of digression. Since these arguments are being used by some advocating other departures from the truth, it will be profitable to notice these arguments and the attitude fostering them.

Informed Christians are needed in this day and time as much as they were ever needed. It was the writer of the letter to the Hebrews who spoke of Christians who had become "full of age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14). It is imperative that Christians become "full of age"—able to discern good and evil. One must learn to recognize a liberal or digressive attitude the moment he sees it. Informed Christians will be the ones keeping the church from error.

Do All to the Glory of God

One of the main arguments used by this digressive preacher was based upon a misapplication of I Corinthians 10:31. Paul said, "Do all to the glory of God." "Therefore," is it argued, "one may play instruments or do anything else in the worship if it is done to the glory of God." It is evident this reasoning would bring in every kind of innovation imaginable. According to this argument one may wash pots, hands, or feet as a part of the worship, if the purpose is to glorify God. The fact of the matter is, God is not glorified by the disobedience of man. When man engages in an act contrary to the will of God, the Almighty is dishonored. Christ pointed out worship was vain if it was based upon human tradition. (Matt. 15:3-9). Apply this same principle to music and we see God is glorified when men sing in obedience to His command, but He is dishonored when men persist in using another kind of music.

I Corinthians 10:31 teaches nothing about every action in itself glorifying God, but rather is speaking of the direction of our actions. Every life should have as its ultimate aim the glorifying of God. In his outstanding work *Apostolical Epistles*, Macknight gives a comment that should help us see the meaning of this verse. "By this precept (Do all to the glory of God, RHB) the apostle hath taught us, that our greatest duty is to promote the glory of God, by regulating all our actions according to His will . . ." (Emphasis mine, RHB). God is glorified when man governs his activities by God's will. One must not be deceived into thinking God can be glorified through the substitution of human schemes for divine commands. Saul thought he could excuse disobedience by sacrifice, but found it to no avail. (I Sam. 15:19-22). Yes, to hearken is still better than the fat of rams.

Let us not be deceived by the idea that it makes no difference how or what is done as long as the motive is right. No matter how high the motive, the action is in vain if it is not done in the name (by the authority) of Christ. Col. 3:17). The young prophet of I Kings 13 had the highest of motives, but he was destroyed because of disobedience. Saul of Tarsus had high motives, but his authority was

wrong. He was the chief of sinners, not because of motives, but because of disobedience.

Can't Condemn It

"One cannot condemn something the Bible does not specifically condemn. The Bible says nothing about 'don't use the instrument', so one goes beyond the word of God if he condemns the practice of using mechanical instruments in the worship." So reasons our digressive brother. This is the old "the Bible doesn't say not to" argument in new dress. The digressives prove too much by this argument. If one is guilty of adding to the word by the condemnation of instrumental music in the worship, he is guilty of adding to the word by his condemnation of sprinkling. Where does the Bible say not to sprinkle? It doesn't, but when the inspired writer declares baptism is a burial (Rom. 6:4) that eliminates sprinkling. Sprinkling would constitute an addition, and thus violate 2 John 9. In the same way, when God commands singing that eliminates the playing of musical instruments. The warning in 2 John 9 applies to instrumental music just as it would to sprinkling.

Those advocating instrumental music in the worship are not the only ones using this argument in support of their position. Worldly church members often use the same argument in justifying dancing, gambling, or card playing. All need to recognize these practices ARE condemned by the word of God. Dancing is spoken against every time the word "lasciviousness" is mentioned, for dancing is included in the term. Gambling and card playing, as well as dancing, are condemned in the "and such like" of Galatians 5:21. It is not necessary for the word of God to name every sin invented by man, for the principles in the doctrine of Christ condemn these practices as soon as they appear. It is the duty of the Christian to be well enough informed to recognize when a practice violates the principles set down by Christ.

How many modernists have attempted to eliminate acts of obedience by this same argument? We are told, "The Bible nowhere says he that is not baptized will be damned." Of course, these specific words are not found in the Bible, but the principle is there. When the apostle Peter declares baptism "saves" us (I Pet. 3:21), it is evident one will be lost if he is not baptized. When God specifies baptism is necessary to salvation (Mark 16:16), He is in fact saying one will be damned without it.

When a practice is pointed out as NOT being the work of the church, we hear the answer, "The Bible doesn't say the church can't do it." As a method of cooperation is condemned as one not according to the divine pattern, the reply comes back, "The Bible doesn't say not to." We must ever keep before us the fact that any practice going beyond the limits of the law of God is transgression (2 John 9), and thus sin. When God makes a specification, everything else is eliminated. The work of the church has been specified, and the method of cooperation has been pointed out. Let us abide within God's specification.

What One Believes is Right

"And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14:23.) It is argued, "Faith is what one believes to be right, and Paul is saying anything is right if one believes it to be so." In the first place, Paul is not talking of commands given by God, but matters of opinion. The music used in the worship is not a matter of opinion, but a command of God. (Eph. 5:19). Then again, if "by faith" means

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CHURCH GOVERNMENT — WHAT IS IT?

E. OLIVER MURRAY

Lufkin, Texas

Christians have no right whatsoever by themselves and of themselves to decide what kind of government the church should have. If we are endeavoring to please the Lord in our worship and work, then we simply must find out whether the New Testament furnishes us a pattern of government. Since it does, then that settles it. It makes absolutely no difference what we think about the efficiency of such a plan. We may believe that some other sort of organization among Christians would more effectively work. But really would it? Do you believe that man can devise a plan in connection with any matter that is better than the Lord's? That is what we say and believe when we refuse to be satisfied with the divine pattern in reference to church government that God has ordained.

This one passage ought to be sufficient. According to Acts 13 and 14 Paul and Barnabas made a tour through Cyprus and Central Asia Minor preaching the gospel and establishing churches. Some time after the establishing of these churches the Bible says (Acts 14:23) Paul appointed for them, **ELDERS IN EVERY CHURCH**. Each church or congregation had a plurality of elders. Now turn to Titus 1:5, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ORDAIN ELDERS IN EVERY CITY**." If the gospel preached resulted in the establishment of a church in a city, then, later elders were ordained or selected for that church. Paul on his second missionary tour started a congregation in Philippi. Later he wrote to this church a letter. In Philippians 1:1 he refers to them as the saints in Philippi with the **BISHOPS AND DEACONS**. As a local church they had bishops as overseers of the work of that church.

At the end of Paul's tour he went by Miletus out from Ephesus and from there sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus. (Acts 20:17). Hear what Paul said to them: "Take heed unto yourselves and unto all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost made you bishops, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28). Verse 17 refers to these overseers of this local church as elders. Then verse 28 of the same chapter refers to these same men as bishops or overseers. Of what? That one local church in Ephesus. Elders are bishops and bishops are elders in the church of the Lord. There can be no difference when we follow the divine pattern.

Deacons were simply as the name implies, servants of that local church. But in Ephesians 4:11 Paul in referring to the bishops or elders of the churches called them pastors. In New Testament days each church had a group of men acting as overseers of the work of that church and **ONLY THAT CHURCH**. These men were known as elders, bishops, pastors. Their authority did not in **ANY SENSE EXTEND OUTSIDE THE WORK OF THAT LOCAL CHURCH**.

For us today to have one man over one church is a digression from the divine pattern outlined in the New Testament. For us to have one man over several churches is surely digression from God's intended arrangement. No one group of elders can oversee and direct the affairs of another congregation or congregations.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued From Page 10)

ye sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be afflicted and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of God and He will lift you up" (4:8-10). This wholehearted faith knows that God is God absolutely, and that man is His creature who must live by every word that proceedeth out of the Creator's mouth; that to lay plans as if God did not exist in His omnipotence is an evil and malicious boasting, it is sinful (4:13-17).

Faith as it is revealed by inspiration to James has in it a long and constant patience too. It waits for the coming of the Lord as the farmer waits for the maturing of the grain, until it shall have received the early and latter rain. Faith knows that it must wait, but it also knows what it is waiting for, and knows that the door before which it stands is God's door, to be opened at God's own time and opening into the heavenly home. Faith, therefore, is patient, waiting for the end of its hoping, and makes firm or establishes the heart (5:7-8). Throughout this epistle there runs this high call of perfection or completeness which knows no half measures. Faith, in James is total, involving the whole man; and complete, involving the whole life.

WHEN IS IT AN EXAMPLE

(Continued From Page 8)

of interpretation will justify our pattern of life when compared with Luke 9:58 and I Peter 2:21?

Whatever that method is, it will determine when we are required to follow the patterns in the life of the Lord, or whenever any other New Testament text contains a binding pattern—an example!

Christ—A Revelation of His Father

One answer may be found in the nature of Christ's mission. John 1:14; 14:6-9. "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." Luke 10:22. In his very coming, Christ was a **revelation** of his Father. This revelation was not only of the Father's nature but of his will. Law is will spoken or revealed. Wherein Christ revealed his Father's will, whether by word or by a pattern of life, it became law to man—it became binding.

In the fact that Christ was homeless, there was no **revelation**. There had always been homeless men. However, in the attitude of Christ toward his homeless life, there is a revelation. Where or when had any man ever had an attitude like that of Christ toward material things? In the statement, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," is revealed the new, perfect attitude for man toward material and spiritual matters.

Hence, we follow the example of Christ's attitude (not the incident in which he was without a home) and we make that choice upon the basis of the nature of his mission. We follow him in everything in which he is a revelation of His Father's nature or will.

Apostolic Illustrations

Acts 20:7, 8 contain several facts worthy of note just here: The Lord's Supper was eaten on the first day of the week; there was a meeting in an upper chamber; there were lights on; Paul preached; and he spoke until midnight.

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THE SEARCH FOR SPONSORING CHURCH

(Continued From Page 4)

Macedonia' does not mean 'when I had left' or 'after I had left.' It simply notes the time, and there is no need to insist on the imperfect: 'when I was leaving.' Note: the time when I left, before I got entirely away. For Thessalonica is located in Macedonia, and there the two gifts that were sent from Philippi reached Paul. That is why *kai* 'even' is added: 'even in Thessalonica,' before I actually got farther away.' (R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, p. 892.)

Thus, these scholars unite in saying that the expression "when I departed from Macedonia" may refer to the general period of his removal from Macedonia. As Paul travelled from Philippi to Thessalonica and Berea, he was in the process of departing from Macedonia; and as he remembered the trip some ten years later, he viewed it as a single event. Hence, the aorist *ekselthon*. Actually, we use the expression "when I departed" in the same sense. I could say, "When I departed from Texas, I received a degree from Abilene Christian College and many of my friends wished me well." Would this mean that all of my friends were clustered at the state line, and as I stepped across into another state, President Morris handed me a degree and my friends congratulated me? Certainly not! Then why insist that this is what it means when Paul "departed from Macedonia?"

Thus, it is sound exegesis, grammatically and historically, to say that when Paul departed from Macedonia, Philippi "only" came to his aid by sending "once and again" while he was "in Thessalonica." If this view of the passage is correct, it refers only to support which he received at Thessalonica; and this was before he visited Corinth. Thus, the "other churches" who aided Paul while he worked at Corinth did not send their funds through Philippi. No sponsoring church here!

Incidentally, if this writer "has his wires crossed" in holding such a view of Phil. 4:15, 16, then "some very able commentators" (to quote our teacher of Greek) have the same wires crossed in the same places!

Same As 2 Cor. 11:8?

Even though it could be shown that Phil. 4:15 refers to a contribution which Philippi sent to Paul after he had actually crossed the boundary separating Macedonia from Achaia, this would not prove that Philippi was a sponsoring church. Until it can be shown that Phil. 4:15 and 2 Cor. 11:8 refer to the same event, there is no evidence that Philippi was a "receiving church;" and there is simply no proof which will identify the two passages with the same contribution. **Here is the crux of this whole discussion!** We could admit everything that some have insisted about the meaning of the clause "when I departed from Macedonia," but this still falls far short of finding a sponsoring church. An essential link of evidence is still missing! Where is the proof that Phil. 4:15 and 2 Cor. 11:8 refer to the same contribution? There is none!

We know that after Paul left Macedonia, he went to Athens. We know also that while Paul was in Athens, Timothy came to him from Macedonia; and Paul sent the younger preacher back to Thessalonica. (1 Thess. 3:1, 2) This proves that Paul had contact with Macedonia while he was in Achaia, but before he arrived in Corinth. If Philippi "only" had sent money to Paul after he crossed into Achaia (and this is granting, for a moment, everything that some insist about Phil. 4:15), is it not possible that the money reached him before he arrived in Corinth? Is this not more reasonable

when he says that "other churches" (not Philippi "only") aided him in Corinth?

Our teacher of Greek admits that the verb "when I departed" (aorist tense) might refer either to the time when Paul "started to leave Macedonia" or to "the whole trip from Berea and on through Athens and Corinth." Thus, he has surrendered everything! This admits that the contribution might have been sent while Paul was at Athens, or even as he was leaving Berea. Phil. 4:15 does not mention Corinth! And we know that Paul had contact with Macedonia while he was at Athens. Thus, even granting for the moment that Philippi "only" sent Paul financial help while he was in Achaia, there is still no evidence to show that it was while he was at Corinth!

There are some commentators who insist that Phil. 4:15, 16 refers to two incidents, and that Philippi "only" sent to Paul after he arrived in Achaia; but it is interesting to note that even among those who hold this position, some insist that this contribution cannot be identified with the one from "other churches" in 2 Cor. 11:8. For example Meyer says, "When I departed from Macedonia, Acts 17:14. Paul, therefore, immediately on leaving that country, received aid from the infant church." He goes on to say, "This receipt of money at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:9) is not the fact meant by the fellowship in the matter of giving and receiving (Phil. 4:15)." (Meyer's *Commentary On The New Testament, Philippians*—Philemon, p. 179.)

A. T. Robertson is as great a Greek grammarian as our nation has produced, and Robertson states: (1) that Phil. 4:15, 16 refers to one incident, the help which Philippi "only" sent while Paul was "in Thessalonica," and (2) that Phil. 4:15 cannot be identified with 2 Cor. 11:8. Note carefully what Dr. Robertson says in commenting on Phil. 4:15, 16, "Paul had to keep books then with no other church, though later Thessalonica and Berea joined Philippi in support of Paul's work in Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8) . . . 'Both once and twice' they did it 'even in Thessalonica' and so before Paul went to Corinth." (A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 4, p. 462.) Let it be remembered, therefore, that when someone turns to the Greek in attempting to make Philippi a sponsoring church, his arguments are denied at every turn by this country's foremost Greek grammarian!

"Giving and Receiving"

There are some who find a possible suggestion of a sponsoring church in the expression "giving and receiving" (Phil. 4:15). If Philippi received from other churches and forwarded the funds to Paul, presto—we have a sponsoring church. However, the expression *doseos kai leipseos* (giving and receiving) does not state, or even imply, that Philippi received funds from other churches.

Robertson calls this a "mercantile metaphor" and adds that at this time Paul had to keep books with no other church, though later he was supported by other churches. Moule says in the *Cambridge Greek Testament* that this expression is "a recognized formula for money transactions, where one gives and another takes."

Dean Alford states, "It is true the Philippians had all the giving, the Apostle all the receiving: the debtor side was vacant in their account, the creditor side in his: but this did not make it any the less an account of 'giving-and-receiving,' categorically so called." (Alford's *Greek Testament*, Vol. 3, p. 193.)

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WHEN IS IT AN EXAMPLE

(Continued from Page 12)

One of these facts is bound among faithful Christians everywhere. Are brethren being arbitrary in insisting that this example of eating the Lord's Supper at the first of every week be followed, and in being indifferent as to whether there is preaching (and we do not believe it must accompany the supper), whether meetings are upstairs, or the lights are on? It isn't arbitrary if some reasonable explanation can be offered that will also explain other texts involving the conduct of the inspired apostles.

The Nature of The New Testament

Romans 16:25-27; I Cor. 2:9, 10; Gal. 1:11, 12, 15, 16. The New Testament is by nature a revelation. Its purpose was to unfold the will of God, not completely revealed by Jesus Christ. John 16:13. The inspired men were the instruments of the revelation, the very words of the Holy Spirit guiding them in the things they preached and set down in writing. I Cor. 2:13. The conduct of the early church to which they gave their approval as the first human rulers of the church, and the only inspired ones, must of necessity have tremendous bearing on our conduct.

But when does their presence in some activity of the church, or their participation in that activity constitute an example? Not always, as is obvious in Acts 20 above. This is the reason for so many year's study of the question, When is an apostolic example binding? The facts seem to indicate that to be more correct it should be, When does the conduct of the apostles constitute an example?

One possible answer: The conduct of the apostles constitutes an example when there is in that conduct any revelation; for, it is the nature of the apostle's work in the New Testament to reveal, as an examination of the above texts will show.

As applied to Acts 20, it will be seen that there is but one revelation in the series of occurrences. There is none in the fact of preaching, for men had always preached. There is not one in meeting upstairs or in having the lights on. But in the fact that men ate a supper in remembrance of a risen Lord on the first day of the week, there is indeed a revelation. No other system or philosophy had ever given to men a similar monument to be thusly remembered.

We follow that example because it is a part of the New Testament revelation. By the same token any other text containing a pattern of conduct approved by the apostles in which there is a revelation, has the same binding force.

Is the Cooperation-Pattern of the Corinthian Letters Binding?

That there is a distinct pattern here can hardly be denied. When many churches cooperated, their action was independent, they never acted through a single agency, human or divine; and they acted with a view to dissolving the inequalities among them. I Cor. 16; II Cor. 8, 9. Many who have seen these things consider them no more binding than the upstairs meeting of Acts 20. They seem to them as mere incidentals. As incidentals, they would not be examples, and certainly no one should insist upon them being followed.

Is there a revelation in the conduct of these churches? When every philosophy and system of world organization has been fully explored by every student, it will stand, that, here in these passages there was revealed an entirely new and perfect concept for the cooperation of organizations.

Space will permit but one illustration of the principle at work. The Roman empire was held together for the time of its strength by the philosophy that "In Union There Is Strength." The various facets of that world rule were organically bound. Men felt this the best way to build strength—the best way to solicit cooperation from every arm of government. This principle was adopted by religious societies such as the Roman Catholic church, and accounts for many of her organizational features today.

In short men lacked the wisdom to see that in the last analysis the strength of a world-wide organization could stand upon the common faith shared by its units while their independence is maintained.

The New Testament reveals this system in the congregational government of the Lord's church, and in the function of the early churches as they preached the gospel and met the disasters common to our race. 2 Cor. 11:8, 2 Cor. 8, 9.

Since it is the nature of the New Testament to reveal, if one believes that we should not follow a pattern of conduct approved by the apostles and exclusively introduced to the world by the New Testament, this one should show why we have the right to ignore this central function of the New Testament. And he should do so with the knowledge that he will with the same stroke erase the steps of the Master, leaving us without that precious path we hope to follow to eternal happiness. He should do so by pointing out where in the affairs of men the pattern of cooperation set forth here had been employed, so that its presence in the New Testament is not as a revelation, but an incorporation of details as the upper chamber and lights of Acts 20!

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CHRISTIANS OF FULL AGE

(Continued From Page 11)

doing what one believes is right, each man is a standard unto himself. The Hindu would be right because he thinks he is right. The Catholic is right because of his own sincerity. This is certainly not the case, for no man can measure himself by himself. (2 Cor. 10:12.)

It is pointed out in Romans 14:23 one's actions are wrong if one thinks them to be wrong, but it does not teach an action is right because one thinks it right. The question is—does God think it right? "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." (2 Cor. 10:18). God approves only those actions that are by faith. This is why Paul declares, "We walk by faith, and not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7). The question is, when does one walk by faith? Since faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), it is evident one "walks by faith" when he walks by the direction of God's word. Singing can be done by faith—God commands it. Instrumental music cannot be done by faith.

This philosophy, that each man is a law unto himself, is destructive to the authority of Christ. It treats the kingship of Christ as something to be ignored. The Son of God answers this school of thought with the words, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). It is inconsistent for one to say he recognizes Christ as Lord, and then refuse to abide in that which Christ has commanded. If one truly believes Christ is the Lord, he will obey Him and abide fully in His word.

Each Christian has the responsibility to become well

enough acquainted with the Word of God to immediately recognize a departure from the faith. Only through study can one become "full of age" and able to discern good and evil.

THE SEARCH FOR SPONSORING CHURCH

(Continued From Page 13)

Conclusion

If we are to find a Bible pattern for the sponsoring church in Philippi's support of Paul, it must be proved: (1) that Phil. 4:15 refers to a contribution later than the help which Paul received in Thessalonica, and (2) that this contribution is the same one that is mentioned in 2 Cor. 11:8. Neither of these points can be proved!

Thus, the search for the sponsoring church has been fruitless, at least as far as the Philippian congregation is concerned.

Let us never allow our discussions of how the Lord's work is to be done to blind us to the urgency of our proclaiming the gospel among all nations. But on the other hand, let us never allow the urgency of the Lord's work to blind us to the importance of our doing God's work in God's way!

UNQUESTIONED RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

(Continued From Page 3)

the problems before us. And the rule book is still the New Testament. All any ask for is New Testament authority. That would set the matter at rest. We are brethren, there should be no strife among us. Truth only should be sought. And if sought it will be found. The unity for which our Lord prayed and which the New Testament commands is at stake. Only one thing is more precious—truth. May God help us all to seek it as for hidden treasure.



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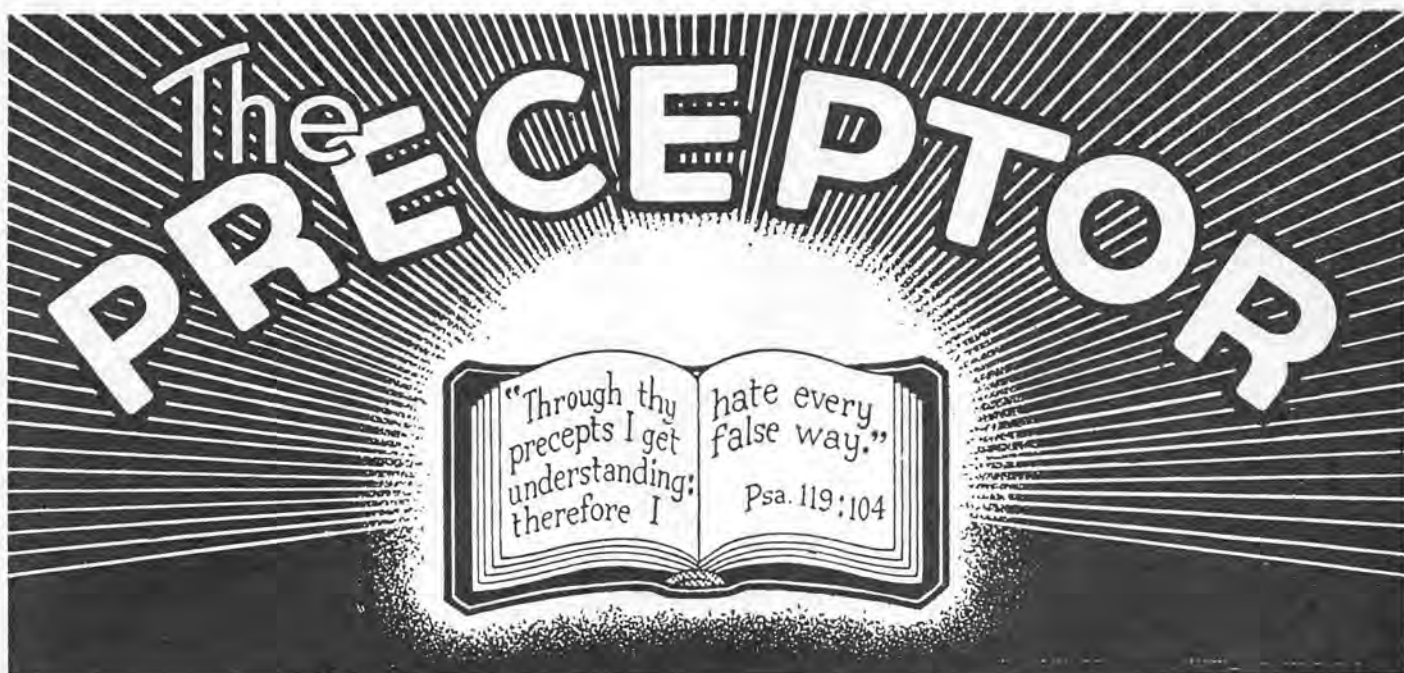
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TO OUR READERS AND FRIENDS

DEAN BULLOCK

With the November number **The Preceptor** began its fifth year of publication. Material designed to teach the lost the way of salvation and strengthen children of God has characterized every issue. Many timely and instructive articles have gone into thousands of homes throughout this fair land of ours. Too, about nine hundred copies have been sent monthly to preacher students in colleges maintained by our brethren. Only eternity can determine the amount of good accomplished. From time to time, writers have given special attention to current problems and issues before the church. They have sought to discuss these with the Christian spirit and in the light of eternal truth. They have striven to give the Bible teaching on every subject considered. They have endeavored to deal with principles, not personalities. This policy has brought many letters and cards of commendation for which we are deeply and humbly grateful.

It is our earnest desire to produce a paper that can be used to indoctrinate members of the body of Christ and alien sinners regarding the organization, worship, work, and purity of the church. We want the paper to be of such nature and content that it can be placed in the hands of all and read with profit. Our services are given strictly in the interest of truth

and righteousness and without any expectation of monetary remuneration. We do not sell advertisements; funds received from personal book sales are used to pay printing bills and send out samples. When you order books from us you enable us to do a work that we could not otherwise do.

Luther G. Roberts and I assumed control of **The Preceptor** about seven months ago. Formerly, it was published by James R. Cope and others in Tampa, Florida. We believe along with hundreds of other faithful preachers that the paper can do much to stem the tide of liberalism and denominationalism in the brotherhood.

Efforts, since last May, to enlarge our reading family have, in many ways, been encouraging. Any religious periodical must depend upon its readers and "boosters" for growth and enlarged circulation. Hence, every subscriber is urged to renew promptly when notified and to work to get others to take the paper. **If every reader would subscribe for one person, our opportunity for doing good would be doubled.** This means that hundreds of others would read good gospel literature. What about it? Will you send two dollars and the address of a friend? If you will, we shall be thankful!



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EDITORIAL

A STATEMENT BY EDITOR

My plans are to move to Amarillo, Texas, to make my home about February 1, 1956. I shall continue to preach the gospel at every opportunity and due to the change in locations I will be available for more gospel meeting work and for teacher in teacher training courses. My address in Amarillo will be 3500 West Haven Drive, but all communications concerning subscriptions, changes of address, or orders for books should continued to be addressed to Box 165, Borger, Texas. It shall be my purpose to do the work of Editor of *The Preceptor* in the new location as for the past several months in Borger. Articles for publication and personal mail should be sent to me at the Amarillo address after February 1, 1956.

CHRISTIANITY

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

Christianity is the system of divine religion of which Jesus Christ is the author. Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Bible as well as the founder of Christianity. The Bible contains a history of Judaism, as well as the system of faith promulgated by Christ and illustrated by his apostles. But in the second division of the book called the Bible, that is in the New Testament, we have the religion of Jesus Christ fully revealed. All Bible lines converge in Jesus Christ.

He was the "promised seed of the woman" who was to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15); the covenant "seed" of Abraham who was to bless all the nations of the earth (Gen. 12:1-3). The sacrifices of the long centuries of the Patriarchal and Jewish periods pointed to the sacrifice of Jesus as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of

the world." Innumerable prophecies and types converge on Christ. In a similar manner the lines of the New Covenant run back to Christ. We preach Christ, believe in Christ, confess Christ, are baptized into Christ, keep the Lord's supper in memory of Christ upon the day that commemorates the resurrection of Christ. Redemption through Christ is the theme that binds all books of the Bible into one.

Christianity centers in a person, that person is Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. The apostle John writes, "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" (John 1:1, 2). Then, in Verse 14, he writes, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." In verse 17 John states, "For the law came by Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." This grace and truth, this system characterized by grace and truth, is Christianity revealed to the world, in the New Testament. Although Christianity centers in the person, Jesus Christ, yet its principles are set forth in the facts concerning Him found in the writings of the apostles and inspired men, commonly known as the New Testament.

As our Preserver, He sustains us by the word of His power; as our Benefactor, he provides for our present necessities, and promises blessings for the future; as our Governor, He who has blessed us ought to possess our affections, He who formed us has a right to our obedience.

Submission to God, which duty springs from our due sense of relationship to Him, as creatures, follows as the night the day. He made us and redeemed us, we are therefore, His. Submission to His will, which will enforce purity, righteousness, and benevolence, annuls every other rule of conduct contrary to it; requires that interests, honors, liberty and life itself, be surrendered to Him that His will be not violated. There are no exceptions in obedience to Him.

Love to God is another of the requisites we owe to God because of His matchless love to us. "We love, because he first loved us." (1 Jno. 4:19). Love is joined with obedience, or rather, love prompts obedience. Love prompts and is essential to true obedience. Jesus said to his apostles, which is applicable to us in principle, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matt. 22:37, 38).

Trust in God, faith in God, fear or reverence of God, prayer to God, praise and thanksgiving are some of the many other duties that we owe unto God as set forth in Christianity.

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"IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP"

LESLIE DIESTELKAMP

"Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting" was the warning God gave the King in the long ago as He wrote the message upon the wall of the dining hall where the feast was in progress. Have you ever considered what God would write today if he were warning his people? Of course, it would be folly to speculate. We have no idea what he would write. But I know what I would write if I should be asked to write a sentence upon the church house walls all over the world. I would write, "It's Time To Wake Up." Paul wrote, "That now it is high time to awake out of sleep . . ." (Rom. 13:11), and it is that message that I would write, if I could, where it would remain to be read until the walls of the church building crumble down into the dust.

They used to tell the story about a Missouri farmer who would call his four sons very early Monday morning with these words: "Hurry! Today's Monday, tomorrow's Tuesday, the next day's Wednesday and the week is half gone and nothing done yet." Today we might urge: "This is 1955, next year will be 1956, the next will be 1957 and the century is over half gone, and so little done yet!"

Wake Up To Needs of Lost Souls

Indeed, it is time that Christians everywhere awake to the necessity of saving the lost by preaching the pure, unadulterated truth to them. Think of the millions in Europe who know not the truth; think of the 100,000 in South America without the help of one, even one, gospel preacher; think of millions and millions in Africa and Asia who have not even heard that Jesus lived and died—yes millions who, if you mention Jesus Christ, would not know if he were stabbed with a butcher knife or if he were hanged on a cross. Then think of the millions of lost souls in our own dear America! Do you realize that about six million lost souls live within thirty miles of my residence (I live in suburban Chicago). Think of it—more people within 30 miles of me than live in New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, all combined! Not just souls, BUT LOST SOULS! And, they are everywhere; in your neighborhood, too!

Preachers need to wake up. We quote the "great commission" almost every week. Do we mean it—for ourselves? Oh, that the words might sting our lips and burn our tongue every time we quote it UNTIL WE INTEND TO LISTEN TO IT OURSELVES! Elders need to wake up to their responsibility in rescuing those wayward souls under their care. Indeed, they should become so concerned with their duty that they would not rest until they had done their very best to guide every wandering sheep back into the fold of safety. Teachers need to wake up to their opportunities to prepare themselves so as to be able to sow some seed in each class and make some impression, even if it is upon the youngest child, that will last for eternity. They should be so concerned with this responsibility that they let nothing hinder their preparation and presentation of great lessons in truth to those tender minds whom they teach. Song leaders need to wake up to opportunity to make the song service really edifying. Christian parents need to wake up to the task that is theirs alone, to mold and make character and, as Hannah of old, to give their children to the Lord.

Wake Up To Dangers

Christian people must wake up to the danger of division.

To close our eyes to such danger does not make it less real, but only more actual. Division does not have to come, but if we do not awake to its possibility—yes, probability—then we will surely be rudely awakened by its actuality some of these days. Differences of opinion will not divide us, but attitudes about those differences may! At least, the gravest danger, now, is not differences, but attitudes. Closed minds that will not study objectively, and dictatorial attitudes that bind and loose, quarantine and boycott, vilify and slander, will hasten division today as has been true in other days.

Authority

If division comes in our day, it seems evident that it will come as a result of abandonment of the New Testament as a complete, perfect, infallible authority. If or when brethren refuse to be limited by the scriptures then division is imminent. Let us wake up to the necessity of being guided entirely by precept and example in God's word. Let us be willing to abandon all that is not thus authorized, just as we should be determined to zealously pursue all for which there is a "thus saith the Lord."

Worldliness

We need to wake up to the dangers of worldliness. Let us be fully aware of the fact that divorce, dancing, gambling, drinking, etc., are becoming too common among professing Christians. The cause of truth is stifled because the world cannot tell the difference between the sinner and the saint. We must remember that sin is just as soul-destroying today as it was four thousand years ago. Because God does not punish sin with immediate death today does not mean that He smiles upon sin any more today than He did when He destroyed sinners in the long ago. (See Lev. 24:10; Josh. 7; Num. 15:33; 2 Sam. 6:3-7; etc.) When "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jno. 1:17), it was forgiveness of sin that came, when we meet his conditions, and not license for sin. Many people don't become Christians because they say there are too many hypocrites in the church. And, the sad thing is that they are right! (They are not right in staying outside the church, for if all others are lost, they can still be saved, while if they stay out of Christ they will certainly be lost, but they are right in that there are too many hypocrites in the church). One is too many, and there just may be more than one!

A grave danger in worldliness is posed in the fact that it is getting to be so hard to find many Christians who will oppose it or who will endorse the preacher who opposes it. Worldliness hangs as a heavy shadow over the cause of truth today. Our light does not shine as it ought! Let us not be deceived into thinking that many members (perhaps a million strong or more) large congregations, great buildings and cultural lectures from our pulpits will make us a true light unto the world. Godliness, holiness and purity must characterize Christians if our light is made to shine brightly for Christ. (Mt. 5:13-16).

Apostasy

We must wake up to the danger of apostasy. It has happened in other generations, and it can happen again in ours. Ten preachers who once preached in churches of Christ in Chicago-land are now in various denominations! Think of it! Ten from one city! And, we hear of others all over the nation who thus depart from the faith month after month. Such news has come to us from New York, California, Missouri, Tennessee, Ohio, and from foreign lands. It is not only true that some preachers go astray, but other Christians follow them. Preachers do not take that long step into apostasy without taking others with them.

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Restoration and Reaction

IT'S NEW TO ME – NO. 10

C. E. W. DORRIS

On May 27, 1911, the Christian Standard published an article indorsing the method of churches and Christians contributing directly to J. M. McCaleb in Japan. On March 7, 1912, the Gospel Advocate published the Standard's article. Brother David Lipscomb re-published an extract from this article. Here is the Lipscomb extract in part.

"Brother McCaleb advocates that method, now growing in favor, by which each missionary and his work is supported by churches and Christians contributing directly. Not many months ago we published a report of his work, and we are pleased to note that it continues to prosper."

Brother Lipscomb wrote under the caption:
"A True Method of Work"

Here is what he said:

"We publish this to show how the true method of missionary work is approved by all. The Standard has done more in its time and its work to build up the societies than any other influence. I am glad to see it rise above all selfish and party influence and commend that which all must recognize as scriptural and right. The Standard says this method is now growing in favor. The churches and individuals are contributing directly to the work without the intervention of the man-made societies; while this method brings familiarity with the work to the knowledge of the members and forces them to study and know its facts and workings, as the human system fails to do. It is singular that any one who understands the Bible and believes in its being of God should hesitate as to what course to pursue. The present method is God's approved method. He guarantees its success if Christians will faithfully use it, and churches growing out of it will be, beyond all doubt, true and faithful churches of Christ. We thank the Standard for its faithful statement of the truth and commend the work as approved of God and that must be a blessing to men. Why should men strive to introduce other systems, when all can unite in this way; when all can, without hinderance or hurt, cross or objection, work through God's appointed ways?

"Sooner or later all professed Christians must be one. There is no possible chance for Christians to live as children of God and not become one. They must be one in Christ, one in the understanding and practice of the word of God. They must be one as Jesus and the Father are one. 'Even as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me.' (John 17:21). The world is waiting to believe on

Jesus, and he who strews discord and division among the people of God by introducing things not required by Jesus Christ is contrary to God and his teaching. He is not a worker with God. Let us all so believe and act as to stand with and for God that we may be one with him." (G. A. 1912, p. 337.)

Thus we have the teaching of Brother Lipscomb on "the true method of missionary work"—"God's approved method" and one "approved by all." But, what is that method? Here it is: "The churches and individuals are contributing directly to the work." There was no division over this method among loyal brethren at the time he wrote. But in latter years some brethren have departed from "God's approved method" and are causing strife and division among brethren.

"But," says one, "Brother Lipscomb was arguing against the society." Exactly so, but he was also arguing for sending support directly to missionaries and against sending it any other way. His argument against the society is equally as strong against the sponsoring church, for the reason both are middle institutions standing between the supporters and the supported. The New Testament makes no provision for middle institutions.

We will now hear Brother Guy N. Woods, a staff writer of the Gospel Advocate. In commenting on Phil. 4:15, 16, he said:

"Here, too, we see the simple manner in which the church in Phillippi joined with Paul in the work of preaching the gospel. There was 'no missionary society' in evidence, and none was needed; the brethren simply raised the money and sent it directly to Paul. This is the way is should be done today."

That has the proper ring, and sounds like what we read from the pens of the old editors of the Gospel Advocate years ago. Brother, give us a few strong articles along this line in the Gospel Advocate. They are badly needed. Our brother continues:

"When men become dissatisfied with God's arrangement and set up one of their own, they have already crossed the threshold to apostacy. Let us be satisfied with the Lord's manner of doing things." (Annual Lesson Commentary, Gospel Advocate Co., Lesson XI, December 15, 1946, page 341.)

The sponsoring church method is unknown to the New Testament, was invented by the wisdom of man, contravenes the word of God and sets his wisdom aside and produces strife and division among God's people. Somebody must have become dissatisfied with God's arrangement, else this would not have been done. Brother Woods says: "When men become dissatisfied with God's arrangement and set up one of their own, they have already crossed the threshold to apostacy. Brother Lipscomb said: 'He who strews discord and division among the people of God by introducing things not required by Jesus Christ is contrary to God and his teaching. He is not a worker with God.' He and Woods both use strong language, indeed, against brethren who become dissatisfied with God's arrangement and set up methods of their own.

We will now hear from another staff writer of the Gospel Advocate, G. C. Brewer. In a message to me, dated September 30, 1953, he said:

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STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES – NO. 5

GEORGE P. ESTES

A lukewarm church is an abomination to the Lord (Rev. 2:14-16). The half-hearted devotion of the double-minded brother fits into this general picture (Jas. 1:8). James 2:1-13 is a fight against the abridgment or perversion of the true faith which takes the form of respect of persons, that is, of partiality or favoritism. Living by faith and complete dependence upon God excludes respect of persons (or as the Hebrew expression put it "accepting a man's face"). God had told His people Israel: "The Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward." (Deut. 10:17). He is the impartial and just Judge and demands of His people that they judge without partiality. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." (Lev. 19:15). God acted upon this principle when He sent His Son and spake His last and final word through Him: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him." (Acts 10:34, 35). His wrath from heaven is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men whether they be Jew or Gentile. Neither in God's judgment nor in His grace is there any respect of persons. It is on this central fact that the inspired James takes his stand: "My brethren do not try to combine faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons" (Jas. 2:1). The address, "My brethren" has a special force here. Jesus said concerning this: "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and ye are all brethren" (Matt. 23:8). In the brotherhood where all are united in Christ Jesus and where all are one (Gal. 3:28) all snobbery and partiality should be put away. In view of the fact that the Son of God humbled Himself, took on the form of a servant and was crucified on behalf of all, and that without distinction of persons, how can there exist class distinctions if one would be like his Saviour? Paul writes: "Wherefore, receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God." (Rom. 15:7).

James then proceeds to make clear and inescapable just what he means by respect of persons, by the illustration of an assembly. A man of substance with a gold ring and splendid garments comes in. There is a hustle and bustle as the distinguished man is shown to the best seat in the assembly. With him there has entered a poor man in shabby garments; but no one pays much attention to him. He is told: "Stand thou there, or sit under my footstool." (Jas. 2:3). That is all that happened, nevertheless something terrible has happened. Christians by so doing are divided in themselves; they have cleft their souls and have broken the wholeness in their allegiance to God. This has made of them men whose judgments are guided by base motives. James' answer in the form of a question, is of crushing irony: "Do ye not make distinction among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" (vs. 4). In other words, they have introduced a division in themselves and this division has influenced their decision. Jesus said: "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). James is against the divided heart in whatever form it appears, whether in prayer or in partiality. In the next verse (vs. 5) he points out

to them just what they are doing when they thus treat the rich and the poor. You are not seeing men in faith, he tells them, not as through God's eyes. For how does God look upon the poor?" "Hearken, my beloved brethren; did not God choose them that are poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," (vs. 5). The very words, "Did not God choose them," teaches the impartiality and unselfishness of the love of God. The poor have always been the kind of people who have more readily accepted the gospel plan of salvation. "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (I Cor. 1:26).

It is this love of God that chose the foolish things of this world, the base things, the weak things, the despised and the things that are not (I Cor. 1:27). It is that love of God that chose to send His Son before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4) that they might be rich in faith and inherit the kingdom. In the kingdom, the great keyword in the proclamation of Jesus and of John the Baptist before Him, which had its beginning in its perfected state on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2) are all spiritual blessings found. The poor that inherit the kingdom, hunger and thirst after righteousness and shall be filled. Those who mourn shall be comforted. The merciful shall obtain mercy. The peacemakers shall be called the children of God. The pure in heart shall see God. (Matt. 5:3-9). They are sons of God who are heirs of an inheritance that is sure because God ordains it, that is perfect because God gives it. In the kingdom, in Christ there is forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38); salvation (Heb. 1:14); glory (Eph. 1:18); blessing (I Pet. 3:9); the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7); and at the coming of the Lord, the new heavens and the new earth (Rev. 21:7) where the tabernacle of God is among His faithful people, where He shall wipe all tears forever from their eyes, where there shall be no toil, no crying, no sorrow, and no death. The Christians in the cleavage of their souls have mistaken the poor for the rich and the rich for the poor; they have dishonored him whom God has showered with honor and glory.

Their action, because it has been faithless, is godless, too. They have been showering their attentions upon those who as a class are the oppressors of the Christians. "Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgment." "Do not they blaspheme the honorable name by which ye are called." (vs. 6, 7). This is not so much an organized persecution but legal actions arising in society in a community, dealing with wages, rent and debts. One can readily visualize the rich man in court, who in his prosperous condition, condemned a Christian and added insult to injury by mentioning that the accused was an adherent of Jesus of Nazareth who had been crucified and was despised. Thus, they would blaspheme the honorable name. In many instances the poor man was entirely innocent of the accusation.

What is godless and unchristian and out of harmony with the Christian life and faith is clearly demonstrated in action. Lapses from the required standard set forth by the inspired men cannot be defended. One cannot evade the total claim the Lord has upon him. But: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another." (Gal. 5:15).

SEND A FRIEND
THE PRECEPTOR
And Help Teach Him
THE TRUTH

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

From the various opinions concerning what the Bible teaches and from the religious state of the world, it is evident that people do not understand the Bible or all see the Bible the same. Why is this? It is not because God is unable to give a revelation of Himself, for He is all powerful. It surely is not because God is unwilling to give a revelation of Himself and His will, for He is a merciful and beneficent heavenly Father. The truth is that when the Bible is understood it will be understood alike by different people. When people see the teaching of the Bible differently at least one and perhaps all do not understand the Bible. God is not a God of confusion and he has not given a book that causes confusion. The cause of the confusion is in men and not in God's revelation.

Man is commanded in the Bible to understand the will of the Lord. Paul wrote to the saints of Ephesus, "Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Would the Holy Spirit command people to understand the will of the Lord if it could not be done, if it were impossible for man to understand it? Surely He would not. Again, Paul commanded Timothy, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). To the same person Paul wrote in the same letter, "Every scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnish completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The apostle Peter declared, "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3). These scriptures all demand an understanding of the will of the Lord. They show that the word of God can be understood by men. The way of salvation from sin and eternal salvation in the world to come is revealed in the word of God, but if men cannot understand it, then, how can they learn the way of salvation?

But why do men not understand the Bible or see the Bible alike? There are different reasons why men do not understand the Bible or see the Bible alike. One is that **people do not study the Bible.** The Bible cannot be understood unless it is studied. It must be read and we must think and meditate on the Bible. We are "to give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13). "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God," Jesus said (Jno. 6:45). The Psalmist said the "blessed man" is the one whose "delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps. 1:2). Hosea, the prophet said concerning Israel, when they had turned away from Jehovah, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Again, the prophet said, "I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my law; but they are counted as a strange thing." We should no more expect to understand the Bible without studying it than we could expect to understand mathematics, or chemistry without study. Men who compose a jury in a trial of a person are required to see the evidence alike and give a unanimous verdict before the person being tried is declared guilty. One of the sadly neglected things of this generation is the neglect to study the Bible to show ourselves approved unto

God. This is one reason why we do not understand the Bible.

Another reason why men do not understand the Bible is that they do not study with an open mind. Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables and when the disciples asked him why he did this, he said, "Because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, 'By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive: for this peoples' heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them'" (Matt. 13:13-15). These people had closed their minds against the truth and, therefore, they could not understand it because they would not. The apostles of Christ and some others were open-minded and they could understand the teaching of Christ. Only those who come to a study of the Bible with open minds, unprejudiced hearts, and without preconceived ideas and notions can understand the Bible and be saved.

Still another reason why people do not understand the Bible is that they come to the Bible with an idol in their heart. By this I mean that people are taught and accept some religious doctrine of men and they try to study the Bible to make it fit their doctrine or the teaching of some men. We study the Bible through colored glasses as it were. We have been taught the doctrine of some church and when this doctrine is not found in the Bible we say we cannot understand the Bible or one sees the Bible through one man made doctrine and another through another man made doctrine and, therefore, they do not see alike. We need to dismiss from our minds the theories and opinions of men and study the Bible with an open mind to learn what it says. Too many have the notion that they learn the traditions and opinions of men in religion and then come to the Bible and find substantiation of these doctrines which originated with men. This cannot be done. There were some in the days when the apostle Paul lived who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead; they had been taught by men that there was no such thing as the resurrection of the dead, and when Paul preached that the dead will be raised, the people mocked him. "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked" (Acts 17:32). These people were prejudiced, they had preconceived ideas about the state of the dead and so they would not listen to such a teaching.

There are some who love the teachings of men more than they do the teaching of the word of God, they refuse to have a knowledge in their hearts, they do not love the truth. "And for this cause" ("because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved") "God sendeth them a working of error, that they might believe a lie: that they might all be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:11, 12).

There are others who do not understand the will of the Lord because they are blinded by the god of this world. Paul said, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: in whom the god of this world (or age) hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them" (2 Cor. 4:3, 4). The god of this world or age is Satan. He hath blinded the minds of men who are lost by the things of this age. The traditions

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IS THE BIBLE THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD?

By WILBUR HUNT

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The Bible is the world's greatest and most influential Book. How is the influence of the Bible shown? The lives and destinies of people and nations have been influenced and changed by the noble and high teachings of the Bible; for example, the teachings of the Bible can change a thief into a law-abiding citizen and a God-fearing person. The Bible has influenced the creation of the beautiful things of life in art, music, literature and architecture. The Bible provides wonderful and many blessings to those who are faithful to God, and gives hope, comfort, and a life of meaning and purpose. Without the influence of the Bible or even the existence of the Bible, the world would indeed be dark and sinful, and life would be without hope and meaning! Let us thank God for the Bible from Him!

But the Bible is also the world's most attacked Book. Not everyone believes in its claims, and in the idea that God is its Author. But despite the attacks made upon it, the Bible still shines bright: outshining all of the literature written by humans put together! Nothing can shake and destroy the Bible!

The issue involves the question of inspiration. Is the Bible actually the inspired word of God and, therefore, our only true and safe Guide in religion or is the Bible just like any other literature written by humans and, therefore, subject to errors? Let us consider this subject of inspiration.

Inspiration is revelation from and guidance by God working together; revelation plus guidance equals the Bible. This is the way that the Bible is the only supernatural Book in the world. This is the way that the Bible is the word of God in the sense that God caused to be written the things written in it under His revelation and guidance. Without this revelation from and guidance by God, the Bible would be just like any human literature, and would be full of errors, contradictions, and disunity. The writers, as well as the speakers, were under the inspiration of God in order to prevent errors and to have an accurate message as shown in II Peter 1:19-21. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The idea that the "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" is contrary to the Modernistic idea that the writers and the speakers were inspired in the same way that Shakespeare, Milton, and other human writers were inspired when they wrote. The Modernistic idea is not true. Here are some reasons why.

First, the idea makes the Bible just like any human book: a Book full of errors and contradictions instead of unity. But the Bible is a united Book! This is true because God is its Author. Therefore, there are no errors and contradictions. Only careful and prayerful study in the absence of human

creeds, prejudices and preconceived ideas can remove what looks like a contradiction or an error on the surface. Here is an example as found in Galatians 6. Verse two states "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." But verse five states "For every man shall bear his own burden." There is no contradiction between the two passages. Here is the answer: all of us can help someone to bear and solve his or her problems, but all of us have problems that only ourselves can bear and solve.

The Bible is united as to theme; Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God as the fulfillment or the climax of the eternal and wonderful Plan of Salvation or the Scheme of Redemption and as the Savior of the world. The climax came while Christ hung on the Cross at the appointed time for the sins of the world so that we can be saved through His precious blood and be in His church, and can have the blessed hope of eternal life someday in Heaven when this sinful world is destroyed by fire at the Last Great Day. At that Day the Judgment of all will take place, all of the dead will be raised, and the kingdom of God or the church will be given back to God. Everything in the Bible is connected in one way or another with this great theme of Salvation. The Old Testament looks forward to the First Coming of Christ. The New Testament looks backwards to the First Coming of Christ, and looks forwards to the Second Coming of Christ.

Second, the idea does not explain the wonderful prophecies of the Bible and their fulfillments. How could these writers and speakers have known about the future events? Human wisdom and knowledge are out of the question. God, through His revelation and guidance, is the answer; God knows all things. An example is the life of Christ. It is mathematically impossible for one particular person to fulfill each prophecy accurately, and yet it happened when Christ came! Daniel 9 is about the "The Seventy Weeks" period divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. On the theory that a day equals one year as mentioned in Ezekiel, sixty-nine weeks is 483 days or years. This period of 483 years is from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of Christ. The Persian Kings made three decrees: 536 B.C.; 457 B.C.; and 444 B.C. The one issued during 457 B.C. was the major one. When 457 B.C. is added to 483 years, the result is 26 A.D., or the year when Christ began His personal ministry after His baptism. Furthermore, the length of His ministry was foretold in Daniel 9, namely, three-and-an-half years or the middle of the week (Halley's Pocket Bible Handbook; pages 312 and 313; Box 774, Chicago, Illinois). What a wonderful fulfillment of prophecy!

Third, the idea does not even explain the wonderful statements mentioned in the Bible, such as the statements of scientific facts discovered centuries later. During the "third day" mentioned in Genesis 1, one of the two major things that happened was the division of the earth into land and seas, the other being the appearance of vegetation after their kind. Moses used for "one bed" the Hebrew word *magom* when he wrote "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good" (verse 9 and 10). Centuries later, science proved the accuracy of the two verses. The Mediterranean Sea and perhaps small sections of the Atlantic Ocean were known during the time of Moses. But how did he know the Seven Seas? By explorations? Or by revelation from God. The only answer is revelation

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PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

WHO TROUBLES ISRAEL?

GEORGE T. JONES

The purpose of this scribe is to seek a factual answer to the above question. In First Kings 18:17, these words are recorded: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?" These words were spoken by Ahab, the king of Israel, to Elijah, the prophet of God. The occasion for these two being brought face to face at this time was a prolonged drought in the land of Israel. Previously, Elijah had said to this same king: "As Jehovah, the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." (1 Kings 17:1). The continued refusal of the heavens to yield any rain had caused Ahab to search for water for the livestock (1 Kings 18:5). It was while Ahab and his servant Obadiah were in search of a supply of water that Elijah was encountered. No doubt the words of Elijah, pronouncing the drought curse upon Israel, had been grating Ahab since the day he first heard them. The longer the drought lasted, the more exasperated Ahab became. Now, as he stands before the one whom he considers responsible for his troubles, he hurls the accusation "troubler of Israel."

But has he the correct answer? Has Ahab placed his finger on the source of the trouble in Israel? Read Elijah's reply and see. "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou hast followed the Baalim." Is it not strange that the very one who was the troubler should accuse Elijah, the man of God? But how had Ahab been responsible for the perturbation in Israel? He had "forsaken the commandments of Jehovah." Too, he had followed "the Baalim." A more detailed account of his sin is given in these words: "And Ahab the son of Omri did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife, Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him." (1 Kings 16:30, 31). Verse 33 reads: "And Ahab made the Asherah; and Ahab did yet more to provoke Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." The text says Ahab walked in the way of Jeroboam. Jeroboam's sin was to introduce false worship into the kingdom of his day. Ahab followed in his steps. He married Jezebel, a foreign princess, and was influenced by her to introduce the worship of Baal in Israel.

It is this very man who charges Elijah with troubling Israel! Elijah had opposed the proceeding. Ahab saw him as the last bulwark to be hurdled in taking Israel into idolatry. Elijah had brought on the drought, not the ungodliness of Ahab! He was creating all of the unrest by opposing the wicked schemes of Ahab and Jezebel!

Currently, it seems that a good many of the brethren are eager to bestow the title "troubler of Israel" upon others

of their brethren. The former have a few projects to boast and brotherhood movements to push. They seem to be more eager for their projects than they are for adhering to New Testament simplicity. If the success of these movements means the creating of havoc with God's plan for the autonomy and independence of local churches, they are just going to look in the other direction and not see the catastrophe. And woe be unto him who questions these practices. He is a "troubler of Israel." Or, as Ahab said to Elijah on another occasion, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Yes, to stand in the way of these brotherhood movements is to be an enemy.

Not only is one hastily designated an "enemy" of the brethren if he questions or opposes the institutional practices current among some brethren, but such opprobrious terms as "troublers" of Israel, "quibblers," "anti-cooperation", etc., are soon affixed to him. The action of all those thus designated is "making a law where God made none"; "religious blather-skiting"; "dogmatizing"; "opposing mission work" and "against taking care of orphan children." Oh yes, they also divide churches!

To hear some tell it, nobody has the right to question anything the brethren may do. He who does question puts himself in a bad light. If one so much as repeats aloud that he believes there should be a "thus saith the Lord" for what we practice, he is a "troubler of Israel."

This writer is persuaded that he has not overdrawn the picture. Those who read these lines will know that this is a reasonably accurate portrayal of the thinking of many brethren. Is it because these brethren see in those who question and oppose their practices a force making it impossible for them to dominate the church that they shout "troubler of Israel"? This Old Testament example should demonstrate that shouting "troubler of Israel" does not prove it! In this instance, the shouting was coming from the actual source of trouble. Undoubtedly, it will be highly beneficial to the cause of Christ for us to have less shouting and more investigating. If those brethren who have brotherhood movements to promote and human institutions to push find that certain brethren question their practice or believe them to be wrong, instead of stirring up a tumult by shouting "troubler of Israel," let them take the time to show by the Scriptures that they are right. This writer can only speak for himself but he believes that he knows a host of brethren who are willing to take what the Bible says. Just one plain "thus saith the Lord" would be a whole lot more influential than a whole chorus of voices crying "troubler of Israel."

Finally, if this policy of investigation should be adopted instead of shouting, it is just barely conceivable that in the course of time the real source of trouble in Israel would be revealed.

IT'S NEWS TO ME

(Continued From Page 4)

"Yes, Brother Lipscomb advised that it was better for the one who contributes to a missionary, be the donor an individual or a church, to send direct to the missionary instead of sending through the Gospel Advocate or an individual. This is the best method and there is no question about it."

"There is no question about" it being the "best method," yet he is acting as a defense attorney defending the sponsoring church method, a man-invented method, that brings discord and division among God's people. That creates a sad condition in the church.

WILFUL SIN

C. B. ASHFORD

Amarillo, Texas

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:26). This statement from the pen of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews teaches us that to sin wilfully is the same as to apostatize from Christ, for which there is no forgiveness. Wilful sins are not sins of error, or sins committed in momentary excitement, but sins of habit, wilfully and deliberately persisted in, sins committed in open violation to God's laws. But, the apostle says that if we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the truth; knowledge is that which we receive, or gain, by an active application of our minds to the study of God's truths; hence, it is of those that were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, that our author speaks. For he continues to say that "if such persons fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:6). To such character there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, or rather there remaineth no longer a sacrifice. The apostle was not simply meaning that to those that presumptuously, and wilfully rejected Christ could obtain salvation through no other, but that the sacrifice made by Christ was no longer available. A man who was once a faithful child of God having become such by receiving a knowledge of the truth, and becoming obedient to it, and then falls away by wilful sinning has shut himself off from the love and compassion of Christ and rejected the sacrifice made by Christ.

According to Numbers 15:22-31, God allowed for the sins committed by the people, that were committed unwittingly, or in ignorance, and when their sins were atoned for by the priest, they were forgiven. But, in verses 30-31, it is said, "That the soul that doeth aught, with a high hand, blasphemeth Jehovah, and that soul shall be cut off from among the people. Because he that despiseth the word of Jehovah and hath broken His commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him."

There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, "But a certain fearful looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation," hence the man who finds himself so apostatized from Christ as a result of wilful sins has nothing to which he can look, or for which he can hope, but is unfit and unprepared to meet God. Paul prayed for, and earnestly desired, the salvation of Israel, though in ignorance they were worshipping God, but Paul bore record that they were zealous, and had a desire to please God, though they were not submitting themselves to God's righteousness, but were substituting their own, which was then and is now highly displeasing to Him. But let us look at this in the light of knowledge received. To these people the written will of Christ had not been revealed, it was a turning away from a law which they loved, and under which they and their forefathers had lived for fifteen hundred years, to accept one who they believed to be a blasphemer of their law, but when it was fully revealed to them, and they received the knowledge of the truth, they accepted it more readily than do people today who have access to all that the Holy Spirit

has revealed for the salvation of men. No wonder then that the apostle said in verse 28-29 of our text, "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace."

Of course, it is wrong and sinful to worship God in ignorance, and unwittingly, but there is no excuse for ignorance in our day, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at, (or overlooked), but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).

Sometimes we as Christians become vain in our imaginations, and are ready to brand our religious neighbors, as substituting for God's righteousness, and are blinded to the wilful sins of which we are so often guilty. My brother, or sister, the fact that you have been baptized for the remission of sins is not enough. Of course, without it you could not become a child of God, neither be recognized as a citizen of the kingdom, for the act of baptism in water is the final act that can make you a child of God, but it alone is not sufficient. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). But only the sins committed up to the time of baptism were blotted out. The act of physical birth does not insure, or guarantee, a life to maturity, neither does baptism guarantee heaven, but our reward in the end is contingent upon the life we live in faithful obedience to His will, and it will depend on the knowledge of the truth received.

Members of the churches of Christ are ready to condemn sectarians for attempting to worship God with a mechanical instrument of music, and at the same time forsake to assemble the first day of the week in loving memory of Him into whom we were baptized. Only recently, an elder in the church told me that he knew of no verse, or passage, that definitely or specifically commanded Christians to assemble on the first day of every week. Such reasoning, my friend, is not worthy of consideration, but for the sake of those who might be influenced by such erroneous ideas, let me suggest that neither do I know where there is a verse that says in so many words that the man who wilfully absents himself from breaking bread with fellow Christians will go to hell. But, the word of God is taught by direct command, by example, and by necessary inference; hence three passages will suffice to prove the point under consideration. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come" (I Cor. 11:26). "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). In the first passage referred to, Paul makes it plain that his purpose of tarrying in Troas was to be present with the disciples on the "First day of the week". Every week has a first day. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). In the second passage, Jesus said, "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shew the Lord's death till He come". How much do we love Him? Can we remember Him less often than he has commanded? Hear the Holy Spirit saying through the Apostle Paul, "Forsake not the assembling." Oh, I know there are those who will say that the approaching day is not the Lord's day, but that it

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A GOOD OPPORTUNITY

DEAN BULLOCK

It is always a source of joy to learn of the spread of the gospel in virgin fields. The success of the word in Africa stirs our emotion and stimulates our heart. Space is given here to the following article by Guy Caskey of Sweetwater, Texas, with the hope that brethren will be encouraged to support a worthy work. Those who are laboring and sacrificing in this field know what the work of the church is. They also know how the church is to function in making known "the manifold wisdom of God"; they are interested in founding congregations after the New Testament order.

While holding meetings, several elders have expressed to me a desire to do foreign mission work without funneling their money through the elders of some "sponsoring" church. Brethren, here is a good opportunity to do the Lord's work in the Lord's way!

"Brother Eldred Echols left Fort Worth, Texas, November 2nd, on his return journey to East Africa, to begin the long-planned work of establishing the church of Christ in that very promising field. Twelve years of his life have been spent on the African continent, and he is extremely well prepared, therefore, to work amongst these people.

Brother Echols is now ready to begin training young African men to become preachers of the gospel to their own people. We do not propose to establish a school, in the academic sense of the term. Young men will be taught the Bible several hours each day in an intensive course which will cover several years. Only in this way can strong preachers be made and prepared to teach the saving message to their own benighted peoples.

We have the facilities with which to begin this great work. There are sufficient buildings for the present to accommodate ten young men (with their families) in class rooms and living quarters. Some of the buildings will need repairs, but aside from this, they are very sound, being of solid brick construction under tile roofs.

HELP IS NEEDED

Ten young men have made application to study the Bible in this teaching program and become gospel preachers. They are now ready, and we are ready, if brethren will give us a little help. Twenty-five dollars (\$25) a month will support a student in Bible school, provide food and housing for himself and family. Two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) a month will send ten young African preachers to this Bible school, and they in turn will take the gospel of Christ to tens of thousands of people in Central, East and Southern Africa. This is the work of the church, and that individual Christians and churches can help plant the cause of pure New Testament Christianity in this section of the world, there is no doubt.

While we cannot know the exact cost for repairing the buildings, it has been quite carefully estimated that \$2,000.00 would put them in excellent condition. These brick buildings, worth \$60,000.00, will be deeded to the church there (upon receipt of government recognition) to be used in the teaching of the word of God from now on. Can the church in East Africa own buildings in which to teach daily Bible classes? Is it scriptural for them to do so? Can the church in your city in the United States own a building in which Christians worship and people come together twice a week to study the Bible? The church is not in the real-estate

business, but it can own buildings in which to worship and teach God's word—and a house in which the preacher may live.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

Two young Africans, Apollo and Timothy, were baptized four years ago, in the Union of South Africa. They were in school in Rhodes University at Grahamstown, but their home was in East Africa. Some three years ago they returned to their people to preach the gospel. In that time eighteen (18) congregations have been established and hundreds of people have been baptized. In August they completed some meetings in which 2500 people were present and ninety-one were baptized. They have converted men of great ability and wide influence: one man had been an elder in the Presbyterian Church for twenty years; two were teachers in the Dutch and Scottish mission schools; one was a village headman, another was a chief postal clerk; several had been preachers in various denominations.

We believe this means, that given the help to instruct young men in the word of God in this Bible school, a hundred such preachers would carry the message of light and life to millions of people in that section of the world. In a few years, churches of Christ would be found throughout Central, East and Southern Africa, an area twice the size of the United States. Brethren, help us develop this project, teach these young men the Bible, make of them preachers "rooted and grounded" in the faith that they may go amongst their people with the pure word of God. Five, ten, Twenty-five dollars a month will do ten times as much in that country as in this one. And many of you could have such a part without making any sacrifice at all. Most of you would never miss what you gave.

WHY BUY LAND?

The church is not recognized in the East African territories, and it was impossible to enter without owning property. Two farms have been bought and paid for (except about \$3000 plus interest) by Eldred Echols, Mrs. Delores Petty (the widow of Martelle Petty) and Guy Caskey. They are situated in the delightful Southern Highlands of Tanganyika. They were bought that we may gain entrance to the territory to teach and preach the gospel of Christ, and in the hope that the farms, which belong to these individuals, may one day support the young men who come there to study the Bible and make preachers.

Once the farms are developed, they will produce enough foods and cash crops, we believe, to feed, house and school 100 young African men and their families (most of these young men are married).

We propose to deed the buildings, and the land they occupy, to the church there for the purpose of housing the students and providing class room space for daily Bible study. We propose, also, to use proceeds from the privately owned farms to help feed, clothe, house, school and provide the simple medical needs of those who come to study the Bible under us. We believe this to be a worthy work in which our brethren can help us without question or doubt.

Your contribution can be sent to: Tanganyika Fund, P. O. Box 356, Sweetwater, Texas, where it will be prepared for exchange into East African schillings and cents, or it may be sent directly to Eldred L. Echols, P. O. Chimala Via Mbeya, Tanganyika, East Africa.

HELP US TRAIN NATIVE PREACHERS IN AFRICA
THAT AFRICA MAY HEAR THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST."

ARE YOU RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD?

O. J. RUSSELL

(One in a Series of Articles Appearing Weekly in the Longview News-Journal, Longview, Texas.)

Often we hear the expression: "I believe we should obey every word of the Bible from Genesis through Revelation." This statement is paradoxical; for it would be impossible to conform the one religion of Christ to the two covenants of the Bible. Every word of the Bible is true and in its composition "men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). While this is true, however, the Book also commands: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

The Old Covenant or Old Testament was made exclusively with the Jews and never with the Gentiles (Deut. 5:3; Romans 3:2; 2:14); and, hence, in "rightly dividing the word" we must be careful to divide the Old Testament from the New (Hebrews 8:6-13). To the churches in Galatia who had not learned this lesson the inspired penman said "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; Ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4).

When the New Testament was instituted then the Old Testament (first covenant) was no longer binding. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9). Any man endeavoring to justify his religious practices by the edicts of the "Law of Commandments contained in ordinances" places himself in the unenviable position of seeking justification by that which the Spirit affirms has been "nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14).

Someone asks, "Do you mean to say that you do not believe the Old Testament?" We answer that we believe the Old Testament is God's word just as the New Testament, but God's commands in one age do not necessarily apply to those in another. Abraham did not build an ark just because it was commanded of Noah; neither do we burn incense and offer animal sacrifices just because God demanded it of those under the law. The Old Law is not for our practice, but was "written for our learning" and our example and served as a school master to bring men to Christ (Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 10:11; Galatians 3:24, 25). Knowledge of the Old Testament is indispensable to a correct understanding of the New Testament, but its laws are no longer binding on us today as authority in becoming Christians and in living the Christian life.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

(Continued From Page 6)

and philosophies of men have been used to blind men to the truth of the gospel of Christ. Jesus said concerning the traditionists, yet the religious people of his day, "Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition;" "making void the word of God by your tradition, which ye have delivered" (Mk. 7:9, 13). It was of this very religious group that Jesus said, "Well did Isaiah prophecy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips. But their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men" (Matt 13:6, 7). Paul warned the "saints and faithful brethren in Christ that are at Colossae," "take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).

Worldliness, love of the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride or vain glory of life,"

has been used by Satan to blind the minds of men to the truth. Paul said, "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6). Albert Barnes, an able commentator, in his commentary on 2nd Corinthians says, (this blinding is) "(e) By the blinding influence of passion and vice. . . . Vice always renders the mind blind, and the heart hard, and shrouds every thing in the moral world of midnight. And in order to blind the minds of men to the glory of the gospel, Satan has only to place splendid schemes of speculation before men; to tempt them to climb the steeples of ambition; to entice them to the scenes of gaiety; to secure the erection of theatres, and gambling houses, and houses of infamy and pollution; to fill the cities and towns of a land with taverns and dramshops; and to give opportunity everywhere for the full play and unrestrained indulgence of passion; and the glory of the gospel will be as effectually unseen as the glory of the sun in the darkest night."

These are some of the reasons why men do not understand the Bible nor see it alike. May the Lord help us to open our minds to study the Bible carefully.

IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP

(Continued From Page 3)

Let me give an example of a need for wakefulness. One preacher left the church in this area in 1954, but ONE WEEK before he departed, he was the most popular preacher among our brethren within 200 miles of his home. Brethren refused to be warned that he was dangerous! Another sign of our grave danger is seen in the fact that many brethren deny that those preachers who went to the denominations have departed from the faith. Many continue to extend fellowship to them.

Some brethren advocating that the church is another denomination among the sects of the land, and if we don't wake up, IT WILL BE! Indeed, if brethren think the church is a denomination, they will make it such, if others do not militantly fight to keep it pure.

Let Me Write It

If I cannot write "It's Time To Wake Up" on your church house wall, please allow me to write it in your mind just now. Christian, WAKE UP! The welfare of the cause of Christ is in our hands. With God's help we can do everything he expects us to do. Without our help God's hands are tied. We are commissioned to "preach the word." God doesn't perform miracles today to bring the truth to lost souls. We are his hands, his mouth, his means. If we are asleep, truth will be stifled. If we will wake up, truth will continue to win.

NOTICE!

If you plan to move soon, please notify us of your change of address. You will not miss any copies of the PRECEPTOR, and we will be able to keep your mailing list accurate.

THE NEED FOR STUDY

by Tommy McClure

That a wide-spread lack of knowledge exists among members of the body of Christ cannot be denied. To many of us, this situation evidently does not appear to be serious, yet it is one of the most serious problems facing the church and individual Christians. Because of the many grave dangers which this condition involves, lessons on the need for study—diligent study of God's word—are in order.

Man Is A Dual Being

That man is a dual being is seen in 2 Cor. 4:16 where Paul said, "... though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." The outward man (the physical body) must be fed, and it is ridiculous to think that the well-being of the inner spiritual man can be maintained without the proper food. In Duet. 8:13 Moses said, "... man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live," and Jesus himself quoted that statement when tempted to turn the stones into bread, Matt. 4:4. Peter said, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). Not only is God's word milk for the newborn babe in Christ, but the writer of Heb. 5:12-14 shows that it is strong meat or solid food for the mature Christian. Hence, there is no time, during one's life as a Christian, when study is not necessary. Does this seem unreasonable when we consider the fact that the physical body must be fed from birth to the grave?

Some Results Of Ignorance In Bible Times

To this writer it seems that consideration of some of the results of ignorance set forth in the Bible constitutes one of the strongest arguments for the need of study. (1) God's people were destroyed. In Hosea 4:6 God said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me, seeing thou has forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." If lack of knowledge wrought such ill effects on God's people then, is it reasonable to think that it will not bring harm to the people of God now? Certainly not! (2) Through ignorance the Gentiles were alienated from the life of God. Paul said, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. 4:17-18). The apostle speaks further concerning their condition, one to which ignorance had contributed, in verse 19: "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Surely, that which was so harmful to the Gentiles cannot be good for members of the body of Christ! (3) Because of ignorance the Jews crucified Christ. After telling the Jews in Solomon's porch that they had "killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead," Peter said in Acts 3:17, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as also your rulers." Paul said, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." If ignorance was one of the causes which brought about the crucifixion of Christ's physical body, and these passages show that it was, who is so simple as to think it will not cause

harm to his spiritual body, the church? At the present time the church of our Lord is passing through an extremely critical hour, and without a careful, prayerful, diligent and honest study of God's word by every Christian, it is certain to suffer untold damage. (4) Another result of ignorance on the part of the Jews is set forth by Paul in Rom. 10:3. In the first verse of this chapter he said, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Thus, they were in a lost condition, and that in spite of the fact that they had a zeal of God, notice verse 2: "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Indeed, they were zealous, but their zeal was not properly guided—it was not according to knowledge. Now, verse 3: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." See the result of ignorance? Because of it these Jews had not submitted to the righteousness of God, and according to Acts 10:35 that is essential to being "accepted with him." (5) Because of ignorance Paul persecuted the children of God. Of himself he said, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:13). In Acts 26:9 he said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." This he did, according to verse 10, and he did it through ignorance! O, how many times since then has ignorance caused people "to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth"!

A Command of God

Also, the great need for study is seen in the fact that it is a command of God. In the Old Testament, God's people were told, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read." (Isa. 34:16) Concerning the Old Testament writings Jesus said to the Jews of his day, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me." (Jno. 5:39). Is it reasonable to believe that God's people today who live under "a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" are not expected to study the Bible wherein God's will is revealed? To our denominational friends we often quote: "Repent, and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins"; "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"; and we usually wind up with "blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." That is good and right, but have we forgotten that God has commanded US to study? To Timothy, Paul said, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation to doctrine." (1 Tim. 4:13) Again "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) To Christians, Peter commanded, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge," and "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:5; 3:18) Paul commanded, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph. 5:14) The person who disregards these commands, yet expects to be saved in the end, is wonderfully deceived.

Study Protects The Church Against Digression and Apostasy

The threat of digression and apostasy is ever present, for to this end Satan is ever busy, and an uninformed membership is one of his most fertile fields. It is God's will that we "be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and

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HYPOCRISY

DOW WILSON
Tucumcari, New Mexico

A hypocrite is of all men most pitiable. He is condemned—by the world for pretending to be not of the world, by the church for just pretending to be a part of it by himself because he knows that he is just pretending, and by the Lord because he is only pretending to be what he ought. It has been rightly observed that we so detest the baseness in others that we possess most. Perhaps this explains why we so detest hypocrisy. We know what we ought to be, and failing to live up to it, we make every effort to appear to be what we know that we ought. Thus hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue.

To say that there are hypocrites in the church is a tribute to the morality of the church. Whoever heard of a hypocrite Atheist or Infidel? He falls short of nothing because he pretends to be nothing and can be no pretender. We recognize that man might fall short of the high ideals of Christianity, and with the desire to live by them, man often pretends to be better than he is because he knows what is good for man to live by. What would the church be if it were not capable of having hypocrites in its earthly ranks?

Hypocritical men will make provisions for hypocrisy. If there are hypocritical men within our ranks, we are unhappy, yet not responsible unless we make provisions for their hypocrisy, thus encouraging them in it. The church, generally speaking, has not degenerated to such an extent that we give recognition to the rich man's millions more than to the widow's mite. The rich and the poor give through the common treasury of the church and distribution is made in such a manner that the Lord is glorified and no personal praise given to man. We have not allowed men to have their names on cornerstones, windows or doors for personal praise simply because some were financially able to do more than others. This is as it should be as Jesus gave the principle of giving, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." True Christians want no personal praise and glory. Their first desire is that the Lord may be glorified.

Most of our benevolent institutions are promoted with the plea that they are not only a good work, but the

church of Christ at work. Some promoters say that a contribution to said institution is a contribution to the church of Christ in that it is the church at work.

Here is another advantage that appeals to the worldly mind: If you contribute to the church to preach the Gospel to lost souls, no recognition will be made, but make it to a benevolent institution (the church at work) and you get your picture in the paper. Still better than giving money, give land or real estate that will be appraised for value. Land worth \$100 per acre can easily be appraised for \$1000 and you can get your picture in the paper and you yourself will hardly believe just how much you gave! Remember that there is no need of giving each Lord's day as prospered, you can save it up and give a lump sum that will surely call attention to what you have done! If you decide to give your remaining possession to a worthy project when you die, be not slothful—look to those who will put your name on a door, a gate, a barn or perhaps even a cornerstone! Also, forget not to give in such a manner as to get your praise while you live for what you intend to leave when you die!

Let us cease offending the widow's mite! Let us cease encouraging the belittling of the church by glorifying man, thus robbing the Lord of his rightful praise! Let the Lord receive the fully glory for all that we do. We may not be able to keep the hypocrites out of our ranks, but why should we make provisions to encourage them?

—o—

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THE NEED FOR STUDY

(Continued From Page 12)

cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). He has repeatedly warned us against false teachers and given us an infallible guide, his word 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). If and when we get to the point that we feel no need for study; when emotionalism instead of scripture becomes our guide; when we give more heed to the words of popular preachers of modern times than we do to the words of inspired preachers of apostolic times; when we no longer feel the need of checking the "blueprint" to be sure that we are building "all things according to the pattern," then and there, whether we realize it or not, we are a long way down the road to digression, apostasy, and eternal destruction.

In Conclusion

It is hoped that this feeble effort on the part of your humble servant will cause all of us to realize more keenly our dependance upon and our need of God's word, and that it will inspire us to engage in a closer, more diligent study of the same.

WILFUL SIN

(Continued From Page 9)

refers to the judgment day, or some other day, but, my friend, there is no greater day than the one on which our Lord broke the bars of death and came forth from the grave by which He was declared to be the Son of God. And it is upon this day that Christians are to assemble to partake of His body, and His blood, which was sacrificed for the sins of men, and we can not wilfully neglect to do so.

Is the man who worships God with an instrument made with men's hands, and who even denies that baptism is for the remission of sins, worse off than the child of God who wilfully neglects to live a life pleasing to God? In the church of our Lord there are many who occupy prominent places who are living in open violation of the will of God regarding the marriage relation. They have put away the one to whom God joined them, and have joined themselves to another, who is not their wife or husband. "Whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, committeth adultery, and whosoever marieth her that is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9). Paul lists the adulterer along with all the other un-godly who cannot enter the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10). "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice to sins."



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THE MASTER TEACHER

ERNEST A. FINLEY

Jesus Christ is called the "Master Teacher" because there never has been a teacher that surpassed Him. In an effort to improve our own teaching, perhaps it would be well that we seek to determine what it was that made His teaching so effective. The following suggestions are not exhaustive but they may help us to analyze His teaching method at least to some degree.

Directness of approach was one contributing factor to the Lord's success. He determined the individual or group's need, then adapted his teaching to supply that need. A good illustration of this fact is seen in his conversation with the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22).

Simplicity is another characteristic of the Lord's teaching. His words were simple. His illustrations were drawn from everyday life, things that all understood.

Jesus was patient in His relationship with students but He also manifested enthusiasm in carrying out His Father's bidding. "Jesus saith unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work" (Jno. 4:34).

No doubt the Lord's humility kindled a favorable response in His hearers. Jesus spoke with sincerity and frankness. He never used vain flattery, though He did at times commend one to whom He spoke for certain good qualities which he possessed.

Jesus, without question, possessed the qualities which He urged His servants to manifest. He exhorted them, "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10:16).

What teacher has ever been more sympathetic and kind than our Lord? Still, the Lord's rebuke could be scathing and stern if men hardened their hearts against the Truth.

His effectiveness was due to His pure and unassailable character. He practiced what he preached. He preached what He practiced.

Jesus was full of the Will of His Father's Will. He believed in the Truths which He uttered. He said, "and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jno. 8:32).

Jesus used variety in His method of teaching. At times the question and answer method was most effective. He could put his enemies to flight by one simple question. Often, questions which He asked did not have to be answered. The question itself made the Truth too obvious to escape. Sometime He chose the lecture method, particularly when He spoke to thousands. Jesus used parables to embalm the Truth in his hearers' hearts. He illustrated and demonstrated the profoundest Truths with utmost sim-

plicity. He spoke of the common things, such as a seed, a vine, a pearl, a lamb and a birth.

Jesus loved those whom He taught. Not only did He love them, but He associated with them. The apostles spent three years in intimate association with Christ, being taught and trained for the great work that lay ahead.

With the Lord, teaching was not a side line. Nothing was of greater importance. He taught any where at any time that He had opportunity or could make opportunity.

Observing the Lord's manner of teaching, we note that He aroused interest in His students. He so motivated His students that they sought still more information, asking further questions.

Jesus spoke with authority. He knew His Father's Will. He knew that Truth would not fail. He was not afraid to speak Truth even though He knew that His hearers held prejudice in their hearts against it.

Even though the Lord was busy every day in His Father's business, He never became too busy or involved to stop and pray. If the Lord, the Master Teacher, felt the need of prayer, and counted it a privilege, should not we?

—o—

IS THE BIBLE THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD?

(Continued From Page 7)

from God! The only answer is revelation from and guidance from God! (Rimmer's The Harmony of Science and Scripture: Page 88.)

Job 26:7 states "He (God) stretched out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Belimah is the word Job used, which word is not Hebrew. There is a disagreement over its origin, but it is considered to be in the ancient Sumerian vocabulary. "Nebulous" is its meaning; the closest we can get to its meaning is "nothing." In other words, Job had in mind gravity. How could Job have known about gravity? By experiments? Or by revelation from God? The only answer is revelation from and guidance by God.

Yes, the Bible is the inspired word of God. This is the only explanation for the statements found in it. Let us, therefore, strive to study the teachings of the Bible and then obey God with the right attitude and motive; if we are faithful to God, we will be blessed and finally saved and enjoy eternal life someday in Heaven.

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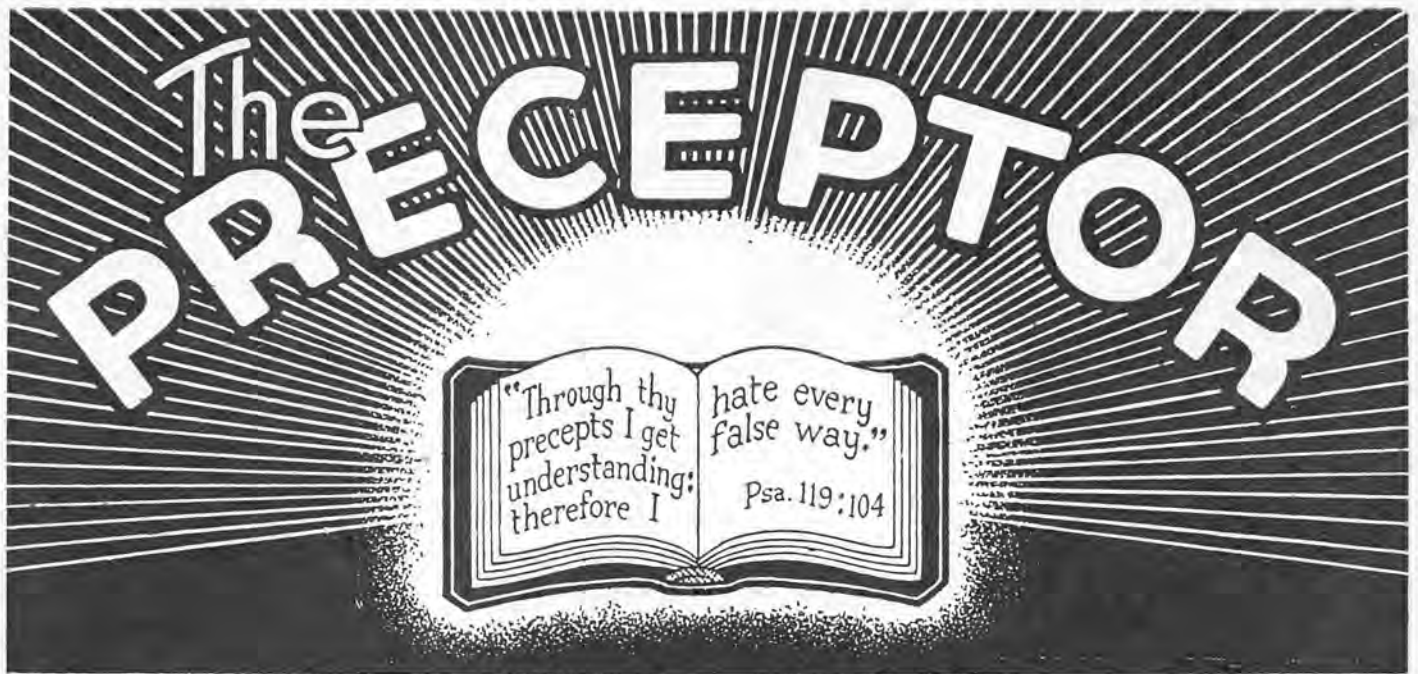
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THE KINGDOM AND WORLDLY WISDOM

DEAN BULLOCK

The success of the kingdom of Christ is not dependent on the wisdom of this world. The spiritual strength of the church does not lie where some seem to think it does. An educated ministry, impressive and costly church buildings, and prominent members in social and political life do not constitute prima facie evidence of the growth of Christianity. Many seem bent in an effort to impress the masses with the fact that "our" preachers hold degrees from recognized institutions of higher learning, that large sums of money have been expended on edifices, that members of the church of Christ have received national recognition. They seem to entertain the idea that all of this means real strength. But does it?

I would not disparage secular education — when properly used it is a blessing. Neither would I minimize the importance of ample buildings and facilities; nor would I leave the impression that we should not rejoice with faithful Christians when they are successful in their various callings and professions. I simply desire to call attention to the fact that real strength lies in a knowledge and application of truth, not in that which men parade to feed vanity and pride.

It is significant to notice that when Jesus selected

men to help in the inauguration of the kingdom He did the exact reverse of that which worldly wisdom demands. He did not seek out the high and mighty; He did not "cater" to the rich and powerful nor choose those who had been educated in the technical schools of His day. He selected poor and ignorant men from the common walks of life. "Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

When men inform themselves regarding Bible doctrine, consecrate and dedicate their lives to truth and righteousness, the kingdom will conquer and make progress. The preaching of Christ will convict and convert; the truth will cast down strongholds. Divine tactics differ from the standards of men. "But God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God" (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).



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EDITORIAL

PAUL C. WITT
Abilene, Texas

(Editor's Note: The Braille magazine, *Glad Tidings of Good Things*, is some two years old. It is published, and the expense is borne by the Fourteenth and Vine Streets Church in Abilene, Texas. When the magazine was started there were approximately 50 readers. Now there are approximately 300 readers and the magazine is going into 26 states, Africa, Canada, England, Honk Kong, and Philippine Islands. The magazine is made available without cost to the blind by the Fourteenth and Vine Streets Church, and any one knowing of a person who is blind who would be interested in receiving the magazine should contact the elders of this congregation.

The following article is a copy of the editorial appearing in the January, 1956, issue of the Braille magazine. We commend the good work that is being done in the publication of this magazine, and this article to our readers.)

"IF THE LORD WILL"

As we look ahead into the new year we can well remember the inspired words of God's servant James! "Come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (James 4:13-14).

Surely we look ahead with reasonable assurance and a measure of anticipation; with promise of God's protecting care and ever-abiding love, but at the same time we are aware not only of the uncertainty of material things but also of life itself. Always we are reminded that the future is in God's hands and ever must we, like James, plan in terms of, "... if the Lord will." God's promises give us hope, His assurances give us trust, His mercies give us

courage, and His goals for us lead us to victory. Who can falter when we have the realization that "... in Him we live, and move, and have our being ..." (Acts 17:28). Who could be discouraged when we have the assurance that "... God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19). Who is fearful when it is remembered that we may "... come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:15-16). Who is faint-hearted when it is remembered that "... death is swallowed up in victory ... the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

Thus we look ahead, according to God's will. Our lives are "... hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3). God works in us, "... both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). We have a hope, "... both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; ..." (Heb. 6:17-19). We go faithfully and hopefully on, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; ..." (Heb. 12:1-3).

We shall not just pray for the way to be easier, but we shall rather pray that our strength be greater; we shall not just plead that the burdens be lighter, but instead that our courage be more enduring; we shall not beg for the day to be always brighter, but also that our ability to see be enhanced; we shall not allow ourselves to wish that God had made additional promises to us, but shall set ourselves to the achievement of a stronger, richer faith in the precious and exceeding great ones that we have.

