



TORCH

Volume VI

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*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

NEW EDITOR

James P. Needham

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Glenn Shaver Available for Meetings and Singing Schools

I recently held a meeting with the Glenn Park church in Gary, Indiana where Glenn Shaver is now working for his second time. As many know, Glenn has been very ill for the past few years. He has had surgery several times, and this has not completely corrected his condition. His doctor has advised him to get away from the pressures of local work.

Beginning next July, he will retire from local work. He hopes to be able to have about 12 engagements per year, either in singing schools or gospel meetings. Those who know him do not need to be apprized of his ability along these lines. His work over the last 25 years has been fruitful and faithful. I can recommend him to any church in need of these services.

He is on a veteran's disability pension, and will be free to work where he is needed. He will need some supplemental income and brethren everywhere will need the services he can render. Why not write or call him right away. His address and phone are as follows: Glenn Shaver, P.O. Box 2052, Gary, Indiana 46409. Phone (219) 884-0715.

-James P. Needham

TORCH



Editor

James P. Needham

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James J. Reekhaus

A Challenge Accepted

It is with fear and trembling that I accept Billy K. Farris' invitation to become editor of TORCH. Having had considerable experience in an editor's chair (not seat as Yater Tant sometimes calls it), I know some of the responsibilities involved. Two considerations make his offer a special challenge to me.



(1) The nature of our time: We are living in treacherous times. There are many reasons to believe that this is one of the most dangerous generations in history.

People of the world are hedonistic, and materialistic. The consuming desire of the world is to make money and spend it on earthly pleasure. These and other ideologies have had their effect on the church. A large segment of

the church has sloughed off into the ocean of apostasy and is in the process of becoming another ultra-liberal denomination. Some who went off with them are trying to keep them from going all the way. Morals in the church and out of it have degenerated to an alarming low and the basest of animal passions are exposed in all their filth and ugliness. There are "wars and rumors of wars." There is hate and mistrust, selfishness and greed.

Yet, in spite of these discouraging considerations, this is one of the most exciting ages in history. Science has solved many technical problems, and broken many barriers that prevented our forefathers from enjoying the luxuries in which we bask. In a few short years we have swiftly moved from the jet age to the space age. We have seen men walk on the moon, and the supersonic jet is in production.

All this has confused many, causing them to question whether the old time gospel is still relevant. We hear much about religious relevance. The truthfulness of the Bible is questioned, and religion has lost much of its influence. A recent Gallup poll showed that in 1957, 14% of our people believed religion was losing its influence. In 1969, 70% believe it. George Gallup commented that this is "one of the most dramatic reversals in opinion in the history of polling."

I like to write! I am not much "pumkin" at it, but I like to try. The things I have mentioned stir my spirit. They make me want to say something, and say it so it can be understood. This age is hedonistic, materialistic, and modernistic, but still the gospel is relevant, and the time has come for us to speak out and hit hard at the false notion that we need a new gospel for a new age. Becoming editor of TORCH affords me an outlet; a place to say what I want to say, when I want to say it, the way I want to say it. These pages will vibrate with words of truth and soberness. At times they may scorch from the heat of the torch of truth. When you read TORCH you will see its light and feel its heat. You may not agree with what we say, but you are going to know it has been

said! We shall not persue a milk-toast policy in dealing with sin and error. This is a time for something that will "stick to the ribs" and give one strength to fight the good fight of faith until the battle is won. I shall not try to write to be understood, but to where I cannot be misunderstood! Only in this way is TORCH worth the time, trouble and money necessary to produce it.

(2) The nature of TORCH: TORCH is a small, unostentatious effort. It is not and does not aspire to be a brotherhood political power structure. It is the combined efforts of a few brethren who are interested in teaching the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. It does not have an impressive mailing list to compare with other papers among us. It has no competitive spirit, no vain ambition to be the biggest and best paper among us. It has only a spirit of service; it desires to serve the brethren and the cause of truth. TORCH is not a part of any movement, or offensive. It is not a pulse feeler, or a brotherhood regulator, nor is it a pop off valve for malcontents who are mad at the world and are looking for some public place to do their thinking. It is not a sounding board for local church trouble, or a tool in the hands of bush wackers who are interested in character assassination and personality parades. It is not interested in brotherhood politics, politicians or promotions. It is not interested in controlling anybody or anything, and its policy can be expressed in one word, fairness. It is not looking for someone with money and/or influence it can exploit to its own selfish advantage, only to relegate them to the junk pile when it has milked them of all they are worth to it. TORCH has no pet issue or issues. Our issue is every issue that involves the faith once delivered (Jude 3). We shall try to feed a balanced diet.

We shall not flatter ourselves by thinking our judgment will always be right. We will make some mistakes, that is about the only thing we can be sure of at this point! But we shall not intentionally take unfair advantage of any man. We shall speak, and speak plainly. We shall grant everyone else the same privilege.

Organization

Brother Farris thought it best to turn the paper over to me unorganized in so far as staff is concerned. As of this issue there are no associate editors, staff writers, or regular contributors. Brother Farris wanted me to have the paper free of any and all obligations, so I can organize and run it as I see fit. I am the editor, he is the publisher.

As of this moment, I do not know what I will do about staff or writers. Our space is so limited that TORCH does not lend itself well to a large staff. For a while I shall either produce the necessary material myself, or solicit it from those I feel are qualified to produce what I want. No doubt, much of the material will be authored by the editor. We shall strive to have material that is vital, relevant, fresh and to the point. We want to have something with which to fill the space, rather than having to fill the space.

Remuneration

I suppose most readers know that there is no remuneration for such a task as this. I do find some, however, who think brethren who are in the publishing business are rolling in dough! TORCH is without funds, without a large subscription list, and without supplemental income. We are depending upon subscriptions for production money. Nobody connected with the paper receives any salary from it. It is a work of faith and a labor of love. If the paper is to survive, those interested in it must subscribe and get others to do the same. We are a low budget paper, but we must have something in order to continue. We need your help, and your prayers.

History of Torch

TORCH was born in the month of July, 1950. It was the brainchild of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. It was laid to rest at the end of the first year. It then laid dormant until it

was revived by Billy K. Farris and William E. Wallace in January 1967. William Wallace was editor, Billy K. Farris, publisher. It has stayed alive from that time until now, but with some afflictions. Wallace soon took on other responsibilities, and gave up the editorship. Farris tried to edit and publish the paper for a time, but could not do it. He then contacted with Jack Holt about a year ago to become editor, but this has not worked out satisfactorily for some reason (no doubt a good one). Brother Holt failed to produce sufficient material to fill the paper. A few weeks ago brother Farris asked me to take the editor's chair, and so, here we are! Brother Farris will continue to serve as publisher of the paper. I shall be responsible for producing the material for it.

TORCH has had a colorful history, and has made a significant contribution to the cause of truth. I have read and re-read volume one of TORCH (as well as the others). Those were some of the most prolific days of Foy E. Wallace, Jr. He asked no quarter and gave none! His motto was, "They shall not pass." They didn't! (Too bad he did!) Nothing escaped his watchful eye, or his potent pen! It saddens me that he now allows his influence to be used by those he once opposed, but still, TORCH was a little paper with a powerful punch. None of us who has been connected with TORCH would claim that we can hold it quite as high or make it burn quite as brightly as its originator, but we intend to make an "A" for effort.

We hope TORCH is now entering a new era. We desire to get it on a regular schedule so you will have it in your mail box by the first of each month. We hope to upgrade its material in such a way that you will look forward to receiving it, and will not want to put it down until you have read every word. As in the past, TORCH shall be known as a little paper with a powerful punch! Let us all get behind and promote the NEW TORCH!

Editorial Responsibility

It should not be necessary to point out that the editor
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assumes responsibility only for what he writes, but there are always some who want to make an editor responsible for everything that appears. I do not speak for anyone but myself, and nobody speaks for me. As editor, I shall try to produce fresh, vital and relevant material. I shall not act as a censor of its contents. If somebody writes something with which I disagree, I may succumb to the urge to say so, but whether I agree with it will not be the screen through which TORCH material passes.

Any who desire to do so may send us manuscripts. They shall receive careful consideration. There is no guarantee that they will be printed. As editor, I shall have to make the decision about that. I may not always be right, but as long as I have this responsibility, I shall always be the editor. It goes without saying, I think, that lengthy articles will have the least chance to be printed because of our limited space. Any manuscript that exceeds three double-spaced typewritten pages will almost certainly be rejected unless it has special merit.

Two for One Subscription Sale for Three Months!

Yes, you read it right, we are offering TORCH at half price for the next three months. From now until March 31, we will accept all subscriptions and renewals at \$1.50 per year; in clubs of ten or more \$1.00 per year. You can send TORCH to two people for the price of one; to twenty people for the price of ten. We will not make any money at it, but we want to increase the circulation of TORCH. This will make it easy for our friends to put TORCH in the hands of their friends, and help all concerned. Beginning April first, the regular subscription price of \$3.00 will go back into effect. We hope to double our subscription list by that date. What a bargain; two for one. If any one issue is not worth \$1.50 we are going to feel like failures. So do not let us down. Let us hear from you today. Send us a long list of subscriptions. You will never be sorry. Remember - TWO for ONE!

Publisher's



Billy K. Farris

Corner

My responsibility in local preaching work has received first consideration. I have worked "after hours" to meet the business obligations. And, to keep it alive, TORCH has received a little artificial respiration along through the year.

As we move into 1971, TORCH regains its strength with James P. Needham as the new editor and with better planning from the standpoint of production. Brother Needham has demonstrated his editorial and writing abilities in church bulletins and papers published by brethren. I personally consider his accepting the invitation to become editor a life saver for TORCH. The production frequency of TORCH will be prompt and regular. We have already planned and produced parts of TORCH two months ahead of schedule.

A Word About Subscriptions

I want to do whatever is necessary to please every TORCH subscriber. Those who subscribed during the past year have not received the amount of material they paid for and expected. To compensate for this I am extending those subscriptions over enough months to make

State of Torch

A popular singing commercial has the words "he tried, but he couldn't do it." Well, I couldn't do it. I tried, but for the past nine months I have been hard pressed to meet financial obligations incurred when a business partnership failed. Ordinarily, I would consider this a personal matter, but TORCH subscribers have a right to some explanation for the irregular frequency in 1970.

up for this shortcoming. An expiration date will now appear with your address. Check this date and if you are not satisfied let me hear from you and I will do my best to please you in this matter.

Some who are now receiving TORCH had their subscription to expire several months ago. These have continued to receive TORCH without a notice of expiration. I am sorry that we have not had the time before now to insert an expiration notice. If your subscription has expired, renew now while our special offer is available.

"Set for the Defense"

Larry Ray Hafley

Let someone attack a favorite politician, an admired President, or an adored athletic hero and most of us will rise to defend the champion of our hearts. But when the church is contaminated, the gospel is mutilated and the hope within saints is humiliated, unnumbered throngs will sit in passive, sinful silence. Peter said, "...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (I Pet. 3:15). The term "answer" is the same as used by Paul when he proclaimed, "I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil 1:17). It means "a verbal defense, a speech in defense." Thus, Christians are to speak in defense of their hope.

Why Some Do Not

1) FEAR OF SHAME: Sorrowfully, some are ashamed and afraid to express their belief in the hope of the gospel. They do not speak "openly of him for fear of the Jews." Like the blind man's parents in John 9, they fear the reproach of men. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk. 8:38). "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). "But the fearful... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8).

2) **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE:** It is difficult to defend what one knows nothing about. Many "unlearned and ignorant" Christians fall into this category. How can they defend the truth against the erosion of error when they do not know the truth? Why is it a sin to use a mechanical instrument of music in worship? How do we know that one who claims to "speak in tongues" is not doing so by the power of the Spirit of God? Far too many bottled, preacher led disciples could not tell if their life (and their spiritual life may) depended on it! They do not verbally defend the truth because they are ignorant. (It is probably just as well that they keep quiet.)

3) **LACK OF LOVE:** When one loves the truth, he will defend it. When he does not, he will not. Half of many church buildings are filled with Christians who have no concern, no love for the gospel. It is a second or third generation hand-me-down religion. ("My grandfather was a preacher, and my dad was up for elder once.") They are what they are for the same reason many Catholics are what they are i.e., they were "raised in the church." Their concept of the church is sectarian, their conviction is convenience, and their worship is a mixture of ritualism, formalism, ceremonialism, and "distinctive Church of Christ" traditionalism. (Based on the Restoration Movement of course!)

To such flimsy followers, ecumenism is more relevant than "fight," "war," and "wrestle" (I Tim. 6:12; II Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:12). They do not defend the truth because they "inherited" it. Besides, their "toleration of divergent views in the religious spectrum" is much broader than the "ugly contentions of the past." They do not love the truth. They will not defend it. They cannot be saved (II Thess. 2:10-12).

Conclusion

What is your excuse for not speaking in defense of the hope that is within you? Are you ashamed of it? Are you ignorant of it? Do you love it? If you are not ashamed of the gospel, if you know and love it, then your course is clear. Defend it "with meekness and fear."

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Reading the Signs of the Time

James P. Needham

Every generation is distinguished by unmistakable signs or characteristics. Our era is no exception. Fortunate is he who has the depth of perception to read the signs of the times. Such ability can spare one the useless exercise and heartache of repeating the blunders of the past.

Sign Readers of the Past

The desension and division of the past 25 years would have been avoided, and the cause of Christ much more advanced had brethren opened their ears to those who were reading the signs of the times and sounding the trumpet of warning in bygone years. For E. Wallace, Jr., C.R. Nichol, O.C. Lambert, W.E. Brightwell, the Srygleys, and others were warning of a creeping institutionalism and unscriptural cooperation that would surely engulf the church if conditions and attitudes were not changed. Indeed, For E. Wallace, Jr. sounded some of his many warnings in the first issue and volume of TORCH in 1950. In the very first issue of TORCH he warned of many dangers facing the church: (1) Modernism, (2) Instrumental music, (3) Church-furnished recreation, (4) Church social functions, (5) Institutionalism, (6) The college in the church budget, (7) Dangerous Bible school literature, etc.



Foy E. Wallace, Jr. was warning of today's problems in the old GOSPEL ADVOCATE when they were in embryo. Thousands of

brethren never got upset about what he said because they lacked the spiritual depth to comprehend what he was talking about. It is saddening that he who was one of the first to sound these warnings now allows his influence to be used to build up the error he once destroyed, but re-

gardless of this, to him must go much of the credit for forewarning us of most of our current problems.

The Signs of Our Time

Conditions today are quite alarming--the signs unmistakable. I am sorry, but I cannot find as much basis for optimism as can some. Not that the future is not bright, but not as bright as it might have been, and as some invasion it. The controversies of the past 25 years have left their mark on the church. They have left tell-tale signs on our time, the reading of which does not require any unusual preceptive powers. Let us look at some of them.

Among the Liberals

1. From contemporary to classical liberalism: Those who have advocated the institutional promotions of the past 25 years have detested the liberal label. They have denied that they are liberal. They complained of the danger that people might confuse them with the liberalism of higher criticism and thus accuse them of denying the inspiration of the Bible, etc. While we have understood that they were not of the classical liberalism persuasion at the time, it has been our contention that they were headed in that direction. Well, we were right. They are not now just headed in that direction, many have arrived! Some are questioning verbal inspiration, and others are on the verge of accepting theistic evolution, if they have not already done so.