This year, more than ever, we shall strive to learn the richness of the meaning of the sublime words, "If the Lord will ..."

"THAT THERE MAY BE EQUALITY"

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

The reader's attention is called to the article in this issue on the above subject. By reading these comments by "able" commentators on this passage as well as by noting the context of the statement in 2 Corinthians it will be seen that there is no such meaning in the language that the equality is financial equality. No one, so far as is known to me, has made any such argument on the passage. Neither is the meaning in the passage as is made to appear by the forced construction that Corinth had a "want," which was for some church to relieve Corinth of some of her "abundance." Corinth was not in "want" for some place to send her abundance, nor was Jerusalem to receive in order to relieve a "want" on the part of Corinth. The idea that this Scripture teaches that the reason Jerusalem received the contribution from Corinth was to relieve a want on the part of Corinth is the figment of a speculative imagination. The Scripture states that the contribution was sent, and it evidently was received for the purpose for which it was sent, as a "ministering to the saints;" "for the poor among the saints." The contribution according to the inspired statements was to supply the necessities of life for the poor saints in Jerusalem, not to relieve a "want" of Corinth.

HUMAN REASON AND DIVINE REVELATION

BRYAN VINSON
Houston, Texas

It has been often observed, and quite correctly, that in the creation God obviously intended the creation of man from the first and ordered it entirely to such an end, with the creation of man climaxing his previous creative arts. Apart from the creation of man there is no discoverable design in creation, and without man being a rational creature all creation would be irrational. He alone of all earth-born creatures is rational, and with him only, therefore, do we find God reasoning. God talked with man and this is equal to stating that he reasoned with him. Speech is designed as a medium for communicating thought from one intelligence to another, and it has been said that in giving man the faculty of speech God gave him both reason and religion. Campbell, in his debate with Owen introduced the question of the origin of human speech, and challenged the latter to explain how man learned to speak on the premise there is no God. This he was unable to do, and Campbell wisely observed that man must hear speech in order to learn to speak, and the Bible account gives the only explanation by relating the fact that God talked to man.

Corresponding there to is the consideration that, while God gave man the ability to think or reason, he also gave him material upon which to think; and had he only given the capability to reason without supplying that upon which to reason, there could have been no exercise and development of his rational nature. The capability to reason is hereditary but the capacity is determined substantially by circumstances and environment. It is vain to think the latter can transcend the former and tragic when the former doesn't approximate the latter. Prior to his transgression man enjoyed communion with God, but with his separation from God this was substantially suspended, interrupted only as God condescended to communicate to man that which he saw fit to make known. The defection of man did not destroy his intellectual power; it greatly reduced the opportunity to exercise it well and wisely, notwithstanding the fact that it was an unwarranted ambition for greater intellectual capacity which enticed him to disobey God—a desire to be as wise as God. As vain and unholy as was the aspiration to be as wise as God, there have been those who have sought and thought to be wiser than God. Every effort to think apart from God and His word is equal to regarding ones self as the equal if not the superior of God, though often perhaps unconsciously so.

"Man, in his state of sin, is invited by God to reason with Him." (Isa. 1:18). As an inducement to do so God tenders the assurance that though his sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. Hence, can be seen that salvation here is made to depend on man's willingness and responsiveness to the effort to reason. But it does not require nor license man to reason alone or apart from God; rather it is an invitation to reason with God, and is a most signal honor to man to be thus invited. There is no promise of salvation here extended solely on the condition that man reasons, but is conditioned on the promise that he reasons with God. It is impossible for man to reason with God except as he reasons on that which God reveals, and to reason on anything independent of God's Word, in relation to that which constitutes God's will to man, is to reason in vain. Such is true because no one knows or can know

the mind of God except as He has revealed it, and He has done so exclusively in His Word. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we (the apostles) have the mind of Christ." I Cor. 2:16. It is interesting to note that when Paul came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of Jews, as was his custom went into them, and three Sabbath days, "reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen from the dead; and that this Jesus Whom I preach unto you, is Christ." Acts 17:2-3. One may reason with others regarding the being of God apart from the scriptures, as Paul did to the Athenians as later recorded in this same chapter, but to reason on the purposes and will of God as related to human redemption it is exclusively proper to confine such to the contents of Divine Revelation. For instance, to pose hypothetical cases which may involve complications and necessitate suppositions the solutions of which may entail a reflection on the sufficiency and clarity of the gospel system of truth is in effect a reflection on the wisdom and mercy of God. To escape the force of the condition of baptism for the remission of sins the hypothetical case of a limb falling on the person on his way to be baptized has often been employed, though it is doubtful that such an incident has ever occurred. What prompts such suppositional situations in the thinking of anyone? It is never provoked by an intense, sincere and reverent desire to know and do the will of the Lord, but rather to afford some seemingly plausible excuse for not doing his will. It offers encouragement to men to neglect obedience to the gospel, and is suspended on the tenuous and errant reasonings of men. It is inimical to the principle of true philanthropy, which is a love for the best and lasting interests of mankind.

In numerous instances recorded in the New Testament of people reasoning with themselves, or among themselves, it is to be observed that always they are portrayed as being in an indefensible and unenviable position. One very familiar instance is found in Matthew 21:25 "And they reasoned with themselves, if we shall say, from heaven, he will say unto us, why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, of men, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered and said, we cannot tell." Their powers of reasoning were unable to extricate them from a dilemma into which their unbelief had involved them. Their unbelief in the Lord on the one hand, and their unwarrantable regard for the opinions of men on the other where responsible for their difficulty; and their lack of faith in the Lord evidently encouraged their undue regard for the opinions of men. In Luke 12, we read of a certain rich man whose land produced plentifully, which resulted in his reliance on his own thinking or reasoning apart from any consideration of the Lord and his accountability to him, together with the inevitable brevity of life. His thinking as he did resulted in the Lord describing him as a fool. This, then, constitutes a very vivid commentary on the incompetency and errancy of human reasoning apart from the consideration and contribution of God's word.

The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise that they are vain. I Cor. 3:20. And the apostle tells us that "these things I have transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think (of men) above that which is written." I Cor. 4:6. The scriptures depict man as he was, as he is and as he shall hereafter be, and clearly define him as unable of himself to direct his steps aright. We are told to not think of ourselves more highly than we ought but to think soberly as God has given to every man the measure of faith. There is no incompatibility between

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PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

The Law and the Circumstances

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

(Note: The following article was first published in the *Firm Foundation*, Austin, Texas, July 4, 1944.)

In the New Testament we read of the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" "a law of faith;" "the perfect law, the law of liberty." In the conversion of people to Christ under the commission given to the apostles by Christ there is a uniformity of conditions with which the one to be converted must comply. In every case these conditions are the same. But the circumstances in the various cases of conversion may be and were various or different.

In the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost they all complied with the same conditions of pardon, viz., believing, repenting, and being baptized. But in connection with their conversion the apostles received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and "there appeared into them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them." This circumstance did not attend all of the other conversions narrated in the books of Acts. In the example of the eunuch, Jesus was preached unto him as they were riding along in a chariot. Surely no one would contend that one must be riding in a chariot before he can scripturally hear Jesus proclaimed. Saul saw a light from heaven; Cornelius saw an angel; the jailer experienced an earthquake. But these circumstances were incidental to the conversion of the individual in each instance; they were various, not the same in every example of conversion. Yet, in each case, the party heard the gospel believed it, repented of his sins and was baptized. The conditions of salvation from sin were uniform, the same in each instance; but the circumstances differed in the examples.

From these facts we draw the conclusion that the circumstances were not necessary to every conversion of a person to Christ. We do not contend that unless one sees a light, as Saul did, that he is not scripturally converted. Although in each case recorded in detail the individual was baptized, the place of being baptized may not have been the same, in fact, it was not the same in every conversion. One person may have been baptized in a river, another in a pool, etc. Therefore, the place of baptizing is incidental, that is, the place of baptizing in every case did not have to be a river; but it might be a river, a pool, a tank, or such like. Just so there was sufficient water to meet the demands of Scriptural baptism was all that was required. But regardless of the place of the baptism all that was done when one was baptized was just baptism.

The same principle is true in regard to the worship of the church. There are certain incidentals or circumstances connected with the worship of the church that are not the same in every case. Although the acts or items of worship were the same in each congregation, the circumstances

were not uniform in every instance. The place of meeting (although required by the command to assemble) was incidental to the worship in which the saints engaged. The church in Jerusalem met in the temple; the congregation at Troas met in "an upper chamber;" "the third story." Other churches, no doubt, met in the residence of some of the members of the church, as the church that was in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (I Cor. 16:19). The church in Jerusalem had in their worship apostles' teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers. So, also, did the church at Troas have breaking of bread and apostles' teaching as stated in Acts 20:7. In connection with this congregation there was a circumstance that surely none would contend must be present in every assembly for worship, that is, the event of the young man's falling down from the third story and killing himself. This was as much a circumstance of that meeting as was their meeting in the third story; this was as much a circumstance of that meeting as the fact of their remaining there until midnight.

If any one contends that midnight is the only hour for taking the Lord's Supper, because in the meeting of the church at Troas they did take the Supper either a short time before midnight hour or a short time after that hour, he would surely be forced to the conclusion that the meeting must be in "the upper chamber," where there are "many lights," and it must be the "third story" of the building. These things were all incidentals or circumstances of the meeting in Troas and the same logic that would call for the meeting to be about "midnight hour" would also call for and demand the same place, and other circumstances be exactly as they were there. If not, why not? The truth of the matter is that the church in Troas did not meet at, nor take the Lord's Supper at the "midnight hour." They came together to break bread. If they did what they came together to do, when they first assembled, they ate the Supper, and following that Paul preached, and prolonged his speech until midnight. But if on the other hand when they came together Paul preached until midnight, and after his speech they took the Lord's Supper, then it was after midnight hour when they partook of the Lord's Supper. For following the discourse of Paul the young man fell out of the window, and Paul went down and brought his life into him, and then went up and broke bread. If this were the time of taking the Lord's Supper, then it was after the "midnight hour." I received a letter from a person contending that the only acceptable time to eat the Lord's Supper is the "midnight hour," because Paul did this on this occasion.

There are some who want to justify the use of mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God in the church today who make about the same argument (?) that was used above. They claim that if mechanical instruments cannot be used in the worship, then, neither can we meet in a house, or have seats, or lights, or song books, or a microphone, or loud speakers. These individuals are guilty of confusing the law and circumstances. The New Testament authorizes a certain kind of music in the worship. It is vocal music attended with the heart: "speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19): "singing with grace in your hearts unto God." (Col. 3:16). The command to sing necessitates a song, either committed to memory or on a piece of paper, in a book or out. But the sing is demanded in the command. But the instrument of the mechanical type is another kind of music not demanded by the command to sing. It is an additional kind of music, and is an addition to the word of God. The com-

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The Epistle of James – Chapter 2

GEORGE P. ESTES
Maplewood, Missouri

"The royal law" is that law given by the King for His subjects in the kingdom (2:8). This law of liberty is the sum and substance of God's will. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is part of the royal law. If in fulfilling that law, one shows favoritism, he is convicted by that law as a transgressor (2:9). The law of Christ is not constituted of a series of isolated prescriptions from which one may pick and choose those he desires to keep and disregard the rest. One cannot hope to keep some and thereby that will serve in his failure to keep the rest, for the law of Christ is the total will of God. To break the royal law in one point is to break the whole law (2:10). A broken link destroys the strength of a chain. Each command is given by the same authority. The New Testament is the royal law, the law of liberty.

James points out how and in what sense the law is to govern the conduct of Christians who are living a life of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory (2:1). "So speak and so act as men that are destined to be judged by the law of liberty" (2:12). The Christian life is here pointed toward the coming of the Lord, when the Son of Man will render to each man according to his works. The law of liberty will be the standard by which each will be judged. Not those who call Jesus, "Lord, Lord," will be acknowledged by Him on that day; not those who have prophesied or cast out demons or did great signs in His name will be welcomed by Him as the blessed of the Father; but those who have done the will of His Father shall enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:22). The will of the Father will avail on that day. Those who have willed God's will, who have looked upon other men with God's eyes, who have dealt with men in mercy (2:13) will be saved and acquitted by the Judge on that day. Only God's mercy which is His will can save one. But whether one has placed himself solely under that mercy will be shown by the way he has lived in the law of liberty. Judgment will be merciless to those who have received God's mercy but have not been merciful to others. Forgiveness comes from God to the one who obeys the gospel; it must also extend from man to man. The one who has his debt forgiven and then has his hands at the throat of his brother for a trifling debt has forgotten and is denying the fact that he himself is living and depending on forgiveness. He has destroyed the basis of his existence; he cannot pray for forgiveness any more, for he by his actions denies the forgiveness he received from God. His action says: There is no forgiveness. (The Merciless Servant, Matt. 18:23-35.)

To put one's trust in God's love but at the same time not to love his brethren and his fellowman is to attempt the impossible. Respect of persons and faith in Christ are mutually exclusive. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). The Great Commission is intended for all races of people at all social levels (Mk. 16:15, 16). To exclude brethren from a place in the assembly who are from other walks of life is to become a respecter of persons. The same principle applies to brethren who have formed a clique or faction in a congregation who constitute the ruling element in that church to the exclusion of any one else in the church who would qualify as an elder. A Diotrophes will discriminate against brethren and rule the congregation even if he must drive away good, honest Christians. Brethren who have the financial ability to dress well and enjoy the luxuries

of life must not frown upon neither exclude the brethren who do not have so much of this world's riches.

Faith is presented by James from the very beginning as being active and obedient. It persists through trials and in that test is developed and perfected (1:2-4). It approaches God in confidence and assurance in prayer (1:6). It triumphs over the present humiliating conditions and fastens itself on the unseen riches of glories to be given by God (1:9 cp. Heb. 6:19). Faith is based upon the word of God (Rom. 10:17), but a faith that only hears and yet does nothing is delusion or self-deceit (1:22). A faith that exhausts itself in the mere forms of worship is vain (1:26, 27). True faith must not be mixed with secondary motives in showing partiality to some (2:1-13).

James 2:14-23 opens with a sentence that clearly defines the subject: "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that faith save him?" One should note first that James is dealing with something that claims to be faith but in reality has no right to that claim. He is concerned with what is called faith. He shows that faith that exhausts itself in mere verbal profession is in reality not faith at all. So he asks: "Can that faith save him?"

James illustrates the futility of such a faith by means of a parable (vv. 15-16). Such faith is likened to mere verbal promises of help to a brother or sister who comes to one in the need of food or clothing. The brother says: "Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled." Fine words are employed but the deed is not forthcoming, the help is not offered. So is faith without works. Here the mode of address excites a momentary delusive hope. Jesus used the words: "Go in peace" (Mk. 5:34), and also the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:36), but in both these instances the deed accompanies the words.

In verse 17, James plainly draws the conclusion: a faith which does not include works in itself, that does not involve obedience to the will of God is dead and lifeless. Profession without practice is worthless, just as compassion which expends itself in words.

In these verses James deals with the objections of those in defense of selves. One defense amounts to this: There are different gifts. One is endowed with the gift of faith, another of works. "Thou" and "I" of verse 18 is a way of saying "one man" and "another man." James will not let this false analogy stand: "Show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith." A faith that has no works is incapable of demonstration. Note James' argument: He does not say: I will show thee my works but "I will show thee my faith." Works are not a thing to be set down beside faith for in James works are necessarily involved and included in true faith.

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"... AND A KITCHEN"

J. EDWARD NOWLIN

Atlanta, Georgia

News reports of proposed new church buildings these days often enumerate various parts of the buildings; such as, auditorium, classrooms, office, restrooms, etc., and end with "and a kitchen." The list may include a social hall or gymnasium. Those who are not novices recognize these as recreational facilities. Gospel preachers who take seriously Paul's admonition to Timothy to "watch thou in all things" (II Timothy 4:5) are seeing among churches of Christ today many tendencies toward a new apostasy, not the least of which is the trend toward "church-sponsored" recreational endeavors. There seems to be a widespread effort to put the church into the entertainment business. For the benefit of sleepy souls who doubt this statement, the following quotations are taken from church bulletins:

1. "Our visitors and members of the armed services are most cordially invited to a free, hot luncheon served in the Assembly Room downstairs directly after the morning worship."
2. "CHRISTIAN MEN'S LUNCHEON TO BE HELD FRIDAY NIGHT AT _____ CHURCH OF CHRIST There will be a surprise program for this initial gathering which is to begin at 7 o'clock." (Same bulletin) "COSTUMED HALLOWEEN PARTY—YOUNG AND OLD—October 31—Friday night —8 o'clock —_____ CHURCH OF CHRIST." (Same bulletin) "The young people of _____, _____ and _____ are scheduled to have a joint devotional and recreation period on the evening of November 8."
3. "We hope you will be with us Sunday, November 1st for all of our regular services and for the luncheon immediately following our morning worship service. Mrs. _____ and Mrs. _____ are the hostesses this month. They have planned a nice dinner consisting of ham, and the trimmings for you and your friends."
4. "FELLOWSHIP DINNER: There will be a dinner at the church building, Saturday, May 2nd at 7:00 p.m. Price per plate, \$1.00."

As far as this writer knows, the nearest that brethren who promote such as the above have ever come to defending their practices has been to offer a few excuses for eating in the church building and to ridicule opposers by charges of inconsistency and insincerity. The mere act of eating in the church building is not the issue. We have no objection to the Janitor's lunch being brought and eaten whenever he sees fit in any part of the building. Neither do we object to facilities to feed the poor where such may be needed. Efforts to prove us inconsistent by the presence of drinking fountains or water buckets in our church buildings are mere quibbles. If we are inconsistent in practice, this does not prove our preaching wrong. For instance, we preach that it is wrong to commit adultery. If we commit adultery, does our inconsistency prove that it is right to commit adultery? If not, it necessarily follows that proving our inconsistency in not opposing drinking fountains while we oppose feasts in the church building would not prove it right to have feasts! The question is not, "Who is consistent?" The question is: "What is right?" Our opposition, again, is not to merely eating or drinking, as such, in church buildings. Our

opposition is to social entertainments in church buildings, whether they involve feasting, masquerading, card playing, dancing, clowning or athletic games. Who ever heard of a group of people being invited to enjoy an occasion of water-drinking from the church spigot on a Saturday night at 7:30 anyway?

Brethren say they have been having these social gatherings in their church building "for many years." Does the antiquity of a thing necessarily make it right? Catholics have been praying to Mary for centuries! Does that make it right? A group of elders in Tennessee once agreed to abandon the scriptural plea and line up with the Disciples of Christ! Did their agreement make it right? They say, "we have no agitation against it here." Does that make it right? Should it be the policy of the elders of a congregation to adopt whatever practice the membership does not object to? They claim to think these practices are "within the scriptural permission for fellowship." But "one thing needful" in this matter is the passage which grants the church permission to go into the recreation business! They say these practices are not "Sectarian" just because the sects do them. To this we agree, and respectfully ask for the scriptural proof that they are right in spite of the fact that those in religious error do them! They grant that "most of them are sincere" who oppose such festivities in church buildings; they question the sincerity of some! We are not interested in knowing who the "some" are, for if all who oppose such were insincere that would not establish the scripturalness of the practice.

It is "a grievous error" and "one of the most glaring exhibitions of the wrong application of scripture on record" for us to cite Paul's rebuke to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 11:22, 34) on this subject. We do not cite it to prove it wrong to supply the needs of the flesh in the church building. We cite it for the reason shown in the context; namely, to show that such "fellowship" dinners as the Corinthians were having in their place of meeting should be elsewhere. They say that Paul was condemning the Corinthian church for "having a common meal in the church assembly, and mixing the Lord's Supper with it." If this be granted, what did Paul say to do about the common meal? They intended to eat the Lord's supper, "but by unworthy behavior neutralized their purpose" (Expositor's Greek New Testament). How did Paul say to prevent such unworthy behavior in their place of meeting? They admit that the "ordinary place" for a common meal was the home. Since Paul said to eat in the "ordinary" place, where did God ever authorize the "extraordinary" place, the church building?

True, the passage does not mention the church house. This is beside the point. Luke does not mention a school house, either, but he implies one when he says, ". . . in the school of one Tyrannus . . ." (Acts 19:9). Likewise, a place of meeting is implied when Paul says, ". . . when ye come together in the church." (I Cor. 11:8).

Now, we wish to file the following objections to social entertainment in the church building:

1. It is not the mission of the church to entertain sinners or saints. Its mission is to preach the gospel. Eph. 3:10.
2. It is not expedient to use church buildings for recreational purposes, because to be expedient it must first be lawful or scriptural.
3. It is not scriptural, for no scripture authorizes it.

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BUFFETING A MAN OF STRAW

OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

(Editor's Note: The following article by Brother Ellison was written some two months ago and sent to Brother Reuel Lemmons, Editor of the Firm Foundation for publication. Along with the article to him Brother Ellison sent a letter and requested that he publish the article in that journal. But, it was also requested that if the article could not be printed to return it to the author and a self-addressed envelope was enclosed for this purpose. Now, the writer of the article requests that it be printed in *The Preceptor*).

One of the most common things done by partisan religionists is to seek to destroy those who oppose their religious position by attributing to them a position they do not occupy and proceeding to demonstrate its falsehood. This we have come to speak of as attacking a man of straw. He is not the real man at all. And the reason the man of straw is used is that the real man cannot be successfully attacked and demolished. This is common practice among secterians but ought to be beneath brethren in the Lord, for it is not an honest or straightforward approach to the problem at hand.

One of two things must be responsible for such an attack. Either a man does not know the position of another or he wilfully misrepresents him. The first of these I had much rather believe to be the truth about brethren in the present controversy. But, whatever the truth is in that regard, there is much of misrepresentation found in what is being written today.

One such attack upon a man of straw is found on the editorial page of the Firm Foundation of November 15, 1955. Brother Reuel Lemmons, editor, is evidently the author of this editorial, entitled, "Can a church engage in a work larger than its local capacity". We respectfully submit the following review of the things said.

VILIFICATION - ABUSE - SARCASM

The first paragraph justly bears the heading as above given. Brother Lemmons says: "Much unnecessary abuse has been heaped upon good churches engaged in a work so large that no one church could do it alone. God forbid that the amount of vilification, abuse, and sarcasm which a writer, or speaker, can produce ever be the measure of a man among us". With the attitude expressed surely thinking people will agree. And, that we sometimes greatly weaken our influence by such tactics is also frankly admitted. Brother Lemmon's own attitude toward such is best represented by his own writings and speeches that become matters of public property. Hear him in an editorial written in the Firm Foundation of November 29, 1955 on "The inconsistency of anti-ism". "The only reason this brand of anti-ism grows is because it appeals to the selfishness that is in us. The only place where it grows is in congregations that are bent on doing nothing, and want an excuse for not doing anything". Again, in the same editorial he writes: "We must repeat that the very spirit of anti-ism has always appealed to the covetous and the unconcerned. It is opposed to the very nature of Christianity itself. It appeals to churches without vision and to men whose interests are selfish and introverted. It is the natural lair of the frustrated. 'If I can't do it myself, I'll kill it' is the slogan of anti-ism". All this was written against those of us who are opposed to sponsoring, centralized, institutional arrangements that exalt one congregation over another and supplant the church with man made organizations. Can you think of an uglier inditment hurled at honest and

sincere brethren than this. Yet, Brother Lemmons decries abuse, vilification, and sarcasm. Let every man's record speak for itself. That's the way we will answer at the judgment.

After some discussion Brother Lemmons comes to draw five or six conclusions in the editorial referred to. Let us examine some of those conclusions.

Brother Lemmon's first conclusion is stated as follows:

1. Jerusalem found itself engaged in a project too large for one congregation to finance."

This is the first man of straw demolished. But, who denies this among the brethren? Let Brother Lemmons name them and give quotations as proof of what he says. The poor were Jerusalem's poor. The famine referred to was in Judea. No one questions the right of one congregation to help another when this occurs. Under two, three, and four Brother Lemmons says, "It asked for help. Help was extended by other congregations. Help was received." And, we all say, what of that? He is citing a New Testament example of congregational cooperation. As long as this practice is followed by the congregations there will be no differences among us. But, this man is a man of straw. Let us take a look at the real picture.

One congregation sets itself up as a receiving and disbursing agency for the churches. It may be a benevolent program. If so, it says to the other churches: "Send us your orphans, widows, old folks, and your money and we will take care of them for you." It may be a radio program of national scope. If so they say to the churches: "Send us your money and we will plan and present the program of preaching for you". It may even be a board of directors made up of men from many congregations that call upon the churches for support of the work they are engaged in. This is the activity to which opposition is directed. These are the things we are calling upon brethren to find the New Testament teaching to establish. Let Brother Lemmons attack the problem, not a straw man of his own creation.

Under number five heading, this statement is made by Brother Lemmons.

5. "The work was not an emergency for it continued for years."

And who says that an emergency may not last for years. The editor of the Firm Foundation. Proof please. There was a famine in the days of the sojourn of the children of Israel in Egypt that lasted seven years. The famine had been two years upon the land when they came down into Egypt, and it continued five years after they came. Was this an emergency? Yet it lasted seven years. We reason so often from false premises. As long as a church is unable to take care of its own work, no one objects to other churches lending aid. It is the creation of a project beyond its own power to perform, to which other churches are equally related, that is the problem. Brother Lemmons is attacking a straw man.

Brother Lemmons final conclusion is stated as follows:

6. "Men who were neither members of the Jerusalem church nor the contributing church raised funds for the project."

Now tell us who objects to this. Quote his article or statement. If he may be found, we shall seek to help in proper teaching. But, this is set up as a thing to which brethren are objecting. It is a man of straw. May God help us to face the issues, not things that misrepresent.

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WHO ARE THE MEMBERS?

CLAUDE B. HOLCOMB

Corsicana, Texas

In previous articles we have discussed the qualifications and duties of elders, deacons, and evangelists, as set forth in the teaching of the New Testament. As a sequel to those studies, we now come to think of the place of members in the church of the Lord and some of their duties. First let us notice a few things that Paul says with reference to the subject:

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Rom. 12:4, 5).

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many . . . But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body . . . Now are ye the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:12-14, 18-20; 27).

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25).

In the first of these quotations, Paul uses the various parts of the human body to illustrate how individuals make up the spiritual body of Christ, and the thought is carried out in other passages. The word "office" is used in the sense of a function. Every member of the human body has a function to perform, but all members do not perform the same function. So it is in the body of Christ. Every member has his place in the church, with a work to perform; if one member fails to do his work, the church suffers to that extent. It is a serious thought. The parable of the talents reveals the dire consequences of neglecting to perform the duties that belong to us as servants of Christ.

This teaching is emphasized again by the apostle in I Cor. 12:12-27. There are many members composing the human body, yet there is only one body. "So also is Christ." The lesson is plain. There are many members composing the spiritual body, yet there is but one body (I Cor. 12:20). And just as each member of the physical body has its own function, or use, so it is in the spiritual body. Paul says that we are baptized into one body by the direction of the Holy Spirit. Men of every race are added to this body through obedience to Christ. The body is Christ's (Col. 1:24), and constitutes the church (Col. 1:18) which belongs to Christ (Acts 20:28; Matt. 16:18).

Christians must ever strive to maintain the unity God designed for the body of Christ, "For we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25). Members of our physical bodies constitute a unit, and none of them rebels because it cannot perform the function of another. Nor does it withdraw from the body because it is not humored and pampered; it does not resent other members performing functions it is unable to perform; it does not seek to hinder the work of other parts because it dislikes them; it does not sulk and pout because it feels it has been slighted. "So also is Christ."

Christians who are truly faithful to perform their functions as best they can, "Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2, 3). Failure to maintain this unity of the Spirit is certain evidence that there are rebellious members in the body. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (I Sam. 15:23). This should be a sobering thought to all of our brethren today. May God give us the will and the courage to keep the unity of the Spirit!

Members of the church have the obligation to work faithfully for the upbuilding of the Kingdom. Those who refuse to do so are under condemnation. Some of the parables of Jesus teach this lesson (the talents, the barren fig tree, the pounds, etc.). Paul also emphasizes the thought in a number of passages. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58). Working members are usually happy, peaceable, joyful, fruitful Christians; never fretting, murmuring, complaining, criticizing, hindering — they have no time for such things. They are the ones who want to get things done for the Lord in the Lord's way, and they do not become discouraged because they cannot do big things. They just do all the little things they can in the biggest way of which they are capable, and in so doing they become the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Lord, give us more members who are too busy to brawl, and too trusting to falter and fail!

Members of the body of Christ are to be holy in life. "Follow after peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). The church today is in dire need of men and women who will "follow after peace" in deed and in truth, rather than going about making separations. Many pious platitudes are intoned with reference to peace that bear no meaning because the deeds of the propagators are inconsistent with their claims. When men accuse other brethren of being "poisoned" because they do not strictly conform to their own views, they have little place to cry consistently for peace. Genuine peacemakers do more practicing than prating in promoting peace.

Striving toward peace is an element of "holiness" without which no man shall see the Lord. Paul shows clearly that holiness is essential to gaining an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Without it no man shall see the Lord!** It is passing strange that some brethren are so anxious to contend for the faith with respect to baptism, but are careless to the extreme concerning gospel teaching on holiness. They charge the sectarians with a fault in which they themselves are guilty — accepting a part of Bible teaching, but rejecting that which does not appeal to them. If the church of the Lord is to prosper, its members must be holy in life. Those who are not striving to this end will not see the Lord.

Members of the church must love one another. How many are going to lose their souls because of failure here! Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn. 13:34, 35). If you really want to know how our testimony appears to the world in this matter, go out and ask them! They will tell you the truth about it — the plain, harsh, indictive truth! But we are afraid even to ask ourselves! Some brethren seem to cherish the hope of heaven without

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"THAT THERE MAY BE EQUALITY"

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

Since some have gone to the Greek to try to prove an out-of-the-ordinary meaning of this phrase I thought to give a little study to what some writers have to say as to the meaning of this passage in II Cor. 8:14. One Greek student told me this means "out of your equality." Let us see what others have said about it. But first, here are some various translations of the passage:

"But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want, that there may be an equality." (King James Version.)

"But by equality; your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality." (English Revised Version.)

"But by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality." (American Standard Version.)

"But on account of equality, that now your abundance may be a supply for their want; that again, their abundance may be a supply for your want; that there may be an equality." (The Living Oracles.)

"But on account of equality, that at the present time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that at another time their abundance also may be a supply for your want, so as there may be equality." (Macknight's Translation.)

"But that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their want, so that their abundance may supply your want, that there may be equality." (Revised Standard Version.)

"But that, according to equality, your abundance, at the present time, may supply their wants; and that, at a future time, their abundance may supply your wants; that there may be equality." (H. T. Anderson's Translation.)

"But to equalize the burden, and in the present situation to have your plenty make up for what they need, so that some day their plenty may make up for what you need, and so things may be made equal." (Goodspeed's Translation.)

"On the contrary, there is a just balancing—your abundance at this present time supplying their need, that their abundance may in turn supply your need, thus making for equality." ("The First Catholic Translation Made in America.")

"It is a matter of give and take; at the present moment your surplus goes to make up what they lack, in order that their surplus may go to make up what you lack. Thus it is to give and take—" (Moffatt's Translation.)

"But, by rule of equality, at this present time your abundance being a supply for their want, that also their abundance may be a supply for your want, that there may be equality." (American Bible Union Translation.)

These are some of the translations I have in my possession, but this number will suffice to show what this

host of Greek scholars understood Paul to mean when he penned by inspiration these words to the church at Corinth.

Comments by various authors and commentators on this passage:

"He does not mean that the brethren in Judea may be relieved and the Corinthians burdened: but that now while they have an abundance, they should help those in Judea who are in need, that sometime when the Corinthians needed others may help them, so there may be equality." (D. Lipscomb in *A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles* by David Lipscomb, Edited, with Additional Notes by J. W. Shepherd.)

"The apostle did not take money from the Corinthians for the purpose of impoverishing them and enriching the church at Jerusalem: his idea was that the abundance enjoyed by the Corinthians might be withdrawn from their side of the scales and placed in the Jerusalem side, that the scales might balance—not a literal balancing, but such a one as would insure that those at Jerusalem would not suffer because of their poverty. And he did this with the expectation and understanding that whenever conditions were reversed, those at Jerusalem would donate their superfluity to the support of Corinth. That such equality is approved of God was shown by the manner in which he meted out his manna, as appears by the citation in the next verse." (*The Standard Bible Commentary*, McGarvey and Pendleton.)

"But by an equality. On just and equal principles. That now at this time, etc. That at the present time your abundance may be a supply for their wants, so that at some future time, if there should be occasion for it, their abundance may be a supply for your wants. The idea is this. Corinth was then able to give liberally, but many of the other churches were not. They were poor, and perhaps persecuted and in affliction. But there might be great reverses in their condition. Corinth might be reduced from its affluence, and might itself become dependent on the aid of others, or might be unable to contribute any considerable amount for the purposes of charity. The members of the church in Corinth, therefore, should so act in their circumstances of prosperity, that others would be disposed to aid them should their condition ever be such as to demand it. . . . That there may be equality. That all may be just and equal. That no unjust burden should be borne by any one portion of the great family of the redeemed. Every Christian brother should bear his due proportion." (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*.)

"But I do it for establishing equality. I mean, that at the present time your abundance may be a supply for the wants of the brethren in Judea, that at another time their abundance also, when ye stand in need of it, may be a supply of your wants, so as among the disciples of Christ, even as among the Israelites in gathering the manna, there may be equality. Ver. 14—1. That at the present time your abundance. Corinth being an opulent city, we may suppose, that among the brethren there were some able to contribute liberally to this charity. Besides, the Corinthians had not, like the Thessalonians and the other churches of Macedonia, been persecuted to the spoiling of their goods.

"2. So as there may be equality. The equality which the apostle recommends, is not equality of condition, but such an equality, as that our brethren may not be in want of the daily necessities of life, while we abound in them; for the manna gathered by the Israelites was only provision for a

(Continued on Page 14)



Restoration and Reaction

What Is Your Religious Standard?

TOMMY McCLURE
Paragould, Arkansas

Surely, all recognize the importance of standards in the material affairs of life. If we had no standard of weight, of measurement, or of time, the world would be filled with chaos with respect to those matters.

Religion is no exception. There must be and there is an infallible standard by which man is to be governed religiously, and that standard is the word of God! Paul said, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17, ASV) John said, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 Jno. 9) Peter said, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ." (1 Pet. 4:11) In view of the many articles that have been written and the many sermons which have been preached, it will not be necessary to consume more space here in proof of the proposition. Especially is that true as far as members of the church are concerned.

"The religion of one's parents is not the proper religious standard" is a statement often made by members of the church. That statement is correct! For example, in order for Paul to be right religiously, it was necessary for him to give up the religion of his ancestors. Gal. 1:13, 14. The religion of parents cannot be the proper standard because many parents are disagreed, and some espouse no religion at all. Every person traced back ten generations has 1,024 ancestors; traced back eleven generations, each person has 2,048 ancestors; and, in fifteen generations back there have been 32,768 ancestors for every person living. Among such a great number of people, it is quite certain that many contradictory religious systems were embraced. By what rule, then, is the religion of a certain ancestor (or certain ancestors) to be accepted as a religious standard, to the exclusion of the religion of other ancestors? Is this not enough to prove that such a standard is unreliable and dangerous? Surely, every member of the church who reads this article will agree that it is, and we all plead with our denominational friends to take the Bible and the Bible only as their religious standard or guide. It is my sincere prayer that we will never cease to so plead, because that is "sound speech, that cannot be condemned."

Likewise we teach, and correctly so, that conscience, the

decisions of the majority, and church councils and leaders with their creeds and manuals are not to be accepted as religious standards. On this we stand united and the combined forces of denominationalism are unable to repel or resist it.

However, we should not forget that it is possible to contradict in practice that which we teach in word. Paul asked, "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" (Rom. 2:21-23, emphasis mine, TM.) We would do well to ask ourselves: Thou that teachest another to accept the Bible and the Bible only as his religious standard, dost thou have another standard? Truly, the words of Paul are in order here: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves . . ." (II Cor. 13:5). Let us do that now with respect to the issue at hand.

Relative to certain issues, in recent months we have heard and read much about what was said in years past by the "pioneers of the truth" and the "giants of the faith"—such men as Tolbert Fanning, David Lipscomb, T. B. Larmore, F. W. Smith, J. D. Tant, M. C. Kurfees, E. A. Elam, H. Leo Boles, etc. That these were great and good men, none of us doubts. Yet, they were men—uninspired men—therefore, not infallible! Question: Have we unwittingly accepted for our standard the writings of these uninspired "pioneers" and "giants"? Also, have we forgotten that the Bible and the Bible only—the writings of the inspired "pioneers of the truth" and "giants of the faith"—is the only infallible religious standard? Brethren, we should strive to keep our thinking straight on these matters.

There seems to be a tendency on the part of many to accept, without investigation, the word of some popular preacher and the position of certain religious periodicals. Indeed, that is a dangerous trend. It is equally dangerous to use "the way we have been doing it in the past" and "the way the big churches are doing it" as a standard for our religious thinking and actions. The Bible is the only infallible standard, and we must never forget that!

Again, let us ask ourselves: Thou that teachest another to accept the Bible and the Bible only as his religious standard, dost thou have another standard?

REPORTS

Derrel W. Shaw, Box 2427, Philrich Branch, Borger, Texas:

THE PRECEPTOR is excellent and its stand for truth is appreciated. We are concluding two and one-half years pleasant work with the Groom, Texas, church to begin work on January 1 with the Bunavista congregation. Correspondents please note change of address. Those interested in the work in Groom may write to the elders.

John Bullock, 1900 Turtle Creek Drive, Marshall, Texas:

One was baptized, one confessed faults, and one was identified at the South Washington church Sunday. Every phase of the work is growing.

Tenth Annual Lecture Schedule of Florida Christian College

FEBRUARY 13-16, 1956

(Note: The following is the complete program for the Florida Christian College lecture series, February 13-16.)

Theme—"THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF SIN"

February 13

7:00 p.m.—Religious Papers; 7:30 p.m.—"What Is Sin?", Curtis Flatt; 8:30 p.m.—"The Nature of Temptation," Bill J. Humble.

February 14

8:30 a.m.—"Sins of the Tongue," Hugh Davis; 9:30 a.m.—"Historical Origins of Inborn Sin," Franklin T. Puckett; 10:30 a.m.—"Conviction of Sin," Robert Farish; 1:30 p.m.—"Definition of Sin: Catholic Viewpoint," O. C. Lambert; 2:30 p.m.—"Sins of Omission," Robert Turner; 3:30 p.m.—"When Is An Apostolic Example Binding?" panel: L. Wesley Jones and Marshall Patton; 4:10 p.m.—Question of Panel; 7:00 p.m.—Religious Papers; 7:30 p.m.—"Sin in the Old Testament," Claude Holcomb; 8:30 p.m.—"Sin in the New Testament," H. A. Dixon.

February 15

8:30 a.m.—"Sins of the Hearts," H. A. Moss, Jr.; 9:30 a.m.—"Arguments for Inborn Sin Considered," Franklin T. Puckett; 10:30 a.m.—"Confession of Sins," Barney Keith; 1:30 p.m.—"Catholic Remedy for Sin: The Sacraments," O. C. Lambert; 2:30 p.m.—"The Sin of Division," Luther G. Roberts; 3:30 p.m.—"The Basis and Breadth of Fellowship," panel: James D. Bales and Bryan Vinson; 4:10 p.m.—Questioning of Panel; 7:00 p.m.—Religious Papers; 7:30 p.m.—"Atonement for Sin," Edgar Srygley; 8:30 p.m.—"The Sin Against The Holy Spirit," Wallace Layton.

February 16

8:30 a.m.—"Sinning in Deeds," Farris Smith; 9:30 a.m.—"Doctrinal Consequences of Inborn Sin," Franklin T. Puckett; 10:30 a.m.—"Sins Against the Home," C. G. Caldwell, Sr.; 1:30 p.m.—"Catholic Remedy for Sin: The Sacraments," O. C. Lambert; 2:30 p.m.—"Sin in Marriage," Thomas B. Warren; 3:30 p.m.—"Building Up The Cause Thorough Teaching," panel: Alan Bryan and Earle West; 4:10 p.m.—Questioning of Panel; 7:30 p.m.—"The Safeguard Against Sin—The Word," Andrew M. Connally, Jr.; 8:30 p.m.—"The Punishment of Sin," Bill Hatcher.

Due to crowded conditions the College is unable to furnish rooms for visitors. Meals may be obtained in the College Cafeteria or Student Center at reasonable prices.

SEND A FRIEND

THE PRECEPTOR

And Help Teach Him

THE TRUTH

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS?

(Continued from Page 8)

practicing the principle of love toward the brethren. Do they not believe the Bible? I suppose we all think, however, that God will make an exception in our case, just to get us into heaven because of who we are. Some must feel that way, judging from attitudes that prevail. How bright is **your** hope of heaven in view of Bible teaching on love?

Members of Christ's body must continue in the faith. If at last they are to be presented holy and unblameable and unreprieveable in God's sight, they must be faithful even to their last moment on earth (Col. 1:22, 23). Christianity is not a seasonal or intermittent religion — it is constant, steady, and unceasing; woven into the texture of the mind so as to become an innate part of his being who is a member of the body of Christ. The man who is not godly every day is not really godly any day. There is no stopping place in the religion of Christ.

Let every Christian renew his determination to perform faithfully the function that belongs to him as a member of the body of Christ, unto the glory and praise of Him Who loved us, and gave Himself up for us.

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THE PRECEPTOR COMPANY

Box 165

Borger, Texas

Masonry Receives A Heavy Blow

December 6, 1955

The Preceptor

Borger, Texas

Dear Brethren:

On October 28, 1955, Bro. Royce Ingersoll and Bro. W. B. Andrews signed the following propositions.

Proposition No. 1

One cannot scripturally be an active member of the Masonic Lodge and remain in fellowship with the New Testament church.

Affirm: Royce Ingersoll

Deny: W. B. Andrews

Proposition No. 2

One may scripturally be a member of the Masonic Lodge and at the same time remain in fellowship with the church of the New Testament.

Affirm: W. B. Andrews

Deny: Royce Ingersoll

This discussion was scheduled to begin December 5th at the Kaufman Highway Church of Christ in Dallas at 7:30 p.m. Brethren and friends from all over Texas gathered for this debate, but Bro. W. B. Andrews, preacher for the Story Street Church in Dallas, failed to show up. After reading the propositions, you can understand why he did not attend.

Bro. Andrews, who is a 32 Degree Mason, talked with Bro. Royce Ingersoll on Sunday before the day of the discussion, and stated he might not be able to have part in it since he had been threatened with a "Masonic Trial." This evidently was the cause of his failing to meet with Bro. Ingersoll.

Brethren, when men in a profane Lodge can threaten a Gospel Preacher to the extent that he will not stand in a pulpit to state his convictions on any matter, it must be a powerful institution and certainly a dangerous one to the cause of Christ.

In his failure to defend his position on Masonry, Bro. Andrews has indicated to the world that Masonry cannot be defended by the Bible. Therefore, brethren in the church should get out of it and go to work for the Master in His church.

I have in my possession the original propositions as signed, which we presumed were signed in good faith, but Bro. Andrews has given in to his Oath of Masonry and has turned down Jesus Christ (Acts 4:19-20). If you would like a photostatic copy of the signed propositions, you may have a copy by writing to me at the address below.

Masonry has received a heavy blow in this area and will never fully recover from it.

H. C. McCAGHREN

7605 Second Avenue, Dallas 17, Texas

THE LAW AND CIRCUMSTANCES

(Continued From Page 4)

mand to assemble demands a place of assembly, either a house or under a tree or somewhere. Lights were burning in the meeting place of the church at Troas, and the young man who went to sleep "sat in the window." Wonder why some one does not demand that the only Scriptural place to sit during a sermon is in the window! But in using seats, song books, microphones, lights, etc., the only thing done in the worship is just what the New Testament authorizes. These things make not the slightest bit of noise in the worship. Even the turning fork, or the pitch pipe, is silent when the singing begins and as it continues in the singing of the song. The command to sing songs demands the pitch of the song, it must either be determined by guessing at it, memorizing it, or by securing it from a pitch pipe. We should not mix or confuse the law and the circumstances in the worship of God.

Worshiping and serving God through Jesus Christ is a matter of authority. Whatever Christ has commanded by direct precept, or by an apostolic approved example, or by a necessary, not just a reasonable, inference, is acceptable as worship to God. Whatever else is used that is not so authorized is presumptions on the part of the one using it, and even David prayed, "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sin." In our worship to God we "walk by faith and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). But faith "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). If in the worship of God something is done that is not authorized in the word of Christ, it is not done by faith and is therefore not acceptable worship to God. John said as directed by the Holy Spirit, "Who so ever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God" (II Jno. 9). Since the New Testament contains the teaching of Christ, then the one who does something in worship to God not taught in the New Testament has not God; has not God's approval, nor God's blessings. But when they had sung a hymn, they went out." And someone contends that this circumstance demands that at the close of the service we must sing a hymn and go out; but the individual fails to read the remaining part of the statement. It states that they went out unto "the mount of Olives." It would be rather a difficult matter for us to carry out this part of the statement for the mount of Olives is just outside the wall of the city of Jerusalem in Palestine. But we are to distinguish what is the law and what the circumstance, the former is binding, the latter is not. When we meet on the Lord's day to break bread or to partake of the Lord's Supper, since there is no specific time of the day demanded by either precept or example, we have fulfilled the command when we assemble on any part or at any time on the Lord's day. So, of every other demand of the word of God, when we have done what the Scripture authorizes us to do, we need not demand that the circumstance be the same in every case. Let us distinguish between the thing commanded and the circumstance that attended and "handle aright the word of truth."

THE PRECEPTOR (November, 1953 through October, 1955) is bound and is ready for delivery. A limited supply (\$7.50 per volume) is available. If you desire to have in one volume the many fine articles which appeared in the paper during the last two years, order now. Delivery will be made immediately.

"AND A KITCHEN"

(Continued from Page 6)

4. It brings criticism upon the church from non-members.
5. It brings embarrassment to members of the church who try to show denominational people the differences between churches of Christ and denominational churches.
6. It alienates brethren.
7. It leads away from spirituality by substituting food for the stomach for food for the soul, music and laughter for meditation and prayer.
8. It often results in questionable amusements. When worldly-minded members plan programs anything can happen; and probably will. Elders do not always know what is going on in the social hall and kitchen. Imagine the surprise of a Tennessee elder who looked through a window and saw a woman putting a dress over a man's head! This kind of horse-play, the aroma of roast chicken, false faces, pumpkin heads and horn-tooting are all out of place in the church house.
9. It profanes the house of worship by making it a house of play, just as certainly as the Jews profaned the temple at Jerusalem by transacting business in it.
10. It is anti-scriptural, for Paul condemned the practice in Corinth (I Corinthians 11:22, 34). Note the words of the following scholars:

LIPSCOMB'S COMMENTARY: "34 (If any man hunger) He should take that in his own home which is necessary for the support of the body before he comes to the assembly, where he should have the feeding of the spiritual man, alone, in view."

PEOPLE'S NEW TESTAMENT, Johnson: "It was customary in Corinth to eat a meal together as Christ and his disciples the night of the Lord's Supper. After this came the Lord's Supper. At this meal each party in Corinth sat apart and ate when it was ready. The result was that some began before others. One would be hungry and another drunken. This last phrase means that he had eaten and was satisfied. 22. (What? Have you not houses to eat and drink in?) The practice was rebuked. The place to eat their feasts was at home."

CLARKE'S COMMENTARY: "Verse 22. (Have ye not houses to eat and drink in?) They should have taken their ordinary meal at home, and have come together in the church to celebrate the Lord's Supper." "Verse 34. (And if any man hunger.) Let him not come to the house of God to eat an ordinary meal, let him eat at home—take that in his own house which is necessary for the support of his body before he comes to that sacred repast, where he should have the feeding of his soul alone in view."

BARNES' NOTE: "Have ye not houses . . . ! Do you know that the church of God is not designed to be a place of your ordinary meals? Can it be, that you will come to the places of public worship and make them the scenes of feasting and riot? Even on the supposition that there had been no disorder; no revelry; no intemperance; yet on every account it was grossly irregular and disorderly to make the place of public worship a place for festival entertainment."

Macknight, APOSTOLICAL EPISTLES: "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in with your friends? Or do ye mistake the church of God for an idol's temple in which

feasts are made; and put to shame those who have not a supper to eat, while ye are feasting luxuriously? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this, as having kept my precepts? I praise you not, but utterly condemn you for these scandalous practices."

11. Respected brethren have opposed it. Of course, we do not propose to accept the convictions of men as being the will of God, but it certainly behooves us to sit up and take notice of what able brethren have said on a matter. They just might agree with the Bible! For this reason we wish to quote from various brethren on this subject. Not the least of our brethren was David Lipscomb, whose convictions concerning this matter are set forth above in the quotation from his Commentary on First Corinthians. He was a great Bible scholar. He established Nashville Bible School, which is now a college bearing his name, and edited the GOSPEL ADVOCATE for many years.

N. B. Hardeman, who was president of Freed-Hardeman College for many years had this to say in 1942: "Now, may I ask, what is the purpose of the church of the Lord? Suppose I discuss the negative side first. I may say things with which you do not agree, but I bid you hear me regardless. I do not consider it a part of the work of the church to try to run the government. I am taught in the Bible to be subject unto the powers that be, just so far as I think they do not conflict with some law of God. Again, I say to you, with caution and thought, that it is not the work of the church to furnish entertainment for the members. And yet many churches have drifted into such an effort. They enlarge their basements, put in all kinds of gymnastic apparatus, and make every sort of an appeal to the young people of the congregation. I have never read anything in the Bible that indicated to me that such was a part of the work of the church. I am wholly ignorant of any Scripture that even points in that direction." (Hardemen's Tabernacle Sermons, Volume 5, Page 50.)

John Paul Gibson, medical doctor, preacher and church leader, has written a book entitled, "The Church At Work," which contains forty-five chapters of worthwhile instructions concerning just that. In his chapter on "Making Full Use of The Church Building" he says, "Among the uses of the church building omitted in these recommendations are the recreational. It is not the business of the church to provide recreation. That is the business of the home. Let us then omit the young people's recreational hall. Let them have their parties in the homes. Let us omit the church kitchens. 'What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in? (I Corinthians 11:22). 'If any man is hungry, let him eat at home.' (I Corinthians 11:34). 'Let us entertain one another in our homes, and on picnics.'" (Pages 239, 240.)

In conclusion, we wish to cite the example of the Christian Church members, who have adopted one unscriptural practice after another during the past hundred years in their digression from the old paths. There was a day when they stood where we stand, but some leaders were not content to follow the New Testament pattern. Beginning with the missionary society and instrumental music, they added foolishness to folly. They planned "Pentecost Services," they ordained women preachers, fraternized with denominations, adopted unscriptural titles; and turned their church buildings into places of entertainment with choirs, soloists, quartets, feasting, "Kum Dubble Klubs," Christmas parties, card parties, pretty baby contests, Halloween parties, mock fun-

(Continued On Page 15)

BUFFETING A MAN OF STRAW

(Continued From Page 7)

FINALLY

In his editorial of November 29 Brother Lemmons makes this fine statement. "No one who claims to be a Christian would hesitate for a moment to study his practice in the light of God's word. It would be a sad mistake indeed for us not to constantly measure our practice by that divine standard". Surely this is a statement to be most heartily endorsed. But, will the editor of the Firm Foundation do this? Will he open the columns of the Firm Foundation to a frank and open discussion of what brethren are doing? This should be a discussion between himself and some capable man who shares the views herein expressed. It surely would prove most interesting and profitable to all of us. I send this article, with this appeal, to Brother Lemmons in the hope that he will see the fairness of it.

Brethren, we do not kill falsehood by the use of an iron curtain. Falsehood is destroyed only by truth. And, truth has nothing to fear from fair and forthright discussion. Every man should preach what he believes to be the truth of God's word after careful and prayerful study. If it is false, another can take the word of God and expose it. That is our proposal to errorists, and has been through the years. Now let us apply it to ourselves. This is God's method. "Contend earnestly for the faith." This is a far cry from closing our ears to all who oppose the things we do. May God help us to return to the militant defense of what we believe to be the truth. And, may it be a fair and forthright one that will win those in error to the truth.

THAT THERE MAY BE EQUALITY

(Continued From Page 9)

day." Macknight, *Commentary and Notes on the Apostolical Epistles.*)

"Place a colon at 'pressure for you' and continue; 'but according to equality—at the present season your abundance to meet their want, that their abundance also may meet your want, so that the result may be equality.' There is to reciprocity, mutual give and take, so that in the end each side has rendered the same kind of service to the other. We need not bring in here the thought in Rom. XV. 27 of Gentiles giving material help in return for spiritual help. Here the help on both sides is material. The Apostle contemplates the possibility of Corinthian Christians being in distress, and of Jerusalem Christians sending money to relieve it." (Alfred Plummer, *The International Critical Commentary.*)

"For the collection is not made in order that there may be relief to others, i.e., to the Judaean Christians, and pressure to you, but by equality, your abundance at the present season being a supply for their wants, that their abundance also may prove to be a supply for your want, *sc.*, at some future time, that there may be equality, i. e., reciprocity. There is no thought here of Jerusalem giving spiritual benefits in return for material benefits given by Corinth (cf. chap. ix. 14 and Rom. xv. 27); what is meant here is that if it ever came to the turn of Corinth to be poor, then it would be for Jerusalem to contribute for her support. Such an idea as that of the transference of the merits of the saints is, of course, quite foreign to the context." (J. H. Bernard, in *The Expositor's Greek Testament.*)

"Nor did the apostle mean to relieve the poor Christians in Judea by burdening the Corinthians: or even to exact from them, and exempt other churches; so as to give rest to the one, and affliction to the other. He only desired that some measure of equality might be preserved among brethren in Christ: and that, in order to do this, the Corinthians should on the present occasion communicate from their abundance, to relieve the necessities of their poor brethren in Judea: and then, if a reverse condition should take place, through persecutions or other calamities, either to individuals, or the collective body; the abundance of the Jewish converts, or of other churches, might be found for the supply of their necessities. Thus, one might help another after an equal manner; according as it is written concerning the Israelites, respecting the manna; which, though collected in different quantities, being thus properly dispensed, was all used, without the redundancy being wasted, or any of the congregation left destitute of a sufficient supply. (Notes, Ex. xvi.) 'So far Christianity seems to require this equality, as that we should not suffer others to lack the necessities of this present life, while we abound in them.' (Whitby.) (Thomas Scott, *Scott's Bible.*)

"That you may do to those who are distressed now as, on a change of circumstances, you would wish them to do to you. And I only wish that of your abundance you would now minister to their wants; and it may be that their abundance may yet supply your wants; for so liable are all human affairs to change, that it is as possible that you rich Corinthians should need the charitable help of others, as it is that those Jews who once had need of nothing should now be dependent on your bounty. That there may be equality. That ye may exert yourself so in behalf of those poor people that there may be between you an equality in the necessities of life; your abundance supplying them with that of which they are utterly destitute . . ." In speaking of the quotation from Exodus this writer has this to say, "To apply this to the present case: the Corinthians, in the course of God's providence, had gathered more than was absolutely necessary for their own support; by giving the surplus to the persecuted and impoverished Christian Jews there would be an equality; both would then possess the necessities of life, though still the one might have more property than the other." (Adam Clarke's *Commentary on the New Testament.*)

"It is the will of God that, by our mutually supplying one another, there should be some sort of equality; not an absolute equality indeed, or such a levelling as would destroy property, for in such a case there could be no exercise of charity. But as in works of charity there should be an equitable proportion observed, that the burden should not lie too heavy on some, while others are wholly eased, so all should think themselves concerned to supply those who are in want." (Matthew Henry's *Commentary.*)

All other commentaries in my possession which I have examined give the same meaning to this passage of Scripture. And if authorities who have written on this passage prove anything, they prove that this verse means that the Corinthians were to contribute at that time to the needs of the saints in Jerusalem, that there might be equality, i. e. that each might have the necessities of life, or as the text states, "that there might be equality." If any one will not accept these authorities so unanimous in their comments on the thoughts of this Scripture, then, he is so prejudiced that he would not accept it if Paul were to appear in person and state again the same thing that he does here. None is so blind as he who will not see!

HUMAN REASON AND DIVINE REVELATION

(Continued From Page 3)

reason and faith, since man is to exercise the one and possess the other; and to do the latter is dependent on employing the former. God does not require nor expect man to have a blind and irrational faith, as is evidenced by the fact he has afforded us abundant evidence to establish and mature an acceptable faith in and appeals to us to reason with him. We walk by faith and not by sight, or appearance; hence, our actions are to be both impelled and directed by what God says rather than by what may have the appearance of being right in the absence of Divine instruction, inasmuch as faith comes by hearing the word of God.

It should be apparent to all of us that safety in reasoning on matters relating to the interests of the soul, for time and eternity, is restricted to that which is written. Such a restriction does not warrant a depreciated regard for the importance and necessity of reasoning; it only applies to that upon which we are to reason legitimately. In fact, we are under the severe necessity of exercising our reasoning powers if we are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the truth. The failure to cultivate a taste for reasoning on the scriptures likely contributes to the disposition to reason apart from them, or be influenced by those who so do. Any religious practice which is to be sustained by human reasoning alone and suspended on hypothetical or assumed cases or situations as its sole or principal support is not a work of faith; that is, faith which comes by the word of Christ. Such should be looked on with distrust, disdain and disfavor by all who love the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It is an occasion of grief when brethren resort to hypothesizing and syllogizing prolifically in their efforts to justify their practice, and thereby substitute sophistry for logic. Logic is the science of sound reasoning, and it is altogether unsound to reason on religion apart from divine revelation. God's word alone is a lamp unto our feet and

a light unto our pathway. And "if we walk in the light, as he is the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Christ cleanses us of all sin." (I Jn. 1:7). To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20). "If any speak let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever, Amen. (I Pet. 4:11).

"AND A KITCHEN"

(Continued from Page 13)

erals, mock weddings, square dances, fish fries, bowling teams, ball teams, and exhibition halls for preachers who refused to shave until their attendance reached a certain number! With all of this "funnybone-tickling" going on, one of their big Louisville churches which claimed a membership of 975 in 1952 was having an average attendance of only about 500 per Sunday. Furthermore, their own statement says, "In ten years we have closed 300 churches and lost approximately 20,000 members. Our per capita giving to missions (Unified Promotion) which includes the United Missionary Society, Kentucky Widows and Orphans Home, Transylvania College and the College of the Bible has been \$2.16." (THE CHIMES, Douglass Blvd. Christian Church, Louisville, Kentucky, Volume VIII, Number 2, November, 1952, page 2.)

A mere novice can see that all of this mania for church kitchens and recreational halls which is asserting itself in the brotherhood today can lead churches of Christ nowhere but away from our divine mission. It emphasizes recreation to the neglect of indoctrination. It substitutes play for prayer, winners for warfare, social graces for the Sword of the Spirit and outward appearances for inward sanctification. It is another of Satan's delusion.

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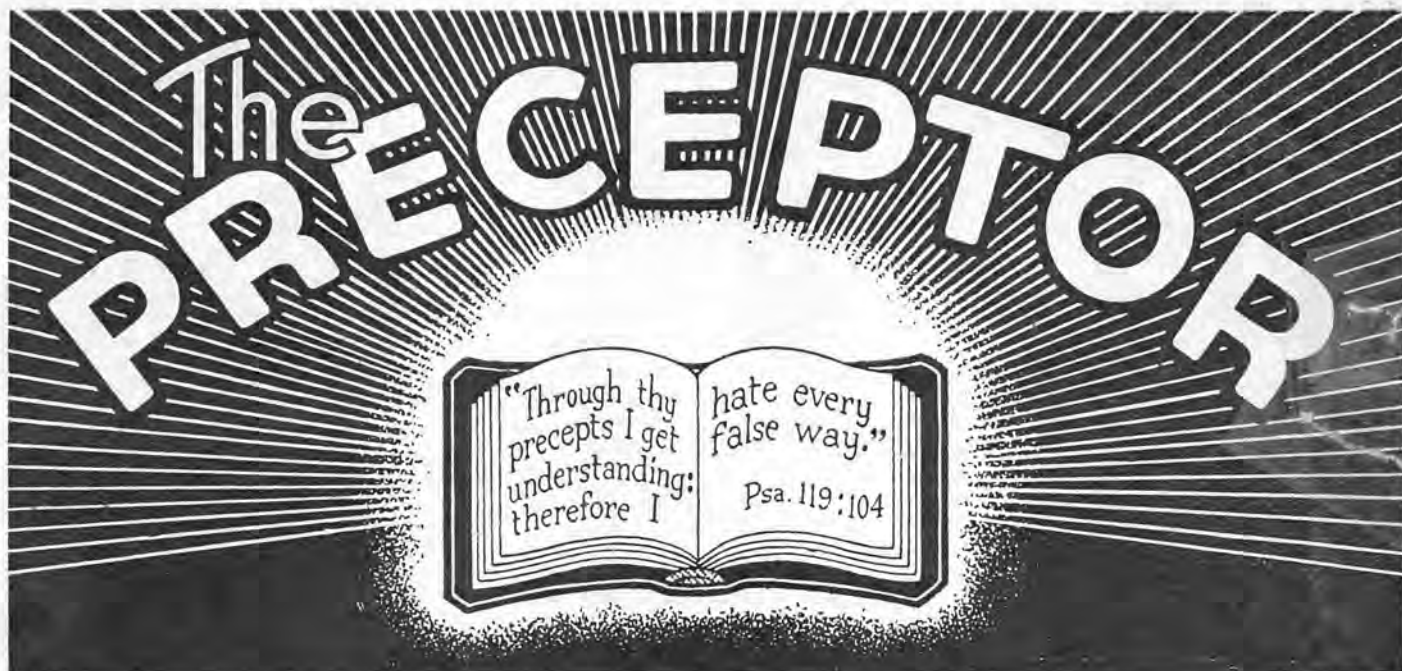
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THE DURATION OF MIRACULOUS GIFTS

DEAN BULLOCK

The church of the New Testament was established about A. D. 33. The last book of the New Testament canon was not written until about A. D. 96. So the church existed for more than half a century before the gospel of Christ was completely revealed, attested by supernatural power and recorded in scripture. This means that the church in its infancy did not have the New Testament embodied in book form to guide it in work and worship as we have now. Hence, it was necessary that our Lord endow men with miraculous gifts for a limited time. These men of the first century were given power to make known the same truth that we now have in book form; this truth was for their benefit as well as future generations. Signs and wonders were wrought by them to establish, verify and confirm the word (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4). When the gospel was revealed in its entirety and made firm by extraordinary manifestations miracles had served their purpose.

The Ephesian letter teaches that supernatural endowments ceased when the faith was imparted in fullness (Eph. 4:8-13). It says that Christ ascended on high and gave gifts unto men (verse 8). The context shows that the gifts were miraculous in nature: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (verse 11). True, we have evangelists,

pastors and teachers today, but they are uninspired. We do not have the kind mentioned here. These were: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (verse 12). Inspired men were given to develop, strengthen and build up the church, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (verse 13). Miraculous spiritual gifts were not to continue forever; they were limited in duration. How long were they to last? "Till we all come in the unity of the faith." The faith is the gospel. Paul preached the faith that he had once destroyed (Gal. 1:23); he preached the gospel. "The priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7); they obeyed the gospel. Miraculous gifts were to continue then until the Ephesians came in the unity of the gospel. But the word "unity" means oneness. **The gifts were to last until they came in the oneness of the gospel or until the gospel was a unit or whole.** When the Ephesians had the complete knowledge of the Son of God inspired men had served their purpose... The "perfect man" (verse 13) evidently refers to the church (note Eph. 2:15). When the church reached its manhood—when it came into possession of complete revelation

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EDITORIAL

(Editor's note: The following article was written by the late H. Leo Boles who served as one of the regular contributors of the *Gospel Advocate* for many years; was for a time president of David Lipscomb College; was an able preacher and commentator of wide acquaintance; and was respected for his clear thinking, teaching and writing by brethren generally. This article is timely today just as it was when first published in the *Gospel Advocate* in 1932).

Church Co-Operation

This is the time for clear thinking and close study of this question. It is the time when we should review prayerfully the history of the churches of Christ as given in the New Testament. There are many people who are confused on this question, who have never given the question much thought. All the churches of Christ need to study just what the New Testament teaches on "church co-operation."

Let us draw a line of distinction between the New Testament teaching on this question and that which is taught by the denominations today. Church co-operation is one thing and a combination of individuals in their individual capacity is another thing. Brethren who worship with different congregations may form a company and do work, but this is not church co-operation. For individual members of the church to associate themselves into a body to do the work as assigned to the churches is to take so much of man's talents and efforts from the churches and to direct them in a way that supplants the churches (emphasis mine, L.G.R.) A convention composed of representatives of churches organized into a permanent body is not and cannot be a co-operation of churches according to the New Testament plan. Such a convention becomes a distinct organization, formed of representatives elected from the churches, but

organized into a body separate from the churches. This body may refrain from certain assumption of power; but such a body possesses, by virtue of its organization, all of the authority that is claimed by the different denominations in their organizations.

It matters not whether the convention of delegated members is permanent or temporary, it cannot be called "church co-operation." An organization composed of delegates from churches is no more the churches than the senate of the United States is a co-operation of the States. The work that such an organization may do cannot claim to be the churches at work; it is only the organization at work, and not the churches. It is difficult, if not impossible, for representatives or delegates from the different churches to keep from assuming power and authority over the churches from whence they come. This is not the New Testament way for churches to co-operate. It is a mistake for churches claiming to be patterned after the New Testament order to be calling for representatives of the different churches to meet any group at some designated place. Frankly, I fear the danger of such a departure from the New Testament order.

How, then, can churches co-operate? I believe that the New Testament Scriptures teach that churches may—yea, must—co-operate, if they fulfill their mission. It is sad to know that every effort made at co-operation in the work of churches among the Disciples of Christ has run in the same channel that has resulted in forming another sect. Church co-operation cannot exist with the individual members combining into a distinct organization to do the work of the church (emphasis mine, L.G.R.); neither can church co-operation exist through delegated representatives from the churches forming an organization. Both of these processes destroy the church. The one saps the life and activity of the churches, and the other helps to form a new sect or denomination. There must be churches before there can be church co-operation. These churches must be distinct, separate, equal, and independent of each other; and they must be independent so far as other churches or organizations are concerned. They must not only be separate, but they must be working churches.

To operate means to work, and to co-operate means to work together to the same end. There can be no working together of churches without the churches themselves working. Churches that do not work cannot work together; churches that do not operate cannot co-operate. Every church in the universe that operates or works according to the will of God co-operates or works together with every other church in the universe that is working according to the same rule. Churches which are fulfilling their mission separate and independent of other churches nevertheless are co-operating with all other churches that fulfill their mission. It seems that we ought to see this, that we ought to recognize this fundamental truth. This is the only church co-operation that is taught in the New Testament. When a number of churches undertake to work in or through an association or organization not authorized in the New Testament, or by a law or rule not of God, they place themselves out of harmony with all the churches operating under the divine law, out of harmony with all the will of God, and out of harmony with God himself. Such churches cannot claim to be co-operating with other churches that are fulfilling their mission as God directs churches to do. (Emphasis mine, L.G.R.)

(Continued on Page 10)

Centralization

GLENN L. WALLACE

Burkbank, California

A free discussion of our differences as citizens has always been the cherished freedom of Americans. In congress, in public forums, men are given the opportunity to be heard and the truth is usually reached by such discussions. If this freedom is ever taken from us, we shall be but another iron curtain country. God forbid that this should happen.

Freedom to discuss points of difference between brethren has been the rule with members of the Church. This policy was followed by the late editor of the Firm Foundation, G. H. P. Showalter, and we believe that the present editor will continue such a policy. Let us freely, sincerely and without bitterness discuss our problems. Such will prevent division. Name calling and insults will lead to strife.

Many Christians are disturbed today about the problem of how congregations can work together and much that has been said on the subject is foreign to the issue involved. Some are almost violent when their ideas are challenged; some feel that any one who raises a question is a hobbyist and a crank. There is one word that is almost anathema in the eyes of some and it is applied to all who would doubt the wisdom of mass movements in the Church today. This word is "Sommerite." This is not Christian action. Men who have doubts and questions should be considered as brethren and their voice should be heard without the threat of isolation and quarantine.

We are faced with the problem of centralization in the Church today. No one would deny that this evil is with us. This plan permits a few congregations to assume the obligations of many. The possibility of congregations working together is not denied by many brethren, but the danger of a few doing the working of the many is a danger that is being overlooked. Centralization leads to indifference, neglect, unconcern, and finally it can develop into a totalitarian machine. A glance at the history of religion will reveal that this is true. The great apostacy that produced the Roman Church is the most horrible example. In the days when this corrupt machine was in the making, churches more and more surrendered their work and their autonomy to some neighboring church. The big churches with their wealth, influence and expert leadership, simply swallowed up the smaller groups. This made for weakness and not strength in the small churches. A great fight developed between the two most powerful churches of the day. Rome and Constantinople fought a vicious battle. The Bishop of Rome (the Churches had long ceased to have bishops) was named the Vicar of Christ and the influence of Rome was stamped over the whole of the western world. Romanism with its totalitarian machine is the result today. It all started with a few of the Churches taking the money, influence and authority of the many churches.

The restoration movement in America saw the same thing develop. A few of the larger and more influential Churches with their preachers and leaders, slowly became the voice of the national church. The planning and vision of the many was assumed by a few. Independent and initiative on the part of the churches was lost. Soon a brotherhood machine was developed that was called the UCMS—the United Christian Missionary Society. Today, this organization has more

than 19 separate organizations within the mother organization. Each of these 19 organizations have budgets that run from \$9,000.00 to \$78,000.00 per year. This money is furnished by the brotherhood churches. Hundreds of Christians who have lived under the shadow of this machine are turning from it in disgust and when they speak the name they say it with a sneer—UCMESS. Brethren, we could develop another "UCMESS."

The year book of the Southern Baptist Convention (1951) makes this very significant statement: "In a world which more and more seeks centralization of power in industry, in government and religion, we are sensitive to the dangers of totalitarian trends which threaten the authority of the churches.

It is often stated today that there is danger in anything we do. They say that there is danger in even preaching the gospel. Is this true? There NEVER WAS DANGER IN DOING WHAT GOD COMMANDS and in the way he commands it to be done. There is no danger in baptizing a man for the remission of his sins. The most apologetic voice I have heard for the dangers of centralizations, came from a man who was defending the right of one Church to do the work of the many, when he said: "Is there danger in such? Certainly there is danger. There is danger in anything we do." Brother, there can be no danger in doing the RIGHT thing.

It is reported that some have contended that no two New Testament Churches ever pooled their resources for any purpose. This is a radical and unsupported statement. Churches helped other churches in the New Testament but we can all see the difference between what was done and what is planned and attempted today. There is a vast difference in a plan that is carried out by a few congregations in a city, who without inter-congregational machinery, conduct a gospel meeting or engage in some other plan of work, and ONE CHURCH COLLECTING AND SPENDING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR HUNDREDS OF CHURCHES throughout the world. It is impossible to place millions of dollars and loads of influence in the hands of one eldership, without creating problems of remote control. This is centralized control and can lead to another institution that is not the Church of our Lord. The results of this centralization are clear on the pages of history and they cannot be erased. Present day witnesses can testify to the reality of the long arm of remote control of centralized influence, although such control is not intended by those who sit in these places of influence.

Let us urge all congregations to do their own work and cease trying to persuade the many to channel their funds and plans through a few churches. One can count the churches today that are doing their own planning and spending. Organizers, self appointed leaders and honest brethren are often doing an injustice to churches by doing all their thinking and planning for them. Too many churches simply meet in officers' meetings today and decide how many appeals they can answer from the offices of a few churches. Am I right?

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PERCEPTIONS

Controversy — Dangers and Blessings

OSCAR ELLISON

Controversy is defined: "A discussion of a controverted matter or controversial issue; dispute; debate; sometimes, quarrel." Controversy is often provoked over matters that are of little importance. Such should receive little attention from sober minded people. However, matters that have eternal consequences are often brought into controversy. With these matters Christian people are deeply concerned.

In recent years much has been said about debate. Some, after observing ugly deportment on the part of those who engage in it, have decided we should not have debates at all. Others, with a view to preserving unity and good fellowship among brethren, have expressed themselves as being opposed to debates between brethren. No doubt all who express such ideas do it in good faith, believing their attitude is based upon sound principle.

Therefore, one of the first questions to be raised about controversy is this one: Does the New Testament teach us as Christians to engage in debate or controversy? Or, shall we defend that which we believe to be the truth of God's word? If not, then away with such an idea. If so, then let us prepare ourselves to do faithfully and effectually that which the Lord commands.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING

One of the most familiar New Testament passages on our theme is this one: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3. This verse places the faith, the gospel, in the hands of the saints, and bids them earnestly contend for it. Paul said of himself, when he came to the end of the way: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." II Tim. 4:8. The word kept as here used means to preserve by guarding. Hence, Paul guarded the faith against error and corruption, by his defense of it both in preaching and practice. In the same connection he exhorted Timothy and charged him to: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." II Tim. 4:2. One of his experiences as related by Luke in Acts of Apostles is that at Athens when he: "disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him." Acts 17:17. Hence, controversy was common in the days of the Apostles. They preached and defended the truth of the gospel of Christ. And, by both their word and example have taught us to do the same.

In the ministry of Jesus controversy was common, Over and over the Jews came to him with questions by which they hoped to involve him in difficulty and contradictions. Jesus did not run from such engagements. With the truth he exposed both their false positions and their hypocrisy. So, if our Lord entered into debate with those who opposed the truth, why should we hesitate to do so ourselves.

Yes, debate in the defense of the truth has New Testament approval. There are both approved examples and direct commands to establish it. It is unfortunate that some disputants have conducted themselves in such a way as to create the impression that some have of debates. But, when our attitude toward truth is what it ought to be we will enter such discussions to uphold and defend it, not for any base or selfish motive. And, when our attitude toward those in error is what it ought to be we will maintain the courtesy and kindness toward those whose false teaching we oppose that is designed to win them from error to the practice of truth. Let us not confuse what is to be done with any abuses we may have observed. Men are human and often err. This is especially true in the heat of controversy. Above all things truth is to be upheld. Every Christian must study to know the truth and to defend it. And, he must strive for the attitude the truth teaches him to have towards it and towards those whom he seeks to win for Christ. With these things in mind let us think on the dangers and blessings of controversy.

DANGERS OF CONTROVERSY

1. The danger of division.

This is one of the most serious as well as one of the most common dangers of controversy. There is frequently an obvious effort to line people up on the side that we favor or represent. This effort, if successful, brings about a cleavage between men that is hard to heal. Especially is this true when differences arise among brethren.

The effort to line people up on our side is made in a number of ways. It is sometimes identified with a certain man or group of men. It is but natural that some with great ability shall be leaders of men. Especially in times of great stress do these men come to the forefront of the battle. And, frequently the positions of these men become the positions of groups gathered around them. In this manner divisions may occur. Therefore, men of great stature should exercise every precaution to see that a faction is not formed around them as men. Such has been the case in times past and it can happen again.

Such an effort to line men up may be made by a religious paper or group of them. Such mediums have tremendous power because of the scope of their influence. A paper may do this by advocating a position and refusing all material that may be presented against that position. A one-sided controversy that does not allow the opposition to be heard is unworthy of Christians. And, it is an obvious admission of the weakness of the position espoused. If a position is true it can be defended. Therefore, we need not fear investigation.

Let us all beware of an effort to create division among men. Our aim in discussions ought to be to arrive together at the truth of God's word and stand there united. It is not to create a party and unite them against others. Each individual is responsible for his own faith. In the light of God's word he should study the question at issue. And, from that infallible standard he should arrive at the truth. When

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Studies in the New Testament

NO. 7

GEORGE P. ESTES

According to James 2:19, one cannot arrive at the conclusion of faith alone apart from works without redefining faith in a wholly unbiblical and ungodly manner. There were those in James' day who held to the theory of justification by faith alone; that all that is essential for obtaining forgiveness of sins and being justified by God is to believe that there is one God. In that case, James says, you are defining a demonic faith; you are holding to a faith such as the demons have. They, too, believe there is one God. They know and are convinced of it and it makes them tremble. The demons who were confronted by Jesus recognized that He is the Messiah, the Son of God: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mk. 1:24). Cp. Matt. 8:29. They also know that Jesus will finally and completely destroy the devil, the demons and their works.

On the other hand, on the basis and meaning of James 2:19, one cannot become a child of God simply because he knows the gospel plan of salvation and the duties and obligations of the Christian life. One can read a Bible until he has mastered much of its contents, he can attend where Christians are assembled and hear the gospel preached, he can be in Bible classes when the text of the Bible is expounded and discussed and still spend eternity in hell unless he obeys the gospel and submits himself to God's will. Simply to know the facts is not enough. If one has acceptable faith to God it will be demonstrated by his obedience.

The word of God is the power of God unto salvation and the only power (Jas. 1:21). If the word of God, the gospel, is not obeyed it will not save and all is lost. Judgment will come upon them "that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8).

Consider also Peter's question: "What shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4:17). The facts of the gospel are to be believed and the commands of the gospel is that form of doctrine to be obeyed from the heart (Rom. 6:17).

If the word be not lived by a church member, the word is lost to him (cp. Jas. 5:20).

By means of two examples from the Old Testament, James (2:20-25) completes a presentation of faith as he wants it to be understood. Both James and Paul set forth Abraham as an example of faith. Only Abraham as an example would suffice because both James' and Paul's objectors would appeal to him. The real test of true faith could only be demonstrated by the life of Abraham as an effective answer to the opponents. Abraham was therefore, the test of true, acceptable faith in both cases: for Paul, in Rom. 4 and Gal. 3 against the Jew who held to the law of Moses as the source of justification and to Abraham as the founder of their race. Abraham lived before the law was given and therefore could not be justified on the grounds of the law but rather by obeying the commands God gave him. For James, against those who argued for the faith only theory, "Was not Abraham our father justifi-

fied by works" (vs. 21). Abraham was not justified until he obeyed God and "offered up Isaac his son upon the altar" (vs. 21). (cp. Gen. 22:1-8). In Rom. 4:17-19, the apostle Paul discusses the faith of Abraham. Abraham looked to God and trusted in Him for everything (vs. 17). He recognized he was nothing in himself (vs. 19). And thus hoping against hope he believed. He clung absolutely to the word of God and His promises. How completely he expected everything from God and thus gave God the glory, how completely he renounced himself, how completely he held on to the promise of God is manifested in the sacrifice of Isaac who was the sole heir, the promised seed, the one in whom, as far as man could see, all Abraham's hopes were either to be realized or forever lost. Through Isaac God's promise must be fulfilled, "in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). Abraham believed God: "By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; even he to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back" (Heb. 11:17-19). Since Abraham obeyed God's commands in that age and was justified for so doing, no one living during the Christian era can be justified apart from obedience. And not only in obeying the gospel in order to be a child of God but including also a faithful Christian life by conforming to God's will.

"Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect" (Jas. 2:22). Compare John 19:28: "After this Jesus, knowing that all things are now finished, that the Scripture might be accomplished (fulfilled), saith, I thirst." In this verse the word "accomplished (fulfilled)" is the same word as made "perfect" in James. The Old Testament promises and prophecies concerning the Messiah were incomplete in themselves and were not God's complete will for man's salvation; it required the birth, life, death, burial and resurrection of Christ to fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures and to accomplish God's will. The Old Testament Scriptures would be incomplete and without meaning apart from their fulfillment. In other words, the promises and prophecies depend upon their accomplishment—Christ. Thus with faith and obedience, faith is not perfect, complete, fulfilled or pleasing in the sight of God separate and apart from obedience. But obedience makes faith complete and acceptable to God. True faith includes obedience and depends upon it, just as the Old Testament Scriptures are dependent upon the New Testament.

Abraham was for all Jews a man of great faith but one might well plead that everyone could not rise to such heights as Abraham. So James gives Rahab as an example who would be far removed from the example of Abraham. She was a Gentile and a harlot. Her background is not as illustrious as that of Abraham. Yet she says: "I know that Jehovah hath given you the land, and that the fear of you is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how Jehovah dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, unto Sihon and to Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we heard it, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you;

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Precepts and Principles

JESUS CHRIST IS THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

(Text of series of sermons presented by Bonds Stocks, preacher of the Academy Street Church of Christ, Dickson, Tennessee, January 2, 3 and 4, 1956 at 6:15 A. M., over Radio Station WDKN.)

"Behold, What Manner of Love"!

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . ." (1 John 3:1).

"Behold"—that is a dynamic word!

It is one of those exclamations that not only demands our attention, but also impels our interest. It is an index finger that points to something that is out of the ordinary.

"Behold," cried John in introducing Jesus—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Pilate used this magnetic word, too. After declaring to the Jews that he found no fault in Jesus he exclaimed to them: "Behold the man!" (John 19:5).

THE WONDER OF WONDERS

And now we find that when John, who wrote and talked so much about love that he is referred to as the apostle of love, contemplates the love of God, he is so awed and enthralled that he joyously exclaims: "Behold, what manner of love!"

Behold! Look at this marvelous sight—the manner of God's love! Now John had been an eye-witness to many awe-inspiring scenes. He had seen the wonderful works of Jesus. He had witnessed the majesty of the transfiguration, and the glory of the ascension of the Lord of Lords to take his place at the right hand of God.

Even so, when he thinks of the love of God he is made to exclaim, "Behold!" Even to "that disciple whom Jesus loved," even to the venerable servant who won the coveted title, "the beloved apostle," the love of God is the wonder of wonders and the marvel of marvels.

EIGHT WONDERS OF THE LOVE OF GOD

It is worthy of note that it is not simply the greatness of the love of God that amazes John. He does not here wonder at the gifts of God's love. It is the manner of God's love that enraptures him.

It is the very fact of God's love, and not only the fact of it, but its kind, to which he joyfully directs our attention. Within the compass of three brief verses the Holy Spirit alludes to eight wonders of the love of God.

MARVELOUS IN ITS ORIGIN

1. The love of God is marvelous in its very source. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us . . ." God is love. Love of God. God is the fountain of love.

When we think of the power of God, we think of God the creator, sustainer and governor of the universe. Reflections concerning the knowledge of God lead us to contemplate him as God the infinite, the omniscient. When we ponder concerning the versatility of Jehovah, we think of the omnipresence of God. When our minds dwell upon the terror of the Lord we think of God the just, the avenger of wrong. But when we think of the love of God we instinctively say: "Our Father which art in heaven . . ."

Yes, God is the source of love. God's love is wonderful because it springs forth voluntarily and directly from the fountain, coming to us from the source of love in all its purity and unselfishness.

God has no personal ax to grind. He loves for love's sake. "To love for the sake of being loved is human, but to love for the sake of loving is angelic" (Lamartine). God loves, not because he is asked to love, not because it is demanded of him, but because he is love. Spontaneous love is the very essence of his nature and the very fibre of his being. "Love divine, all love excelling!" Divine love is self-starting, self-sustaining and self-perpetuating.

MARVELOUS IN ITS DIRECTION

2. The love of God is marvelous in its direction—man is its object. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us . . ." Man is the objective toward which the love of God is directed.

Perhaps those who trust in their own righteousness may be inclined to inquire here: "Well, what is so marvelous about that? Why shouldn't God love man?" But the man who rises above his conceit long enough to examine himself and explore the dark passages of evil in his own heart and the ugly marks of sin in his own life, would never ask such a question.

Think of God as he is—pure, holy, spotless. Then think of man as he is before he is transformed by the power of the love of God—sinful, spotted and blemished, selfish and hateful. When we think of man as compared with God we are more inclined to ask: "Why should God love man?", or to inquire in the language of the Psalmist: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:3, 4).

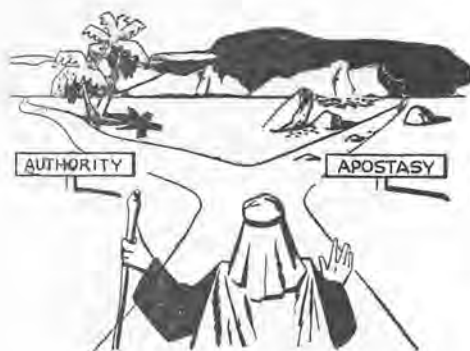
God created man in the image and after the likeness of Divinity. He made man a fit companion for deity. He pronounced this man, the pride of his creation, "very good." In Eden he allowed man intimate communion and personal fellowship with his Creator.

But this is not the same man that John is talking about when he says that God hath bestowed his love "upon us." That man that God created turned against his Creator. He rebelled against the authority of God. He sinned.

God hates sin. He would not be God if he did not. Sin brought about the alienation of man from God. Man became a sinner, his allegiance to God repudiated and transferred to Satan. He was unclean. He was wrong.

In his book, "The Man Nobody Knows," Bruce Barton indicates his disapproval of the line in the familiar hymn which asks concerning Christ's death: "Would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?" Mr. Barton does not relish the idea of referring to man as a worm.

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Restoration and Reaction

The Porter-Woods Debate

(NO. 1)

J. P. LUSBY
Amarillo, Texas

It was my privilege to attend the Indianapolis debate between brethren W. Curtis Porter and Guy N. Woods. The subject discussed was whether or not the churches have a scriptural right to build and maintain benevolent organizations through which to do their works of benevolence. Brother Woods affirmed they do and brother Porter denied. The debate was well attended, the order was good and the interest high.

Brother Porter did his usual fine work in defending the truth and exposing error. Brother Woods' strongest argument was to shout: Change, Leroy Garrett, Carl Ketcherside, Sommerism, Radicalism, Anti-ism, Hobbyism. His second strongest was to talk about how "silly" and "ridiculous" Porter's arguments were, and tell the audience how "weak" Porter was. Said Porter was the "weakest" he had ever met in twenty-five years of preaching and one hundred debates. Well, Porter took care of all that and kept pressing his arguments. Woods was unable to answer, so he shouted: "Sommerism." On the other hand, Porter answered every argument Woods advanced—took it away from him and turned it against him. It was a masterly affair, and the truth of God and the church of our Lord stood out more brilliantly in contrast to the errors of men and organizations of earth.

The proposition affirmed by Guy for the first two nights of the discussion read: IT IS IN HARMONY WITH THE SCRIPTURES FOR CHURCHES TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN BENEVOLENT ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE CARE OF THE NEEDY, SUCH AS THE BOLES HOME, THE TIPTON HOME AND OTHER ORPHAN HOMES AND HOMES FOR THE AGED THAT ARE AMONG US.

In his introductory remarks of his first affirmative Woods said he was contending for the truth and not discussing changes that may or may not have been made. Yet he charged Porter with changing on the subject under dispute, then complained when Porter proved Woods had changed.

In defining his proposition he said by "benevolent organizations" he meant "charitable institutions." In reply to questions he said that a corporation is a "body politic" and that a "body politic" is an "organization chartered under the laws of the state." Porter then read from the charters of both Boles Home and Tipton Home. It was pointed out that the church is one body and the benevolent organization is another body—that one body and another body make two bodies—that Paul said in Ephesians 4:5

there is but one body.