Today the institutional brethren are in a life and death struggle with the young princes produced by their teaching who have made the easy transition from "Where there is no pattern" (contemporary liberalism) to "There is no pattern" (classical liberalism). The concepts were kissing cousins all along, and now their affinity has grown from courtship to wedlock.

Classical liberalism has become such a problem to the institutional brotherhood that they have started

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several periodicals to combat it. Ira Rice has written three volumes of a book entitled **AXE ON THE ROOT**, which exposes the classical liberals among his brethren. He returned from the "mission fields" and turned the attack of his paper away from the "antis" and focused it upon his more liberal brethren. Freed-Hardeman College devoted an entire lectureship program to exposing classical liberalism, and it has been published in both hard and paper back! James Bales, a leading liberal, is writing a book in opposition to some of the extreme results of contemporary liberalism in some of his good friends, hoping it may serve to pull back some of his brethren from existentialism. He also authored a series of articles exposing the extremes of Pat Boone, and even requested that it be printed in a leading "anti" periodical, of all things!

DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST

RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST

OTHER TONGUES

SPEAKING WITH OTHER TONGUES

ies of articles exposing the extremes of Pat Boone, and even requested that it be printed in a leading "anti" periodical, of all things!

The liberal camp, therefore, is in a state of confusion; "Some cry one thing, some another? (Acts 19:32). Those who want to come back closer to scriptural ground, are not willing to come all the way back. They are as opposed as ever to the so-called "antis" and still defend institutionalism and the Herald of Truth type of cooperation. They are between the devil and the deep blue sea! They refuse to come all the way back to Bible ground, and yet they are not willing to go as far as their logic leads! Those who stand midway between ultra liberalism and sound Bible ground are in "limbo," a sort of a spiritual no man's land. They are stuck in a quagmire of indcision; they refuse to go all the way to classical liberalism, but will not come all the way back to Jerusalem.

This late effort to apply the brakes to the bandwagon of liberalism is a lost cause. It was doomed to failure before it got started. The movement is being taken over by a new generation of young princes who are products of the system with some help from some of the old heads who are willing to apply the principles that form the basis of the liberal establishment.

Should the brakemen succeed in holding contemporary liberalism at the level practiced for the past twenty five years, it would be short-lived because the principles remain the same and the next generation of leaders would rise and demand that the principles be followed to their legitimate conclusion. Hence, should these brethren win this battle they will not have won the war! The only way to win the war is to surrender their weapons and come on back to Bible ground and be satisfied to speak as the oracles of God (I Pet. 4:11). Any victory they may seem to win short of this will only become a stepping stone to fiercer battles in the future.

2. Existentialism: Existentialism is a religious concept that is part and parcel of liberal theology, and our liberal brethren are having their inevitable problems with it. It is the old concept that religious authority is subjective (coming from within man, feeling, inner light) rather than objective (outside of man, revelation, the Bible). Thus the doctrine of "Where there is no pattern" and "we do many things for which we do not have Bible authority" has logically driven some to look for authority and religious guidance from some other source. Hence, there are those among the liberals who claim special guidance from the Holy Spirit, baptism of the Holy Spirit, ability to speak in tongues they never learned, and even miraculous healing. In a word, old time holiness theology. Little did the Harpers, Dixons, Willofords, Nicholses, Woodses and others know "Whereunto this would grow" (Acts 5:24).

3. College in the church budget: When we pointed out that the orphan home issue was just a means of getting the church to accept a principle that would admit the college in the church budget, we were accused of raising a false issue. Will anyone say that now? The college is in the budgets of many churches, and that without apology! Such is openly and unashamedly advocated and practiced. One of the leading lights of



the liberal establishment, Batsel Barret Baxter, has openly preached and written that the colleges and the orphan homes stand or fall together.

What About the Conservatives?

We have been so concerned with the problems of contemporary liberalism, that we have allowed others just as damaging to arise. Some brethren said twenty years ago that the institutional problem arose because brethren got so caught up in the instrumental music controversy that they forgot about the institutional issue, which in turn raised its ugly head again in the benevolent societies. Have we not committed the same mistake again? We have been so busy fighting institutionalism at the front door that the enemy out flanked us and slipped in the back door with other problems that threaten our very existence. Having travelled among the churches for the past 10 years, holding about 15 meetings per year, I feel somewhat qualified to speak with some authority on this matter. I say conditions among the "conservative" churches are not quite as "rosy" as some seem to think. Let us look at some of the signs of the times among us.

1. Pseudo unity movement: Pseudo unity movements have followed every division in the church in its history. After the liberals get their innovations bedded down in the budgets and bosoms of the brethren, they say to their opposition, come on down to "the plain of Ono" (Neh.-6:2) and let us talk this thing over. We can have unity! We be brethren and we have so much in common that we should be able to work together, especially if you will cease opposing our innovations and help us fight the young princes who have applied our logic to the bitter end!

Well, I am not against discussion differences with anyone, but I am against jumping the gun and exaggerating the potential results of such discussions without proper evaluation, thus building up some only to let them down later. Some brethren have calculated their infantile poultry previous to the consummation of the process of incubation! They indicated the possibility of results that

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never existed outside an imagination intoxicated by over-zealous enthusiasm, or just plain day dreaming!



Such occurrences have done nothing but create more problems for "conservative" brethren, such as: accelerated controversy, and out-right alienation in some cases.

While I realize this was not the intention of those zealots who caused it, it is true nevertheless. The self-appointed brotherhood doctors (not intended to be derogatory) misread the pulse of the brethren and prognosticated that the patient was developing ecumenicalism and that re-approachment to the "conservative liberals" was indicated and a complete recovery of the body imminent. The misdiagnosis resulted in the deterioration of the body, and the patient has not yet fully recovered from the malpractice!

If the recent blundering effort at reapproachment and communication is an indication of what we can expect in the future, I am bailing out now! I am willing to communicate ideas, but refuse to negotiate principles. I am willing to manifest a brotherly attitude toward those I consider to be in error, but I will not be unequally yoked together with those who refuse to make all things according to the pattern. I will talk with anybody who wants to talk, but I cannot walk with those who refuse to walk with God. I will gladly ally myself with anyone who is allied with God and truth, but I will not join hands with error to fight error; first because I believe it is wrong, and secondly, because truth does not need an ally.

2. Arbitrary creedal soundness: Churches and brethren are often declared to be sound because they are opposed to church contributions to benevolent institutions and the Herald of Truth. The fact that they may be like whited sepulchres, "full of uncleanness" (Matt. 23:27), makes no difference, they merit the "sound" label. They may spend so much of their time trying to convince the liberals that Jas. 1:27 and Gal. 6:10 deal with individual

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responsibility that they have no time to practice what they preach, but they are still "sound brethren," yes, sound, all sound, nothing but sound! I say such is arbitrary creedal soundness; people are sound because they are judged to be by an arbitrary unwritten creed that gives soundness a narrower definition than does the Bible.

I frequently have heard brethren say they were not going to oppose certain brethren who were in obvious error because "They are sound on the issues." Ungodly brethren and churches are thus being declared sound on an arbitrary creedal basis.

I have spent my share of time opposing the innovations herein discussed, and I plan to continue doing so, but I cannot buy the bill of goods some brethren are selling that equates soundness with agreement with them on 2 or 3 pet issues. Soundness is teaching and practicing the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth on all subjects. When churches believe and practice the truth on institutionalism and cooperation, but silently harbor members who forsake the assembly, fornicate, lie, gossip and beat their honest debts, they are not sound. When preachers who are well known for their opposition to contemporary liberalism deal unfairly and unrighteously with brethren, lie and exploit everybody's money,



energy and influence to their own advantage and then hypocritically boast of their great righteousness and extreme sacrifices, they are not sound regardless of how big they are or who thinks so. When churches spend hundreds of thousands of dollars of the Lord's money to erect imposing cathedrals for their own pride and comfort, let the people who live next door die and go to hell, close their ears to calls for help from humble preachers of the gospel in hard places while they sit on plush in petty business meetings and fuss about silly trivialities, they are not sound churches regardless of who says they are. Churches that build up large bank accounts and then sit on them like they own them while

millions are dying all over the world without Christ, are not sound regardless of how effective they have been in opposing institutionalism and unscriptural cooperation. Soundness consists of more than merely occupying a negative posture on benevolent and cooperative issues.

When the liberals have charged that we are a bunch of do-nothing antis who are picking each other to peices, we have resented and rejected it without stopping to see if there is any substance to their charge. I think I know of some brethren and churches against whom such a charge can be made accurately. (If this be heresy, make the most of it). We have been quick to cite them to all the many orphans conservative brethren have cared for and how many "missionaries" conservative churches are supporting. This is supposed to answer all arguments and settle all questions. Some have never taken the time to think that this is not what we are doing, but what some individuals and some churches are doing. Those using this argument may never have done anything to speak of.

The point is this: some brethren and churches are so busy staying "sound" that they do nothing but make a lot of sound. They are so afraid of doing something wrong that they wind up doing almost nothing. There are still some individuals and churches that can close their eyes and ears to needy brethren both in evangelism and benevolence, and still maintain that they are sound.

The result of this arbitrary creedal soundness is partyism. It is the result of an unwritten creed, and unless something is done about it, the party spirit will grow. I am opposed to institutionalism and unscriptural cooperation, but I will not allow my preoccupation with these issues to blind me to the fact that while brethren may be sound on these issues, they may be very unsound on others that are just as important and far reaching.

3. Sideline preaching: One of the most dangerous problems we face today is sideline preaching. There is an alarming growth of sideline preaching among us. Almost every week we hear of another able preacher who

has become a salesman or a school teacher, but who says he has not quit preaching; he plans to continue preaching as often as possible. "As often as possible in most cases is a lot less than usual.

A great deal more is indicated by this situation than meets the eye; it is indeed a sign of the time, and it should be understood as a symptom of an alarming condition among us. Let us look into it a little deeper, and discover what it often indicates:

a. Materialism: Our age is massively materialistic, and this disease has afflicted some preachers just as it has others. Many have taken secular jobs, or gone into business because they could not be satisfied with a preacher's salary. Some part time preachers are paid almost as much as many full time ones, but are free from the most pressing responsibilities. Thus from the standpoints of money and responsibility, part time preaching can be rather attractive, especially to one with a materialistic tendency.

b. Bad working conditions: Preachers often have very poor working conditions. Churches often are not scripturally organized because of petty personal rivalries among the brethren. Church affairs are run from business meetings which are often little more than glorified "bull sessions," or what is worse, shouting contests where rival cliques come together to let off their venomous steam. There is no leadership, and certain aspiring leaders constantly watch each other lest one get ahead of the other. Every proposal precipitates an holocaust, especially if it is made by the preacher, because "no preacher is going to run this church." Every man's judgement becomes the law by which every issue is to be settled. This has driven many preachers to desperation. I have often said that I would make it pretty well in local work, if I could skip the business meetings!

Then, if the church is organized, the elders and deacons are often as cliquish and divided as a business meeting ever dared to be. Elders and deacons are often

just figure heads who do very little figuring. They often feel they have been given an honorary position, and their only duty is to keep the preacher in line, which often means seeing that he does their work. But then, even



though the preacher is often expected to play a major role in the local church program, he is sometimes the last one to know just what that program is. Elders often labor under the misguided concept that to consult the preacher is to surrender the work to his oversight. Because the preacher is so

deeply involved in the work, and his influence is usually quite extensive, the elders and deacons are often jealous of his position, thus they labor hard to make him feel like an unwanted outsider whose temporary presence is to be reluctantly tolerated.

Finally, there is the money situation. The brethren's attitude toward money has driven many a preacher into the secular world. Some brethren look upon the preacher as a money-hungry parasite on the body of Christ, and they are going to see that he gets paid just as little as possible. The church may have a large bank account, but they are going to see that the preacher does not get any more of it than is absolutely necessary.

From the amount of time expended in its management and the trouble it causes, one would conclude that money is the most important thing in many local churches. Preachers are fired over it, elders and deacons squabble about it, and all-night business meetings are held for long, drawn-out discussions of how it is to be spent. Churches sit on the treasury like a mother hen as though the money belongs to them.

The working conditions here described are major factors in the preacher shortage we hear so much about. Preachers who have not seriously considered throwing in the towel, are few and far between. The brethren are in the habit of rationalizing this situation rather than

(21)

rectifying it. They often say, "if a preacher will quit for such reasons, the church is better off without him." This is a clever way to put responsibility for the problem on the preacher. I will not say that preachers are entirely innocent in this matter, but neither do they bear all the guilt. I concede that preachers are often looking for an excuse to get away from the demanding life of a preacher, but his miseries are often caused by the immature actions of the brethren. Many of the preachers' problems would disappear, if the brethren would start acting like adults.

The problem of pulpit dropouts has now reached alarming proportions. Churches with part time preachers are often stalemated, and the part-time preachers are usually the first to admit it. Part-time preachers have ceased to grow and develop themselves because they do not have time to study as they should. This in turn results in malnutrition in the church which culminates in discouragement and delinquency on the part of many members. The part-time preachers are tied down with a secular responsibility and are not free to help members when they need it most. They are not free to hold meetings because of their jobs. The whole thing adds up to a very dangerous problem. If we fail to solve it, we are going to reap some very damaging results in the years to come. A casual observer can see the effects of it already.

There will always be a place for the part time preacher, and there will always be reasons why some brethren should be such, but the pressing need of this hour is not for more full time preachers to become part time preachers, but more part time preachers to become full time preachers.

Conclusion

These are some of the signs of the times in which we live. They are some of the issues that will occupy the pages of TORCH in the months to come. In the spirit of the original TORCH, "They shall not pass!"

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TORCH

Volume VI

February, 1971

Number 2

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Number Two !

Well, here we are with the second issue of TORCH under this editor ! It has been a distinct pleasure to produce these first two numbers, and we look forward with eager anticipation to the months ahead. We have been elated by your enthusiastic reception of the first issue. We shall labor constantly to make TORCH worthy of your continued confidence. We shall do everything within our limited ability to make it first class, both in material and workmanship. We want it to be the kind of paper you will want to recommend to your friends, yes, even send to them.

We ask your patience while we make some adjustments during our period of transition. As time goes on we hope to upgrade our layout and quality of production. Brother and sister Billy K. Farris are to be commended for their untiring and unselfish efforts in publishing the paper. They have made certain sacrifices to keep the paper alive, and the time has come for those interested in the paper to give them a hand. We need to broaden the paper's circulation. We need readers who will send gift subscriptions, and call the paper to the attention of others. Many have promised to do this within the past two months, and words cannot express our appreciation for this favor.

Due to the fact that I have not had time to solicit articles from others, most of this issue is made up of material by the editor. We hope to have some very profitable articles by outstanding writers in the issues to come. We say thanks for your continuing interest.

- James P. Needham

TORCH



Editor

James P. Needham

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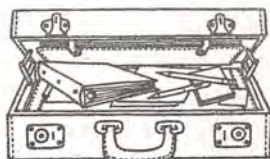
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



UNITY?

Every serious Bible student understands the importance of unity. Most of us could quote a dozen or so passages enjoining it. We all profess to want it, but how many are willing to have it on the proper basis? Too many define unity as everybody agreeing with them, but this is not God's definition. True Biblical unity is everybody agreeing with God. Paul defined it as sameness in speech, mind and judgment (I Cor. 1:10).