Throughout the discussion Guy was continually shifting ground on the meaning of the word "organization." With reference to "benevolent organizations," which he defined to mean "charitable institutions," he said he meant by the term "organization" simply "a systematic method of procedure." To illustrate his meaning he said one could not send flowers to the sick without some form of organization! He attempted to make these "charitable institutions" the method, procedure, functioning, manner—the "how." But when Porter, in his forceful way, paralleled the missionary organization with the benevolent organization, the word "organization" lost its meaning of "a systematic method of procedure" and became instead a "machine using means." So, when it was to Guy's advantage organization meant "a systematic method," but when it was not to his advantage the word meant a "body politic, a corporate body, an organization chartered under laws of the State."

Guy attempted to make the benevolent organization parallel to "place" or "a means of travel." Porter simply pointed out that the organization was not the place nor means of transportation, but that the organization had to provide a place and use a means of travel. It was simply the old digressive arguments revived.

Guy even argued that the term "relieve" in 1 Tim. 5:16 implied the benevolent organization. Porter asked him if the term "teach" in Matt. 28:19 implied the missionary society. Guy replied that the missionary society does not "inhere" in the term "teach," but that "place" does "inhere" in the term "relieve." So he shifted ground and tried to make "organization" mean "place" with reference to the benevolent organization, but a "body politic" with reference to the missionary society.

Porter used the following diagram with telling effect:

	(Church &
Matt. 28:19—Teach—How—Organization	(Missionary
	(Society
	(Church &
1 Tim. 5:16—Relieve—How—Organization	(Benevolent
	(Organization

This was pressed by Porter each night of the discussion. Woods never could escape the force of it. The only reply attempted was that the missionary society was a "machine using means" and that the benevolent organization was a "means" itself. Porter asked him to tell whether the benevolent organization uses means. Woods replied that it uses means in the sense that all Christians use means in carrying out their obligations.

It has been argued by many, and by Woods in particular, that the benevolent organization is simply a means, a medium, through which the churches operate in doing their work of caring for the needy. But in the course of discussion Woods made this statement: "The orphan home is not doing the work of the church, but of the home." Ponder the implications and consequences of that gem! According to that the church has a scriptural right to build and maintain organizations to do that which is not the work of the church! This sort of reasoning would justify the church's establishing and maintaining Christian Colleges, hospitals, entertainment societies, etc.—just so long as they didn't do the work of the church, but of the home!

In connection with the above consider this statement made by Woods: "By organization we mean simply a way

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New Testament Fellowship vs. Entertainment and Recreation

OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

To many persons who are members of the Lord's church this will seem a strange contradictory expression. For, to many brethren church sponsored and church supported programs of recreation and entertainment are the order of the day. Many have not even stopped to question them. To this end, churches in many places have made elaborate preparations for such things. Kitchens and dining rooms, recreation and party rooms, and many other things necessary to church sponsored entertainment programs have been provided by the congregation. When objections are made to such facilities being provided by the congregation in the meeting house, several arguments are immediately employed to justify such arrangements. First, one is informed that the building is not the church. Therefore, there is not anything sacred about the meetinghouse. That this is true I am sure no informed person will deny. But, does such justify the expenditure of money contributed into the treasury of the Lord for the purpose of accomplishing the mission of the Lord's church for recreational and entertainment purposes? This is the real question in regard to the practice. Is recreation and entertainment part of the mission of the church? If so, then the church as such is authorized to provide for it. If not, the church violates God's law in engaging in that which it was never designed by the Lord to do. The question is not one of recreation and entertainment as such. All agree that Christians may have these. But, the problem is church supported and church sponsored recreation and entertainment. IS SUCH THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD?

A second effort is made to justify this practice by calling such recreation and entertainment fellowship. A preacher brother and close friend made such an argument to me not long ago. He said: "No, we do not have these things mentioned as part of the mission of the church, but, we are taught in the New Testament to have fellowship together." Many brethren try to justify their practice on this basis. So, let us examine the word fellowship as it is used in the New Testament. In this manner we can determine whether or not it is used to describe social and recreational activities of Christians.

NEW TESTAMENT FELLOWSHIP

The most common word translated by our English word fellowship in the New Testament is KOINONIA. This word is translated 'fellowship' twelve times and 'communion' four times in our common version of the New Testament. It refers to fellowship with God: "and truly our fellowship is with the Father (1 John 1:3); fellowship with Christ: "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9); communion of the Holy Spirit: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14). Paul thanked the Philippian brethren for "Your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:5). The Jerusalem disciples "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship" (Acts 2:42). Paul told the Corinthians that the brethren of Macedonia prayed them with much entreaty to "take upon us the fellowship of ministering to the saints" (2 Cor. 8:4). John tells us that "if we walk in the light,

as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (1 John 1:7). All the other passages might be quoted but these are enough to show us the use of the word fellowship in the New Testament.

We are blessed with the opportunity of fellowship with God and with fellow Christians. In fact, brethren are called fellow-laborers, fellow-soldiers, fellow-helpers, fellow-citizens, fellow-disciples, fellow-servants, fellow-prisoners, and fellow-heirs in the New Testament. All these expressions in their various forms refer always to a relationship together with God and one another in the work, and worship, and service of the Lord. Not one of them ever refers to entertainment and recreational activities as fellowship in Christ. This fact should be enlightening and thought provoking. It should teach us that New Testament fellowship is not a gathering of people, young or old, for the purpose of having fun.

ARE SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FUNCTIONS SINFUL?

Someone always raises the question, when these things are under discussion, is it wrong to have social and recreational activities as Christians? The answer is no. These things are a necessary part of our lives. Then comes the question as to how these may be carried on. As long as the thing done is not wrong we may enjoy these things together in many ways. It may be a home function. It may be a community affair. Or it may be a group of people in a congregation. No restriction is placed upon people associating together as long as it is right.

But, the distinction to make is this one. Entertainment and recreation are not functions of the church as such. If they were, they would of necessity have to be under the oversight of the elders God appointed to rule the congregation. And such would have to be a part of the mission of the church. Let's let the church be the church and not make it the instrument of all our worldly whims and fancies. May God help us to see this fundamental truth in these times of the emphasis of man on a social gospel.

WHAT IS NEW TESTAMENT FELLOWSHIP?

New Testament fellowship is a joint participation, a partnership, a common effort, put forth by Christians in the work, and worship, and service of our Lord. God is our common Father, Christ is our common Lord and Savior, we are together members of the one body of Christ, we together share the blessing of redemption in Christ, one hope of heaven beats in every heart. May God bless us to the end that our labors together with God in such a high and holy calling shall not be perverted to make them a mere entertainment of self. One passage always challenges me in thinking about these things. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18, 19). Surely we will not let our fellowship in Christ be lowered to that level.

Bonds Stocks, P. O. Box 42, Dickson, Tennessee, February 3, 1956: The gospel of Christ is being heard twice daily over station WDKN, 1260 kilocycles, which has a wide coverage in this area. D. Ellis Walker preaches on the broadcast of the Walnut Street Church Monday through Saturday at 12:30 p.m., and on Sundays at 8:30 a.m. I speak on the broadcast presented by the Academy Street Church Monday through Saturdays at 6:15 a.m. We would like to hear from those who are listening to the broadcasts.

Popularity

W. L. WHARTON, JR.
Odessa, Texas

One of the most painful experiences that a conscientious man is called upon, as such, to endure, proceeds from the misconception which is frequently entertained by others as to the motives by which he is governed.

If those to whom he gives offense by his conduct would but credit him with acting from a genuine conviction, although in their opinion a mistaken one, he could afford to bear being scorned, and even persecuted, for his adhesion to principles which were unpopular. For scorn and persecution for conscience sake are the good man's natural inheritances; and such earthly approval as he should seek and expect is not the loud commendation of the world, but only the approval of a conscience that is acting in harmony with the will of God. The conscientious man, however, must frequently submit to being set down as acting from base motives, when nothing but a high sense of duty controls his conduct. Thus: Is he too reverent to join in, or countenance, the conversation or the pleasure, however attractive, which is irreligious? He is denounced as a churlish Puritan. Is he too ardent a lover of truth to accede, for the sake of peace, to the prevalent opinion which he does not approve? He is branded as a captious bigot; a troubler of the peace and a factionist. Is he too faithful a servant, himself, to permit those fellow-servants over whom he is placed in authority to waste their employer's time or property, and too honest to hush up, by dissimulation, the fraud, petty though others may deem it, which he cannot prevent? He is stigmatized as a tyrant and a mischief-maker.

Indeed a truly honest man is not so great a rarity as is a truly honest man who is generally liked.

"Popularity," says F. W. Robertson, "is one of the things of an earthly harvest, for which quite earthly qualifications are required. I say not always dishonorable qualifications; but a certain flexibility of disposition, a certain courtly willingness to sink obnoxious truths and adapt ourselves to the prejudices of the minds of others, a certain adroitness catching the tone of those with whom we are. Without some of these things no man can be popular in any profession. And Hazlitt, in his trenchant criticism of so called 'good nature,' which he styles 'humanity that costs nothing,' enunciates the same truth when he paradoxically observes, 'The most disagreeable people are the most amiable.'"

The morale of the foregoing remarks is, that one should not conclude that a man is deficient in a certain good quality, without first considering whether he does not possess in a higher degree some better one. For, often, two qualities, both good, happen to clash; and then it becomes a question of which is to be sacrificed to the other. Thus, in the examples we have noticed above, the first man is not lacking in geniality because he loves religion more; the second man is not lacking in charity because he loves truth more; and the third is not lacking in kindness because he loves duty more.

Dean Bullock, 319 Austin Street, Borger, Texas: I shall speak on the Fort Worth lectures March 12; I shall begin a meeting at Garland (Dallas area) March 19. The work here at Second and Deahl is pleasant and profitable.

THE PORTER-WOODS DEBATE

(Continued from Page 7)

or means, not something separate and apart from the church—that's wrong." And, of course, Guy was arguing that the orphan home was this way or means.

There are two assertions in the above begging for proof. First, that the orphan home is simply a way or means. Second, that the orphan home is not something separate and apart from the church. All the proof offered was Woods' assertion. In harmony with these assertions, consider the following syllogisms:

Syllogism No. 1

1. Organization means a way or means.
2. An orphan home is an organization.
3. Therefore, an orphan home is a way or means.

Syllogism No. 2

1. Organization means a way or means.
2. A missionary society is an organization.
3. Therefore, a missionary society is a way or means.

Syllogism number one is Woods' argument. Syllogism number two is a parallel. If the first one is true, the second one is so. But if the second one is false, the first one is untrue.

If an objection is raised that the missionary society is something separate and apart from the church, I reply so also is the orphan home. If it is said that an orphan home is under the elders, therefore a part of the church; I raise the question, would it make the missionary society a part of the church to place it under elders? If yes, should it do the work of that of which it is a part? Should the "way or means" employed by the church accomplish the work of some other institution?

Remember, brother Woods is on record (or will be when the debate is published) as saying, "The orphan home is not doing the work of the church, but of the home." There are others, however, allied with him who insist that the orphan home is doing the church's work of caring for orphan children, or that the church is using the orphan home as a medium through which to do its work of caring for orphans. To these brethren I pose this question: If it is scripturally right for the church to do its work of benevolence through benevolent organizations as a means, would it not be scripturally right to do its work of evangelism through these same organizations? If not, why not? Is it unscriptural for the church to use the same means in doing one part of its work that it is allowed to use in doing another part of its work?

Guy says, "By organization we mean simply a way or means, not something separate and apart from the church—that's wrong." According to the statement and its implications the orphan home is simply a "way and means." A way or means of what? Not a way or means of doing the work of the church, for "the orphan home is not doing the work of the church."

Further, this "way or means" is not something separate and apart from the church. Therefore, it is something that is a part of the church. But this "way or means" is the orphan home. Therefore, the orphan home is "not something separate and apart from the church"—that would be wrong. (So some of the brethren had better repent of the arguments they have made to justify it!) It is a

(Continued on Page 13)

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

ERNEST A. FINLEY

1. Should have the ability to draw lessons from incidents and everyday things of life. Eg. The Lord used seed, pearl, sheep, etc. to illustrate spiritual principles.
2. Should use variety in method: lecture, textual, question and answer, problem and project method, discussion, etc.
3. Know students: maturation, personal backgrounds, individual differences.
4. Lesson well prepared, organized and delivered.
5. Knows what physical equipment, supplies, and materials are available and knows how to use them effectively. Eg. Maps, blackboards, charts, tracts, film, slides, opaque projector and other visual aids.
6. Has a library. "A growing teacher has a growing library." Eg. Concordance, Bible dictionary, commentaries, etc.
7. Physically strong and alert. Has a pleasing and a sense of humor. Has a gentle voice. Has self control or poise.
8. Ever watchful for useful material. Starts preparation after each class period while things are fresh in his mind.
9. Attends all teacher's meetings and teacher-training courses. Reads teaching books and literature. Observes other teachers at work.
10. Elicits response from all students. Not just a few.
11. Makes assignments clearly and expects them to be carried out.
12. Does not complain in class of his arthritis, sinus or headache. This is depressing to students.
13. Does not visit with guests or visitors during class. Gives attention to students.
14. Does not criticize "superiors" or other teachers.
15. Keeps trivial mechanics of teaching from taking up valuable class time. Eg. checking roll, distributing supplies.
16. Has a reasonable amount of self-confidence. Possesses tact, cooperativeness, adaptability and optimism.
17. Associates with students, visits their homes, plays with them, checks on absentees.
18. Realizes that aids (visual aids such as opaque projector, slides or film) are not an end within themselves but merely a means to an end. They should contribute something to the lesson or get across some point which you wish to emphasize.
19. Fits the teaching to the level of the students. Not too simple, not too difficult. There is no need to make lessons unnecessarily difficult.
20. Know how to select and develop a course of study. The course should meet the students' needs.

THE DURATION OF MIRACULOUS GIFTS

(Continued from Page 1)

—it no longer needed the miracles of its childhood.

There is a school of thought that gives a different application to the expression "unity of the faith." Some make the argument that all denominations are not united and that miracles will last until they are one in belief. Is this what Paul taught? Why the Ephesian letter was written hundreds of years before modern denominationalism came into being! When it was penned the Ephesians were one in belief; they enjoyed unity of faith. Paul besought them to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3). How could they keep something that they did not have? "Unity of the faith" means oneness of the gospel.

CHURCH COOPERATION

(Continued from Page 2)

Churches can co-operate—yea, they do co-operate—if they fulfill their mission. It is not a matter or question as to whether churches should co-operate; it is a necessity for them to co-operate in fulfilling their mission according to divine instruction. Churches that fulfill their mission are promoting the cause of Christ and the will of God; hence, as they are working to the same end, they are co-operating. Churches cannot co-operate and please God when they form new organizations through which to work. No organization is needed. Church co-operation cannot be done by selecting officers, committees, or associations to take charge of all the work of all the churches throughout the land. No one can give a reason why one church should attend to the business of another church. No reason can be found that will justify one church doing the work of another church when that church can do its own work.

The church in Wausan, Wisconsin (composed of about 10 members) is sending out appeals for assistance in purchasing a building for worship. Address correspondence to Church of Christ, Box 423, Wausan, Wisconsin.

Ed Grantham, evangelist of the College Church in Paris, Texas, reports a prosperous work. About 1600 enrolled in the Bible correspondence course and daily radio preaching over KFTV at 8:15 a.m.

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MT. SEQUOYAH CAMP MEETING

An old fashioned CAMP MEETING AND BIBLE SCHOOL will be conducted at Fayetteville, Arkansas in the Mt. Sequoyah Assembly Grounds from July 1st through July 8th.

This camp is for the entire family. There are modern cottages for families and dormitories for the young people. The camp will accommodate about 450 people. This beautiful spot covers the top of Mt. Sequoyah in the city limits of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Fayetteville is in the very heart of the Ozark Mountains and a more beautiful place would be hard to find.

A variety of Bible courses will be offered to all who attend. There will be special training courses for the young and old. A well qualified evangelist will bring all the evening lessons.

The camp is under the supervision of five men who are members of the church in Fayetteville. All of the teaching program is under the direction of the Fayetteville elders.

Approximate cost per individual for the entire camp is \$25 00.

For further information write: Church of Christ, P. O. Box 84, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

CONTROVERSY—DANGERS AND BLESSINGS

(Continued from Page 4)

this is done his position is not that of a paper, or of a man—he is on God's side and is making a defense of the truth as he has learned it from the Bible. We should deeply resent the effort sometimes made to line us up by threat of ostracism.

2. The danger of prejudice.

Religious prejudice is one of the most hurtful and destructive of all attitudes. Prejudice caused the Jews to reject and crucify the Lord of glory. It is defined as—"Preconceived judgment or opinion; unreasonable predilection or objection; esp., an opinion or leaning adverse to anything without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge." One may have prejudice against a person, an institution, a doctrine. This attitude he may fall into without being aware of it. But, he will none the less be blinded. There is no doubt but that one of man's greatest problems is to hold always a fair and open mind. If he does not have this he does not have anything. We should beware of letting any man or circumstance come between us and an honest approach to the study of the truth.

In controversy men often make deliberate effort to arouse prejudice. We are all familiar with the cry of "Campbellite." In days of the development of digression by the introduction of the society the word "Anti-missionary" was often heard. Now the names "Sommerite" and "Ketchersideite" are being used freely in the same way. So also are "Anti-cooperation," "Anti-college," and "Anti-benevolent." Brethren, shall we descend to the level of these things? Is our cause so weak that we must resort to

"Argumentum and hominem"? If it is it should be abandoned and honest men will abandon it.

How shall we enter into controversy? How shall we listen to the discussion of issues among us? Surely this is an important factor if we as a great brotherhood in Christ are to come out of this strong and united. A confusing and distorting of the issues involved will not help. Charges and counter-charges of a personal nature will not help. Closing our minds and refusing to discuss them or hear them discussed will not help. All this will hinder. In the strained relations of these times let us seek always to speak truth in love. We must be honest with ourselves as well as with others.

These are not all the dangers of controversy but they are primary. We can avoid them and if we avoid them great good will come from our strivings for truth. May God help us to join the issue manfully but in love.

BLESSINGS OF CONTROVERSY

1. The blessings of unity.

While division is possible as a result of controversy, the real aim of the Christian is unity. We seek to draw men to the truth by the exposure of error and the establishment of truth. Thus we may stand united. Unity in error is not pleasing to God. Hence, if we come to agreement by compromise it is to no avail. We must be united on the basis of truth.

Therefore, let each man strive for unity while he contends earnestly for that which he believes to be the truth. Let him maintain that honesty of heart that will accept truth when it is pointed out and forsake the error espoused even though the issues are publicly contended for. Being willing to change from that which we have publicly avowed on the basis of conviction concerning the truth is the real measure of a man. But, he who loves the truth will do it. We must not rely upon sentiment. We must not consider what others may say or think. We must not (as is so often suggested by some) consider our influence in the great brotherhood. What it may do to me personally is not worthy of consideration. "Buy the truth, and sell it not." This is the sum of the whole matter. And, if we all will do this there is no doubt of the result of being united in Christ.

2. The blessing of our renewed confidence in the truth.

Nothing so establishes one in a position as to see it assailed and come off victorious. Thus our confidence in the divine origin of the Bible is established. We have seen it attacked but without the semblance of success. I would not be willing to defend any religious position that could not be fully defended by a plain thus saith the Lord. I am not willing to appeal to what is being done. The end does not justify the means. I am not willing to appeal to mere sentiment. What God has commanded can be done best in his way.

3. The blessing of God's favor.

Surely nothing is so good as this. "If God be for us who can be against us." So, when our position has been tried in the fires of controversy and been fully upheld we may be sure of God's approval. "Stand fast in the faith" is his directive and he will bless us in it.

(Continued on Page 13)

How Did They Stand?

C. E. W. DORRIS

Nashville, Tennessee

A good Brother wants to know how Tolbert Fanning and William Lipscomb, founders of the Gospel Advocate, stood relative to the sponsoring church method of cooperation. The present day sponsoring church method of cooperation was unknown in their day. In 1856, year after the Gospel Advocate was established, a church in Louisville, proposed a work that would be called today a sponsoring church. That church decided to send an evangelist to England, but not financially able to bear all the expenses. They sent a Brother Tompson out among the churches to collect money to enable them to send and support the evangelist. W. G. Elly, in a message to Fanning, said:

"Brother Tompson of Louisville seems disposed to complain that the churches both in Kentucky and Missouri are unwilling to give their money to him as agent of the Louisville congregation in order to send an evangelist to England; but what right has that or any other congregation to appoint agents to collect money for any such purpose without first obtaining their consent to such work? Where is to be found a precedent for it? Would you give your money to such agents and churches without first being advised of the wisdom and propriety of such movements?" (Gospel Advocate, 1857, P. 216.) Replying to this, Fanning said:

"Brother Elly asks 'What right has the congregation at Louisville to appoint agents to collect money for sending evangelists to England, without first obtaining the consent of the congregations?'"

"We answer, that the Louisville congregation and messengers are wrong in every particular, except the first step. The brethren at Louisville in a most praiseworthy manner, proposed to encourage the sending of a few evan-

gelists to England; but instead of consulting the congregations with the view of securing a large cooperation, sent Brother Tompson through the country to collect funds for the Louisville church to appropriate. This error well nigh obstructs all cooperation, and makes it mainly the work of a single congregation. In this particular, the church at Louisville, regarding the labor of sending preachers to England, occupies precisely the ground of the Missionary Society of Cincinnati, and the State Cooperation at Lexington. The officers of these respective bodies say to the churches and the brethren, 'We have a noble enterprise in view, and if you will send us your money, we will wisely appropriate it, and publish our proceedings in the papers and tell all the world what each member does.' This is a fair translation of the matter. We say still that there is a scriptural plan for such labor. If the church at Louisville, will send competent members to England as evangelists, and ask any number of churches in Kentucky or elsewhere, to consider the magnitude of the service, and cooperate in their own way, we hesitate not to say, that the Louisville Missionary's wants would be liberally supplied, as they would make them known to the respective congregations agreeing to carry out the good work. In this manner, another congregation in Kentucky, and still another might send successful ministers abroad, and have them well sustained. But each church must be left free to perform her own duty at her own time and in her own way. But on this plan the active energies of the respective congregations are called forth, and success is made sure." (Gospel Advocate, 1857, P. 216, 217.)

Since the sponsoring church method of cooperation and that of the Louisville church, are the same, and since Fanning gives us his position on the latter, it appears that he condemned the sponsoring church method some seventy years or more before it was born and did not know that he was doing it.

I don't remember of having seen anything from William Lipscomb touching the issue.

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The Right Attitude

BILL FLING

There is nothing so basic or vital to the faithful Christian as having the right attitude. This is true whether the attitude be toward the Christ, the Bible, the Cross or the brethren. In reading your New Testament, notice the number of qualities we are to possess that relate to the attitude of our mind.

Because of this critical position of our thinking, the devil hurls many temptations at us to topple our balance. Controversy is one place where our humility might grow lean and our patience wear thin. In dealing with error we must always be on guard concerning our feelings and motives.

Brother Moses E. Lard gives us a good example of such objective thinking in an article he wrote in April, 1865. He was making an attack upon a principle which many of the brethren of his day upheld by practice and doctrine. It was an error that was widespread, and Brother Lard himself had been guilty of it. In the midst of his article he proposed the question of his inconsistency. In answering it he displayed what we can all agree is a noble pattern for the right attitude. He said:

"But in thus speaking, do I not pass sentence against many a line of my own? Perhaps so; but is that a reason why I should not thus write? With me my own blunders can never become a plea for repeating them. When we complain of a fault we complain of it for self as well as for others. It matters not who may have practiced the abuses of which we speak; they are not therefore right, and should be corrected" (Lard's Quarterly, Vol. II, p. 287).

Is it not obvious why Moses E. Lard held such a wide scope of influence? It takes a big man to see his own faults; but it takes even a bigger man to correct those faults. Essential to such an attitude is a double portion of the spirit of humility. Humility is the trait that keeps a man from thinking "more highly of himself than he ought to think" (Rom. 12:3). It is opposed to pride and high-mindedness. Humility is that virtue that makes it easy to correct one's mistakes; pride is the vice that makes such correction seem insurmountable. So if we maintain the right attitude, we simply are making it easy on ourselves.

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who,—humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6, 8).

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 5)

for Jehovah your God, he is God of heaven above, and on earth beneath" (Joshua 2:9-11). But she acted on what she knew; her faith worked. In Jericho she received the spies under her roof and helped them escape another way. In so doing she helped the Jews take Jericho.

No matter where one looks in the Bible there is no faith that does not work and from the above examples there is no one who can excuse himself from obeying God's will. A faith without works is like a body without life—it is dead. (Jas. 2:26).

CONTROVERSY—DANGERS AND BLESSINGS

(Continued from Page 11)

CONCLUSION

Surely as Christians we have all made this our aim in the present controversy. Personal victory is not our purpose. To win praise for ourselves while we defame another is not our goal. The present restoration movement was launched nearly a hundred and fifty years ago on the divine standard, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." This is our strength. When we abandon this rule we will be as weak as the sects around us. Then will we have cause for fear and alarm.

The greatest steps of progress in this cause have been made amid the fires of controversy and persecution. The truth is defensible when we live by it and teach it to the exclusion of all else. Let us never relinquish our firm hold upon it. Free and open discussion of what the word of God teaches is now, has ever been, and shall always be the basis of its purity. Teach it faithfully, live by it diligently and prayerfully, die for it if necessity requires, and God's eternal blessings shall ever be yours. May God help us.

THE PORTER-WOODS DEBATE

(Continued from Page 9)

part of the church. Yet this "way or means"—a part of the church—used by the church—is not doing the work of the church! Neither is the church doing its work through this "way or means" for "it (the orphan home) is not doing the work of the church, but of the home."

It was an interesting, informative and profitable discussion. May there be many more.

PRECEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

(Continued from Page 6)

And certainly God did not create man as a worm. Nor is he comparable to a worm in his recreated state which stems from his obedience to the gospel. But man the rebel, man the reviler of God, man the spurner of God's overtures of grace and mercy, man the ingrate who on countless occasions accepted God's blessings and then forgot his benefactor, man the defiled, filthy with iniquity, polluted with the spiritual leprosy of sin—that is the man upon whom the good and holy God has lavished his outreaching, embracing and purifying love!

Is it not, then, nothing short of marvelous that God the Good could love man the sinner at all? And is it not even more amazing that he could love man enough to pour out that which was most precious to him, the life blood of his only begotten Son—his dearly beloved—to woo man back to the way of redemptive love?

We love that which we regard as worthy of love. A number of years ago I was preaching in Boston, Massachusetts one Lord's day evening. My theme was the all-embracing love of the Christian. In an effort to drive home the point that the Christian must love everyone, including his enemies, I selected the most extreme case I could think of at the time, declaring that a Christian must even love Hitler!

(Continued on Page 14)

PRECEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

(Continued from Page 13)

After the service a lady said to me: "Brother Stocks, I enjoy your sermon, but there is one thing that I am not going to do. I have no intention of ever loving Hitler!" Well, why not? In the first place, she had no desire to love him. In the second place, like a good many others, she no doubt felt that Hitler was not fit to love! Many think that they are so much better than men like Khrushchev that they just could not condescend to try to love such men.

Do you not see that if God had had such an attitude as that we would not be the beneficiaries of his love? God is so much better than we are that there is no basis of comparison except to say that God is good and we are wrong.

Yet God loves us. And he loved us while we were still sinful, helpless and hopeless: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:6-9).

When we had no strength of our own, when we were ungodly through and through, God sent his Son to die for us, the unworthy and the helpless. God so loved us when we were hardly worth loving—loved us in order that through love he might draw us to him and make us worth loving.

"I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how he could love me, a sinner, condemned,
unclean.

How marvelous! how wonderful! and my song shall
ever be,

How marvelous, how wonderful is my Saviour's love
for me!"

MARVELOUS IN ITS FREENESS

3. The love of God is marvelous in the manner of its bestowal—it is a gift. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us . . ." God gives his love to us. He does not ask us to buy it. "Love gives itself, but is not bought" (Longfellow). God knows that we can never fully merit his love, yet he freely bestows it upon us, asking only that we accept it by believing and obeying his gospel of love.

The story is told of a king who, wishing to express his affection for one of his soldiers, gave him a richly jeweled cup—his own cup. When the soldier stepped forward to receive the gift, realizing that it was the king's personal cup, he protested: "This is too great a gift for me to receive." The king replied: "It is not too great for me to give."

God gave his Son for us—a gift seemingly too great for us to receive, but not too precious for the great God of love to give. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!

MARVELOUS IN ITS IMMEASURABLE PROPORTIONS

4. The love of God is marvelous in its breadth, depth, width and height—it is immeasurable. "Behold, what manner of love . . ." Not only has he given us his love, but he has bestowed the greatest possible love upon us.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not

perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God loved us so much—so greatly, so deeply, so intensely—that his love could be expressed only by bestowing upon us the most precious gift that he could possibly give.

No wonder, then, that Paul said with respect to this amazing love: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). The God who would not refrain from giving up for us the life of his most prized possession, certainly will not withhold any good thing from us. "Love sacrifices all things to bless the thing it loves" (Bulwer-Lytton). God's love is truly immeasurable.

Alty Routier tells the story of three small children who were trying, in their childlike manner, to express their devotion for their mother: "The oldest of the three stretched forth his hands on either side just as far as he could reach, and said, 'Mother, I love you this much.' The second stretched forth his hands as far as he could, and said, 'Mother, I love you this much.' It was then little Bobbie's time to tell how much he loved his mother. Being only three years of age, he looked up into his mother's face with a look of disappointment, and said, 'I love you more than I can reach!'"

God's love for us is so great that it could not be expressed in mere words. It required the gift of his Son to express and prove his incredible love for us!

MARVELOUS IN ITS DESIGN

5. The love of God is marvelous in its purposes. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . ."

Now you think of that. We were rebels. We were unworthy, unclean. And while we were in that condition God was obliged to call us "strangers," "foreigners," and even worse, "sinners."

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

But while we were yet sinners God loved us—loved us so much that he sacrificed his Son so that by his immeasurable love he might woo us back to him.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). God's love had this sublime purpose—to take away the loathsome brand "sinner," and lead us to reconciliation with him so that he could call us sons.

6. The love of God is marvelous in its power to save. "Beloved, now we are the sons of God . . ." Not only are those who have obeyed the gospel called the sons of God, but they are actually his by adoption. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:14, 15).

How powerful is God's love? The love of God made possible the gospel of love, which is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). God's love through the power of the gospel of love convicts of sin, creates faith in our hearts, leads us to repentance, makes us glad to confess our faith in Christ, brings us unhesitatingly to the watery grave of baptism, and raises us from the waters of baptism as new creatures, dedicated and consecrated to a new and living way.

(Continued on Page 15)

PRECEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

(Continued from Page 14)

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4:4-7).

How powerful is God's love? It changes us from rebels against God to patriots in the kingdom of heaven, from "strangers and foreigners" to joint heirs with Christ to all the blessings of divine government.

The love of God removes from the obedient the reproachful designation "sinners," and confers upon them the coveted title, "children of God." Through the new birth it bestows upon us the relation of "children" to the heavenly Father. Through the power of the gospel of love the filthy old man of sin is crucified, the old things of sin are banished into oblivion, the love of sin and of sinning is taken away, and we are recreated, made new, adorned with the clean new man of righteousness.

The love of God delivers us from the power of darkness and translates us into the glorious light of the kingdom of God's dear Son, and, as the adopted sons of God gives us a spiritual home in the church, and bestows upon us the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

MARVELOUS IN ITS DURATION

7. The love of God is marvelous because it is eternal. "Beloved, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

One of the tragedies of human love is that it is so often fickle. It may be heaped upon one today, and transferred to another tomorrow. It may be as warm as the noonday sun now, and overnight freeze into an iceberg of hate. God's love is not only priceless in its quality and incalculable in its quantity, but it is also endless. "Riches take wings, comforts vanish, hope withers away, but love stays with us. Love is God" (Lew Wallace).

God loves, not just for now, but forever. His love is always warm, radiant, steadfast. When your best friends desert you, when the whole world turns its back upon you, God will love you still.

"What if the morning skies be overcast
And what if the clouds be grey,
You can keep God's sunshine in your heart
Through all the livelong day—
For sunshine's within and not without,
And the thought that soars above,
Is filled with radiance pure and bright,
The radiance of perfect love."

MARVELOUS IN ITS TRANSFORMING AND SUSTAINING POWER

8. The love of God is marvelous, not only in its power to save, but in its transforming and sustaining power. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." How powerful is the love of God? Its power is not exhausted in saving men from past sin. It also has the marvelous power to transform weakness into strength, cowardice into courage, egotism into humility, explosiveness into love.

The love of God can enable us to lay aside our prejudices, overcome our weaknesses, solve our problems, surmount the obstacles in our pathway, and live victoriously in the service of God and man. The love of God transforms the Christian, continually renewing his mind, promoting his growth, and perfecting his character, leading him day by day farther along the path to maturity in Christ.

THE LOVE OF GOD AND YOU

Yes, the love of God is the wonder of wonders and the marvel of marvels. It is, in some ways, beyond our comprehension.

But there is one simple fact about the love of God that you need, above all else, to understand. God loves you. If only you can grasp that fact, lay hold on it, make it yours, it will make an eternity of difference so far as you are concerned.

God loves you. "But I am so sinful and unworthy." True, but God still loves you. He does not, of course—and in the very nature of things he cannot—love the sin in your life. But he loves you so much that he gave his Son to die as a sacrifice for your sins. He loves you so much that he allowed his spotless, sinless Son to die the death of a rank criminal in order to take away your sin and bear it on his own manly shoulders.

God loves you. Does that mean anything to you? Does it register in the very depth of your heart? What is your response to the marvelous love of God for you? Has it occurred to you that you have the responsibility of responding to the love of God? As a matter of fact, you cannot avoid making some response to it. You either appreciate it enough to accept it on God's terms, or else you despise it enough to spurn it.

Has it occurred to you that if you refuse the gift of God's love—Jesus Christ—that, so far as you are concerned, the wonderful marvelous love of God is wasted?

"But I want to respond to God's love. How can I do it?" The answer is simple: We respond to God's love by reciprocating it to the best of our ability. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). We respond to God's love by loving him. "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments" (2 John 6).

Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Will you prove your love for him by accepting him as your Savior? Will you come to him in faith and repentance? Will you confess your faith in him? Will you be buried with him in baptism for the remission of your sins?

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

(Additional copies of this sermon may be obtained by writing to: Academy Street Church of Christ, P. O. Box 42, Dickson, Tennessee.)

The Preceptor (November, 1953 thru October, 1955) is bound and ready for shipment. A limited supply (\$7.50 per volume) is available.

The response to our appeal for readers to subscribe for others has been indeed gratifying. Many names were added to our subscription list during January. Some congregations are sending the paper to their members; individuals are sending the subscription price for friends and relatives. This is the way to do the most good.

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THE SOUL — MAN'S GREATEST POSSESSION

DEAN BULLOCK

The soul is the spiritual nature in man. It constitutes that which is immortal about man. The supreme value of the soul is declared by the Christ. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). One's soul is precious; it is worth more than the whole world. All things temporal are not as valuable as the soul; this truth ought to be uppermost in our minds at all times; it is a basic tenet of the religion of our Lord and Master.

An individual may acquire title to tangible property, amass a great fortune, accumulate large quantities and storehouses of earthly goods and then die a spiritual pauper. He may achieve success in secular, commercial and civil affairs and still make a miserable failure in life. Men often attain eminence, distinction and recognition in the world and at the same time appear

"wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" in the sight of God (Rev. 3:17).

We must place the proper value on the soul; it is man's greatest possession; it is his only lasting and durable possession. One's soul will never die, but will continue throughout a never ending eternity either in heaven or hell according to the life lived here.

These truths ought to sober our thinking and affect our living. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). It would be folly to give the whole world in exchange for the soul. To lose the soul is to experience eternal separation from God; this we cannot afford to do. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). This, of course, applies to men unprepared to meet God.



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A New Congregation in Amarillo

The elders of the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, Amarillo, Texas planned the starting of a new congregation in the southwest part of Amarillo. This church was begun February 26, 1956. Luther G. Roberts who had moved to Amarillo from Borger on February 1st was invited to preach for this new congregation. The church is temporarily meeting in the Amarillo Little Theatre located at 2019 Civic Circle, Wolflin Village. Several families from the Pleasant Valley congregation together with several other members form the nucleus for this new work. Plans are underway to purchase property on which to build a church house in the southwest part of the city of Amarillo.

A gospel meeting was conducted from March 11 to 18 with various gospel preachers speaking each evening throughout the week. Any members of the church who may be passing through Amarillo are invited to worship with this congregation meeting in Wolflin Village, Wolflin Avenue and Georgia Streets..

EDITORIAL

(Editor's Note: This article is an excerpt from the sermon delivered by the late Brother G. H. P. Showalter at the Abilene Christian College Lectures in 1939, and appears in the published book of lectures of that year. We commend it to a careful consideration by our readers.)

It was a sad day in the history of the church when the divine order was set aside and men began to organize the church. A great ecclesiasticism was developed exercising authority over the churches, whereas neither Christ nor any of his apostles ever authorized any man to have any author-

ity outside the local congregation. Let it be distinctly noted that there is no earthly organization of the church of Christ outside the local congregation. Outside of this there is, on earth, no legal existence of the church founded by our Lord. There is no earthly president, or head of the church to rule, serve, live and die and be succeeded by some other mortal. Nothing of the sort. The church cannot sue and be sued in the civil courts. It is a spiritual, heavenly institution and is not organized and controlled like governments and institutions of the earth. Every religious institution or organization of earth founded by men with presidents, popes, cardinals, bishops, archbishops and other high ecclesiastical functionaries is an institution different from and apart from the church of Christ and in its final analysis is rebellion against God.

The wisdom of God may be observed in the divine arrangement for his church. The local assemblies or groups with their elders and deacons, constitute a sisterhood of congregations with a common cause and the same divine and holy purpose, but independent so far as their local church government is concerned. Each congregation is a distinct unit responsible directly and only to God and Christ Jesus his Son. The elders and deacons of one congregation have no authority whatever, over the membership of any other congregation. And this while there may be, and it is important that there should be cooperation among the churches of Christ, this cooperation must never be permitted to go beyond the limitations authorized in the inspired writings of the New Testament. There may be, there is, and should be, a concert of action on the part of congregations of disciples of Christ. But there cannot be an institution made up of representatives of a plurality of churches, and officers elected and installed to preside over and serve in such an institution, apart from, and distinct from, the local congregation with any sort of authority from the word of the Lord. Such a body has no counterpart in the work of the inspired apostles of Christ Jesus our Lord. They left no precedent for it, and gave no orders nor instructions for the creation nor for the existence of such an organization. Such an arrangement becomes indeed an existing entity—and what is it? It is not the church. The church consists of all the saved in Christ, redeemed by his blood. But the institution of men mentioned above does not consist of all the saved in Christ. Hence it cannot be the church of Christ. It cannot be a local congregation or church of Christ, for its members and officials are not the same as any local church. It is an institution that was not founded by Christ—is not the church of Christ—is not the same as the church of Christ—is not like the church of Christ. It is an institution founded by men with no authority whatever from Christ our great Leader and Law-giver and the Captain of our salvation.

It is manifestly within the scope of approved precedent and precept from the inspired records of the New Testament that two or more local congregations combine their effort and service in any particular mission work, or any case of charity or need, but they can perform such service or render such relief, each as an independent group, or body only. Some examples under the direction and approbation of the apostles will make this clear to all.

1. In Acts 11:27-30; 12:35 we are given some insight into just how the disciples and the churches proceeded in relief work. The passage reads: (Here the passage is quoted which the reader is requested to turn and read.)

(Continued on Page 14)

We Have Come A Long Way — But Where Are We Headed?

W. R. JONES
Greggton, Texas

I was recently in conversation with another preacher, who, when he had finished a rather wordy description of what he considered church growth said, "Brother, we have come a long way." At which time I remarked, "But where are we headed?"

That the church has grown, none can deny. For this growth I am truly thankful. Time was, when one had to look across the tracks and down by the creek to find the meeting house. Our meeting place could usually be identified by the tall grass and unkept building. I am glad that we became liberal enough with our money that we moved to decent, easy to find locations and built comfortable, convenient and respectable buildings in which to worship God and teach His word. But, like the pendulum of a clock, brethren are prone to swing from one extreme to another. Many brethren have plunged into the task of impressing the world with architectural beauty by building gorgeous temples and imposing cathedrals. Massive and costly towers, which assist neither in worship nor edification, are erected as nothing more than monuments to human pride. Some are obsessed with the idea that the finer the building the more God is praised. We would all do well to remember that God, "dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He worshipped with men's hands, as though He needeth anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:24-25).

In many cases, to these buildings have been added kitchens, gyms and other recreational devices. The name "Fellowship Hall," which has been borrowed from the sectarians, has been given to these additions to the building. To use the word "fellowship" in this manner is to remove it a long way from its New Testament meaning of "partnership." One brother reasons that kitchens, gyms and recreational devices all fall under the scope of fellowship; therefore, he maintains it is as much the mission of the church to provide good "fellowship" for her members as it is to preach the gospel. His tribe is larger than most people think. It is not the mission of the church of Christ to entertain saints or sinners. Her mission is the mission of Christ. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10; Eph. 3:10. Into these "so called" fellowship halls have been brought all manner of affairs. Christmas parties, tacky parties, Hallowe'en parties, Valentine parties, class banquets, college booster banquets, talent shows, magic shows, secular quartets, plays, musicals, a great variety of games, Boy Scout and Women's Club meetings, receptions, showers, breakfasts, luncheons, and dinners are some of the many things for which these halls are used. At this rate we will soon put the Christian church in the shadow. Yes, we have come a long way—but where are we heading?

When I first became acquainted with the church, there was very little system used in our efforts to teach the Bible. Confusion of classes and lack of "age level" literature among many other things were letting ignorance rule supreme in many places. Much of this was overcome with better literature for the classes and the acquainting of our teachers with better methods of teaching. Again, brethren have gone overboard. Not content with a simple division of

students according to their ability to learn, some churches have organized their Bible school to the limit, with a superintendent, a president and secretary in each class. Some of these classes take their own collection and do their own benevolent and missionary work apart from the congregation. Some larger classes have within themselves committees, such as a committee on entertainment or the preparation and serving of food for class parties. In some areas, so much emphasis is placed on schemes, methods, systems and ways, that God's word (that which is to be taught) is left in the background. Too much of the literature for smaller children is given to stories of Bob and Betty, Jim and Mary and not enough to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and other Bible characters that will help us become better acquainted with God's word. Some publishing houses are putting out materials for church consumption which a not-too-well-taught membership is not prepared to handle properly. Such as rally day cards, rally day buttons, booklets on how to hold a business meeting, organize a youth group, special programs for Sunday School, primary worship, junior worship, intermediate expressional services, and devotional talks for women's organizations. "We are no better than we are taught" is an old saying with much truth. I hate to think what we will be in ten years, if an enthusiastic and gullible brotherhood continues to feast on this diet, much of which is prepared by sectarians who care not for the health of the church of our Lord. At the rate we are going, we will soon have little right to criticize sectarian boards for producing books which tell their preachers how to do everything from "sprinkle a baby to dedicate a church building."

In these years of rapid expansion, many congregations have undertaken the sponsorship of various things for which they have no Bible authority. It is not uncommon in this age to find churches supporting colleges and human benevolent institutions. Nor is it uncommon, to find a congregation sponsoring such things as a wedding chorus, school for pre-school children, or a summer camp.

It is not my desire to offer unjust criticism, but to arouse thought in the light of God's word. Let's not draw back into a shell of inactivity and let's not continue headlong into the trends of liberalism. Let's let the church be the church. Yes, brethren, we have come a long way . . . but where are we heading? It is later than many of us think!

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Restoration

and
Reaction

The Porter-Woods Debate

(NO. 2)

J. P. LUSBY
Amarillo, Texas

In the Indianapolis debate between brother Woods and brother Porter on whether or not the churches have a scriptural right to build and maintain benevolent organizations through which to do their benevolent works, brother Woods argued the benevolent organization is simply a method. Brother Porter insisted the discussion was not purely and simply a question of methods, but organizations. He repeatedly called brother Woods' attention to the fact that the proposition so read, and insisted he defend the human organizations embraced in his proposition for which there is no scriptural authority. Porter pointed out that no one was denying our obligation, but through what are we to discharge this obligation? Do the scriptures authorize the churches to set up human institutions, "boards and conclaves unknown to the New Testament," as Woods one time phrased it, through which this work is to be done?

PORTER'S CHART

The following chart, used by Porter, was very disconcerting to Woods:

THE CHURCH AND HUMAN ORGANIZATIONS

My Opponent's Position

Churches **can** scripturally do their work of benevolence through human organizations known as Orphan Homes and Homes for the Aged.

Churches **cannot** scripturally do their work of evangelism through human organizations known as Missionary Societies.

1. Both benevolence and evangelism are works of the church.
2. Both institutional homes and missionary societies are human organizations.

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE?

Woods was unable to adequately point out the difference. His feeble reply was the missionary society is a "machine using means" and the benevolent organization is simply a "means" itself; and he accused Porter of using the term organization in one sense on one side of the chart, but in an altogether different sense on the other side. Everyone using discernment could see clearly that it was Woods, not Porter who was shifting on the meaning of the word organization.

WOODS' CHART

Woods with great confidence presented the following chart:

ORGANIZATIONS IN DIFFERENT CATEGORIES

Federal Government.....	Post Office Department
State Government.....	Highway Department
Masonic Lodge.....	Homes for Aged
Catholic Church.....	Orphanages
Church of Christ.....	Orphanages and Homes for Aged



Rival These



Do These

His argument based on this chart was that the Post Office Department does not rival the Federal Government, the Highway Department does not rival the State Government, the Homes for the Aged do not rival the Masonic Lodge, the Orphanages of the Catholic Church do not rival the Catholic Church, and likewise the Orphanages and Homes for the Aged created by the churches of Christ do not rival the churches which created them. He concluded with saying: "That, friends, is the sense in which I am talking about the word organization."

I was stunned and chagrined! It was incredible that such a line of reasoning would be employed by a gospel preacher! He is hard pressed indeed who must shy from the word of God and seek asylum in the Federal Government, the Masonic Lodge, and, of all things, the Catholic Church! in his wild and frantic search for scriptural authority for practices of the churches of Christ!

PORTER'S REPLY

Porter, in a calm and dignified manner, patiently and forcefully pointed out the following:

The organizations on the right side of the chart are organizations within the organizations on the left side of the chart. The principle is an organization within an organization. The Federal Government exercises **legislative authority** in creating the Post Office Department. The State Government exercises **legislative authority** in setting up the Highway Department. Likewise, the Masonic Lodge and the Catholic Church use **legislative power** in bringing into being Orphanages and Homes for the Aged. All this necessitates **legislative power**. Who has legislative authority in the churches of Christ today?

The Catholic Church not only has Orphanages and Homes for retired Priests and Nuns, but also **Missionary Societies**, and even **Foreign Missionary Societies**. To be sure, a door has been opened for Missionary Societies in the churches of Christ.

WOODS' CONFUSION

Guy took the following positions in the debate:

No. 1

The orphan home is not the church, that is the reason it is right. If it were the church, it would be wrong.

(Continued on Page 13)

An Open Letter to Brethren Who Operate Children's Homes

OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

For some time I have thought of writing to you of some matters that seem to me to be of general interest and importance to all of us. Several considerations enter into my thinking in regard to children's homes and the methods of brethren in conducting them.

First, and always of primary consideration to those who strive to serve the Lord, there is the question of whether or not they are scriptural. This would certainly determine in the mind of every Christian whether or not they have a right to exist. None questions the duty of caring for the fatherless. Therefore, the thing done is not disputed. It is whether or not brethren have scriptural right to form benevolent organizations, supported by the churches, to do the work God has assigned to the church.

Second, there is the problem of centralized, brotherhood projects, through which local congregations may do their benevolent work. Is it possible for congregations to perform their duty to God through such organizations. Does not this create something larger than a congregation? And, does it not become the agency through which congregations work and to which they surrender their independent action as congregations?

Third, is there actually any need for such homes? This question may startle some of us. But, it is certainly one that needs to be answered. It does not matter what else may be involved, the problem of need is certainly of great importance. Judge William R. Collinson, in a speech made in Springfield, Missouri, on January 5, 1955, had this to say about it. "There is no excuse any more for orphanages. They involve a waste of time, effort, and money." This man has had many years experience in dealing with juvenile and parental delinquency. It was not that he had lost interest in dependent children. Judge Collinson went on to point out that in Springfield alone there were 400 families okayed for adoption who could not get a child. This is also the case with Christian families. Many have adopted foreign children simply because none was available in this country. Just yesterday a gospel preacher mentioned to a group of us that two families in the congregation where he preached would love to have children but could not find them to adopt. One brief appeal in a gospel paper a few weeks ago for the adoption of five boys, ages two to twelve, in the same family, brought such a response that more than eighty children could have been placed in Christian homes. And, this is the story everywhere one turns. I repeat, ARE SUCH CHILDREN'S HOMES AS ARE OPERATED BY BRETHREN EVEN NECESSARY?

Heretofore I have not written in this vein concerning the problem of children's homes. Believing, as I do, that they are unscriptural arrangements for the care of dependent children, I have chosen to approach it from that point of view. And, if such a need exists, I am equally sure that local congregations, within the framework of the organization that God has created for the function of the church, can and will take care of such need without human, centralized, benevolent societies.

However, in the light of present circumstances, I have been constrained to write in this manner. Therefore, let me make an appeal to your hearts, in love of the truth, in love of unity of the body of Christ, in love of boys and girls who need our help.

BRETHREN, WHY NOT ALLOW THE CHILDREN WHO COME UNDER YOUR SUPERVISION TO BE ADOPTED INTO CHRISTIAN HOMES. They need real fathers and mothers, just like your children and mine. They need the affection and attention that only real fathers and mothers can give. Do you not believe this? Or, is it true, as some have reported of you, that you believe you can do a better job than Christian parents in bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Surely this is not the case.

You may answer that you do not have the proper agencies for adoption. But, could you not provide those agencies? Is it impossible? Brethren, think on these things. It is vital to the church and to dependent children. May God help you to see the wisdom of his divine arrangement.

If all would agree to this I am sure our problem would eliminate itself. Those who long for children to love and provide for prayerfully await your reply.

February 8th, 1956

To The Faithful In Christ—Greetings:

We wish to take this means of notifying you that the differences that have existed between the Culver-Palms Church of Christ and the West Culver City Church of Christ have been removed and the two congregations are now in full fellowship.

The two congregations are at peace and harmony and are now working together in the cause of the Lord.

It is our prayer that the work of the Lord may grow and prosper and that many souls may be saved as we endeavor to spread the borders of the Kingdom of God.

In Christian Love and Faith.

Culver-Palms Church of Christ.

H. B. Thompson, Elder

Fred H. Fisher, Elder

Ira B. Sandusky, Minister

West Culver City Church of Christ.

H. W. Heinlein, Member

Hershel Melear, Member

Carl Melear, Member

Bob Melear, Minister

Glen W. Adair, Member

Donald E. Evans, Member

M. D. Mason, Member

SEND A FRIEND
THE PRECEPTOR
And Help Teach Him
THE TRUTH

Studies in the New Testament

(NO. 8)

JAMES 2:14-26

GEORGE P. ESTES

The epistle of James is addressed to Christians. For that reason the last half of the second chapter of James might be entitled: "The Perils or Dangers Confronting the Church." There is always the danger and possibility of a congregation becoming lukewarm, cold or dead in inactivity. A church may become so set in its habits and procedure that worship or other activities are meaningless and thus it becomes formal. A church member may be what he is simply because his parents were members of the Lord's church, yet Christianity has but little meaning to him. When one defines or describes the work of the New Testament Church, he must include the accent James gives to it: "Faith apart from works is dead" (Jas. 2:26).

The one true church demands absolute and total fidelity to the word of God. The New Testament is its constitution. It insists on having a command, an approved example or necessary inference for its every activity. It will not add nor take from the word of God; neither will it set up beside the New Testament a creed book (man-made). It will let nothing stand in the way of the Word. The word of God is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12); it is God's will. Therefore, it lays hold on those truly converted because they receive it with meekness. They obey its commands and allow it to influence their lives. The true church is the church that does God's will.

Christians are Christians by God's giving (John 3:16; Eph. 5:25). But after obeying the gospel all depends upon what one does in relationship to God's word. From this point on, one may have, yet not have and thus bring upon himself the judgment of God and that which he has, will be taken from him. The Jews "were intrusted with the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:2). The Old Testament is God's revelation and God committed it to them; but they had it without seeing therein Jesus as the One who fulfilled the promises and prophecies of the Messiah, which was God's testimony to His Son. Paul says concerning them: "For until this very day at the reading of the Old Testament the same veil remaineth, it not being revealed to them that it is not done away in Christ. But unto this day, whensoever Moses is read, a veil lieth upon their heart" (2 Cor. 3:14-15). God turned to a people who would accept His Son and believe the Scriptures. The disciples of Jesus had the Old Testament scriptures but they had it in quite a different sense than the unbelieving Jews, for to them it was the word of God to be believed. Philip said: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph" (John 1:45). They followed Him. After the resurrection Luke records this fact: "Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:45; cp. vs. 44): "All things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms concerning Me."

The Jews heard Jesus saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). Many of the Pharisees evidently knew Jesus' words as well as did His disciples during the early part of His ministry; for they carefully listened to Him. But they who felt themselves whole refused the Physician; the self-righteous refused the Friend of sinners;

th worldly-wise refused wisdom. And so wisdom was hidden from the wise and revealed to the simple. Jesus teaching took the form of parables, "Therefore speak I unto them in parables; because seeing they see not, neither do they understand" (Matt. 13:13). The disciples had Jesus teaching and to them was given, but upon their contemporaries this very parable of the Sower passed judgment and condemned. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Matt. 13:12).

These lessons are for our admonition and learning. It is possible to have the word of truth and yet not have it. It is given only to those who have faith; and faith, as James defines it, lives and acts. Where faith does not obey, it dies, and the Word of God is lost. James says, "Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls" (1:21). This doctrine is true whether applied to the sinner who must obey the gospel or to the church member who must live the Christian life. To worship God on the Lord's day but live with mammon the remainder of the week, is to have the Word, yet not have it; the same is true concerning those who on the basis of excuses are absent from the assembly when Christians come together to worship; to study the Bible or preach the gospel to the lost.

The true church insists on purity of doctrine and does, "earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). It holds the pattern of sound words and speaks as the oracles of God (2 Tim. 1:13; 1 Pet. 4:11). All perversions, distortions and abridgements of the word of God will endanger the souls of the members of the church. In Galatians and Colossians and other epistles the apostle Paul not only sets forth the true doctrine but refutes false doctrine. Some of the churches in Asia Minor had accepted false doctrine and digressed. They were no longer pleasing to the Lord (Rev. 2-3). The epistle of James is in full agreement with the writings of Paul and Peter; the doctrine must be pure, it must be "the word of truth" (Jas. 1:18); "The perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25).

In this section James explains the true nature of faith: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, de-luding your own selves" (Jas. 1:22); "Faith apart from works is dead" (2:26). A life of faith means a life of works; works which glorify God. In James there is emphasis on the connection between faith and works; this is the true nature of faith. This too, is in perfect agreement with Gal. 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."

James is really teaching the possibility of apostasy. The passages of Scripture describing the judgment tell us how important works or deeds are. At that time when all, the great and the small, stand before the throne, they will be judged "according to their works" (Rev. 20:12, 13); (cp. 2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25). The Scriptures teach that what one does here, the manner in which he received and obeyed God's word will determine where he will spend eternity. Those who have labored in the vineyard will receive their reward (Matt. 20:1-16).

It is God's will that those who obey the gospel fulfill their mission as a Christian by doing good works: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,

(Continued on Page 11)

PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

False Teaching

J. P. LUSBY
Amarillo, Texas

False teaching had its origin on earth in the garden of Eden. The devil through the serpent contradicted God's edict. False teaching was prevalent in Old Testament times and raised its ugly head during the apostolic days. Therefore, it is no amazing thing that we should have false teachers today. Nay, rather, it is to be expected.

Paul said of some in his day: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

FALSE TEACHERS IN ISRAEL

"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof." Jer. 5:30, 31. Alarming condition!

It is bad when preachers preach false doctrine. It is worse when a collusion is formed between preachers and those who bear rule to practice deceit and fraud upon the people. It is worst when in addition to this the "people love to have it so." But this was the "wonderful and horrible" condition prevailing in Israel. False doctrine had a "fetching appeal" then, and it does now. Preach the truth and people become offended; teach false doctrine and they "love to have it so."

We are warned repeatedly both in the Old Testament and New Testament against false teachers. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12. "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed." "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." "Thus said the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord." Jer. 23:25, 21, 16. The Son of God warns: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves"—greedily devouring and destructive like wolves. Matt. 7:15. "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you (or lead you astray). For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" Matt. 24:4, 5. Notwithstanding these and hundreds of other dreadful, fearful, and even tearful warnings there continue to arise false teachers and multitudes of people to rejoice with them in their error.

Error cannot set man free from sin and death; the truth alone, unmixed with human speculation, can do that. Jesus declared: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Jno. 8:32, 36. Jesus makes men free through the truth—i.e., through their obedience to the truth. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth . . ." 1 Pet. 1:22. No wonder then Solomon admonished: "Buy the truth, and sell it not . . ." Prov. 23:23. But what is truth? "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth," prayed Jesus. Jno. 17:17. Is it not therefore the height of folly for one to become offended at another simply because he tells him the truth and exposes the fallacy of man's way? Yet there is that weakness in the human family.

Paul, in exposing false teaching in the church at Galatia, recognizes this human infirmity, and raises the question: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" 4:16. The Galatians were being misled by Judaizing teachers who "would pervert the gospel of Christ," Gal. 1:6, 7, and thus hinder their obedience to the truth, chapter 3:1; 5:6. To pervert the gospel is to distort it, garble it, misapply it. There are numbers yet who will pervert—distort, garble, misapply—the gospel. Seemingly, there are thousands who "love to have it so." The more irrational, mystical, inexplicable and non-understandable a doctrine is the more prone some people are to receive it. Let a sectarian preacher preach on the new birth telling people that it is a mysterious something like "the wind (which) bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth"—one just knows it happens, but he doesn't know anything about how or why, he doesn't understand it, he can't explain it—it is intangible, mystical—and the only way he knows he has "got it" is by the way he "feels" which he can neither explain nor describe! and hundreds, if not thousands, will bow in abject submission to the fleshly wisdom of this apostle error. But let a gospel preacher point out to them that Christ said: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," Jno. 3:5; that three thousand on the day of Pentecost did enter the kingdom, consequently, they must have been born "of water and of the Spirit," Acts 2; and let him call attention to the fact that the only thing they did was to obey the voice of the Spirit when through Peter it said: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," Acts 2:38; and that therefore that must constitute the new birth—i. e., believing the gospel, repenting of one's sins, and being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, according to the instruction of the Holy Spirit—and they will repudiate the teaching and deprecate the preacher. Truly it is a "wonderful and horrible thing."

THE TERRIBLE PLIGHT OF ISRAEL

In addition to loving the false doctrine spoken by the prophets the people counted the word of the Lord a reproach and delighted not in it. "To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" Jer. 6:10. "Pride, prejudice, and the love of idols and iniquities, so closed their ears, that the word of God could find no entrance: they could not hearken, because they hated God and his service; and their inability aggravated their guilt. . . . They counted his precepts, warnings, and reproofs

(Continued on Page 10)

Man's Supreme Task, and How To Accomplish It

W. L. WHARTON, JR.
Odessa, Texas

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in so doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (I Tim. 4:16).

These words of Paul to Timothy should not be confined to preachers. They have application to all men. They show man's highest work and how to achieve it. I. MAN'S SUPREME WORK. What is the highest work? First: The salvation of self. "Save thyself." What is salvation? Not simply or merely deliverance from some outward hell or introduction into some outward heaven, but it is the restoration to the soul itself of what it has lost through sin—the restoration of lost purity, lost love, lost harmony, lost usefulness. Secondly: The salvation of others. "And them that hear thee." All men, besides preachers, have hearers; and it is the duty of all men to preach, to speak that which will tend to the salvation of men, to raise them from ignorance to knowledge, from selfishness to benevolence, from materialism to spirituality, from Satan to God. II. MAN'S QUALIFICATION FOR THIS WORK. What are the qualifications? First: Self-heedfulness. "Take heed unto thyself." See that self is right, rectify your own mistakes, get the beam out of your own eye, train your own faculties, purify your own heart, discipline your own character. This is the first step. You must be GOOD, in order to DO GOOD. Secondly: Genuine teaching: "Unto the doctrine." The word doctrine here includes the whole matter of teaching; see that the teaching is true—true in its doctrine, true in its aim, true in its spirit. There is no teaching work where there is not a teaching life. He alone knows the doctrine that wills to do the Divine will. Thirdly: Perseverance in goodness. "Continue in them." Continue in the work of self culture and in genuine teaching. Do not let your efforts be capricious, but systematic; not occasional, but persistent. "Be instant, in season and out of season."

A Three-Fold Simile

W. L. WHARTON, JR.
Odessa, Texas

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," John 12:24.

This simple fact in nature to which Christ alludes is well known to all and is practically recognized by the farmer. This fact is that grain, in order to multiply itself, must go down into the earth and die. This fact can well be taken as the symbol of three things: I. AS THE SYMBOL OF THE HISTORY OF JESUS. For his teaching to obtain wide, regal influence over the minds of men, His death seemed necessary; it struck home in thunder His truth to the conscience and understanding. Christ certainly affirms that his death is necessary to the extension of His truth in the world, as the death of the seed to the multiplication of its kind; and it was certainly so. II. AS A SYMBOL OF THE HISTORY OF MORAL TRUTH. A great truth, to multiply and grow, must go deep into the soil of the soul, and there its logical husks and wrappings must die and rot; and then by quiet reflection it shall germinate and grow. III. AS A SYMBOL OF THE HISTORY OF A TRUE SOUL. The fact well illustrates the history of a true soul. First: It is simple in its appearance. How plain and unattractive is the grain of corn! How unostentatious is a true soul! It makes itself of no reputation. Secondly: Unbounded in its possibilities. What possibilities a single grain possesses? Harvests slumber in one seed; forests repose in one shell! What potentialities lie within one human soul; Thirdly: Developed by self-abnegation. Unless the soul dies to self, loses all its egotism, become self-oblivious, it will never rise into freedom, power and perfection.

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Hypocrisy

GEORGE T. JONES

Kilgore, Texas

Jesus warned His disciples: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Lk. 12:1). The word "hypocrite" originally meant a stage player or an actor. It signified one who played the role of another. It is used in the New Testament to describe a character who is not real. Such a person is not himself. Neither does he seem to be what he is, nor is he what he seems to be. This sin called forth our Lord's most severe denunciations. Never is it recorded that Jesus spoke with more severity than when He condemned hypocrisy.

There can be no doubt of the Lord's estimation of this sin. But our tendency is to wink at it! It may be that some of the most respected people in the church are hypocrites. Their respected position does not immunize them from the hatred of God against this sin. It needs to be cried out against. We preachers must use the words of Christ in rebuking this sin. It is capable of robbing the church of its glory and power.

Christ has given a thorough account of the manifestations of this sin. Let us turn to His words. First, He said men who say and do not are hypocrites. In warning the disciples against the scribes and Pharisees, He said: "All things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not" (Matt. 23:3). The inconsistency between the teaching and practice of these scribes and Pharisees was glaring. They taught the law of Moses with great vigor. Jesus commanded His disciples to observe the law as taught by them. But their practice was far removed from what they taught. Paul brought the charge of inconsistency between teaching and practice against the Jews as a people in the Roman letter. "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? thou who gloriest in the law, through thy transgression of the law dishonorest thou God?" (Rom. 2:21-23).

There is flagrant incompatibility between the profession and practice of the hypocrite. By his talk, he professes strongly but he walks differently. This is obviously because talk is easy but walk is hard. There are many instances of "talk" not harmonizing with "walk." These are more numerous than the often-alleged case of the church member who attends worship to sing and pray but is dishonest or corrupt through the week. True, this is a case of pretense but only one case. Some brethren become vociferous champions of certain work by their talk but their walk does not harmonize therewith. This writer remembers an expression in use among boys with whom he grew up. Though a crude manner of expression, it is to the point in this matter. When one youngster in the group would become boastful, he was told to "Put your money where your mouth is." This is a good admonition for those whose profession and practice do not harmonize. We are taught in the New Testament to have the two in tune. Paul wrote the Ephesian saints "To walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called" (Eph. 4:1). To the Philippians he also wrote: "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27).

Jesus also charged these same pretenders with doing their works to be seen of men. "But all their works they do to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5). (1) "For they make broad their phylacteries." The word "phylacteries" literally means "preservatives." They were either strips of parchment or small cubes covered with leather, on which were written certain sections of the law. These were worn either fastened to the forehead or fastened inside the left arm. The size of these was set by the rule of the rabbis. But those who wanted to display their piety increased the size in order to make a greater show. By enlarging their phylacteries, these were saying, "Take notice of my great reverence for the law." (2) "And enlarge the borders of their garments." These were fringes or tassels fastened to the corners of the garments in accordance with Num. 15. They were an intended reminder to the wearer of the commandments of God. Thus, to enlarge them was but another way of advertising one's claim to godliness. (3) These people would sound a trumpet when doing alms (Matt. 6:2). This was to be sure that the good deed would not go unnoticed by men. (4) The hypocrites loved to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets to be seen of men (Matt. 6:5). Jesus brands all of these actions hypocrisy and declares those thus acting have no reward with the Father in heaven (Matt. 6:1).

That there are those who currently do good to have men's approval cannot be denied. Humanity has not changed. It is evident to be well thought of by men is the elixir of life to many people. One way chosen to gain this coveted goal is to advertise oneself through good deeds. Jesus brands the action of performing even charitable deeds as rank hypocrisy, when the object is to be seen of men. Because this kind of pretender has such fear of what men think, he will be caused to call that which is evil "good"; or, that which is good "evil." One may then be hypocritical in what he approves or disapproves. This is so when his approval or disapproval is because of the fear of man.

It is just barely possible that much of the service rendered may be prompted by this motive. Is one ever prompted to attend worship by what some person or persons will think? Is his going influenced by a desire to meet some person's approval other than God's? If so, his action is plainly hypocritical. In giving of our means, are we constrained by what others might expect of us? If so, what we do in this behalf is plainly prompted by a desire to gain men's favor. It would be very practical if each of us searchingly asked himself what motivates us in religion. If this probing should reveal that we are moved by a desire to "have glory of men," then our service has received its full reward when it is seen of men. God has no reward for this kind of service.

Third, the Savior said hypocrisy manifests itself in a love of prominence and distinction. "And love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the market places, and to be called of men, Rabbi" (Matt. 23:6, 7). These loved the chief places at feasts. Their custom in eating was not to sit, but recline on cushions on three sides of the table in horseshoe fashion. The place of honor was the upper end of the right side, the president of the feast being placed in this position instead of in the center. There was a great deal of squabbling for these honor places near the president. They also coveted the chief seats in the synagogue. The synagogue was built with an entrance generally in the south. A pulpit or reading desk was in the center. At the south end, and facing north,

(Continued on Page 11)

The Inflexible Word

MORGAN TAYLOR
Venice, Calif.

"The narrow way the Bible tells about is broad enough for any man not given to wobbling." If the religious world could grasp the truth of the preceding statement and would go to the Bible to find the narrow way, we could soon do away with most of the religious confusion, but most men want to go to heaven "their way" instead of "the narrow way." They thank God for the many churches that make it possible for a man to join the church of his choice instead of being thankful for the call into one body. (Col. 3:15). They profess to believe that God's word is truth and that one's life should be based upon it, but they make it flexible enough (they think) to include all religious practices called Christian by the world. No one would accept rubber yardsticks and divers weights in the general store, but the great majority of people called protestant say that the Bible is the standard in religion and then stretch it to cover any belief of any man if he is only honest and sincere. But let us examine the flexibility of God's word.

"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put MY WORDS in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them ALL that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that WHOSOEVER will not hearken unto MY WORDS which he shall speak in MY NAME, I WILL REQUIRE IT OF HIM" (Deut. 18:18-19). Christ is the Prophet of whom Moses did speak (Acts 3:22), and he gave us GOD'S WORDS (John 17:8), therefore, the words he spoke in the name of the Father are required or essential whatever those words may be. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations BAPTIZING them IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, . . ." (Matt. 28:18-19). Since all that has been spoken by Jesus Christ is required of us, and he said that disciples are TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, who can say that baptism is not required or is non-essential?

"But the prophet, which shall presume to speak A WORD in MY NAME, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die" (Deut. 18:20). All prophets die physically regardless of what they may teach, so the death must be a spiritual death, and the same penalty rests upon the one who speaks an unauthorized word as is upon the prophet of an idol god. Therefore, it is a serious thing to speak in the name of God where the Bible is silent.

Everything I do in word or deed must be done in the NAME of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17), and I, without fear, can exhort men to be Christians because I find that Peter said we are to glorify God in the name Christian (1 Pet. 4:16, R.V.), and Paul almost persuaded Agrippa to be a Christian (Acts 26:28), and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch (Acts 11:26). But how can a Methodist preacher, without fear, preach that everything must be done in the name of the Lord Jesus and then exhort a man to be a Methodist?

Let whosoever that values his soul realize that the WORDS spoken by Jesus IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER are required and essential, and that to go beyond and speak A WORD (one word) without commandment is to bring one's self under the condemnation of death, and let all of us go to the Bible and meditate upon the inflexible word of God.

FALSE TEACHING

(Continued from Page 7)

to be a reproach to them: they were affronted at the prophets for describing their characters, exposing the ingratitude and rebellion of their conduct, and showing what punishment they deserved and were exposed to: they could not endure those teachers, who were always reproaching them with their sins; but preferred such as had a better opinion of them, and gave them more encouragement." Scott's Bible.

We shudder at this description, but there are numbers in similar condition with identical disposition today. Appeal to them to obey the gospel and it "is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it." To them it is disgusting, disgraceful, and they are grossly offended; they love not the truth, and therefore rejoice not in the word of the Lord. They will heap unbecoming epithets and hurl fiery darts of criticism and slander against him who preaches it. They rebel and revolt and absolutely refuse to take heed. But these people are not irreligious! They will at the suggestion of a false prophet pray long and loud for salvation, they will sign a card that God wondrously and gloriously saved them, they will relate an experience to prove it, they will testify of God's mysterious workings with their soul, and raise the hand for any reason or no reason—anything that some emotional emissary of Satan may suggest! And they wouldn't trade "this feeling" which they say they have—usually near the center of the left side of the torso just above the belt—for a positive declaration of God's word sealed with the blood of his Son!!

GOD'S CALL TO REPENTANCE

Notwithstanding the sinful rebellion of Israel and her depraved attitude God through the prophets pled with her to repent and return. Israel's reaction was: "There is no hope: no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." Jer. 2:25. God commanded: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." Jer. 6:23. "But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward," verse 24. God warned: "Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good." Jer. 18:11. "And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart," verse 12. Therefore Jehovah declared: "Because my people hath forgotten me . . . to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths . . . I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy: I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity." Jer. 18:15-17. Fearful pronouncement!

ISRAEL'S UNDONE CONDITION

Israel's undone condition is portrayed in these mournful words: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Jer. 8:20. It was not because there was "no balm in Gilead" or "physician there" that they were not saved. But because they had refused the remedy prescribed by the Physician and had hearkened to the voice of false prophets. Let us learn the lesson, heed the warning, reject the false teachers and repudiate their doctrine, "return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon us; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7. Let us now accept the remedy for our sins prescribed by the Great Physician, lest we too one day are made to cry out in agonizing regret: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!"

Is "Literature" Wrong?

DOW WILSON

Several years back we often heard "literature" spoken of in such manner as to give the impression that "literature" is absolutely a sinful thing. Most literature used in classes was from sectarian writers and it is easy to understand why it was so concluded by many brethren. When we consider some of our own literature, we are somewhat bewildered, disappointed and confused.

A few nights ago I was talking to one of the elders of the church by telephone as to the merits of some of the literature we are using. My wife heard me tell him that I liked the GOSPEL TREASURE series about as well as any. I remembered that some error was eliminated when it was first published, but said that we might expect some error in any of it. My wife called my hand. She had just taught a lesson from Year 1, Book 2, Junior Students and was shocked to read from a member of the church the following paragraph:

The Hebrews believed that God had appeared to Jacob in the form of a real man and wrestled with him. This could be true. It might also be true that this is the kind of wrestling that goes on inside of us when we have done wrong and something seems to say, "Shame on you! Why won't you be sorry for your wrong-doing and try to do better?" We know that Jacob had sent Esau a fine present, but he was afraid and sent the gift to try to make Esau forget his anger. This night of wrestling perhaps showed Jacob that he needed to make a few changes himself. Perhaps that is what his new name means. He did decide to be a different kind of man.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

1. If the implications were true (that Jacob wrestled with his conscience, instead of a personage) the passage would be so vague as to leave the student wondering just what really did happen.

2. It is a thrust at the inspiration of the Bible. "The Hebrews believed . . ." What difference does it make what the Hebrews believed? Did God write the Bible to tell us about the myths prevalent among the Hebrews, or for our instruction?

3. The whole paragraph is calculated to teach that what really happened was that Jacob wrestled with his conscience, and not a real angel as plainly stated. Question: Did Jacob wrestle with his conscience in such a manner as to get a lame leg?

We sometimes wonder whether the writers of our "literature" really do believe and write such things, or whether they just copied some storybook written by sectarian writers. Yes, "man made literature" can mislead us. We cannot be too careful with that which is published by our brethren.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 6)

which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). God's people who have been bought with a price and who are God's own possession must be, "zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:11). Since God has ordained the Christian life to be thus and with the reckoning to be done at the judgment, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3:11). Those who do not have works are placed in the class as demons. (Jas. 2:19).

HYPOCRISY

(Continued From Page 9)

was a movable ark. Right before the ark, and facing the people, were the seats of honor. These were the seats for which the Pharisees were contending. Their thoughts were more on gaining these seats where they could sit, exalted in the eyes of the people, than on the worship in which they were supposed to engage. It also did them good to receive respectful salutations or greetings in public. This was a further mark of distinction, and how they loved to be called "Rabbi"! This was a term applied by students to their teacher. Hence, it came to mean scholarship and dignity. This was a religious title. The sum of all these cravings mentioned by Christ in these two verses is honor, prominence and distinction. He classified it as hypocritical in this chapter. Hence, the same attitude is Pharisaical and hypocritical whenever and wherever it exists.

It is a fact that the same hypocritical love of honor prevails now. It is seen in the preeminence aspired to by churches and individuals. When a congregation aspires to be known as having the largest Bible school among churches of Christ, what is it but the same craving of distinction Christ condemned? And, what is it but more of the same when a sister congregation says, "We'll outdo you and have a bigger one than you"? When a congregation seeks to elevate and distinguish itself in any respect above her sister congregations, one would indeed be blind who could not identify such an attitude with that Jesus condemned in the Pharisees. When individual brethren have the fever to be recognized as specialists and long to be acclaimed by the brotherhood for their accomplishments, they are not a step behind these who received the Lord's denunciation. In wearing religious titles as "Reverend," "Doctor," etc. and in wearing clerical garb, one also displays his cravings for worldly honor which is so hollow and that smacks of the same thing Jesus denounced in the Pharisees. Read verses 8-12 of this chapter and hear Jesus say: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

(To be continued.)

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Some Things It Might Be Well To Remember

R. A. McMEANS
Amarillo, Texas

Our well-being here and hereafter is contingent on forming our lives, shaping our characters, and sealing our destinies in keeping with the will of God. His will is revealed in the Bible. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

No one has the "right" to live contrary to God's will. God allows man the "privilege," but not the "right," to do as he pleases. He allows him the "privilege," but reserves the "right" to see that his eternal destiny is in accordance with the way he has lived in this life; eternal life, if he has lived in obedience to God's will; eternal death, if he has not.

There is no room (or cause) for division over what constitutes our obedience to the Lord. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." God's word is not divided against itself; it does not teach things contradictory. We may understand it, or we may misunderstand it, but if we understand it we understand it alike. There is no such thing as two or more people understanding a thing differently; they may all misunderstand it, but they do not understand it differently. You cannot understand a thing to be that which it is not.

Can we see alike? Can we see things differently? Can we understand things alike? Can we understand things differently? You may see a portion of a thing, and someone else see another portion of that thing, but if you both see the same thing, or the same portion of that thing—you see it alike (if you both have equally good eyesight). It is not possible for anyone to see a thing to be that which it is not. You may be mistaken in what you see, but that doesn't change the fact that the particular thing in question is still just what it is. For instance, you might see a cow and think it is a horse, but that doesn't make the cow a horse—it will still be a cow.

Neither is it possible for you to understand a thing to be that which it is not. You might take a lump of sugar from a bowl believing it to be salt—but you did not understand it to be salt—you simply "misunderstood." Regardless of your thinking it to be salt, it still remains "sugar." You cannot understand a thing to be that which it is not.

You either see, or you fail to see—you can be mistaken about what you see. You either understand, or you fail to understand—you misunderstand.

What church?

Christ said: "I will build my church . . ." (Matt. 16:18).

"There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all . . ." Eph. 4:4-6).

"And He is the head of the body, the church . . ." (Col. 1:18).

"And He gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body . . ." (Eph. 1:22-23).

" . . . many members, but one body." (I Cor. 12:20).

" . . . the churches of Christ . . ." (Rom. 16:16).

1. Matt. 16:18 shows it is Christ's church, for He said: "my church" which denotes possession and is singular number.

2. Eph. 4:4-6 shows "there is one body," not many bodies..

3. 1 Cor. 12:20 shows there is "but one body."

4. Eph. 1:22-23 shows "the church" (singular number—definite article "the") "is His body." Also, Col. 1:18 shows "the body" is "the church."

5. Rom. 16:16 shows a number of congregations were called "churches of Christ."

God's word is complete and furnishes "the man of God . . . completely unto every good work." (2nd Tim. 3:16-17).

We must abide in "the teaching of Christ," and not go "onward" and do things not authorized by His teaching, as 2nd John 9 reads: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son."

We not only have no authority for any organization other than the local congregation to do the work that God requires His church, as such, to do; but, also, we have no authority for any organizational ties between any two or more of such local congregations.

Q. What constitutes a religious denomination?

A. Any religious group or body of people that teaches and/or practices things peculiar to itself not authorized by the word of God, either by direct command, or example, or by necessary inference, constitutes what is known as and is commonly called a religious denomination.

1. The church of Christ is not such an institution; therefore, not a religious denomination.

2. Whenever, or wherever, a church of Christ does become such an institution it also automatically becomes a religious denomination and ceases to be "the church" as referred to in Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16, and other passages in the New Testament.

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PORTER-WOODS DEBATE

(Continued from Page 4)

No. 2

By organization we mean simply a way or means, not something separate and apart from the church—that would be wrong.

In position number one Guy takes the benevolent organization out of the church. In position number two he puts it back in. In position one it had to be out to make it right; but in position two it had to be in to keep it from being wrong! But whether it is out or in "the orphan home is not doing the work of the church, but of the home," so averred our esteemed, but confused brother.

A RIDDLE

It is not the church. Neither is it something separate and apart from the church. Nor is it doing the work of the church. What is it?

It would appear that some brethren think the church is God's missionary society, but not God's benevolent organization.

PORTER'S CHART

LAW AND EXPEDIENCY				
Commands	Inclusions	Perversions	Incidentals	Additions
Build Ark Gen. 6:14-16.	Gopher Wood Three Stories	Cottonwood Ten Stories	Tools, Size Transportation	Another Building
Teach Matt. 28:19.	Whole Counsel Truth	Human Tradition, Doctrines of Men	Blackboard, Radio, Chart, Press	Christian Missionary Society
Baptize Matt. 28:19.	Water, Believer, Burial	Wine, Infants, Sprinkling	Ocean, River, Pool Baptistry	Christian Baptizing Association
Sing Eph. 5:19.	Spiritual Songs, Melody in Heart	Worldly Songs, Melody on Harp	Books, Tuning Fork, Voice, Parts, Notes	Singing Saints Society
Partake L. S. Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 20:7	1st Day, Bread, Fruit of Vine	Midweek, Beef, Buttermilk	Plates, Cups, Hour, Place Communion	Christian Confederation
Pray Phil. 4:6, Jas. 1:6	To God, In Faith	To Virgin Mary, In Pretense	Length of Prayer, Posture	Christian Praying League
Give 1 Co. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 9:6, 7	As Prospered, Cheerfully	Sparingly, Grudgingly	Collection Plates, Envelopes	Christian Fellowship Federation
Visit Orphans Jas. 1:27	Food, Clothes, Shelter	Oppress, Vex, Neglect	House, Tent, City, Country	Christian Benevolent Corporation

This chart, introduced and used by Porter, is self explanatory. In column one are the things commanded. In column two are items included in the commands. Column three contains illustrations of perversions. Listed under

column four are incidental entries. And things which are manifestly additions to the commands are catalogued under column five.

Porter's affirmative read: IT IS CONTRARY TO THE SCRIPTURES FOR CHURCHES TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN BENEVOLENT ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE CARE OF THE NEEDY, SUCH AS THE BOLES HOME, THE TIPTON HOME AND OTHER ORPHAN HOMES AND HOMES FOR THE AGED THAT ARE AMONG US. The above chart was introduced the first night of this affirmative. I was unable to stay for the following night, which was the closing night, of the discussion. If Guy made any serious attempt to examine and reply to this chart he did so on the final night. About all he said the night it was introduced was: Where is brother Porter on the chart? Porter replied: Supposed Porter is in the Christian Baptizing Association, would you endorse it?" Guy saw fit to observe the passover on this question!

WOODS' CHART

Axiom: The whole of anything is the sum of its parts.

Proof: My Proposition Requires—

1. Obligation to care for orphans and aged.
2. Obligation of churches to support orphans and aged.
3. Churches may cooperate in supporting orphans and aged.
 - a. This we have already done.
 - b. Porter concedes foregoing anyway.

Syllogism:

1. All situations, the component parts of which are scriptural, are scriptural situations.
2. The component parts of the whole work involved in my proposition are scriptural.
3. Therefore, the whole work involved in my proposition is scriptural.

Porter's Alternatives:

1. Deny the major premise.
2. Repudiate public statements.

The argument in the chart above was developed by Tom Warren and Roy Deaver. Guy gave them credit for it, and praised it as one of the best arguments he had seen in twenty-five years preaching and one hundred debates. This seems destined to become the argument by which all organizations and practices unknown to the Bible shall be given scriptural sanction! Brother Harper used it in the Abilene debate in an attempt to justify the Herald of Truth, and now brother Woods exalts it to highest honors as justification for the churches' building and maintaining benevolent organizations. Brother Porter showed that it also may be used, in the following parallelism, to justify the missionary society!

(Continued on Page 15)

EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 2)

"Let us note:

1. There was a famine in Judea and the disciples there were in need of relief.

2. The disciples over at Antioch, in keeping with the benevolent and unselfish spirit of their Master, determined to send relief to their needy brethren in Judea.

3. In this instance the offering—the relief was sent by the church at Antioch and the individual 'disciples, every man according to his ability,' making the offering.

4. The relief was sent by faithful men—Barnabas and Saul. In this instance these men were serving in the capacity of deacons and deacons should always be men of blameless and faithful lives.

5. This relief was delivered to the 'elders' of the church or probably churches in Judea.

6. Note the 'relief' sent was not delivered to a board, or any sort of organization outside the church—and it was given 'to the elders'—the elders of the local church. This should be sufficient so far as divine authority is concerned in the matter of sending relief to any who are in need. The work was done through the local congregation at Antioch without recourse to any other temporary or permanent institution or organization.

But let us consider another passage of Scripture that throws some light on this very interesting question. In First Corinthians 16:1-4 we have from Paul the following: (Here is quoted the above mentioned passage.)

1. From the above we learn that Paul gave this special instruction to the churches of Galatia and that it went forth from him an inspired apostle, as an "order."

2. Later he gave the same "order" to the church at Corinth.

3. "The churches in Galatia"—how many we do not know, but we have reason to infer the number was considerable—were separated many miles from the church at Corinth in Greece.

4. Here we find another instance of the local congregation—rather mention of a plurality of local congregations in their congregational capacity—sending relief to a distant place. No other organization other than the local church was resorted to in making up this bounty, and in the service of its delivery to those in need.

In the Second Epistle of the Corinthians Paul enlarges upon this very matter of relief for the poor saints, and in the 8th and 9th chapters, sets forth in lucid terms the requirements and manner of giving for such cause. Notice the directness and simplicity of his message, instruction and exhortation. (Then, again the passage is given at length, which we omit here, but urge you to turn and read the chapters cited.)

Notice then that,

1. The churches in Galatia, as churches, and under the instruction of Paul the apostle, provided and supplied through freewill offerings relief for those in need.

2. The church at Corinth was instructed of Paul to do the same thing.

3. The churches in Macedonia, as churches—not as an ecclesiasticism, as a combination of churches—did also as the churches of Galatia and Achaia.

This, then should suffice, so far as relief work is concerned, and how it was carried on in apostolic times. There is not found an exception to this method or manner of doing this type of divine work and service.

But just here we may consider with profit the report of Paul to the church at Philippi, for what they were doing to support him in mission work. (Here the author quotes Philippians 4:10-18.)

Paul was a great missionary. He made many sacrifices in order to preach the gospel. Sometimes he worked with his own hands to support himself that he might preach the gospel (See 1 Thess. 1:9, 10; 2 Thess. 3:8, 9). Again churches sent to him things necessary for life. The church at Philippi had had fellowship with Paul. Other churches did the same. The statement, "When I departed from Macedonia no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only" is an indication that other churches on other occasions had extended such fellowship.

Outside of their needs within their own local affairs there are two great responsibilities for the churches of Christ. These are:

1. Relief work, ministering to the necessities of the saints, and doing good to all men, including possibly the care for and the training of orphan children and others in need.

2. The support of men who are preaching the gospel in destitute fields, often referred to—with possible inaccuracy—as "mission work."

Some have supposed in the past and many presume at the present time that the successful execution of such service necessitates, or at least warrants the organization of a society other than and in addition to the local church. But in proceeding to institute such organization it becomes necessary to create offices and elect officials other than and in addition to, those elders and deacons and evangelists of the local congregation of the New Testament. Thus a society is formed with officials performing a service that is not limited to, and does not of necessity belong to, any one congregation—a sort of supervisory body with either assumed or delegated authority over, and administration of, the affairs of the local church. And all this without one particle of authority from the New Testament. To such a body the New Testament gives no jurisdiction whatever over the churches nor any authority to handle the money or direct the missions of the local church. Churches of Christ may act in unison, or by a concert action—directing their services to the same needy field—but each, to act scripturally, must maintain its congregational independence with no supervision of outside overlords.

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PORTER-WOODS DEBATE

(Continued from Page 13)

PORTER'S CHART

A DEADLY PARALLEL TO WOOD'S CHART

Axiom: The whole of anything is the sum of its parts.

Proof For Missionary Society Requires

1. Obligation to preach the gospel.
2. Obligation of churches to support preaching of gospel.
3. Churches may cooperate in supporting preaching of the gospel.
 - a. This has already been done.
 - b. Woods concedes foregoing anyway.

Syllogism:

1. All situations, the component parts of which are scriptural, are scriptural situations.
2. The component parts of the whole work involved in proof for the missionary society are scriptural.
3. The whole work involved in proof for missionary society is scriptural.

Woods' Alternatives:

1. Endorse the missionary society.
2. Repudiate best argument in twenty-five years and one hundred debates.
3. Repudiate the proposition and admit defeat.

Porter called attention to the astonishing fact that Woods had left out completely from his chart the matter under dispute, and that he should add point number four, viz., churches have a scriptural right to build and maintain organizations through which to do it. This simple item, point four, left out by Woods, but essential to the point at difference, would change the whole complexion of Woods' chart and Warren's argument! In fact, it was the only point at issue.

ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE CHURCH

This debate involved a fundamental question: Is the church all-sufficient to do the work God wants done, or must it erect human organizations through which to accomplish God's purpose?

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." Eph. 3:21. "And ye are complete in him . . ." Col. 2:10. Let us praise him, adore him, worship him, and serve him. Let us ascribe greatness, glory, honor, power, and thanksgiving unto his holy name. Let us be loyal unto CHRIST and to HIS CHURCH.

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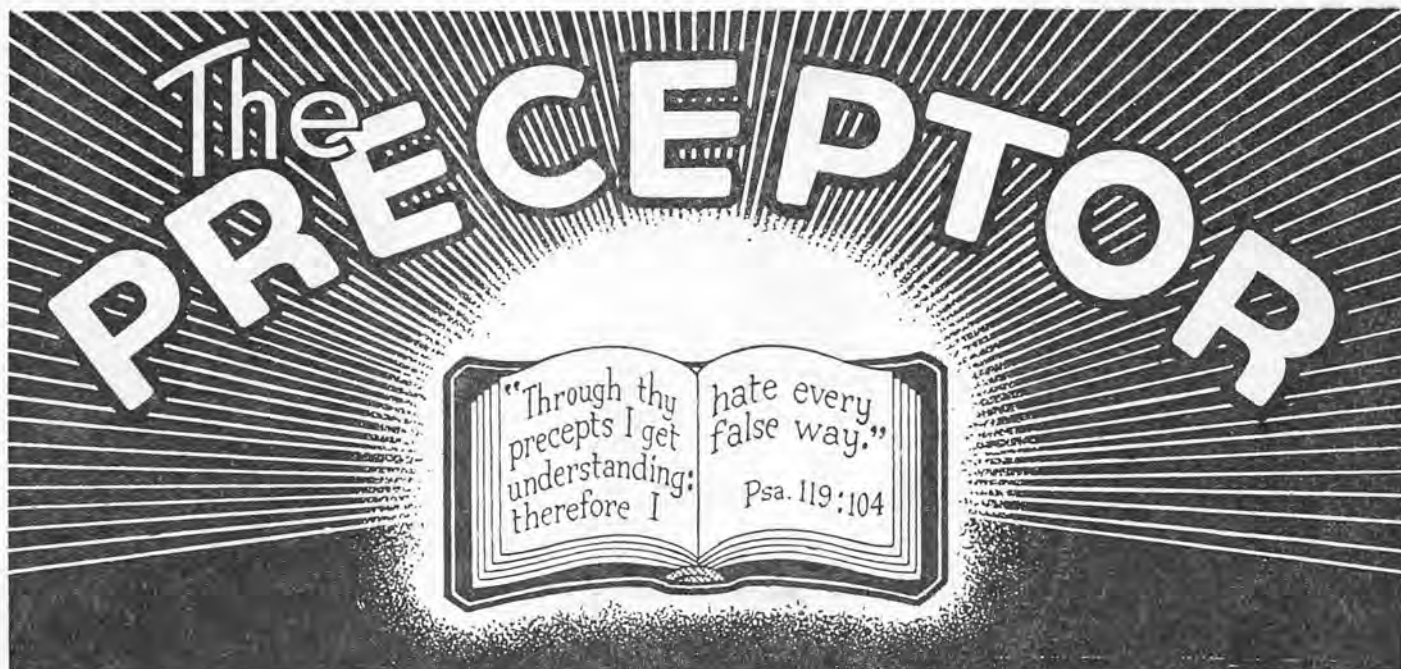
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"AND IF THY BROTHER SIN AGAINST THEE"

DEAN BULLOCK

The Lord knew the infirmities of the human race. He knew that brethren would sin against each other. Hence, in Matthew 18:15-17 He established principles calculated to resolve all **personal** differences between children of God. But members of the body of Christ do not always observe these principles in dealing with those who trespass against them. Even men who claim to be elders, preachers and teachers in the church often ignore the instruction of the Master regarding our subject.

"And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone . . ." (Verse 15). It is interesting to note here that the Lord did not say: (1) tell others that he is a scoundrel; (2) uncover the mistakes of his life and publish them to a gullible people; (3) cease all speaking relationships; (4) quit attending the services of the church; (5) harbor ill-will, malice and hatred; (6) retaliate. "My brethren, these things ought not so to be." This scripture requires that we go to the offender; other passages indicate that this is to be done in meekness and with

love for the erring brother, the church, and the cause of unity and peace (Gal. 6; Eph. 4).

"But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more . . ." (Verse 16). This is the second step in an effort to restore the offender. Witnesses may induce the brother to repent when it has been established in their presence that he is at fault. But if he does not make correction, there is still another step.

"And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church . . ." (Verse 17). This is the last resort. Unless it brings repentance and complete restoration, "let him be unto thee as the Gentile (heathen) and the publican."

Application of these Bible principles will dissolve all personal problems between brethren and settle troubles and difficulties that retard the progress of truth and righteousness. May we be "doers of the word, and not hearers only"! Christ is still the panacea for all spiritual ills.



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EDITORIAL

"A Lying Spirit"

OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

In the days of the divided kingdom, when the wicked Ahab was king in Israel and Jehoshaphat was king in Judah, there occurred a most interesting incident that teaches a very timely lesson. The story is told in I Kings chapter twenty-two. On a visit of Jehoshaphat to Ahab it was proposed by Ahab that by a united effort they could wrest Ramoth-Gilead from the king of Syria. So, Ahab asked Jehoshaphat if he would go with him to battle in Ramoth-Gilead. Jehoshaphat was not unwilling to go, but asked that they first inquire of the Prophets of God as to what the word of the Lord was in regard to such an undertaking. So Ahab gathered the prophets together, about four hundred in number and asked them: "Shall I go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?" And they said: "Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the King." But Jehoshaphat was not satisfied, and said: "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him?" Then Ahab told him about Micaiah the prophet, but he said: "I hate him: for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." So, Micaiah was called, and the question asked of the other prophets, was asked of him. He first said go, speaking in derision. But, when charged to speak only the word of the Lord, he told them this story.

"I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand on his left. And the Lord said, who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came

forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so."

This revelation caused Micaiah to be much abused. He was thrust back into prison and Ahab charged that he be kept there and fed on bread and water of affliction until he returned in peace. Zedekiah, one of the false prophets, smote him in the face, saying, which way went the spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? But Micaiah was unmoved. He told Ahab: "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me." To this prophesy he called all the people to witness. Earlier, as he had been brought before these kings, the messenger had said to him: "Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good." But he had replied: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord sayeth unto me, that will I speak."

The kings did disregard his word, as the Lord knew they would, and, though Ahab disguised himself and went into battle, he was killed that day. He was enticed by the lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets. Many valuable lessons are here set forth for our good.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SPEAKING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

There is a fearful responsibility and is often taken much too lightly. Those who thus speak are sometimes frivolous in speaking and engage themselves in entertaining of those who hear rather than instructing them in the word of the Lord. Micaiah is a fine example of a man who was faithful to the charge of speaking the word of the Lord and that only. Jeremiah warned: "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream: and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Jer. 23:28. Paul, in the same way, charged Timothy: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2.

Why be so careful to be sure the word of the Lord is preached faithfully? First, because it is the word of the Lord. God is worthy of being heard. Second, because the eternal destinies of men are bound up in it. We are not dealing with passing things but with eternal verities. This very word will judge us in the last day. Let us therefore study to know and be careful that we preach only the word of the Lord.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HEARING WHAT IS SPOKEN

Not only must those who speak God's word speak it faithfully, but those who hear have an equal responsibility of hearing faithfully. So, Jesus said: "Take heed what ye hear" Mark 4:24—and, "Take heed how ye hear." Luke 8:18. One who hears must first be sure that his is an "honest and good" heart, then must test that which he hears to be sure it is the word of truth.

FALSE PROPHETS

Unfortunately, there have always been false prophets. And, such will always be the case. God warned Israel against them and told them how they could determine whether or not the prophet was false. Jesus likewise warned his disciples against them. "Beware of false prophets, which come

(Continued on Page 13)

"Lord, Teach Us to Pray" ✓

PAUL WILLIAMS

The Dalles, Oregon

"And it came to pass, as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1.

Jesus' disciples had prayed to God since they were small children, do doubt. They were devout Jews, schooled in the law. Yet in spite of their past experience in praying, one of them came to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." There was a use of prayer by Jesus that this disciple wanted to learn. Something was lacking in his prayers which he could see supplied in his Master's.

Many of us are in the same condition as this disciple of our Lord. We have been praying most of our lives; yet we need to be taught how to pray. Our use of prayer is just as limited as was the use made of it by these disciples. "Lord, teach us to pray."

I. THE ELEMENTS OF PRAYER.

Prayer is a simple thing. Perhaps the effort upon the part of most to make prayer a complicated, difficult accomplishment has prevented us from receiving the maximum benefits from it. There are actually only four elements in acceptable prayer. These elements can be remembered because their first letters spell the word "ACTS."

A. Adoration of God is the first element. A good example of this is found in the prayer prayed by the disciples gathered together after Peter and John had been imprisoned and released. In Acts 4:24-31 we have the record of that prayer, and the major portion is taken up with the adoration and praise of God.

B. Confession of our sins is the second thing which should be included in our prayers. The marvelous prayer of Ezra recorded in Ezra 9 is an example of a prayer of confession. We must confess our sins to God if we are to be forgiven.

C. Thanksgiving for our blessings should be on our lips in almost every prayer. Our requests should be made known to God with thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6).

D. Supplication to God for the blessing we need (Phil. 4:6) is the last of the four elements. How reassuring it is to ask Him for what we need and know He will supply it.

II. WHAT IS NOT REQUIRED.

A. We can thank God that He does not require a fancy prayer, for there are many of us who would not be able to pray acceptably if He required correct English, flowery phrases, and impressive language. But Jesus condemned the fancy prayers of the hypocrites saying that those prayers were prayers only to be heard of men (Matt. 6:5). God does not require elaborate prayers.

B. Neither does He ask for a long prayer. Jesus condemned the vain repetitions of the Gentiles (Matt. 6:7). God requires that we say only those things necessary to convey what we want Him to hear.

III. WHAT IS REQUIRED.

A. Instead of a fancy prayer, God requires sincerity and lack of show (Matt. 6:6). It is what is in our hearts that counts; not what is upon our lips.

B. We must have an attitude of forgiveness if our prayer is to be acceptable to God (Matt. 6:14-15). No man can be forgiven by God if he refuses to forgive his brother.

C. We must have faith that God will hear our prayers (James 1:5-7). If we doubt that God will or can answer our prayers, we shall not receive anything in answer to them.

D. God also requires that we constantly use prayer (I Thess. 5:17; I Tim. 2:8). An occasional prayer is not enough. For our prayers to be effective, we must pray often. God is our Father. Just as we talk with our earthly father, we must talk to our Heavenly Father.

E. A life of obedience is also necessary before God will listen to us (John 9:31). We must live holy lives before Him. God will not listen to those who flaunt His will in any way (Matt. 15:9).

IV. WHEN WE PRAY ACCEPTABLY WE RECEIVE:

A. The peace which passeth understanding (Phil. 4:7). There is nothing so needed in this strife-torn generation as peace of mind. This priceless gift can be yours through prayer.

B. Help in time of temptation (I Cor. 10:13). Though we may be helpless to resist temptation, if we are in constant communication with Him who supplies all our strength, the help which is from above will give us the power to live triumphant. The strength to live a pure life comes not from within us, but from our Father above. We have access to His strength through prayer. How shortsighted are we, then, when we neglect to pray.

C. Wisdom (Jas. 1:5). Have you sometimes wondered why you were not as wise in regard to spiritual things as you would like to be? Perhaps the reason is that you have not prayed for wisdom. If we pray for wisdom, God will give us the opportunity to gain it. How much this world needs spiritual wisdom! Would to God more of us would pray for it.

D. Our physical needs (Matt. 6:33). The Christian who lives faithful and prays without ceasing need never fear concerning his physical wants. We have but to ask Him, and He will supply.

E. Healing (James 5:16). Though the age of miracles is past, God heals our bodies in answer to prayer. How comforting it is to be able to turn to Him in time of pain and sickness.

F. Forgiveness (Matt. 6:12). The Christian who repents of his sins and prays for forgiveness has God's word that He will forgive. How marvelous it is to know that we stand justified in His sight.

G. Help with our prayers (Rom. 8:26-27). Finally, when we have done our very best to pour out our hearts to God, we still feel that what we have prayed has been inadequate. God has provided even for this infirmity. He has given us His Holy Spirit who helps our prayers. We need never fear that God will not understand because we cannot phrase what is in our hearts. The Holy Spirit supplies our deficiencies—our prayers are accompanied by His intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered.

When we understand the blessings of prayer, we are made to say with the disciples of old, "Lord, teach us to pray." May we all learn to pray acceptably and to use prayer without ceasing.



Restoration and Reaction

MEDITATION AT A GRAVE

BILL HUMBLE

Last week, as I stood beside a grave on a beautiful rolling hillside near Bethany, W. Va., it was a moment for serious meditation. The grave was not a new one, for the tall marker at the head of the grave carried the dates: 1788-1866. This grave had already been on that peaceful hillside for sixty years when I was born into the world; yet, I realized that my life had been made richer by the man at whose resting place I stood. Further down the hillside stood the old mansion where he had been married, where he had rocked his fourteen children and where he had died. Outside the mansion was the octagonal study, lighted by small windows at the top to symbolize the owner's desire to be guided only by that light which comes from above; and I realized that within this study had been prepared volumes which I had perused with interest and profit.

For I was standing beside the grave of Alexander Campbell. Nearby was the final resting place of his father, Thomas Campbell, who had coined that familiar plea, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak: where the Bible is silent, we are silent." To others this would have been just another grave, but to one who has been interested in the cause of restoring New Testament Christianity, it was a memorable experience and a moment of meditation.

Each of us must leave his small mark in the world, but Alexander Campbell was one whose mark was larger, more impressive and more enduring. It is not often that truly great men arise, but Campbell was such a man, gifted to guide others. It was within the little octagonal study that Campbell had studied and prayed in preparing to debate Bishop John B. Purcell of the Roman Catholic Church; but many years later Purcell, who was then America's ranking Catholic prelate, paid this tribute to Campbell: "History will place him on the same pedestal with Luther and Calvin and Wesley, the peer of either of them." Remarkable praise for a remarkable man!

Campbell's greatness was many-sided. He was a profound student of the word of God, and he accepted it as the all-sufficient revelation of God's will. As a preacher he could hold audiences spellbound for hours, and he is one of the few men to preach to both houses of our Congress. Campbell was probably the most gifted debater ever to grace the American religious scene; yet, he engaged in only five formal debates.

Campbell knew the Bible, and he understood that denominationalism and division were sinful. Campbell never founded a denomination; he did not establish the church of Christ. Christ's church had been founded in the first century, a perfect pattern of what the church should be in every century; and Campbell was simply one among many who pleaded for a restoration of that first century body of Christ. They planted the seed and the kingdom grew.

But as I stood beside that grave, I mused, "His greatness should not blind us to his mistakes." For Campbell was a man, and men make mistakes. Campbell made his. Earlier in his life, he had challenged all organizations which questioned the sufficiency of the church to do its work; but later he pleaded with his brethren to establish an organization through which the congregations might work in carrying the gospel to others. When the organization was created, Campbell became its first president. The mantle of charity will hardly excuse this mistake; for when he thus abandoned his earlier faith in the sufficiency of Christ's church, he opened the door for the digression and apostasy which engulfed much of the church after his death. And unfortunately, the Christian Church, born of that mistake, has never been able to close the door.

Not far from that hillside grave, there stands Bethany College, the school which Campbell founded. Today, it is probably typical of most Christian Church schools; it is worldly, liberal and modernistic. Christian churches frankly admit that they do not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the miracles of the Bible or the essentiality of baptism. They have abandoned their faith in the New Testament as a perfect blueprint for what the church should be in every century; yet, they profess to be following the same principles which guided the Campbells. As I stood beside that grave, I thought, "How many times Campbell must have 'turned over' in this grave at such a turn of events. Behold, how great an apostasy a little deviation kindleth!"

The lives of great men always serve to inspire and influence others. Campbell set out in search of the ancient order, unaided as are we by others' efforts; and we can be thankful that his influence for a restoration of the Lord's church does not lie buried in yon' hillside grave. But how important it is that we remember the warning of Paul that we follow men, but only as they are followers of Christ!

C. R. Mansfield, 300 Fairview, Pittsburg, Texas:

I have just finished one year with the brethren here. Thirteen have been baptized, thirteen restored to duty, and five saints have come to us from other places. The attendance is now at an all time high and the contributions each Lord's day are at present much over the previous highs. A training class for the men and boys has resulted in a greatly increased number who can do help in the work. A year ago this church was in difficulty and needed someone to help guide it out of same. During the past year no friction of any account has been observed and the saints here should be able to continue to build solidly. We have installed much needed new seating and pulpit furniture and other much needed work has been done on the building.

Studies in the New Testament

GEORGE P. ESTES

The second chapter of James is in full accord and agreement with the context of the whole New Testament from Matthew to Revelation.

The apostle Paul by inspiration writes concerning grace and faith. He links faith and works as closely and in the same way as James. No passage of Scripture stresses the grace of God and the receptive faith of man more strongly than Eph. 2:8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God; Not of works, that no man should glory." Here is the counterpart of James' statement concerning man's redemption in 1:18: "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures." The scriptures are the "word of His grace" (Acts 20:32) for those who would be saved must "receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (Jas. 1:21). Those who receive the word, the gospel and obey it "are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus FOR GOOD WORKS, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10). Paul's language later in the epistle is as stern and as uncompromising as that of James: "For this we know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience." (Eph. 5:5,6).

That obedience is required in the Great Commission (Mk. 16:15, 16; Lk. 24:47; Matt. 28:19) in being justified before God is seen in John the Baptist's words to the Pharisee and Sadducees: "Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance." (Matt. 3:8). John saw that the grave disease lay in the fact that tradition had made religion a matter of habit and custom. They acquired pious convictions, did religious duties and presented a picture of piety while the inward life remained untouched by these. These pious thoughts and acts called forth no obedience, no results. John reckons that these men desire baptism but desire no more than that. Then their repentance would be dissipated in their moods, words and pious acts of their tradition. The contrast shows what God demanded by John for those who would be baptized and the desire of the Pharisees and Sadducees to retain their former attitude and life; that if they were allowed to do this it would be in opposition to God's command to repent and thus annul the purpose of baptism. All are called upon to TURN (that is the Old Testament sense of the word in the prophets and means the same in the New Testament) totally away from their evil and turn to God and totally means mind, will, everything, the whole man, including his works. Baptism is thus set forth as a beginning which had of necessity its effect (forgiveness of sins) and consequence (a new life turned toward God). That baptism, the beginning of this new life would not avail unless the consequence appeared; that the forgiveness received by baptism did not retire them from service but called them to action in the service of God. The same demand for repentance and baptism are found in the Great Commission which superseded John's baptism and took its place.

The wise man is the one who "heareth these words of mine and DOETH them." (Matt. 7:24). The most worldly successful ecclesiastical sectarian activity will not serve as a substitute for doing the will of God. Those who follow creeds, those who preach eloquent sermons, those who cast out demons, those who do signs and wonders will, for all that, be called workers of iniquity. God's will alone is authoritative and it only benefits and blesses those who obey it. Faith without works is dead. "Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto (to) them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21-23).

As in justification, so in sanctification (set aside to serve God), those who have been buried with Him in baptism are to rise with Him and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). One cannot receive the grace of God in vain. Those who are "bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:20) are to glorify God in body and soul. Those who have died with Christ must mortify his members (Col. 3:5). Those who are His must press on toward the goal (Phil. 3:12) which is set before them. Those who have the treasure must still so run that they grasp it (Matt. 13:44). Faith without works is dead.

When John, the apostle of love, speaks of truth, he means the truth (the word of God, John 17:17) that is done, not of one that is merely intellectually grasped. Truth in John has to do with the whole life of a Christian and relates to action, conduct and feeling as well as to word and thought. "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and DO not the truth." (I John 1:6).

Galatians is the epistle that deals with salvation by grace through faith without the works of the law (2:16). But in this epistle Paul gives some of the strongest admonitions to work. It is in this epistle that the phrase "fulfill the law of Christ" occurs (6:2). Also, "faith which worketh by love" (5:6) which has a parallel passage that reads "keeping the commandments of God" (I Cor. 7:19). In both these passages Paul says circumcision is nothing, neither is uncircumcision. In Gal. 5:16 "the new creation" is like "creature" in Jas. 1:18. So "new creation," "faith working by love," and "keeping the commandments of God" are so closely associated in Paul's letters, that they could be used almost interchangeably. Faith and works could hardly be more closely associated.

The necessity of obedience can be observed from a study of a word group. Take the verb "to make ready" and its cognate adjective "ready" or "prepared." They are used again and again for what God has prepared or made ready in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The king who made a marriage for His Son sends forth His servants to call them which are bidden to the wedding. "Behold I have prepared my dinner . . . all things are ready." Matt. 22:4). The marriage figure is used also to refer to the coming of Christ at which time He will gather His own unto Himself. The words are used to refer to heaven. Jesus has gone to prepare a place (John 14:6). God has prepared for them a city (Heb. 11:6). Christians "who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:5).

(Continued on Page 12)

Whom Shall I Fellowship?

FORREST DARRELL MOYER

Napa, California

The current issues in the church on sponsored church cooperation and the support of orphan homes have led many brethren to ask anxiously and fearfully: "Will the church be divided? Will these issues be the means of a wedge of division in the ranks of the body of Jesus Christ?" Sincere brethren have been attempting to solve this problem peaceably by diligent study and open discussion. However, the question of fellowship keeps popping up. Therefore, let us ask, "Whom shall I fellowship? What does the Bible say about fellowship?"

With Unbelievers

First, should we have religious fellowship with every person on earth? No, for God says: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?" (II Cor. 6:14-15).

Therefore, we cannot have fellowship with unbelievers.

With Immoral

Second, can we have fellowship with all who have obeyed the gospel sometime in the past? Let us hear inspiration: "But as it is, I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat . . . put away the wicked man from among yourselves." (I Cor. 5:11-13).

Thus, we cannot have fellowship with any that are immoral in their character even though they have once been our brethren. When exhortations have been given, and the sinner remains unpenitent, let him be disfellowshipped. (II Thes. 3:6).

Church Dividers

Third, are there any others within the church that are not to be fellowshipped? Yes, for Paul says: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them." (Rom. 16:17)

False Teachers

Hear John:

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 9-11).

Therefore, we cannot have fellowship with those who teach false doctrine.

Walking In The Light

Now, whom are we to fellowship? The answer is made plain by the previous scriptures. We are told to have fellowship with those **believers** whose lives are in harmony with God's word and who abide in the teaching

of Jesus Christ. Do you say that this is narrow? Well, it is the Lord's standard. Those sinners named in the passage quoted—unbelievers, immoral, those who cause division contrary to the truth, and false teachers—cannot go to heaven unless they repent. Nor can we have fellowship with them. Whom should we fellowship?

"If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." (I John 1:7).

The answer is obvious. We must have fellowship with those, our brethren, who walk in the light. When they sin, we must urge them to repent and be restored to God's fellowship.

What, then, should our attitude be toward those who are divided in sentiment and teaching on the issues facing the church?

First, there must be much study and teaching to ascertain truth. When we have learned truth, then we should be diligent and patient in teaching it to others. Only when one refuses truth, shuts the door of learning and study, and proceeds to practice that which is without authority or to bind a law where God has not bound one, can disfellowship exist. And, may I ask, who is splitting the church? Is it the person who asks for chapter and verse? Or is it the one who introduces a practice for which there is no spiritual authority? The answer again is obvious. Those who uphold practices without scriptural precept are guilty of splitting the church.

Second, I should therefore ask:

1. Where is the scripture that authorizes the church to contribute financial support to an institution apart from the church that is seeking to do the work of the church?

2. Where is the scripture that authorizes several congregations to pool their money into the treasury of one church and let it oversee a general brotherhood work? We all realize that churches may send to another church to do a work that is peculiarly its own. But where is the authority for one church's becoming the sponsoring church for a work and having other churches send money to help them do it? That is the question.

Conclusion

The question of fellowship is important. God forbid that I should draw the line of fellowship where God has not drawn it. And may the Lord help me and all others to be willing to study the Bible in reference to these pertinent questions without becoming angry and threatening disfellowship and quarantine. Above all, let us make sure that we are abiding in the doctrine of Christ, and we shall not have to be troubled with the question of fellowship—we shall then have the fellowship of God and of faithful brethren everywhere.

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THE APPROVAL OF CHRIST

There is a wide gulf between the world's standards of approval contrasted with God's standards. The world puts a premium on physical beauty, attainments in the art of acting and the possession of material wealth. Christ puts a premium on the beauty of character, attainments in the art of living, and the possession of those spiritual riches which neither moth nor rust corrupt nor thieves break through and steal.

Every year the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences awards "Oscars" to those for the best picture, the best performance of an actor, the best performance of an actress, the best supporting player, the best screen play, etc.

Recently I saw a telecast of a meeting at which these awards were given. It was a gala occasion. The great and near great of America's most publicized industry were there. It was, so far as people engaged in the motion picture industry are concerned, the night of nights. The greatest distinction that any one in that industry can achieve is to have one of those "Oscars" awarded to him.

So the atmosphere was tense, charged with expectancy and anticipation. Appropriate speeches of presentation were made and those honored expressed their appreciation. Indicative of the value which was placed on the awards by those who were present was the fact that several who participated had difficulty in controlling their emotions.

When one contemplates the mission and duty of man as revealed in the Bible, however, he is made to reflect on how fickle is the fame bestowed by the world and how perishable are the honors accorded to man. In a few years, those who live in the limelight today will be forgotten. Others will receive the coveted awards.

And this evident truth brings out clearly the difference between the honors bestowed by men and those conferred by the God of heaven. The world puts a premium on those things that sparkle brilliantly for a little while and then go the way of all flesh. God puts a premium on those indestructible values which will survive time and endure throughout eternity.

The honors of the world give pleasure for the moment. The honors bestowed by God bring everlasting satisfaction and endless joy.

Much of the fame bestowed on people on this earth is based upon sheer flattery. God's word repeatedly warns against the deceitfulness of flattery. David says in respect to his enemies, "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue" (Psalm 5:9; cf Proverbs 20:19; I Thessalonians 2:4, 5).

As you study the life of Jesus, you are impressed with the fact that he was not a back-slapper. He not only reproved men for their sins, but he refused to flatter anyone.

Neither did he hand out compliments promiscuously. He was careful in what he had to say. He encouraged people and inspired them to do better, but rarely do we find him handing another what we would call a compliment.

Perhaps the reason that Jesus was not so generous with his commendations as we are is that he knew what was in man (John 2:24, 25).

By examining the rare compliments that Jesus did extend we can get an idea of that which is enduring and contrast it with that which is transitory in its nature.

GUILELESSNESS

1. Jesus commended the guilelessness of Nathanael. "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (John 1:47). Guile is "the act of deceiving; disposition to deceive; a stratagem." To be guileful is to be full of deceit; to be guileless is to be free from guile, artless, frank.

There was much corruption and deception among the Jews, and Jesus could hardly have paid Nathanael a higher compliment than to say of him that he was "an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." In other words, he was a true Israelite, one who, because of his open-and-above-board honesty, lived up to the high ideals of those who were the people of God, and who were worthy to be called true sons of Jacob.

Jesus is not saying that Nathanael is sinless. He is simply commending him on the ground that he is guileless—he is not self-deceived and he is not trying to deceive others. Those who have the deepest consciousness of their sins are much more likely to be guileless than those who are self-righteous.

Jesus commends guilelessness. Does the world today count it as a virtue? Theoretically it does, but in many quarters the premium is placed, not on honesty, but on dishonesty. The man who can deceive people in order to gain advantage for himself is regarded by the worldly people as not only shrewd, but as worthy of emulation. The false and strange claims that are made by many products are so widely advertised is considered good business.

The man who can cheat on his income tax and "get by with it" is rather admired by many, and moral standards have descended to such a low level that people who are living in adultery are not only accepted by society, but are admired by many people.

We should remember that the Christian life is the life of an open book—that deceit has no place in the life of the followers of the one who commended the guilelessness of Nathanael.

We should not deceive ourselves by believing that we can long deceive others. "Be sure your sins will find you out." We should never deceive ourselves by believing that we can ever deceive God (Galatians 6:7, 8).

FAITH

1. Jesus commended the faith of the Roman centurion. (Matthew 8:5-10). Faith is sometimes found in the most unexpected places. Of all people who might be reasonably expected to have faith, the people of the home town of Jesus are included in that number. But of them it is said, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:58). Mark's account says, "And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:6).

But here is a Roman centurion, a man who had not the spiritual advantages of the Jews, and his faith is so thorough-going that the record says, "When Jesus heard it,

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PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

The Work of the Holy Spirit In Conversion

ERNEST A. FINLEY
Carlsbad, New Mexico

There is much confusion over the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. At the mere mention of the Holy Spirit many people become highly emotional. They feel that the work of the Holy Spirit is better felt than understood. To them the work of the Holy Spirit is a strange, incomprehensible mystery. Though it is highly unlikely that one shall ever understand everything there is to be known about the Holy Spirit, there is no question that there are many things that can be clearly and positively ascertained by an honest investigation of the scriptures.

There is no question that one must be drawn to Christ by the Father. Without bothering to find the proof, many conclude erroneously that this work is accomplished by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But Jesus makes it quite clear that one is drawn to Him by the teaching of the Word. "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me" (Jno. 6:44, 45). How drawn? "taught," "heard," "learned," then "cometh unto me."

God saves men by the preaching of the gospel, "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). Vitally related to one's calling upon the Lord for salvation is the preaching of the gospel, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:13-15). On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ men called on the Lord for salvation. But it was the teaching that caused them to do so. The record says, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts" (Acts 2:37). It does not say "when they felt the irresistible influence of the Spirit." It is true that one must be under the influence of the Holy Spirit to turn to God. But we "resist the Holy Spirit" when we refuse inspired teaching or the teaching of the inspired Word, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51). The Jews, by refusing the teaching which Stephen was endeavoring to give them, were guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit. The influence which the Holy Spirit exerted in conversion then, even as today, was not a direct influence

but an indirect one. The influence was through the Word of God.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was not a command but rather it was received by the apostles in fulfillment of a promise which was made by the Lord to them, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it becometh him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you . . . But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (Jno. 14:16, 17, 26). The purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit was to inspire the apostles that they might make known the will of Christ and confirm the truths which they revealed by miraculous powers and signs. "Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come" (Jno. 16:13). These are the words of our Lord. They show conclusively that the Spirit came to guide the apostles in revealing the Will of our Lord. The author of the book of Hebrews shows that the miracles and signs which were performed by the Lord's servants were evidence that the things which they spoke came from God. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will" (Heb. 2:3, 4). Notice the expression, "was confirmed unto us by them that heard." The baptism of the Holy Spirit never came for the purpose of converting an alien sinner.

The conversion of Cornelius is cited by some in an effort to show that the baptism of the Holy Spirit comes to convert the alien sinner. Whereas we freely acknowledge that Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before baptism as well as all other Gentiles who were in his house, we emphatically deny that the coming of the Holy Spirit is the thing which accomplished his conversion. The assertion that the direct operation of the Holy Spirit effected his salvation is an unfounded assumption. It can not be proved. Rather, there is ample evidence that the coming of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius did not accomplish his salvation. Remember, first of all, that the angel that spoke to Cornelius told him that he would be saved by Peter's words. "Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house" (Acts 11:13, 14). Notice "words, whereby thou shalt be saved." Peter's preaching was to save him. Cornelius was saved by faith when he moved in obedience to the gospel. After Peter had preached the gospel to Cornelius, he later reported to the brethren in Jerusalem, "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe . . . and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith (Acts 15:7, 9). Luke's record of these things indicates that their faith saved them when it moved them to repentance (Acts 11:18) and baptism (Acts 10:48). This was certainly not justification by faith alone.

"Well," one inquires, "if the Holy Spirit did not come to Cornelius to convert him, then why did it come?" Cer-

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Hypocrisy — No. 2

GEORGE T. JONES

In a prior article the warning of Jesus against the sin of hypocrisy was set forth. "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12:1). It was also pointed out that our Lord denounced this sin with the greatest severity. At no time were His words of rebuke sharper than when reproving those guilty of this sin. It was also shown that this sin can exist in "high places" and among respectable persons. The church of our Lord is by no means free of it. The call is imperative for this sin to be exposed and those guilty of it to be properly reprimanded.

Our first article dealt with some of the manifestations of hypocrisy mentioned by the Lord. They were: (1) Those who say and do not; (2) Those who do their works to be seen of men; (3) Those who love honor, prominence and distinction among men. As was shown, Jesus attacked everyone of these and branded each hypocrisy.

This study will be a continuation of the various attributes of hypocrisy mentioned by Christ. He said those who "strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel" are guilty of pretense. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone. Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel!" (Matt. 23:23, 24). Jesus charges that these were long on keeping the minute details of the law but short on some weightier matters. Generally, the law concerning the tithe was enforced only in respect to the products of the field such as corn, wine and oil. However, the Pharisees applied the law of Lev. 27:30 to the smallest pot herbs, even their leaves and stalks. They scrupulously enforced the tithing of these minor plants. While exerting strenuously to enforce payment of tithes of these very minor plants, these were far short in their observance of some matters of deeper significance.

They were neglecting "justice." This evidently has reference to fairness in dealing with one's neighbor. It matters little how pious one may affect to be if he is unfair or unjust in his dealings he is a hypocrite. The same God who gave us ordinances to keep, commands fairness and justice. It shows a marked degree of impiety to disrespect the law of God with respect to fairness and demand firm adherence to other demands. Too, they neglected "mercy." This means forbearance and compassion. Do you regard these as "little things"? Then, you are tinged with the thinking of the hypocrites. The person is obviously insincere who has regard for some of God's commandments and ignores His requirements of mercy and compassion. Faith is the third "weightier" matter Jesus accused them of being slack in. Imagine it! While they were slack in their trust in the Lord and in manifesting trust in their lives, they clamored for their fellowmen to pay tithes of these relatively insignificant herbs. It reminds the writer of a brother who recently called him to seek help in locating certain scriptures teaching the essentiality of baptism. He was trying to convince a friend that he needed to be baptized. But the brother who did the calling has not attended worship at all in six months!

Jesus would not have let us keep one part of the law of God and exclude the other. He said: "These ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone." By His

branding them "hypocrites" for such action, He plainly declares it a token of insincerity to bind one commandment rigidly and take a loose attitude toward another.

Another way hypocrisy shows itself is leniency toward ourselves and severity toward others. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:3-5). The mote of the Lord's illustration represents a small object, while the beam pictures something great. One might say the contrast is similar to the difference between a splinter and a cross-beam.

What is the spiritual application? In the case mentioned by Jesus, the one attempting to remove the mote (small object) from his brother's eye had a beam (large object) in his own eye. The beam represents faults existing in one's spiritual sense, making him unable to see clearly. It clouds his spiritual vision. Thus, the censorious man can see any fault, however slight, in another but cannot see his own great fault which is censoriousness. The beam actually represents a hard, severe attitude toward others.

With a little thought one can see why Jesus branded this as hypocrisy. The man who has the beam in his eye, the censorious attitude, impersonates one free from visual impediment as he goes about his mote-hunting. He acts the part of one who has nothing to becloud his sight. But he does have! He is possessed of a stern attitude, completely blinding in its effect. Hence, he acts something he is not. In this way is he a hypocrite.

It is worthy of note that Jesus had just forbidden unrighteous judgment. One is not capable of rendering righteous judgment (Jno. 7:24) whose spiritual sense is dulled by the presence of a "beam." Here, again, he is acting the role of a judge when not capable of doing so.

It should be observed that Christ did not forbid the removal of motes from our brother's eye. He tells us to get rid of our own spiritual imperception (beam) "And then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The word rendered "see clearly" means to see discriminatingly. It is followed by the infinitive which denotes the purpose of the seeing; i.e., be able to see clearly to cast out the mote. This is surely a promise of the Lord's, as well as a statement. The teaching is not that we are forbidden to remove a mote from a brother's eye, or to judge another. But, we are taught that our spiritual sight being blinded by a censorious attitude toward others renders us incapable of judging righteously or of seeing clearly to help remove the faults of others.

Finally, men become guilty of hypocritical action when they attempt to serve God by the commandments of men. Perhaps this has been little thought of as a form of hypocrisy but our Lord decreed it to be so. Read Matt. 15:1-9. First, let us behold the action of these Pharisees. They came to Jesus and accused the disciples of violating the tradition of the elders in that they washed not their hands before eating. His reply to them was that they (the Pharisees) transgressed the commandments of God, not a human tradition. "For God said, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or

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Food or Poison

DOW WILSON

"YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE" (Jno. 8:32). As food for the body is a necessity for physical growth, so truth for the soul is necessary to spiritual growth. As poison may not kill the human body, so error in a meager measure may not kill the soul. Yet as the body might live in spite of, and not because of poison, so the soul might live in spite of and not because of error.

Never minimize falsehood. It dwarfs the soul and perverts true thinking and reasoning. It has long been the cry of sectarianism and theorists that, "We all have some error." Without doubt, we do have some, but to hold error knowingly is a soul damning mistake. One of the favorite scapegoats of the Pre-millennialist is to cry, "Well, if we are mistaken, that is no consequence for now. We cannot change the future anyway." Of course, when they get caught that is an easy way out, but we wonder why they spend so much time in their speculations if they really feel that way.

The Bible is of God and given to man to satisfy the hungering and thirsting soul. One of the greatest desires of man is to understand something about the origin and destiny of the soul. The Bible gives us the information we need to meet and satisfy these natural desires. God believes that it does matter what we believe about the origin and destiny of man, or why would he have told us something about it? Though we cannot change these things—though we may not find commands we are to obey in the information, we must properly understand what God has revealed for us to know or we will develop a thwarted attitude in our proper relationship to God.

Facts affect attitudes, therefore we must understand the facts of the Gospel in order to come to a proper understanding of man and his relationship to his God. Any false theory concerning man and his relationship to his God is not harmless. A constant straining of the mind to prove a falsehood is destructive to the natural channels of thought. Such makes correct and sincere reasoning concerning truth hard, if not impossible. There is an old rule of logic which tells us this: Never hold to any sentiment or propositions as being more sure than the evidence upon which it rests. It has been further asserted that logical men give their assent to a proposition only as strong as the evidence relative thereto. To hold a speculative theory as though it were truth perverts the natural channels of thought and destroys the ability to reason correctly in any field relative thereto.

True it is that we cannot change the future, yet to believe that it makes no difference what man believes about the future would be to charge God with foolishly imparting idle information. Why did Jesus teach so much about heaven and hell? Why would He have told His disciples about His return? Why did the apostles tell of the second coming of Jesus and the judgment at the end of the world?

There are some things taught in a positive and definite manner and which need little thought to understand. Some of the rudiments of the Gospel are so simple that worldly wise men reject them simply because they are taught in too simple a manner to appeal to their minds. God has always placed a premium upon humility rather than upon scholarship. The worldly wise man relies too much upon himself and his own ability to think things out his own

way. By so doing he develops a conceited and egotistical heart which does not reason on spiritual things.

Then those who are Christians often begin to speculate on the future using vague and indefinite passages and disregarding plain and positive scriptures which contradict their theories. Let us note some things plain and positive regarding the second coming of Jesus which cannot be denied:

"Jesus is coming again" (Acts 1:8). "He will come with the clouds and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). "He will come with his angels and judgment upon all will be executed" (II Thess. 1:7-9). "There will be a general resurrection in preparation for this judgment" (Jho. 5:28). "The earth will then be destroyed" (II Pet. 3:7-12). "No one knows when this will take place save the Father in Heaven" (Matt. 24:36).

In spite of these plain and definite scriptures, false theories which flatly contradict them have been taught to man and the fundamentals of his faith are made to center around idle and false speculations. Plain and positive scriptures which contradict the theories are made to appear "hard to understand" and those who would accept them at face value are pictured as simple minded.

In my few years of preaching the gospel I have often encountered brethren who disagree with the pre-millennialist views who would be willing to fellowship pre-millennialists IN SPITE of their erroneous views, but fellowship is impossible for two reasons: 1. Pre-millennialist brethren often are not honest and upright in statements of their views. They are not consistent in expressing themselves. 2. Pre-millennialist brethren who know the gospel plan of salvation have manifested a closer feeling of spiritual kinship with Pre-millennialist sectarians than they have for brethren who are striving for the "One Lord, One Faith and One Baptism."

It has been clearly manifested that speculative theories have blinded the thinking of brethren who have embraced the pre-millennialist views. They have demonstrated a willingness to fellowship sectarianism (of the pre-millennial sort) and they have not been altogether honest and upright about promoting their views. They have shown an unwillingness to be taught and have taken refuge behind the excuse: "What difference does it make? We cannot change the future anyway."

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Catholics Force Church Off the Air

ROBERT H. BUNTING
Beaufort, South Carolina

In this small South Carolina seacoast town the Roman Catholic Church is in decided minority, but it holds more influence than one might first imagine. This organization holds enough power to have a gospel preacher gagged by a simple call to the local radio station. On Monday, February 20, a series of lessons was started entitled "Some Errors Concerning the Sacrifice of Christ." On Wednesday, February 22, the local priest and several members of the Roman Catholic Church phoned the station and complained about the program, although the name of the Roman Catholic Church was not mentioned over the air. Then on Friday, February 24, calls were again made to the station demanding the preaching be stopped. Consequently on Monday morning I was informed the church could not continue the program in the manner it had been conducted in the past two years. The station admitted the phone calls were the reason we were off the air. It was pointed out to me what I was preaching was causing a "stir" among the denominations and the station wanted no part of it.

On Monday, February 27, I called the local priest to see if he had called and why. He admitted the call and said it was made because of my "intolerance." He agreed I had the right to speak what I believed over the air, but he hoped the station would not give me that right. A suggestion was made that we have a discussion of our religious differences (either public or private), and in the middle of that suggestion he hung up. Immediately I called back to finish our conversation, but the cleaning woman answered and said "Father Anderson" was "too busy" to talk.

The exact reason for the refusal to sell the church more time is uncertain. One of the stock holders (before four witnesses) stated it was the fear of a boycott headed by the Catholics. The denominational churches have fallen in behind the Catholic Church on this matter (even one Jew called to complain about the sermon on transubstantiation!). For this reason the threat of a boycott seemed highly possible. However, the station manager said there was no threat of a boycott, but the church must be kept off the air because it is "stirring up the town." The manager agrees I have not been sarcastic or abusive in any way. It seems the only crime committed is condemning error.

The Lord's church in Beaufort is turning again to the newspaper to reach the multitudes with the gospel of Christ. We pray the newspaper will permit us to lead men from darkness to light, and the town remains "stirred up" to the extent souls continue to obey the gospel and the borders of the Kingdom are extended.

"Christian Union"

C. E. W. DORRIS

Often what is called Christian union, is no union at all, neither does it seem anything like the unity for which Jesus prayed. As an example, we mention sectarian union which sometimes occurs. We have seen a number of denominations in a given city unite for the time being, for the purpose of holding a protracted meeting, to get up a revival in religion.

The leaders would get together and enter into a "gentleman's agreement" that during the meeting they will lay aside all their denominational peculiarities, and preach only on those themes upon which they all agree. With this compromise of all matters of opinion, for the time being, they go to work, and the meeting is called a success, and a great revival, as it is called, is the result. Many are persuaded to become religious. All this is the result of union, such as it is.

But now a graver question arises. What is to be done with the converts? The union is not permanent, and will be dissolved at the close of the meeting into its former elements of sectarianism. Each convert must now choose as to which of the parties he will join, and become a sectarian. So far, then, from doing any permanent good towards Christian union, such a compromise has only had the effect to popularize sectarianism. Now, if such a union for a few days will produce such results, what might we not expect if all parties would unconditionally surrender their sectarian peculiarities, and unite permanently on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone?

Upon what foundation or platform can such unity be consummated? We answer, "Upon the Bible and the Bible alone." On this divine platform all can unite in a permanent union, and that without doing any violence to the faith, and thus have that unity for which our Lord prayed.

Central Church of Christ

CHARLES E. COBB
Nashville, Tennessee

Central Church is abundantly blessed in having a splendid group of Christian men as its elders. We suggest that all of these men are worthy and deserving of more praise than they receive. They are ALL intensely interested in the growth and in the progress of this congregation. Among the elders, however, as the eldest, we have Brother C. E. W. Dorris.

Brother Dorris is still very active and spends considerable time writing for Gospel papers, visiting the sick and the unfortunate, and preaching on various occasions. His mind is wonderfully active and his counsel is respected by young and old alike. The occasion of this mention of Brother Dorris is that just last Wednesday he celebrated his eighty-third birthday.

Brother Dorris, along with Brother Ward and Brother Burnette and others, served the church for the past many years in a commendable God fearing manner. Due to age and infirmity, both Brother Ward and Brother Burnette are unable to attend the services of the church, thus have relinquished their active participation. Brother Dorris has been blessed abundantly, and so continues to labor in the office of a bishop in this congregation.

We wish for Brother Dorris the very best of all of the good things that the Lord bestows upon us, in the years to come. We trust that he shall long be active and that he, along with our other fine overseers, may continue his good work for the growth, the progress, the prosperity, and the fidelity of the Central Church of Christ.

Note: Brother Dorris has asked that his appreciation be extended to all who remembered him with cards, telephone calls, good wishes, etc., on his birthday. April 7, he passed his 83rd anniversary. He has been preaching for one congregation 61 years and still running in high.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Continued from Page 8)

tainly, this is a legitimate question. We gladly supply the answer. Luke tells us that the coming of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and those in his house was God's way of saying that He desired that the Gentiles be received into the kingdom, the church. Though the church had been established at that time for about ten years, the gospel had not been preached to the Gentiles. God's grace had not been extended to them as it had to the Jews. It took a special miracle to convince Peter that God desired that he go to the house of Gentiles with the gospel—a four cornered sheet let down from heaven (Acts 10:9-16). For proof of this suggestion, notice the following, "And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us" (Acts 15:8). Evidence that God desired that there should be no distinction between Jew and Gentile is seen in the fact that the Holy Spirit was given to the Gentile just as it had been to the Jew. Thus, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles, served to confirm the action of Peter going in unto Gentiles and preaching the gospel to them. Peter used the coming of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius as evidence that God intended for them to receive baptism, for he turned to the six Jewish brethren that accompanied him and said, "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (Acts 10:47). There could be no question that Cornelius had received the Holy Spirit, "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:46). When Peter went back to Judaea with the report that God had extended His grace to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, he used the coming of the Holy Spirit as evidence that God desired that the Gentiles share His salvation with the Jews. "If then God gave unto them the like gift as he did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17). Actually, the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius accomplished as much for every Gentile as it did for him—it served to open the door of the kingdom to the Gentile race.

There is no example of conversion being accomplished by or as a result of the direct work of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord set forth a general law which says that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. "Even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you" (Jno. 14:17). The Holy Spirit comes to one who becomes a child of God, one who is obedient to God. "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). The child of God today does not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but rather the gift of the Holy Spirit or the Holy Spirit as a gift. To believers Peter said, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Paul wrote to the Corinthians who had already become children of God, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (I Cor. 6:19, 20). Thus, the Holy Spirit is received today when we become children of God, not before.

There is nothing essential to man's salvation that is not accomplished or supplied through the Word. The Word was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Whatever is accomplished by the Word is accomplished by the Holy Spirit. The Word is God's appointed medium for the conversion of the World. This may seem foolish to man (I Cor. 1:21), but we can rest assured that God knows best. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). James tells us that the "implanted word . . . is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21).

Let us be thankful that God has extended His grace to all men through His Word, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and rightously and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:11, 12). Notice: the grace of God is extended through instruction.

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 5)

And to faithful Christians in the last day it will be said: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).

To this "it is ready," "it is prepared" there is the imperative to correspond. Of good works Paul says, "Put them in mind . . . be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1) of testimony: "Be ye 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" (I Pet. 3:15); and of the coming of Christ: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matt. 24:44). And only those who are ready shall with burning lamps enter in with the Bridegroom into the marriage. (Matt. 25:10).

Those who have erred from the truth should remember God's warning to the church at Ephesus: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works." (Rev. 2:4, 5).

Martin Luther never could relish the epistle of James and offered to give his doctor's cap to anyone who could successfully harmonize with him the writings of Paul. But when Luther comes to describe faith in the Preface to the epistle of Romans, it is the very kind of faith defined by James. "It is a living, active, energetic, mighty thing, this faith, so that it is impossible that it should not work what is good without intermission. It does not ever ask whether good works are to be done, but before one asks it has done them, and is ever doing. But he who does not do such works is a man without faith, is fumbling and looking about him for faith and good works, and knows neither the one nor the other, yet chatters and babbles many words about both . . . Therefore it is impossible to sever works from faith; yea, as impossible as to sever burning and shining from fire."

The answer to all the quibbles about the difference between Paul and James is given by Jesus: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." (John 14:15). Thus all the tension is resolved. Whosoever loves Jesus keeps and obeys the word of James and Paul. For it is in the nature of love that one willingly obeys; this is faith. It is also in the nature of Love that it sets one busily and earnestly at work, and willingly serves Him when His word is heard; that produces works. A life cannot be lived without deeds and Christianity is a life. (Acts 5:20).

"A LYING SPIRIT"

(Continued From Page 2)

to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matt. 7:15. Peter, in like manner, warned against them. "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." 2 Peter 2:1. In the same way John warned: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1.

We cannot listen to men because they are in the majority. Micaiah was outnumbered four hundred to one. Yet he alone was speaking the word of God.

We cannot listen because men declare themselves to be teachers of God. Jesus said they would come in sheep's clothing. They endeavour to disguise their base purpose to mislead and destroy.

MOTIVES OF FALSE PROPHETS

When contrasted with the eternal issues involved the motives of false prophets seem foolish indeed. Yet, there are always those who look only upon the present and what may be gained in this life. All motives of those who are false are of this character.

Paul wrote to Timothy about such deceivers. And, he said of them: "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sakes." Their motives were base gain. Things of this world are attractive. To 'love this present world' is to depart from God.

To the false prophet popularity is a major consideration. To him, THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE IS THE VOICE OF GOD. He is willing to preach what the people want to hear. It may be that he will not go that far at first. He may begin by refraining from discussing unpopular things. But at last, he will allow his preaching to become simply the sum of the desires of those to whom he preaches. He is the hireling Jesus mentions in John chapter 10, who flees when the wolf comes because he careth not for the sheep.

The false prophet is jealous for his position. He desires the honor and esteem of his brethren and is willing to sacrifice God and his word for the orthodoxy of his brethren. What will be the attitude of the brethren if I preach this? Such is the question that determines his course of action.

In contrast with all this the true prophet of God and the true teacher of his word thinks only of that which is the will of God, knowing that it alone can truly bless those who hear. He takes no account of consequences to himself. The prophets of the Old Testament and the Apostles and gospel preachers of the New Testament draw a vivid, never to be forgotten picture. The writer of Hebrews tells us of the former. Paul, in an enumeration of his own experiences relates the latter.

Who had not rather be a Paul than a Balaam. It requires conviction, and courage. But the end of each displays the wisdom in the right choice. May God help us to make these great examples live again in our own lives.

THE TRAGEDY OF IT ALL

The tragedy of all this can be fully expressed in the language of the scriptures. "The prophets prophesy falsely,

and the priests bear rule by their means; AND MY PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jer. 5:31. "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever: that this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord: Which say to the seers, see not; and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits." Isaiah 30:8, 10. "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. "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." 2 Peter 2:2. Men want to hear smooth things. They want to be soothed and sustained while they continue in the course of life that pleases them. They want a convenient religion. They want their religious teachers to play a part. They prefer smooth talk and an outward piety to the thunders of an Elijah or the plainness of speech of a Paul. May God help us when this becomes the spirit of the people. Time servers, bent on self-gain and self-praise will rise to the occasion and give them just what they want.

THE SAD FACT

That one is honestly led by lies does not exempt him from penalty. Witness the young prophet of 1 Kings 13. Our only defense is a return to and reliance upon the word of God. We must refuse to be led astray from it. We must demand a thus saith the Lord for all that we are called upon to believe and do. We must abhor and rise against feigned piety that would take the place of ringing truth in preaching.

And, those who preach must feel the depth of the responsibility to the God before whom we stand. "We must obey God rather than men." "We do not seek to please men." May God help us to stand against all the enticements of the world around us.

These, brethren, are the things that make apostasy from simple truth an ever present danger. They are the considerations that make false systems of religion so easy to propagate. Let us not fall prey to their schemes.

Reports

J. Odes Forshey, Box 335, Gilbert, Arizona:

The work here continues to make progress. We closed a meeting last Sunday night in which Brother J. C. Roady did the preaching. The attendance and interest were excellent. Nine were baptized and one restored.

Robert C. Copeland, Jr., P. O. Box 416, Spur, Texas:

Six baptized and six restored in the meeting which closed here last night. Brother Ernest A. Findley of Carlsbad, New Mexico, did the preaching. I have time for two meetings.

Dean Bullock, 319 Austin Street, Borger, Texas:

The meeting with the church in Garland was enjoyable; 13 responded to the gospel; 563 attended Sunday morning Bible classes. This was a new record. Bill Hatcher is preaching at Garland and is doing excellent work.

PRECEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

(Continued from Page 7)

he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily, I say unto you that I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel" (Matthew 8:10).

This centurion was a soldier. He knew the meaning and significance of authority. He realized that he had only to speak a word and the soldiers under him would immediately obey. The centurion believed in Christ and recognized his authority. He told him that he had but to speak the word—in other words, exercise his authority—and the deed would be done, his servant would be healed.

Jesus placed such great value on faith that he made it the very bedrock of Christianity. Faith is of such overshadowing consequence in the scheme of redemption that, in its absence, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

Does the world place a high value on faith? It does in some things. The business world is builded upon faith. Cities, governments, industrial empires are established upon faith and maintained by faith. Men have faith in science, faith in economics, faith in medicine, faith in psychology and psychiatry.

But when it comes to faith in the Bible, in the God of the Bible and in the Christ of God, worldly people attach very little value to faith. Powerful forces are at work to destroy faith in all things that are held sacred by lovers of truth. Science has been exalted as the god of the 20th century and modernists teach that this great god of science has made the God of the Bible ridiculous.

Christianity rests upon the firm foundation of faith in God, and in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God. Christ taught men to have faith in God, in themselves and in their fellowman.

TRUE GREATNESS

III. Jesus commended the greatness of John the Immerser. "Verily, I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). Here again we see the difference between the way that Jesus evaluates men and the way that the world estimates them. What is the popular idea of a great man? Why, a great man is one who has achieved spectacular success in some field that keeps him constantly before the public. He may be the head of a great industrial empire, or the president of a wealthy bank, or the governor of an influential state, or an outstanding criminal lawyer, or a sensational evangelist, or a star athlete. The world associates greatness with fortune, fame and power.

But who is this man whom Jesus called great? Why, he was what people would perhaps call a country preacher. He did most of his preaching out in the rural sections. He was not a fellow who went in for fancy dress and city mannerisms. The Holy Spirit describes him in Matthew 3:4: "And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey."

John's clothing and diet were simple. He was a man who evidently never had an eminent reputation as a profound doctor of the law or as a prominent leader among the Jewish bigwigs. He did not attract the attention of people through fancy dress, affectation of manners, or ap-

peals to the things that minister to human pride. Wherein then lay the greatness of John the Baptist?

1. He was great in character. Jesus gave the world a new standard of greatness. He taught that greatness consists, not in winning the applause of men, but in enjoying the approval of God—that the chief ingredients of greatness are not self-aggrandizement, inflated ego, selfishness and vaunted power but, on the contrary, they are self-denial, humility, devotion to duty, purity of heart and righteousness of life.

John the Immerser is a splendid example of greatness as measured by the yardstick of Jesus. He was a man who was gracefully humble. Had he desired to glorify himself, he could have deceived the people into believing that he was the promised Messiah. When, however, the people thronged to him and asked him questions, he denied that he was the Christ (John 1:19, 20).

John was content to be the way-shower, and he repeatedly demonstrated his humility by proclaiming the superiority of Christ. Instead of attempting to attract attention to himself, he always diverted the attention of the people to Jesus (John 1:26-30).

"He must increase, I must decrease." That was the attitude of John toward Jesus. When a man can in that way prefer another, he has the humility that constitutes greatness.

John was great because he was pure. His clothing and food suggests that he was not self-indulgent. He disciplined himself. He had no false pride.

He was great because he was a man of courage. He did not hesitate to rebuke Herod and Herodias for their sinfulness.

2. John was great in the work that he did. He was the forerunner of Christ. He was the friend of the bridegroom. It was his privilege as the voice of one crying in the wilderness to lay the groundwork for the work of the Messiah.

3. John was great as a preacher. Although he was perhaps crude in dress and unostentatious in manner, he had a great message. His message was not designed to make him popular with the people of the world. The burden of it was, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

The demand for repentance is never popular with those who want to continue in their own way. But John, being a preacher of conviction and of courage, did not tone down his message to please the people. He knew that the need was for repentance and that only repentance could prepare the people for reception of the kingdom of God.

People have many standards by which they measure the worth of a preacher. Some demand that he be a good mixer, that he have a pleasing personality, that he spend most of his time making purely social visits in the homes of the members, that he dress fastidiously, that he be careful to offend no one. On such an examination as that, John the Immerser probably would have made exactly zero.

But he was a preacher who was faithful to God, loyal to his convictions and one that brought people to God and prepared them to receive Christ.

LIBERALITY

IV. Jesus commended the liberality of the poor widow. "... but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mark 12:44).

(Continued on Page 15)

PRECEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

(Continued from Page 14)

Again we have a rather dramatic presentation of the truth that Jesus does not see things as the people of the world view them. It is doubtful if anybody else paid any attention to the poor widow. The rich men casting in their jangling coins made a much more spectacular scene, but Jesus singled out the poor widow for special attention and unusual commendation.

What was it that Jesus saw when he looked at the rich men? He saw them casting in a large number of coins from purses that contained a super-abundance of coins. He saw a parade of pretense and pride.

What did Jesus see when he saw the poor widow? Did He see the two mites that she cast in? Yes, but he saw much more than that. He saw a heart radiant with love for God and man. He saw a generous spirit, a consecrated life, a self-sacrificing soul.

That is the solution to the problem of church finance. Liberality comes first, not from open pocketbooks, but from open hearts. Of the Macedonians Paul said that first they gave their own selves unto the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:5).

Before our hearts can be fully opened to the needs of God's cause, they must be bleeding hearts. They must bleed for their own sins and for the sins of mankind. They must bleed over the physical and spiritual needs of the whole human race. They must bleed until they become truly compassionate hearts, until they realize that the responsibility for the salvation of souls rests upon their shoulders, until they appreciate the truth that God's people have responsibility to every man everywhere who has a physical or spiritual need.

GOOD WORKS

V. Jesus commended Mary for her good work. "And Jesus said, let her alone; why trouble ye her. She hath wrought a good work on me" (Mark 14:6). This woman had anointed Jesus with a very expensive ointment. Judas objected to what he regarded as Mary's shameful waste, not because he had any love for the poor, but because he was a lover of filthy lucre.

Mary had learned what every disciple of Christ needs to know—that nothing is too good for the King of Kings. Often people object to spending money for the cause of Christ on the ground that it is wasteful, but, when you go and look into their garages, you see splendid automobiles and, when you go into their homes, you see not only the comforts of life, but many luxuries.

LOYALTY

VI. Jesus commended Mary for her discernment and loyalty. "But one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:42). Martha was careful and troubled about many things. Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his word.

Things are fine in their proper place, but they must never be allowed to crowd out of our hearts our higher spiritual obligations.

"THOSE THINGS THAT PLEASE HIM"

Let us serve our fellowman, but let us covet the approval of God. Let us strive to engrain into the fabric of our character those virtues that won the approval and applause of the spotless Son of God.

Let us make it our supreme ambition to so mature in character that we can say with ever-increasing truthfulness in the language of our Saviour and model: "... the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29).

HYPOCRISY

(Continued From Page 9)

his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is given to God, he shall not honor his father. And ye have made void the word of God because of your tradition." All an avaricious son needed to do was say the part of his goods by which his parents should be supported was Corban, that is given to God and he was forever free from the God-given obligation to support his parents. He could turn them over to starvation or beggary, according to this tradition of the Pharisees. For this Jesus called them rank hypocrites. "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth me with their lips; But their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

Their action was hypocritical because in claiming to honor God with what was devoted to the poor parent, there was the false pretense of doing something for His service which was done out of covetousness. Jesus said the inspired words of Isaiah applied to them. The ninth verse of the text is more a conclusion from Isaiah's prophecy than a quotation. Isaiah's statement is: "And their fear of me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them" (Isa. 29:13). Fear toward God springs from the word of God, not from the commandment of men. Their fear (service) of God was prompted by the tradition (commandment) of men. Jesus called it hypocrisy. This accusation of Jesus does not apply only to the Pharisees of this chapter. Isaiah said it of the Jews of his time. Jesus applied it to those of His day. It applies with equal force to all men of any age who are guilty of the same.

Every attempt at service to God by a human commandment or tradition bears the brand of hypocrisy, placed on it by the Lord. It is a fearful charge to make, but our Lord made it. It is likewise a fearful thing to attempt to worship and serve God by a substitution of human commandments and appointments for Divine commandments and appointments. The fact our Lord called such hypocrisy should send men searching the scriptures regarding all of their service.

Luther G. Roberts, 3500 West Haven Drive, Amarillo, Texas

April 8 the church at Sinton, Texas closed a meeting in which I did the preaching. Two were baptized during the meeting. This was my second meeting with this fine congregation. Brother W. E. Coffman is the faithful preacher in his seventh year with the Sinton church. I am scheduled to begin a meeting with the Country Club Road Church in Tucson, Arizona, where M. C. Cuthbertson is the regular preacher, April 29th. My third meeting for the year is planned for Pine Bluff, Arkansas to begin June 10. S. Leonard Tyler is the preacher at Pine Bluff. The work with the new congregation, Wolfelin Village, Amarillo has started off in a good way. I am preaching regularly for this church when not in meetings. The Wolfelin Village church has contracted to purchase two acres of ground for a church house to be erected in the extreme southwest part of the city of Amarillo.

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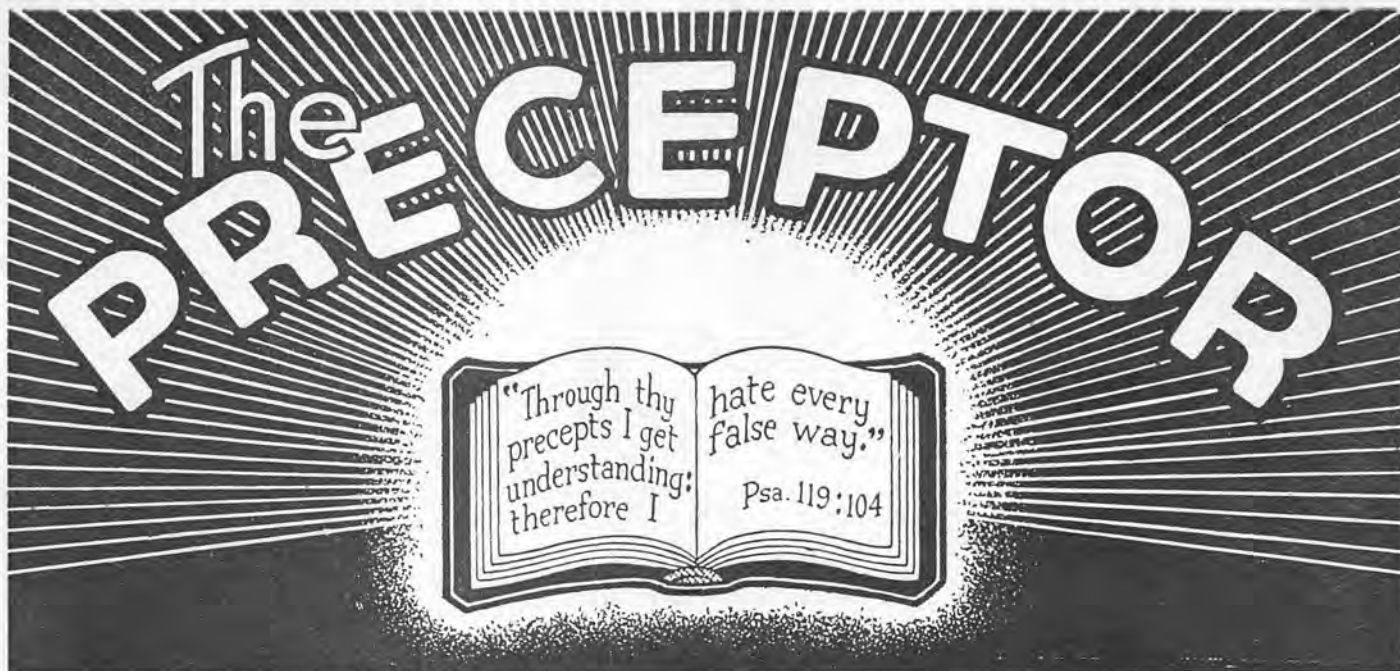
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THE PURPOSE OF BIBLE CLASSES

DEAN BULLOCK

Borger, Texas

Seemingly many church members have lost sight of the real purpose of Bible classes. This is even true of some teachers. They seem not to realize that Bible classes are conducted solely for the purpose of teaching the word of God. The function of the church of Christ is to impart truth. This should be stamped indelibly on the minds of Christians. The various classes represent the church carrying out her mission in this respect. They are deliberately arranged and planned to educate, indoctrinate and instruct people in the way of the Lord.

Periods allotted for class study should be used properly. Time should not be consumed in discussing social and secular activities; nor in making long and unnecessary announcements; nor even in singing hymns.

This is not to say that it is wrong to sing in classes; special classes and drills designed to improve both the musical and spiritual quality of singing are good; but singing during Bible class study disturbs others and tends toward confusion instead of edification. It prevents concentration and meditation. It seems to me that it violates the principle embraced in the statement of Paul, "Let all things be done decently and in order." If an effective teaching program is to obtain, this rule must be observed.

Only a few minutes are set aside for the Bible classes each week. Every minute should be utilized. Did you know that many are not taught any truth at all in the home? The responsibility of teachers in our class program is therefore great!



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EDITORIAL

Change in Management

LUTHER G. ROBERTS

With the April issue of *The Preceptor* I completed one year's work as editor of the paper. This has been a work that I enjoyed very much. Many letters and comments likewise have been received on the paper. The interest in the work and the encouragement received have been appreciated very much. Of the comments received all were not favorable, of course. However, its perfectly safe to say that, at least, 95 per cent of the comments have been favorable to the position occupied by the paper and toward the disposition manifested in the writings in it.

Due however to the amount of work involved in the publishing and editing of a religious paper and to the change in my work which has given me less time than before to devote to the work of editor I am with this issue relinquishing the editorship of *The Preceptor*. Brother Dean Bullock and I have worked diligently in bringing out the paper each month. Brother and Sister Bullock have done the work of keeping the records, notifying subscribers of expiration dates, and all of the other details connected with publishing the journal. This has been a difficult job and has required much time and effort on their part. So, it was decided between Brother Bullock and me to make some disposition of the paper. We are happy to announce that beginning with this issue of the paper Brother Stanley J. Lovett will become the editor, owner and publisher of *The Preceptor*.

We are very glad that a man of the ability of Brother Lovett is to be responsible for the publishing of the paper

and commend him for his willingness to assume the full responsibility for the paper and trust that he may have the same fine co-operation that we have had with the writers and others interested in the good done by the publication of *The Preceptor*. We commend Brother Lovett to the readers of the paper and it is our desire that the paper continue to receive the support of lovers of the truth of the gospel throughout this country as well as foreign countries where it is going. We believe that Brother Lovett is well able to edit the paper and that he is a safe, sound teacher of the word.

To the ones who have contributed to the success of *The Preceptor* the past year by sending in articles, subscriptions or otherwise we express our sincere thanks and trust that the good accomplished will in some measure compensate for the efforts and sacrifices made. We wish for the paper an even wider circulation that the potential good may be increased and that many brethren will be further strengthened in the faith.

Statement

STANLEY J. LOVETT

Since its initial issue in November of 1951, *The Preceptor* has exerted a wholesome and widespread influence. Those aims and guiding principles, as then set forth by those with whom was conceived the idea of this paper, are quite as timely now as then. In the main the same lofty ideals and just principles shall continue to guide the course of this journal.

With a limitless confidence in the miraculous inspiration, divine authority, and all-sufficiency of the word of God, we stand and shall continue to stand. Conversely we shall withstand and oppose anything and everything that is inimical to the plenary inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of the word of truth.

Through these pages we propose to continue to promote and encourage, positively and aggressively, the spread of the pure gospel wherever men are lost in sin. Equally is entertained the desire to build up and strengthen brethren in the most holy faith. Our heart is possessed of an humble and sincere longing to contribute good and no harm at all to the cause of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

No informed and discerning brethren will deny that we are passing through critical times. But it is our conviction that there are no ills among us today that the correct understanding and proper application of the New Testament cannot remedy. As the true meaning of the gospel is perceived and faithfully applied by good men and honest, if the difficulty is not then solved we may be sure it cannot be. Every problem's answer lies within the word of God. But each one must seek it out for himself.

Truth will prevail and the church's welfare will be promoted in proportion to free, open, and unrestrained discussion of issues in the light of the New Testament by Christian men with Christian attitudes. It is our aim that issues and not personalities be discussed. However, when issues are inextricably related to personalities the latter must come in for attention. Harsh, bitter, unChristian dispositions, the impugning of motives, the misrepresenting of positions and of men will settle nothing. But a thorough discussion of issues in the right manner will help considerably.

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The Word of God

BILL J. HUMBLE
Kansas City, Missouri

There are many Biblical statements which emphasize the importance of the word of God; but few, if any, of these statements are more emphatic than the declaration of Christ, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). The parable of the sower was designed to illustrate how different kinds of people react to the gospel; but first, the seed must be sown, and this seed is God's word! Thus, where the word has not gone, the kingdom has never been established, and men have never been saved.

Since our salvation is dependent on the word of God, it is essential that we know something of this word. Thus, here are five great characteristics of God's word, each of which has been widely misunderstood in spite of its importance:

Inspired

(1) **The word of God is inspired.** Surprisingly perhaps, the word "inspired" is found only once in the New Testament. It occurs in 2 Tim. 3:16, where Paul says, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching . . ." The Greek word translated "inspired" is *theopneustos* and literally means "God-breathed," that is, the scriptures were breathed out of the mind of God. The Bible, then, is absolutely unique in its origin. The libraries of earth contain no volume which originated in the mind of God, for the Bible alone is "God-breathed."

But even though the word "inspired" is found only once in the New Testament, the idea of inspiration is found often. Describing the origin of the Old Testament, Peter said that "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). Christ admonished the apostles to take no thought how or what they should speak (Matt. 10:19, 20), for when the Holy Spirit came, he would guide them into all the truth (Jno. 16:13).

There are many evidences that the scriptures are inspired, but the case for the inspiration of each of the two testaments may be rested on a single great evidence. In the case of the Old Testament, it is the fulfillment of prophecy. If one should consider only the messianic prophecies (and there are many others, involving a vast variety of times and topics), he could list more than three hundred distinct prophecies, all committed to writing at least four centuries before Christ, yet all fulfilled in him. And how did all of this happen? The answer is the providence of God! When we turn from old to New Testament, we are immediately challenged by the person of Jesus Christ, whose uniqueness lies not only in his giving the world its highest moral concepts, but even more surprising, who translated those concepts into a faultless life. This Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Are we to admit these claims? If so, we must face his promise that the apostles would be guided into all truth; hence, the inspiration of the New Testament.

If we accept the Bible as "God-breathed," these corollaries follow: the Bible is perfect and infallible, a revelation of the mind of God.

Essential

(2) **The word of God is essential.** Where has Christianity gone? What parts of the earth have been blessed by the influences of the Christian faith, even in a corrupted form? The world has been blessed by Christianity only in those areas where God's word has been preached, and nowhere

else! The benevolent influences of the Christian religion and the spread of the Bible have been co-extensive.

As the book of Acts chronicles first century examples of conversion, it shows that the preaching of God's word always preceded the conversion. The keys of the kingdom were used when Peter first preached the gospel to the Jews, and later, to Gentiles. When the time had come for the Gentiles to receive the gospel, Cornelius was told to send for Peter, "who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house" (Acts 11:14). Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ, Paul and Silas "spake the word of the Lord" to the jailer, and so it is in every New Testament conversion. The word is essential; for faith is essential to salvation, but faith cometh by hearing the word of Christ!

Powerful

(3) **The word of God is powerful.** This might readily be assumed from the fact that the word is essential to salvation, but it is not necessary for us to assume. The New Testament says plainly, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Also, "the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

Those passages which describe the results of obedience to God's word all serve to emphasize its power. When people obey the word of God, they are converted, transformed, translated out of the power of darkness and into the kingdom of God's son, and born again to become new creatures in Christ. If the word of God can accomplish all of this, its power staggers the imagination.

Not long ago, a preacher was addressing an audience in London's famous Hyde Park. There was a Communist in the audience who was trying to heckle the preacher. Pointing to a dirty man dressed in rags, the Communist shouted, "Communism can put a new suit on this man." The preacher immediately replied, "Christ can put a new man in that old suit." There's greater power in a message of hope than in the plea of athiestic Communism!

All-Sufficient

(4) **The word of God is all-sufficient.** This means that the Bible, and the Bible alone will satisfy our every spiritual need. Paul stressed this truth when he said, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching . . . that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The same idea is found in 2 Pet. 1:3, "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue."

Since the word is all-sufficient and furnishes us completely unto every good work, we require no other standard of faith or authority in the religion of Christ. The word of God alone will make Christians alone, but it takes the Bible plus the doctrines of men to produce denominationalism and division. Those who accept the all-sufficiency of God's word have no need for any creed, manual, or confession of faith other than the word of God, and churches of Christ have none! Some time ago, when a student in Central Baptist Theological Seminary wrote me, asking where he could obtain a

(Continued on Page 12)



Restoration

and

Reaction

The Proper Way to Preach

HARRY PICKUP, JR.
Grapevine, Texas

For as long as men have been preaching the gospel, I suppose, there has been discussion of how is the best way to present the true message. The words to be used, the tone of expression, gestures, etc., all have come in for their part in the discussion. Should the gospel be hurled with terrific impact in order to penetrate the seemingly impervious hearts of sinners? Or, should it be used more gently as a feather-duster to clean the soul and mind? Should the words and tone be incisive? Or, should they be tender as the biddings of an anxious mother?

One sees the gospel preacher as a stalwart soldier fighting against the ramparts of Satan in order to release condemned souls, hurling the gospel against the bulwarks of evil to breach the wall of error. Another sees him in less militaristic garb and in less manly circumstances. He views him as a "winner" of souls.

It is not the purpose of this article to show why the former view is the one more frequently employed in the scriptures. But along this line these two things should be kept in mind: (1) The fact that one is a "fighter" does not preclude the possibility of having love and kindness in his heart. None of the New Testament writers were bolder or utilized the military figure more in discussing preaching than Paul. And yet some of the most tender inspired expressions are found in his writings. Cp. Gal. 5:14; Phil. 1:7. (2) This is the method that has been successful in conquering sectarianism, nullifying premillennialism and obtaining the ground that we now occupy.

It is the primary purpose of this article to show some characteristics that should always characterize the preaching of the Word.

It is well to note here that it is a fair inference in the account of Math. 10:19 that Christ promised the apostles the Holy Spirit would guide them in what they were to say and how they were to say it. "But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak." This being true the manner of preaching used by them would be a justifiable model.

Paul plainly told the Corinthians that Timothy would remind them of his "ways." "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church."

I Cor. 4:17. The point is too plain to be missed: Paul's "ways in Christ" constitute scriptural authority.

Every preacher, I suppose has had his manner of presentation criticized at one time or another. And, not being infallible, the criticisms may be justified. But generally speaking the preacher is not so much disturbed by what is said as by what is implied.

Let us now note some of Paul's "ways in Christ" of preaching the gospels as mentioned in I Thessalonians 2.

1. **The aim; with reference to God; with reference to men.** With reference to God his principal concern was to be approved by him. "But even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts." Verse 4. This aim is the highest; this motive the purest. The preacher is first the servant of God and Christ, to speak their will for man's benefit. No amount of human approval can make the preacher "approved" when he is not; no amount of human disapproval can make him "disapproved" when he is "approved." The highest approbation one can receive is from God Almighty. The gospel preacher should constantly be examining his preaching to determine if it meets with God's approval. Only by doing this can he serve with honor.

With reference to man the preacher aims for reception of the message. Uppermost in his mind should be the aim to have the message received not as if it were "the word of men but as it is in truth the Word of God." Anything which would distract him from accomplishing this aim is completely out of place. "Man's word" is often falacious and sometimes deceptive; "God's Word" is always true and without guile. At accomplishing this aim Paul was imminently successful. "And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe." Verse 13. And above all the final test of the preacher's success is the ability to get the hearers to act upon the truth they have received. And this too the Thessalonian brethren had done. "For ye brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Christ Jesus." 2:14. "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth." 1:8.

2. **"Boldness in God."** "As ye know, at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God in much conflict." 2:2. Courage should always characterize the speaking of the gospel. Such courage has its source in God and because when one speaks his Word he is approved of God. Flamboyancy should not be mistaken for boldness. There never was a better example of this—excepting Christ, of course—than Paul. And yet his boldness was not of the "headline" type. But it won him the respect of such steadfast friends as the Philippians who supported him time and again with their money and even their lives. Phil 4:15, 16; 2:30.

"In much conflict" could either mean "in spite of persecution" (Phil. 1:30) or "inward anxiety" (Col. 2:1). It seems to me that the context demands the former view in as much as he has just reminded them of the trouble at Philippi. The test of boldness is the strong opposition of persecution.

3. **He did not use "word of flattery" or "a cloak of covetousness."** Verses 5, 6. Words of flattery could not

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From the Heart

Brother Stephen's Death and Its Sequel

JAMES R. COPE

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Cope presents an old story in a novel and impressive style. We think you will like it).

"And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts 8:2).

Devout men cried—
Noble men wept—
Consecrated men lamented—
Strong soldiers grieved—

A hero is dead
Their hero, a valiant fighter!
He died in battle—
His sword was unleashed—
Quick!
Active!
He held the enemy at bay . . .
Hip and thigh he hewed the foe!
Now he is dead—
Their great warrior is slain!

Tenderly they wrap his cold form.
Carefully they bear his body away.
Thoughtfully they entomb his remains.
Prayerfully they ponder his life.
Broken hearted they stand at his grave.
Sorrowfully they sigh for comfort.

Why did it happen?
Why was their hero slain?
Is this the end?
Is their Cause doomed to failure?
Has God turned His face from them?
Is all lost?

It seemed such a glorious fight!
So many were enlisting in the army!
Both men and women were converts—
Men alone numbered 5000—
Even many priests were obedient to the faith.
What has happened?
Is it all in vain?

He was so young—
Too young to die!
In the vigor of manhood—
At the height of his physical strength.
Why should one so young be taken?

He said he saw Jesus—
Jesus standing!
Jesus standing at God's right hand!
Jesus who had died!
Jesus, the Just, His enemies slew!
Jesus, the slain, alive!

They are already mad.
He has told them about themselves—
They murdered the Just One;
Their fathers killed the prophets;
They are stiffnecked!
Uncircumcised in heart and ears!
They don't like the preaching.
They get mad at the preacher—
Enraged!
They gnash with their teeth!
They stop their ears!
The join hands!
They unite forces!
They pick up stones—
Big stones.
Heavy stones,
Deadly stones,
Destructive stones,
They ignore the law.
They take law into their own hands.
They need no law.
They are above law.
Tradition is behind them.

•
They have fathers to honor.
Abraham is their father—
They are Abraham's offspring—
They are somebody!
They have spoken . . .
They make law—
They interpret law—
They destroy law—
They are laws!
They hurl the stones—
They strike our brother.
They kill him.
They hated him.
They hated him because of what he preached.
They killed the preacher!

Our brother prays.
He calls upon God.
He pleads for his killers.
His Master had said,
"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."
He says,
"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
His Lord and Master had said,
"Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do."
He says,
"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."
He prayed while he died.
He died as he prayed.
He fell asleep!
"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!"
O blessed hope!!!!
Yet they weep—
Still despondent.
Sad.
Discouraged.
But he said,
"I see Jesus!"
Did he?
Did he see Jesus?
Did Jesus see him?
Is that why Jesus arose from His throne in Glory?
Is that why He stood at God's right hand?
Did Jesus thus honor His child—
His first child—
Who sealed his faith with blood?
Is that why Jesus was standing?

These pride-drunken killers exult in their victory!
Blood!
That's it—
Blood!
Shed enough blood—
That will stop them!
They will put an end to this WAY!
They will kill others.
They will show them.
They will have their way.
They forget God's way.
They ignore God's way.
They don't care about God's way.
They want their way.
Their way is the way—
Of wrath!
Envy!
Hate!
Destruction!

These zealots killed Christ too.
They hired false witnesses against Him.
They impaled Him.
They crucified Him on a cross—
A Roman cross,
A wooden cross . . .
A rugged cross . . .
A cross of contempt . . .
Of Infamy!
Disgrace!
An insignia of suffering!
Of shame!

God's providence works wonders—
Brings order out of chaos . . .
Peace from war . . .

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"Come Early for Fellowship!"

ROBERT F. TURNER
Gladewater, Texas

Recently, while glancing through several church bulletins, I found this statement: "Prayer meeting, and Bible Study will begin at 7 p. m.; but those who desire Christian fellowship may come at 6:30 for doughnuts and coffee." Hummmm! Perhaps a preacher friend of mine had such as this in mind when he quipped, "Getting to where I can smell coffee every time I hear that word, 'fellowship!'"

Now this word, "fellowship" has nice blue-blooded ancestry, and should be treated with respect. It has a Teutonic origin, from Old English and Old Norse, according to Dr. Kemp Malone, of John Hopkins University. It indicates association or communion in a common state of condition, having the same relation to something. Now our good 6:30 brethren may occupy a common position with reference to the coffee pot, and have "fellowship" in their love for doughnuts; but when brethren begin to think of this as "Christian fellowship"—even to the point of making Bible Study and prayer a poor second—it is high time we revised our thinking.

Christians are, or should be, "Christians" in all their conduct. In this sense, when several Christians do business together—buying and selling gasoline, groceries, etc.—there is a certain amount of "Christian fellowship." "Christian" here refers only to principles of conduct, however, and the relation is in reality a business relation, and is in no wise peculiar to Christianity. Christians may likewise associate together in wholesome sports activities, or in a "coffee and doughnuts party," but the essential nature of this association is social, and is not peculiarly Christian. We are stretching our terminology therefore to define this as "Christian fellowship." Further our loose speech is a hinderance to the proper teaching of young, poorly "grounded" babes in Christ, and may be the "Shibboleth" that betrays our own lack of understanding.

The inspired writer, John, gives us a definition for what may properly be called "Christian fellowship," and tells us the means by which this fellowship may be obtained. After describing Jesus Christ as the "Word of life," and declaring that he had beheld and handled—could bear witness of this "eternal life," John says:

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full." I John 1:3-4.

John, with other Apostles and Prophets, had fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, Jesus Christ. This is true Christian fellowship. And John desired that others might have fellowship with them. To this end, he declared and wrote these truths concerning Jesus Christ. Today the inspired written Word of God is our means of establishing fellowship with Christ, and enjoying fellowship with one-another.

John further writes, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I Jn. 1:6-7.

Outside of Christ, walking in sin and error, we are in darkness. But God's truth is light, and when an individual accepts and obeys the gospel of Christ, he steps into the light. Walking in light, he has fellowship with God. It may

be well to point out that the primary responsibility of each individual is to see that he walks in the light, and has fellowship with God. There is a direct relationship between the individual and divine authority. This is the fellowship that is of first importance.

Then, when a second individual accepts the call of the gospel—comes out of darkness into light, he also has fellowship with God. These two individuals now have something in common—"association or communion in a common state or condition; having the same relation to something." Thus, these two are in fellowship one with the other. Members of the church thus have fellowship together; and in like manner, a congregation of Christians in Tennessee—faithful to the Lord and actively engaged in the work He has given His church to perform, is in fellowship with a congregation in Texas who is also faithful and active.

True Christian fellowship grows out of the common relation the various individuals, or congregations, sustain unto the Lord. It is not a mechanical bond, nor one based upon human ingenuity for organizational machinery. The "tie that binds" is not church pride, creedalism, the communal or gang spirit, nor faith in the Pope. In fact the force does not originate within the units, nor is it generated by the units. Each unit is bound to God through adherence to the truth of God. With this tie well established, the individual to God, no further effort is necessary to bring these units together. They have fellowship with one-another as a result of their fellowship with God the first and primary tie provides the force necessary to establish the second.

Loving the Lord, compelled by this love to worship and praise Him, one individual sings, prays, and studies the Word of God. Another individual, compelled by this same kind of love, likewise worships and praises God. They enjoy true Christian fellowship together in these activities. In fact, there is a divine plan for this kind of fellowship: the congregation, or church, in the local sense. One may say the congregation is God's plan for the cooperative efforts of Christians in those things peculiarly "Christian." How utterly ridiculous and absurd for any Christian to suggest that coffee and doughnuts could make "Christian fellowship." Come early, indeed, if you like coffee and doughnuts—and if you are so unconcerned for the purity of the church as to encourage social activities as a part of her divinely ordained work; but for "CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP," come at 7 o'clock—or whenever members of the body of Christ assemble to worship and serve Him.

STATEMENT

(Continued From Page 2)

In accepting the responsibility of publishing and editing *The Preceptor*, we plead no special ability with reference to such work. Responding to an invitation, opportunity, and responsibility presented, with an awareness of the enlarged door for service thus opened, is our reason for undertaking this work. That mistakes shall be made is appreciated by ourself as keenly as anyone else dare imagine. To constructive criticism and suggestion we are receptive. Sober consideration shall be given such. But finally, with a consciousness of accountability to God, we reserve the right to conduct the paper as we deem right and best.

To lovers of the truth everywhere we earnestly appeal for continued help and support. Without such help the paper could not long continue. Make up a club of new subscriptions. Or, at your own expense send in a list of names whom you would like to be reading such a religious paper. In advance, "Thank you!"

PRECEPTOR PERCEPTIONS

Time for a Change!