Following every great apostasy in history, there has been a unity movement. Such movements seldom if ever propose unity on God's basis. It is usually some clever scheme for the faithful to compromise their convictions on the points of division. Once the apostates get their innovations accepted by their party, they feel like they can negotiate with the "antis" from a position of strength, so they call for a unity meeting. What they fail to realize is that Biblical unity is not to be negotiated because its terms have been stipulated. It must be agreement on the teaching of God's word (Jn. 17:20,21), and not a clever scheme of compromise or an agreement to disagree.

After 25 years of heated controversy over unscriptural cooperation and institutionalism, some on both sides of the question are bent all out of shape over the terrible division that plaques us. There have been unity meetings, communication offensives, pulse feelings, and extensive searches for means and methods of getting us back together. A very unusual aspect of the current movement is that it seems to have been promoted more by the "antis" than by the liberals. It is usually the liberals that lobby for unity following apostasies. Understand, I am not against any of this as long as it is not presumptive and subversive of scriptural principle. I have to be honest and confess that I have very little faith in it, but I am not dogmatically opposed to it.

My doubts concerning the current campaign to bring us together again have all been confirmed by the results of the meetings that have been held, and the manifest lack of progress that has been attained. It has been my conviction all along that the unity the liberals are seeking is based upon a cessation of our opposition to their promotions. If there was ever any doubt about this, Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has forever obliterated it. In his paper **CON-TENDING FOR THE FAITH** for September-October 1970, he really sounds off! He prefaces his letter to the brethren with a very warm and gracious, "WOULDN'T IT BE WONDERFUL IF WE COULD ALL GET BACK TOGETHER AND CLOSE RANKS AGAINST ERROR?" Then he says,

"Although soon a quarter of a century shall have passed since the schism formed among us over inter-congregational cooperation--by which time it would seem that all old wounds should have healed and been forgotten--the simple fact remains that they have NOT healed, and the hearts of many of us who remained with the truth on this question STILL YEARN for the ones who went away.

"Although there cannot REALLY be, in fact, any fellowship worthy of the name between us as long as those who made those old contentions against such cooperation continue to ~~be~~ so--yet I, for one (and I know of literally thousands of others, who are of the same mind), would

go to any SCRIPTURAL length in order to heal the breach so that we all might get back together again, close ranks and thus present a united front against that error which threatens to destroy us both--LIBERALISM.

"It may come as some surprise to many that the threat of liberalism in no wise is limited to the ranks of us who contend for--and practice--inter-congregational cooperation..."

Now, I want to make some observations on the above statements. But first, I will say that I understand that many of his own brethren repudiate Ira Y. Rice, Jr., but I am not concerned with whether they endorse Ira Y. Rice, Jr., I am concerned with the fact that they endorse what he says. That he expresses their sentiments is hardly subject to serious doubt. They probably would not have expressed it in these same words, but his candor is more to be commended than their lack of it. I like for a man to "shell down the corn" so we can know what he is talking about. Ira does just that. Let us notice what he says:

1. "...the hearts of many of us who remained with the truth on this question STILL YEARN for the ones who went away." I am sure learning of their yearning will come as a surprise to most "antis!" It surely has not been evident in their words and deeds! With all the epithets and invective they have been throwing around for the past 25 years, their yearning has not shown through very well. Furthermore, I would like to know what we "went away" from. Certainly not the scriptures since they make no provision for the many far out programs that have been promoted by Ira Rice and his brethren.

2. "...Although there cannot REALLY be, in fact, any fellowship worthy of the name between us as long as those who made those old contentions against such cooperation continue to do so..." Now, this confirms what many have thought all along. The liberals are not interested in giving up any of their programs. Their idea of having "unity" with us is based upon our creasing to oppose their promotions. Those brethren who have been

(29)

dreaming something else need to wake up and smell the bacon! Ira has shelled down the corn for us, and doubts can not live amidst such plainness of speech. There has been abundant evidence of this fact all along, but some brethren have been too interested in "unity" to see it. In the same papers where the liberals have preached unity, they have continued to promote those programs that have divided us. I have really been surprised at the gullibility of some of my brethren in this matter. Unity is fine, and very desirable, but TRUTH must come first. Compromise is not unity!

Not only have the liberals continued to beat the drums for their divisive promotions, they continue to escalate such programs. In the very same envelope with the paper from which I have quoted came a brochure describing and soliciting financial aid for a "School of Evangelism" Ira Rice has begun in San Francisco. He is still of the same die we have known him to be in the past. Note this quotation from his brochure.

"Property for this school has been located on one of the choicest corners in the Downtown area. It is costing us \$211,000, plus interest. Of this amount we already have paid \$10,000 in cash and given our promissory note for another \$10,000, which must be increased to a total down payment of \$50,000 on or before January 4, 1971."

There you are! Another brand new Manhattan-type promotion by one who is supposed to be the arch enemy of LIBERALISM, and with whom some of the brethren are seeking unity. For years I have received the outlandish promotional propaganda of Ira Rice in the Far East. He has built a church supported college, and just about everything else to which the "antis" have objected over the past 25 years. He has not changed, and has told us that he has no intention of changing. He has had churches and individuals from all over the world contributing to his projects, and he has been so spoiled by it all that he has no qualms whatsoever about creating large debts that he expects someone else to pay.

3. "It may come as some surprise to many that the

threat of liberalism in no wise is limited to the ranks of us who contend for--and practice--inter-congregational cooperation." He then makes it appear that Yater Tant and Bill Wallace have admitted that liberalism is a threat to the ranks of the conservatives. I have as little faith in his interpretation of others' words as I have in his promotional schemes, but regardless of that, I deny that classical liberalism is a threat to the ranks of the conservatives, that is, in the same way it threatens Rice's brethren. Those who are beginning to doubt the inspiration of the Bible, and are on the verge of accepting evolution, are to be found in the ranks of the liberals, not the "antis." It would be rare indeed to find one such among us for the same reason that it would be rare to find bananas growing in Alaska, the climate is not right. I am inclined to believe that Rice's aligning Wallace and Tant with his cause is some more of his propaganda.

Teaming up with Ira Rice and his brethren to fight liberalism is quite ludicrous! It makes about as much sense as teaming up with Russia to fight Red China! Until these brethren are ready to give up their unscriptural promotions, scriptural unity will be impossible. Rice has made it very clear that he thinks we are the apostates. We are just as convinced that they are, so we are as far apart as we have ever been, so it is back to the polemic platform, not to the plains of Ono!

Rice is terribly concerned about where Pat Boone and his Pentecostal cohorts are taking the church. He really gets carried away on this issue. What he fails to realize is that wherever they take what he calls the church, it will have been with his help. I know of no person who has done more to create a climate conducive to this Pat Boone-type defection than has Ira Rice. His free-wheeling promotions, his minimizing the necessity of having Bible authority, and his wild money-raising methods would hardly promote a conservative approach to the scriptures. Until he realizes this and changes his course, all of his bombastic efforts at spiritual knight-hood will be about as effective as shooting beans at a battleship!



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Under this heading we shall share our mail, not because it may commend our efforts, but because we like to feel that our readers are a sort of a family, and that all members therein have a desire and a right to know what other members are saying. This month we are particularly elated by the many heart-warming congratulations and best wishes we have received upon our accepting this new responsibility. These mean much to us as we begin our effort to steer a straight course on the stormy and uncertain sea of religious journalism. We say thanks a million to one and all. JPN).

INDIANAPOLIS: "Congratulations on your new adventure with TORCH. I cannot think of a better man for the job. Here's praying that you have good success!" (Jimmy Tuten).