BRYAN VINSON
Houston, Texas

This is an election year and we will hear many appeals for a change in the administration of our governmental affairs from those who are out and want in, whereas those who are in will be saying, "we never had it so good." Changes are always being made in the affairs, the lives, and the fortunes of men, some of which are good and some otherwise. We are a restless and discontented people, but changes wrought merely for their own sake aren't wise and beneficial. We should "cleave to that which is good" and renounce that which is evil, both in our private and political lives. Improvement, of course, involves a change to whatever extent is necessary and equal to the degree of improvement made. As such, therefore, there is always a timeliness in the work of making changes; none of us are yet perfect in knowledge and in character, and we need to be constantly engaged in self-improvement. In regard to human affairs society is never static; we are either changing for the better or the worse and we are fearful that in recent years the change has been preponderantly of the latter kind.

But that God wants a change in us is evidence by the demands of the gospel. Christ taught that except one be converted and become as a little child he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. The apostle Paul called on his hearers to "repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out." Paul said the times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. We read that as a result of hearing the apostles many believed and turned to the Lord. The question of immediate interest is why is this change desired by God? A very generally entertained view of the condition of man as relates to his state of sin is that he is born in this condition. This is equal to saying that God so made him, and that God is displeased with man as he made him. God not only made Adam; he makes us also in His own image. It is not strange to think that God makes a man, and, viewing him as thus constituted, he immediately is displeased with what he had made and demands of the creature of conversion or change as precedent and necessary to enjoying citizenship in the kingdom of heaven? Thus considered we are lead inevitably to this conception: God made man a sinner—inasmuch as he is thus born—and then requires of man a reforming of his character from that state and quality as initially formed by God!

Granting momentarily the truth of this situation, we raise the question: was God unable to make man AS HE WOULD HAVE HIM BE? If so, then we ascribe to man a power supplemental to the limits of the Divine, and, if not, then we reflect on the wisdom and goodness of God in failing to do that which He later beholding is dissatisfied with, and in many, many instances the error and imperfection is never rectified by the cooperative responsiveness of man,

The fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah affords one of the most lucid and replete expressions of the Divine appraisal of the condition of man, the cause of it, and the remedy prescribed by the Almighty. It is a Messianic prophecy, portraying Christ as a leader and commander of the people, under whose benign reign the conversion of sinners may well be accomplished. Man is presented as hungry and thirsty, spending his resources for that which satisfies not. In this helpless and hopeless condition there is sounded, descriptively and predictively, the invitation of God for man to incline his ear and come unto Him that he may live. May is located away from God; therefore, he needs to come to him. His being away from God is ascribed, not as being born thus, but is being brought about by his going away from God. Hence, he is invited to RETURN, a thing he could not do except as he had formerly been with God.

Also, we observe that this appeal and invitation calls on man to seek the Lord while He may be found, and call on him while he is near, thereby implying that there are time limits to this invitation. THIS IS THE TIME, the Dispensation of the Fulness of Time, the Dispensation of Grace. In order to thus return to the Lord it is necessary that the wicked forsake his way and the uprighteous man his thoughts. This the turning, the changing, required as initially accomplished in order to make a man what God would have him be. Man's ways and thoughts are incompatible with those of God, and two cannot walk together unless they be agreed. The returning to God, in the abandonment of evil, is required by God, and the abundant exercise of forgiveness therefore is graciously exercised by God, and from this dual action the conversion of man from a state of condemnation to the plane of justification is accomplished. This, evidently, is embodied in the thought expressed by Jesus in Matt. 5:20, to the effect that unless our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The point of contrast here is one of kind and not degree. Their's was a righteousness of the law, of which Paul said had there been a law which could have given life, then verily righteousness would have been by the law; but since this was not the righteousness or justification which could give life, then we must look to the righteousness attained by the faith of Christ. Reformation of life could and was required under the law, but there was no plenary and actual remission of sins under it—we thus must look to the time when this assurance was coupled with the appeal to return to the Lord. This is the time. There has not been a day since the beginning reign of Christ, on the day of Pentecost, but that the time has been present and the demand urgent and the command imperious that men be converted away from sin and unto Christ.

All men are not equal in many respects, and among the areas of inequality is that of the diversity of their culpability before God. All have sinned, but all have not gone equally as far into the love and practice of sin; hence, the conversion of anyone from sin is just as far reaching as their engrossment in sin. Those groveling in sensual pleasure have a greater change to make than did Cornelious, though he was a sinner. Many people today, feeling they are of good moral character, fail to recognize the need of conversion. The work of the Holy Spirit involved the primary and essential task of convicting the world of sin, and this is wrought through the preaching of the Word of God. When those thus cut to the heart with a sense and recognition of their

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Precepts and Principles

BONDS STOCKS

Is the Church Essential?*

"... and 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 ... " (Matthew 16: 18-19.)

Every Lord's Day millions of people all over the world meet in public assembly for the purpose of worshipping the true and the living God.

But the sad truth is that more millions stay away from public worship than attend it. And, strange as it may seem, the majority of those who stay away profess faith in Christ.

This situation poses a question that should deeply concern the heart of everyone who loves truth. Why do millions who claim to believe in Christ remain aloof from the church? The answer to that inquiry has many ramifications, but it may be boiled down to this: The world has been taught, by subtle and effective propaganda, that the church is not essential to either man's happiness here or his eternal welfare hereafter, that it plays no vital role in God's plan for the rehabilitation of man, and that, so far as salvation is concerned, man could get along just as well without it.

Let it be clearly understood that in discussing the church no reference or allusion is made to any denomination on the face of the earth. There is no contention that any human denomination is essential to either man's happiness here or his eternal salvation. As a matter of fact, the man-made, man-dominated and man-operated system of sectarianism that has grown up as a result of human corruptions of a divine plan has done more than any other one thing to cause millions of good men and women to throw up their hands in disgust and turn their backs on any profession of religion.

Certainly no Christian can be proud of the fact that there are in the United States nearly 300 separate and distinct denominations, sects and societies with conflicting creeds and contradictory confessions of faith, all claiming to follow the same Christ. This is the fault of man and not of God. It is a crime that must be laid at the door of sectarianism and not at that of pure Christianity.

The New Testament knows nothing about denominations except to condemn them. It speaks only of the church. Therefore, in this lesson we are concerned only with the church which bears the name of Christ, the blueprints of which are clearly drawn on the pages of the New Testament.

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE WORLD

1. What does the world think of the church? Many persons who are well educated according to man's standards point the finger of scorn in the direction of this institution and say, with a sophisticated sneer: "The church is a reactionary organization. It teaches fossilized doctrines and mossback dogmas. It is centuries behind the time and is the enemy of progress."

*—Author's Note: This is the text of a radio sermon. A condensation of it appeared in an article I wrote several years ago for Truth In Love.

Some of the leading universities have become the rallying ground for the enemies of the church. Many doctors of philosophy, and even some so-called doctors of divinity, have made the church their whipping post. What we call our institutions of higher learning have, in many cases, transformed themselves into theological incubators which annually hatch out and turn loose upon the world a surplus of infidels, atheists and agnostics. This deplorable situation has become so common that it would be much more appropriate to refer to many of them as "seminaries of Satan" instead of "schools of divinity."

A brief survey of what the Bible itself teaches about the church will serve to demonstrate that it is not only essential, but that it is one of the most vital parts of God's spiritual universe.

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF GOD

2. Is the church important from the viewpoint of God? In Ephesians 3:9-11 Paul teaches that the church was conceived in the mind of God from the beginning of the world, and that it was Jehovah's eternal purpose that by the church might be made known the manifold wisdom of God.

The church was promised as soon as man evidenced the need of redemption, and its coming was the burden of prophecy for centuries prior to its actual establishment. The church was in preparation for a brief part, the preparatory work centering about John the Immerser, whose voice pierced the silence of the wilderness with the passionate cry: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And finally, it was established in its perfection the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection.

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF CHRIST

3. Is the church essential from the viewpoint of Christ? The first time the word "church" is used in the Bible is in the 16th chapter of Matthew, which records Peter's noble confession to Jesus: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" and the Master's reply "... upon this rock I will build my church." From this statement and the passages which surround it we are taught six truths about the church: We learn positively that the church is built upon the divinity of Christ, that Christ himself is the builder, that Jesus was so determined to build it that all the forces of the Hadean realm could not marshal sufficient strength to prevent him so doing, that it was to be built in the future—sometime after the Lord made the statement, that is Christ's church, or the church of Christ, and that it is the kingdom of heaven, or God's government on earth.

Jesus came into the world to bear witness unto the truth by establishing this spiritual kingdom, the church (John 18:37). In Ephesians 1:22, 23, Paul, writing of Christ, declared that God "hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." This passage teaches that the church is the body of Christ, that Christ is the head of it, and that in the church dwells the fulness of Christ.

How important did Christ consider the church in God's arrangements of affairs? Ephesians 5:25 tells: "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Christ thought enough of the church to lay down his life for it. In Acts 20:28 Paul appeals to the elders of the church at Ephesus to "feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Jesus was so profoundly impressed with the importance of the church in God's program for the good of mankind

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Are There Few that Be Saved?

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"Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved?" (Luke 13:23.) This question, propounded to the Lord by an unidentified man, is one that is frequently raised in our own day when the gospel is effectively preached; when sin is denounced in no uncertain terms and when the conditions of forgiveness as set out in the Word of God are plainly stated. We have no means at our disposal to determine the attitude of the heart of him who ask the question; if we did it would help us evaluate his motives and give us a better understanding of why the question was raised. Be that as it may, the Lord knew all that was in man, as he knows all that is in us, and he gave an answer that is at once detailed and very much to the point. It is worthy of our attention that the Lord did not answer the man's question with a simple "yes" or "no."

May times men frame questions in the expectation of creating a prejudice against the truth by simple "yes" and "no" answers. Such answers to a question may be sufficiently correct but many times they are not sufficiently accurate and complete. While Jesus answered the man's question he also states some reasons why the answer is true.

A frequent heard objection to the truth is that the person who preaches it "thinks he is right and everyone else is wrong." And that members of the body of Christ "think that they and their little bunch are the only ones going to heaven." These and kindred remarks are appeals to prejudice and have no element of merit in them either one way or the other even if they were true representations of the people referred to. They serve only to cloud the mind and turn the interest from truth to personalities.

Someone is heard to object to the teaching of the Bible that men must be baptized in order to be saved; he points out that according to that you ought to observe how many pious people there are who have never been immersed—who are therefore lost, and concludes that such teaching cannot be right because it leaves out so many and includes so few. In effect he, like the man of our text, is asking "are there few that be saved?"

One thing must be clear to all thinking men. If no man on earth is saved such state of affairs will not change the truth of God; God's truth is not affected by the number of people favorably receptive to it. Man often seems to reason that for God to be just and righteous and for truth to be true it must just about save everyone. But the case is stated very differently in the Bible. Indeed, the picture painted by the Bible of mankind in this respect is not very bright. But, before we examine some matters along that line it might be well to make a few observations on God's provisions for man's welfare and his willingness to save all men. For example: "—God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9). "—God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jno. 3:16). This will suffice to plainly indicate the willingness of God to save ALL. If any man is lost it will be in spite of God's love and preparation for Him.

Then, there is the attitude of Christ toward the lost. "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). And again, "And this we judge, that

if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. 5:14). "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." This will certainly indicate the willingness of Christ to save and the completeness of his sacrifice for the lost.

Consider too, that the gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). That the Gospel is to be preached to the whole creation (Mk. 16:15-16). This clearly indicated the divine provision for salvation for all.

(1) But returning now to our question. "Are there few that be saved?" Consider: (1) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21).

(2) In the preceeding verses (13-14) Jesus has pointed out the two ways in which men may enter and live; the one to life and the other to death and destruction. Of the way that enters to destruction and ends there he said: "FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT." I would not attempt to say how many are lost and how many are saved; but with the Lord's comparison we must leave it that many are lost, and shall be forever so, and FEW are saved. In Matt. 22:14 Jesus said: "Many are called, few are chosen." This needs no comment to be applied to our question under review. There are entirely sufficient to show that Jesus has given a clear and satisfactory answer to our question: "Are there few that be saved?"

Now all of this will naturally raise a question in our minds: If God desires the salvation of all; if Jesus died to save all and the Gospel, God's power to save, is for all, then why are not all saved? The fact that any man is lost will incidentally explain why many men will be lost; for any condition that will cause the loss of one, when multiplied in terms of mankind, will cause the loss of many.

"Men must believe to be saved" (Heb. 11:6). Many men will not believe. Therefore, many will be lost because of unbelief.

"Men must obey Christ" (Acts 3:22-23; Heb. 5:8-9). Many will not obey the Lord. Therefore, many will be lost. Jesus weeping over Jerusalem declares his love and provision for her people but laments: "Ye would not!"

"Men must have the truth to be freed from sin" (Jno. 8:32). Some men do not love the truth and will instead believe a lie and be damned" (2 Thes. 1:10-12). We see on every hand evidence that men are satisfied with less than the truth of God in religion.

"Men must have the righteousness of God to be saved" (Rom. 10:1-3). "Not accepting righteousness revealed in the gospel (Rom. 1:17) and setting up their own ways and means, they fail to be righteous at all, for the only righteous man is the one whom God makes righteous. It seems that most of the people with whom we deal are indeed religious minded people. Only, they are too often minded to be religious according to their own ideas rather than those of God.

With these observations, let us now notice that in answering the man's question, that the Lord did not at that particular moment comment so on the number that would be saved or lost (which seems to be what the man was most interested in) but rather upon the need for personal diligence on his part to be among those who are saved. "Strive to enter in," pleads the Lord. What difference, good friend,

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Faith and the Faith

CLAUDE B. HOLCOMB
Corsicana, Texas

"For therein (the gospel) is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17).

"Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

In order to plant the truth it is often necessary to root up erroneous ideas. Since there is so much "rooting up" and "planting in" to be done on the subject of faith, we plan a series of articles which, we trust, will help some to think more clearly in the light of Bible teaching. Space is limited, so this first article must be confined to some introductory thoughts which I feel are needed, and which furnish the background for subsequent teaching.

We are all vitally concerned with the subject of faith, whether or not we have been made to realize fully its tremendous effect upon our lives. Much has been said and written about faith that should never have been spoken or written, and this fact emphasizes the importance of keeping New Testament teaching before the public. The nature of faith is such that it is easily exploited by men with speculative and visionary minds, and many of them have made the most of this circumstance by advancing theories that are mere products of human conceit. In an effort to say something about faith that has not been said before, or to make a show of wisdom by eloquently enshrouding the term in mystery, they have created an atmosphere of vagueness with reference to faith, and thus confusion and misunderstanding widely prevails.

Some have attached to faith abstract ideas which place it beyond the reach of those who will not give themselves to superstitious notions or speculative theories. I have heard men refer to faith as something which is abstract. It is not so with respect to Bible faith. That which is abstract pertains to general concepts or ideas, rather than with realities or actual instances. Abstract ideas are those "considered apart from any application to a particular object" (Webster). This cannot be true concerning Bible faith. Faith is a spiritual reality which is as concrete, positive, and comprehensible as life within the body. Let us take it therefore, out of the realm of mere unctuous words, and make it the practical and understandable element that God meant it to be.

To do this we must confine ourselves to what God says concerning faith. Let us not be too ambitious to know more about it than He intended for us to know. Paul said, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Faith is produced in the heart by the hearing of testimony providing sufficient evidence to convince us of certain facts. First of all, facts must exist, then testimony concerning the facts must be presented, and the result is FAITH on the part of those who believe the testimony. This is the thing Paul is talking about in Romans 1:17, quoted at the beginning of this article. God saw fit to base our salvation upon one of the most noble elements of our nature, our faith, and the righteousness to which we must attain in order to our salvation is revealed in the gospel of Christ. The gospel is based upon faith, and it is God's power to save. In the gospel facts are revealed, presenting testimony that is necessary to cause us to believe the facts.

These facts were brought into existence by the will of God, as He saw fit to create them; testimony was brought to light by the inspired writers of the Bible, who were guided by the Holy Spirit; and this testimony produces faith in the hearts of right-thinking people who hear it. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." As far as the testimony goes, faith may go, but no further. Where testimony ends, faith also ends, and everything beyond that is mere speculation, conjecture, or imagination.

It is the testimony of the Bible, therefore, that produces Bible faith, and any conviction derived from any other source is NOT the faith spoken of in the scriptures. What a man believes can be only as authentic as the source of his information or teaching, but no more so. How careful, then, we should be to confine our religious beliefs to what is revealed in the gospel of Christ, which was given for the purpose of producing that faith by which we shall live eternally.

Now, will the reader please notice the title of this article: "Faith and The Faith." The distinction between the two elements mentioned is clearly made in the scriptures, and must also be clearly made in the minds of Bible students. "Faith" is subjective; the act of believing. "The Faith" is objective; the thing believed. One is that which is exercised in the mind of the individual, while the other is that system of teaching set forth in the gospel. The first comes to the hearts of men through hearing the word of God; the second came into existence by the will of God, is revealed in the gospel, and is to be propagated, defended, and cherished by the believer. Without this distinction it would be impossible to understand certain statements of scripture. As we continue our study, we plan to discuss each of these elements separately, and show their relation one to the other. Remember that subjective faith is wholly dependent upon objective faith, and this is an important factor that must be kept in mind to keep us from progressing into the field of speculation.

Perhaps another thing that will help us by way of introduction to our study is to be reminded that faith is a common thing which is practiced by humanity in every realm of activity. The infidel who sneers at the mention of faith, although he does not believe the Bible, follows the principle of faith in his own affairs. Faith is belief—nothing more nor less—and the man who believes nothing is mentally incapacitated. So, everyone has faith in something, and this fact has been recognized by every thinking person since the time of Eden. Secular writers, some of whom were atheists, have set forth the fact of faith and its value in their writings. T. H. Huxley is quoted as saying, "No man who has studied history or even attended to the occurrences of every day life, can doubt the enormous practical value of faith." Lord Lytton wrote: "Strike from mankind the principle of faith, and man would have no more history than a flock of sheep." James Russell Lowell declared: "No man without intense faith in something can ever be in earnest." Everyone who is informed recognizes the reality of faith.

Faith is an essential element in the salvation of the soul, and no man can hope for salvation who is not in earnest about hearing from God, and believing what he says. We shall give more attention to what God says in our next article.

SEND A FRIEND
THE PRECEPT
And Help Teach Him
THE TRUTH

Parental Delinquency

W. R. JONES

Greggton, Texas

According to the authorities adult crime decreased 1.9 per cent last year. It is sad to note, however that juvenile crime remained alarmingly high. Meanwhile people who are concerned continue to search for some means of prevention. Why so much juvenile delinquency? Money, time and talents are being spent in great quantities to find the answer. In almost every case the answer has the same ring. The problem necessarily reverts to the parents. **INDIVIDUALLY!**

Since the beginning man has wanted to shift blame and responsibility. In the Garden of Eden when faced by Jehovah, Adam tried to shift the blame to Eve by saying, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Eve tried to evade the charge by saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." In this article I am especially concerned with one of the great evasions of our day. The attempt on the part of fathers and mothers to evade their **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**. Most all of us have or will some day experience the joy of parenthood. As parents and especially as Christian parents we have a great charge in the rearing of our children. **IT MUST NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.** If you take it lightly you are trying to shift your God-given responsibility to someone else.

Basically speaking our children obtain their standards from four sources. They are the home, community, church and school. All of these have a part either for good or bad in shaping the character of our children. These four units of society all share in the molding process, but not equally. The church of Christ in most places has provided Bible study classes where our children may be taught God's word. This is fine and parents ought to rejoice because the brethren are interested in their children. However, the total time spent in Bible classes and preaching services by the most faithful in attendance is only about four hours each week. Most communities are filled with worldiness and dominated by religious error and therefore can not always be trusted to set the proper standards for our youngsters. In too many instances the school system is in the hands of worldly minded, sectarian, political leaders who render it useless for real character molding. The community and school efforts have their place, but they can no more take the place of loving parents than an "Institutional Orphan Home." Some say the answer to this juvenile problem can be found in the creation of more parents and youth organizations. Is this the cure? NO! It is not more organizations we need. We have too many already. Dr. Herbert Ratner, Professor of Preventive Medicine says, "Fathers and mothers are kidding themselves when, under the guise of doing a greater good for their children and community, they become willingly and happily ensnared in the time consuming work of community organizations. Parents should return their talents and energies to the work of doing a bang-up job of rearing their children." Many educators now realize that the "tap root" of the youth problem is **FAILURE IN THE HOME**. Home has lost its meaning. One investigator telephoned numbers at random to ask parents, "Do you know where your child is right now?" In 64 percent of the cases a child answered and said he didn't know where his parents were!

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, THE HOME IS THE PRINCIPAL MOULDING PLACE FOR OUR CHILDREN. This fact was written in God's word long ago. "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6:4. "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." Titus 2:4-5. The trouble is, as parents we are trying to dodge and shift this God given responsibility. Some would shift this charge to the community, others to the school system, and still others place this burden on the elders, preachers, and Bible class teachers. Parents, try as you may to "pass the buck", the fact remains, this is chiefly your responsibility.

The authorities say, "It's up to the parents. If the law does not hold them responsible for the acts of their young, a higher court will". Our boys and girls are growing up in a pretty wicked generation. They need our love, sympathy, understanding and **our discipline**. No child is so strong that he could not fall prey to delinquency of some manner. It has been suggested that we watch for these ten early symptoms of trouble:

1. Truancy.
2. Evidence of alcohol or drugs on the breath, needle marks on the arms.
3. Cruelty to animals.
4. Sloppy appearance or dress that exaggerates sex. In boys, uncut hair. In girls, skin-tight jeans. (shorts, bathing suits, etc. W.R.J.)
5. Unexplained cuts, scratches, bruises.
6. Unexplained late hours.
7. Appearance of strange articles that were not purchased.
8. Possession of unnecessary weapons.
9. Flagrant disobedience.
10. Friends he never brings home.

There are the ten symptoms of delinquency. If you recognize one in your child, look into it. If you recognize three, look out!

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Co-Operation and Loyalty

GENE MARTIN
Brenham, Texas

Cooperation of churches and Christians should always be within the confines of loyalty to the Lord. In our work methods as well as our teaching we must be careful not to go beyond what is written. Frequently, discord arises among brethren because of misplaced loyalties. People develop loyalties to men, or causes, instead of to God. The church suffers severely when brethren support their friends or pet schemes at the expense of harmony and the welfare of the church. This happens concerning various promotions, "brotherhood" projects, and the like, which are without foundation within the scope of revealed authority. Considerable effort and time have been expended in controversy over such matters within our ranks these past few years. It is good to attempt great things for God, but we must be sure that they are "for God" and according to his will. Zeal is good; it is necessary to the effectual spread of the gospel, but it must be based upon knowledge and used as God directs. Knowledge that God is pleased with what we do and how we do it must be the motivating factor in all our thoughts and actions. Only a thorough and unbiased study of the Bible can provide this. Let the Bible be studied, believed and obeyed; nothing more, nothing less, nothing else is safe and sure for any of our practices.

It matters not how good and effective the "end results" may seem to us, both methods and accomplishments must be according to God's pattern. The church, its organization and work, are of divine origin, and thus are not subject to change or improvement. The New Testament, which contains "all things that pertain to life and godliness", furnishes the pattern for all phases of church work and organization. It is so complete that it furnishes "unto every good work".

The Lord adapted the organization of the church to its nature and work. Since Christianity is simple in principle, its organization also is simple. Nothing was directed toward form and flattery or pomp and circumstance. The church was built for service, not for show. We indicate a lack of understanding when we think and talk in terms of comparison with the denominational world's institutions and activities. Too many think in terms of denominational machinery with reference to the church. This is manifested by such expressions as "ours is the third largest in the country", "brotherhood papers", "Church of Christ schools, homes, preachers," etc. Evidence of denominational "church-anity" in many congregations is apparent to an alarming degree. That we can see if we are willing to see.

We trust that all are interested in "unity" and are concerned over the prevailing controversy within our ranks at the present time. When people accept "God's way" as the Bible presents it, they are united. But when they try unauthorized ways and disagree over "what God's way is", nothing can really bring them together. They will never be united until all are willing to accept and abide by what the Bible authorizes, and reject all else. Too many have forgotten that we are the people who have said so often, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak. Where the Bible is silent, we are silent." That is the only way we can be truly loyal to the Lord. But who would deny it? Then it should be easy for all to see the truth about cooperation and institutions.

Do we practice what we preach? We preach: "The plan is simple and safe. No book but the Bible, no creed but Christ, no name but the divine, no plea but the gospel, no aim

but to save and to serve. In faith . . . Unity; in opinion . . . liberty; in all things . . . charity." Do we believe it? Will we practice it? Time will tell.

THE WORD OF GOD

(Continued From Page 3)

"copy of the creed of the Church of Christ," I wrote him a lengthy reply. The first sentence of that reply was, "If you would like to study the creed of the church of Christ, just open your New Testament, for we have no creed other than the word of God."

The doctrine of modern revelations and the truth that God's word is all-sufficient cannot be harmonized, and thus, those churches (Mormon, Latter Day Saints, Assemblies of God, Catholic, et. al.) which hold to modern revelations find themselves in the unenviable position of denying the sufficiency of God's word. There is a prominent "faith-healing" evangelist of the Assemblies of God, A. A. Allen, who has published a book entitled *The Price of God's Miracle Working Power*, and on the front cover of the book is the claim, "Inspired of the Holy Spirit from a direct revelation from God." But does God continue to inspire men today? The New Testament exhorts us to "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). If the faith was "once for all" delivered in the first century, it is evident that none of it remains to be revealed in the twentieth century. Whether it be revelations to a band of Mormon apostles, or the living voice of a supposedly infallible church, we must make our choice between such doctrines and an all-sufficient Bible. We cannot have both!

Dependent

(5) **The word of God is dependent upon us.** The reader may ask, "Dependent? How can this be? If the Bible is inspired, powerful and all-sufficient, how can it be dependent on anything?" The answer is that God's word is dependent upon us, our attitude toward it and willingness to receive it; for despite all of its God-given qualities, the word will never redeem those who refuse its redemption. If one never obeys God's word, all of its power is in vain, at least as far as he is concerned.

Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto "all them that obey him," never to the disobedient. As for the disobedient, the Lord will come with his mighty angels in flaming fire to take vengeance on all those that know not God and obey not the gospel!

The parable of the sower might be called "the parable of the soils," for the four soils represent four kinds of people; the hardened, the shallow, the worldly and the obedient hearers. The seed which is sown is the word of God. Just as seed is essential to a harvest, so the word is essential to our becoming a Christian. But even when good seed is planted in the hardened wayside or stoney ground, no harvest will result. Thus, even though the word of God is God-breathed and all sufficient, even though it is the power of God unto salvation, its power will avail only when men trust and obey!

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OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

The three words forming the title of this article are of great importance in our relationship to God. They are set forth, each in its place in that relationship, in the parable of the talents. This parable, spoken by our Lord, is recorded by Matthew in the twenty fifth chapter of his gosepl. It is preceded by the parable of the wise and foolish virgins and followed by a detailed description of the final judgment. In these two parables Jesus tells us of the means by which we may prepare ourselves for the judgment of the great day. That of the wise and foolish virgins tells us of the necessity of being ready when the Lord comes, and that of the talents of how to make ready for his coming. Both are vital to our spiritual welfare both here and hereafter.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey". Matt. 25:14,16. The five talent man traded with his and gained other five. The two talent man gained other two. But the one talent man took his talent and hid it in the earth. So, when the Lord of the servants came to reckon with them he called each one before him. When he learned that the five talent man had gained five he pronounced blessing upon him. Likewise did he bless the two talent man. But, when the one talent man related what he had done he was condemned. The talent was taken away from him and given to him that had ten. This is presented to us this profoundly important lesson on preparation for the coming of the Lord and judgment. Let us study the principles of the preparation here enjoined.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE

Jesus is the man traveling into a far country. He left this earth, went into heaven, and will return to reckon with his servants. The servants are the citizens of his kingdom. The talents are the opportunities that are ours for serving him, to be used according to the ability that each of us has. The return of the Lord of those servants and the reckoning is the second coming of Christ to judgment.

The parable itself ought to give us a feeling of the great responsibility that abides each of us. Christ has left us here to execute his work, to carry out his righteous purposes. This responsibility we must be willing to assume in order to be his servants.

ABILITY PLUS OPPORTUNITY EQUALS RESPONSIBILITY

This is one of the primary lessons of the parable. It is a divine formula of man's moral and spiritual responsibility to God. The Lord does not expect anything of anyone that he is unable to do. Nor does he hold us responsible for that which we do not have the opportunity to do. Responsibility is measured by ability plus opportunity. God expects us to do all that these two equal.

This is not only true of the individual Christian. It is equally true of the congregation of Christians. What a congregation has the ability and the opportunity to do God expects of that congregation. Beyond this there is no responsibility. The idea that a congregation is responsible to God for more than it's ability is not taught in the New Test-

ament. But, if each individual will do what he can as he has opportunity and each congregation of Christians will do the same the Lord's work will be done. And, it will be done according to his will. The New Testament authorizes individual and congregational action and nothing else.

JUDGMENT OF INDIVIDUALS

This parable clearly points out that the reckoning will be on an individual basis. These three men with their combined increase could have given a very good accounting to the Lord. They received eight talents and at the coming of the Lord they had fifteen. But, it is not to be done that way. Each man was called individually to account. And so it will be in the last day of judgment. I will not be asked what my family did. What did you do?, will be the question. We cannot answer for one another. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that EVERY ONE may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10. I must answer for how I used my ability and my opportunity. And such will be the case with each one.

GIVEN AND TAKEN AWAY

To the one talent man the Lord said: "Thou wicked and slothful servant." Then he said: "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." This is a sad fact. Yet, the truth of it has been demonstrated many times. Let a man use his opportunities for serving God and they will be multiplied. Let him neglect or refuse them and they will be taken away. Let us here be warned of the danger of neglected opportunities.

APPROVED BECAUSE FAITHFUL

Finally, this lesson stands out in the parable. It is not the amount that a person does but the faithful use of whatever ability and opportunity he has that brings the approval of God upon him. God requires faithfulness. Whether it be the widow with two mites or the rich man with his great gifts, each must be faithful in the use of what he has.

This is the principle of equality at work. When each one gives what he is able to give and the Lord's work is done there is equality. True, each one did not exactly as much as all others, but each did according to his ability, hence equality.

CONCLUSION

If we will be ready for the Lord's coming—ready to enter into life eternal—ready to hear, well done, good and faithful servant—this is the course we must pursue in our lives here. May the Lord help us to use and to develop all the ability to serve him that we have. And, may we seize upon every opportunity for service, not as a burden, but as a treasured possession. In this way God will be honored, humanity will be blessed, and our own souls eternally saved.

ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED

(Continued From Page 9)

if all the rest of earth should go into the joys of our Lord and we ourselves be shut out? The real problem of our soul is not how many or how few are to enter heaven, but whether we will enter or not. If we will assure our hearts before God then the many or few will be no problem. The only real difficulty here is not of number but of personal consecration. That was the answer stressed by our Lord in the particular and specific answer given to this inquirer. Let us do all to enter in while the gate is open and sincerely try to take others with us and leave to comparisons of "many" or "few" to our great Judge.

IS THE CHURCH ESSENTIAL?

(Continued from Page 8)

that he was willing to pay whatever price necessary to assure its establishment—and the purchase price was his own precious blood. In Ephesians 5:23 Paul wrote: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." The New Testament teaches that we are saved by the blood of Christ, which was poured out on Calvary for the remission of sins. That blood—every drop of it—went into the purchase of the church. To contend that a man can be saved outside of the church is to claim that he can be saved without the merits of the blood of Christ.

The church is represented by many different figures in the New Testament, and—mark this—in every one of them Jesus Christ is characterized as the supreme ruler of that blood-bought institution! When the church is portrayed as a bride, Christ is the bridegroom, who nourishes and cherishes his bride. When it is pictured as a sheepfold he is depicted as the good shepherd, who constantly watches over his flock—yea, who gives his very life for his sheep. When the members of the church are presented as branches of the living vine, Christ is the vine, giving nourishment, life to the branches. When the church is spoken of as the kingdom of heaven, Christ is the all-powerful king, ruling wisely and well over his loyal subjects. In whatever form the church is presented to us it is always Christ who is the pre-eminent personality.

Those who claim to believe in Christ and at the same time deny that the church is important overlook the fact that when Jesus made the statement "Upon this rock I will build my church," he united himself with the church in an insoluble tie that no force on earth can ever sever. The world must learn that Christ is always, in everything, associated with the church. It is impossible to take Jesus Christ, isolate him from the church, and present him merely as a wonderful teacher with no vital, abiding interest in the institution which bears his name. You just cannot take Christ out of the church which owes its very existence to his passion! Ignore the church and you ignore the Lord! We can talk all day about what a marvelous teacher Christ is, but if we refuse to honor the bride of his bosom, the church, our talk is but idle chatter and vain prattle.

When Christ declared: "Upon this rock I will build my church" he did not envision the establishment of a mere "moral uplift" society that was to play no part at all in man's salvation from sin. When Jesus writhed in agony and suffered the torture of humiliation on the cross He did not pour out His blood to purchase a spiritually anemic institution that would make no contribution to the eradication of sin.

When the Holy Spirit came down in full force on Pentecost to announce and confirm the birthdate of the church he did not pour out the blessings of heaven upon the appearance of an organization that is totally isolated from God's system for the redemption of man. When the peerless apostle announced that the church is the body of Christ, that Christ is the head of it, and that he is the Saviour of the body, he was talking about an institution that is filled with the Holy Spirit, which houses all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and which is the pillar and ground of the truth.

There is only one way that we can give Christ the pre-eminence which the Bible demands for him, and that is by exalting the institution which He came into the world to establish. The only way we can lift Christ up is by living as faithful members of the body that He purchased with His own blood.

Christ is the only Saviour (Luke 19:10; I Timothy 2:5, 6), but Christ saves in the church. The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18). Christ is the Saviour of the body (Ephesians 5:23). When one is baptized he is saved from his past sins and added to the church (Acts 2:36-47; I Corinthians 12:13). The church is the called-out body (2 Thessalonians 2:14; I Peter 2:9; Colossians 1:13). The church is the blood-washed, blood-purchased body (Acts 20:28; cf Romans 6:3, 4; Ephesians 1:7). The church is the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27). When one is baptized he is married to Christ, and added to the church. (NOTE: The facts stated in this paragraph will be discussed in a series of articles on "The Church and Your Salvation.")

Do you believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God? Will you repent of your sins, and, upon a scriptural confession of faith, be buried with your Lord in baptism for the remission of sins? If you will, your sins will be washed away in the blood of the lamb, the Lord will add you to the church, the home of the saved, the gift of the Holy Spirit will be bestowed upon you, and, being faithful unto death, eternal bliss will be yours.

THE PROPER WAY TO PREACH

(Continued from Page 4)

come from a pure motive. These things should be completely foreign in preaching. As regards this Paul called upon God as his witness. His motive was above reproach because he did not seek the "glory of men" nor even the material rewards of men. This was evidenced by his "working night and day, that we might not burden any of you." verse 9.

4. "Affectionately desirous" of his brethren or hearers. Frequently Paul found it necessary to speak firmly and sharply to his brethren. Such action demanded boldness. And yet ever present with him was the love for men and their well-being. "But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children: evenso, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us." Verses 7, 8. This attitude is present in the parent who finds it necessary to correct his child. No gospel sermon is proper unless the preacher has this attitude toward his hearers, "affectionately desirous of you."

5. The evidence of sincerity. The incontestable proof of the characteristics discussed above is found in the manner of life. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblameably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe." 2:10. While the power of the gospel lies in the preaching of it, it is undeniable that a holy life greatly facilitates the reception of the message.

This is the way Paul preached. These characteristics are a part of his "ways in Christ" which he taught "everywhere in every church." Let us be positive that the preaching we do or that we hear follows this pattern. For, this is the proper way to preach.

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FROM THE HEART

(Continued from Page 5)

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 An apostle said so—
 "God forbid that I should glory save in the Christ."
 Christians sing so—
 "In the cross of Christ I glory,
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time!"
 Again,
 "So I'll cherish the cross, the old rugged cross . . .
 Man's ways are not God's ways!
 God meant it for good!
 Once the cross was shameful—
 Now the cross is glorious!

Thus with Stephen—
 God again makes men's wrath praise Him!
 Stephen died young;
 So did Jesus.
 Look what Jesus' death wrought!
 See what Stephen's death did!
 The church did not die.
 Prospered!
 Spread!
 A fire was kindled—
 A spark!
 A flame!!
 A blaze!!!
 A conflagration!!!!
 Truth is on the march!
 By foot . . .
 Camel . . .
 Ass . . .
 Chariot . . .
 Ship.

No radio—
 No TV—
 No newspaper—
 No telephone—
 No steamship—
 No railroad—
 No airplane—
 Notwithstanding—
 The kingdom is spreading!
 Each disciple . . .
 Each disciple going . . .
 Each disciple going and preaching . . .
 Each disciple going and preaching the word . . .
 All disciples going and preaching the word everywhere!!
 The banner is unfurled!
 Preachers . . .
 Preachers supported . . .
 Preachers supported by churches . . .
 Preachers supported by churches—direct!

Churches—
 Churches with elders . . .
 Churches with elders feeding . . .
 Churches with elders tending the flock . . .
 Churches with elders tending the flock among them . . .
 Churches with elders tending—to their own business!

Onward Christian soldiers!
 To all nations and classes!
 To all climates, kindreds, tongues!
 Jew . . .
 Gentile . . .
 Barbarian . . .
 Scythian
 Male . . .
 Female . . .
 Master . . .
 Servants . . .
 Parents . . .
 Children . . .
 King . . .
 Subjects . . .
 Like waters that cover the sea!
 The army of the Lord moves on!
 In synagogues and streets . . .

Market places and homes . . .
 Privately and publicly . . .

Day and night . . .
 Across valleys and plains . . .
 Across mountains and deserts . . .
 Across islands and seas . . .
 Across city lines and provinces . . .
 Across countries and continents!
 The world!!
 The world for Christ!!!

Jerusalem's loss was the world's gain.
 The world's loss was heaven's gain.
 Stephen's loss was his own gain.
 Stephen's example is our gain . . .
 Like, Jesus, he gave himself!

Think!
 So much in such short time!
 A. D. 33 Mark 16:15—
 "Go ye into all the world . . ."
 A. D. 57 Romans 10:18—
 "Their sound went out into all the earth,
 And their words unto the ends of the world."
 Twenty-five years!
 A. D. 33 Mark 16:15—
 ". . . preach the gospel to the whole creation."
 A. D. 62 Colossians 1:23—
 ". . . the gospel . . . was preached in all creation under heaven."
 Twenty-nine years!
 Thirty or thirty-five years at most!!!
 Stephen's death—not defeat but victory!
 Deliverance—
 For Stephen!
 The Church!
 The world!

TIME FOR A CHANGE

(Continued from Page 7)

guilt before God inquire what to do, they are told to repent and be baptized, or repent and be converted. This shows, while conversion doesn't embrace only baptism, that it is never effected prior to and without obedience by the believing and penitent sinner to this command.

Conversion, properly considered, is a progressive and continuing action experienced by those who would seek and secure the ever-increasing favor of God. We are to grow in the grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and growth involves change. In resigning our thoughts and forsaking our ways, and, converse there to, seeking to cultivate and embrace God's thoughts and pursue his ways we both radical and progressively undergo those changes for the better and thus increasingly strengthen our hope of heaven and enrich our capacity for the enjoyment of its blessings in the great afterwhile. Now is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time. May we not harden our hearts as they did in the day of provocation.

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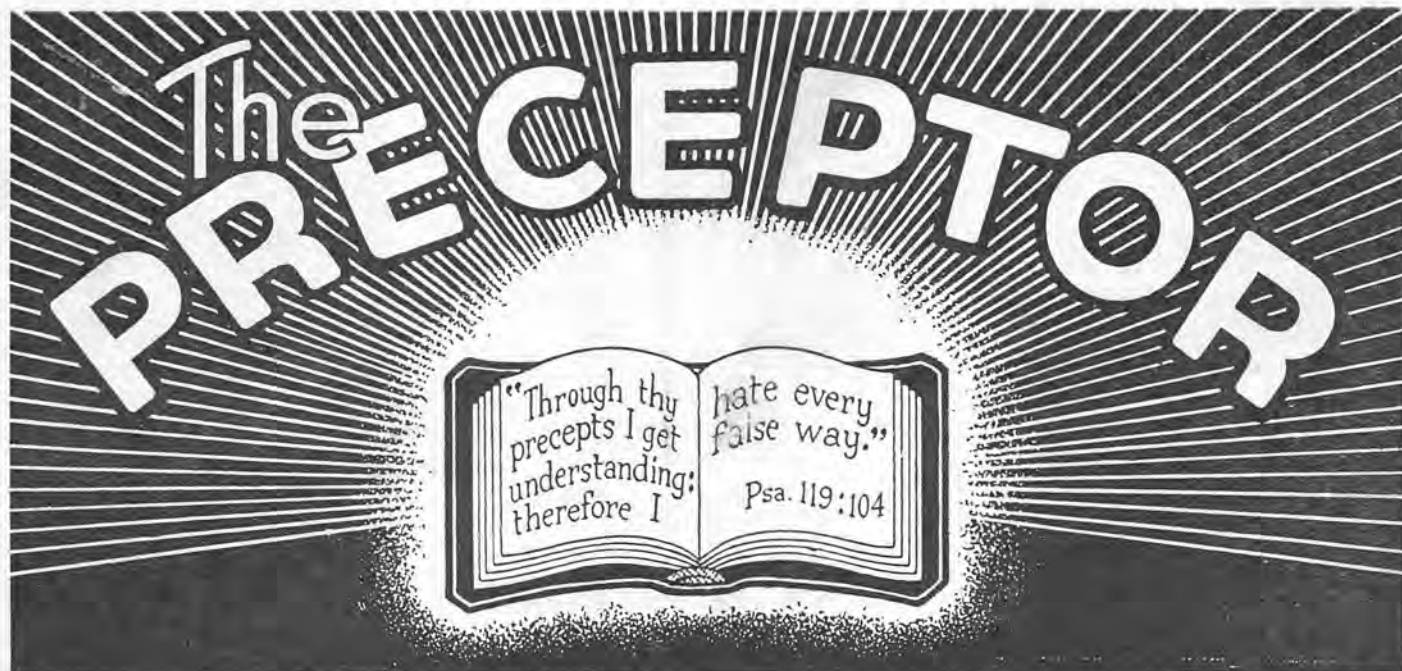
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"CHRIST JESUS OUR HOPE"

HARRY PICKUP, JR.
Grapevine, Texas

Many words are used to describe Christ but none is more comforting or assuring than "hope." Because He is the triumphant ruling priest, both "faithful and merciful," the Christian dares to hope.

Hope is more than wishing; it is "desire with expectation of receiving." Expectation implies "reason." And the Christian's hope is built upon the most solid foundation: the immutable promises of God Almighty revealed through the gospel.

The "hope of eternal life" God promised "long ages ago." And God cannot lie. In His own good time He "manifested his word in the message, where-with I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour." Titus 1:2, 3. Hope based upon such "reason" (1 Peter 3:15) sustains us; it is the very anchor of our soul. To God we have fled for refuge and, therefore, our hope is "both sure and steadfast." Heb. 6:18, 19. By hope we are saved. Rom. 8:24. Hope dissipates extreme anxieties. Phil. 4:6.

Because the Jews considered Paul a traitor to their "hope" they accused him of such crimes as would demand his life, if proven guilty. Standing before his accusers in the presence of Rome's representative Paul made it clear that one man was not on trial but

"the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers" (Acts 26:6) was to be judged.

In the presence of death, viewing the house where once lived life and happiness, the mourner is able to banish sadness and in its place put hope. Our hope goes beyond time, through the unseen, and into eternity. For, "If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men pitiable." 1 Cor. 15:19.

That for which we hope—eternal life—is an inheritance that bears the characteristics of God. As He is eternal so our hope is "incorruptible," imperishable and enduring; as He is Holiness so our hope is "undefiled" and cannot be stained with the blemishes peculiar to time; as His goodness abides forever so our hope does not "fade away" or wither. 1 Peter 1:3, 4.

Is there anything more pitiful than the one whose hope is merely wishing because he lacks the sustaining basis of "reason"—the evidence contained in "the message"? Christ Jesus cannot be the "hope" of any who will not obey him. For this reason the message of truth must be courageously and continuously preached.

Does your hope stand sure upon the testimony of God's Word?



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EDITORIAL

Problems Which Confront

From her beginning the Lord's church has been forced to grapple with almost every conceivable type of problem. Circumcision, immorality, and heathen philosophy were but some of the issues faced by the church of the first century. Church history is largely a recitation of attempts to solve encountered difficulties. As long as the clash between good and evil continues there will always be problems to meet. Let us not suppose that in our, or, in any man's day we shall escape them.

Ignorance of God's word continues to be a most acute problem. A sizable part of current difficulties could be quickly dispelled if we but knew what the New Testament teaches. This alarming state of affairs is only intensified when we ponder that this lamentable condition obtains not only among brethren generally but is also painfully evident among the elders of many congregations. This situation imperatively demands a greatly increased emphasis on Bible teaching from the home, the class, and the pulpit. Not just teaching—but Bible teaching. An informed church can right its own ills, will be alert to and resist the encroachment of error, and from the motive of divine truth known and believed, be stirred to greater zeal.

Attitudes toward the word of God increasingly continue to present themselves as a major problem. Modernism, seeking to rob the scriptures of their miraculous inspiration, their record of miracles, and their divine authority and all-sufficiency, is more and more in evidence among us. Its subtle methods

and the difficulty of recognizing it for what it is are two of its insidious features. Undulating ever so cunningly between the dividing line of truth and error; and, then again boldly showing its true colors in its inborn hostility to the word of God; while at another time it may pose as the very soul of conservatism itself. Whether it be gleanings from liberal sources parroted from the pulpit, the naive class teacher unsuspectingly passing on modernistic material; or, the subtle insinuations and implications of the modernistic pedant in the college class room, its effect is to shake confidence in the word of God. Nothing can more effectively obliterate New Testament Christianity than this foe which strikes at the very basis of its existence, i.e., the divine and authoritative word of God.

The most controversial issue facing the church today is that of "centralized control." It involves the question of the right of a single congregation to plan, oversee, and prosecute a work of general evangelism or benevolence to which every other church is equally related, and through which, potentially, the church universal can function. Or, whether an institution separate and apart from the church can so plan, oversee, and prosecute such a work. When the all-sufficient local congregation adheres to the all-sufficient word, she can do everything that God intends for her to do in fulfilling her mission. It was done during the first century and it must so be done in our century. We must walk by faith. The utter gravity of the state of things is seen in the anxious fears of many on both sides of the issue, of the possibility of a cleavage in the Lord's church. God forbid that the Lord's body should be thus rent. When the question is resolved it will be because cool heads and warm hearts have appealed to and have been willing to settle the matter in the light of eternal truth. Let us continue to humbly, studiously, and prayerfully study the matter in the light of God's word. Earnest exchange of ideas in areas of disagreement with appreciation for one another as brethren in the Lord will go far in solving the problem.

Worldliness poses a real problem to the Lord's people. Never before has the materialistic concept of life, through so many potent media, been so effectively presented in all of its deceptive allurements with such terrific impact. That a man's life does consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses and that it is better to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season than to suffer ill-treatment with the people of God has been tacitly accepted by even some in the Lord's church. Attrited lives about us

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ROBERT F. TURNER

Gladewater, Texas

It is becoming increasingly apparent that this expression "autonomy of the church" has been on the tongue of many preachers and teachers, but not in their "heart." Some do not know what the expression means, some do not appreciate its importance, and some make little pretence of practicing its demands. But—it is a good "historical" expression—the orthodox have always believed in it—so we go on mouthing it as a part of our sermons on "Characteristics of the N.T. Church." Wouldn't be without it!

"Autos" means "self"; "nomos" means "law"; so the most simple definition for the word "autonomy" is "self-governed," or the "right of self-government." An autonomous congregation is one with the right of self-government; and if—as has been preached for years—autonomy is indeed a characteristic of a divinely approved congregation (and I believe it is) then a divinely approved congregation **exercises** that right. To the extent that a congregation fails to exercise her right of self-government, to that extent she fails to receive divine approbation.

Notice that the above paragraph makes "congregation" the "church" of our subject. This is as it should and must be. The church in its universal sense—the great body of Christ—is not autonomous—"self-governed." It is a monarchy; a group of citizens who have completely subjected their will to that of their king, Jesus Christ. The New Testament gives us no hint of a functional organization for the church universal. No provision is made for an earthly headquarters, universal church officers, or universal church law-making body of any kind. (Not even an expediting board!) On the other hand, the church (congregation) is located (Phil. 1:1), has "officers" (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23), reaches decisions (I Cor. 16:3), and functions (Phil. 4:15; Acts 11:22).

Not only is autonomy limited to the congregation, but self-government is acceptable to God only in certain phases of the congregation's work. The individual Christian does not lose his obligation to Christ—the relation of subject to King—when he works with other Christians in a congregation. The overseers of a congregation are not "lords over God's heritage" but rule by example—their own example of following the dictates of the King, or Chief Shepherd. (1 Pet. 5:1-4) They are not a law-making body—"for one is your Master, even Christ—" (Matt. 23:8); and their decisions, being the decisions of uninspired men, are not a part of "the faith once delivered unto the saints." We have been warned that it is possible for elders to speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20:30). All of this is said, not to discredit or dishonor godly elders of the church, but to make clear their divinely appointed field of operation. A congregation is not autonomous in the realm of faith.

This leaves us the field of judgment or opinion; the choice of various expedencies that have first been proven lawful by the Word of God. In this realm, and in this realm only, is a congregation autonomous. Here, and here only, may she exercise her right of self-government. And to carry this a bit further, here she **must** exercise autonomy. This characteristic (self-government) is one of the identifying marks by which the existence of a New Testament church is determined. If a congregation ever loses her autonomy,

she does so in losing the right of self-government in matters of judgment and/or opinion. This is the only realm in which she has any autonomy to lose. And of course, if she ever fails to exercise her autonomy, that failure is likewise in this same realm of judgment and/or opinion. Let us illustrate the case.

No autonomy (self-government) is exercised when a congregation "decides" to "preach the Word." This is a mandate of the King. We must preach the Word, as a matter of faith, and in keeping with our desire to be faithful. The man who teaches others of Christ **only** because the elders command him to do so, is failing to show proper respect to the Head of the church, Christ. And the man who would refuse to teach the truth because the elders forbade it, would also be unworthy of the name Christian. Teaching truth is not a matter of opinion or judgment; it is the realm of faith. But there are various things connected with the preaching of the Word, such as particular location, method of presentation (whether by radio, newspaper, etc.), and other details, which are not determined by command, approved example, or necessary inference from the Word of God. These things are in the realm of human judgment, and when congregational activity is concerned, each congregation must be self-governed in reaching decisions on these matters.

A congregation has no autonomy to lose in relieving her widows who are "widows indeed." (I Tim. 5:16). This is a matter of faith. But a congregation may lose her autonomy by allowing some human organization or another congregation to exercise her right of self-government in matters of opinion and/or judgment necessary to the carrying out of God's command.

A congregation has no autonomy to lose in sending assistance to some distressed sister congregation. (I Cor. 16:2-3). This is a matter of faith. But a congregation may lose her autonomy by allowing some "middle" organization or "sponsoring church" to exercise her right of self-government in matters of opinion and/or judgment necessary to the execution of God's command. (Note in the example give—I Cor. 16:—the Corinthian church made such decisions.)

Finally—it should now be clear that a missionary organization, benevolent institution, or even a congregation with her elders does wrong in taking the autonomy (right of self-government in matters of opinion) of another congregation. But here we are dealing with a possibility that rarely happens in actuality. Seldom is the autonomy of any congregation taken; i.e., taken by force. This would be somewhat on a par with forcing a congregation to use mechanical instruments of music against her will. It just isn't done. The American Christian Mission Society of 1849, a dividing wedge between disciples of the Restoration movement, did not take autonomy of the churches. Assumed,—yes! And even her assumptions were but gradually enlarged, from the very growth and development of such "brotherhood" institutions; and had the church answered these assumptions with a firm, "NO!" the society would have perished. But the churches GAVE away their autonomy—not in all matters, mind you, but in regard to decisions and judgments in matters of opinion respecting the sending forth of evangelists. They ALLOWED the society to plan and execute various "missionary" efforts, and were content to simply make a contribution to this "great work," and receive a printed report now and then on the progress

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Restoration and Reaction

Are You Contending?

GENE MARTIN
Brenham, Texas

Much is heard and read about "factions," "party-spirits," and "contentious brethren"; and, all manner of condemnation is heaped upon those thought to be guilty of such attitudes and actions. This is right and proper when people do the things in the way and manner which the Bible condemns. But, there is one matter about which God's people ought to be contentious; in fact, Christians are commanded to be so. In Jude 3 the language is plain and unmistakable "... earnestly contend for the faith," says Holy Writ.

When one obeys this specific command he is not to be criticized and maligned because he contends for matters of faith as opposed to human innovations and extra-scriptural organizations. Distinction must be made between contending for the faith and a hard-to-get-along-with attitude which is calculated to engender strife among brethren. Some have been vilified because they contended for truth and safety; they have been misrepresented as simply promoting strife and division, and their motives have been impugned. This ought not to be, and it will not be if the proper distinction is made. We should "hold up the hands" of those who seek to stem the tides of digression from the pattern of truth.

There are attempts to "modernize" the church and its work by some who fail to see any tendency toward "modernism" in their efforts. "Ways and means" are the main point of contention. New ways and new means, promotions borrowed from religious neighbors, and such-like are thought to be more effective. Surely all still recognize the Bible as being all-sufficient for our faith and practice; we need no "modernizing" or streamlining.

When digression is evident, we need to heed the admonition of Deut. 19:14, "Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set." We must contend for strict adherence to scriptural authority for our activities. Even when people do not like it we must contend; even when they think our remarks are "too pointed" we must contend. Our contention must be of such strength that we can say with the Psalmist: "I have set Jehovah always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

We must neither sit on the sidelines nor remain silent when we see brethren drifting into error. Listen to Isaiah: "Lift ye up a banner upon a high mountain, exalt the voice unto them." With him the Psalmist agrees: "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of truth." That demands a "public" stand for God's truth. "Private" convictions are not enough.

There is no need to deal in personalities. It is not so

much a matter of "who is right" but rather a question of "WHAT is right" according to Bible teaching on the subject under consideration. No matter where the majority stands, or who is in favor of it, or how influential its promoters; popularity is not the deciding factor; is it right in God's sight? . . . that must be the basis of our decision and the stand we take. Majorities have been in the wrong. Important and intelligent people have been in error. The only safe thing to do is to find where the Bible authorizes it. No man can be sure that he is safe when he pursues doubtful things; and, when God has not authorized it, it can be no better than doubtful at its very best. It may well be altogether displeasing in God's sight. In that case, it would result in condemnation to those who pursue it, and all because they had not the proper regard for scriptural authority.

Be not deceived, brethren, it isn't "backward" and "non-progressive to walk in the "old paths" of truth and righteousness. It is disastrous if we do not. Spiritual safety is not in numbers; it is in scriptural precedent. We must contend for truth and right, always. Are YOU contending? If you are, you won't be popular with some folks, but you WILL be pleasing to God. You likely won't be on the "bandwagon," and the "big, important preachers and churches" may not be pleased with you. But, whether you should seek to please God or men . . . "judge ye."

Building by Faith

C. E. W. DORRIS
Nashville, Tennessee

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 20, 21)

There are those who pull down. Even among the professed followers of the Christ, there are those who are destructive and not constructive, who are destroying and not building, who are a dead weight and a drag to the church; who never assist, aid, nor help, who are controlled by custom rather than by law, and by selfish aims rather than the common good of man and the glory of God. Had there been none of these, the admonition of Jude would not have been necessary, certainly not so urgently necessary. But there were knockers and critics and destroyers then, even as there are now. There are, and have been all along, men who are given to pessimism, and who create trouble wherever they go. When there is peace and harmony, they introduce strife and discord, because nothing that others do seems quite satisfactory in their eyes. They see things that do not exist, and imagine tendencies, results and consequences the most remote, unlikely and improbable. They are found in most communities (not all), more or less, numerous and always have a predilection for murmuring and complaining. They carry about an ache and a grouch because nothing appears to them right. The faithful builder bears with them and keeps driving forward in the Lord's work.

The heavenly admonition would warn us against the awful sin of tearing down the church and destroying the work of the Lord. No sort of excuse will be acceptable in God's sight. The unity of God's people is a sacred, important, wonderful thing. Do not destroy it.

Thinking With Parents And Teachers

"Train up a child in the way he should go."
(Proverbs 22:6)

IRENE SOWELL FOY

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN

PART I — THE BASIC PRINCIPLE—ONENESS

Jesus closed his great sermon given on the mountain with this lesson:

"Everyone therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rocks." (Matt. 7:24, 25)

From II Timothy 3:16, 17, one learns the source to which one may go for direction in any undertaking of this life. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

From "scripture inspired of God" one learns that the home was the first institution established on earth by God. Jehovah God saw among all his living creatures that "for man there was not found a help meet for him." Man was the crowning of all creation, for God had said with respect to him, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (Gen. 2:26) Thus was man given by God an exalted position over and above all the creatures of the earth. He was given the distinction of being made "in the image of God." A "help meet for him" could not be found among the beasts of the field but must need be "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," woman. "Therefore," said Jehovah, "shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

Thus was a foundation principle for the home set out by Jehovah God; the male and female of the creatures in his own image were designed to function as one flesh. Jesus, in response to the question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?", said, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matt. 19:4-6)

Thus the great foundation principle of that first institution established by God is oneness of its two principle characters. That is a principle taught by our King of Kings, so then in order to be dignified by the modifying word, Christian, the home must conform to that foundation principle set out by Christ himself.

"Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain

that build it." (Psalm 127:1)

The home must be Christian to begin with in order to be kept Christian.

How May The Two Be One?

"O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23)

God provides in His word the answer as to how the two may be one. In Genesis 6, God presents a picture of the unfortunate results of a marriage where oneness was not a consideration. "The sons of God saw the daughter of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they choose." After those marriages, out of harmony with God's foundation principle for that relationship "Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Genesis 6:5) From the giving of that foundation principle of the home by God, until today, conformity to this plan has resulted in happy homes. Setting aside God's plan and substituting man's plan brings further evil works and confusions, and the many "problems" that confront man today.

In the long ago God instructed his people, Israel, to make no covenant with the people in "the land whether thou goest to possess it. He said, "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For he will turn away thy son from follownig me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he will destroy thee quickly." (Deut. 7:3, 4)

Solomon brought on himself suffering from the anger of Jehovah because of his failure to respect God's principle of oneness with one woman in the marriage relation. The record in I Kings 11 is: "Now King Solomon married many foreign women. . . . For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his hearts after other gods . . . And Solomon did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah And Jehovah was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from Jehovah." Speaking further on his condemnation of "mixed marriages," in Nehemiah 13 we read, "Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon, king of Israel, sin by these things? . . . Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to trespass against our God in marrying foreign women?"

God, through the writing of Paul to the church of Corinth, instructs Christians today in any relationship where two or more must work together, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" When two become one in wedlock, they are "yoked together." If "unequally yoked," what part can he that believeth have with an infidel? As to the widow, Paul wrote, "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." (I Cor. 7:39)

In order to keep the home Christian, it must begin with a Christian man and a Christian woman equally yoked 'till death. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

(Our next topic will be: Parenthood.)

PRECEPTOR PERCEPTIONS



Living in the Middle of the Road

L. WESLEY JONES

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Gospel preachers desiring to be faithful and devoted have long been challenged by this charge of Paul to Timothy: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2) Each time the charge is read new and apparently obvious meanings come to light that have been over-looked. Each time, new strength, new zeal, new courage and new loyalties are stirred. Each time the student is all the more staggered by the tremendous responsibilities attending the work of gospel preaching.

This time attention is called to the plea of Paul that Timothy be moderate—That he live in the **middle of the road**. This expression may have various connotations for our readers. It is a popular term in politics. It invariably means different things to different people, depending entirely upon the relative positions occupied by those who use it. Politically, to a man who is to the "right" a middle-of-the-roader seems a "leftist." To a "left-winger" a middle-of-the-roader seems to have swung to the right. But even though these difficulties attend the use of this term, the meaning in this article will be clear upon an examination of these points:

Two words of Paul form a paradox or an apparent incongruity. These are the words "instant" (urgent, ASV) and "longsuffering." The first requires positive and determined action. The second requires patience and endurance. It is here that the apparent incongruity lies. It is in a proper understanding of the terms, and in a proper balance of these qualities that one finds what is here meant by living in the middle of the road.

"Instant" is a part of an expression which Dr. A. T. Robertson says means to "take a stand," "stand upon it or up to it" . . . "stick to it." The Apostle's use of this word demands that the preacher be a man of conviction. It demands that he be a man who can make up his mind—One that can form his belief on the basis of testimony. (The word translated "instant" is a form of *pisteuo*, to believe.) At the same time the reproof, rebuke and exhortation offered by a preacher from his convictions are to be with longsuffering—With patience and endurance.

One explanation of the verses, and probably the correct one, is that Paul urged Timothy to form convictions without hesitancy and in all kinds of circumstances, and to preach those convictions; but to be patient in waiting for the result. But whatever explanation one may make of the verses, if it be one that does not explain them away, he is still face to face with the fact that a preacher's life and work is to

be a balance of urgency and patience—Of conviction and longsuffering.

This balance, or middle of the road as we have called it, is explicit and implicit in other passages. Paul said that those who are crowned in the Christian race are those who are "temperate in all things." I Cor. 9:25) Such temperance will not countenance extremes. Such a principle requires temperate thinking, temperate speech, etc.

To the Phillipian brethren the same apostle said, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." (Phil. 4:5) This word is uniformly defined by scholars to mean "your sweet reasonableness," "gentleness," or just "reasonableness." Here is reason tempered with consideration. Hence Matthew Arnold's definition of "sweet reasonableness."

An application of this principle is far more difficult than the statement of it. Perhaps the best we can do is to raise some problems—Not settle them.

THOSE WHO CHANGE POSITIONS?

1. Let us seek an application to brethren who change their minds.

This is a time when many are changing "positions." Perhaps at no other time in this generation have so many changes taken place. The church has been swept forward (and downward) by a blind zeal. It has taken some longer to awaken than others, but as brethren awake from their sleep, they are turning about and firmly declaring themselves lest they drift away from the things they have heard. But no sooner had these numerous changes begun to be known when some cries of protest were heard. Some have said that one should "get out of the teaching field until he gets changed."

When all of the talk about changing is sifted down, we believe there will be extremes. The Christian's duty will be to find the middle of the road. What is reasonable, temperate attitude toward such changes?

It cannot be overlooked that Peter made many changes after being called by Christ, that would be most embarrassing in the present atmosphere. He made some changes after being commissioned as an apostle. (Gal. 2:1-14) This was, of course, after he was a public teacher. The change was startling, and dealt with a great fundamental of the gospel, and one of the greatest living issues of the First Century Church. We believe he, and all like him, are between two extremes in making their changes. On the one hand is the man who changes his colors like the chameleon, and these changes will have to do with his "convictions," and he will make them to suit his surroundings. He will believe and preach one thing in one pulpit, and something else entirely in another.

On the other hand we have those who refuse to change because they are ashamed. Someone may have made them ashamed. There are instance where threats have been made, and young men have been warned away from certain views before they even knew what these views were. To such, any alteration or exchange of or variation from the **one course pursued**, preached and practiced by the home church, the respected preacher of the community, or the influential journal or Alma Mater would be as unthinkable as for some Baptist girls to give up Baptist doctrine because it would speak disrespectfully of their mothers.

Between the two extremes is the middle of the road. Here one considers all information that he can find from any

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The Question Box



Deacons and Elders

ARNOLD HARDIN
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The following questions come from the State of California and at the request of the Editor I will attempt to give the desired information. Number one: "Is it scriptural to have deacons without elders?" Number two: "If all but one elder resigns is it according to sound doctrine that he remain an elder that is an inactive elder?"

The scriptures speak of the bishops and deacons. (Phil. 1:1) The conjoining of "bishops and deacons" in Paul's letter "To the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi," brings them into peculiar prominence. The work of the bishops or elders is seldom a matter of conjecture. Such, however, has not been true of the work of deacons. But, suffice it for this answer, the deacons were and are to assist the elders in whatever capacity the elders, in their oversight, deem wise and best. The term deacon is a transliteration of the Greek diakonos. They were to be servants working with and under the elders. Nowhere do we read of the church in a given locality having deacons without elders.

Yet, we should not be too hasty in condemning a congregation that has appointed deacons without there being elders. I say this for this reason: The work of elders and deacons differ. Elders are shepherds. Theirs is a spiritual oversight, particularly, though they must oversee every phase of the work. They rule and discipline under the chief Shepherd. This the deacons can not do. Now, if a group of Christians does not have within it men qualified as elders there must yet be some kind of "leadership" provided for the proper functioning of that church. If it has men qualified to serve as deacons why would it not be in harmony with truth and order to select such men and let them be known as deacons? To be sure, they would be selected not to "rule" over the church, for this they would be unqualified to do, but the secular workings of that church could be properly looked after by those deacons. This has been done by quite a few churches to my limited knowledge. The physical needs of that church could be planned and executed by these men working as they would in cooperation with the entire group. If this arrangement, in the absence of elders be wrong, then the same men or others will need be selected to look after the affairs of said church or else "nobody's business becomes every body's business" and vice versa. The Lord's work will then "go begging."

Question number two: The New Testament reveals that the Lord's church had a plurality of elders in each locality, (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-9; I Pet. 5:1-4; Phil. 1:1) It would therefore be unscriptural for a church to have just one elder. God's wisdom in such an arrangement is easily discernable. A congregation having elders, and all resign save one, that one should also resign until such a time another man becomes qualified to serve with him as overseers. There is no such thing as an inactive elder in God's sight.

There may be many in the sight of men! If, in God's sight, a man is an elder he is active. An elder, one fulfilling his duties to God's church, ceases to be an elder or bishop should he become "inactive." The churches had elders. No church should ask a man to shepherd the flock alone. This is not God's plan for the oversight of his church.

Who Will Go?

MERRILL E. CONDIFF
Park Rapids, Minnesota

While areas in the United States starve for the Truth of God's Word, for lack of preachers, men with great ability are reluctant to leave the section of the nation where they were born and raised. Some refuse to go to mission fields because of climate conditions. Others, because it will mean a separation from their relatives. Is this reluctance and sometimes outright refusal to go in keeping with the command of our Saviour to "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"? When men refuse to take up abode in an area where the Truth is not being preached because it means a distant separation from mother, father, sister and brother, are they not running a risk of being told in that day "depart from me, ye that work of iniquity for I never knew you." Jesus said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Some of the preachers who have been willing to go to these mission fields soon find themselves literally swamped with work. Such a condition exists in an area in northern Minnesota where Harry E. Johnson is laboring with the congregation at Wadena. Brother Johnson, the only preacher in the northwestern part of that state, is conducting home study or "cottage classes" three nights a week in addition to a regular mid-week service, a daily radio program Monday through Friday, as well as two programs on Sunday; teaches a class and preaches two sermons on the Lord's Day. The results of his untiring devotion to the Lord's Work has caused the small congregation in Park Rapids located thirty-five miles north of Wadena to treble since the beginning of the year. Denominational preachers are being harassed by questions from members of their congregation as a direct result of this teaching program. The saddest part of it all is there is only one person in Brother Johnson and it is impossible for him to be at hand when these denominational men try to side step the Bible and pervert the gospel in an attempt to chill the interest shown by their members in the scriptures. Several of the people in these "cottage classes" have indicated a desire to hold classes in their own homes to interest their circle of friends and relatives but this is not possible because of the lack of a man with ability to teach. Because of the "exalted" position of preachers in the many churches in this area, it is necessary that a man who receives his support as a preacher teach these classes. The fields are truly "white unto harvest" but it will require more than one reaper to gather all the sheaves.

Surely, there must be some capable men who love the Lord more than relatives and who are unafraid to face the elements of the northern part of our vast country. If those who pervert the gospel find living in these areas no problem does it not put to shame those who hesitate to come because of winter weather conditions? Congregations who are in a position to support men willing to go should be most anxious to assist in missions such as the one described in this article

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An Actual Example of Roman Catholic "Evidence"

LUTHER W. MARTIN
St. James, Missouri

Frequently, non-Catholics wonder as to just what kind of 'evidence' does the Roman Church use in attempting to PROVE that the Apostle Peter was ever in Rome, let alone, any 'evidence' as to his becoming the first Pope of Rome.

Obviously, they must assert that he WAS ONCE in Rome, if they stand a chance of making the claim of his being a Pope. In the next few paragraphs, we copy from "A History of The Catholic Church, For the Use of Colleges, Seminaries, and Universities," written by Charles Poulet, a Benedictine Monk, and translated from the French by Sidney A. Raemers. It is published by B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Missouri. It carries the required *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*, indicating that the required Church officials gave their approval for its publication. On page 31, we copy under the following title:

"THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AT ROME"

"The origins of Christianity at Rome are VEILED IN OBSCURITY. (Emphasis mine, L.W.M.) No doubt it was introduced by Roman proselytes who had heard Peter's preaching in Jerusalem; then by soldiers of the *cohors italica civium romanorum voluntariorum*, a body of volunteers who resided at Caesarea within call of the governor of Palestine; and finally, PERHAPS, (my emphasis, L.W.M.) by Cornelius, the centurion, an officer of this legion, and a number of other converts among the military, who, upon returning to Rome, had hastened to spread the 'good news.' It MAY WELL BE, (my emphasis, L.W.M.) also, that Peter paid his first visit to Rome in the reign of Claudius, between 41 and 44, and remained there about six years, when an imperial edict banished all Jews. The community gradually made progress in growth and development. In 57, an illustrious recruit, Pomponia Graecina, joined its ranks. In the following year it had already attained sufficient proportions to warrant Paul writing his Epistle to the Romans. In the salutations with which the letter closes, we remark the predominance of Roman names, a positive proof that the community had spread beyond the restricted Jewish quarters. And yet, when St. Paul arrived in chains, in the year 61, the "brethren" came to meet him in the Forum of Appius, a proof that their number was still rather small. As yet little prejudice existed against the Christians, who were frequently confused with the Jews. Paul was, no doubt, able to take advantage of the situation, because, although in the continual custody of a Roman soldier, he received many visitors and even preached the gospel abroad. Under his direction (UNDER PAUL'S DIRECTION, L.W.M.) the community must have made rapid progress, for Tacitus avers that in the year 64 the Christians already comprised an immense multitude ('*ingens multitudo*'). When these words were penned, Paul had been set free and left Rome to undertake several journeys.

"No writer today raises any doubt concerning this departure of Paul from the Eternal City, and no one contests the fact that the Apostle was put to death after a second arrest in the year 67. His captivity, as described by himself in his Epistle to the Philippians, is very different from that described in his Second Epistle to Timothy. When he wrote the former of these Epistles, his quarters were com-

fortable and he was allowed to receive visitors; when he wrote the latter, he was lying in chains and treated like a criminal. Moreover, the Acts of the Apostles end abruptly with the statement that Paul remained two years in Rome in the custody of a soldier; if he had been put to death soon after, St. Luke would surely have made mention of the fact.

* * * *

"The Roman community was not without a shepherd during this time, for St. Peter had come to the city about A.D. 63 or 64. The earliest PROOF (emphasis mine, L.W.M.) of this statement is the testimony of the Apostle himself, who dates his First Epistle from Babylon. Now, IT IS NOT ALL LIKELY (my emphasis, L.W.M.) that Peter made a trip to Mesopotamia. The city of Babylon was no longer in existence, hence the name here is used symbolically to designate Rome, which had often been called the Babylon of the West." (Pages 31-32.)

AN ANALYSIS OF THIS PRETENDED PROOF!

(1) The origins of Christianity at Rome are VEILED IN OBSCURITY, is the first admission of weakness of their Peter-in-Rome tradition.

(2) Christianity was PERHAPS taken to Rome by Cornelius or other members of the military. The use of the word "perhaps" is in itself an admission of LACK OF FACT!

(3) That Peter made his FIRST visit to Rome . . . they say, IT MAY WELL BE. Again this is an admission of lack of actual evidences. "May-be-so" and *mebbe* not so!

(4) Please notice the INFERENCE made in the above assertion concerning Peter's "FIRST" alleged journey to Rome, thus inferring that he made still another trip to Rome.

(5) Notice their inadvertent ADMISSION that the church in Rome grew "UNDER PAUL'S DIRECTION."

(6) In the second paragraph copied, the historian says that IT IS NOT AT ALL LIKELY, that Peter made a trip to the literal city of Babylon.

The foregoing points display the weak structure upon which the Catholic historian rests his assertion that Peter went to Rome. However, we now submit some points in addition to those contained within the historian's own context.

(1) The First Epistle of Peter was directed to Christians and was filled with literal and practical instructions for its readers . . . yet IF we are to accept the Catholic assertion that the term "Babylon" in I Pet. 5:13, is not to be taken literally with all the rest of the books, but that the word "Babylon" herein used is symbolic or figurative, then we violate the basic rules of scripture study. Now, IF the book in question was similar to Revelation, wherein we are told that it is written in signs or symbols, then we might consider the Catholic assertion . . . but NOT with Peter's epistles!

(2) The introduction to the Kleist-Lilly Translation (Catholic) of the New Testament's First Epistle of Peter, states in part . . . "IT IS HISTORICALLY UNCERTAIN THAT ST. PETER ALSO WAS IN ROME WHERE HE ENDURED MARTYRDOM, either in A.D., 64 or 76, during the reign of Nero." (Page 603.)

(3) However, if we concede to the Catholic Church that the word "Babylon" in I Peter 5:13, IS symbolic, and does mean "ROME," then the Roman Catholic Church MUST ALSO CONCEDE that in the Book of Revelation which IS A book of SYMBOLS, that when BABYLON is mentioned that it actually means ROME!

(Continued on Page 15)

Studies in the New Testament

(NO. 10)

GEORGE P. ESTES
Maplewood, Missouri

James, Chapter 3

A teacher performs a function; he expounds the meaning of the Scriptures to others. In due process of time all Christians should develop into teachers: "For when by reason of time ye ought to be teachers." (Heb. 5:12). To show that this is a grave responsibility, James places the activity of teaching at the judgment. A teacher therefore, must give an account of what he teaches. One must teach only the "oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11) and "hold the pattern of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). The tongue (vv. 2-12) and wisdom (vv. 13-19) are sub-topics to the truth, the word of God which the teacher teaches.

Man is God's creation, His creature. Moses in the account of creation wrote: "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" (Gen. 1:26). James reveals also that man is "made after the likeness of God." (Jas. 3:9). And in the same verse calls God both "Lord and Father." The word "Father" was introduced and used by Jesus. It necessarily implies that there are children. After the beginning of the church (Acts 2) Christians called upon God as their Father. James is therefore addressing his words to Christians. "Lord" means the unlimited authority of God over man, beasts and all things which belong to God because they are His. In this context (Jas. 3:9) the word certainly means God's sovereign rights over His people (the church).

In the beginning man was the crowning act of God's creation. All other acts of creation were for man's use, for his good. Man was given dominion by God over all: "Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:6). cp. Gen. 1:26. James is in perfect agreement with Moses and David: "For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed by mankind" (3:7).

But man sinned and fell and all Adam's posterity sinned. (Rom. 5:14). The universality of sin is thus stated by Paul: "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). cp. Gal. 3:22. In James, the seat of sin is the tongue which is the most expressive part of man; it is "the world of iniquity" (3:6). All stumble here even the church member. The tongue is often so demonic that James connects it with hell which is Satan's seat (3:6). The ominous power of the tongue is seen in the illustrations given: the bridle controls the horse; a little rudder turns a great ship; a small fire can kindle a great and damaging fire; the tongue can defile the whole body.

Jesus said, "But the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart cometh forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings" (Matt. 15:18, 19). Again, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:34-37). Church members should not fall into the habit Paul warns against in I Tim. 5:13: "And

withal they learn to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." James says "My brethren these things ought not so to be" vs. 10). For "therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men . . . out of the same mouth cometh forth blessings and cursings" (vv. 9-10). The same divided loyalty is here shown as that which pertains to faith and prayer (1:6, 7). A Christian cannot be double-minded but must be whole hearted in his loyalty to God. The epistle of James is a commentary on Jesus words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37).

By the tongue James shows that man is bent on sinning and through his tongue has sinned in the sight of God. It is the most universal and common sin committed by man.

By this means James shows the constant warfare in the child of God's life; that he must constantly say no to the old man of sin which attempts to persist in the new life in Christ for the tongue is "the world of iniquity among our members . . . which defileth the whole body" (vs. 6). This warfare between right and wrong, sin and righteousness is stated by Paul in these words: "To me who would do good evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 7:21-25).

Thus Paul furnishes the next step in the transition of thought—man stands in need of a Savior. A Christian daily needs his Mediator; he needs to "walk in the light" (I John 1:7) in order to secure the cleansing blood of Jesus. A Christian must guard his tongue and exercise self control over it. A Christian should fill the capacity of a teacher and speak as the oracles of God. The apostle Paul gives the following rule governing a Christians speech: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of (by His authority) the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:14). And "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt that ye may know how ye ought to answer each other" (Col. 4:6).

Wisdom is God's dealing with man in the world and in the way of salvation. In classical Greek the idea of wisdom is man's relation to the world, man's attempt at mastery to get the world well ordered. The heathen religions had but little part in this. Certain Greek philosophers set forth philosophies or ways of life.

God is the source of true wisdom; it "cometh down from above" (Jas. 3:15). "For Jehovah giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:1). God's wisdom is found in His will: "The testimony of Jehovah is sure making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:7). One must know God's will to be wise. God's will is found in His "commandments" (Prov. 2:1), which will "instruct" (Prov. 1:7), give "knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:6). God's wisdom supplies ethical application to the activities of life (Prov. 2:10-17) in the covenant God gave the Jews. The same may be said of the New Covenant which superseded the Old.

Jesus Christ is the embodiment and fulfillment of God's wisdom for the salvation of man. God's rule upon earth,

(Continued on Page 13)

Why Preach The Gospel

C. R. NICHOL
Clifton, Texas

Some years ago I knew a man, physically strong, mentally he was wiser than most men, a hard student, one with a retentive memory and a good vocabulary. He was a gospel preacher whose efforts were attended with marked success. Consequently his services were in demand beyond his home community. Often he engaged in debates with men who did not teach the whole truth.

Years passed and his compensation for time spent in preaching was not as much as that of some men whose ability was less noted than his, who were working in the business world. So he began devoting part of his time to secular—money making—employment. Preaching the gospel was relegated to second place—by this I mean, he devoted most of his time and energies to business—studying industry—How to make money by honorable business methods? Six days per week were devoted to money-making business; and on Sunday when opportunity presented itself he would preach. During this time his interest in the church waned. If in his business career a religious question arose, if to contend stoutly for the truth would show the false teaching or views of a prospective client, he would smile, change the subject, thereby failing to be true to his convictions, was guilty of sinning. There is a saying which I heard when a mere lad: "Take your religion with you in your business and politics; but keep your business and politics out of your religion."

It should be profitable for all to mull over the question: "Is it possible some men are preaching the gospel, because it is a 'white collar job'? One with little work and a lucrative salary, an easy way to make a living? Do they enjoy preferences shown in many ways, being welcomed into many homes, cut rates on merchandise, etc? Is the preacher of today engaged in the work to save souls? Does he strive to please Jehovah; or is he preaching for the reason that there is nothing else which can do that will pay him as much money? Is it an easy way to make a living?

Read with me: "Woe to me if I preach not the gospel." I am not oblivious to the record of God's call of Paul, and work to which he was sent. Nor am I forgetful of: "The things thou hast heard of me commit them to faithful men who shall be able to teach others." The question arises when a man makes preaching the gospel a secondary work is he a faithful man?

I recall when I was younger than I am now, when in Nashville Bible School, Nashville, Tennessee. Many young men came there to study the Bible, many of them with the urge and determination to preach the gospel. There were numbers of congregations in, and others not far removed from Nashville. There were also a number of mature men in Nashville, who made their living in the commercial field; but preached on Sunday receiving compensation from the congregations served. The "preacher boys" were unhappy about this situation and registered complaint saying: "These men make their living in the commercial world, and then are paid for speaking on Sundays, should these opportunities and the remunerations not be given to young men who are preparing to devote their lives to preaching the gospel? Should they not let us prospective preachers fill these commitments?"

Recently I have learned more than one man who has been preaching for some time, turning to the commercial field, and planning to preach on Sundays. They plan to earn enough at their daily occupations to preach on Sundays Gratis!

This plan, "Preach Gratis," is contrary to the teachings in the Bible, further it may be an injustice to the congregations where they preach. There may be a marked difference between a "good preacher" and a man who can preach a "good sermon."

There is a fast growing tendency toward greater commercialism in the church. In some places a brother makes his living in the commercial field, and because he is a good "Song Director" demands a salary to direct the song service in the work of the church where he works each Sunday.

"Brethren think on these things!"

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Success: Some Essential Elements of It

HARRY PICKUP, JR.
Grapevine, Texas

Every normal person has within himself some desire to succeed, to a more or less degree. It is entirely possible, and most likely very probable, that what stands for success in most of our minds is not success at all. Whatever it is we plan for it, sacrifice for it, strive for it, and it represents our goal in life.

What is it to the Christian? Ultimately it is the sentence of the Judge, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things." Matt. 25:21. And this verse expresses it equally well: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34. For this all Christians are working out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2:12.

But is there no measure of success to be obtained in this life? I believe there is. It is the confidence that one has that he enjoys God's approval, not by merit but by righteousness—being made righteous. Such was Paul's inspired value of his own 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 to all them that have loved his appearing." II Tim. 4:6-8.

In no way can this statement be considered the expression of one who believed the rich rewards of eternity were his by right. For, he never forgot "... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an example of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life." I Tim. 1:15, 16. This is a confident statement—under inspired influence—made in trust because of a life lived in God's service.

Judgment is sure; eternity is certain. The joys of eternal life are incomparable; the terrors of eternal damnation are indescribable. Whatever is essential to obtain the former and avoid the latter should be done gladly.

Now, I would like to suggest three elements that are essential to success as we have just discussed it. These are not the only elements. And it is entirely possible that someone else would frame them differently. But they are essential. (1.) The ability to distinguish things of value. (2.) The courage to choose the things of value. (3.) The willingness to suffer for things of value.

All three of these points have one particular thing in common, "value." Before one can choose the things of value in order to suffer for them willingly he must know how to distinguish the thing of real intrinsic value from those that only have the appearance of value. Just after Peter had made the good confession in Matthew 16 the Lord took the disciples and began to show them of the things he must suffer. Peter rebuked him saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee." Verse 22. Christ

called Peter a "stumbling-block" for this reason: "For thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men." Verse 23. In keeping with our three elements this point would have some bearing upon point number 2. But for the moment we are concerned with being able to distinguish things of value. Christ gave a divine judgment on what is the thing of highest value. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" Verses 25, 26.

The thing of value is "life." Not life in this world where value is measured by quantity; but eternal life where quality is of the essence. Christ rebuked Peter because he had not yet understood what was really important and what was not. He was still concerned about the "things of men" rather than the "things of God." This is a lesson that many Christians need to re-learn. We have forgotten, if we ever knew, what is truly valuable.

This is not an insignificant matter that can be lightly brushed aside. For the consequence of it is death. Paul reminded the Romans: "For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; (what is this but minding the things of man?) but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit (what is this but minding the things of God?)" Now notice the consequence of these "minds." "For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." But why is the mind of the flesh "death"? "Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God..." Rom. 8:5, 6.

1. **The ability to distinguish the things of value.** This is the very thing Paul had in mind in this statement to the Philippians: "... that ye approve the things that are excellent." Phil. 1:10. For "approve" the marginal reading is "distinguish the things that differ." Paul was praying that they might continue to learn how to know the things that are excellent from the things that were not. But why?: "That ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ." And, "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Verse 11. One cannot know what to avoid and what is the fruit of righteousness who does not know how "to approve the things that are excellent."

It would be well also to notice how they could learn "to distinguish the things differ." "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment." Knowledge of God's word is the key to success. Not merely knowing the facts but knowing them in order to appropriate them into our lives.

2. **The courage to choose the things of value.** Paul cites Abraham and Sarah as examples of such courage. "By faith Abraham, ... obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive ... ; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Heb. 11:8. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Verse 13. How were they able to manifest such courage by continuing to be pilgrims, never actually receiving the promises, and never going back to the country from which they came. Of this last it is well to remember, "they would have had opportunity to return." The reason for this was they were "not mindful of that country." They knew what was best and, therefore, they choose it.

(Continued on Page 14)

Epistle to Paul (?)

CHURCH OF CHRIST
DRIFTERVILLE BITHYNIA
A. D. 52

Paul the Apostle
Antioch, Syria
Dear Paul,

We hasten to express our gratitude to you for recommending Demas to us to assist the church here in recreation, social functions, athletics, etc. He seems to understand our peculiar problems here at Driftderville since we too have come to "love this present world." Demas seems especially well qualified for work in athletics since he majored in physical education at the University of Alexandria and lettered in three sports every year he was there except his freshman year.

We were so sorry that you could not be with us for our annual bazaar. The church raised enough money to buy new uniforms for our basketball team, new baseball equipment, refinish the gymnasium floor and get a new set of instruments for our fellowship hall. The music company where we bought the instruments threw in books of music for the latest popular songs when we told them that it was the church buying it, and did not charge us a mite for them. Things went off much smoother this year than last year at our bazaar, thanks to Demas. He surely has a knack for getting things organized. The ladies Bible class had a cute little fish pond arrangement where they sold surprise packages for ten farthings each. The old folks class had a fortune-telling booth. Sister Necromancer really is a wizard at reading a crystal ball. The business men's class ran a bingo table and gave away copies of the gospel to the winners. This one scheme brought in thirty shekels. It surely was a lot of fun.

Barnabas was through Driftderville the other day bragging about the church at Paphos winning the Cyprus Invitational Basketball Tournament. Have you heard how the tournament came out at Lystra? We have received no word as yet. The Ephesians were favored to retain their regional crown. The church surely is growing at Ephesus. Do you suppose they would let us in on their secrets? How do they do it? We heard by grape-vine that a wealthy brother in the church there bought a big supply of tickets to the Olympics that are due to be held in Ephesus this year and gives a ticket to each student that does not miss a single Bible class over a three months period. Timothy was through Driftderville the day we got the report about the ticket deal and he suggested that it looked like pure carnality to him. But Timothy just does not seem to realize that we have a youth problem. Something just has to be done to compete with the world if we are going to keep our youth.

Paul, we never have forgotten that you said that "bodily exercise is profitable for a little." We intend to get everything out of it that we possibly can. It surely would be wonderful if something could be done to stop the mouths of the hobbyists that are opposing these worth-while activities. But some people are just opposed to everything. They are just "anti," period!

Broad-mindedly yours,
Elders:
I. M. Worldly
R. A. Liberal
Comp Romise

(Note: With apologies to Paul and Barnabas for inti-

imating that they would have had any part in such activities as those mentioned above or that they would have favored perverting the church from its God-given spiritual mission to that of providing recreation, social functions and entertainment for its members. Surely, they would have had no part nor lot in the carnality that is sapping the spiritual vitality of so many churches today. The author.)

Ernest A. Finley
Carlsbad, New Mexico

PROBLEMS WHICH CONFRONT

(Continued from Page 2)

testify to the degree with which the cares of this world have withered away spiritual development. Fainter and fainter grows the line between right and wrong. No longer are unscriptural divorce and remarriage, social drinking and dancing condemned by some. How long ere we truly learn the basic lesson, "Love not the world"?

Though it is not the problem it once was, we must not fail to recognize Pre-Millennialism as an ever present potential threat. Surrounded by religious denominationalism, a large part of which features the theory, it would be unusual if some were not attracted to and captured by its vagaries. As is true of any false theory, its secret disciples are every ready to come out in the open the moment our guard is down. Let the truth about the establishment, nature, and purpose of the Lord's kingdom or church and the present rule of Christ at the Father's right hand be thoroughly taught and we have nothing to fear.

Protestant denominationalism and Roman Catholicism remain the rivals of pure Christianity upon the earth. All do not understand the differences between the Lord's church and religious denominationalism. Some consider ourselves as "another" denomination. Sectarian nomenclature, sectarian thinking, and the apeing of their sectarian ways will finally lead to a full-fledge denominationalism.

Lethargy and complacency are ever with us. Man is prone to drift and the Lord's people are no exception to this. Past accomplishments are sometimes substituted for present obligations. In spite of the great good that is being accomplished in many places today, it is very likely that we are accomplishing only a fraction of what we are able. Let us not mistake fanfare for lasting good that will win the approval of heaven. In full consciousness of our exalted position as children of God and of the responsibility that rests upon us to preach the gospel and care for the needy, trusting in Christ and the ability of his word to lead us in all things, let us renew our determination to press the battle in Jesus' name!

Viewing then these problems and all the others with which we are confronted, let us do away with wistful thinking and accept the fact that they must be resolved in this our generation and with determination be about it.—Stanley J. Lovett.

SEND A FRIEND

THE PRECEPTOR

And Help Teach Him

THE TRUTH

STUDIES IN NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 9)

His kingdom was to be set up and realized by His Son. Concerning the Messiah, Isaiah wrote: "And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse and a Branch out of His roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah" (11:2). The remainder of this chapter in figurative language depicts the whole earth restored to order and fertility as in the beginning; that the instrument of the establishment of the reign of paradise is by the Messiah. In figurative language these verses describe the condition or state to be in the kingdom and since the time element is not stated, it would refer to the everlasting kingdom also. God's kingdom began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ and Christ is its King. (Acts 2).

The church and the kingdom are the same; wisdom, testimony and the commandments of God are synonymous. Paul states the mission of the church in these words: "the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). The church is to preach the gospel plan of salvation to the lost, to set forth to sinners the wisdom of God in the new covenant—to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, to repent and turn from wickedness to God, to publicly confess his faith, to be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins. The church has the mission of teaching the Scriptures to its members that they may be edified. The church is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15); it is to hold "forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:16).

God's wisdom is His will. Those who are wise do His will and shall be saved: "Every one therefore that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them shall be likened to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock" (Matt. 7:24). In the judgment this one who built his house (life, character) upon the rock (Christ) will receive the verdict of "well done thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:23). In the resurrection "the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" (Dan. 12:3); they shall "awake to everlasting life." (Dan. 12:2). Job sets forth the principle which is to guide man in all ages: "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (28:28).

God's wisdom for man's salvation is centered in Jesus Christ "who was made unto us wisdom from God" (I Cor. 1:30). The cross is the "power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). Man at the height of his wisdom is a fool before God. (I Cor. 1:20). Man when he rejected the manifestations of the proof of the existence of God and through his own wisdom lost the concept of the one true God sank to the lowest level of immorality. (Rom. 1:26-31). And "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:23). Jeremiah rightly says: "O Jehovah, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (10:23).

False interpretation of the Scriptures, creeds, tradition is rebellion against God's will and His wisdom; it is man's will to autonomy. This is earthly wisdom (Jas. 3:15); it creates confusion and strife among those professing religion. God's wisdom wills that all believers be one and united in one body, the church. Jesus prayed "for them also that believe on me through their word; that they all may be

one; even as thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send Me" (John 17:20-21). The tradition of the Catholic Church makes it peculiar; the creeds and disciplines of the sects causes them to be different and distinct from each other. The New Testament which contains the whole counsel of God (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) will, if accepted as the only authority, unite all believers.

James is writing to the true church, the apostolic church. There must be no jealousy or faction in the hearts of the members which vaunts itself against the truth, the word of God. Jealousy leads one to himself, to his own ways—not God's. This causes faction and division. No one must legislate where God has not legislated; no one can set up his opinions as a standard which others must obey. Within the church there are brethren who are not content with the divine arrangement. Those who are baptized into Christ are added to the church, the universal church, the church that Jesus built. (Acts 2:47). But God has given no organization by which the universal church is to function; it is an organism, not an organization. God has decreed organization only for the local church. It is to worship and serve God in the community in which it exists. But brethren through earthly wisdom see power in number and strength in projects formulated to join all the congregations in a concerted effort. These additions and substitutions for the divine order are classified by James as earthly wisdom and are "sensual, devilish" (Jas. 3:15). The Missionary Society is the fruit of such wisdom. In the last century congregational singing would not suffice for some so the mechanical instrument was introduced. This glorying against the truth led to faction and division. (Jas. 3:14).

A Christian by his good works is to "show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom" (Jas. 3:13). This is in contrast to jealousy and faction. Meekness involves the whole attitude; meekness looks to the will of God as the only dominant reality in life and His wisdom becomes the whole norm for one's actions. The meek take God seriously and so act as to please Him. In the Old Testament, meekness is the fear of the Lord. "Commit thy way unto Jehovah (Ps. 37:5) scripturally defines meekness (cp. vs. 11). The will of God is the end of man's wisdom. Works done in meekness lead to peace and unity.

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LIVING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

(Continued from Page 6)

side of controversy, and prayerfully, patiently, "takes a stand," whether in harmony with past positions or not.

WHEN IN ROME?

2. A second manner of applying these principles, and a second group of problems is seen by a study of I Cor. 9. Here Paul speaks of various changes he made; and perhaps he made them often. The sum of it was that he became all things to all men that by all means he might save them. (V 22) Such variations as Paul here records would be considered by some as unthinkable. But where did Paul draw the line? "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ." (Gal. 1:10) He drew the line on compromise; as the context will reveal this to be the meaning. That which was revealed to him, the gospel preached by him, would never be sacrificed for the favor of men. And yet he became many things to many men.

Here we think most will agree that the problem is in deciding what is a matter of judgment and what a matter of faith. As one passes from place to place he will observe many differences among brethren that pertain to the work in a rather direct manner than are matters of judgment. Some will have the communion before the sermon, others after. Some will have four prayers in the assembly, some five. (While nearly everybody will have three songs, a prayer and a song.) In such, and a thousand others, we adjust ourselves to the practices that are local.

But if we find upon entering a community that the instrument has been added to the worship, the Lord's Supper is not taken on the first day of the week, modernism or premillennialism is being preached, the church is being ruled by the majority of some officers or (legal) officials other than elders, or the church has abandoned all semblance of self-government, and turned its work over to others to run for them, we will find it hard to "adjust" without taking a stand to preach and practice truth. After all matters have been tested (I Thess. 5:21) it becomes the duty of all to make such corrections as are necessary to stand with God and His word. This can be accomplished only by reproof, some rebuke and some exhortation. Who can deny that this is the middle-of-the-road course?

LOVE AND FIGHTING

3. Finally, we are faced with the fact that there is not universal agreement among God's children over some New Testament terms used by inspired writers to shape and mould our attitudes. Consider two of them: Love is employed often in connection with spreading the truth. "Speaking the truth in love . . ." is an example. (Eph. 4:15) Misunderstanding this word, many require an extreme of a gospel preacher. To these the word love means softness. If one is firm and militant, if he exposes any error, if he names any religious group in presenting his lessons, if he dares question the practices of his brethren, he is without love.

He may even be told that love covers a multitude of sins. (I Pet. 4:8) But a person who thusly uses this verse hasn't read James 5:19, 20, which declares that sins are covered by converting a brother from the error of his way.

This confusion over the meaning of love could be cleared up by some study of the life of our Lord, He used a scourge to drive money-changers from his Father's house. Was this an act without love?

Another such misunderstood word, used sometimes in

to the extreme, is the word fight. ("Fight the good fight of faith . . ."—I Tim. 6:12) Because our greatest dangers are indifference, lethargy and slothfulness, we are not nearly so apt to go to extremes with this word as with those that point in the other direction. But it is possible for one to have such a conception of the fight of faith that he can never forgive his enemies, grant consideration to an opponent or be fair in pressing an antagonist.

The middle of the road is a balance of love and fight, of rebuke and exhortation, of the rod and spirit of gentleness. (I Cor. 4:21)

CONCLUSION

You have seen that by the "middle of the road" we do not mean one without identification, one whose stand is not known, or one who vacillates. Reference is rather to that which is stated in the adage that the truth is between two extremes. We believe it has been demonstrated that this is a Bible truth.

These are days when the added time needed for brethren to get together and think together may be provided by those who are willing to stay in the middle of the road. Fellowship, being strained in many localities, is as a frantic woman—And she cries out for moderation!

SUCCESS: SOME ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

(Continued from Page 11)

3. The willingness to suffer for the things of value. One does not make the choice to crucify the old man and then that is the end of the matter. Every temptation causes the decision to have to be made anew. Frequently one has to suffer for the things of value which he has chosen.

In chapter eleven of Hebrews, which chapter deals with the heroes of faith, Paul mentions some women who were willing to suffer for "life." "Women received their dead by a resurrection: and others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Verse 35. Those who did not suffer received life in this world; those who did suffer received the life which is incomparable.

The Lord shall give the "crown of righteousness" to all those who "have loved his appearing," even as Paul. To have this trust one must "mind the things of God" and not "the things of men."

WHO WILL GO?

(Continued from Page 7)

for they are assisting in "converting a sinner from the error of his ways and shall save a soul from death." Money spent erecting magnificent edifices in areas where the church is comparatively strong in numbers often results in a neglect of support for adequate meeting houses in the mission fields. Some brethren are forced to meet in beer and dance halls for Lord's day Worship for lack of funds to erect or own a place to use exclusively for the Lord's Work.

Brethren, these things ought not to be. Can't we do something to change this deplorable situation?

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AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH

(Continued from Page 3)

that was being made. No student of Restoration history can successfully deny this.

It seems to me that the autonomy of our present-day churches is seriously threatened. The human institutions and "sponsoring churches" who would assume the right to reach decisions and execute projects on behalf of contributing churches are clearly in the wrong. However, much of the energy spent in battle might be better directed toward teaching the churches to recognize their responsibility in maintaining autonomy (self-government) by exercising it in their own work. If the congregations were better taught on the subjects of self-government, its realm, and how to keep busy doing their own share of spreading the gospel, the brotherhood planners would find slim pickings. If the churches of this generation lose their autonomy or any part thereof, it will not be wholly due to the taking ways of a few big churches. It will be a huge GIVE AWAY program on the part of many poorly taught congregations.

AN ACTUAL EXAMPLE

(Continued from Page 8)

"Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (Rev. 14:8).

"And great Babylon came in remembrances before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." (Rev. 16:19).

"And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Rev. 17:5).

"Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." (Rev. 18:21) See also verses 2 and 10 in the 18th chapter.)

This leaves the Catholic scholars impaled upon either or both of the horns of the dilemma. (1) If they insist upon a symbolic usage of the word "Babylon" in an otherwise totally literal epistle, then they CANNOT AVOID accepting the symbolic meaning of "Babylon" in the Book of Revelation, which IS a book of symbols. (3) Please note that NOT ONE SINGLE REFERENCE TO "BABYLON" in the Book of Revelation, is used in a complimentary sense. IN EVERY CASE, CONDEMNATION WAS PRONOUNCED! (3) If the Catholic Church, however, denies the use of "Babylon" in Revelation as referring to ROME, then she throws away her only "proof" text, that Peter was EVER at Babylon (supposedly Rome).

CONCLUSION

It is interesting to note that after the "historian" that we have quoted lays his "foundation" of assertions, maybes, and not-likelys . . . that he goes right ahead as if he had all the proof in the world for teaching that Peter was the first Pope of Rome. Such a procedure would not stand up in any civil court in the world.

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THE NEW CREATURE

HOMER HAILEY

Tampa, Florida

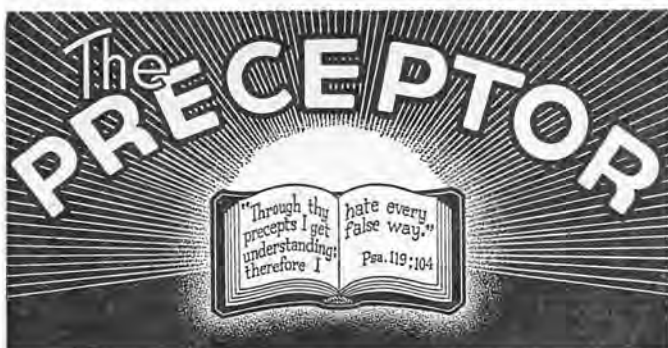
"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." (II Cor. 5:17).

To the Jew, to whom his past was dear and sacred, this would mean much. His fleshly relation to Abraham would give way to a new spiritual relation in Christ. His priesthood in Aaron now was passed away, with its altar, sacrifices and temple. In their stead he found a new priesthood in Christ, with its altar, sacrifice and spiritual temple. His old citizenship in Israel now meant nothing to him, for his citizenship was in heaven. His old inheritance in Canaan was now gone forever; his new inheritance was one incorruptible, undefiled, that would not fade away, which was reserved for him in heaven. For him to become a Christian meant a drastic change. The book of Hebrews reveals something of the struggle of those early Jewish Christians in making the adjustment.

To the Gentiles the change was different. Likewise, it meant the giving up of his religious connections, but these did not mean to him what those did to the Jew. With the Gentile the change was primarily

moral. It meant that the old habits and vices of immorality, corruption and deception were passed away. The old man had been exchanged for the new. In the stead of the old vices was the new life with its practices and habits of holiness and purity. He must "put to death" his members upon the earth, which pertained to the moral character (Col. 3:5-11). He must "put on, as God's elect, holy and beloved" a character after that of Christ his Master (Col. 3:12-17). He must become an imitator of God, as a beloved son (Eph. 5:1-2).

The principle shall endure as long as the gospel age—until the end of time. In Christ the individual is a new creation. The old life, religious and moral, of habits and disposition, must pass away. In their stead all things are new. The life now must be devoted to the showing forth of the excellencies of God who called him to that new life. He must seek the things which are above, where Christ is. His mind must be on things above (Col. 3:1-4). This, too often, is the failure of God's people today. Is it yours?



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EDITORIAL

The All-Sufficient Word

Even if the scriptures did not specifically affirm it, the benevolent disposition and omniscient intellect of the Heavenly Father would suggest that he has provided for his children's every need. Among these benefits must be provisions for an all-sufficient standard of conduct. Man's frailty, fallibility, and inability to direct his own steps demand it.

The Holy Spirit, the agent through which this want was supplied, guided the Apostles into all the truth. No essential element of truth for man's spiritual welfare was withheld. This divine norm of behaviour was known as "the apostles' teaching" and contained the whole counsel of God embracing everything profitable for life and godliness. So completely adapted to man's requirements, these utterances and approved examples were to be followed by the Lord's people. Anything with which the Lord is connected in a controlling way will bear the imprint of his perfection. Thus it is the perfect law of liberty with none of its essential parts lacking. It has the power and was so designed not only to furnish man complete with respect to his moral and spiritual character but also to direct him unto every good work. Anything unsupplied by the scriptures is unnecessary to his spiritual well-being. Unity so markedly characterizes this word that Inspiration called it "the faith" and "one faith." It is the faith which has been given once and was never to be added to. God said all he intended to say to man when the New Testament scriptures were completed. As long as time endures, heaven will keep her silence until the return of the Lord.

When men contemplate the wisdom and goodness of God and view the perfection, unity, and unalterableness of his word, they are driven to conclude the all-sufficient character of this word. This divine discipline cannot be amended. Those who propose to teach the will of heaven must speak only as the oracles of God. Abiding in the teaching of Christ, the friends of God will not dare to go beyond the things which are written. Neither will they add to them nor take away from them lest the anathema of Christ rest upon them.

Serious and fatal are the consequences which attach themselves to a rejection of the idea of the all-sufficiency of the scriptures. (1) It is a repudiation of either or both the wisdom and the goodness of God. Either God could not bestow upon man an all-sufficient code, and that being true, it would reflect upon his divine intelligence; or, God was able to do so but would not and the latter being true, it would reflect upon his goodness. (2) Imbue man with the erroneous conception of a deficient standard of deportment and he will begin to seek and devise human means to bolster up that which he holds to be lacking. Any view of incompleteness in the scriptures calls for supplementary creeds, disciplines, manuals, and confessions of faith. Such a course is but to invite and encourage speedy departure from God's all-sufficient word that will not stop short of apostasy. (3) A corollary of this second consequence is the denial of an absolute criterion of right and wrong. There can never be unanimity in determining in what areas it is sufficient and in what areas it is insufficient. This uncertainty will obtain in the sphere of morals as well as in all other categories. There will be no absolute truth and man is adrift. (4) Rob the scriptures of their sufficiency and by the same process deny the plea for a restoration of primitive Christianity. Thus there could be no adequate reason adduced for engaging in restoration.

The most significant thing involved in the idea of the all-sufficiency of the scriptures is the divine conception that the New Testament is the miraculous revelation of God's perfect will to man thereby exhibiting his grace and wisdom. This commits the friends of the word to follow it exactly. Therefore, let us determine what the word teaches and perform that and only that. When this is done all humanisms will cease.

The interests of the religious community generally and those of the brotherhood specifically would be greatly promoted by a clear conception and practical application of the scriptural idea of the **all-sufficiency of the New Testament scriptures.**—Stanley J. Lovett.

THANKS!

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to those who are renewing and are sending in new subscriptions both single and in clubs. We are dependent upon such friends of **The Preceptor** to promote and increase the circulation of the paper.

Please keep them coming!

"Christ Jesus Wisdom From God"

HARRY PICKUP, JR.

Grapevine, Texas

The mission of Christ into the world was to meet the needs of man. And Christ was sent from God. It was needful that such aid should come from God because man could not supply it himself. More than this, man is not always—in fact, seldom—aware of what are his greatest and primary needs. Man's real and basic needs are to be discovered in Christ's mission. And Christ's mission can be discerned by being correctly informed of man's chief needs. Christ's mission is continued in the work done by His Body.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I Cor. 1:30, 31. At least four things are taught in these passages: (1.) We are "of him" by being "in Christ." It is only by being in the right place—"in Christ"—that we have the proper relationship to him—"of him." (2.) Christ was sent "from God" to meet man's needs. God is the author and architect of the plan by which man's needs can be met. (3.) Man's needs are these: "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption." (4.) The purpose of this is that man might not glory in himself but in the Lord; "that no flesh should glory before God." I Cor. 1:29.

God has always understood the needs of man and abundantly supplied them. He gave the children of Israel manna when they were pilgriming in the desert. During Christ's personal ministry the Jews themselves confessed this fact. "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat." John 6:31. But their real need was a manna that would give them everlasting life. Jesus therefore said unto them, "Verily, verily I say unto you, it was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world." John 6:32, 33.

Essentially the mission of Christ's church is to carry that "true bread"—Christ's word—to men that they may have life. To see man's primary needs as other than spiritual is to misunderstand those needs and to be misinformed as to Christ's mission and also that of His Church's.

God was the guide for the children of Israel in the wilderness. He led them by a "cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night." Exodus 13:21. Through Isaiah he promised them a "highway" which would lead them back to God. Is. 35:8. Christ was moved with compassion for the multitudes "because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd." Mat. 9:36. They lacked a guide. Their guides had taken "away the key of knowledge." Luke 11:52. They had not only made void God's commandments by their traditions but they had also transgressed His commandments. Mat. 15:3, 6. Their traditions were nothing more than human wisdom.

Because of these traditions they did not understand the promise of the Messiah in the Old Testament. They denied the very evidence that testified of Christ. "And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he sent, him ye believe not. Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." John 5:38-40. Christ told them why they did not "under-

stand" his speech. "Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." John 8:43.

From the history of man it is perfectly obvious that he cannot direct his own steps. Jer. 10:23. The writer of Proverbs declared, "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint." Proverbs 29:18. Jew and Gentile alike were about as far from God as it was possible for one to be. The Jews were self-righteous and cared more for their own traditions than for the revealed message of God. The Gentiles had begun to worship the creature and not the creator and were prolific in idolatry.

The Gentile was in no better position than the Jew. They had stopped glorifying Him as God. They "changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things." They exchanged the truth of God for a lie." "And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting." Rom. 1. Consequently, "they walked in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart." Eph. 4:17,18.

But God is good. Knowing that man could not find his own way out of the labyrinth of ignorance he provided them the way out. Christ was God's "wisdom" to guide" man who could not guide himself and in order that he might "glory in the Lord."

The primary need of man is to be saved from sin. God's plan for man's salvation is revealed through Christ in the gospel. Rom. 1:16, 17. Some men dare to substitute human plans of salvation for God's. The futility of such a thing is obvious to all. And some are substituting for the Church of Christ a human mission for a divine one. And in so doing man glories in himself; but he cannot glory in the Lord.

Before one can be saved from sin he must "know" God. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." John 17:3. Without knowledge of God and his Son, therefore, none can be saved. Reason, or knowledge, is the basis of our faith and hope. "Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you." I Peter 3:15.

The need of man is to know God, that he may be made righteous through the forgiveness of his sins. Christ is wisdom from God. ". . . Even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." Col. 2:4. We know Christ through his word, the gospel. I John 1:1-4. To proclaim any other message than His word is to nullify God's wisdom and make use of human wisdom instead of divine wisdom. Nothing else than God's wisdom should be spoken that "your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I Cor. 2:5.

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Restoration and Reaction

Religious Journals — Guardians or Disturbers of the Faith

BILL J. HUMBLE

(Author's note: Several months ago, the editor of the Christian Leader asked me to prepare an article on the subject: "Religious journals—guardians or disturbers of the faith." That article, which was submitted but which never appeared in the Leader, follows. BJH)

Ever since the earliest days of the restoration movement journals have exerted a great influence in moulding brotherhood thought. Entering thousands of homes over widespread areas, these papers have served to acquaint brethren with the progress of the church elsewhere, draw brethren together, and crystallize thinking on brotherhood problems.

The influence of brotherhood papers is well illustrated by such journals as the *Christian Baptist*, *Gospel Advocate* and many others. Established in 1823, the *Christian Baptist* was published by Alexander Campbell while he was still preaching among the Baptist churches; and its influence was so great that when Campbell finally withdrew from the Baptists, thousands joined him in the work of restoring New Testament Christianity. A half-century later, David Lipscomb published the *Gospel Advocate*, and almost singlehandedly, he stayed the tide of digression in the South. Let no one doubt the influence of religious journals!

GOOD OR BAD?

The question is often asked, "Has the influence of these papers been good or bad? Have they been guardians or disturbers of the faith?" Unfortunately, the answer must be: both! The influence of the papers, as with men, has been both good and bad. The papers have done much to advocate the restoration of the New Testament church; they have converted thousands to this plea; they have drawn the brethren together and encouraged them to greater zeal and activity. This is the positive good side, but the bad is also there. The papers have sometimes abandoned and opposed the restoration ideal, promoted unscriptural ideas, and brought controversy and division to the brotherhood. There have been some who have exclaimed disgustedly, "The church would have been far better off had these papers never existed." Of some papers, but not all, this is true!

Surprisingly, the same paper has sometimes been both a guardian and disturber of the faith at various periods in its history. The restoration movement would never have grown so rapidly during the decade of the 1830's had it not been for the *Millennial Harbinger*, but after congregations had been established in many areas, Campbell became the champion of a national missionary society, through which

these congregations might cooperate in evangelism. For nearly ten years before the American Christian Missionary Society was established in 1849, Campbell wrote article after article pleading for such "cooperation." Had it not been for the influence of Campbell and the *Harbinger*, the society would not have been established in 1849. Now, was the *Harbinger* a guardian or disturber of the faith? It was both; for upon the society question, at least Campbell abandoned the very principles which had given birth to the paper.

The *American Christian Review*, edited by Benjamin Franklin in the decades after the Civil War, was at one time the most influential paper in the entire brotherhood; and it opposed the missionary society vigorously. Franklin's *Review* was undoubtedly a staunch guardian of the faith. Yet, in later years the *Review* fell into the hands of brethren who used it to oppose "located preachers" and colleges operated by Christians. The *Review* thus became a disturber of the faith, promoting views which cannot be defended by God's word, sowing discord and division among brethren.

Since papers have been, and will probably continue to be, both guardians and disturbers of the faith, how may we determine whether the influence of any particular paper is good or bad, whether it is defending truth or disturbing brethren? The following general principles should help us to answer this question.

GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH

If a religious journal is to be a guardian of the faith:

(1.) It must stand for the faith! This is actually the fundamental test, and all else is secondary. If a paper is teaching the truth, it is a guardian of the faith. The paper may not be large and influential; it may not be popular. (David Lipscomb was always pictured as a "mean ill-tempered little man" by the majority who favored the society.) But only truth, not circulation or influence, can determine whether any journal is defending the faith.

If a paper has a scriptural attitude toward truth, its writers will admit, "This paper is fallible, but the New Testament is infallible." The readers will be admonished to search for a "thus saith the Lord," nor for a "thus saith the paper."

(2.) It must allow brethren to discuss questions and problems freely. This spirit of free inquiry lies at the very heart of the restoration ideal. The idea of "restoring" New Testament Christianity implies a search for long-lost truth, and this necessitates study, inquiry and discussion. Our brethren have always believed that as they study scriptural questions and weigh controversial issues, they draw nearer the truth, and the religious papers have always served as a medium through which these discussions should be conducted.

The willingness of such great editors as Campbell, Franklin and Lipscomb to open their columns to those of opposing views is an index to their greatness. Searching for truth, they encouraged frank discussions of controversial issues.

(3.) It must be interested in presenting truth in love, not in crucifying some brother, or group of brethren. The paper must be an instrument of truth, not a weapon of character assassination. Let the brethren ponder their problems, but let them do it in love and understanding.

DISTURBER OF THE FAITH

On the other hand, a religious journal becomes a disturber of the faith whenever:

(1.) It teaches false doctrine. Again, this is the basic test. When a paper defends a teaching not in harmony with

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Thinking With Parents And Teachers

"Train up a child in the way he should go."

(Proverbs 22:6)

IRENE SOWELL FOY

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN

PART II—PARENTHOOD

One of the great sources of happiness in the marriage relationship is that of parenthood. To man in the beginning God said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Jehovah did not so order because of lack of power of his own creative activity to continue to populate the earth. He did it because he had purposed and planned it that way. He so ordered that man and woman could have the honor and the privilege of working together with God in bringing new life into being. "For with thee is the fountain of life." Yea, "Children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Psalm 127:3). Since the power is from God, holy is the privilege of parenthood. Real and genuine are the joys of parenthood.

With the pleasures and privileges which our Father gives us, he gives us attendant responsibilities. Civilization in general accepts that principle to the end that wherein one or both parents do not wish to carry the responsibility of even the physical care of their children, we have recourse to a court of law. Our society holds a man responsible for the life which God has given him the privilege of bringing into the world.

However, such laws are for those who know not God. From the morning of time, Godly people have joyfully and prayerfully anticipated the privilege of parenthood. Rachel said when she "bare a son," "God hath taken away my reproach." (Gen. 30:23). Hannah prayed unto the Lord "and she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life." (I Samuel 1:11). What a challenge to Christian womanhood is the beautiful submission of Mary, the mother of Jesus. After the angel had reminded her that "with God nothing shall be impossible," Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word."

Certainly, women of old enjoyed the anticipation of that one who was to bruise the serpent's head. Today Christian womanhood may enjoy the anticipation of working together with God to bring into the world those who may grow into elders or preachers of the good news of that one born of woman, and to carry on his work which he committed to earthen vessels. What a joyful privilege, but what a wonderful responsibility, is that of Christian parenthood.

What Is the Great Responsibility?

Some one has truly said: "No one has such power over a river as he who stands near its source. No one has such power over the tree as he who plants and tends it while yet it is a pliant sapling. And no earthly power is to be compared with that which, humanly speaking, determines the course and destiny of a human soul." We read in Isaiah

64:8, "But now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou art our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Parents must realize that within their child are possibilities for the greatest of evil and there are possibilities for the greatest good. "Which shall it be?" is not an unanswerable question. The answer lies in the word "nurture," or feeding, guiding, directing. That "soft clay" is to be molded after the fashion of the Master potter. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it," so speaks the timeless voice of Wisdom.

With Jeremiah, parents must realize, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23). The human offspring is in a dependent state for a longer period of time than any creature. Evidently that is for the purpose of guidance and direction by those of experience and who love him, his own father and mother.

IMPORTANCE OF PARENTHOOD

"The childhood shows the man

As morning shows the day."

"If we work upon marble, it will perish," but if parents see that God's laws are written into the minds and in the hearts of their children there is a work that will stand the test of time and go into eternity with God.

In order to engrave the Word of God on the hearts of their children, parents will have to teach and train. By teaching, facts and ideas will be placed in the child's mind. By training, he will put those ideas into practice. He will receive guidance in the way to go.

One of the most impressive ways of realizing the importance of parenthood is to look at the final results. The adult will be the sum total of the nature and the nurture of the child. Into the nurture of the child go the indirect influence of his parents and their direct efforts of teaching and guidance. The child becomes "a part of all he has met."

Christian parents should realize that they are "shaping an immortal soul for an eternal destiny." In order that that end be reached, parents must keep in mind that goal which Paul pictured to the Ephesians, "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. Parents, know assuredly that your child will be among "all nations" gathered there. In which classification will your child be and what will his answer be? Give yourself the comfort of the right answer while they are young and while you may.

Finally, let us keep in mind that parenthood is designed by God. It is therefore a joy and a privilege but at the same time a grave responsibility. In training your child to be fit to inhabit that eternal home of the soul around the throne of God, these things must be kept in mind to do:

1. Guard, protect and keep those early childhood qualities which our Saviour commended as becoming of those subjects in his kingdom, "for of such is the kingdom of God"

2. Guide them in the path of truth and righteousness and to acceptance and submission to The Way of Life.

3. So nurture your child that he may say with David, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, So panteth my soul after thee, O God." (Psalm 42:1).

With the accomplishment of these responsibilities, a child "faithful to the end" will be the happy ending to the great privilege and responsibility of God-given parenthood.

(Our next topic will be, Behaviour of the Christian Wife.)

PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

Premillennialism: Christ and the New Testament

L. WESLEY JONES

If the New Testament is what it claims to be, every system of false philosophy, every sectarian development and every heresy is a direct reflection upon it. If men are "complete" in Christ (Col. 2:10) these isms also reflect upon the Saviour. This is true because the New Testament and Christ claim to be complete, perfect. There is in neither any room for improvement. Therefore, to teach a doctrine not taught in the New Testament is to reflect upon its completeness. To make of Christ something He does not claim to be, or to subtract from His divine personality, is to reflect upon His perfection.

It is often impossible to alert men to the dangers of systems of error until these facts can be demonstrated.

All too common is the practice of parading a doctrine as "harmless" and "a matter of opinion," while unsuspecting, careless thinkers among members of the church are "taken in" by its softness, incurably sickened by its "sweetness," and forever captured "by (the) good words and fair speeches" of its advocates. When these captives are approached with appeals to the truth, their ears are deafened and their eyes blinded. Only when convicted that their beliefs reflect on Jesus Christ and the divine revelation of the New Testament are they willing to consider evidence against them.

Modernism and Premillennialism

These two isms hold the above symptoms and principles in common. Both undermine the claims of Christ and the New Testament. While modernism denies the deity of Christ, premillennialism denies His kingly authority. As modernism is casting doubt upon the inspiration of the New Testament, premillennialism is casting doubt upon the veracity of the New Testament, by misrepresenting Christ, God, the Holy Spirit, the apostles and preachers, and even the devil! Just as modernism appeals to the liberally minded who seek fraternization with all sects who desire to ignore all distinctiveness in preaching, so is it well known that premillennialists in the church of our Lord have long ago abandoned all extensive efforts to maintain the identity of the New Testament church.

We think it not overly optimistic to feel that premillennialism is a storm being swept out of the church, and that its terrible influence for evil will continue to wane if brethren do not lessen their efforts in opposing it. Herein lies a major difference between premillennialism and modernism: For we believe it is not the view of an alarmist that modernism will be a continually rising threat to the peace of the church, its soundness and identity, in the coming generations. Both must be vigorously opposed. It must

be shown that each is a reflection upon Christ and the New Testament. Our task here is to deal with premillennialism in just this way.

Prophecy and Interpretation

The prophets of the Old Testament were under a sufficient influence of the Holy Spirit that they made no errors. (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Though the prophecies varied in manner or method or form of language (Heb. 1:1, 2) they found their mark truer than the swift arrow finds its target. Granting that this is believed by all in question, and thus giving full benefit of any doubt, what shall we say as to the reason that there is such disagreement over the fulfillment of these prophecies?

That an inspired prophecy, written without error, can not always be interpreted without error by **uninspired** men should be no mystery. What is more, when these prophecies are interpreted by inspired men in the New Testament, and they are contradicted by the interpretations of uninspired men, there should be no surprise at finding error, disagreement and misunderstanding.

Our Choices in Interpreting Prophecy

When "all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after" have spoken and their very words are quoted and applied specifically in the New Testament, a student of these words may take one of these courses:

- (1.) He may happily accept them.
- (2.) He may ignore, set aside or argue with the fulfillment.

There are two popular methods for doing the latter, and one who expects to oppose premillennialism successfully should be watchful of them. The first is an effort to apply some ONE, UNIVERSAL rule of interpretation to ALL Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom, the reign of Christ, the throne of David or the restoration of Israel. Usually this rule will be some **a priori** consideration. For example, whole systems of prophetic interpretations which premillennialists believe will work like magic keys in unlocking all mysteries of prophecy, are built upon the assumption that the kingdom of Christ was intended to be an earthly, materialistic kingdom. In these arguments it has been decided before-hand by them that this is the nature of the kingdom, and all interpretations are based upon that consideration. (Compare Luke 22:24-30; John 18:36.)

It should be remembered, however, that Paul said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son . . ." (Heb. 1:1, 2). Since God's message through his mouth-pieces (the prophets) was spoken in divers manners, why should we be alarmed to find it necessary to use divers methods of interpretation, rather than one, universal key to unlock them all?

A second method of setting aside inspired fulfillments found in the New Testament is that of **literalism**. Many are familiar with this pursuit of the premillennialists in preaching on the twentieth chapter of Revelation. It is no less obvious in their treatment of Old Testament prophecies. Consider for example the premillennialists' position that the Old Testament sacrifices will be reinstituted at the second coming of Christ (a logical and necessary consequence of **literalism**). "In speaking of the time when 'the Gentiles shall come to thy light' (Isa. 60:3), it was stated that 'all the

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Is There Really No Pattern?

GEORGE T. JONES

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An article appeared in a recent issue of one of the religious journals entitled "The Pattern." Such a title for the said article is most paradoxical since the burden of the article was to prove there is no pattern for congregational cooperation. Here are the first three sentences of the article: "There is no one who objects to doing things according to the pattern. But we ask where is the pattern for congregational cooperation? How may a pattern be violated that does not exist?" From this, the author proceeds to argue that the Scriptures do not furnish a pattern for church cooperation!

It might be profitable to pause and ask the brother who opened this piece if he really believes his first sentence. He said: "There is no one who objects to doing things according to the pattern." We wonder. Does he really think none objects to doing all things according to the pattern? By "no one" does he include sectarians? Or does he only include the brethren? If so, is it possible this preacher thinks there is no instance of defection from the pattern among brethren? A rather careless statement, wouldn't you say, Dear Reader?

In the body of this article are four points purportedly showing there is not pattern of church cooperation. Let us examine each.

"1. Disciples (not congregations) sending money to a congregation." Then he quotes Acts 11:27-30. Next, he says this is a record of disciples sending to the elders of the church. Nothing is said of congregations sending to another congregation. Certainly, it was not a case of congregations sending but it is a case of a congregation sending to other congregations. His fundamental error in this point is trying to make the contribution from Antioch a contribution of individual Christians rather than one made by the church in its collective capacity. In verses 27, 28 of Acts 11, there is this reading: "Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius." These prophets came to Antioch and prophesied the coming famine. But the Holy Spirit says Agabus "stood up" to make the prophecy. Just where did Agabus stand up to make his prophecy concerning the famine? It is not plain that he "stood up" in the assembly in Antioch? Weymouth's translation says Agabus "publicly predicted by the Spirit" the famine that was coming. Now, our brother would have us believe the aid sent to the Judean elders was in the form of private, individual donations by the disciples but the Holy Spirit says when the prophets came to tell the people of Antioch about the coming disaster it was laid before the church publicly.

After hearing of the coming famine, the disciples according to each one's ability determined to send. The Holy Spirit says: "Which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." Significantly enough, the Holy Spirit calls this bounty "it." It was one contribution! Yes, we have an instance of one church sending to several churches in need!

Our brother's second point is: "2. Congregations (not individuals) sending money to the saints." He here refers to the contribution made by the Macedonian churches for Jerusalem. He avers this is not an instance of church co-

operation but a case of churches sending to individual saints. He cites I Cor. 16:1 which says, "Now concerning the collection for the saints," etc. We ask our readers to remember the brother's contention. But who are these saints? Were they the church at Jerusalem, or not? The author of the article under review even says: "A saint did not have to have his membership at Jerusalem to receive help." But what saith the Scriptures? Paul was writing of this same contribution in Rom. 15:26. He said: "For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." And in verse 31 of the same chapter he writes: "And that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints." It is possible our brother did not know these statements were in the New Testament? Yes, we have a case of several churches sending to the church in Jerusalem to care for the poor among the saints there.

His third point is "3. There is no record of one congregation sending to another congregation any money at any time for any purpose." This statement we have already shown to be incorrect. Antioch sent to the Judean churches (Acts 11:27-30). The churches of Macedonia and Achaia sent to Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 15:25-27). Under his third point, this author continues his "no pattern" argument by asserting there is no record of one congregation helping another do anything. He concludes this part by saying, "Certainly it is right for one congregation to send to another congregation and for congregations to send to individuals. But there is no set pattern in the matter."

From such statements, one is made to wonder just why much of the New Testament was written. The Bible teaches God has provided a divine pattern in all his ways. This pattern was from God by Christ and delivered to the apostles through the Holy Spirit (Jno. 12:49, 50; 14:26; 16:13). These apostles gave these words to uninspired men as a pattern. "Hold the pattern of sound words thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1:13). Also, Paul wrote to the Philippians: "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do" (Phil. 4:9).

When Paul gave instructions to the church at Corinth for sending a collecting for the needy in Jerusalem, he declared he had given the same orders for the churches of Galatia (I Cor. 16:1). This included laying by in store on the first day of the week. But it was universal instructions that were given, not just for the church at Corinth.

Since the brother's article under review is merely arguing there is not no pattern, we shall content ourselves at this time with a refutation of this matter he has argued. His fourth point is merely a repetition of what he has already written. "4. There is no pattern at all for congregational fellowship in preaching the gospel." Having shown the error in this, we pass to some other matters in this connection.

The article under review is seeking to justify the "sponsoring" church type of congregational cooperation. At this point, let us observe the disagreement among those brethren who advocate the sponsoring church. In this same journal, there appeared a series of articles some months ago defending the sponsoring church. The author of that series took a position diametrically opposed to the position under review. He argued there is a pattern of church cooperation. According to his contention, the sponsoring church is scriptural because he found one "in the Greek," of course.

Here are some excerpts from three of the articles in
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Precepts and Principles

BONDS—STOCKS

The World's Priceless Treasure

I bring you a gift!

I know not what you may possess of this world's goods. It may be little or much, but even if you owned a whole continent you would have nothing when compared to the value of the treasure to which I refer.

If you owned a king-sized Fort Knox filled with all the earth's gold and silver, precious jewels and priceless tapestries and furnishings, you would be a miserable pauper in comparison to your affluence when once you possess this invaluable treasure.

This treasure is a gift to you. But it is the most costly gift ever presented. It cost countless hours in planning, in preparation, in execution. Men lived in poverty, endured persecution and laid down their lives in order to secure this treasure for you. Heaven and earth gave their best to make it available. Men have endured ridicule, reviling and re-creation to keep it within your reach.

Yet it is yours as a gift. It is not for sale. If all the material resources of the universe were at your disposal you could not purchase this gift. It is available in abundance, everyone may have it, but it can not be purchased with silver and gold.

Again I say, it is a gift. But I hasten to add, it is not yours without cost. The truth is that it will cost you your very life to own it in any real sense. The truth is that to possess it as your own you must allow it to possess you.

The treasure about which I am speaking may be wrapped in a small package, but it contains the whole universe. It is compressed into a very small space, but it enshrines the wisdom of the ages. You can put it in your coat pocket or in your handbag, but all the safety vaults in the world could not guard its treasure.

When I assert that this treasure is invaluable I am not indulging in hyperbole. When it comes to evaluating its worth, no scale can weigh it, no assayer can determine its value, no calculating machine can add up the sum total of its enrichment of the world and its people.

It has been treasured for centuries, yet no man has ever fully appreciated its true worth. It has been counted dear by countless thousands down through the centuries, yet there have always been those who have rejected it, who have scorned it, and who have pronounced it as worthless rubbish.

There are those today who have risen so high in their own eyes that they regard this treasure as worse than rubbish, looking upon it as a source of stagnation, decay and contamination. There are other thousands who can see some of its beauty and who have some idea of its value, but who nevertheless have never laid hold on it even though it is theirs for the asking.

And, sadder still, there are others—and their number is legion—who have at one time staked their claim to this treasure, but who have never troubled to exert themselves to dig out its golden nuggets.

Now let us look at the treasure. Of course, you know

by now what it is. It is the treasure of the ages, the Bible, the Word of God, God's book, God's revelation, God's message, God's gift to the human race.

"Now, preacher, all this is very pretty, very nice and extremely idealistic. Come down to earth and tell us the practical basis for these statements, if there is any."

Where is the evidence that the Bible is the world's greatest treasure?"

There are many truths about the Bible that would enhance a lesson of this kind, and which might ordinarily be presented in connection with this subject, but which will not be discussed in this part of our study.

I could speak of its literary excellence. It is acknowledged by many men of letters as the greatest literary masterpiece of all time. I could point to its scientific accuracy and value, which is increasingly recognized by outstanding scientists; or to its historical accuracy, which is a source of invaluable assistance to those who chronicle human events; or to its ethical value, a field in which it is generally accepted as supreme. But these and other characteristics will have to await future lessons. In this study I want to get as close as possible to where we live.

GOD SPEAKS TO US IN THE BIBLE

1. The Bible is the supreme treasure of the universe because it is the instrumentality through which God speaks to us. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world." (Hebrews 1:1, 2). God has spoken! God spake "in time past" to the fathers—to the Jews—by the Old Testament prophets. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:20, 21).

God speaks today—God speaks to us. "... hath in these days spoken unto us by his Son. . . ."

God spoke to the Jews through the prophets. The words of the prophets are in this book. God speaks to us through Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles, which are enshrined on the pages of the New Testament. God speaks to us today through the Bible.

Who is God? He is the creator of the universe. He is the maker of man. He is the father of our spirits. He knows everything. All power is his. He is everywhere.

Who are we? We are creatures of God. Apart from him, we know very little. We have no power. We have seen very little of this marvelous universe.

And yet God, the infinite, speaks to us, the finite. He speaks to us through his word, the Bible. He speaks to us through the pens and lips of inspired men.

What is the Bible? In simplest terms, it is a letter from God of the universe to the human race. It is God's message to man. It is God's will—his law and his legacy—for you.

God has revealed himself to man! What a glorious truth! God has spoken unto us! What a reassuring and comforting fact! And he has spoken unto us in language that we can

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Studies in the New Testament

GEORGE P. ESTES
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James chapter 4.

James writes with the same forthrightness and boldness as one of the Old Testament prophets; he rebukes members of the church, the prophets denounced the sins of the Jews. Though the word repentance does not occur in this chapter, nevertheless, the whole chapter is a drastic call to repentance. Those who ignore it go down to doom.

In James there is the need for continual repentance; the need to turn away from self, sin and all that oppose and separate one from God and turn to God. One cannot sin without sinning against God; this is the inevitable consequence.

The epistle of James is addressed to the "twelve tribes," a figurative expression for the church. God has a claim upon His people who are His "own possession" (1 Pet. 2:9). Jesus "purchased the church with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Christians are "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20). For these reasons they are to "walk worthily of the calling" (Eph. 4:1). Rules for conduct and manner of life are clearly set forth in the New Testament Scriptures. God tells His people how they should live and what they should do. Christians are to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Paul says they "cannot continue in sin that grace may abound" (Rom. 6:1). But the old man of sin attempts to persist and continue in the life. Some of the converts in the apostolic age felt that they were set free in Christ to live as they pleased. If church members live according to the old man and the former lusts, the distinctive features and characteristics of the christian life are obliterated and lost; they can no longer influence others by exemplary lives.

Jesus says the manner of life of a disciple must be thus: "Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand; and it shineth to all that are in the house. Even so let your light so shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14-16). Furthermore, those in the bond of fellowship in Christ, those related as brethren in the Lord must give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3).

The ones addressed by James were guilty of violating the Scriptures and were in rebellion against God. They needed to return to God in complete submission. The imperative is to put on Christ; put to death their rebellious members. Chapter four of James shows the contrast of humility and pride.

"Wars" and "fightings" are strong terms to denote the friction and discord among brethren. Such emanated, not from God who demands peace but from their pleasures, from their members. "I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members." (Rom. 7:23). The struggle is ever present within a church member "evil is present". (Rom. 7:21). The main thought therefore, should be with self. One must turn from the flesh and turn to God.

"Lust" (4:2) signifies coveting for personal pleasure and gain, gain to satisfy self. Wars and strife occur when people seek through lusts to satisfy their cravings. Lust is

the very opposite to all that is divine. Sin gets its life in lust. It is the evil set of man's will.

"Kill" (4:2) is used by James as it is by Jesus: "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment; but I say to you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in the danger of the judgment." (Matt. 5:21-22); and John, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murder hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3:15). Some of the brethren were coveting (jealous over the possessions of others). They were putting selves and ego before the welfare of others.

The prayer described in verse 3 is one of self seeking. Acceptable prayer must be thus: "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." (1 John 5:14). Some pray piously as did the Pharisees who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at naught." (Luke 18:9). They would select and interpret certain passages of Scripture and hope that the reward would be gratification of selves.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. 6:24). James 4:4 teaches the same. God's child cannot show partiality and love for the world. Friendship with both worldly mankind as such and their principles, as well as with associates and desires of earthly things, causes enmity with God. The "world" is the inhabitants of sinful men as opposed to God.

The "Scripture" in verse 5 is the word of God. They were not taking Scripture seriously; they did not consider the Scriptures as God speaking to them. This is the double-minded man who blinded himself to this fact.

"That Spirit which he made to dwell in us yearneth for us even unto jealous envy" Footnote (ASV) for verse 5. The "Spirit" marks the new life. God's name is omitted but understood by the context. He is jealous and yearns for the devotion of His people.

vs.6-10 is a drastic call to repentance, to turn from worldly ways and pleasures to God. In all this there was collision with fellow men, though they tried to deny this. All this must be forsaken for God's people are to be single in heart—not two-souled or divided. This is opposite to a whole heart. "Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matt. 22:37). One cannot approach God with a two-fold heart. This makes a caricature of God. The divided heart "speak falsehood every one with his neighbor; with flattering lip and with a double heart, do they speak." (Ps. 12:2).

In these verses James presents man's concupiscence. Brother is in conflict with brother. The child of God is in flight from God, is in enmity against God, though he seeks to conceal this from self. He feels self sufficient, is independent and judges the law instead of obeying it. He is in reality secularizing his life and attempting to live independent of God but hopes to have Him near at hand where he can call him in once in a while. He must turn from all this and "submit to God (vs. 7).

The erring one must turn to God by the following: "Humble yourselves in the sight of God"; Be subject to God"; "Draw nigh to God"; Resist the devil"; Cleanse your hands"; Purify your hearts (minds)." In return God will "draw nigh" and "exalt you." These verses teach that if the one in error repents, God's grace is not far away and He will forgive and accept one's person.

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Shifting Responsibility

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The BASIC ERROR of all the "Brotherhood Projects" among churches of Christ today is that of "SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY." "Brotherhood Projects" thrive on the shifting of responsibility on the part of someone. If churches of Christ and individual Christians would cease shifting their responsibilities, then all "Brotherhood Projects" would die. This is an IMPORTANT subject!

It is absolutely impossible for churches of Christ to turn their work of Benevolence and Evangelism over to another congregation for that congregation to do for them without having to bear the guilt of shifting responsibility. It is impossible for churches of Christ to turn their funds (which funds the elders of each congregation are responsible to oversee and spend) over to another congregation for that congregation to plan a work which she knows she is unable to do, and which work she expects, at the time of her planning, other congregations to help pay for; and, which work is a work to which all the churches she expects to contribute are equally related, WITHOUT BEARING THE GUILT OF SHIFTING THEIR RESPONSIBILITY. It is absolutely impossible for parents to shift their responsibility of rearing, providing for, and educating their children without bearing the same guilt, Eph. 6:4. The relative who will not accept the God-ordained responsibility that falls to him of providing for his helpless kin must bear the same guilt, 1 Tim. 5:1-16.

All must agree that the following rule applies with equal force to churches and individuals as relates to responsibility:

ABILITY PLUS OPPORTUNITY EQUALS RESPONSIBILITY

1. The individual, Mat. 25:15; Mark 13:32-37; Rom. 1:14-15.
2. The church, Acts 11:29-30; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3.

In other words, God expects each congregation and each individual to do what they are ABLE to do as OP-

PORTUNITY affords. This equals RESPONSIBILITY. But, God has NEVER required, nor even suggested, that congregations and individuals do more than that which EXCEEDS their ABILITY. It is possible, we recognize, that conditions may come about to where churches, as well as individuals, may be rendered unable to carry their responsibilities for a time, or even permanently. God recognizes this, and gives us the information relative to it in His word.

Before we get into our study on this most important subject, it will be good to define our term. RESPONSIBILITY: 1. State or quality of being responsible; specifically: a. accountability; also moral accountability. b. Reliability; sometimes, ability to pay. 2. A charge for which one is responsible or accountable. — Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

1. Some responsibilities are ordained of God: Parent to child; child to parent. Christian to Christ, church under Christ, elders to Christ, evangelist, etc.
2. Some responsibilities come about as a result of assignment of duties, one's station in life, etc.
3. Duties always grow out of responsibility or accountability.
4. Assigned duties may be removed, which removes responsibility. Assignments by parents to child, elders to members, government to citizens, etc.
5. Responsibility from God in relationships cannot be shifted. Inability, for whatever cause, may release one from responsibility, but he can't shift responsibility from God provided he is able to accept it.

We believe the above definitions and explanations will serve to keep the issue focused and prevent endless quibbling relative to this subject.

A thorough study of this subject will serve to enlighten us as to our responsibilities and their seriousness; and also, will serve to remind us that it is wrong to shift our responsibilities to others for them to perform for us, when we are able, ourselves, to perform them. This study will also bring out the fact that it is wrong for others to take over our obligations, even with our consent, and, at the same time smile on, and encourage us in, our shirking, or shifting of the same.

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RELIGIOUS JOURNALS—

Continued From Page 4)

the New Testament, when it "rides some hobby" (as brethren often put it), the paper becomes a disturber of the brethren. The paper need not be small to be guilty. It could be a large and influential journal, even supported by a majority of the brotherhood; but when it teaches false doctrine, it is disturbing the faith. Just after the Civil War, it was the small and unpopular *Advocate* which said, "Each local congregation is sufficient to do the work God has given it," while the larger papers favored the society.

Today, there are some papers which disturb the faith by teaching that it is wrong for brethren to operate Christian schools. They charge that the school is doing the work of the church, but these papers err in failing to distinguish between congregational and individual responsibilities. On the other hand, some brethren go to the opposite extreme and insist that churches may subsidize the colleges out of the church treasury. But if the college is not doing the work of the church, what right does it have to be supported out of the churches' treasures? None! When a paper teaches that the college may be included in the church budget, it is a disturber of the faith, just as certainly as if it went to the opposite extreme!

(2.) **The paper becomes "the" authority.** There is nothing more dangerous than for a paper to become so influential with a segment of brethren that they say, "I have such confidence in that paper and its editor that I'd believe nearly anything I read in it." When brethren become that loyal to any paper, the seeds of disaster have been sown. Unwittingly perhaps, the authority of men has been submitted for revelation.

This is exactly what happened in the decade of the 1840's, when the way was being prepared for the society. When Campbell began to plead for a means by which the churches might work together, the majority of brethren said, "We have such confidence in Bro. Campbell and the Harbinger that we just don't see how he could be wrong." And disaster struck!

(3.) **The paper abandons the "sound doctrine" for which it once contended.** We do not preach "once safe, always safe;" and the fact that a paper once was sound in teaching does not guarantee its perpetual soundness. The *American Christian Review*, once an effective instrument for good, later became a disturber of the faith.

Even today, brethren who once preached the autonomy and all sufficiency of the local congregation shudder when some preacher announces that he will discuss these same themes; for they fear that some "pet institution" may be criticized. Could it be that principles are being abandoned?

(4.) **The paper refuses to allow brethren to study vital problems.** When any paper stifles free discussion of current issues, it assumes an omniscience which Campbell, Lard and Lipscomb dared not assume. When thousands of sincere brethren conscientiously question some practice and ask that it be studied in the light of the New Testament, and when some paper defends the practice by saying, "We are teaching the truth on this question, and no hobbyist on the other side has any right to be heard," that paper is treading the brink of disaster. Let brethren discuss the questions which confront the church! Truth will prevail! But let no paper become so arrogant that it says, "What we teach is the end of truth. No further discussion is necessary."

Let all papers say, "Our quest is for truth; our spirit is brotherly kindness; our aim is to present all views fairly." And a grateful brotherhood will rise up and say, "These papers are all guardians of the gospel."

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CHRIST AND THE NEW TESTAMENT—

(Continued from Page 6)

flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together into thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.' (60:7). God's sanctuary will be beautified (60:13), and what else could it mean but the Old Testament sanctuary since that was the sanctuary known when the prophets spoke! What else could a premillennialist say that it was? It would have to be if the sacrifices are to offered." **New Testament Interpretation of Kingdom Prophecies**, James D. Bales, p. 42 (which see for an excellent presentation of material along these lines).

Now inspite of all the New Testament says about the purpose of these Old Testament ordinances (Heb. 10:1-9, for illustration) the premillennialists will insist that there is nothing figurative in these statements in Isaiah. They cannot refer to the type of which the New Testament system of sacrifice in Christ and worship in the church is the antitype! (I Cor. 5:7, 8; Heb. 13:10-15). No! Why? That would be a **figurative interpretation** and such is virtually anathema in premillennialism. Hence, all New Testament references to a substance for the Old Testament shadow of carnal sacrifices must be set aside to make way for the literal interpretations of the millennialists. But, as Brother Bales clearly points out, "Surely the revelation of God which deals with the 'very image of the things' is clearer than that which dealt with the shadow (10:1)." Ibid, p. 46.

Methods of the Skeptics Are Used

It is no less true than alarming to observe that the methods of the modernist and even of the atheist are employed to support this speculative system here under study. Christians have long been aware of the distasteful and blasphemous nature of these methods in which men make light of the Bible, and laugh at the Christian's claim for its unity and perfection. This is not to say that the premillennial brethren are laughing at our claim for the unity and perfection of God's word. They are not. But this makes them all the more inconsistent; for while pursuing a course which the skeptic has long calculated will destroy the Bible and make it laughable, the premillennialists are continuing to proclaim their belief in the inspiration of the scriptures.

In this they are like our denominational friends, from whom the atheist gets so much comfort. He looks upon the seething, feuding, vascillating conglomeration of sectarianism claiming to believe and follow the scriptures and finds comfort in his hopeless and undone state. Even he can see that the claim to believe the Bible to be inspired makes ridiculous all the peculiar doctrines of the various denominations. And indeed, let us remember that Jesus said, "That they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21).

Questioning the Accuracy of the New Testament Authors

Every gospel preacher has heard some skeptic question Paul's "views" on marriage and the home because Paul was a bachelor. We have heard the modernist make light of New Testament principles of strict obedience, because the New Testament writers were not advanced sociologists and didn't know that it is better for man to sacrifice than to obey. Now comes the premillennialist who by his teaching says Peter, Paul and others were not absolutely accurate in their statements of fulfillment. This is tantamount to denying the inspiration of the New Testament writers.

Was Peter entire accurate in saying "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel"? (Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28-32).

Was there no mistake when the same apostle applied both Deut. 18:15 and Gen. 22:18 in his sermon in Acts 3:22-26? And what of his assertion that Ps. 16:8-11 and 132:11 were fulfilled when Christ was raised from the dead to sit at God's right hand? (Acts 2:22-36).

What of Paul's treatment of Ps. 2:7 and the "sure mercies of David" from Isa. 55:37? He said, "God hath fulfilled the same unto us . . ." (Acts 13:32-37). Was he in the slightest error as he spoke here by the Holy Spirit? And again, what of his several quotations in Hebrews One, from Old Testament prophecies with a direct application of Jesus Christ? His application of anyone of them would make the premillennial theory ridiculous. Was he right about them all?

We must say in leaving this section that one of our greatest weapons in dealing with skeptical views of the scriptures has been the unity between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfillment. God obviously intended for it so to be. (2 Pet. 1:16-21). It is then so very sad that we should have those claiming to be a part of the only communion on earth that can consistently refute the claims of the infidel, who undermine this position with such concessions to the infidel camp!

Contradictions

Again we happily call your attention to '**New Testament Interpretations of Old Testament Prophecy**.' This time, page 47:

If the premillennialists are right in their interpretations of prophecy, there are prophecies which contradict one another.

(1.) How can the sacrifices be restored and still there be no hurting and destroying in God's holy mountain? (Isa. 60:7; 66:21, 22, 23; Malachi 3:1-4; Jer. 33:15-18, 21, 22 versus Isa. 11:9; Jer. 3:16).

(2.) How can the new covenant be established in the millennium, as some premillennialists teach, and yet the old covenant with its sacrificial system and Levites be restored? (Jer. 33:15-18, 21, 22; Malachi 3:1-4 versus Jer. 31:31-34; Jer. 3:16). Both cannot be in force at the same time. (Heb. 10:9, 10; Rom. 7:1-6).

(3.) How can faithful Gentiles who were martyred for Christ, reign (Rev. 20:4) if Gentiles are to be slaves of the Jews in the millennium? (Isa. 60:3, 6-16, 61:5-9, 49:22-23, 26).

(4.) Malachi 1:11 stated that offerings and incense could be and would be offered in every place, while the literalistic interpretation of Isa. 2 and Zech 14:16-21 bring the nations to Jerusalem for worship since there will be the Lord's house.

Again, it must be observed that skeptics have labored long and tediously to show the scriptures do contradict. How unfortunate that comfort should be given them by those who say that they have fellowship with God!

Conclusion

These things have been presented with the hope that they may be used to reach persons who have failed to see the illogical, matherialistic nature of the premillennial theory, but may yet be reached with the truth when they know that it is a system which reflects upon Christ and the New Testament. Perhaps upon seeing that the methods used to sustain millennialism are the very methods, and the fruits are the very fruits, of modernism, cause will be given, and they shall stop to consider more the ground occupied. That even one may be so recached is our prayer in the Master's name.

IS THERE REALLY NO PATTERN?—

(Continued From Page 7)

the series. Bear in mind these articles appeared in the same paper in which the one now being reviewed appeared. "It is generally admitted by our brethren that the pattern of New Testament churches included a government which consisted of the rulership of the local assemblies by a plurality of elders, or bishops. It is also generally held that, although these churches were autonomous, they cooperated or worked together at times. The exact details of such cooperation have lately been the subject of much discussion." This quotation shows that the author of this series, in contrast with the author whose article we are reviewing, thought "the exact details of such cooperation" might have some bearing on the present cooperation.

In a later article in the series, he wrote: "We continue our study of the examples of the cooperation of New Testament churches. . . . Our effort is to see what the details were of such cooperation and to apply the bearing of such cooperation in the New Testament to the work of independent local churches of Christ today." This brother plainly says he is studying "the examples of the cooperation of New Testament churches." The writer your scribe is reviewing says we have no such examples. The brother says his series is designed "to apply the bearing of such cooperation in the New Testament to the work of independent local churches of Christ today." The brother whose article we have under review argues the cooperation of these New Testament churches has no bearing on church cooperation today. In a still later article in his series he writes: "The details of this cooperation certainly bear upon cooperation of churches today." He was writing about the cooperation of Macedonia, Achaia and Galatia in sending to Jerusalem (I Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8, 9). In contrast with that we quote one paragraph from the article we are currently reviewing. "It is suggested that 2 Cor. 8 presents a pattern of 'congregational cooperation.' Be it remembered that this is a false premise."

Now both these brethren think the sponsoring church is acceptable to the Lord. Both argue and have written much favoring it. But the writer of the article we review says his colleague in defense of the sponsoring church argues from a "false premise."

Our last consideration for this paper is this: If there is no pattern of church cooperation in the New Testament, what would be wrong with the missionary society? Suppose the missionary society were stripped of its objectionable features as Campbell and others envisioned, what would be wrong with churches cooperating through it since no pattern is revealed? Are brethren not on the verge of taking such a position when they argue that the New Testament does not furnish a pattern for cooperation? We know personally some who have already arrived at this conclusion. Less than a year ago a gospel preacher told this scribe unashamedly he had no objection to a missionary society, since the New Testament revealed no pattern of cooperation.

We are presenting a statement by Alexander Campbell appearing in the *Millennial Harbinger* of May 1849. Will the readers notice the similarity between Campbell's argument and the one we have in review?

"In all things pertaining to public interest, not of Christian faith, piety, or morality, the church of Jesus Christ in its aggregate character, is left free and unshackled by any apostolic authority. This is the great point which I assert

as of capital importance in any great conventional movement or cooperation in advancing the public interests of a common Christianity and a common salvation. My strong proof for this conclusion is that, while faith, piety, and morality are all divinely established and enacted by special agents—apostles and prophets possessed of plenary inspiration; matters of prudential arrangement for the evangelizing of the world, for the better application of our means and resources, according to the exigencies of society and the ever-varying complexion of things around us—are left without a single law, statute, ordinance, or enactment in the New Testament."

Campbell's argument was that in "matters of prudential arrangement for the evangelizing of the world, for the better application of our means and resources, according to the exigencies of society and the ever-varying complexion of things around us—are left without a single law, statute, ordinance, or enactment in the New Testament." Whatever "prudential arrangement" brethren might make for church cooperation would be suitable to him, said Campbell. Scriptures were silent on church cooperation. He thus argued in favor of a missionary society. Campbell's writings are replete with such statements.

Too much discernment will not be required to perceive the parallel between Campbell's argument and that of this writer whose article we have under consideration. Note the closing sentences: "We are to have fellowship one with another and the Lord gave no pattern for congregational cooperating. How then can one violate a pattern that does not exist?" We respectfully ask our brother, would a missionary society do violence to the New Testament pattern for church cooperation? Gentle Readers, he cannot say it would for, like Alexander Campbell, he has asserted there is no pattern!

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THE BIBLE—

(Continued from Page 8)

understand. Of course, the words were not originally spoken in the English language, but one of the most remarkable facts about the Bible is that it is so written that it can be translated into any language or tongue without losing its meaning.

The Bible is God's gift to me! It is enscribed from him to me—what an enthralling thought!

I read a true story about a little girl who decided to give her father a Bible as a birthday present, but who was at a loss to know what to write on the flyleaf. "From Maggie" seemed too cold. 'From your little daughter' would not do, either, for her father had said that she was getting to be a big girl. Would 'From one who loves you' do? Scarcely, for quite a lot of others loved him, too. Finally, she went to her father's library. She found there one of the books had this on the flyleaf—"From the author". Later, when her father opened his gift, and saw 'From the author,' he realized that he was not acquainted with the author of the Bible. He began to study the Bible, was converted, and became a preacher. In telling the story of his conversion, he often held up the little Bible, and told about the inscription, 'From the author'."

Have you examined your Bible lately? You will not find the inscription "From the author" on the flyleaf, but you will find it stamped, in one form or another, on every page of this blessed book.

If I should receive a letter from the President of the United States I would read it, not once, but often. I would show it to my friends. I would prize it highly—I might even frame it and hang it on the wall of my study for all to see.

But I have something of infinitely greater value than that. I have a letter from God—"from the author." It came direct from the mountain of all knowledge and wisdom. It is filled with the power of the universe, and backed by the authority of the Supreme Governor of the universe.

You have the same letter. Have you read it? How often do you examine it? Does it occupy a prominent place in your home and in your heart, or is it gathering dust on a shelf or collecting family mementos on a table?

But God has not simply spoken unto us. He has spoken to us in language that we can understand.

The Bible is God's revelation. God wrote it, not to confuse or perplex us, but to enlighten us. A revelation is that which reveals, makes known. That there are difficulties in the Bible the book itself affirms, but God's message to us is plain and simple and clear—in our own language.

"A woman missionary in Africa saw an unknown native coming toward her. He was dressed in the customary skins and was leading a goat. He put down his spear and tied up the goat, and then said: 'White lady, has God's book arrived in our country?'

"Are you interested in God's Book?', she asked.

"Yes," replied that native; 'My son brought me these pieces of paper, and has been teaching me the words, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. I heard that God's Book had arrived, and I have walked for five days, and I have brought this goat to buy God's Book!'

"Then she showed him a copy of the Bible and found

the place where the words were printed.

"Give me that Book," he entreated, 'And you may keep this goat.'

"Then he walked up and down, pressing the Book to his heart, and saying, 'God's Book, God's Book. He has spoken to us in our own language.'"

We have had the Bible all our lives. We can walk around the corner to the dime store and buy a Bible for less than a dollar. Perhaps we would appreciate it more if it were harder to obtain.

The Bible is a priceless treasure, then, because upon its pages God speaks to us. I may read it with the assurance that it is God's certified message. And only upon its pages can I be absolutely sure of receiving the unadulterated truth.

(Additional truths about "The Bible—The World's Priceless Treasure" will be discussed in future issues of THE PRECEPTOR.)

STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Continued From Page 9)

Do not speak down a brother or belittle him but rather pray for him. (vs. 11). "Brethren" is a religious term expressing the fellowship and relationship of the people of God.

Some of the members addressed by James were guilty of exalting themselves to a position of a judge of the law of Christ and were attempting to invoke the law. Thus they were themselves convicted by it. The perfect law of liberty must not be taken by part or piecemeal but totally. Furthermore, it is intended that it be obeyed not interpreted to suit one's fancy. The Pharisees fell into this grave error concerning the Mosaic law. They sat "on Moses seat" (Matt. 23:2) and enforced the law of Moses on others but when applied to themselves it was interpreted to suit their designs and theories. They thus became judges of the law.

"Destroy" in verse 12 stands opposite to eternal life.

If the Lord will, must be behind every thought, word and act in life. Brethren must not say to the Lord, let us put it off now, we are doing business. Those invited to the Great Supper (Luke 14:16) "began to make excuse." (vs. 18). The invitation of the Lord must not be rejected if one would be saved. Excusing oneself amounts to practical atheism; it is quenching the spirit. (1 Thess. 5:19).

Man's life is described as being transient, frail and fading (vs. 14). It is like a vapor that soon passeth away; flesh is like grass and its flower that blooms for a short time but soon withereth away, (1 Pet. 1:21-23). Man "is of few days" (Job 14:1). One must prepare for eternity in this short life. One has but a few days, weeks, months or years to do this. So time must not be washed in rebellion to God or idleness. He must spend his days in service. While so doing one must not glory in himself nor be puffed up with pride, but glory in the cross of Christ. (Gal. 6:14).

To fail to do good when one knows what is right is a sin. This is the sin of omission. When and where God has spoken, His child must obey. To neglect or refuse this brings condemnation.

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Reports

Paul Foutz, 513 Club Oak Drive, Fort Worth 14, Texas, June 28, 1956.—Thus far the Castleberry congregation has not experienced the "summer slump" which characterizes many congregations. During May and June we averaged 428 in Bible Study attendance compared with 409 for the same two months in 1955. Contributions for May and June this year averaged \$906 each Sunday compared to \$862 for the same two months one year ago. During the past two months we have had 19 responses. Eight have been baptized and 6 were restored.

Rodney Wald, 5 Belford St., Broadmeadow, N. S. W., Australia. Please note my change of address. The work in Warner's Bay, N. S. W., Australia, is progressing in a splendid way. Our attendance averages in the 30's. We have only four members. We must build an addition to our present building because of crowded conditions. It will cost around \$2,000.00. If you can help us in any way it will be appreciated. We have begun mailing out gospel tracts into the homes of interested people, and our correspondence course is being sent into homes throughout most of Australia. For further information write: 41st St. Church of Christ, 2302 W. 41st St., Tulsa 7, Okla., or M. T. Bishop, Box 397, Haskell, Oklahoma.

Luther Roberts, The Wolflin Village Church of Christ, Amarillo, Texas had its beginning February 26, 1956. Thirteen families from the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ, Amarillo, Texas went out from that church under the direction of the elders to form the nucleus of the new church in the southwest section of Amarillo. There were 38 members who met with the congregation the first day who signified their intention of being identified with this new work. At this writing there are 83 members of the congregation. This membership has more than doubled in the first four months.

The Wolflin Village church is now meeting in the Coronado public school building located at the corner of 34th Avenue and Georgia, but the entrance to the building is just north of 34th Avenue at 3210 Wimberly Road. The church has bought approximately 2 acres of ground at Sunlite and Andrews Streets in Olsen Park Addition in the extreme southwest part of Amarillo. Luther G. Roberts, who had been preaching in Borger, Texas moved to Amarillo February 1, 1956 and was invited to preach for the Wolflin Village church, which he has done regularly since the beginning of the congregation.

Brother Cleon Lyles wrote the following in the *Church of Christ Reminder*, May 31, 1956: "How are congregations to be established where they are needed? It would seem to me that in a city where there is a congregation, or a number of congregations, that any movement should have

the backing of a well-established congregation." This is the way the Wolflin Village church was started. The elders of the Pleasant Valley church in Amarillo took the lead in the planning of the new church in Amarillo and the nucleus of the church was made up of members of the congregation whose elders took the initiative in beginning the new congregation in the section of Amarillo where there was none. Other congregations have started and some are now starting new churches in the city.

O. Orman Henderson, 4200 S. E. 24th St., Del City, Okla., I have accepted a Civil Service job and am in a position to preach for congregations within driving distance of Del City who can not support a preacher with a full salary. I have done local work for seven years. For references write Elders, church of Christ, Clarksville, Ark., or, Bro. George B. Curtis, Harmony Rd., Clarksville, Ark. Contact me at the above address or phone MELrose 7-2944.

Paul K. Williams, Route A, Poplarville, Miss., is having to abandon his plans to go to South Africa as the South African Government is currently restricting the entrance of any missionaries into that country due to racial troubles. While awaiting further opportunity to enter, he will be available for work with some church here in the States.

ERNEST A. Finley, 1810 Buchanan St., Wichita Falls, Texas, after two years of pleasant and profitable association with the Fox and Lake church of Carlsbad, N. M., began work with the Floral Heights church in Wichita Falls, June 1.

Ed Grantham, Overton, Texas, after serving 1½ years (from its beginning) with the College church of Christ, Paris, Texas, recently began work with the Overton, Texas church.

Carl Gardner, Fort Worth, Texas, reports a joyous occasion at the Waxahachie, Texas, church when he had a reunion with former students of Ellis County and A. C. C., and hearing Horace Busby preach. Gardner recently preached at Roanoke, Texas.

SERMONS—VOL. I—C. R. NICHOL

It has been my pleasure to examine and read some in the recently published book of sermons by C. R. Nichol. As might be expected, they reflect the characteristically Nicholian style and content with respect both to impressiveness and adherence to the word of God. Every one will want a copy of this attractively bound volume of sermons by C. R. Nichol.

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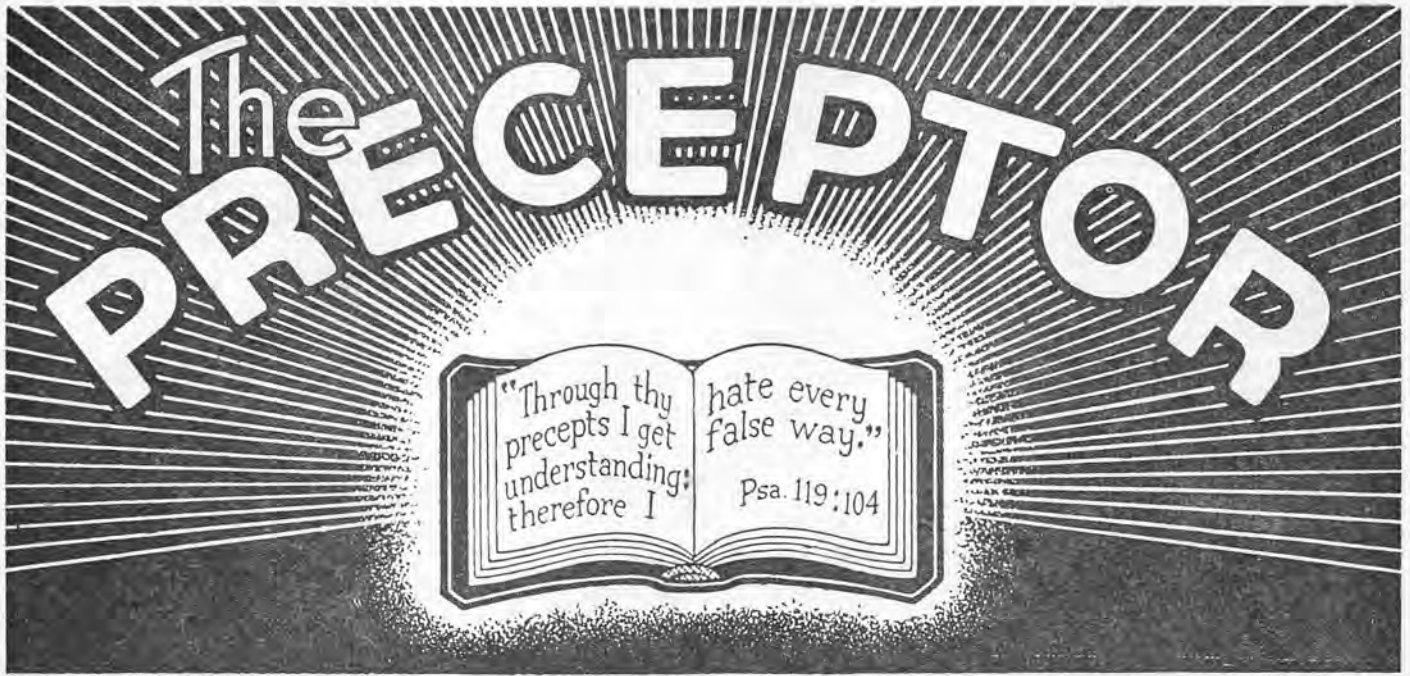
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CONVERTED TO THE TRUTH

ROBERT F. TURNER

Gladewater, Texas

In the strictest sense, we should be converted to Christ. He it is who saves us from our sins, and motivates and directs the life of every true Christian. But Christ declared Himself, "The Way, the Truth, and the Life." It is only through truth that anyone comes to Christ; we are sanctified through truth, and by truth made free (Jn. 8:32; 17:17). We can walk as Christians only by walking in the truth, the light of His Word. Here sentimentalism and true Christianity often part company. Here we must define real conversion.

To convert—that means to turn about, turn over, etc. Properly used, one "converted" has accepted in Christ a standard of faith and practice hitherto rejected; has "turned about" to walk in this new (to him) way.

But often people "change religions" because of personal differences, business, social likes, etc. These are not true converts, for the change does not really involve a "turn over" in conviction. Outwardly they change, but inwardly—in principle—they do not.

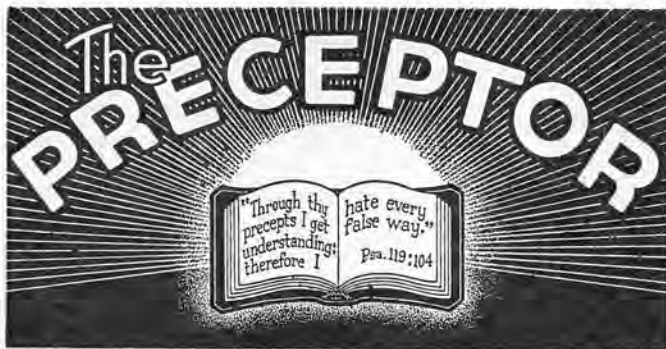
Today's religious world is filled with so much unconcern, "doesn't make any difference" attitude, that many regard any religious change with distaste. They may charge "bigotry" or some ulterior motive. They would judge all by their own definite attitude

toward truth. But people who are genuine converts to the TRUTH of God's Word are not overly concerned about what the world may think of their change. Once thoroughly convinced that God's way is complete and perfect, they are too busy learning and working, drinking deeply of this water of life, to fret about the darts hurled by the broad-way traveler.

They are not converted to people, therefore people can not move them. They are not converted to a preacher, therefore other preachers do not attract them. They are not converted to a human creed, therefore they have little interest in comparison studies with various philosophies of men. They are converted to God's TRUTH.

In their hearts burn the desire for more TRUTH. They hunger and thirst after righteousness. They recognize the inspired Word as the living link between God and man. Realizing that their knowledge of TRUTH about God, and things eternal, must come from this source, Their delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law they meditate day and night.

Our congregations today need more real converts; men and women not creed-bound, preacher-bound. Men and women who, in faith, see Christ at the end of the true way, and strive faithfully to follow His steps.



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EDITORIAL

Going and Preaching

The Saviour's promise, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," involves the obligation to execute the Lord's charge beyond the life-time of those to whom it was spoken. There is a sense then in which the Lord's people must continue this work of going, teaching, baptizing, and teaching the baptized in their own time.

In spite of all that has been written and said, many still have very indistinct conceptions of this almost overwhelming responsibility. Two distinct and impelling ideas are deserving of sober consideration with respect to this task.

First there is the matter of conceiving of this work from the viewpoint of discharging an obligation that rests upon the doers. Some assignments are fulfilled by the simple performance of the thing required without any necessary thought as to the results that follows. Carrying the gospel to those who need it is partly, though not entirely, of this nature. Possibly all are too concerned about the immediate results of gospel teaching. Sight must never be lost of the fact that the gospel is to be preached, fully and to all, regardless of the effect upon the hearers. Should not another soul obey the gospel in our time, the necessity to continue to preach would in no wise be lessened nor relieved. Whether or not men submit themselves to the commands of the gospel is incidental to the preaching of the word. The servant has a master to please.

The soldier a battle to win. The athlete a course to run and the believer a faith to keep. Whatever is or is not accomplished by faithful preaching is the effect of the divine word and springs from no intrinsic power from the proclaimer. Therefore neither undue elation nor despondency should upset us respecting the effect of preaching. It is enough that the word be faithfully preached and that all have the chance to hear. We must free ourselves from the blood of all men.

A second arresting factor to be reckoned with is the sobering consideration that souls will be eternally lost if preaching is not effective. Ah, would to God that all his children could conceive of preaching in this true light! It is casting the rope to the drowning man. It is lifting the blind man out of the pit. It is snatching the helpless out of the fire. No more anguished thought can enter into the human mind than the vivid picture of the soul created in the noble likeness of God writhing in the throes of eternal punishment. Unless it be the realization that had I done my part in preaching and teaching and holding up the hands of others that so do, that soul instead would be in the gentle and joyful climes of the blessed. When the matter is viewed in this light it is difficult to remain indifferent and inactive. Other things pale into relative insignificance when we think sensibly about these eternal issues that flow from going and preaching. That is the reason for extreme solicitude about the results of preaching. The gospel rejected is a soul lost. Hence, the need to plead with and pray for lost souls. You are not lost because someone brought you the gospel. Others may be lost if you do not carry the gospel to them. A stranger. A relative. A parent or a child of your own!

Let each impressively own his personal responsibility to teach such as he is able to help others who are going and teaching. It is not the necessity of the suggested alternatives of going and teaching in arrangements unknown to the New Testament scriptures on the one hand, or, sitting idly by doing nothing for fear of violating the Divine will on the other. These alternatives do not correctly represent the situation. Rather, LET US ZEALOUSLY AND UNCEASINGLY GO AND PREACH TO THE EXTENT OF OUR ABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOLLOWING THE INERRANT LEADERSHIP OF GOD'S ETERNAL TRUTH. This is right; it cannot be wrong. Thus we will save our own souls and the souls of them that hear and obey.—Stanley J. Lovett.

EARLIER PUBLICATION DATE

This issue of *The Preceptor* was mailed the 15th. The September issue will be mailed not later than the 5th. We think you will like the earlier date.

Then and Now

W. L. WHARTON, JR.

Odessa, Texas

I have just been loaned a centennial year-book published by the Central Christian Church of Austin, Texas, in 1947. It is a very interesting and enlightening book since it relates the highlights of the history of that congregation, which was among the first congregations of the church of Christ to be established in the State of Texas. Because I believe it to have some reader interest, I have undertaken to set out some of the more pertinent features of the record.

The congregation had its beginning in the Spring of 1847 with ten members and was known as the Church of Christ. It was fully organized with officers in September, 1850.

No record of their place of meeting prior to 1852 exists. At that time they are reported to have been meeting in a school house.

120 names are added between 1850 and 1860, mostly by letter indicating the growth of Austin itself which had risen in population to 3,494 by 1860.

Dr. W. A. Morris united with the church by letter on April 18, 1852. "He was a practicing physician, educated, intelligent, refined, and quite progressive. In our day he would be called a liberal. Dr. Morris later, in 1886, was the leading spirit in organizing the Texas Christian Missionary Society in a State meeting held in the Austin Church."

"On April 24, 1867, the church apparently first acquired title to a site for its building. On that date the deed was conveyed to W. A. Morris and W. H. D. Carrington 'in trust for the use of the Church of Christ in Austin.'"

"The Austin Church was willing to pay one of its own Elders or Bishops for his service as a preacher or evangelist, as he was then regularly called, but not on any basis of professional training as we now understand it. Here again was an attempt on the part of the local congregation to re-establish the customs and the order, as well as the faith, of the Apostolic church."

Concerning the church during this period of time the article states: "The movement was in reality a voice crying in the wilderness against certain abuses in the church, particularly against emotionalism, ecclesiasticism and sectarianism," (1847-1867). But when the church was split over the question of missionary societies etc., they explain the differences in part like this: "Here is the difference between those who feel that the church should primarily be a voice crying in the wilderness, so spiritual a voice that it would be in danger of being corrupted by anything costly or beautiful in a church building, and those who accept the church as the body of Christ." (1887). Just ten years later (1897) they say of the church at that time; "It was no longer a voice crying in the wilderness against ecclesiasticism, but rather a cooperating unit with other spiritual forces of the city." So we have in the brief space of fifty years the transition from "a voice crying in the wilderness" to an uncertain attitude towards the "voice (1867), on to "no longer a voice crying in the wilderness." In those fifty years the "voice" of the Austin church was mostly silenced and if anything was "cried out" it was for the sects who had, in the interval, become "other spiritual forces in the city," according to the Christian Church, which in turn had become

altogether a different thing from the plain "church of Christ" it started out being. Was the change in the "sects" or in the church? The answer is obvious.

An entire section is devoted to what they style "The Great Controversy." Some excerpts will serve to show the thought and feeling of the Christian Church toward the issues involved. They say:

"But no history of the Central Christian Church in Austin during this period from 1867 to 1897, the three decades that embraced the "Great Controversy," would be complete or a true portrayal of the spiritual life of those decades without picturing the significance and the bitterness of that long-continued religious controversy. It should be given somewhat in detail in giving the history of the Central Christian Church in Austin, because this church was the center of much of the controversy. The controversy was three-fold: first and foremost, it was the matter of the organization of a missionary society. Second it was the controversy over instrumental music in public worship. And third, it was the general controversy over whether Christianity would be legalistically or spiritually interpreted.

"The first question that finally got a decision was the matter of organized missionary work in the State of Texas. That was decided in a state meeting held in the Austin church in 1886. It largely centered around two elders in the Austin church, Dr. W. A. Morris and W. H. D. Carrington. (Bear in mind that this was the Dr. Morris in the foregoing paragraphs who was "educated, intelligent, refined and quite progressive. In our day he would be called a liberal." (W. L. W.)

"Morris had the support of D. Hardin Walsh, another elder in the Austin church, and a group of preachers led by Chalmers McPherson. There had been a state meeting for several years, at which time year after year the subject of a State society was always brought up and defeated. But when the State meeting that was held in Sherman in 1885 decided that the following year the meeting should be in Austin, Dr. Morris and Mr. Walsh, who had long wanted the evangelistic work of the Disciples of Christ in Texas to be done in a systematic and organized manner, began laying the groundwork for the Society long before the meeting was called the next year. They wrote all the churches in the state a letter as to what they proposed, and in the letter they included these words: 'All churches in harmony with this movement are cordially invited to send their delegates or representatives' (that is, to the State meeting which was to gather in Austin in July, 1886. W. L. W.)

"After three days of debate, the proposal of a State Society was carried. Immediately money was pledged by individuals to carry on the work. Some \$2500.00 was raised. When the vote was counted and the opposition found they were defeated, W.H.D. Carrington rose in the meeting and said: 'All who want to do missionary work on the scriptural basis will please meet me in the basement of this church immediately.'—Thus the first bitter controversy was settled in favor of those who called themselves the Progressives, and the decision was made in the Austin church."

The unscriptural practice of a State meeting, though practiced with the approval of all parties, led the way for the majority vote. Preachers' meetings, some types of lectureships, and other opportunities for group expression to be passed down in the form of a decision are potentially

(Continued on Page 13)

Denominationalism: An Obstruction to Christianity

HARRY PICKUP, JR.
Grapevine, Texas

Denominationalism is one of the greatest obstructions to Christianity. The real truth of the matter is it is a rival of Christianity. A consequence of the Protestant Reformation it has long since left the fundamental principle of the Reformation: the reenthronement of the scriptures as authority. But the coronation never took place. The enthronement was Scripture interpreted in the light of human conscience. And conscience was to be guided by some mysterious extraordinary operation of the Holy Spirit. Scripture was "set" by conscience in place of conscience being "set" by Scripture.

In Protestantism the real authority is either conscience, feelings, human will or some other subjective standard. The difference between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism is that in the former one man—the Pope—is the infallible interpreter for all. In Protestantism each man is his own "Pope."

Denominationalism was wrong at the beginning. To this both reason and Scripture attest. The sum of the denominations is supposed to be equal to the whole—the Church of Christ. But the parts are all different in kind to the whole, Christ's Church. Therefore the sum of all deminations could not be the Body of Christ. It may be a religious body, but it is a body other than Christ's.