BRANDON, FLA.: "I wish you the very best in your editing of TORCH. Though I have not been subscribing to TORCH for several years, I have kept up with it--and will certainly want to be on the regular subscription list, when you take over the editorship." (Harry E. Payne, Sr.).

MARION, IND.: "No doubt, TORCH with you as editor will enjoy a substantial increase in subscriptions. I sincerely hope all goes well with you and with it." (Cecil Willis).

LEXINGTON, ALA.: "I am glad that you have agreed to become the editor of TORCH. I am confident that you will do the job that is needed for a successful publication." (Billy K. Farris).

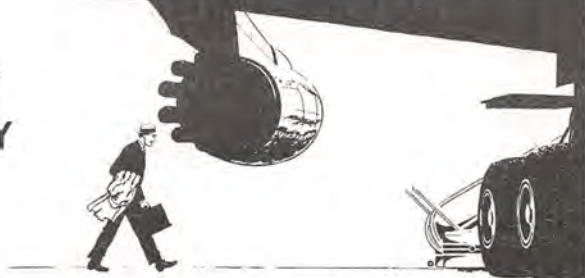
PLANO, ILL.: "Your approach to the chore of editor seems to be what it ought to be...Now...that we may use your name as editor, the subs will be much easier to obtain...Our prayers are with you...Your pen will sell TORCH." (Larry Ray Hafley).

GREENVILLE, S. C.: "Best wishes on the TORCH. Enclosed is a check for my subscription. As soon as I get the first copy under your editorship, I'll show it to others and try to help with the subscriptions." (Larry Dickens). (That is the best kind of "best wishes").

TAMPA, FLA.: "I am glad to hear that you are to become editor of TORCH in January...My very best wishes to you in this adventure." (H. E. Phillips, Editor of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES).

LUFKIN, TEXAS: "It is great to know that you will edit TORCH. Someone needs to take the paper and restore it to a form true to its heritage. You can do it, and I am sure you will." (William E. Wallace). (And a big THANK YOU to a previous editor of TORCH).

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Worth Repeating

Articles, Excerpts and Tidbits Clipped
and Snipped from Hither, Thither and Yon

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Under this heading we shall print some short articles from various places which we feel are "worth repeating." The following article was written by Bobby Witherington, preacher for the Haldeman Ave. church in Louisville, Kentucky. I print it with pride since Bobby and I grew up in the same **country** church. (We are both "proud" of it!) Bobby is an outstanding writer, an able preacher, and a close personal friend.)

A Letter from a Sympathizer

By Bobby Witherington

Dear bro. Paul:

I have been discriminated against, offended, and harassed, and it looks as if I may be withdrawn from. I just want you to know that **YOU** are primarily to blame. You see, I'm a member of the church here at Ephesus, and; well, it's like this: I don't believe in all that name calling, nor do I believe it is necessary for one to be "always going to church."

Why do I blame you? Paul, do you remember how you talked to our elders over at Miletus? (cf. Acts 20:17-38). Well, after they got back home, they've never been the same. Nowadays, **every** time I miss worship, they're over at my house, riding me, pumping me, nosing into my business, wanting to know why I wasn't there.

Paul, I let them know, and I'm also letting you know that it's nobody's business what I do! The very idea! And YOU talk about freedom in Christ!

Then, too, Timothy told us what you wrote him. You know, Timothy would be a nice guy if you'd just leave him alone. In your letter to him you said something about "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (cf. II Tim. 4:2). Well, he's started doing that in every sermon -- most of the time he looks straight at me! Also, he mentioned what you said about Hymanaeus and Philetus (cf. II Tim. 2:17,18), and I tell you, Paul, I almost lost my temper! Those two good men are related to me, and I KNOW they're not all that bad. Oh, I know they may be a bit mixed up on the resurrection, but Paul these things are not all THAT important. I think you are just trying to make a mountain out of a molehill!

Paul, you've also hurt my reputation here in Ephesus. You see, Demetrius (cf. Acts 19:23-27) and I belong to the same civic organization, and he tells me about the time you came here and hurt his business. I told him that I'm not so fanatical and that I don't always go along with you in everything, but he's still a little cool toward me. It's very evident that if I keep my membership here where they persist in name calling, where they have publicly endorsed your work, even though you are now a prisoner, and where they're continually harping against sin and error (nobody's perfect, you know!), I'll never be elected to higher office.

Well, at least I've had a chance to get some things off my chest. So I must close in order to get a letter off to Demas (II Tim. 4:10) to express my sympathy to him after the way you embarrassed him.

Yours For This Life Only,

Brother Softy Weak

- 1901 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, Kentucky 40206



James P. Needham

SIGHT



A Look at Contemporary Events
As They Relate to Religion and Life

PROTESTANT PREACHERS AND FOREIGN POLICY

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL has become the consuming purpose of modern protestantism. Today many protestant preachers, without the necessary training or inside knowledge, have become "experts" on civil rights, foreign policy, camital and labor, etc. etc. It is strange how the mere claim to "clergyhood" automatically makes one an expert on everything, even in fields and on subjects he has never studied!

Some of these preachers have become so caught up in things that pertain to man's relationship to man, that they seldom think or speak of his relationship to God. Indeed, some have disavowed any interest in man's relationship to God, saying that their interest is in the here and now rather than in "pie in the sky by and by."

As an outstanding example of what I am talking about, consider Carl McIntyre, a well known Presbyterian preacher. He has made a trip or two to Viet Nam, and recently held a huge rally in Washington in which his theme was "victory in Viet Nam." He even tried to bring Viet Nam's Vice President Ky to this country to address the rally. I would like to know what Carl McIntyre knows about the military situation in Southeast Asia, or any where else, and just what credentials he has to qualify him to speak on such matters?

I have some misgivings about our country's involvement in other people's wars. I feel obligated to express

my disagreement as I see fit, but I do such as a citizen and not as a preacher. I have neither the training nor the information necessary to qualify me as a expert in these matters. As a spiritual force, protestantism is dead, and it knows it! It is dead because it is no longer interested in spiritual matters. It is just another ordinary socio-political organization.

Seldom has the church of our Lord been faced with a greater challenge than at present. Over the past thirty years an insipid softness has led many of God's people to minimize our differences with protestantism. Now that protestantism has lost interest in the Bible and spiritual matters, we need to emphasize them as never before. If the world has us identified as just another protestant socio-political organization, what attraction do we have? The world needs the gospel of Christ that deals with sin and salvation, not a social gospel that is concerned with bread and butter, capital and labor, and riots and rallies. We need to declare war on sin and satan, rather than on poverty and political systems.

CHRISTIANS AND THE COMMUNITY CHEST

UNITED APPEAL is centralized control in public benevolence. It is a fund raising organization for multiple organized charities. It is one of the most coercive and down-right tyrannical organizations ever to emerge on the American scene. It panders to the vanity of local executives and merchants by giving them vain titles in the annual drive and they in turn seek to coerce their employees into a hundred percent participation. Some persons have lost their jobs for refusing to "give the united way."

United Appeal presents a real challenge to the Christian. In ninety-nine per cent of all communities, he can not contribute to the drive without supporting several things which violate the scriptures, such as: the USO, which sponsors dances for service personnel, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant charities through which falsedoc- trines and propagated, and other such organizations

which are inimical to Biblical principles.

Some lack the conviction necessary to refuse to give. They may be accused of not being compassionate, regardless of how much charity they do otherwise. They may be intimidated by threats of dismissal or lack of promotion, and give, even though it is in violation of their consciences, which is sinful (Rom. 14:23).

As a matter of information, there are many Christians who have withstood the pressure. They have not been intimidated by the wild accusations and the coercive threats, only to discover that the threats were, in most cases idle bluffs. But regardless of whether or not they are idle bluffs, one must be willing to bear the consequences of an uncompromising stand for truth.