Scripture denies its right to exist. First, because truth is specific and fixed and not general and relative. If Denominationalism admitted this, she would soon be destroyed. If each denomination believed its doctrines were Truth this would alienate them all from each other. For example: To Baptists baptism is immersion. But to Methodists it isn't. For either to say it was right in its contention would automatically classify the other as wrong. And denominations are unwilling for this to happen. So, they say it is all a matter of interpretation.

But Christ said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free." John 8:32. To know the truth that makes one free from sin is conditioned upon abiding in the word of Christ. It is not enough to confess that He "was a teacher come from God," as did Nicodemus. John 3:2. It is not enough to confess that He is John the Baptist, Jeremiah, Elijah or one of the prophets, as did some of the people. Matt. 16:14. We must confess he is the only begotten Son of God who revealed the only true message from God. This is the divine testimony of Him and His Word. "Moses indeed said, A phophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not harken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." Acts 3:22, 23.

The body of Christ is one. All Christians are members of the one body. And all Christians are members of each other. Rom. 12:4, 5. Denominationalism is composed of many bodies which are all separate and distinct from Christ's body for several reasons, among them are these: (1) All members are not of the same body. (2.) All members are not members

of each other. (3.) There, are schisms in this body and schisms being carnal—I Cor. 3:1-4—are after the "way of men" and not the way of God. (4.) Denominationalism, admittedly teaches different doctrines. In Christ there is but one doctrine and all others are condemned. Gal. 1:8, 9. (5.) Denominationalism countenances human philosophy and is founded upon human tradition. Thus "spoils" men and is condemned. Col. 2:8. (6.) All fullness is in Christ. Col. 2:10 and Eph. 1:22, 23. But no demonination claims to be the "fulness" of Christ, only a part of the "fullness." Thus it is something other than His "fullness." In being something other than His "fullness" it is a rival to Christ's Body, the Church, "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:23.

And yet it cannot be denied that denominationalism has increased religious enthusiasm. And we cannot deny that the aim of such—in most cases—has been for man's betterment. But the stream does not rise above its source. And sweet water does not come from a bitter fountain.

Let us see if the contributions of denominationalism are obstructions or contributions to Christianity. Has it increased faith in Christ; promoted respect for God's Word; fought sin; facilitated spirituall among its votaries? Unequivocally, we answer, "No," to all the parts of this question. We can prove from authentic Protestant sources that it has decreased faith in Christ; promoted disrespect for God's Word; abetted sin and encouraged materialism.

It has done this by flagrantly disregarding the truth of God's Word. By putting no premium upon truth but permitting it to be one thing to one and still something opposite to another she has greatly obstructed the Cause for which our Master died. Of course, it would have been impossible for it to have been otherwise since she was error from inception. The only way denominationalism could have become right would have been by following the original principle of her founders: the re-enthronement of God's Word in the seat of authority. But by doing this she would have inevitable caused her own death. For, following God's Word would have destroyed the denominations since they are unauthorized and condemned.

Two or three years ago "LOOK" magazine did a series on religions of today. The editors asked questions and representative men of each religion answered. The articles were entitled, "What Is a Baptist," for example. Nine of the articles dealt with Portestant bodies. They are the Seventh-Day Adventist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Christian Scientist, Disciples of Christ and Congregationalist bodies. All specifically claim to be Protestant. All are deminations. In our next article we will present quotations from these articles which will prove conclusively our contention: that Denominationalism is an obstruction to Christianity.

NOTICE!

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Thinking With Parents And Teachers

"Train up a child in the way he should go."

(Proverbs 22:6)

IRENE SOWELL FOY

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN

PART III—BEHAVIOUR OF THE CHRISTIAN WIFE

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Phil. 1:27a) This admonition of Paul to the Philippians should be heeded by all Christians everywhere. However, Christian wives and mothers have such grave responsibilities in helping, not hindering, their husbands and in the guidance of their children, the "manner of life" of the wife and mother is of special importance.

Eve's behavior in succumbing to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life affected not only the life of her husband but was far-reaching, even to today. Woman could not confine the influence of her conduct. It was and is now as sure as the "influences of the Pleiades?"

"Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?"

The behaviour of the Christian wife toward her husband must be such that will do "him good and not evil." She must be a worker, as "full of good works" as was Dorcas. Paul commanded Christians in Thessalonica that they work. "If any will not work, neither let them eat. For we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies." (2 Thess. 3:10, 11) She "worketh willingly with her hands," thus using her time worthily so there is none for idle gossip or to spend as "a meddler in other men's matters." A woman who desires to keep her home a Christian home can ill afford to be as the young widow, "going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not," but her behaviour should be such as to give "no occasion to the adversary for reviling."

It is not "a help meet for him" when the husband comes in tired at the close of his day's work to see that the household duties have not been done and the appearance of the house is not that which is restful. Neither is it conducive to his rest to hear the idle chatter of this or that one. He needs a home that means rest, peace, and quiet—away from the distracting noise of the world. He needs an atmosphere where he can compose his thinking, meditate on things spiritual, thus be strengthened to carry on further the many duties that are his.

The Christian wife helps him to begin his day well, then she helps him to close the day restfully and happily. "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth food to her household." Breakfast is ready on time so the family can meet together with ample time for physical food and also time for spiritual feeding from an appropriate passage of scripture and a prayer of thanks and supplication for help for the day, these, preferably given by the head of the house. The wife then will be ready to feed the bodies of her family with nourishing, well-prepared food. The unhurried atmosphere surrounding the breakfast begun on time will con-

tribute to the health and the happiness of the family.

The husband of a worthy woman may enjoy a feeling of security throughout the busy hours of the day because he can trust in her, "she doeth him good and not evil." She too has an intelligent understanding of how to keep the wolf from the door. "She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hand she planteth a vineyard . . ." "She layeth her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle . . . She is not afraid of the snow for her household . . . She maketh linen garments and selleth them, and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and dignity are her clothing; and she laugheth at the time to come . . . She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness."

In order to be a help meet for her husband, the Christian wife must keep herself well nourished spiritually. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and the law of kindness is on her tongue." What is the "wisdom" with which "she openeth her mouth?" To the Corinthians so filled with worldly wisdom, Paul identified it as "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." If she opens her mouth with wisdom, it is necessary that she be conversant with the life and teachings of Christ. One may ask, "With all the duties of the day, when does a wife have time to 'search the scriptures?'" It is necessary to rest one's body occasionally. That is a good time to feed one's soul. A wife may meditate upon and even memorize many a passage from God's Word if she will "write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy house, and upon thy gates." A passage written and placed over the kitchen sink, or over the washing machine or ironing board will help to fill many precious moments with that which will do one good and not evil.

The Christian wife must be subject to her husband, "as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" and "the head of the woman is the man." "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything." (Eph. 5:22-24) "and let the wife see that she fear her husband." (Eph. 5:33b)

Mary's prayer of submission to God's will should be that of every Christian's wife, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1:28) It is according to "thy word" that the marriage relationship "be fruitful."

"Praise ye Jehovah.

He maketh the barren woman to keep house,

And to be a joyful mother of children,

Praise ye Jehovah." (Psalm 113:9)

Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah;

And the fruit of the womb is his reward." (Psalm 127:3)

Hannah of old knew that "they which strive with Jehovah shall be broken to pieces." In harmony with Jehovah's design for marriage, she wanted to become a mother. "And she vowed a vow, and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but will give unto thy handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto Jehovah all the days of his life." What greater "career" could a Christian woman have on this earth than to give a son to the Lord "all the days of his life!"

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PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

Some Things to Think About (No. 1)

C. E. W. DORRIS
Nashville, Tennessee

The argument is made in favor of the sponsoring church method, that the sponsoring church can get support to missionaries in larger amounts at less cost, than if the same amount was sent direct in small sums by churches. Acting on the same principle, a Methodist preacher could argue that he sprinkles his candidates at less cost and trouble than going to the creek to immerse them—that it saves gas and the trouble dressing and hanging out wet clothes to dry. There is as much authority for one as there is for the other. There is none for either. No difference how great nor how small the expense might be in getting support to the missionary, it does not prove either the direct nor the indirect method wrong. Neither does it prove either method right. If either method is right, it must be established by the New Testament independent of cost. If either method is divinely authorized we should have it and operate it no matter how great the cost. To set aside a scriptural method and operate one invented by uninspired men, in order to save a few dollars, to me, shows a lack of faith in the wisdom of God, and too much in the wisdom of man. It sets God's wisdom aside for man's. We respectfully invite attention to the fact, that all parties concerned, agree that the direct method is scriptural thereby admitting that it is authorized by the New Testament. This is safe ground and we should operate it, no matter how great the cost. We can't afford to set God's method aside to save a few dollars.

The one fateful fact about the sponsoring church method is the commitment of its advocates to the principle of a central board in religion and placing in the hands of that central board of supervisors and managers work which God placed in the hands of a board of managers and supervisors in each local church. Such a central board of supervisors and managers is not only contrary to God's order revealed in the New Testament, but it contains the seeds of ecclesiasticism. It is the one fatal rock on which the church in all ages has gone aground. In fact, centralization of power in religion not only constitutes the only soil in which the plant of ecclesiasticism can grow, but it is impossible to have it without the seed which produces that plant. Possibly in this fact may be found the divine reason for the complete independence of the local church and for placing the oversight and management of all religious affairs in the hands of a local board of managers and supervisors in each church.

New Testament churches were entirely independent, of each other. If there had been no central board of managers and overseers for missionary work among the advocates of the Restoration movement, but each local church had been left, as God ordained it, to manage its own missionary

work and all other business, then the evil of division into two separate and distinct churches—the Christian Church and the church of Christ, would never have appeared. We ask our highly esteemed brethren, promoters of the sponsoring church method, to ponder well these two facts; First, there is not in the New Testament a solitary instance of any central board of supervisors and managers for missionary work; and second, such central boards have been one fateful source of ecclesiasticism and trouble in other forms throughout the whole history of the church. Surely in these facts there is food for solemn thought.

The only safe method of church cooperation that has no machinery to be oiled up and tinkered with between times is the local church with its divinely appointed board of supervisors and managers to oversee and manage its own religious work and finances. This organization we all agree is the expression of God's wisdom, and why not come back to it and remove the cause of strife and contention that the sponsoring church method is producing? Why procrastinate longer with a method of cooperation that carries with it such disaster to the cause of Christ such as we all know that the present day sponsoring church method does? If brethren will recall their reading of history of the society and its evil results among the churches, they can but see that the evil following the sponsoring church method, is history repeating itself. The proper thing to do, and do it without hesitation and without delay, is to turn away from it, rally to the God appointed method that all parties agree is scriptural, and thus reproduce in theory and in practice the apostolic way of doing mission work.

At the beginning, God appointed local churches, each with their divine board of supervisors and managers to oversee and manage their religious work. Why not come back to this ordained way? It spread the gospel all over the Roman empire at the beginning, and it is still able, if Christians will be content to work through it, to do the same work and achieve the same signal success in all empires and all countries of the world. Why turn from this way, which did such effective work in the beginning and which has upon it the stamp of God's approval, to work in a way which has in it such disastrous and fatal results as the sponsoring church has? We speak with all possible emphasis, that here, and here alone, is where all the trouble lies and that the brethren promoting the sponsoring church method are responsible for the evil it brings. Local church independence and autonomy is the divine remedy for this evil work. Let us, one and all, promptly and everywhere resist the beginning of departure therefrom.

I suggest that all concerned make a friendly compromise on the New Testament method of mission work that all agree is scriptural. I propose just such a compromise. I do not ask our good brethren to surrender anything they can read in the New Testament, but I do ask them to join with me in pleading for the things, and only the things, they can read therein. Is this asking too much? Brethren, will you do it?

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Worldiness in the Church

BRYAN VINSON
Houston, Texas

Man is a creature of a dual nature. He is a product wrought by the conjoining of that which is of the earth with that which is from above. He has two minds, the carnal and the spiritual; he may be guided and controlled by either of two wisdoms—one which is earthly, sensual and devilish, or that which is from above which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be. God's law of redemption is addressed to the spirit of man, to that part of our being which is in the image of God. It appeals to our better nature, and aspires to excite within us those high and holy principle that develop and cultivate an interest in those things above. Our earthly nature, coming from and being dependent on the things of this earth may well assert a self-interest which intrudes injuriously on our superior interests. This is a basic recognition and explanation of much of the conflicting interests which war against each other in our lives. It offers an approach to the proper recognition of the just relation existing between the Secular and Spiritual.

Secular and Spiritual

Secularism is a term employed here to embody a general class of interest and things indigeneous to the earth and earthly existence. We are dependent on the provisions of the earth for our physical life and the continuance of our temporal existence. The necessity of expending time, thought and energy in acquiring the physical necessities of life is one that is constant and unavoidable by all of us. The obligation to earn a living by honorable pursuits and productive efforts is incumbent on all men. We are told to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Christianity doesn't enjoin upon its adherents the disregarding of this life's responsibilities, but it certainly doesn't warrant a devotion of interest and effort of such a nature and extent as to relegate to a secondary place our interest in the Lord, His church and our individual duties to Him. In the parable of the Sower, the soil encumbered with foreign matter is representative of the cares of this world and the deceitfulness or riches. It isn't unlikely that this condition, and the attitude it nurtures, has been responsible for more defections and apostasy than all others combined. Little by little do members of God's family allow their family obligations, their social and community interests to detract from their interest, time and devotion to spiritual matters.

There are not any inherent qualities in the secular sphere to undergird and render secure the moral purity of a person, and for this reason it is explainable why, in being weaned away from the church many Christians degenerate morally. Morality existed before religion did, evidently; but morality, once lost can never be regained and protected, sustained and safeguarded without religions. Religion is the support and protection of morality. This affords an explanation for the rightful expectation of society to see exemplified in the lives of religionists a higher code of morality than that of the world. The church is either going to influence the world or the world the church; they are placed in opposition to each other, warring against one another, and, therefore, designedly endeavoring to influence the other and thereby subjugate it. The world, of course, is used here with reference, not to the earth, but to the people of the world

in contradistinction to those who have been called out of the world and are the church.

The World and Morality

Man was made upright but he sought out many inventions. With his declaration of independence from God, he rapidly degenerated morally. The condition of society, as viewed by God has been exceedingly mad for many centuries. The moral corruption was pronouncedly bad with the coming of Christ and the establishment of the church. The church is composed and constituted of the redeemed and purified from all the moral pollutions of the of the world. The conflict between the world and the church is a relentless one, in which each is endeavoring to influence and control the lives of the other. The disciples of Christ are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. The line, therefore, between the two is to be clear, wide and deep; Christians are not to walk as other men walk, but are to put off the old man, or manner of life, being renewed in the spirit of their mind, thus putting on the new man or character. Eph. 4:17-24. The people of God are not justified in lowering their standard of morality in accommodation to the plane of the world. God's standard of morality, as revealed in His Word, is to be our standard. Who is influencing whom today—the church the world, or the world the church?

If there be any doubt in the mind of any reader, but a moments reflection will bear out the idea and confirm the correctness of the assertion that the world is exerting a far greater measure of influence on the children of God, than the reverse. This isn't good. Within the last generation the church has been led into an attitude toward many things quite a variance to that formerly held. For instance, the attitude of Christians toward dancing has been changed to the point of gravely effecting the policy of the church in relation to the teaching of God's Word on the subject. Preachers have been known to be fired because of their public statements condemnatory of this evil. Elders sometimes are known to allow their children to engage in the modern dance, and are, therefore adverse to any teaching against it from the pulpit or in the class room. Mixed bathing is indulged in by members of the church, and the wearing of shorts is widely practiced by women and girls who profess to be followers of the Lord. It is obvious that the church cannot be the light of the world by thus conforming to the world. If these things were ever wrong, essentially speaking, they are still wrong. True, a thing may not be essentially wrong and yet under certain circumstances become wrong. But we are talking of those things which were esteemed as immodest and immoral in their own proper character, and today have become accepted and practiced by members of the church. The question is: have they ceased to be wrong, or have Christians come to think they are so little wrong as to not endanger their standing before God. The apology that "everybody is doing it" is too asinine and treacherous for any sensible person to subscribe to.

The increasing prevalence of divorces and remarriages, without scriptural jurisdiction, by many members of the church is cause for alarm. Why this let-down in respect for the scriptures? Is it because the world has degenerated to such a loose state of promiscuity in regard to a respect and adherence to the morality of marriage, that the church thinks it must go along with the world in order to remain in the world. People of multiple marriages are accepted in full fellowship without any questioning of their status before God, and it isn't entirely unknown for some preachers of

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Precepts and Principles

BONDS STOCKS

The World's Priceless Treasure

The Bible is God's priceless gift to the human race.

GOD SPEAKS TO US IN THE BIBLE

I. The Bible is the supreme treasure of the universe because it is the instrumentality through which God speaks to us (Hebrews 11:1, 2). The infinite God speaks to his finite creatures through the Bible, which is God's revelation.

Of the Bible, R. A. Torrey has written: "Other books tell us what man supposes. The Bible tells us what God knows. Other books tell us what other men, almost as foolish as ourselves, speculate; this book tells us what an infinitely wise God, who made us and all things, and consequently knows all things, has inerrantly revealed. This Book makes men wise with the wisdom that is golden, the wisdom that brings eternal salvation. No one can study this Book aright, no matter how ignorant he may otherwise be, without being possessed of the priceless wisdom that means eternal life. No other book has the power to make us acquainted with God and with His Son, Jesus Christ, that this Book has. Oh, study the Book that brings eternal life; make it in your own experience 'the implanted WORD, which is able to save your souls'" (James 1:21, R. V.).

If you tell me that God spoke to you in a dream, I tell you that you might very well be mistaken, and probably are. You may have only been having a nightmare! If you tell me that God appeared to you in a trance or in a vision, I tell you that, in the Christian age, God has not promised to appear to people in any such fashion. If you tell me that God spoke to you in "a still small voice" in the night, I tell you that you have been "hearing things"—not the things of God but the opinions and hallucinations of finite men. If you tell me that God has spoken to you directly through the Holy spirit, separate and apart from the written word, and given you a message that he has not given to others, I tell you that God is no respecter of persons and has promised to deal squarely with all men.

That is one of the most wonderful things about the Bible. God has sent the same letter to every man. He has no pets. He does not give one preacher one message, and another preacher a different message.

If you tell me that God has spoken to you on the pages of the Bible, I know you are right because that is where he said he has spoken to you. I know what he has said to you, and you can know what he has said to me. There are no secrets. It is all out in the open.

If you tell me that God speaks to you from the pages of some human creed book, manual, discipline or confession of faith, I am obligated to tell you that God never wrote any of these books, nor did he ever authorize any man or any set of men to write such books. They are filled with human opinion and human tradition. They have given birth to human innovations and human corruptions. They are not God's message to man. God does not speak among them.

If you want God's message, turn to the Bible, particularly

to the New Testament, which is God's will for the Christian age. If you want to please God, obey his will as revealed and preserved in the covenant of Christ, and turn your back on the documents written by men without the approval of God.

The Bible! God's message to us! What a priceless treasure!

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE BIBLE

II. The Bible is God's priceless treasure for the world because of its age. There are some things that are valuable because of their age, if for no other reason. There are some books that antedate the Bible, but, for the most part, they are fragments.

Dr. Sayce wrote: "And yet there is a sense in which we may still say that the Pentateuch is the oldest book in the world. The books of Egypt and Babylonia have, for the most part, come down to us in a torn and fragmentary condition. And of those which are complete, there is none which can compete, either in length or unity of plan, with either the book of Genesis or the Pentateuch as a whole. For the books of Moses have been written in accordance with a definite plan which has been worked out consistently from the beginning to their end. It is just this plan that gives them their literary form and stamps them as the first known literary example of a literary conception of history."

Now a thing is not necessarily valuable because it is old. But there are some things that grow more valuable with the passing of the years.

One reason for this is that age proves their enduring value. This is especially true of a book. The first book of the Bible was written thousands of years ago, and the last one was written 1300 years before the invention of printing—and yet today it adorns millions of homes, and is read every day by multiplied thousands in virtually every part of the globe.

The Bible is our link with the past. My father read it and loved it. My grandparents read it. I have never been sufficiently interested in genealogy to try to trace my ancestry back very far. I do not even know where my ancestors lived before they came to the new world, but wherever they lived, the chances are that they read and studied the Bible.

Martin Luther, Charles and John Wesley, John Calvin, John Knox, Alexander Campbell, and the spiritual leaders down through the centuries have studied this book. George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Clay, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt—practically all of our great political leaders have been students of the Bible.

Yes, this book is hoary with old age. But its value, like that of a precious heirloom, increases with the passing of the years. We revere it for its antiquity.

THE BIBLE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE

III. The Bible is God's greatest treasure for the world because it has never been, and can never be, destroyed. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 118:89). The fact that the Bible has survived all efforts to destroy it is that which gives such lustre to its antiquity.

The most brilliant minds among the skeptics have hurled their mightiest rocks against the Bible, but their attacks have been as fruitless as though they were casting pebbles

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"We Will Not Discuss It"

ARNOLD HARDIN

Lancaster, Texas

The complexion of things continues to change. Our generation is seeing strange things happen, or else, some of us, beloved, are having nightmares. It could be devoutly wished that some of the things being witnessed would all be resolved by an alarm clock awakening us to the realization that it was, after all, just a bad dream. The Lord's church is one the verge of a general split or division. Many communities have already witnessed it. It is going to happen in many more unless "cool" heads and devoted hearts take the only course open—back to the Bible for study.

Most of us cut our teeth, spiritually, on the truth that no problem, of any import, could be solved by Christians without recourse to the fountain of truth. From my youth up, it was drilled into me by Godly soldiers of the Cross that for every problem there was a solution, if only, the divine record was honored and its principles sought out and carefully followed. Therefore, most of us were reared in a spiritual atmosphere which taught us by day and by night the urgent need of ever searching for; and, the discovery of truth in God's vast storehouse of truth. (Jon. 17:17). This language, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," was echoed from town to town. Hardy farmers were seen to tie up their teams at the end of the row and across the fence they would engage another in conversation about some Bible theme. It did not take long for the word to get around, "You'd better let those 'Campbellites' alone, they're a walking Bible." Though not Campbellites, they were almost walking Bibles. They were, for the most, studious and eager to learn truth; and, they were not a breed of Christians that said "we are satisfied with the way we are doing things" for they were not satisfied with the amount of truth gleaned from those eternal pages of truth until they had searched it all. When we now are inclined to brag about "our" accomplishments it would do us all good to remember that our heritage was not easily won and that, largely, today our advancements are traceable to those "walking Bibles" of yester-year. Thank God, those humble servants of the Lord were not too concerned with "new fangled ideas." They believed, when I was a boy, that Christianity was personal and very real. In the words of a favorite preacher of this writer, they looked upon the Bible as a direct personal letter to each one of them and not to anyone else. It was as though God had written to one person only to tell that one what to do. Each congregation, under its elders, worked and many were baptized. Parents were responsible for their children and peach tree limbs tightened up hides as well as held up peaches. Differences arose, and most of the time Christians were willing and anxious to study them in the light of truth. Minds had to be changed and surely some were stubborn. But, all in all truth seemed to have its way much more readily than today.

The complexion of things has changed! Today, in many places, faithful gospel preachers are not permitted to preach their convictions on certain vital themes. A personal friend of mine has been doing a fine job of reaching the people of his community though he has been there but a few short months. He has never preached about the current problems as such. Recently the elders called him in and told

him not to preach about the orphan home question nor the national radio program. He replied that he did not move there to divide the church and would not preach on those things if they would privately study these problems with him. He explained that he had convictions as to these matters but believed that a meeting of the minds could be had by a private study. They had previously stated that he was doing the best job that any preacher had ever done in that community. However, they now told him that "we will not study these matters with you now nor in the future." Queer? Why refuse to study? Said they, "we are satisfied with the way we are doing things." These things were stated to the congregation by this preacher in his letter of resignation over the signature of approval of the elders. My only concern in this matter is the shocking reply of those elders: "We are satisfied with the way we are doing things." This is a spreading disease among God's people.

It is to be wondered if such men will ever dare challenge denominational preachers on their teaching. A Methodist could well reply, "we are happy with the way we are doing it. We don't care to study the question of sprinkling." One is just as logical and right as the other. I know a congregation whose preacher believes it to be wrong to have the Lord's Supper at night for those hindered from the morning service. That church, for years, had a man who worked every Sunday morning. Then, just as faithful as clock work he would attend the Sunday evening service. For years he did not partake of the Lord's Supper. Why? All because that preacher was satisfied with the way he was doing it. A little study might have kept one Christian from sinning against his Lord week after week. But, the sad thing is this—the case of my preacher friend is not an isolated one. I personally know of others that have moved or plan to move all because the elders refuse to study these current problems in the light of truth. When preachers ask elders to study some matters with them privately, a matter of conviction, those elders owe it to that preacher, because of his soul, to study the matter. If he be wrong he needs to know it. The elders are supposed to know enough to show him if he is wrong. Then, after showing him his error, if he persists it will be time to fire him or allow him to resign which seems to be the polite way it is done. My brethren, we have always said that the reason sectarian preachers would not debate is because they can't defend their doctrine. We are going to be forced to quit charging them in such a manner. If we have been right in our charge all along, then, what about this growing refusal to study, even in private, these vexing problems now before us? One other word. Brethren, what is going to happen to us preachers when we believe a thing to be part of God's truth and then yield to the pressure of brethren that want us to be quiet? When elders show me I hold a thing as a matter of faith, when in reality it is only an opinion, they should demand my silence when it will cause trouble. But, when a preacher takes the Word of God and shows his conviction is a matter of faith, then, he should defend it even if he has to pick cotton in order to support his family while preaching. A refusal to study is bad, but, even worse is knowledge denied. (2 Tim. 4:1-9).

SEND A FRIEND
THE PRECEPTOR
And Help Teach Him
THE TRUTH

Interpretation and Application

HOMER HAILEY

MOUNT ZION

Zion, the fortress of the Jebusites, the city of David, the habitation of Jehovah, and now the stronghold of the Christian and the habitation of his God! It has been the theme of psalms, the inspiration of songs, and the mediation of saints through the centuries. Surely a few moments spent in learning something about Zion will be worthwhile.

The Jebusite Stronghold

The city of Jerusalem was bounded on the west by the Valley of Hinnom, which flowed almost south, then curved to the east and slightly south until it was joined by the Kidron, also flowing south, and which formed the eastern boundary of the city. The two valleys having combined then flowed southeast toward the Dead Sea. Between these two valleys lay a third, the Tyropeon Valley, extending in a general southerly direction. Between the Tyropeon and Kidron valleys was the hill called mount Zion, especially the southern part of the elevation. Zion therefore was the hill in the southeastern part of the city. To the north of Zion lay mount Moriah, on which the Temple was built.

When the children of Israel came into Canaan they possessed the land about Jerusalem, but did not take the city of Zion itself. It remained in the hands of the Jebusites until the days of David. However, a man of David's temperament could by no means suffer an enemy to remain in the very heart of his territory, wherefore it is said, "And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (the same is Jebus); and the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there. And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David . . . And David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore they called it the city of David" (1 Chron. 11:4-7). The former stronghold of the Jebusites now became the stronghold and city of David.

The Tent of Meeting

For twenty years the ark of the covenant of Jehovah had remained in the village of Kiriath-jearim (1 Sam. 7:2), from which village David determined to bring it to Jerusalem. Having taken Zion, "David made him houses in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent" (1 Chron. 15:1; see also 2 Chron. 1:4). It was upon this memorable trip from Kiriath-jearim that Uzzah touched the ark of the covenant and died. The ark was being returned on a new cart instead of upon the shoulders of the Levites, where, according to the law, it was to have been borne. When the oxen drawing the cart stumbled, Uzzah put forth his hand and touched the ark and fell dead. Because of this David left the ark in the house of Obed-edom for three months before bringing it on into Jerusalem to the tent he had prepared for it (1 Chron. 13; 2 Sam. 6:12-14).

The ark now rested on Mount Zion, within the city of David in the tent David had prepared for it. The ark signified

the presence of Jehovah among them. David, the sons of Korah, and others, in the psalms, gave emphasis to Zion as the dwelling place of God among the Israelites. They came unto Him in Zion; He spoke to them out of Zion; He fought for them from Zion. It was this emphasis in the psalms that helped give to Zion the significance that it came to hold in the hearts of God's people. It was the stronghold of the king; it was the resting-place of the ark of the covenant; it was the dwelling place of Jehovah among the people; it was the symbol of all that was dear to them. Through the years it came to symbolize the beauty and strength and hope of the Messianic kingdom. Its beauty and glory are described in a psalm of the sons of Korah as they said, "Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in his holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:1-2).

Mount Moriah

David had wished to build a temple for Jehovah, but was forbidden to do so because he was a man of blood; he had shed much blood during his lifetime. However, he prepared with all his might for the building of the temple, leaving an abundance of materials and wealth to go into its construction. It is written that after he began to reign, "Then Solomon began to build the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem on mount Moriah, where Jehovah appeared unto David his father, which he made ready in the place that David had appointed, in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite" (2 Chron. 3:1). Mount Moriah was north of Zion. The temple, built upon it, faced the east, looking across the Kidron Valley toward the mount of Olives.

When the temple building was completed, "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the father's houses of the children of Israel, unto King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of the city of David, which is Zion" (1 Kings 8:1; see also 2 Chron. 5:2). From the tent that David had built on Mount Zion, the ark was now removed to rest in the temple built by Solomon on Mount Moriah. Here it was to remain until the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, at which time the ark is lost sight of, never to be mentioned again as being among them.

"Zion" came to signify the whole of Jerusalem, the mountain of Jehovah, where He was to be worshipped and from where He reigned. David said, "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: Build thou the walls of Jerusalem" (Ps. 51:18). Here Zion and Jerusalem are equivalent. After the Babylonian captivity and the return under Zerubbabel, Zecharian said, "And the word of—Jehovah of hosts came to me saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. Thus saith Jehovah: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, The holy mountain" (Zech. 8:1-3). Here Zion, Jerusalem, the city of truth, the mountain of Jehovah of hosts, the holy mountain, are all one.

The joy of the ancient people was to go up to Jerusalem and there worship and meet with their God. When away from the beloved city their hearts would pine for its sanctuary and for the presence of Jehovah. Of Zion they would sing, and toward Zion they would pray. To them it was the habitation of their God, a mighty fortress, a place of

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Faith and the Faith (No. 2)

CLAUDE B. HOLCOMB

Corsicana, Texas

Faith is an essential element in the saving of the soul, and in giving efficacy to every act of obedience and service unto God. Without it we cannot please God in anything that we do (Heb. 11:6). It is by faith that we appropriate spiritual truth to our own hearts and lives, and work so as to obtain the salvation that is "ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:5). Since faith is so prominent in the religion of Christ, everyone should be profoundly interested in a study of it, and never grow weary of searching the scriptures to learn more of its value. Every growing Christian anxiously seeks to increase his own faith as time goes by.

The original word (*pistis*), translated "faith" more than two hundred times in the King James Version of the New Testament, is defined by Thayer in this way: "1. Conviction of the truth of anything, belief. a. When it relates to God, *pistis* is the conviction that God exists and is the Creator and ruler of all things, the provider and restorer of eternal salvation thru Christ: Heb. 11:6; 12:2; 13:7. b. In reference to Christ, it denotes a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God." The word is also translated "belief" (2 Thess. 2:13), "assurance" (Acts 17:21), "fidelity" (Titus 2:10). It is also found in verb forms in numerous passages. With respect to persons, the word is also defined as "trust, or confidence." We can surely see from these definitions that the shrouds of mysticism do not clothe the element of faith as it applies to the religion of Christ. Even brethren sometimes lose themselves in visionary estheticism with reference to faith, and give out long discourses on the subject that place it in the realm of mere unctuous words that have no practical meaning. If we are content to stand upon the firm foundation of God's word,

faith will be to us a clear and abiding reality that we can put into practical use in everyday living.

Christian faith involves profound respect for Christ's authority and the power of his word. Jesus found this kind of faith to be greater than any he had seen in Israel (Matt. 8:5-13). This centurion knew what it meant to speak with authority. He himself was under the authority of the Roman emperor, and knew that the word of the emperor was sufficient to move him to action. The same was true concerning the centurion's authority over the soldiers who were under him. He knew the power of a word of authority. He had enough confidence in the authority of Christ to believe that a mere word from him was enough to exert power over human ailments, and he wanted his servant healed. In this case, not even personal contact was necessary to effect a cure—just say the word! When we contrast the centurion's faith with that of the Jews who thought they had to touch Jesus, or be touched by him, in order to be healed, we can see the significance of the Lord's statement, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. The Jews did not have as high a conception of the authority of Christ as did this Roman soldier—a Gentile!

This kind of faith is greatly lacking on the part of those religionists who declare that the Holy Spirit must come in direct contact with the sinner in order to do anything for him. The power of the word of Christ is nullified by such a notion, his authority is not respected, and faith in him is lacking. Since God has made the gospel his power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), he exerts no other power to that end. The gospel contains the word of Christ, spoken with all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18). If this word does not reach the soul of a man and is not apprehended by faith, that soul will not be saved. Direct contact advocates need the faith of the centurion in the word of Christ.

Christians also need the lesson to be derived from the

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Minnesota Needs Our Help

DERREL W. SHAW
Borger, Texas

The Bunavista congregation in Borger, Texas, where I preach, supported me in a meeting in Wadena, Minnesota, July 6-15. Some of the impressions I received while there must be shared with others and I pray that by means of this article three will be Christians and churches who will learn of the needs and opportunities in Minnesota.

Brother Harry E. Johnson preaches in Wadena and he is the only preacher in the western half of the state (there are only four preachers in the entire state). Brother Johnson is laboring tirelessly and his labors are being rewarded as there have been 23 baptized in the Wadena-Park Rapids area since he moved there 16 months ago. He has driven many miles to go into homes and teach the Bible and there are more opportunities to do so than he can possibly take care of. Also, he preaches on the radio Monday through Friday and twice on Sunday and makes many more contacts by that method. He desperately needs help now while the interest is so high

The church in Park Rapids, just north of Wadena, needs a preacher to work with the 13 faithful members there. There is no question that many more souls could be saved if a man were fully supported there to help do the great work that Brother Johnson cannot get done alone. There are preachers who could go and congregations who could send them. Are there those among us who are willing to say, "Here am I, send me?"

The churches in Wadena and Park Rapids are representative of the situation which exists throughout Minnesota and many other states of the nation. Those brethren are struggling and sacrificing because they love the Lord and the souls of men. We say that we have the same love. If we do, then we are going to awaken from our state of indifference and begin to send money and preachers that we might share our blessings with those who need our help. If you feel that you can help, and desire further information, write to: Mr. Harry E. Johnson, Box 382, Wadena, Minnesota.

An Anniversary Gift

(Editor's Note: As long as Teen-Agers are thinking straight like the 15-year-old whose letter to her parents on their eighteenth anniversary is given below, parents can take renewed courage in rearing their children.)

Dear Mama and Daddy:

This note is just a little way for me to tell you some things I wouldn't be able to tell you otherwise.

First of all, I want to say that your anniversary is almost as important to me as it is to you. Your marriage is a constant source of inspiration to me. Why?

There is a perfect union between you. It seems to me you both have three main objectives in life, which you both co-operate in achieving. First of all, your main objective is to live a Christian life, and further the cause of Christ. Secondly, you seem to want to make each other as happy as you can. Thirdly, you want to provide a wonderful Christian environment for your children to grow up in. I am not listing the last two in the apparent order of their importance, as I do not know which is the more important to you-all, I don't think you place one above the other.

I'm so happy to say that I never remember seeing my parents quarrel. That is wonderful, when an individual can say that of his or her parents. So many children are living in homes where their parents drink, smoke, quarrel, and live in a worldly manner. I'm so happy I can say that I live in a wonderful, healthy, Christian environment, and in the most wonderful home in the world!

Why can I say all of this? Because of your mutual love and understanding of one another. I believe the basis of a happy family lies in the parents.

This little note is just to say "Thank-You" for providing such a happy home for me, and—and——. I hope that some day I can grow up and have a happy home like yours and that some day I can do something to make you really proud of me.

I hope you understand what I have been trying to tell you. I wish I were more eloquent, so I could express myself in prettier language. Happy anniversary, and hope you live to see 100 more!

God bless you both, always.

Lovingly,

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FAITH AND THE FAITH—

(Continued from Page 11)

centurion's exhibition of faith. We need faith enough to regard the word of the Lord as sufficient to accomplish anything and everything he wants us to do. When we go beyond his word, we have transgressed his authority, gone beyond his teaching, and God is not with us (2 Jn. 9). It is a lack of faith in Christ for one to chart his own course in religious matters (2 Cor. 5:7).

The relation of faith to the gospel of Christ is graphically set forth by Paul in Romans 1:16, 17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, but the righteous shall live by faith." This statement shows that the power of God is obtainable only to the believer. Faith is an essential element in the matter of salvation. God's power to save is appropriated by faith, according to Paul's statement. The power of God has no limitations by which it is circumscribed, but it is wrought in human hearts only insofar as faith is exercised. It is for those who trust in it. It is not something imposed upon man against his will, or that comes directly upon him unexpectedly.

That the blessings of the gospel are made to depend upon faith is declared in verse 17: "For therein (in the gospel) is revealed a righteousness of God from FAITH." The false notion that the prepositional phrase "from faith" should modify the word "revealed" is inconsistent with Paul's argument here, and with the teaching of the scriptures as a whole. It is not faith that reveals the gospel, but the revealed gospel is that which produces faith. The gospel reveals God's plan of righteousness for mankind which is to be appropriated by faith. This righteousness is to be obtained by man, and it is obtained on the basis of faith—"a righteousness from faith" that is originated by God and offered to man through the gospel. When a man obeys the gospel he is justified in God's sight, and has thus obtained a righteousness of God that is based upon the element of faith. Faith is an essential element in obtaining the righteousness of God. The way in which such righteousness is obtained is revealed in the gospel. It is revealed "unto faith"; i.e., to produce faith in the hearts of men. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

God's grand purpose through the gospel is to bring fallen man to the place where he might treat him as a righteous being. This can only be done through a plan that will make him righteous. God has seen fit to base such righteousness on one of the most noble elements of man's nature—his faith. So the gospel system is based on faith. But faith alone cannot make men righteous, because men do not become any better until they are moved to action. Character cannot be improved without certain conditions having been met to make a man better. Merely to believe a thing without acting upon it will never make a man righteous, but the action to which faith leads him will improve his character, if he believes what is right. "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (Jas. 2:24). The works by which men are justified are set forth in the gospel, which stipulates conditions to be met, the performance of which will make a man righteous. This is the righteousness of God based on faith of which Paul speaks in Romans 1:17. God has revealed it to us as a means of producing faith in our hearts.

(To Be Continued).

THEN AND NOW—

(Continued from Page 3)

dangerous. We ought not be too blind to see it. Mass meetings and rallies are in the same category. Some forms of cooperation constitute a deadly trap that can all too easily snap shut and catch us unaware. If they are not producing evil fruit today who can guarantee what they will produce tomorrow. In some respects our "now" is very similar to their "then." Brethren, let us take heed! Notice too, how this first digression came in under the guise of "organized" and "systematic" work. It is implied that without the State Society the work was unorganized and unsystematic. Are not some of the appeals for support of certain programs being sent out under the same argument for their acceptance by the brethren? They would make it seem that if we do not "cooperate" with their plan that our work is, at best, "unsystematic" and "dis-organized." So it's vi-va-la" organization!" (Our organizations, that is.)

"The argument about instrumental music in the church was never so bitter, at least in Austin, as the controversy over the missionary society, but when an organ was put in the church, many had heart-burnings on the subject because they regarded it as unscriptural. Granny Holman remained unreconcilable. They had got the organ into the church, she said, but she didn't know where they would put the monkey! After the original decision, the music controversy never disturbed the Central Church congregation."

Referring to the installation of a modern pipe organ at a later date; "A pipe organ was installed in this auditorium, successor to the primitive cabinet instrument that had been in the old building. The great controversy about the organ was over as far as this church was concerned, and no further heart-burnings were occasioned by the installation of the new instrument."

Thus do men set themselves in the fashion of innovations and still their conscience to any voices that would cry out.

Concerning their new building it is stated: "This building was later enlarged by an addition in the rear for Sunday School rooms and social activities. The enlarged plant was quite adequate for the next quarter of a century."

This "addition in the rear for Sunday School rooms and social activities" was made in 1897 but it sounds like a paragraph from some of the bulletins or a phrase from the speech of some of our brethren. Indeed "social activity" has become quite a concern in our "NOW" but the Christian church solved it, in exactly the way some among us would solve it, more than half a century ago. They simply turned it over to the church. How far are we, brethren, from being exactly in line with the Christian church when we adopt "social activities," church kitchens, fellowship (?) dinners etc., etc., as the work and program of the church? The same crowd that brought in the missionary society by popular vote, instrumental music and "spiritual interpretation" of the scripture, brought along the kitchen, social activities and the like.

WORLDINESS IN THE CHURCH—

(Continued from Page 7)

the gospel to be accepted, used and honored who have fouled up their lives by questionable marital alliances.

These conditions shall never be relieved and the morality of God's people shall never be recovered by ignoring these facts and therefore refusing to deal with the teaching of Holy Writ as touching such matters. Of course, it is doubtful that the latter will be too successful in reversing the moral trend of the times, for the reformation of the church morally or spiritually has never been completely effected.

The capital fallacy in our thinking as touching these and other matters is the inclination to conform in an effort to be accepted by society to have a feeling of belonging, and to secure a degree of worldly success. Paul tells us to not be conformed to the world but to rather be transformed, and tells us how to do it, and why we should do it. It is possible only by the renewing of minds, by setting our affections on things above and not on things of the earth. This we are enabled to do only in the prevailing persuasion and full conviction that we are dead and our life is hid with God in Christ, coupled with the assurance of hope that when He appears we shall appear in glory with Him. This same persuasion, faith and hope will also safeguard and protect us against the wisdom of this world as touching spiritual truth.

The World and Spirituality

Not only is the world, the aspirations, pursuits and pleasures of this world, injuriously effecting the morality of God's people, but equally true is it undermining our spiritual values and our respect for the authority of the Christ as it is to direct and control our religious faith and practice. Is the church today being influenced by the thoughts of the religious world more than a "thus saith the Lord" in our work and worship? I verily believe it is. The reverse should always be true. There is nothing which we may do in accomplishing the will of God that can be justified on the basis that others are doing it. We are wholly and solely dependent on what the New Testament teaches. Even in the area of matters determined as expedient and decided by uninspired judgment, there is no dependency to be placed in the wisdom of the world. Too frequently men are recognized as leaders in Israel because they have attained positions of leadership in the affairs of men. An entirely different kind of wisdom characterizes these two areas of thought and activity.

The fact that a man has been successful in the business, social or political world affords no reason for his usefulness in the church. Certainly one may be successful in these spheres and still be worthy and capable in the church, but such isn't a guaranty of their ability. The admonition with respect to those who can and should endeavor the recovery of the fallen Christian are those who are spiritual, not those who are prominent in the affairs of the world.

The desire of Israel of old to be like the nations around them prompted the demand for a king. They lost sight of their distinct separateness and their peculiarity as God's people, and hence their avidity to be like others. When the early church was being assaulted and persecuted by the Jews there arose a clamor within the church to incorporate the rite of circumcision into the economy of Christ. Paul clearly states the motive back of this demand. "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be

circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." Gal. 6:12.

In the preceding chapter Paul says: "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer presecution? Then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you. For, brethren, ye have been called to liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." vs. 11-13. From these statements we make this observation: (1) The pressure of the world (Jewish) was being exerted from without on those within the church. and was having the desired effect on some (2) This effect was being expressed in a contention for circumcision to be fastened on the church. (3) The aim was, not that of pleasing God, but to please men, so that the persecution might cease, and acceptability in the general religious community be gained. Who was influencing whom here? The world was influencing the church, and Paul was withstanding this pressure. Was circumcision wrong, inherently so? Paul affirms that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; hence, many may say since it isn't wrong within itself, and would make us more acceptable before the world we should embrace the practice. The lesson is a vital one. We can not afford to be governed by the wisdom of the world, but only by the will of God in our spiritual life. Every innovation, as the terms suggests, comes from without, and the without is the world. Let us look to God to guide, direct, control, preserve and ultimately save us.

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN

(Continued from Page 5)

The young wife must be trained for the great work our Lord has designed for her. God gave a plan for such training. He said, "That the aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; that they may train the the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Titus 2:3-5)

"Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying: Many daughters have done worthily, but thou excellest them all. (Prov. 31:28, 29)

"A worthy woman is the crown of her husband." Study also I Peter 2:11, 12; Prov. 25:24; 21:9; 14:1; 12:4; 11:22.

(The next topic will be: Dress of the Christian Wife).

July 11, 1956

William R. Ward Sr.

Since our last report of several months ago, we have had 4 restorations and 5 to place membership with this congregation. The work here is coming along nicely. We are having some of the best attendance ever. We look forward with great expectation of continued spiritual prosperity. This past Lord's Day, July 8th, Brother Homer Hailey of Florida Christian College spoke to us. He is again to speak at the mid-week service. Prescott is the home of Brother Hailey's mother, whom he is visiting.

THE WORLD'S PRICELESS TREASURE—

(Continued from Page 8)

into the bosom of a shoreless ocean.

So-called higher critics have worn out their sledge hammers of scorn on the anvil of the Bible, and they have never yet made a dent in the anvil.

Someone has written that "No fragment of any army has ever survived so many battles as the Bible; no citadel ever withstood so many sieges; no rock was ever battered by so many hurricanes and so swept by storms. And yet it stands. It has seen the rise and downfall of Daniel's four empires. Assyria bequeaths a few mutilated figures for the riches of our national museum. Media and Persia, like Babylon, which they conquered, have been weighed in the balance, and long ago found wanting. Greece faintly survives its historic fame; and Rome of the Caesars has long since ceased to boast. And yet the book that foretells all this still survives—while nations, kings, philosophers, systems, institutions have died away, the Bible engages now men's deepest thoughts, is examined by the keenest intellects, stands revered before the highest tribunals, is more read and sifted and debated, more devoutly loved and more vehemently assailed, more defended and more denied, more industriously translated freely given to the world, more honored and more abused, than any other book the world ever saw. It survives all changes, itself unchanged; it moves all minds, yet is moved by none; it sees all things decay, itself incorruptible; it sees myriads of other books engulfed in the stream of time, yet is borne along till the mystic angel shall plant his foot upon the sea, and swear by him that liveth forever and ever that time shall be no longer. The Old Book Stands!"

God promised that this book would never be destroyed. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Peter 1:23-25).

Men do not believe that God meant what he said, so they go on in their vain attempts to destroy the Bible. They have been at it for thousands of years. They go about it in various ways, but the result, in the long run, is always the same. They may win what seems to be a temporary victory, but when all the evidence is in, and the final result is known, the Bible is always victorious.

At various times scoffers have sought to nullify the influence of the word of God by destroying those who believe in it. But such efforts, sooner or later, boomerang. We have a splendid example of this in the 12th chapter of Acts. "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the church. And he killed James, brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to take Peter also" (Acts 12:1-3).

One of God's servant's killed, and another thrown in jail to be taken care of later! It seemed a dark day for the cause of Christ. But the power of God intervened. The church started praying for Simon Peter, God delivered him, and the record says of Herod: "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12:23).

And then this significant statement: "But the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:24).

(Additional truths about "The World's Most Priceless Treasure will appear in THE PRECEPTOR next month).

MOUNT ZION—

(Continued from Page 10)

refuge. It was a symbol of permanence: "They that trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but for ever" (Ps. 125:1).

Through the prophets, in time of siege and captivity, Zion took on new significance. It came to symbolize the future glory and dwelling place of Jehovah, and the city of the great King who was to come to them. It should be the place from whence His word would go forth, and from whence He would reign over His people. Its significance became spiritual.

(Next month: Spiritual Zion)

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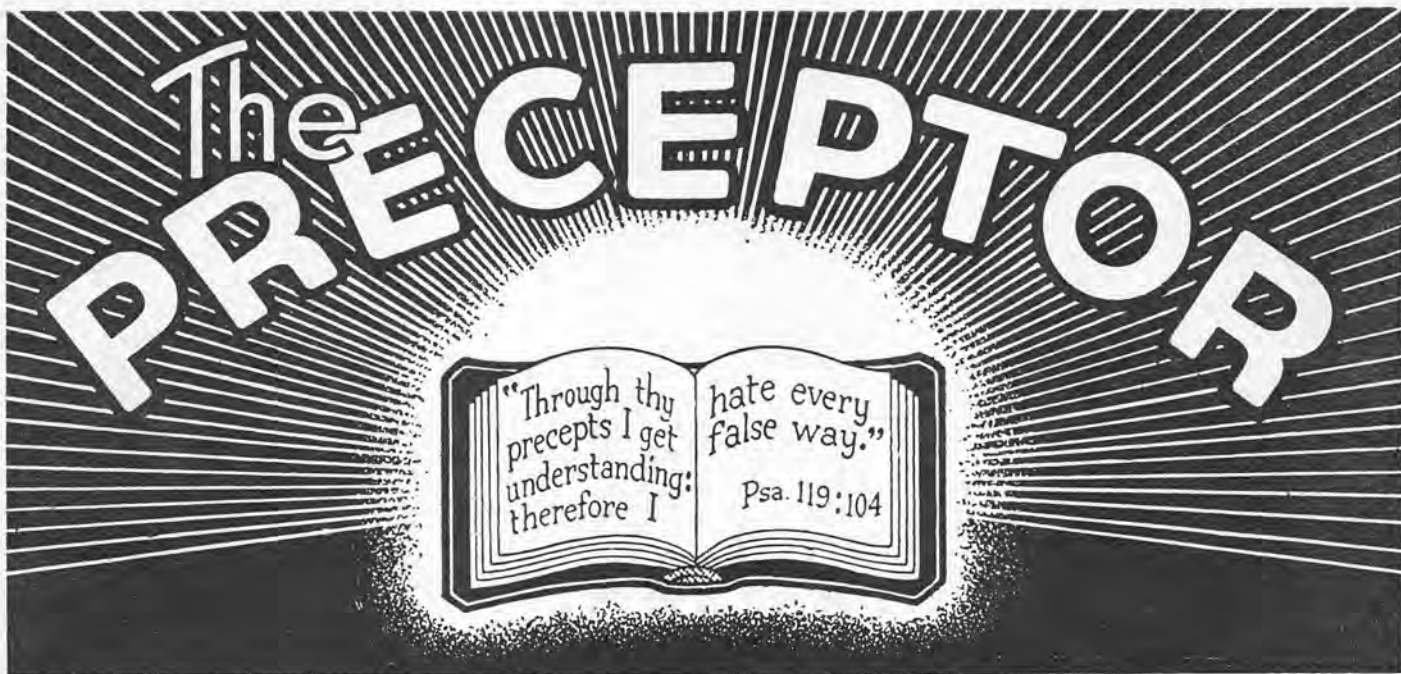
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THE TRUTH

W. L. WHARTON, JR.
Odessa, Texas

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie—" (Rev. 21:27).

At one stroke these words forever bar from the kingdom of God every sort of make-believe and sham. Truth is seen as an essential item. Without it none can please God. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (Jno. 8:32).

Truth is a fundamental necessity even in material institutions. Both business and industry would stop if in the industrial world there were no word of honor or faith. If no man could be depended on to tell the truth; if fraud were the object of every man seeking credit; if every man taking out insurance did so for the object of making illegitimate gain, then there could be no great business.

Truth is essential in the building industry. The stone which centers the foundation of our great structures must tell the truth as stone. It must be what it represents itself to be and not shifting sand. A faulty piece of steel built into a bridge, a lie built in if you please, will fall down and destroy the labors of him who builds it.

No government can long stand on a foundation of political fraud and chicanery. Solemn pledges made,

but unkept, bring disaster.

It may seem a small matter to gain the advantage for a moment by sacrificing truth, but God brings both men and states to reckoning.

God commands his children: "Speak the truth; lie not—." And again: "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him who is in all things the head." That man who debauches moral sentiment, or helps to establish a reign of untruth or wickedness, undermines the very foundation upon which alone an enduring state, society or service to God can be rendered.

A lie in other fields may bring ruin and disaster in the physical, but in the religious realm it brings eternal separation from God. Allegiance to any belief or thinking which denies the right to fullest investigation in the light of God's Word, shows a fundamental disregard for the conquering power of truth.

"The way of man is not in himself—," declared the prophet of old. "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," declared our Lord. We must give rapt attention to the divine guidance of God's revelation lest our liberty in Christ be jeopardized and the very privilege of Sonship be taken from us. "Buy the truth and sell it not."



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EDITORIAL

Peacemakers

The Prince of peace, expressing the will of the God of peace, declared "happy" are the peacemakers. Peace among men was the theme of angels when the Lord of peace was born. Because of its tranquilizing design and power, the gospel is called the gospel of peace. By it was peace preached and brought to both Jew and Gentile.

Of the dual aspects of peace, the most noteworthy is the individual's personal peace with God. This is the peace that follows justification by faith. It is of the heaven-born peace, diverse from that which the world gives, that Jesus left with his disciples. A fruit of the Spirit, it must rule in the hearts of the sons of God. It is of the nature of and is a foretaste of immortality.

Peace in the heart with God makes for peace with all men. Peace is one of the many admirable characteristics of the kingdom of God on the earth. As our Lord, during his personal ministry, would have his disciples to be at peace one with another, so would he now have his disciples to be at peace among themselves. Not only will the peaceful citizen of God's kingdom be at peace with his fellow-citizen under the reign of Christ, but, he likewise, will possess an abiding and true interest in peace with all men.

An obligation, divine and inescapable, rests upon the believer with respect to peacemaking. He must follow after peace with all men, after those things which make for peace. Discrimination between the things which make for peace on the one hand and

those things which hinder and disturb peace on the other must be made. The latter, with assiduity, must be pursued. Peace is a thing that is made. It is not just an accident or happen-so. When the full potential of peace is achieved in our day it will be because enough brethren sincerely desire it and, within scriptural limits, will make it. Each disciple's wisdom, influence, and opportunity to make peace and to avoid strife should be fully utilized. Nor ought prayer for peace to be neglected.

As there is a divine responsibility toward peacemaking, similarly there are divine limitations respecting peacemaking. The idea of "peace at any price" is not taught in the New Testament. Peace cannot be enjoyed at the expense of righteousness. All the peace in the world cannot compensate for sin nor compromise with sin. It is an arresting fact that Jesus attached more importance to truth than to peace. He came not to give peace (at the cost of truth), but, rather division (when divine truth produces it). The wisdom from above produces in the person effected thereby first purity and then peace. That is the divine order. Peace with all men all the time is clearly impossible. As sincerely as it might be desired, some will not let it be. They are implacable. But to the degree that it depends upon the individual, he must be sure that he is no obstacle to peace. To the extent that it depends upon him, by his attitudes and actions, he must be certain that peace will be had and strife avoided. Since truth takes precedence over and is basic to peace, the paramount importance of discovering truth is clearly evident. Each is obligated to know what truth is respecting matters of New Testament teaching generally and particularly so concerning matters that threaten the peace of God's family on the earth. No acceptable nor lasting peace can be possessed that is not supported and guided by gospel faith in all of its relationships. Regrettably enough the trend in some quarters seems to be "peace at any price." Peace is the criterion by which all else is being evaluated. If a semblance of peace can be had, many are satisfied. With little or no regard for the truth of God's word this state of affairs prevails. Compromise and rejection of God's truth can never be defended successfully on the single plea of maintaining the peace. The Prince of Peace came to send a sword.

The peacemakers, blessed in that noble effort, shall be called the sons of God. This because of the similarity with the heavenly Father of the peacemaking endeavour. God seeks and promotes peace in the lives of his creatures. When his people likewise seek and promote peace in the lives of their fellowmen, they are, in that respect, like God and are truly his sons.—Stanley J. Lovett.

NOTICE!

If you plan to move soon, please notify us of your change of address. You will not miss any copies of the PRECEPTOR, and we will be able to keep our mailing list accurate.

"Elam's Notes"

FRED E. DENNIS

Marietta, Ohio

One of the truly great preachers who has gone to his reward was E. A. Elam. He wrote several volumes of the Annual Commentary put out by the Gospel Advocate under the title of "Elam's Notes." I have always read everything I could find by E. A. Elam. Presently I am engaged in a careful study of his "Notes" for 1923. I had read this volume before, but I am really enjoying this second study of it. About in the middle of the book Bro. Elam wrote an article under the caption, "Asking for a King." He put a note under this title saying, "All should study this." This is my excuse for reproducing it here. It may take more than one installment. I join with Bro. Elam in saying, "All should study this." It is worthy of study. But now for the article.

"Not a more important lesson can be learned than the one which must be learned from Israel's asking for a king.

"Anointing Saul king is important, but the reasons for asking for a king at all are the fundamental principles of rejection of God, and should be studied most seriously. These are given in 1 Sam. 8.

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah." (1 Sam. 8:4.)

"They held a council, or 'convention,' to determine what in 'their wisdom' was best to be done. Peloubet's 'Select Notes' says this was 'the national congress, or parliament.' May we not call it 'the national convention,' 'representing the brotherhood?' These 'elders' did represent the people and are put for the people in verses 7, 10, 19, 20, but they did not represent God or His will.

"An old, gray-haired man was the only one in that conference, or 'convention,' of 'leading' and 'representative' men who pleaded the cause of God.

"If God's people are to be governed by human 'brains' and 'the majority rule,' old Samuel was in great opposition to God, for he was distressingly in the minority.

"God's order, or way, must be maintained, regardless of majorities, 'representative men,' and 'human wisdom.' I would rather be Samuel old and alone, on God's side, than to be the greatest and most popular man of the great majority of 'leading men' of the nation, against God.

"Majorities and 'human wisdom' are not signs of right and loyal to God. 'Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.' (Ex. 23:2.) Many go down the 'broad way,' while few travel the 'narrow way,' etc. 'Where is the wise? . . . hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?' (1 Cor. 1:20.)

"But the people composing this conference, or 'convention,' of 'representative men' were of one mind. They had discussed this grave question of changing the form of government, had decided in mature deliberation, and had passed a 'unanimous resolution' to have a king.

"They came in a body to Samuel. They gave three reasons for making this request—(1) 'behold, thou art old'; (2) thy sons walk not in thy ways'; (3) 'now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.' (Verse 5.)

"To judge us' means not only to settle disputes; it means to rule over us and to fight our battles.

"A king would organize and centralize them as a nation and give them a permanent, systematic, and successful government. With a king, a court, and a standing army, they would be ready at any time to put forth a successful 'organized effort' against any foe. (1 Sam. 9:16; 11:3.) 'And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us; when Jehovah your God was your king,' (1 Sam. 12:12.) To have a king would also give them prestige among other nations and make them respectable.

"They did not want a king because it was God's will for them to have one, but to be 'like all the nations.' God had foretold that they would ask for a king and had said that then they should set over themselves the one only whom he should choose (Deut. 17:14-17), but this did not justify their desire and request for one and their rejection of God as King.

"The reasons these elders offered for wanting a king were only pretexts. (1) Samuel was old; but he was still mentally and physically vigorous and strong and lived nearly forty years after that. (2) His sons walked not in his ways. They could have been rejected as were Eli's sons, and better men appointed. (3) They wanted a king to judge them 'like all the nation'; but God had said they should be unlike the nations—a peculiar people—and he would be their King.

"They should have remembered the wonderful deliverance God had given them from Egypt and the great victories he had given them over Sihon and the giant, Og, king of the Amorites, 'from the valley of the Arnon unto Mount Hermon.' (Deut. 3:1-17.) Og ruled over sixty cities. (Josh. 13:30.) They should have remembered how God had turned Balaam's curses into blessings and had given the victory over the Moabites and the Midianites. They should also have remembered how, through Joshua, God had conquered the nations in the land of Canaan and had given them the land by lot, and how, through such judges as Barak, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, and Samuel, he had always delivered them from their enemies. There were no people like them and none before them. So long as they put their trust in God, one could chase a thousand and two could put ten thousand to flight.

"Other Pretexts"

"The reasons that brethren now give for organizing missionary societies and other societies to do the work God has committed to the church and for uniting all the churches in one 'national convention,' or organization, are only pretexts. They want a king, 'like all the (denominations),' but must have some pretexts for making one.

"One of these pretexts is: 'The church will not do the work.' They have forgotten what the church has already done; and that the thousands of congregations, which existed before the organization of a missionary society, were planted by the church.

"Samuel Was Hurt"

"Samuel was a just and good man. He knew the complaint against his sons was true, and at this he took no offense. 'But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us.' He felt this was a rejection of himself as judge.

"And Samuel prayed unto Jehovah.' (Verse 6.) He laid the matter before God and sought his guidance. Samuel was troubled when the people did wrong, and he prayed over it.

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PRECEPTOR



PERCEPTIONS

Some Things to Think About (No. 2)

C. E. W. DORRIS
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It would probably be a waste of time to even try to get some churches and brethren to conform to the New Testament ideal of mission work, for the simple reason that such churches and brethren, judging them by the fruit they bear (contention and strife among brethren), seem not to perceive even the necessity for any such conformity. Though professing to follow the New Testament in all they teach and practice, yet, depart from a method of missionary work they admit is scriptural and union ground, and teach and practice a method unknown to the New Testament that sows discord among brethren. Some see the necessity for strict conformity to the New Testament ideal, and to these and with these, as far as we may reach them, we enter the solemn plea that this ideal can never be attained and maintained except on the condition of adopting and strictly following the principle or rule of procedure embodied in the famous and familiar motto; "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." And if it was not intended that the principle which it establishes should not be followed, why were the Scriptures given to us at all? If we may even speak where the Scriptures do not speak, and be silent where they do speak—then why may we ignore the Scriptures altogether, and speak when we please, as we please, and what we please? If this conclusion does not follow, then we would be glad to know why it does not. Moreover, since we are told that "the secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and our children forever" (Deut. 29:29), we add that the only possible way to respect this divine classification of things is to proceed in principle in accordance with the motto in question.

I take it that all will agree that one of the greatest, if not the greatest, need today, next to the salvation of sinners, is unity of believers in Christ. But how can it ever be accomplished, except by speaking when the Scriptures speak, as the Scriptures speak, and being silent in all these particulars as the Scriptures are silent? Is it not as clear as a cloudless sky that as long as different brethren speak in different ways, some departing from the Scriptures in this thing or that, just that long divisions and parties will exist? And if union could be had on some departure from the Scriptures, it would not be the union required by the Lord, and therefore not acceptable with Him.

All professed Christians should do everything within their ability to bring about the unity of Christians. This is a great and vital truth that all concerned should labor for, but it points to the only possible way by which such a desirable and praiseworthy end can ever be attained. We feel safe in saying that strife and contention among brethren will

never come to an end, until all Christians themselves, with an open New Testament, shall be willing to face and discharge the following threefold duty. (1) To carefully survey their faith and practice, retaining whatever they are preaching and practicing that can be read in the New Testament. (2) Laying aside everything that cannot be read therein. (3) Adding to their faith and practice whatever can be read therein that they are not already preaching and practicing.

If this course was faithfully pursued, strife among brethren would vanish before the power of the truth like a snow pile before the noon day sun, and unity and fellowship of all brethren in Christ would inevitably follow. May the good Lord help us all to see and to follow this truth. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Rom. 14:19.)

To forestall strife and division among brethren, and apostasy in particular, Paul, Peter and John laid down the one concrete and universal rule for the guidance of Christians in clear and unmistakable words; "Now these things brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written." (Rom. 4:16.) "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.) "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)

Here we have from the pen of inspired apostles, not only the one great and fundamental law for the guidance of Christians in all religious affairs in all the ages, but it is expressed seemingly with the specific design of making it utterly impossible for intelligent and truth-loving men to make any mistake in its application. Moreover, the uniform way in which they state this law is remarkable and significant indeed. Whatever may be their differences in phrasology, they all unite and speak as one mouth on the solemn provision that religious teachers at all times and under all circumstances must keep within the limits of a plain and unmistakable "thus saith the Lord" for all they teach and practice. This is significant and certainly should be seriously weighed by brethren before they begin teaching and practicing anything that is liable to disturb the churches and create division. There is in this law not only no room left for any sort of conjecture, human opinions or speculations, but these things are all clearly and distinctly ruled out as impudent departures from the divine order.

One of the most remarkable and significant facts which greets us on the pages of ecclesiastical history outside of the Bible is the uniformity with which genuinely true and sincere men in their efforts at religious reformation in all the ages have striven to observe this divine law. But the fact to which we now invite particular attention and which we gladly emphasize is the fact that what gave these men the greatest power and influence for good and which signalized their work as a triumphant success was their direct appeal to the word of God—to a plain and unquestionable "thus saith the Lord" in support of their claims. With equal determination and uniformity they strove to place the greatest possible emphasis upon the additional fact that they did not invite the people to accept their mere opinions, nor to accept the opinions of men in religion at all. To the extent that they wished and labored to effect genuine reform, they seemed to feel that a positive "thus saith the Lord," clear of all speculations and opinions of men, was what people should hear, and with great consistency and tenacity they pursued this course. It was in defense of the same principle

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Denominationalism:

An Obstruction to Christianity

No. II

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Denominationalism is one of the greatest obstructions to Christianity. Actually, it is a rival to Christianity. Because of its low evaluation of Truth and perverted handling of the Scriptures it has decreased faith in Christ; promoted disrespect for the Word of God; abetted sin and facilitated materialism.

To a denominationalist Truth is not fixed and certain, something that cannot be surrendered regardless of cost. But Truth is uncertain and ultimately is to be determined by each person according to his own subjective standard. So far as I am able to determine historically, the father of this basis of denominationalism was Philip Melancthon, friend and contemporary of Martin Luther.

Some years after Luther's break with Roman Catholicism Melancthon offered a compromise with the Roman church in order to have a semblance of peace. During Luther's bitter struggles with Zwingli over the Lord's Supper Melancthon made the proposal that in order to unity a creed be written in "ambiguous terms and phrases, on which each party could put its own construction." "Mosheim, Vol. III, ps. 331,332. This was a most startling suggestion, made and adopted by men who instigated a Reformation whose foundation principle was the Scriptures as the only authority. Denominationalism's foundation today is Melancthon's proposal with slight modification. The modification is that the Bible is written in ambiguous terms and phrases and, therefore, each party is free to make its own interpretation.

But these charges are easy to assert. The seriousness and weight of them demand proof. The proof is now presented from statements of some outstanding denominationalists. In the main these quotations are taken from a series of religious articles written in "LOOK" magazine. The Protestant denominations under consideration are: Seventh-Day Adventist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Christian Scientist, Disciples of Christ and Congregational. They all have at least these two things in common: each is a denomination and each is Protestant. Naturally, space will not allow me to quote from all of them.

Denominationalism has obstructed Christianity by:

1. **Decreasing faith in Christ.** It has done this by demoting Christ from the object of faith to the example of faith. This has been done either by rationalizing the claims made for him or by actually denying the miraculous evidence presented by the writers of the New Testament in support of His divinity and authority. And one cannot deny the former and be a subject to the latter. For, they are inseparably bound. John 20:31. Early Christians believed in his divinity and humanity. I Thess. 1:9, 10. To deny he was "of God" was to be anti-Christ. I John 4:3. It was not—and is not—enough to say He was "of God" in some sense, as did Nicodemus (John 3:2) and "some of the people" (Matt. 16:4). He must be believed to be God's son in the sense he claimed—"the only begotten son of God." John 10:31-39; 3:16.

All of the before mentioned denominations claim faith in Christ. And yet: (a) "Some Methodists do not feel it necessary to believe that Jesus Christ was born without a human father in order to assert that he is the only begotten Son of the Heavenly Father. The Methodist Church does not disown this latter group as long as they believe in the deity of Christ." But how could one possibly believe in the "deity of Christ" and deny one of the cardinal arguments for that deity? Matthew, Luke, John and Paul all teach it.

(b) On the subject of the "Virgin Birth" a Baptist makes this startling statement: "A large majority undoubtedly do (that is do believe that Christ was born of a virgin. H. P., Jr.). A substantial minority do not . . . I know of no Baptist church that requires acceptance of this doctrine as a condition of baptism.

(c) On the same subject hear what a Congregationalist says: "Probably the majority do not (believe in the Virgin birth. H. P., Jr.) . . . The fact of Christ, and not the manner in which he was born, is held to be of dominant importance." Such teaching on the deity of our Lord make a travesty of faith in Christ. It is impossible to believe the conclusion if one denies the evidence advanced to prove it.

2. **Promoting disrespect for the Word of God.** In general all of these denominations, with the exception of the Christian Science body, have approximately the same view of the Scriptures as is expressed by this Presbyterian writer: "Presbyterians believe that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God and 'the only infallible rule of faith and practice'." And yet the very presence of denominationalism is the best of all evidence that they really do not allow the Word of God as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice." For, denominationalism is condemned in the Scriptures. The churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, etc., were made up of men who held the same faith, had obeyed the same gospel and were practicing the same form of service and worship. These Christians were not independent bodies but all belonged to the same body and were members one of another. I Cor. 12:12, 13, Rom. 12:4, 5; Eph. 4: 4; Phil. 1:27, 28.

Where does "the only infallible rule of faith and practice" authorize the baptism of infants? Why do not those denominations which sprinkle for baptism practice immersion which the "only rule of faith and practice" does authorize? Where is the scripture which authorizes a clergy and laity? In Christ's Church there is only one ruler, lawmaker, who rules through the Word. Eph. 1:22, 23; Heb. 1:3; James 4:12. In denominations each has its own creed. For Christians there is "one faith"; for denominationalists there are many.

They have promoted disrespect for the Word of God by undermining its inspiration and authority. Its inspiration has been undermined by teaching and practicing what it does not authorize and yet claiming it as "the only authority in faith and practice" in matters Christian.

(1.) The New Testament claims to contain the "mind of God," a perfect and permanent pattern for those who would be Christians. I Cor. 2:10-16; II Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 10:11-17; Jude 3. (2.) It claims that inspired men had a complete and authoritative revelation of this pattern. II Peter 1:3, 4; Eph. 3:3-5, II Peter 1:19, 20; II Cor. 4:4-7; II Cor. 5:18-20; I John 4:6. (3.) It claims that we possess the record of such a pattern. I Peter 1:22-25.

3. **Abetted sin.** The ever increasing attitude toward sin and salvation is found in this quotation from an Episcopalian writer. "Modern Episcopalians tend to understand by this

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Precepts and Principles

BONDS STOCKS

The World's Priceless Treasure (3)

In preceding articles it has been pointed out that the Bible is the world's priceless treasure because:

I. It is the instrumentality through which God speaks to us.

II. Its antiquity ranks it as an enduring and priceless gem.

III. It is indestructible—all efforts of men to destroy it have ended in utter failure.

Continuing our study, let us think some more about the indestructibility of the Bible.

Individuals have tried to destroy the Bible by various means. I read the story of a man who tried to rid his home of the book by burning a copy of the Bible.

"A woman whose husband was a confirmed drunkard led a most miserable life until one day a colporteur came to her home and brought her a Bible. She found much comfort in reading it and soon came to treasure it above everything. Her husband sneered and railed at her about it. One day, when he came home half intoxicated, and found her sitting and reading her newly found treasure, he snatched the Bible away from her, threw it into the stove, and set fire to it. 'Now we shall see,' said he, 'What will be left of your new religion.' The next day he opened the door of the stove, and taking the fire tongs, was about to stir up the cinders, which, as he thought, were all there was left of the Bible, when his eye fell upon the words: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' Having been thrown in closed, some pages of the book were partly preserved, and these words stood out clear and distinct. They were like a revelation to the man; he stood convicted and awestricken. Soon after he was converted, and led a different life" (Sunday School Times).

In our day men who pride themselves on their intellectual superiority and who rather relish the idea of being modernistic do their dead-level best to destroy the confidence of the human race in the integrity and reliability of the Bible. Of such men one newspaper editor has written: "I would rather trust a bunch of blind men to take a few old lanterns and a string of lightning bugs some day at high noon and go out to examine the noon day sun and analyze it by the power of the lanterns and the lightning bugs, than trust modernism advocates to take their own light and examine and analyze the Son of Righteousness and the word that reveals Him."

YOU CANNOT PUT THE BIBLE IN JAIL!

IV. The Bible is God's priceless gift to the human race because it can not be imprisoned. Not only is it impossible to destroy it; you can not even put it in jail! This glorious truth is affirmed by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:9: "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound."

The enemies of God could treat Paul like a criminal and throw him in jail, but they could not imprison the mes-

sage of truth that he preached. He wrote some of his epistles from jail. On one occasion he converted the man who held him prisoner. Bound in chains, he preached the gospel to Felix and Drusilla. While in custody he preached to Festus, to Agrippa and to other dignitaries.

Down through the centuries men who loved the truth have been thrown into jail, but no power yet has been able to imprison the word of God. Even ecclesiastical tyrants have not been successful in keeping the Bible in jail. For hundreds of years the Roman Catholic hierarchy sought to chain the Bible to the pulpit, to deny it to the common people, but God's word could not be bound. A monk by the name of Martin Luther took the book seriously, and used his knowledge of it to break the chain that tied it to the selfish and grasping hands of the hierarchy.

"In Armenia a whole village of sixty families embraced Islamism under threats of torture and death. There was only one exception—a woman aged 110 years, who refused, saying, 'I'm too old to deny my Lord.' The fierce Turks snatched her Bible from her hands, tore it up, and burned it. She said very calmly, 'You can do that, but you can not tear the promises out of my heart.'"

You can put a servant of God in jail, but you can not imprison his mind and his heart. The Bible lives in the hearts of men, and its influence can not be destroyed by law, edict, ultimatum or injunction. Regardless of the efforts of tyrants or bigots, God's word can not be bound, nor its influence stifled or nullified.

THE BIBLE IS TIMELY AND TIMELESS

V. The Bible is God's priceless treasure for the world because of its timeliness and its timelessness. It is timely because, in spite of its antiquity, it is perfectly adapted to the needs of our day. It is timeless because it meets the needs of every generation.

It is true, of course, that there are many people today who think that we have outgrown the Bible. This is not new. In every generation there have been those who have thought conditions had outmoded or outdated the Bible. But every generation has learned, in pain and sorrow, that the only hope for mankind is respect for the principles of God's word.

The face of the world changes, but the Bible remains the same. There are many things that were commonplace 50 years ago that are rarely seen today. There was a time within the memory of some now living where towns and cities had to employ lamplighters to illuminate the street lights. But you don't see lamplighters any more. The lights of a whole city can be turned on automatically. The town crier was, at one time, the chief source of news in a community. He was later replaced by the newspaper, the party line on the telephone, and finally by the radio. Now you can sit in your living room and see the news while it is happening.

But back in the days of the lamplighters and the town crier there was a book to which men turned for enlightenment and encouragement and guidance—and in these days of radio and television men turn to the same book.

Those moderns who have a superior attitude toward the Bible, looking upon it as an outdated book, would have a very difficult time living in a world that had been deprived of the influence of the Bible.

"As a converted African cannibal sat reading his Bible a European trader passed by and asked him what he was

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Faith and the Faith—No. 3

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In previous articles we have discussed faith in its relation to the authority of Christ, and to his gospel which is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth. From this we proceed to study the preciousness of faith in the Christian life, and its supreme value toward obtaining the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

The preciousness of faith is emphasized in I Peter 1:3-9. We have already seen how faith is that which renders salvation from past sins obtainable to the obedient believer, and now Peter teaches us the essentiality of faith in securing for the child of God "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." He tells us that such an inheritance is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God. But notice how the power of God is appropriated in this matter. Peter says it is "through faith." God's power guards; man's faith appropriates the power. Peter declares also that there is a salvation yet to be obtained. This is not the salvation experienced in primary obedience to the gospel; i.e., redemption from PAST sins, but it refers to that "entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:11). This is final redemption from the sphere of earth and earthly things—entrance into heaven itself. Peter shows that this is obtained by faith. We are guarded (kept) by the power of God THROUGH FAITH unto that final salvation. The value of continuing, constant, increasing faith is emphasized by the apostle in this thought. It is of so great value as to be the means of securing that incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for the saints. Surely, then, we must be diligent in sustaining an approved (perfect) faith.

Peter warns that our faith will be tried. If it becomes our lot to be "put to grief in manifold trials (temptations)" it is for the express purpose of proving our faith. Is it strong enough to make us fit subjects of redeeming grace? Are we of the character that renders us capable of inhabiting heaven with honor and glory? The proving of our faith is the testing ground, and if we stand the test our faith will be "found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such an end glorifies faith, and shows why it is more precious than gold that is tried by fire. Gold is purified by fire, yet perishes. Faith is made strong and pure by fiery trials here, but it is an imperishable, abiding element that is far more precious than all earthly treasures, because it procures for us the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, and ultimately brings glory and honor to the saints. If all members of the church of God were adequately impressed with the preciousness of faith we would see more earnest effort on the part of all to cultivate and strengthen faith in our own lives. Men will risk everything to obtain more gold, but not many sacrifices are made to gain stronger and richer faith, which is far more precious!

Notice the phrase "yet believing" in verse 8. Christians believe in Christ, "though now we see him not." The word "believe" is from the verb form of the same word which is translated "faith" in other places. If we were able to give a participial form to the word "faith," we could say in this place, "yet faithing." That is the meaning of the phrase. According to Thayer this means, "a conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah—the divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God,

conjoined with obedience to Christ." Such a confidence, or trust, causes the Christian to "rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory." We are made to wonder how anyone, if convinced of these truths, could allow any temporal considerations to stand in the way of earnest endeavor gain greater faith—it is more precious than all of earth's treasures.

The end of faith is the salvation of our souls (v.9). This does not mean the termination of faith, but its aim or purpose. Salvation is the goal to be accomplished through faith. Surely the value of faith is magnified again by Peter in setting forth this thought. It is evident that no such end will be gained without faith, and this within itself shows that here is no such thing as unconditional salvation. The theorists who say there is should take notice of this.

We are living in times when it is not always easy to maintain the faith we should have, because of attitudes that prevail, and because of consequences that sometimes follow strict adherence to one's convictions. There are those who disparage real faith, brand it as dogmatism, and make it an object of scorn. Definite conviction is often discounted in our day. This strikes fear into the hearts of weaker Christians and they flee from the field of battle. In some places the man who really believes something definite and takes a firm stand to uphold it is denounced and discredited, while one who is too broad to be quite sure of anything is exalted and praised as "open-minded." This has become one of the greatest snares in the way of faith on the part of many Christians, and hence they become indifferent to truth, and complacent toward all forms of error. We need stronger faith!

It is true that the Bible teaches that our minds must be receptive to the truth of God. The broadminded person is the one who accepts the truth when he sees it; the narrow-minded person is the one who closes his mind against truth. But does this mean that we are to be so "open-minded" that we never reach finality in regard to truth? Can we not be sure of anything? If not, then we are relieved from all obligation to believe anything, and faith itself is relegated to the realm of indifference! God forbid. I can surely be certain of everything that God says, and rest my soul with trusting faith upon the verities of his word. Thus I can reach finality with regard to the doctrine of Christ, and conviction may run as deep as the faith I am to muster. Let us not be frightened away from true conviction by the epithets of doubters. I have observed that doubters can be as "dogmatic" as anybody.

At no time has there been more urgent need for emphasizing faith than in this present hour. Circumstances have given rise to doubts and fears in the minds of many. Doubt is the enemy of faith, and brings about a spiritual paralysis that endangers the soul. The remedy for doubt is a larger knowledge of the truth of God—and remember, it is only by faith that truth can be appropriated. Faith and doubt stand in inverse ratio—as one enters in, the other goes out. It takes faith to drive away doubt. To dispel any doubt that disturbs our souls we must increase our faith. "According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. 9:29). "The righteous shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). "We walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7). "This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 Jn. 5:4).

How well can we see that faith is an indispensable element in the religion of Christ! How clearly it is shown that faith

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Thinking With Parents And Teachers

"Train up a child in the way he should go." (Prov. 22:6a)

IRENE SOWELL FOY

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN, Part IV

DRESS OF THE WIFE AND MOTHER

"Safety first" is a popular slogan today since dangers to one's physical being seem to have multiplied. Such a suggestion of caution is not new in God's dealing with man. In building regulations given to Moses was this, "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." (Deuteronomy 22:8.)

Precaution for spiritual safety is implied in "Train up a child in the way he should go." That training does not consist wholly in factual teaching. Your child is being trained "when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." "Safety first," as applied to the mental and spiritual phases of our children means that parents must recognize the power of all things to influence the growing child.

"His own parents, he that fathered him and she that conceived him in her womb and birthed him,

They gave this child more of themselves than that,

They gave him afterward everyday,

They became part of him

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes on the supper table,

The mother with mild words, clean her cap and gown

These became part of that child."

Yes, the child in the home is being trained by observing his mother at work, by hearing her words and the tone of her voice, by her personal appearance and her dress, indeed by all that is seen and heard in the home. In view of these things, does it make any difference how a Christian wife and mother dresses? When one is interested in safeguarding the child's spiritual being, it makes a great deal of difference whether a child sees daily his mother in dress that is suited to the bride of Christ.

A Christian mother is one of the "elect," the "chosen," she belongs to royalty. She, as a member of the church, is married to the King, "the King of kings and Lord of lords." Does it make any difference how a member of the royal family dresses? Even in earthly royal households one's dress must be in keeping with his status. Great care and study are expended to be assured that the dress and behavior of members of royalty bespeak their station in life. Surely, in the family of the King of kings, dress and conduct must be suitable for a member of the house of God. It does make a difference.

God gave us a graphic picture of the garments which the "wise-hearted" were to make that "Aaron may minister unto me in the priest's office." Aaron was to be dressed in a manner distinctive and appropriate to his position and duties so that he might easily be identified. Those priestly gar-

ments were for "glory and beauty." They were garments that would enable those who saw and those who wore them to be impressed with the dignity of the occasion, giving them a greater feeling of reverence and respect for the high calling.

There was nothing suggestive of carelessness, nothing shabby about those holy garments of the priests. They were in harmony with the commands of God. "And these are the garments which they shall make," said Jehovah. He designed garments as "appropriate to the occasion," and in harmony with the caption on the "plate of pure gold" on Aaron's forehead: "Holiness to the Lord."

Our High Priest is clothed for "glory and beauty" with garments of righteousness. The words "chosen," "royal," "holy," "peculiar" indicate an exalted calling. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood." (1 Peter 2:5a).

What is the purpose of that high calling? Peter, by inspiration, gives the answer: "That ye should shew forth the excellencies of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9b). "Offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5b). What clothing is appropriate to wear by one in so exalted position? Just as God specified the clothing for his priests of old so he gives the pattern for his priests today, that it may be for "glory and beauty," to "shew forth his excellencies."

Paul, in writing to Timothy said: "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing goodliness) with good works." (1 Timothy 2:9, 10). "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Peter 3:3, 4).

Satan is successfully using the power of "pressure groups" to delete from God's order the expression "modest apparel." Store windows advertise and in all public places may be seen women so dressed as to display the physical features that are distinctively feminine. Verbal expressions are equally suggestive. Standard dictionaries give the definition for modest as: "having or showing a nice regard for the decencies of behaviour, speech, dress; delicate or decent; pure in thought and conduct; also from ostentation or showy extravagance."

After sinning, Adam and Eve were ashamed of their nakedness. God clothed them. Ham was cursed because he looked on his drunken father's nakedness, did nothing about it but went out and told others.

Is a Christian woman whose scant clothing displays half of her naked body showing "forth the excellencies of him who hath called" her from her low estate to be a child of the King? Satan attacks the word "modest." He says: "It's just what you get used to. Today we call a dress 'modest' which our grandmothers would have called 'immodest'". Our grandmothers are not our pattern. It is regrettable that many Christians are traditionally minded. God has plainly given us the pattern.

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SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY—No. II

EARL DALE

McAlester, Oklahoma

In our former treatise we brought out the fact that the local church and the individual Christian have responsibilities for which they are obligated to God to perform. We brought out the fact that it is **WRONG** for either to shift that responsibility to others; and, that if individual Christians and the church, as such, would quit shifting responsibility, "Brotherhood Projects" would fade from the scene immediately. We now begin with the body of the subject: "Shifting Responsibility."

I. SHIFTING RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FAMILY.

1. It is the responsibility of the parents to educate their children. See Titus 3:14: "And let ours also learn to maintain good works (profess honest trades, Margin, E. D.) for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful." If parents shift that responsibility onto the church, they do wrong; and, the church has no right to accept it. The work of the church is **NOT** that of providing secular education. This is **ONE** reason it is wrong to put the college in the budget of the churches. This is also the reason why the church has no scriptural right to provide funds to send a member through college. The church has a responsibility, all right, to teach to **ALL** the word of God; but, that doesn't relieve the individual of his responsibility to teach his children, Eph. 6:1-4; 2 Tim. 3:15; Phil. 2:12-16. If we are not careful, brethren, we will be leaving **all** Bible instruction to our children **FOR THE CHURCH TO DO**. That is shifting responsibility! Our children ought to know their lessons **BEFORE** they come to Bible classes, and be able to recite them when they get there; and, in addition, they should receive instruction which the church can provide through competent Christian teachers.

2. It is the responsibility of the parents to maintain their home and rear their children in the way of God, Eph. 6:1-4. If they shift that responsibility onto their relatives or the church when they, themselves, are able, either of them, to do it, they thereby do wrong in shirking, or shifting, their God-ordained responsibility! If we had **LESS** shifting of responsibility on the part of parents in the rearing of their children, we would have **LESS** delinquency on the part of our children. Maybe I should have said, "less delinquency on the part of parents." If parents are not able to maintain their home, relatives and others may help them; but, those who help are not obligated, neither do they have the right, to take over the responsibility and oversight of another man's home just because they are helping that home do something to which they are not equally related, and which something that home was not able to do for itself. The helping person should not **DESIRE** to take over the management of another home just because he is helping to maintain that home in time of need. Sometimes "inlaws" become "outlaws" because of their interference in the affairs of the homes of the children! By their interference, they contribute to the putting asunder "what God hath joined together," Matt. 19:1-9. It is recognized that conditions may be brought about by death to one or both parents, divorces, mental diseases which makes one irresponsible, etc. to where responsibility would cease and fall to the next kin.

3. It is the responsibility of the individual to provide for his own kin who are in need of the necessities of life. If conditions are such that the need is continual, then the responsibility of supply is continual. If the conditions are such that the need is only an emergency, then the responsibility is only

for the duration of the emergency, 1 Tim. 5:4, 8, 16. This is providing, of course, that his kin are not able to provide for themselves. If an emergency arises, and he has not the ability to supply their needs, the church may assist in that emergency. See Acts 4:32 thru 5:11; also Acts 6:1-7. But, for an individual to shift his responsibility onto the church for the church to shoulder for him, is a sin and renders the individual "worse than an infidel," 1 Tim 5:8, 16.

Some cases in point:

(1) Man and wife die. The children become the charges of the grandparents, provided they are able financially, morally, or otherwise. Next, brothers and sisters with the above modifications plus age; next, uncles and aunts, etc. In other words, the laws of the land will grant to the nearest of kin the custody provided they are fit subjects to care for them. I consulted a lawyer friend of mine to obtain these facts. Also, **THE LAW OF GOD** requires the nearest kin to take the responsibility, 1 Tim. 5:1-16.

(2) What scripture would allow the nearest kind to shift that responsibility **onto the church**? **NOT ONE!** Do you see, brethren, how difficult it is for a person to become the **CONTINUAL CHARGE OF THE CHURCH**? The man who palms off his responsibility onto the church "is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. 5:16. This truth needs to be burned into the hearts of all the children of God. Although the church can in an emergency, see Acts 6:1-7, the responsibility of permanent care remains with the individual, with the modifications already mentioned, of course. What about a congregation that would accept this shifting of responsibility and, at the same time, fellowship the one who shifted it? What about the congregation that will **even encourage one to shift their responsibility**? This is a serious matter!

Our next article will deal with "Shifting Responsibility in the Church."

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT—

Continued from Page 4)

that both Stone and the Campbells raised their battle cry for reformation more than a hundred years ago. Moreover, it is a fact, well known to all well informed men, that to the extent that, and so long as, they and their successors remained true to this principle, sectarianism was stired from center to circumference, and they recorded one of the brightest and most glorious chapters in all the records of ecclesiastical and religious affairs. But, when disciples met in Cincinnati, October 24, 1849, and organized the American Christian Missionary Society, they departed from the divine rule, introduced doctrines of men and sowed discord throughout the brotherhood, and finally a complete division of the church. This is what departure from the divine rule, if not checked in time, will always do. Brethren, let us learn a few lessons from past history.

What a pity that men have ever departed from safe principles and from this divine standard of appeal in religion to enter the vain and fruitless realm of speculation and opinion! But such men have been found in all the ages, and they are with us today. Let us, one and all, with daily prayer to God and full faith in his wisdom and guidance, labor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

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THE TRUTH

SEQUEL TO "THE INDIAN'S BAPTISM"

ROBERT F. TURNER

Gladewater, Texas

Just about every preacher and his dog has told the story, some time or other, of the Indian who was given a Bible and told to read carefully, "that you might learn how to become a Christian." Seems it took some doing to convince the Indian that "this book" really had the answer to his problems, and should be accepted as the rule-book for his life. He led the Indian to a small stream, stopped at the bank, and was about to sprinkle a little water upon his head, when the Indian halted the procedure.

"You Bible teachum this baptism?" he asked.

"Certainly so!" the preacher replied.

"Hum! You givum me wrong book!" the Indian grunted, as he walked away.

This time-worn but still appropriate illustration came to mind once again recently as I was looking through some old files. Buried among some newspaper clippings which dated back to my work in Phoenix, Arizona I found a copy of the "CATHEDRAL BULLETIN" of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Phoenix, April 30, 1944. This paper contained an account of the "setting apart as Catechist and Lay Evangelist of Jim Crook, of the Havasupai Canyon Reservation." The story included the record of the "conversion" of this "rough but genial Indian cowboy," and of his "baptism" some time later. The following quotation caught my eye.

"As a result the following summer, after due preparation, Jim with Viola, his wife, and several children were baptized by Mr. Harris in the little river that winds through the canyon. Without the slightest knowledge of the doctrinal or ecclesiastical significance of the matter, Jim of his own volition asked to be put under the water, saying that he had been "a heap bad man" and wanted to feel his past life as being washed away.

Fortunately Mr. Harris had once been a minister of the

Christian Church and was quite accustomed to immersion, so he gladly consented. The other members of the family, however, were satisfied with being baptized in our regular way, except that they, too, including the children, went into the water with Jim.

All this was quite traditional according to an ancient picture of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan but with water poured on his head by John."

I would like to have a nice heart-to-heart talk with Jim Crook. There is enough information in the bulletin article to make me feel a great deal of respect for him. I wonder how he is getting along in his work for "Jesus Way" among his people who inhabit that Garden Canyon, 3,500 feet below the rim, sometimes known as the "Shan Gri La" of America. I hope he and his family are well, hale and hearty; and that they are not too much corrupted by the white man's ways through their increased contacts with the "outside."

I wonder where Jim (he may be a "Reverend Bishop" by now among the Episcopal people, but I mean no disrespect by calling him "Jim")—I wonder where he got the idea that in baptism his past life would be "washed away?" Could he have read where Ananias told Saul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord?" (Act 22:16). Or maybe Jim had read Eph. 5:25-f. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

We are assured that Jim acted "without the slightest knowledge of the doctrinal or ecclesiastical significance of the matter." Well, perhaps so! But that leaves us to wonder if he had been properly prepared for "baptism" according to Episcopal usage. I believe it is safe to say that Jim did not learn of "Christian baptism" from tribal custom and teaching. If he was taught only the "regular way" of the Episcopalians (witness above quotation) then he must have

(Continued on Page 14)

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"REBUKE NOT AN ELDER"

BY W. R. JONES

Greggton, Texas

In Paul's first letter to the young evangelist Timothy the following instructions are found, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren." What is the meaning of "rebuke not an elder?" It is wrong for an evangelist to rebuke, reprove, question or reprimand an elder concerning his conduct, attitude or teaching? It is not at all common to find elders who seek shelter under this passage when they are bombarded by rebuke from straight-forward gospel preaching. Some elderships have been turned into a legislative board and make decisions which they have no authority to make. One well known elder in his efforts to impress the congregation with the authority of the elders said, "If the elders were to tell one of you ladies to get in this pulpit and preach a sermon Sunday morning, it would be your duty to do it." After such elders have made an unscriptural decision, some preacher in an honest effort to stand for the truth, suddenly finds himself across the fence from those in power. So, under the guise of having "rebuked an elder" he is charged with insubordination and is forced to move on to other fields. If this passage means that one can not question, reprove, rebuke or disagree with elders in regard to their life or teaching then it ought not and must not be done. What does it mean?

I am convinced that the word ELDER as used in this passage has reference primarily to those who are OLDER and not to elders in the sense of BISHOPS or OVERSEERS of God's flock. I Timothy 5:1-3 reads, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that are widows indeed." Take note in verse 16 of chapter 4, Paul tells Timothy to take heed "unto thyself and the doctrine," then he proceeds to inform him how to deal with the different classes in the church. 1. Rebuke not an ELDER (older), but intreat him as a father. 2. Treat the young men as brethren. 3. Treat the Elder (older) women as mothers. 4. Treat the younger as sisters, with all purity. 5. Honour widows that are widows indeed. This passage will no more excuse ELDERS (bishops) from rebuke than any other member of the church as I now set forth in the following points:

1. If "rebuke not an elder" means "rebuke not an ELDER (bishop, pastor, overseer), then Paul is made to contradict himself. In I Timothy 5:19-20 he wrote; "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. THEM (including elders) that sin rebuke before ALL that others may also fear." The Lord knew that elders who really stood for the truth would be recipients of criticism from the ungodly. He therefore, has Paul to warn Timothy to take no action unless the complaint comes from more than one mouth. However, if the accusation proved true, then Timothy was to "REBUKE BEFORE ALL that others may also fear." This definitely shows that ELDERS (bishops) are not exempt from rebuke when such is needed.

2. If "rebuke not an elder" has reference to a BISHOP then the life, practice or teaching of an elder could not be called into question. If the decisions of the elders can not under any circumstances be questioned then the church must stay in the same boat with her leaders, right or wrong. If the overseers are wide awake and true to THE BOOK this might not be so bad, but on the other hand if the elders

are inactive, indifferent, or in error then it follows that the church would be forced to be likewise.

3. If an ELDER (bishop) can not be rebuked, then the evangelist's hands are tied in preaching much of the New Testament. No preacher would dare preach on I Timothy 3, Titus 1 or I Peter 5 for fear he might rebuke an elder.

The true teaching of I Timothy 5:1 is that; as a younger man I am not to despise, misuse, abuse or talk hatefully to an elder (older) man or woman. I must treat them as I would my father and mother. I would not for one moment hesitate to disagree with my father or mother, nor to rebuke them, but I would not despise, abuse, or talk hatefully to them. AGE must be respected by YOUTH, but this does not mean tht the aged can not be questioned by those younger in years, if done in the proper spirit. YOUTH must never disregard the WISDOM OF AGE and the elderly must not try to retard the ENTHUSIAM and COURAGE of those in lesser years.

As an evangelist it is my duty to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." II Timothy 4:2. It is my responsibility to work with the ELDERS (bishops) of the church in every undertaking that is according to the word of God. It is likewise the duty of elders to cooperate with the preacher and stand behind him in his efforts to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. If his life and teaching will not harmonize with the Book Divine, then he stands to be rebuked by them. Godly preachers are not interested in promoting self, but in holding forth the words of life against the rampages of sin and error. Elders ought to stand by godly preachers through thick and thin. Evangelist and elders must never manifest a "strong-headed" attitude toward one another. Both should strive to put Christ first in all things.

The ELDERS (bishops) of the church have a great responsibility as they look after the soul of men and women. I am sure they do not receive due credit, in man's sight for their labors. There are no group of men on the face of the earth that I admire as much as I do good, faithful, sound elders in the Lord's church. May elders, present and future, always realize that to accept the work of an elder offers no exemption from scriptural rebuke GOD BLESS OUR ELDERS WHO ARE TRUE TO THE WORD.

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BLESSED ARE THE DEAD

W. W. OTEY

Winfield, Kansas

(Editor's Note: We offer sincere sympathy to Brother W. W. Otey, veteran and venerable gospel preacher, in the passing of his faithful companion of nearly seventy-two years. Herewith is his written tribute to her and following that is a newspaper account of her passing.)

On July 23, "Mother" fell asleep in Jesus to wait his coming. After more than four years of great suffering she was released from all pain and went to be with Him whom she has deeply loved and served for about seventy-five years. During her more than four years of great suffering, I was by her side day and night. Gall bladder disease (not stone), hardening of the arteries and heart ailment, brought on the most intense suffering.

December 29, 1884, nearly seventy-two years ago I met Minnie Showalter for the first time. During the hour, while standing some ten feet distant, I turned my face toward where she was standing. Our eyes met and held as if by magic for a moment. Were I an artist I could now after nearly seventy-two years paint that unforgettable face, and even the dress she was wearing, as perfectly as an artist with a living model before him. The face was a true likeness of maiden modesty and purity. During our long life together she never in my presence spoke a coarse word or violated the rule of womanly modesty.

One year after we first met we pledged ourselves as husband and wife. For nearly seventy-one years we have shared our joys and borne our griefs. We have laughed together; read the word of the Lord together; prayer together; worshipped the Lord together.

During the last thirty-five years, after our children had gone out from our home, our lives have been the closest and sweetest of our long sojourn. Often in the evening as we sat close together, as the evening shadows closed around us, we talked of our children and their welfare. Yes, I am not ashamed to say that many times we found ourselves holding hands and talking in tender tones just as we often did while still in our teens. And most important of all we talked much about the "land that is fairer than day." We wondered how our time would be spent, and if we would know each other in that glorious land. On this we did not form an opinion. We simply said that what is best God will provide, and it will be satisfactory to us.

I am sure that I have never known anyone who was as impartial toward her children as "mother" was. It was only the one that happened to be sick or otherwise in need of sympathy that received her closest attention. She more nearly loved everybody, yes, loved, than anyone whom I have ever known. And with few exceptions, possibly, all who knew her loved her. Sympathy, kindness, kind words, tender acts characterized her life. No one whom I have ever known loved the word of the Lord, and the hour of worship more sincerely. And what has been a marvel to me is, for nearly seventy-years she remained to the last about the most appreciative listener to me.

Two hearts that beat as one more than seventy years have been severed and left mine torn and bleeding. She, "Mother," is not over in Highland Cemetery. No, she is with the angels and happy.

What of me? The calendar says I will soon be ninety. The doctors say, "You are as sound as a teen-ager." But of course I do not have the strength of a youth. I think I would like to lie down and go to sleep and wake up on the other side. But the will of the Lord is mine. I have never lived in the past. Even now I still have much planned to do if it be His will. The Lord said: "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life." This, by the help of the Lord, I shall try to do.

Mrs. Minnie E. Otey, wife of W. W. Otey, died Monday at 11:30 a. m. at the family home, 315 E. 7th. She had been in failing health for four years.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday at 2 p. m. at the Church of Christ with George Blake officiating. Burial will be in Highland Cemetery with Morris Funeral home in charge.

Mrs. Otey was born in Floyd County, Va., Feb. 13, 1869, the daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Showalter. It was there she was married to W. W. Otey Dec. 24, 1885. Mr. Otey was a minister in the Church of Christ and the family lived at various places. They came to Kansas in 1911 and in 1939 they moved to Belle Plaine where they lived until Mr. Otey retired and they came to Winfield in 1953.

Surviving are the husband, and the following children: Mrs. Ola Criver of Richmond, Ind.; Mrs. Vera Hammer, Winfield; Joe Otey, Hot Springs, So. Dak.; Mrs. Willie Phipps, Ft. Collins, Colo.; Bentley Otey, Independence, Mo.; Mrs. Lucille Dias, San Antonio, Texas; Ray Otey, Denton, Texas. A son, Dr. D. S. Otey, died 10 years ago. Also there are 14 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Seven living children from six states were at the funeral.

4 July, 1956

Tant Williams, Jr.
SOUTH HOUSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST,
Box 866, 401 Pennsylvania Ave.,
South Houston, Texas.

As a matter of education the church in South Houston has arranged for and will support Brethren Cecil B. Douthitt and Thomas B. Warren in an oral debate on current issues, scheduled for October 23-26, 1956, South Houston, Texas.

Proposition One.

The Scriptures teach that a church may contribute money from its treasury to another church only (1) when the receiving church is unable financially to supply adequately for the physical want of its own indigent members, and (2) when the purpose of the donation is: "That there may be equality," or mutual freedom from want of physical necessities.

Affirmative: Cecil B. Douthitt
Negative: Thomas B. Warren

Proposition Two.

The Scriptures teach that one church may (has the right to) contribute to (send funds to, render assistance to) another church which has assumed (undertaken) the oversight of a work to which both churches sustained the same relationship before the assumption of the oversight.

Affirmative: Thomas B. Warren
Negative: Cecil B. Douthitt

Following Douthitt's last speech Warren will have a fifteen minute rebuttal with no new material to be introduced.

THE WORLD'S PRICELESS TREASURE—

(Continued from Page 6)

doing. 'Reading the Bible,' was his reply. 'That book is out of date in my country,' said the trader. 'If it had been out of date here,' said the African, 'You would have been eaten long ago.'"

Sometimes we hear people cry out for a new Bible more in keeping with the "spirit of the times." One of the most wonderful things about the Bible is that it never yields to the spirit of the times. Instead, it cries out against what men call "the spirit of the times."

The truth of the matter is that "the spirit of the times," in every age, being fundamentally the same—one of rebellion against truth and righteousness. The prophets of the Old Testament cried out against the spirit of the times and, to some extent, cleansed it.

Jesus of Nazareth denounced the political and orthodox religious leaders of his day, and changed the spiritual complexion of the world. The apostles of Christ refused to yield to the spirit of the times. Faithful gospel preachers today refuse to compromise the truth by succumbing to the demands to adjust the Bible to the times. The Roman Empire has long since fallen, but the Bible still lives, and its message is as timely today as it ever was. Many empires have crumbled to the dust, but the Bible remains a Gibraltar of strength. A group of intellectuals in Germany thought that the Bible was outmoded and engaged in destructive criticism of it. Their philosophy produced Nazi Germany, which has gone the way of all flesh, but the Bible still lives.

Italy has long been under the yoke of a false religion which denies its people the right to study the Bible for themselves. Such a system produced Fascism. Mussolini died a coward's death, and the back of Fascism in Italy has been broken, but the Bible lives on.

Communism has spent decades trying to rid Russia of God. Because of its contempt for things holy, it is a threat to the peace and security of the whole world. Regardless of how many temporary skirmishes it may win, it is headed for certain destruction, but long after its fall, the Bible will live on and will be ministering to the real needs of the human race.

We live in an age of materialism and worldliness when many leaders express, in one way or another, contempt for the spiritual and moral principles of the Bible.

The following quotation from *TIME*, June 6, 1955, pp. 37-38, is a reflection of "the spirit of the times": "Sex in School. 'What should schools do when pupils have children?' asked Stockholm's *Dagbladet*. A Bible teacher in a school in southern Sweden had posed the question after two girls bore babies fathered by fellow students. Should they be expelled, or at least get bad-conduct marks on their final reports? The Bible teacher's view was that they should. Not so, said the principal, and handed out good-conduct marks. The school's teaching staff agreed, taking the position that 'the schools should not punish, now that society no longer does.' The outraged Bible teacher appealed to the school board, which simply referred him to the official handbook on sex education in public schools—'Established sex relations between youngsters may not be contrary to the general viewpoint in their circles . . . '—and upheld the principal.

"Then the Bible teacher appealed to the government itself, protesting indignantly that 'in this school, sexual relations between pupils are entirely consistent with the highest conduct marks.' A fortnight ago, at a formal Cabinet meeting presided over by Prince Bertil, son of King Gustaf VI Adolf, the government formally backed the school principal over the Bible teacher.

"Explained the vindicated principal: 'The couples are good at school and exceptionally hard-working. They had been going steady for a long period . . . Nobody wanted to force them to get married, but they remained true to each other and did so. Now they have settled down happily and their 'doll marriages' are touchingly beautiful.' Reported one of the young mothers, 19, preoccupied with both schoolbooks and a six-month-old boy: 'Since the baby arrived, my husband and I have had no free time and have been forced to do all our homework at night. Marriage, pregnancy and diaper-changing cannot be combined with schoolwork. We regard the Scripture teacher as a fine and cultured person, but we definitely oppose his moral view. It belongs to another age.' Both she and her husband, reported the girl, have decided to keep on studying. Their prospective careers: teaching."

Of course, the old-fashioned Bible teaches that these misguided young people are fornicators, and that unless they repent and turn to God they will be eternally lost in hell. Their example, of course, is a corrupting influence on the society in which they live. But their "super-enlightened," ultra-modern, "free-thinking" and free-wheeling teachers, who think they are smarter than God, approve them, pat them on the back, hold them up as examples for others to follow, and sneeringly say: "We have outgrown the Bible."

Well, the Bible will be here when they have learned, through pain and sorrow, that such high handed contempt for the law of the Holy God can lead only to decay, corruption and ruin.

Yes, the Bible is timely and timeless. We live in the atomic age, but the atomic age man has the same basic needs that characterized the people who lived during the patriarchal, Jewish and early Christian eras.

(Additional truths about the Bible as "The World's Most Priceless Treasure" will appear in next month's issue of *THE PRECEPTOR*).

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DENOMINATIONALISM:—

(Continued from Page 5)

term (salvation. H. P., Jr.) 'health or wholeness of life.' Salvation means that one is given the wholeness which is God's will for man, and is delivered from arrogance and selfishness . . . In man, sinner because he is ridiculously proud and self-centered, there is no real 'health.' The Bible teaches that sin is the transgression of God's will. I John 3:4. Denominationalism sees it chiefly as "sickness." The New Testament classifies it as "lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and pride of life." I John 2:15. Denominationalism classifies it as "lack of wholeness" and "no real health." The New Testament gives it names that cannot be misunderstood: "fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, etc." Gal. 5:19f. The New Testament brings sharply into focus the horrible end of it, "death"; "they that practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." James 1:12-15, Gal. 5:21. "Health" for "salvation" is a tepid nauseating expression. The only begotten Son of God gave his life as a ransom for many to save them from sin. This was his mission, the story of which runs as thread through the entire New Testament. Denominationalism encourages sin by refusing to recognize it for what it is and what it does to men's souls. Instead of opposing it, it attempts to galvanize it into respectability.

4. **Facilitated materialism.** A great part of denominationalism has seen Christ's mission and man's need as chiefly material. Such a concept is why fake miraculous healers have such a following. Premillennialism, predominant among the "fundamental denominations," is materialism pure and simple. Because of the materialistic outlook on man's needs and Christ's mission the mission of Christ's church is greatly perverted. Many denominations seem to put the primary emphasis upon the body rather than the soul. Most would deny this, saying, they were only trying to reach the soul through caring for the body. Some Christians seem to have a similar philosophy: That "benevolence is the seed of Christianity rather than the fruit of it."

It would be well for all men who are Christians, who are really trying to follow the Scriptures as the "only infallible rule of faith and practice" to stop and ponder these obvious mistakes of denominationalism. These extremes did not come into the world full-grown. As all other fruit they came by seed. And the seed in the beginning was hardly recognizable. The growing tendency to laugh at the necessity of authorizing faith and practice by the Scriptures is a dangerous thing. Poking fun at "finding the pattern" should give cause for alarm among more serious students. The frequent statement, "let's have less doctrinal preaching and more on Christian living" shows a grave misunderstanding of the "doctrine."

And do we not too have our "pride of life?" Do we not point to "our" colleges, our fine buildings our phenomenal growth? Can it be denied honestly that "pride of life" has played no part in the "brotherhood programs?" It is entirely possible that seeds of denominationalism have already been sown among God's people. If, so, the harvest will be reaped. But remember this: denominationalism is not Christianity no matter how much it resembles it.

SEQUEL TO "THE INDIAN'S BAPTISM"—

(Continued from Page 10)

known that his request was somewhat unorthodox.

But if Jim had been reading the New Testament in the time between his introduction to the "Jesus Way" and his "baptism," he may have read Rom. 6:4, "Therefore we are

buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Do you suppose Jim had seen Col. 2:12? ("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.") I wonder.

Oh yes, this is just a day-dreaming sort of article. I mean Jim Crook no harm, nor any of his kind. I hope he, or some of his Episcopal brethren read this little column, and are sufficiently exercised to give some thought to the difference in New Testament teaching and the "regular" and "traditional" practices of men. Too, members of other religious organizations that "sprinkle" instead of "baptize," religious cousins of the Episcopalians, may give these matters some serious thought.

And I wonder—yes, just one more, please! I wonder what Jim Crook would have done had not Mr. Harris been a former Christian Church preacher, "accustomed to immersion?" Suppose he had been a "traditional" type of preacher, determined to follow only the "regular way" of the Episcopal church?

Would Jim Crook have said, "Hummm! You givum me wrong book!"???

FAITH AND THE FAITH—

(Continued from Page 7)

is of supreme value and a most precious thing! Without it we could do nothing to any profit in the kingdom of God. How fervent we should be in praying with the disciples, "Lord, increase our faith," and how diligent we should be in doing our part to bring about the answer to that prayer! With faith made perfect through obedience we can do all things that are right, achieve all things that are glorious, and "be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"ELAM'S NOTES"—

(Continued from Page 3)

"God answered Samuel and explained that this was a rejection of himself, and not of Samuel—that God should be king over them. (Verse 7.) This was a fearful sin. God was their king. (1 Sam. 12:12.) The government under the judges was God's order. 'He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they asked for a king.' (Acts 13:20, 21.) To reject God's commands (Luke 7:29, 30), or his system of government, is to reject him."

(Note: Be sure to be looking for the second installment of this great article in which Bro. Elam writes under the head: "How God Is Rejected Today." F. E. D.)

We have had the best month in 1956 during July. Attendance and contributions have been their highest, with no sign of a "summer slump." One has been baptized recently and two placed membership with us. When passing through, visit with us.

M. T. Bishop, Box 397,
Haskell, Oklahoma.

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NEWS REPORTS

HARRY E. JOHNSON

Wadena, Minnesota

The meeting in Park Rapids with Bro. Billy McJunkins of Dallas, Texas doing the preaching was a wonderful success. We had more outsiders to attend this meeting than any previous one. Bro. McJunkins brought some very plain and timely gospel lessons. We can highly recommend him to any congregation in need of a meeting. There were three baptisms and one to be restored. The lady who was restored and her husband work here in Wadena.

We are in need of a full time man to work with this group in Park Rapids. Bro. Merrill Condiff has been the main-stay in the work there ever since it started, but he is being transferred next month to Little Falls; that is ninety miles from Park Rapids. The field there is white unto the harvest and we need a man right now. Who will come and what congregation will support him while he builds a self-supporting congregation in that city of over 4,000 people? Brethren who will come? Let us hear from you as soon as possible. Write us for more information about the needs and also the great opportunities that we have in Minnesota.

Brother Harry Pickup, Jr., finished a fine meeting with us last week here in Tucumcari. Four were baptized. I am leaving tomorrow for a meeting in Illinois (Pekin). I held the first meeting there three years ago and the church has made remarkable progress since. I was preaching at the Bunavista congregation in Borger, Texas, at that time. The church has been supporting Brother J. F. Dancer there and reports are that he has done an excellent work.

Dow Wilson, Box 43,
Tucumcari, New Mexico.

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN—

(Continued from Page 8)

From the beginning, God's design for man and woman has been that the behaviour, dress, attitudes be distinctively masculine or feminine. He made the general appearance of man and woman different: the hair, the skin, the form, the voice. One is spoken of as manly and the other as womanly. We accept those natural distinctive features but stylist have sought to make a change in distinctive features as applied to woman's clothing. It is a little smart, for some occasions, for women and girls to appear in that which pertains more to the masculine than to the feminine type of dress. Men do not dare to appear in effeminate dress but Christian women seem to get delight in dress that is patterned more after men's clothing than of women. Observation suggests that such dress is accompanied by an increased boldness unbecoming a Christian woman. Those who seek to "do all to the glory of God" are not agreeable to any attempt to change God's plan for the woman to be modest and womanly and the man to be manly. "Doth not nature itself teach you that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him?"

Our God is an unchanging God. Are Christian women showing forth his excellencies when we show gross disregard for his "abomination" of things and make changes in harmony with worldly customs?

Is a slovenly, careless appearance becoming to one who has the honor to "show forth his excellencies?" A queen must maintain her queenly bearing under all circumstances. That is particularly true of the queen in the Christian home. Her influence for good does not take "time out." Like Tennyson's brook, it goes on forever. For work in the home, ap-

propriateness of dress is as essential as on the street.

Christian women who want to be safe, observe these regulations as to dress:

1. Use modest apparel, not costly. Do not appear half clothed.
2. Use that which pertains to the feminine type.
3. Save the adornment for the inner part.
4. Remember always that she is to show forth the excellencies of him who called her out of darkness.
5. Ask yourself, "Is this in keeping with my high calling in Christ Jesus?"

Why "take thought for your body, what ye shall put on? Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?" "Consider the lilies of the field—Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Next topic: HOSPITALITY IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

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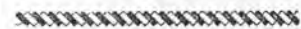
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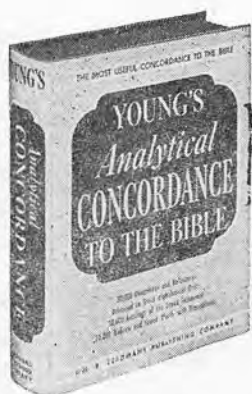
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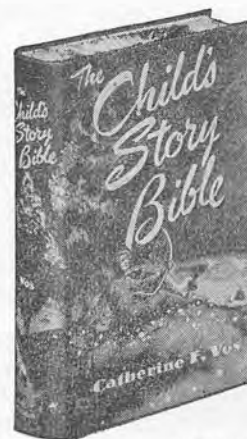
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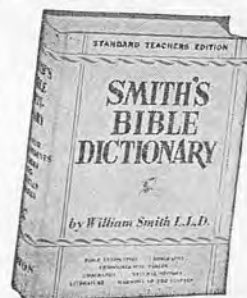
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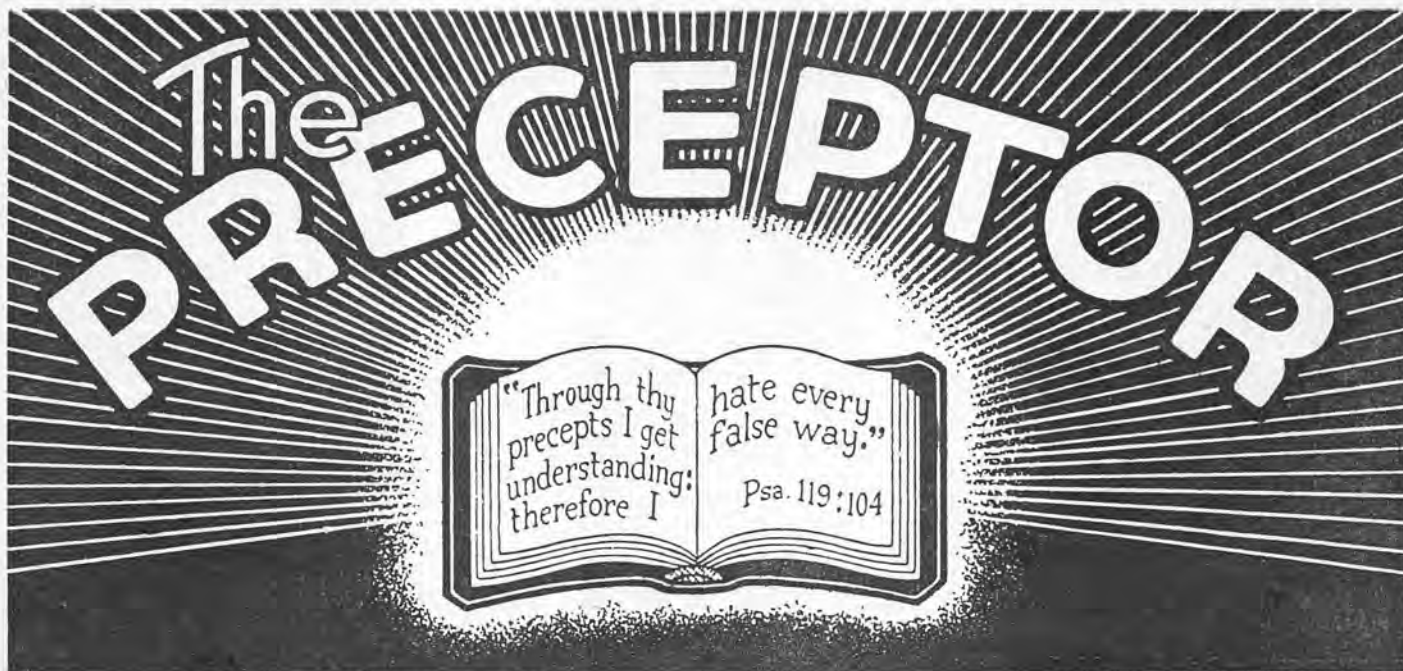
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"I HATE HIM"

GEORGE T. JONES

Kilgore, Texas

"But I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil" (1 Kings 22:18). These are the words of King Ahab of Israel to King Jehoshaphat of Judah. They describe Ahab's feeling for one Micaiah, a prophet of God. Ramoth-gilead had formerly belonged to Israel. The Syrians had taken it from them. Ahab was trying to convince Jehoshaphat to be his ally against Syria in order to repossess Ramoth-gilead. The king of Judah insisted upon inquiring into the will of God. Ahab gathered four hundred prophets who said, "Go up, for the Lord will deliver it into the hand of the king." These were Ahab's hand-picked men. They spoke to please Ahab. When the king of Judah insisted on hearing another, Ahab expressed himself as aforementioned concerning Micaiah. When Micaiah was finally summoned, she said: "As Jehovah liveth, what Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak."

Herein we have a fine illustration of what often happens. People, like Ahab of old, have plans, purposes, schemes and ambitions to fulfill. They seek

the advice of those who will approve their purposes or plans. They may even seek a preacher whom they feel is sure to endorse their procedure. If, however, one determines with Micaiah "what Jehovah saith unto me, that will I speak," the disposition is to be somewhat like Ahab was toward Micaiah. Though Ahab could not deny that Micaiah had spoken to him the word of God, he hated him nevertheless. He hated him so bitterly that he had him imprisoned and fed the bread and water of affliction.

This did not change the word of God, however. Ahab went on his ill-fated expedition, contrary to the word of God spoken by Micaiah. He was slain and his army routed. Never did hating the prophet or the preacher change what God has revealed. Nor does the fact that people despise and belittle what the Lord has said prevent "every transgression and disobedience" from receiving "a just recompense of reward." All of the hatred people may find in their hearts to muster against the preacher and the message of truth he brings will not change one particle of God's word.



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EDITORIAL

The New Man

Although not exclusively moral, the gospel of Christ incorporates within itself true morality. There may be morality without Christianity but there can be no Christianity without morality. All religion is not essentially moral. There was no necessary connection between morality and the idolatry of heathenism. Moral conduct and the practice of religion could be, and quite frequently were, different things. In this present day of mass returns to religion this identical concept apparently continues to obtain among some. No doubt many who consider themselves devotedly religious have very little conception, and less performance, of true morality. Regrettably, this view may be fastening itself on the church of the Lord more markedly than some are willing to admit. Christ, through the gospel, instructs and enforces true morality and spirituality. A re-emphasis, continual and impressive, is sorely needed in this area.

Regardless of by whom spoken, under what circumstances, and for what purposes, a lie is still a lie. Through no logical process can the falsefieri evade the fact that while lying he is in comradeship with the devil who is a liar and the father thereof. God hates a liar and such shall find his part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. Speaking the truth cannot be improved upon.

Nowhere does the Bible propose that anger is a sin within itself. Righteous indignation at real injury or insult is only natural and even right. The

Lord himself was angry but without sin. But even righteous anger must ever be held in check. When anger rules and prompts a child of God to think, say, and do wrong then it is sin.

Even though a new creature in Christ, the Christian is not immune to temptation to dishonesty. As was true of the Decalogue so of the law of Christ, the new man is to steal not. Hence, the constant need to introspect and to guard against dishonesty. Judas was a thief and thieves shall be barred forever from the kingdom of God. The preventative against theft is diligent labor, even manual, in honorable enterprises. Thus not only can he provide for his own needs but he will also have to give to him that hath need.

As surely as the believer moves in a world that lieth in the evil one, he is daily exposed to the corrupt speech, and thus to the evil thoughts, of wicked hearts. It is not strange then, yet still wrong, that some of God's children should adopt the rotten and profane speech of the people of the world. No friend of Christ, then, will allow corrupt speech to proceed from his lips but only that which is good for edifying.

This new man to be put on is noticeable for such excellence of life as will cause joy and not grief to the Holy Spirit. Bitterness, wrath, clamor, railing, and all malice are to be put off and in their place such positive virtues as kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness are to be inculcated.

Moral purity must be possessed by him who has been renewed in the spirit of his mind. In this age of free-love, trial marriage, easy divorce and multiple marriages, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain chastity. But fornication and every species of moral uncleanness must be avoided. Any other course persisted in will rob a man of his inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

It is high time we quit our dallying around with sin and our futile attempts to explain away and justify our connivance with wrong in our own lives and in that of our children. Pray God that we may turn to old fashioned (yet ever new) virtues characteristic of the gospel of Christ ere it is too late for us and those who follow our footsteps!

Next issue **The Preceptor** will carry the first installment of a discussion between Pat Hardeman, Tampa, Fla., and F. W. Wortman, Secularist, Albany, Ga., on the proposition: "Jesus is the Son of God." Brother Hardeman affirms and Mr. Wortman denies. This unique debate has appeared in no paper published by brethren but did appear in **The Progressive World**, a Freethinker publication.

I have just read the **Life and Times of David Lipscomb**, by Earl West. Informative, highly interesting, and well written, no person interested in Restoration history can afford to be without it. The similarity of problems before the church then and now is striking. It gives a broader understanding of the present problems connected with "church co-operation." Order from **The Preceptor** at \$4.00 per copy.

The Consistency of Truth

BRYAN VINSON
Houston, Texas

The wise man of old, Solomon, advised that we "Buy the truth and sell it not." Pro. 23:23. Theoretically and professedly we all are devoted to the truth, and avow an undying allegiance to it. But what is truth? This question was asked the Savior by Pilate as his reaction to the statement of Jesus to the effect that he had come to bear witness to the truth, Jno. 18:37-38. If heaven so seemed truth that Jesus came to bear testimony as to what it is, to establish and identify it, then we should be exceedingly interested in discovering, procuring and cherishing it above all interests. In our efforts to discover it, to the end we might possess it and be prospered in it, we must recognize the fact that it is accessible to us, and has been thus made so by Jesus. Apart from him we are without it; that is, **the truth**, as distinguished from truth generally. Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." The life is dependent on the way which it unfolds, and the way is revealed and prescribed by the truth; hence, neither the way nor the life is free of absolute dependency on the truth. But since the life is singularly defined and the way is definitely identified, we can only pursue the latter and attain the former as we ascertain and hold the truth on which both are dependent. This, then, requires the recognition by us that the truth in Christ is a system of teaching wholly consistent and entirely complete.

All truth is consistent; even truth, unrelated by reason of other identity with different spheres of thought, are never conflicting and contradictory. But all truths which compose any given system of teaching and constitute any theory of thought and action are severely consistent, in a two-fold sense. Not only are they never conflicting, and thus neutralizing, but they are basically consistent in the sense they mutually support each other. Regarding the creative and sustaining work of Christ, Paul tells us all things were made by Him, and by Him all things consist. This is equal to saying they are held together in their proper place, to the end they might properly function, by Jesus. Even so is this true of the truth of the gospel, the word of truth which we are enjoined to handle aright. To rightly divide the word of truth, or handle it aright, certainly requires that we maintain the consistency of its relationship and the force of its significance as a whole, and in its several truths. The remark is often made, and generally accepted at face value, that "I would rather be right than to be consistent." On examination this is a strange and untenable statement. Can one be right and be inconsistent? This statement implies as much. Consistency is peculiar to truth and right; error and wrong can never be found always and inevitably possessing consistency. Error is mutually conflicting and inharmonious, whereas truth is of necessity consistent and harmonious. If this were not true there would be no logical reasoning possible, and the fact that error abounds so prolifically, and frequently admixes itself with truth, serves as the occasion for illogical reasoning to justify, by way of endeavoring to harmonize, such admixtures. The conscious awareness, if not intuitive recognition, of this leads one inevitably in the examination of any position to look for elements of disparity and conflict in it. A position may, then, be in part or even fundamentally correct, and yet in some aspects be false; in which case it cannot be entirely true and correct. The honest thinker will divorce the false from the true, or if the two are inextricable repudiate the position as untenable. In other

words, any position of teaching or practice which rests on a foundation part truth and part error in untrustworthy.

However, in the defense of a given position, there is an evident inclination to think if inconsistency can be established as attaching to those who oppose us, then we are secure in our defense of our position. It does not follow that my position is true simply because those who oppose it may be found to be inconsistent in theirs; we both may be wrong, and his wrong does not establish mine as being right. All that can safely be acknowledged is that he is wrong, when inconsistencies are proven as characterizing his position. All too often, in public discussion, disputants are given to laboring, in the affirmation of their position, to prove the position of their opponent to be wrong. This line of argument properly belongs to the negative. Surely, my position, in proof of its truth, is not made to depend on the failures, deficiencies and inconsistencies of the position of my opponent in such disputations. It is proper, altogether so, to point out these in disproving the contention of the affirmant of a proposition you are denying; it, however, does not prove the truth of my position. If a Baptist proves the Methodist wrong, such wouldn't prove the Baptist position to be right.

If God be the Author of the Bible, then there is necessarily a harmony of the scriptures that renders the whole volume a consistent whole. The consciousness of this has led those who deny it being the Word of God to endeavor to enforce their denial by showing the inconsistency and conflict within the teaching of the Bible. This, of course, they have been unable to do. But taking mistaken views as to the significance of given passages, or predicating their understanding of them on preconceived notions has led to a mishandling of them that involves inconsistencies of a glaring degree. For instance, the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination and Foreordination when joined with an examination of certain scriptures necessarily creates a state of contradiction. It is a fact that God prohibited Adam from eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with the penalty of death affixed thereto. Second, it is a fact that Adam did eat. These two factual statements are in harmony with each other, but when we add the ingredient that God has "freely and unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass," we create an absurdity. We place in conflict the Divine Prohibition with the Divine Decree, and picture God prohibiting that which he had decreed would occur. Such an inevitable caricature of God is enough to make infidels of all who behold and accept it.

Now these two statements from the Word of God are not inconsistent, inasmuch as they present a difference between two wills—God expressing His will in the prohibition, and man expressing his in doing the thing forbidden. But when we inject the eternal decree of God as unchangeably ordaining whatsoever comes to pass, then we create an inconsistency within the expression of the Divine Mind or Will. There is no way to harmonize this alleged decree and this divine prohibition against a thing which did come to pass. The conclusion must be accepted that this doctrine, Calvinistic fatalism, is false since it contradicts the word of God.

Another instance of inconsistency may be cited from the teaching of Paul in Romans four, when subjected to human tampering and misuse. Verses four and five read: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him

(Continued on Page 13)

CHRISTIANITY and CATHOLICISM



SOME CONSEQUENCES AND INCONSISTENCIES OF INFALLIBILITY

CLINTON D. HAMILTON
Tampa, Florida

Papal infallibility is defined by the Vatican Council, 1870, as follows: "We teach and define it to be a dogma divinely revealed that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when acting in his office of pastor and teacher of all Christians, by his supreme Apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, through the divine assistance promised him in Blessed Peter, he enjoys that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed his Church to be endowed in defining doctrines concerning faith and morals; and therefore such definitions of the said Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church." According to this doctrine, Catholics believe that the possibility of error is excluded from the church's teaching in matters of faith and morals (*The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, edited by Canon George Smith, vol. 2, page 711).

An examination of this doctrine with a view to its logical consequences is a fruitful study. For one thing, such a study reveals inconsistencies and consequences which cannot be accepted. The purpose of this article is to show some of these with the hope of making the truth to shine in contrast to error.

The Bible Infallible, But Not an Infallible Guide

Pope Leo VIII affirmed that it is wrong and even forbidden to say that the writers of the Bible erred and that any who so teach either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration or make God the author of error (*Previdentissimus Deus*). Consequently, Roman Catholics believe in the infallible truth of all things recorded in the Holy Scriptures (*The Teaching of the Catholic Church*, vol. 1, page 178).

However, the Catholic Church teaches that the Scriptures cannot be interpreted except by the Spirit of God whom, they tell us, God left to remain with the church to guide her in all truth (Footnote to 2 Pet. 1:20, Douay Version published by P. J. Kenedy and Sons and approved by James Cardinal Gibbons). In the fourth session of the Council of Trent this same idea is advanced. The Bible is infallible but one cannot read it and learn what to do. He must have an infallible interpreter, which to the devout Catholic is the Roman Catholic Church. We must listen to the pope who is the one so endowed to speak for the church. Religious leaders among Catholics must submit to the judgment of the church and not advance their own interpretation.

This view presents a real difficulty which a little thought will make abundantly clear to anyone. How does one know what the pope says the Scripture means? Surely one must interpret the pope's interpretation. If one can interpret an infallible interpretation, why cannot he interpret the infallible

passage itself? If an individual is unworthy to interpret Scripture, what makes him trustworthy to interpret its interpretation? If it is dangerous for one to lean on his own ability to understand the Bible, is it not equally dangerous for him to lean on his own ability to understand what the pope says? What guarantee does one have that a decree of an infallible pope will be understood while the words of the infallible Bible will not be understood?

The Catholic doctrine concerning the need for an infallible interpreter involves those who hold the view in the same difficulty concerning the interpretation of an infallible pope's words. If the arguments have merit when applied to the pope's language. Logically, it is impossible for the Catholic Church to be consistent with what she calls truth in this matter. If she persists in holding her view concerning man's inability to interpret the Scriptures, then she becomes involved in another absurdity: who will interpret the interpretation of the interpretation and on *ad infinitum*? This objection to the Catholic position is weighted with logical truth which cannot be gainsaid.

If one can understand the words of an infallible pope, he can understand the words of an infallible Bible. Consequently, the need for an infallible interpreter, in the sense Catholics teach that the church is, disappears. Either way one looks at the matter, the Catholic position is completely untenable.

The Meaning of 2 Peter 1:20

"Understanding this first, that no prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation. For prophecy came not by the will of man at any time: but the holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost" (Douay Version, 1 Pet. 1:20, 21). This passage is misinterpreted by Catholics and this is seen by the following considerations. The word **prophecy** means a "discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproof and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden; esp. by foretelling future events" (Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, page 552). The word means that which is spoken forth. Nothing ever was spoken for God except God gave the thing to be spoken. The things written in the Scriptures did not come into being from a man's own mind because prophecy did not come by the will of man but by the will of God and inspired by the Spirit. This passage does not deal with the meaning of the prophecies of Scriptures but with their origin. The word **ginetai** which is translated made in the Douay Version is used in Acts 20:3 and there is translated **purposed**. The same root word is used in 1 Timothy 5:9 and is translated **being**. It is translated **become** in Luke 20:14 and Revelation 11:15. The idea is being or existence.

The word **interpretation** is translated from *epiluseos*. This word means a loosening, unloosing and in its metaphorical sense means interpretation. This word in turn is from *epiluo* which means to unloose, untie and to explain what is obscure and hard to understand (Thayer, *op. cit.*, page 240). The idea then is that no prophecy of Scripture ever was unloosed into being by the will of man but it was unloosed by the will of God.

God made it know to men by the Holy Spirit for the men who spake were moved by the Spirit. The word inspired in the Douay Version of 2 Peter 1:21 is from the word *pheromenoi*. This word means "to move by bearing . . . of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted" (Thayer, *op. cit.*, page

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Studies in the New Testament

GEORGE P. ESTES

JAMES CHAPTER V.

James is now speaking instead of and in place of the "prophets who spake in the name of the Lord" (vs. 10) and by His authority. They spoke to the people for God. David calls himself "thy servant" many times. (Ps. 19:11; 27:9; 31:16 and others). Israel is God's servant in Isaiah 41:2; Jacob likewise (Isa. 44:1); and the Messiah (Isa. 52); and the prophets, "Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveals his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7). "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his son." (Heb. 1:1, 2). James is a "servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." (Jas. 1:1). The New Testament writers superseded the Prophets of the Old Testament. The basic conception is being at the complete disposal of God in speaking His word to man.

In James 5:1-12 the last judgment is a decisive reality; word and deed of a Christian is destined to appear at the judgment. The reckoning of God is tied in with the conduct of believers. God is in control and will bring about His purposes, hence everything moves toward the ultimate consummation. The New Dispensation, the christian era has broken into this world of sin and the last judgment culminates this. There is an intense expectation of the consummation of the "last days" (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:2). Christians are the people of the Dispersion (Jas. 1:1), a segregated people waiting for the ultimate consummation. The whole idea is that the people of God are sojourners. "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:20). The faithful courageously wait His coming; there is a straining toward this "stretching forward toward the things which are before" and "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13, 14). A christian lives in the hope of his deliverance at the coming of Christ. This is the basis of his bearing up under trials.

The rich (5:1) and the poor as well as the oppressed and the persecuted and all that is written about them in chapter 5 must be considered in the light of the last day, the day of the Lord, vv. 3-6. The rich have unused wealth or wealth cruelly begotten by oppression. The rich brethren are luxuriating in material things and in the assertion of self. There is complete disregard by them concerning the last day. A rich man has a great temptation in his wealth and often this is his stumbling block.

In Acts there are the rich or those who possessed much property. But the emphasis is on the fact that they do not have greatness by the things of this world. Something has happened to cast this into the background, into a shadow. There is no standard of a rich man according to possession of property. In Christ, he ceases to be rich in this sense. Jesus spoke of a certain rich man who became richer but in his prosperity he did not consider the condition of his soul neither did he attribute to God the source of his abundance. Jesus calls him a "foolish one." Lk. 12:20.

The rich brother must exalt "in that he is made low." (Jas. 1:10). The size of his life is not measured by riches but by the fact that he is born again by the word of truth (Jas. 1:18). This is set in contrast to his wealth. Riches are

no longer the center and aim of his life for there is no permanence in riches and wealth. He may continue in an honorable profession or work but as a christian he must recognize the fact that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from above." (Jas. 1:17); that God is the real owner of all things and that for a time he is placed in ownership over material things. But as a good and wise steward he must dispense with and use his possessions for his Lord and in remembrance of and in thanks for all the blessings he has received in Christ. He possesses something greater than riches. There is no permanence in wealth, for "we brought nothing into this world neither can we carry anything out." (1 Tim. 6:7).

For these reasons James attacks the rich. "Weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted; and their rust shall be a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh as fire. Ye have laid up your treasure in the last days. Behold, the hire of the labors who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out; and the cries of them that reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived delicately upon the earth, and taken your pleasure; ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter." (Jas. 5:1-5). What is said here ties up with faith without works (Jas. 1:9, 10, rich brethren). Description of the rich man is into nothingness. There is no exaltation in man, no merit. God is the giver, man is lacking. What man has received in Jesus, blessings acquired in obedience to the gospel should have changed his life. Sin is analytically described by James, that is, man cannot sin without sinning against God. So the denunciation of the rich man is concentrated fire and fury.

"The Lord of Sabaoth" is the Old Testament "Lord of hosts" and means that God is in reality in control of all things; that He will bring all things to an inevitable conclusion regardless of the activities and works of man. The apparent success and prosperity of the rich coupled with his fraud and deceit might be a foil to the patient waiting brother. So James describes the final outcome of men who so live.

"Fattening the heart for the day of slaughter" is the judgment imminently spoken of here. "But thou O Jehovah, knowest me; thou seest me, and tryest my heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter." (Jer. 12:3) . cp. Jer. 25:34; 46:20-1.

vv. 7-11. The brethren are therefore told to be patient until the coming of the Lord. The husband man does not harvest the crop at the time of planting; he must wait till the harvest time. Thus, patience must be exercised until the day of reckoning. "The early and latter rain" could only be a reference to Palestine-not Egypt. This statement along with several others prove the epistle of James was written in the first century in Palestine. It is not, cannot be a second century document written in another land, or country .

The Old Testament prophets, Job and the Lord are given as examples of patience during trials. Patience is the inner stamina to bear up under trials and even an onslaught while following God's will; also the strength to resist temptation and evil. Hope is connected with it, "And let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith." (Heb. 12:1, 2). Out

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Precepts and Principles

BONDS STOCKS

The World's Priceless Treasure

(4)

Preceding articles have called attention to the fact that the Bible is the world's great treasure:

- I. Because it is God's message to us.
- II. Because of its antiquity.
- III. Because of its indestructibility.
- IV. Because it cannot be imprisoned.
- V. Because of its timeliness and its timelessness.

Continuing our study let us think some more about the timeliness and timelessness of the Bible.

We live in the atomic age, but the atomic age man has the same basic needs that characterized the people who lived during the Patriarchal, Jewish and early Christian eras.

What is man's basic need today? He needs to be saved from sin. Why do preachers always approach any subject from the standpoint of sin? Because that is where man is. He lives in a world of sin, and his heart must constantly battle to overcome temptations to sin. The Bible is our sword in the battle against sin. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalm 119:11). Where will we find cleansing from sin? "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psalm 119:9).

Science can make our lives more comfortable, but we can not hide science in our hearts as a protection against sin. Philosophy, psychology, psychiatry can challenge our attention and make some contribution to our thinking, but they can not cleanse us from sin.

When you find a man who does not have to deal with the problem of sin then preachers will stop talking so much about sin.

Man needs enlightenment to illuminate the pathway of life. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). The Psalmist also said, "The entrance of thy words giveth light (Psalm 119:130).

Man needs security, deliverance, liberty, comfort, hope. The Bible is perfectly adapted to these needs, as we shall see later in these studies.

Those who plead for a new gospel more compatible with the spirit of the times not only fail to appreciate the truth that the gospel is God's final, perfect and adequate message to man, but they also, whether they realize it or not, seek to popularize religion by compromising it with a perverted gospel that will indulge the whims, fancies and lusts of finite and sinful men.

We must minister to the needs of our times. It is our privilege to love and serve the people of our times, but God forbid that we should sell them down the river of materialism and sensuous pleasure by doctoring, twisting and perverting the word of God to give it a greater appeal to those who are bent on having their own way regardless of what the will of God is!

Let us preach the truth in love and seek to woo men to the love of truth. Let us preach the old Jerusalem gospel whether people accept it or reject it, whether they applaud it or ridicule it. It has stood the test of time. It will live and move and convert long after its sensuous and sophisticated critics are "dead and buried and in their graves!"

THE BIBLE REVEALS MAN AS HE IS

VI. The Bible is God's invaluable gift to the world because it gives an exact and true picture of the human race and of every man in it. In the first chapter of James the word of God is represented as a mirror into which men may look, see themselves as they are, and proceed to correct whatever needs alteration.

Would you like to see an exact picture of the human race as it is until redeemed by Christ? If so, read the first chapter of Romans. Would you like to see an exact and true picture of yourself. If so, look into the gospel mirror by reading the Bible.

Perhaps there are those who are ready to ask why the fact that the Bible gives us an exact picture of humanity makes it such a priceless book. Well, if there were but one mirror or looking glass in all the world, how valuable do you suppose it would be? Or suppose there were a shortage of mirrors, how mad do you think the scramble would be to obtain them?

The Bible is the only mirror in all the world into which you may look and see yourself as you really are. It is the only book that can point out the blemishes and, at the same time, give directions for their eradication.

Do you doubt that the Bible gives an exact picture of the human race?

A missionary in China was talking with an intelligent Chinese about the Bible. One point he made was that the Bible was a very old book. The man read the Bible, and came to the first chapter of Romans, which gives such an accurate description of the human race. After reading it he came to the missionary and, with accusation and triumph reflected in his voice, exclaimed: "You told me that your Book was very ancient; but that chapter"—pointing to the first chapter of Romans—"You have written yourself since you came here and learned all about the Chinese!"

If you want to know anything about this being called man, read the Bible. Men speculate about man, his origin, his nature, his destiny. God knows. He made man, he knows what is in him and what he has in store for him. He tells all about this in the Bible. He tells the good and the bad, and tells how to accentuate the good and eradicate the bad.

THE BIBLE HAS BUILT THE WORLD'S GREATEST CIVILIZATION

VII. The Bible is God's priceless gift to the human race because it has built the world's greatest civilization. Even people who are skeptical of the Bible and of Christianity have been obliged to acknowledge the Bible's effect on civilization. H. G. Wells, who was not a believer in the Bible but who was critical of it, wrote: "The Bible has lost hold, but nothing has risen to take its place. That is the gravest aspect of the matter. It was the cement with which our western communities were built and by which they were held together."

President Grant said: "To the influence of this Book are we indebted for all the progress made in our civilization,

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"Prove All Things"

OSCAR ELLISON
Springfield, Missouri

The caption of this article, along with other practical admonitions to Christians, is found in the fifth chapter of first Thessalonians. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. We are therefore, made to believe that it is of practical value to all who would live as the Lord directs.

The word prove is explained by its use in other passages. In telling of the excuses offered by those who were invited to the feast Jesus tells us that one said: "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them." Luke 14:19. To the Corinthians, in teaching them the duty of giving, Paul wrote: "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love." 2 Cor. 8:8. And, concerning the qualification of Deacons, he wrote: "And let these also first be proved." 1 Tim. 3:10. This may also be done in regard to the value of a right life. To the Romans Paul wrote: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom. 12:2.

To prove, therefore, is to test, to try, to examine the merits of. And, this we need to do with our religious practice. No practices should be continued without such examination, regardless of how long it has been done and how universally it has been accepted. "Prove all things."

We want the food we eat to be subjected to proper tests. And, we require that the water we drink be tested for impurities that might destroy our physical bodies. In all areas of living we require these tests. Why not also in the realm of religion. Those things have only to do with our physical well-being. They are temporal. The things we believe and practice in religion are spiritual. They have eternal consequences. Surely we should be anxious to prove them.

THE STANDARD TO USE

Men use many and varied standards by which they determine the value of their religious practices. "The teaching of the church" of which one is a member is often the one determining factor in religious practice. This seems to be a growing tendency among those who are members of the church of Christ. If the church does it it must be alright. This is the attitude with which we are frequently confronted. It has been done for fifty years and none has objected to it. Such statements are often seen. But, the church is not a criterion of right. Actually, such is pure Romanism. Are we, after all these years, to fall into such a trap of Satan as this?

Others practice the religion of their parents. They have never stopped to consider whether or not the practice is right in God's sight. We honor our parents. Their memory is dear to us. As a result, sentiment is strong in connection with their religious faith. But, parents are not a criterion of right. They could be honestly wrong.

A third group listens to the preacher. Whatever he says, they believe and do. It is a busy world in which we live. Few make any time for study. So, they simply accept what is told them. Churches of Christ have not escaped. Time was when we were known as a Bible reading people. We were recognized widely for our knowledge of the Bible. Sadly enough, little of this remains. The preacher is not a criterion of right. He is human and often errs.

God's standard of right is the Bible. Every test of religious practice must be made by what it says. A few passages from many will fully establish this truth. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. "The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting." Ps. 119:144. "Thy word is true from the beginning." Ps. 119:160. "All thy commandments are righteousness." Ps. 119:172. "Thy word is truth." John 17:17. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12:48. Paul admonished Timothy: "Preach the word." The Bereans of old were counted more noble because they "Searched the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

Our only safety in religious practice is a return to this standard of right. Search it, believe it, practice it and it alone. Nothing else is either safe or right. No other course will please God and bring his blessing upon us. **THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY STANDARD OF RIGHT IN RELIGION.**

HOW THE BIBLE TEACHES US

The word of God teaches us what is right in three ways, namely: direct statement or command, approved example, and necessary inference. These methods of setting forth the will of God present to us what God would have us accept and practice.

1. Direct statement or command.

This is the most common method of Bible teaching. Jesus said to the disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16. Peter said to those on Pentecost: "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." Acts 2:38. A direct statement is made and command given.

2. Approved example.

This method of teaching is also frequently used. When a thing is done with the approval of inspired men it is an approved example. It must be attended by those circumstances that show it is approved. It must not be merely an incidental or local arrangement for carrying out God's will. An example is found in Acts 20. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow: and continued his speech until midnight." They met to observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Paul, an inspired man was there and participated with them in the observance.

3. Necessary inference.

An example of necessary inference is found in the latter part of Acts Chapter 8. When Philip Baptized the Eunuch we are simply told that as they went on their way they came unto a certain water. We do not know if it was a stream, or pond, or just how much water was there. But, we do know there was enough to perform the act of baptism. That is necessary in order to the performance of what the writer says was done. Hence, a necessary inference. But, be sure it is not just an inference. It may well be an inference without being a necessary one. We might infer that these men came to a fresh water stream. However, nothing in the story makes this necessary. Baptism is a burial or immersion. Therefore, there must be sufficient water to perform that act. Nothing else is necessary.

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Thinking With Parents And Teachers

"Train up a child in the way he should go." (Prov. 22:6a)

IRENE SOWELL FOY

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN—V

Hospitality

Having made man, God knew it was not best for him to travel the way of life alone. "Jehovah God said, it is not good that man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him." Further he said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth." Thus we see group living as designed by God in the beginning. From that observation we see that God made man a social being.

God's patterns always being perfect, He designed that man repeat that pattern in each generation. As boys grow to manhood, they feel that it is not good to be alone so each begins to seek a "help meet for him."

Abraham saw fit to work in harmony with God's plan to take a wife for his son Isaac. When Abraham's servant arrived at the home to which he had been sent, he was shown hospitality. "They did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him and tarried all night." Rebecca's parents had a responsibility to their daughter. They did not send the stranger away to provide ways of seeing Rebecca elsewhere, nor did they shift the responsibility to others to "entertain the young people." There was room and a warm welcome for the servant who represented his master in search of a wife.

Whose responsibility is it today to work in harmony with God's plan for boys and girls to form the right associations that may lead to establishing new homes, Christian homes? "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." When boys and girls approach marriageable ages, how do fathers sometimes "provoke" them? It may be done by a failure to recognize the mating drive within one's boy or girl. When a son suggests he would like to go out with his girl, or a daughter asks permission to be with her boy friend for the evening, a failure to cooperate on the part of the parent will not kill the desire of the young people for such an association. Such a procedure repeated again and again may tend to "provoke" your children to wrath and lead them to behaviour unbecoming of Christians.

Whose responsibility is it to see that boys and girls have wholesome and happy associations so they may learn each other better, then be able to choose wisely a life's companion? God teaches that Christians be "given to hospitality," entertainment of guests. The Christian home exists, in the main, for children and their development. The children's friends should find a warm welcome and provision for them.

The training, guidance and development of children are responsibilities that belong to parents in the Christian home. Just as surely as the parents make proper provision for the physical care and development of their children, so God holds them responsible for the development and direction of the innate social drives of their boys and girls. After about thirty years of having been "subject to his parents,"

Jesus emerged, having "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." From a babe, Timothy had the training and guidance of a Godly mother and grandmother.

God sets out purposes other than marriage as for the goal for developing children socially. Christ, as the head of the church, wants harmony and unity among the members of his body. "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:20, 21.) "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen." (John 4:20.) Thus God plans for unity, togetherness of his people. This is best taught by practice in the home by members of the family taking responsibilities together.

When does one learn to tolerate, to get along with, to love his neighbor as himself? Since God places the child in group living at the first and plans that he eventually adjust to group living on a universal scale, a social guidance and direction should begin and continue in the home throughout the training period.

These signs of a social drive may be seen early in the child's life:

1. A tendency to want to be with others. At three years of age a child likes to play beside, not with, others. At four or five, they begin to build a block house together. The wise Christian parents study the stages of development of their child and guide his social development where he is. Invite children of his own age to come play, provide a place suited to their needs and their development. As they grow socially, the parents must recognize that growth, always preparing to meet present needs satisfactorily. No one can better determine the present needs of his own child than the parents themselves. There is no safer place for the development of the child's adjustment to his fellows than under the roof of a Christian home and in the hospitality extended by the parents in that home.

2. Sympathy for others is another sign of the child's social growth. Jesus gives us the goal toward which parents must direct their children in this respect. He felt so deeply sympathetic toward his friends in the death of their brother that it is said, "Jesus wept." To Christians, Paul said, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them." How can one guide his child to the point where he feels sympathy for another in his sorrow or joy with him in his happiness? Open your doors of hospitality to those in sorrow; permit the child to take some responsibility in helping one to assuage his grief. Bring an orphan into your home for a visit with your child. Experience will prove a good teacher in developing sympathy for others.

3. Efforts to please others will also show the child's social status. Christian parents have the responsibility of directing the child toward the right goal in pleasing others.

The voice of wisdom tells us that the whole of man is to fear God and keep his commandments. That is the highest goal in "pleasing others." How did Jesus keep his Father's commandments? He was social. He was always with people, serving them by helping them on to better living, not for any benefit to accrue to himself. He most unselfishly

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What the Relationship?

C. R. NICHOL

The term "church" is used in the New Testament to designate Christians in one community, or city. It is also used to include all Christians in a state, several provinces that may be designated. It is also used to include all Christians without any geographical boundaries named—all Christians on the earth.

1. The Christians in one city. (Acts 8:1.)

2. "The church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace." (Acts 9:31.)

3. "I will build my church." (Mt. 16:18.) "He is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.)

The treasurer of Queen Candace, was riding along the road in his chariot, reading from the Book of Isaiah. He was reading aloud, and Philip, one of the Lord's preachers, hearing him, inquired: "Understandest thou what thou readest and he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: his generation who shall declare? For his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from the same scripture, preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water; both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." (Acts 8:30-38.)

You will take notice of the fact that the treasurer was baptized. The scriptures declare that believers are "baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12:13.) The one body is the church—Christ "is the head of the body, the church." (Eph. 1:18.)

Though the eunuch was baptized into the "one body," which is "the church," he was not a member of the local congregation in Jerusalem nor in Corinth, for neither of the places knew of his baptism at the time of his baptism! He was not a member of either of the congregations named; but having been baptized into the "one body, the church," he was, of course a member of the church of Christ. May I use the term "universal," and say he was a member of the "Universal" church of Christ? By this I mean the church in the aggregate, as distinguished from the local congregations, and was all Christians in the church of Christ without regard to geographical limitations.

It must be learned from the foregoing that one can be in the church of Christ, without being a member of a local congregation. (I will not discuss "local congregation" in this connection.)

The promised Kingdom mentioned in Dan. 2:44, has been established, and of it Jehovah said: "It shall not be destroyed." The church Christ promised to build, has been built, and the gates of hell 'shall not prevail against it." (Mt. 16:18, 19.) The church existed in the days of the apostles, as did the kingdom. (Acts 8:1; Col. 1:13.) The church that Christ built and the kingdom promised in Dan. 2:44 are co-extensive, as a church the ones "called out" by the gospel, and obedient there to, are the church, and in becoming mem-

bers of the church, they at the same time were born again, and became citizens of the kingdom, as related to the world, Christians are "called out" of the world, morally and spiritually, as relates to the government of God, they are citizens in the kingdom.

The congregation in "A" is engaged in a series of meetings, which resulted in five additions; at the same time the local congregation in "B" is engaged in a meeting in which five were baptized. Neither of the congregations knew the other was engaged in a meeting. Presuming each congregation preached the gospel; were they not cooperating in the work of the Lord? Though each congregation was increased by five new members, is it not true that the church in the "universal" use of the term, was increased by ten new members?

Some time ago, a congregation divided. Each claimed the property. There was a suit in the courts of the land over the ownership of the property. I was a witness in the court. Each side had an attorney. One of the lawyers said to me, "Mr. Nichol, I understand the teaching of the churches of Christ on the matter of the autonomy of each local congregation; but I ask you: What relationship is there between the congregation of the church of Christ in Coleman, Texas, and the congregation in this town?" The question was pointed. Brother, what should my answer have been? What would you have answered, had you been the "witness," on the stand being questioned by the attorney. Will you please do me the kindness to write me a personal letter, telling me the relationship between the two congregations, presuming, of course, that each congregation was faithful in serving the Lord?

I thank each one in advance who writes me. I am anxious to hear from you—preachers, as well as others.

James D. Hester, 453 S. 6th Ave., Pocatello, Idaho: I began work with the Pocatello congregation in April. This is considered a hard field in which to labor, with the greater population Mormon. Much teaching is needed here in every way. I appreciate the attitude of the brethren as a whole and looking forward to growth, both spiritual and numerical. I would like to hear from those having friends or relation here, who would be interested in being taught the truth.

In response to a recent request, a bound copy of **The Preceptor**, Volume 3-4, was sent without cost to a worthy preacher in a foreign country. Anyone desiring to pay for this man's copy may send \$7.50 to us.

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"What Is It to Preach in Love"

FRANK PERIGO

Dallas, Texas

I have often heard the expression used about different preachers, that they preach in love, or that they do not preach with love. Which prompts me to ask this question: "What is it to preach in love?" The first thought that comes to my mind is, that to be a true gospel preacher one must preach the same gospel which Paul and the other apostolic preachers preached. To do otherwise is to provoke the anathema of God upon one. (Gal. 1:8, 9).

I am afraid that when the expression is used today, that a man preaches with great "Love," in most cases, if you will check further, you will find him to be a pleaser of men rather than God. We have many such men among us today, who love the praise of men more than they love God. They could well be called "General Practitioners." As the old saying goes, "They hit everything in general and nothing in particular." They have a gift of oratory to make one and all feel as though they were saints without spot or blemish, and the preaching is to the other fellow. Paul called them teachers for itching ears. (2 Tim. 4:3).

Your writer is well aware of the fact that a man can, and that many do, abuse the use of the pulpit by dealing in personalities. If a man is to preach as they did in the apostolic days, and all should so preach, I am of the mind he must fight an all out war against sin. By this I mean pin point besetting sins in our midst today, and fight them with the pure gospel of Christ, not personal abuses.

Paul told Timothy to preach the word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching. (2 Tim. 4:2). I am sure that Paul both preached and taught others to preach with full Christian love. Yet Paul called some Christians at Galatia "Fools," because they were allowing men to lead them away from Christ with a perverted gospel. Yes Paul loved the brethren at Galatia, loved them so much he did not want to see them

led astray by the evil one, and be lost in hell.

To love a man as a Christian is to love his soul. Fear for the destiny of his soul. Therefore a true gospel preacher will from love, point out sin in the lives of his brethren, that they may become penitent of their sins and grow strong in the Lord. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may also fear." (1 Tim. 5:20). The Lord ask Peter three times if Peter loved him. Peter answered the Lord each time that he did love the Lord. After this answer, the Lord told Peter to feed his sheep. (Jno. 21:15-17). So to preach in love is to break the bread of life to the Lord's church in a way that it will be built up in the most holy faith. This cannot be done with mealy mouthed, soft soaping tactics to please apostate members of the church.

NEWS REPORTS

John Bullock, Box 726, Farmersville, Texas, Aug. 21: I began work with this congregation last Sunday. We enjoyed a very good work with the South Washington congregation in Marshall, Texas, and we anticipate a good work here in Farmersville. This congregation has a program over KGVJ at Greenville. Please note change of address above, or address my mail to the Hill Street congregation.

English speaking services of the Church of Christ are held at 11 a. m. each Lord's Day in the home of Les and Jeanette Page, Viale del Tirreno, 106 Tirrenia, Italy.

Tirrenia is located near Camp Darby on the coastal highway between Livorno (Leghorn) and Pisa. At present two families meet regularly, with Houston and Anita Goodspeed, of Dallas, Texas, meeting with the Pages.

Preliminary arrangements have been made for use of the Post Chapel at Camp Darby when the number grows out of the present meeting place.

Information concerning members of the church in the Livorno-Pisa area, or prospective members, will be aggressively pursued. Direct all correspondence to Captain Leslie K. Page, 0972813, Headquarters, SETAF Support Command, APO 19, New York, N. Y.

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SOME CONSEQUENCES—

(Continued From Page 4)

650). Thus the men who spoke were borne or carried along by the Holy Spirit. They said what the Holy Spirit intended. The Scriptures accordingly could not be the product of men but were unloosed by or originated with God. When one says that this passage deals with the meaning of Scripture and tries to tell us that an individual cannot understand what he reads in the Bible except the Holy Spirit guide him, he has missed the entire point of the passage. The origin of the prophecies of Scripture is the point under view and not their meaning.

In summary, the passage says that no discourse declaring the purposes of God was uttered by one's own unloosing but rather was unloosed to man by the will of God. This unloosing occurred when men were borne by the Holy Spirit to accomplish His purpose.

It is therefore a misuse of the passage to say that it refers to a man's ability to understand what God has revealed. In fact, this interpretation of the passage reflects on the wisdom of God for God had the Holy Spirit to move men to write that those who read might understand God's purposes and plans (Eph. 3:3-6).

Not Infallible Incidentally

The Catholic doctrine of the infallibility of the pope states that the pope is not infallible when he touches on a point incidentally. The doctrine of infallibility covers only those subjects under immediate pronouncement. For instance, Nicholas I (858-867) taught that a person could be baptized in the name of Jesus only or in the name of the Trinity when he was answering the question of who could administer valid baptism. Catholics do not now believe that one can be baptized either in the name of Jesus or in the name of the Trinity, for he was not infallible in this utterance. It was not the immediate point under discussion! This is most unlike the infallibility of the apostles. All their words given by inspiration are inerrant. If they were not, we would have a most uncertain revelation. One can visualize the utter confusion in religion if this were the case with the writings of the inspired men.

This doctrine of infallibility had to be circumscribed with so many rules in order to try to extricate the Catholic Church from past inconsistencies that the rules show the absurdity of the doctrine they are supposed to enforce.

If Right Then Wrong

If the Vatican Council were right in pronouncing the pope infallible on the ground of tradition and Scripture and that all such infallible decrees must be based either on tradition or Scripture, then the Catholic Church finds herself fallible in the case of the dogma of the assumption of Mary into heaven. This dogma is probably the first clear-cut use of the doctrine of infallibility since its promulgation in 1870.

It is admitted by the best Catholic Scholarship that the assumption of Mary is not in early tradition and certainly not in the Scriptures. In fact it was not heard of until the fifth or sixth century. Yet the pope declared in 1950 that Scripture teaches she was assumed body and soul into heaven without her body having seen corruption. This is in the face of Paul's infallible declaration: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God: neither shall corruption possess incorruption" (Douay Version, 1 Cor. 15:50). If the dogma of infallibility is right on the basis of tradition and Scripture, then the dogma of the assumption is wrong for it is in neither. I say, if the Catholics

are right on the one hand, they are wrong on the other. The doctrines are not compatible.

Writing Scriptures

Peter refers to the epistles of Paul "wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16). There were some things in Paul's writings difficult to comprehend. They are not impossible of understanding! However, some twist, torture or pervert them for so is the meaning of wrest. One twists or tortures a passage when he turns it to a false sense. It is a sense the writer did not intend. When the language is twisted or perverted to say something the writer did not intend, the passage has been wrest.

Peter mentioned two characteristics of people which might cause a wresting of scripture. The ignorant person is one untaught. It is the negative of a word which means to learn, to increase knowledge, to be apprised. The person who has not apprised himself of the truths of the Bible is ignorant or unlearned when it comes to the interpretation of scripture. His knowledge must be such that he will refrain from interpretations that would twist or pervert a given passage to a false sense. Ignorance of God's words will lead to distorted interpretations of given passages.

The word *unstedfast* is the negative of a word which means to render consent, strengthen, make firm, confirm, one's mind. A person who is thus unstable may twist a passage to suit his own whims. He has no accepted standards or rules by which he learns the meanings of statements. The person whose mind is constant or stable can by applying the laws of interpretation learn the correct meaning of any given statement and give it the sense intended by the author.

Some scriptures may be hard to understand but they are not impossible to be understood. One may need to study to erase some ignorance in order to understand or he may have to become stable. But one thing is certain: with proper application and a desire to know the truth, he can understand for the Word was written to give us an understanding (Eph. 3:4-6).

Yes or No—The Case of Peter

Peter wrote to bring to remembrance certain truths that the brethren might call them to mind after his departure (2 Pet. 1:12-15). The Catholic Church affirms that he was the first pope. If the popes are official interpreters of scripture and Peter was a pope, why cannot we understand Peter's writings? If we have to listen to popes' language to learn the real meaning of scripture, why cannot we understand scripture. But if we can understand Peter's writings, then we can understand scripture. But if we can understand some scripture, why are we not also competent to understand other scripture? But if we cannot understand scripture written by Peter, then does it not follow that we cannot understand the language of any pope? Whatever renders one incompetent to understand the language of one pope, Peter, would also render one incompetent to understand the language of any pope. Verily, the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope and what it is supposed to give to the pope is a doctrine with terrible inconsistencies and consequences. Who can accept it?

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THE TRUTH

(Continued From Page 6)

and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

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ness and freshness.

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There are many who have no appreciation at all of it.

"Several years ago an old man living in New Jersey discovered about \$5,000 in a family Bible. The bank notes were scattered throughout the Book. In 1874 the aunt of this man had died, and one clause of her will was as follows:

"To my beloved nephew, Steven Marsh, I will and bequeath my family Bible, and all it contains, with the residue of my estate after my funeral expenses and just and lawful debts are paid.

"The estate amounted to a few hundred dollars, which were soon spent, and for about 35 years his chief support had been a small pension from the Government. He lived in poverty, and all the time within his reach there was the precious Bible containing thousands of dollars, sufficient for all his wants. He passed the Bible by. His eyes rested on it, perhaps his hands handled the old leather-bound Bible, with its brass clasps, but he did not open it once. At last, while packing his trunk, to move to his son, where he intended to spend his few remaining years, he discovered the unknown riches were in his possession. What thoughts of regret must have come to his mind. It he only had opened that Bible years ago, he then might have used the money to great advantage. Instead of being enjoyed it all that time.

"This is a sad story. But there is something infinitely sadder than the experience of this man. It is the neglect of the Bible by God's people. Our God has given to this people a costly treasure in His own Word. In this Book of books the riches of the wisdom and knowledge, the love and grace of God are made known. All the child of God needs spiritually is to be found on its pages; all wants are there supplied. And yet these riches, put at our disposal by a loving Father, are unknown and unused riches. Instead of being enjoyed, used, and in using then multiplied, they are neglected.

"Many of God's people are dragging along in a spiritually impoverished state, when they might have all their need supplied and constantly increase in the knowledge of God. Occasionally, we receive letters from aged Christians, including preachers. They tell us that they deplore the fact that they did not know certain truths thirty or forty years ago. 'How different my Christian life and experience as well as my service might have been,' is what an old Christian wrote to us recently. And all this time these riches were in the Bible, they might have enjoyed them. Oh, the neglected Bible! May we arise and possess our possession."

How foolish men are when they impoverish themselves by failing to avail themselves of the spiritual riches for which the Bible serves as a storehouse.

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This lamp, thro' all the tedious night of life, shall guide my
way,
Till I behold the clearer light of an eternal day.

Holy Book divine! Precious treasure mine!
Lamp to my feet and a light to my way to guide me safely
home.

THE CONSISTENCY OF TRUTH—

(Continued From Page 3)

that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The failure to identify the nature and kind of work herein mentioned, and placed in contrast with the grace that justifies, has involved many in inconsistencies from which they can never extricate themselves. In the opposition to the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, denominationalists have classed baptism as a work such as is here under consideration by the apostle. In so doing they condemn both Paul and themselves. This they do in view of the fact that Paul was baptized, and they, too, practice baptism—or what some of them are merely pleased to call baptism. In so doing they, therefore, nullify salvation by grace and predicate their justification on the ground of debt. They charge this consequence against those who teach baptism for the remission of sins, and who disclaim that baptism is a work in the connotation of Paul's statement in these verses. They, however, in placing baptism in this category, while at the same time practicing baptism, involve themselves in a contradictory position. Verily, they who thus work, according to Paul's language, are justified—if at all—as counted to thus be by virtue of debt or an obligation by God, as meritoriously procured by the one who works. This obviates the element of favor or grace as the basis for justification. Consistency requires they not be baptized for any cause or reason whatsoever, if it be a work as they here identify it. Their present position and practice cannot be harmonized.

These and many other instances which could appropriately be cited but illustrate the fact that inconsistencies only exist in the Christian system of teaching when there is the intrusion of human wisdom and dogma, and the latter persisted in by the wresting of God's word to conform thereto.

May we strive to never be guilty of bending God's Word to our thoughts and will, but rather form our thoughts by the Word and therefore conform our Will to His. The con-

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sistency and harmony of Divine truth constitutes the strongest evidence of its truthfulness, and we should not weaken or destroy this evidence by our perversions of the Word of God. The only area in which we need to constantly strive to improve the character of consistency is not that within the teaching of the scriptures, but that of a more acceptable and worthy correspondence between what God instructs us on the one hand, and our fruitful performance and practice on the other.

PROVE ALL THINGS—

(Continued From Page 7)

ALL ELSE IS FORBIDDEN

Time after time God tells us to do those things that are told us in His word. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deut. 4:2. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." 2 John 9. We are exhorted to contend earnestly for "THE FAITH" which was once delivered to the saints. We are not only to do what God says. We are to do only what God says. His plans and arrangements are complete and will accomplish all he wants done.

This has been the pitfall into which man has fallen over and over. We have our own schemes. They seem good to us. We think we see how much they can do for his cause. To us they appear harmless. So, we launch out. But such things always bring us to ruin and the cause that we love into apostasy. He is a poor student of history who does not know this is true. We have forgotten that "We walk by faith, not by sight."

WHY PROVE ALL THINGS?

Paul immediately gives us the answer. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." We test our religious practice by God's rule, the Bible. Our aim is to be right. Hold fast what is good. Discard all else. It does not matter who else is doing it. It matters not what the seeming results are. Put your trust in the Lord and follow only his direction.

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STUDIES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT—

(Continued From Page 5)

of patience comes christian maturity. "I know thy works, and thy love, and faith and ministry and patience and thy last works are more than thy first." (Rev. 2:19). Faith and patience bring the crown of life; patience is active faith, how real faith works. At the very outset, Jesus shows a deep expression of complete and triumphant faith; James begins with it (Jas. 1); at the end of the doctrinal discussion about faith, Paul says brethren are "more than conquerors." (Rom. 8:37). The persecuted do not cease to be poor; so the patient do not cease to be the faithful. Chapter 5 reveals that a constant effort must be exerted to remain centered in God; that a church member cannot ignore God and be self-sufficient. The central emphasis is that they (the poor) share in glory of the Lord. "The cry from the souls of the saints at the foot of the altar for God to take vengeance upon the wicked is answered by God. They are to rest for a little while, then the great day of wrath would come and who would be able to stand. (Rev. 6:9-17). At that time God is vindicated as the righteous judge.

vs. 12. Swearing and taking oaths is like unto the words of Jesus (Matt. 5:33-35). It simply means that a christian must be honest and without guile in his dealings with others. He must not cheat, defraud or oppress others. That he merits the respect of those who know him and therefore men believe his word and in every case he is not duty bound by them to perform an oath or have a note or pledge signed by witnesses. A christian must have a good reputation as pertaining to honesty in dealing with all men. In the final outcome, the Lord receives the blame for the dishonesty and crookedness of those among His people who commit such. Cheating and fraud brings reproach upon the name of the Lord.

v.v. 13-20 Consists of verses about the upbuilding and education of the congregation. Prayer, visiting the sick and restoring the erring result in spiritual growth. In this last part of the fifth chapter, James gives an insight to the life within a congregation. That this is true may be seen by the introduction by James of the elders of the church. "Ecclesia" rendered "church" in the King James Version and the American Standard translation is one of the most grossly misunderstood, the most abused and misapplied words in the entire New Testament. The foremost linguists of recent generations have severely criticized the word 'church' as an accurate translation of ecclesia. To them the word 'church' is ambiguous and does not convey in English the basic meanings of "ecclesia." In fact, it has been definitely established that the word 'church' does not come from ecclesia but from the Greek word 'kuriakos' which means 'belonging to the Lord.' (Rev. 1:10). Ecclesia is first used in Classical Greek. In the centuries B. C. a number of Greek cities existed each consisting a city-state. Each composed a free, independent community as pertaining to its own administration and regulation of affairs. At an appointed time a herald passed through the streets and called a certain number of the citizens to the place of council. These citizens who were summoned assembled at the meeting place. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word 'qahal' which means assembly or congregation is the most kindred word to ecclesia. Both words have the root meaning of 'call.' In the Greek translation of the Old Testament (The Septuagint) 'qahal' is translated by 'ecclesia.' The word ecclesia occurs 110 times in the New Testament in reference to God's people in the Christian Dispensation. Of these it occurs 100 times in the local sense and use; it is in the local sense the congregation at work.

The remaining ten times in the broader application it is used to show the relationship and affiliation of God's people to Christ or to God; not the congregation at work. Ecclesia is a collective noun which though singular includes several or many. This specific word (ecclesia) would therefore mean a congregation of God's people in a certain community which must remain free and independent from outside oversight or authority in all things pertaining to administration, business, worship and work. Each congregation must oversee and carry on its own program. For further study on this important subject, I suggest the following authors and books: F. J. A. Hort: Christian Ecclesia; H. E. Dana: Manual of Ecclesiology; Karl Schmidt: Bible Key Words (The Church); Emil Brunner: The Misunderstanding of the Church. These men believe the institutional church with all its foreign meanings was a development of the Roman Catholic Church; that an apostolic congregation had none of the features of an institution.

An ecclesia is a congregation of God's people. Those who are faithful are reconciled to God and in fellowship with one another. Their government and organization is on the basis of divine arrangement but this does not include a board of trustees or directors. They have strictly a religious design, purpose and function. The lack of following the fundamental meaning of ecclesia has led to digression and doctrinal error. The New Testament ecclesia is not a charitable institution or a benevolent institution; neither does it have the responsibility of teaching secular subjects or furnishing worldly entertainment for its members. According to the meaning of ecclesia a congregation cannot scripturally turn over its program, work or administration to another congregation. If it does it no longer remains independent. There can be no federation of congregations; no one congregation can scripturally carry on a program involving oversight of work other congregations. The form and work of a congregation comes under the heading of doctrine, not judgment.

The sick are to call the elders. This proves that eldership is a work, a function. In the fellowship in Christ brethren are to "confess therefore, your sins one to another and pray one for another, that we may be healed." (vs. 16). The supplication and intercession of a righteous person avails much for another. The spirit of prayer must be away from doubt. Prayer with doubt is to say that the grace of God is not big enough for me. Prayer has access to God only in the sphere of faith. Elijah is the example given by James. (vv. 17, 18). If one read carefully the epistles of Paul, he recognizes the part devoted by the apostle to prayers for the brethren, thanksgiving to God and requests for the prayers from the brethren, is not a minor part but rather a major part of the epistle. I and II Thessalonians.

Faithful brethren should endeavor to turn the errant brother from the error of his way. Should one stray from the truth (the word of God) those who are spiritual should try to restore him in the spirit of meekness. Gal. 6:1. For his condition is death, separation from God not merely the end of this life. Death is opposite of and opposed to the crown of life. If he is turned, he is saved from the wrath to come. Rom. 5:9.

Robert Goodman, Madisonville, Texas, Aug. 13: R. J. Stevens, of Houston, recently closed a good meeting here. There were 10 confession of faults and 6 baptisms. 3 of those were former Baptists and 1 a former Methodist. We have recently installed year round air conditioning. Bible class attendance is growing.

KEEPING THE HOME CHRISTIAN—

(Continued From Page 8)

served humanity. Christian parents, open the doors of your home to your children's friends. Direct and guide them in giving pleasure to others by planning for them happy times together, social experiences that lift them to higher ground. Give them a proper evaluation of what constitutes a "good time."

4. Eventually one's child shows an interest in cooperative activity. By meeting this desire satisfactorily, Christian parents are "getting ready at the quarry" the "lively stones" that will fit together so perfectly in the Lord's house. Whose responsibility is it to encourage and to develop this desire to work with a group? Open your doors a little wider to the group of "gang," help them to become aware of worthy undertakings which they can carry out. Encourage, by making room in your home for them. The house may get a used or perhaps an abused look, but what of that? If you gain the whole world of fine furnishings and lose your child's soul, what does it profit? To carry on the work of the church, the demand is for co-operative effort. Experiencing worthy cooperative efforts is a great preparation to living satisfactorily and working together in the Lord's family.

When Christian parents obey the Lord's command to "be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares," (Heb. 13:2), they are supplying a wonderful experience for the children of that household.

Each Christian has duties to perform as an individual, such as, training the children in the way they should go, providing the material needs of the family, providing for needy relatives and loving the neighbor as one's self. The work of the church, as a body, may be listed under three heads: To build up or edify itself, to help the poor, and to preach the gospel.

God's plans always bring the desired results. Let us not, as parents, shift our God-given individual responsibilities. "What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" said Paul. Whence then the "fellowship halls," "coffee and doughnuts," ping pong tables and the various "programs" to "interest our young people?"

Let us study and keep alive the duties, privileges, and responsibilities of the Christian home so that our children may develop in that well-rounded way as did Jesus of Nazareth. Let the mothers and grandmothers maintain their good works so that there may be more Timothys "fit for the Masters use."

Finally:

1. Parents in the Christian home, arrange opportunities for boys and girls to have wholesome associations in your home which may help your child to choose wisely a life companion, as well as train him in making satisfactory social adjustments.

2. "Be given to hospitality" that the God-given drive to be social may be encouraged by developing tolerance to others, sympathy toward others, desire to please others in a worthy way rather than selfishly pleasing one's self, and a desire and ability to work with the group and get along.

3. Home experiences in hospitality will serve as a readiness period to prepare your child to function satisfactorily in the Lord's family, in unity.

4. Christian parents, carry joyfully your responsibility thus to train your children in loving and working with others. Refrain from any encouragement to shift your individual responsibilities to that of the church, the body of Christ.

"Be given to hospitality."

Next topic: The Christian Wife, Stewardess of Time and Money.

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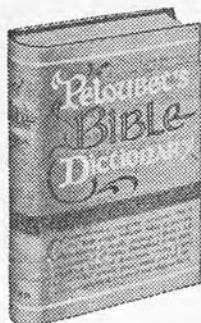
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