It is high time somebody lets the courts decide if an employer has the right to dismiss an employee for refusing to support that which violates his religious convictions. It is obvious that such coercion is in violation of one's constitutional rights. It is past time for somebody to call the hand of this un-American and un-Godly organization.

I will personally work to raise funds for the legal fees of any Christian who has been dismissed from his job over this matter and who will take the matter into the courts.

NEW SUPREME COURT RULING ON OBSCENITY

Obscenity is rapidly becoming an integral part of American society. Pornographic literature has become a multi-million dollar business with the help of an ultra-liberal Supreme Court. In a recent ruling the Supreme Court upheld a U. S. Circuit Court ruling which declared:

"No photograph of the female anatomy, no matter how posed, if no sexual activity is being engaged in, or however lacking in social value, can be held obscene."
(ORLANDO EVENING STAR, November 23, 1970).

If we think some of the material we have been seeing on the racks has been bad, we "ain't seen nothing yet!" With this ruling by the highest court in the land, the sky (or rather the depths of the moral gutter) is the limit.

Previously some pornographic materials were curbed by a guide line that said such material must have "social value," but this ruling knocks that down. The only guide line remaining is that no sexual activity can be depicted. Anything short of this is now legal!

Moral corruption has now permeated the very fiber of American society, and we have not seen the end yet. Unless the liberal philosophy of the Supreme Court is changed, America will make Sodom and Gomorrah look like a pink tea.

To a large degree this country has been taken over by atheists, and moral libertines. Such characters have been appointed to the highest court of the land by morally corrupt politicians, or by those who were more interested in political patronage than in national morality.

Solomon said, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but **sin is a reproach to any people**" (Prov. 14:34). The future of our nation is in serious doubt. History proves that when a nation no longer has enough salt to save it, destruction comes.

LEGALIZE MARIJUANA?

There is a great deal of sentiment toward legalizing marijuana. Some leading politicians have come out in favor of it, and others are on the fence. Ramsey Clark, former Attorney General, said recently on CBS' FACE THE NATION, that "In my judgment, the case against marijuana has failed." He said he asked a Justice Department advisory council on drugs "to demonstrate to me the damage that" marijuana can do. They were unable to, he said. Senator Barry Goldwater recently said he has not definitely made up his mind, but he leans toward legalizing it.

This sentiment for legalizing marijuana is based upon the same lame logic that, a few years ago, argued that society is better off with legalized alcohol than with prohibition. It is also the same "logic" that argues that legalized pornography will result in fewer sex crimes.

This nonsense is not supported by statistics, logic, or scripture. It is like saying that if I run an open sewer through my back yard, I will soon forget it is there, but the fact is that regardless of how long it is there, or how used to it I become, it is still an open sewer. My becoming accustomed to it is not a redeeming virtue, but rather an extreme hazard. The fact that my children grow up with it may prevent their understanding its danger. If they drink out of it, their familiarity with it will not change the consequences, because a sewer is a sewer! Regardless of how one sees, or feels, or treats a sewer, it is still a sewer! One can whitewash it with pretty labels, and the Supreme Court can legalize it, but it is still just a sewer!

Demanding that someone demonstrate the harmful effects of marijuana is about as absurd as such a demand would have been in reference to tobacco when people first began to smoke, dip and chew it! How ridiculous can one get? The fact that marijuana distorts the mind, and causes one to act irrationally should be pretty good evidence that it is harmful. Some feel that the fact that it is not physically addictive is in its favor, but is this the only criterion by which to judge it? That it is psychologically addicting is hardly debatable, that is, one who cops out with marijuana when some problem arises will soon become dependent on it for a solution to all his problems. Medical science says tranquilizers are not addictive, but we all know people who are so psychologically addicted to them that they think they cannot live one day without them!

I have always been taught that civil government exists to protect us against social ills, but nobody has told me what is supposed to protect us from the evils of civil government!

Publisher's

There Is Something We Can Do!

Billy K. Farris



Corner

sale of pornography. Federally funded organizations such as SIECUS and SPRED teach children in the public schools that sexual relations outside of marriage is permissible and even encouraged. "The latest figures by the Institute of Sex Research, of Indiana University, suggest that sooner or later 25 per cent to 40 per cent of American wives are unfaithful - an estimate that is half again as large as the figure two decades ago." (FAMILY CIRCLE, April, 1970, quoted in ANCHOR, Summer, 1970). In California there is a church for homosexuals.

Christians have always been faced with decisions to be made about modest clothing, places of entertainment, participation in school affairs, dating, etc. But many parents, under the permissive pressures of contemporary society, have allowed their children to go out into the world with little or no concern about what they do. And many Christians try to evade their responsibility saying, "with such an immoral climate in our land what can we do?"

But there is something we can do! We can fight back
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at the moral anarchy that threatens our society by:

(1) We can teach our children the way they should go. Fathers and mothers who take pains to teach their children the word of God will be rewarded not only by their children's having a wide knowledge of the Bible, but also by their ability to use their knowledge (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6). I am presently in the process of a



"Bible Knowledge Survey," and at this early stage I am appalled at how little "our" children know. (And in many cases the parents do not know as much as the children.) Certainly, the church has a responsibility to teach the Bible, but we as parents, have the responsibility of imparting to our children spiritual knowledge. The interest that parents show in their children's spiritual welfare at home, largely determines how effective the Bible classes of the church will be for them. Far too many homes of Christians make

little or no provision for Bible instruction. Daily Bible reading **with** our children will help to prepare them for the problems they will face growing up. Parents who are unconcerned about what contribution their children will make to society must be dull souls indeed. The children we are bringing up will carry on what we have started--they are the ones who will swing our country back to its moral sanity. In our home we have a "devotional" period each night before going to bed. We read the Bible together and we pray together. We recommend the practice highly.

(2) We can use our influence. There are opportunities on every hand for the Christian to speak up and use his influence for good. We can register our disapproval of those things that contribute to the moral decay of the community. The pornography for "adults only" will find its way into the hands of our children to corrupt their minds unless we let our voices be heard. My children,

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like yours, want to be involved in school activities. Today, too many Christians have either compromised with the worldly or they have withdrawn their children from most school activities. In the first place, parents need to help their children decide about participation in "questionable" activities. It doesn't always help a child to forbid them something without helping them to understand why. Secondly, parents need to be on hand to influence guide lines for school and community activities. This past fall both of my children were interested in Pee Wee football -- my son as a player and my daughter as a cheerleader. I went with my son to the "try-outs" as did other parents, my main concern being the moral character of the men who would be coaching the teams. (It is not uncommon to find men who use some pretty rough language with these boys.) However, I appreciate good men who will give their time to such worthy activities.



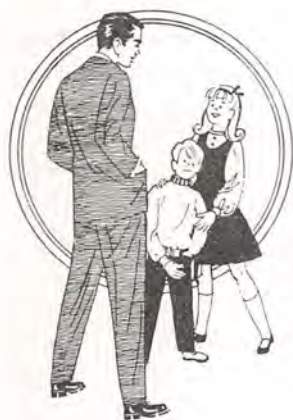
I believe my son was able to develop physically and socially from this experience. Things did not go as well for my daughter--she did not get to be a cheerleader--the costumes to be worn were not modest. The girls ranged in age from 6 to 13, and at the first meeting of the sponsors, many of whom were members of the Lord's church, no one, so far as I know, offered a suggestion as to the modesty of the costumes. But the point is this: if Christians will let their voice be heard in matters such as this, our children can part-

icipate in some of these activities and society will be made better as a result of our efforts. School meetings, P.T.A., community meetings, etc. offer opportunities for the Christian to have an influence on the environment in which we live.

(3) We can provide wholesome activities for our children. As I have suggested, we need to let our voices be heard in influencing school and community affairs. However, at times there will be school and community activ-

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ities which we cannot influence. Many times the school prom is such an event. But parents together can provide alternatives in cases such as this. Many restaurants have private dining rooms available to any group or a dinner could be enjoyed in someone's home. The so-called "generation gap" could be bridged with a little interest in our youth's problems. As teenagers, our boys and girls are in a period of transition where they are making decisions that will affect them the rest of their lives. We have not tried to understand their problems and we have been too ready to criticize without helping. It is not surprising that we are losing half "our" children to the world. When there are school and community activities that they cannot engage in let us not just blacklist these things without "sharing" the problem with our children and without suggesting alternatives.



How long has it been since you, as a parent, **really** took an interest in your children's problems. Are you **really** concerned about the choices of entertainment and recreation they have? Certainly, there has to be moderation in recreation and entertainment, but parents must provide some suitable recreation in the home. The social requirements of our children consists of companionship and recreation. That "evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33 ASRV), should prompt every parent to see that his

children choose good companions. We should realize that there are times when it is good for our children to associate with the children of other Christians. More social associations between adults will do us good too. Wholesome recreation in outings, picnics, hobbies, music, athletic games, sight-seeing and dozens of other activities will provide opportunities for us to better know fellow Christians and opportunities for our young people to form friendships with those who are Christians. And there are activities which, though they do not have the entertaining features of those we have mentioned, are

important for us and our young people to engage in -- things like visiting with the elderly and those who are shut-ins. These need our companionship and our youth will form a sound sense of values. Ours is a time when we need to be doing something **for** our children and **with** our children.



Some of the objections which I have heard raised against these suggestions of what we can do are that we do not have the money, or we do not have the time. There are times when money is a factor in some recreational activities, but this is not the case generally. Besides, many of the activities would not involve any expense at all. There are parents who have spent many dollars over what it would have cost for some wholesome activities, because they failed to provide it, not counting their many hours of worry and heartache. And the question is not do we have the time (we all have the same amount each day), but how we use it. We have a responsibility to use some of our time for our children.

Yes, there is something we can do! And all Christians should be involved in doing it. We must steer between turning our responsibilities over to, and compromising with, the world on the one hand, and perverting the work of the Lord's church on the other. The worldly do not offer the social environment that our children need, but we must influence the world (Matt. 5:13-16). The home, not the church, is the institution charged with the providing of our social and recreational needs. We must fight to remove the demoralizing influences that threaten our churches, homes, schools and communities. We must let our voices be heard as we combat the moral decay of our society, and we must do it now !

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These timely notes on the relation between drugs, rebellion and modern music were compiled by Ron Halbrook. He has researched his subject well and his notes are well documented. This material is a reading must for young people and parents. This booklet will be ready for shipment soon and the price will be \$15 per 100.

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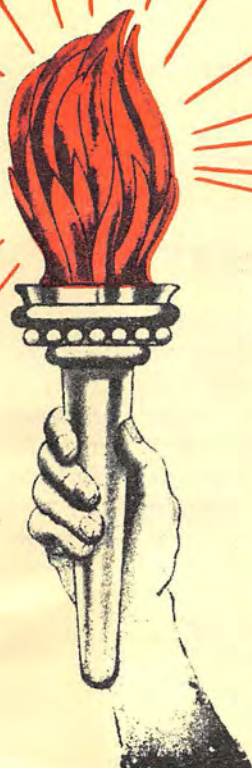
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*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Mini Message

TO BULLETIN PUBLISHERS

FOR a long time I have received, enjoyed and profited from many church bulletins. But some of them are about like a coconut, by the time I get them open, I am not hungry for their contents! For some unknown reasons some publishers feel that they must not only fold their bulletins, but also drive a staple through them! Well, the other day when I was tugging at one such, I got into a poetic mood, and decided to pen this little ditty:

*Staple your bulletins without fail,
Slam them hard upon the deck!
So when I break my fingernail,
I'll want to break your neck!*

JPN



Editor

James P. Needham

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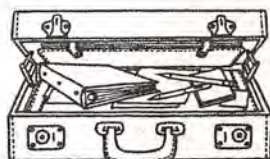
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



Protestantism -- Our Greatest Danger

INTRODUCTION

For the last 25 years I have heard gospel preachers talk about "dangers facing the church." They have talked about Communism, worldliness, Catholicism etc. usually concluding that the greatest danger facing the church is Catholicism. I have never heard one even mention Protestantism as a danger. We have generally assumed that the church is in no way threatened by Protestantism. Perhaps we have been unable to see the forest for the trees!

I. EVALUATING DANGERS

How do we evaluate dangers facing the church? By what rules of evaluation have we concluded that Catholicism is the greatest danger the church faces? Have our rules been well founded, and our conclusion just? I think not. That which does us the most harm is most certainly our greatest danger, and Protestantism has done the church a great deal more harm than has Catholicism. On this basis I must conclude that it is a greater danger than Catholicism.

I am not denying that Catholicism is a threat to the truth. I am affirming that Protestantism poses a greater threat on the basis that it has done the truth the greater harm.

II. PROTESTANT INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Protestant philosophy, by far, wields the greatest

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influence on American religious thought. The American public practically has been brainwashed by Protestant philosophy; so much so, that certain basic truths of the New Testament such as: the need for scriptural authority, the one church, the spiritual mission of the church, and the necessity of baptism have little chance of acceptance in America. In the early 19th century these fundamentals swept over the American religious scene and practically dominated it. It is a different story today.

A new Protestantism has emerged in America. Its philosophy is accepted by practically all denominations in this country. It minimizes the necessity of scriptural authority, and says that one church is as good as another and stigmatizes as bigots all who deny it. By the acceptance of the social gospel, Protestantism casts the church in the role of a social reformer with little or no emphasis on salvation and immortality. Baptism as an essential to the new birth and salvation as taught in the scriptures (Jn. 3:1-5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Pet. 3:21) is anathema.

These Protestant philosophies have not only influenced the religious people of America, but they have also affected the uncommitted. It gets harder and harder to convert the uncommitted. They have been brainwashed by the easy-going-do-nothing philosophy of Protestantism and are programmed to reject everything that is critical of anything that is called religion.

III. PROTESTANT INFLUENCE ON THE CHURCH

The close observer is amazed by the extent to which brethren have absorbed Protestant thought. This fact plays a major role in the controversies of the last 25 years. The majority of today's problems are the result of brethren's having adopted Protestant philosophy. Let us look at some illustrations.

1. "One church as good as another": This is a well known Protestant concept, and one which a great many brethren have absorbed. Sermons on the one true church are not as prevalent as they once were; neither are they as popular with the brethren. To a large degree this

accounts for the lack of personal evangelism on the part of many church members. They do not believe their religious neighbors are lost. It is not at all unusual to hear brethren say they do not like preachers who "condemn other denominations."

2. "Where there is no pattern": The student of Protestantism detects a familiar ring in this title of a popular tract authored by a college president. It has been the contention of Protestantism through the centuries. The underlying concept of original Protestantism was that the Bible is an all-sufficient standard of faith and practice, but it has never strictly adhered to it. In the areas of church government, work, and worship, the plan of salvation, etc., Protestantism has long since accepted the principle of the free play of human wisdom and imagination. This underlies and explains their unity in diversity concept. Their acceptance of each other in spite of their many differences is explained on the basis of their erroneous belief that God has not furnished a complete pattern and thus anything goes as long as one is honest and sincere.

Having absorbed this well-known Protestant tenet, brethren have promoted all kinds of innovations. They look with scorn upon those who challenge them to produce scriptural authority for their practices. Like ordinary Protestants, they tell us "We do many things for which we do not have scriptural authority, nor do we need any." Or, more recently, they have adopted the doctrine of existentialism which postulates the theory of subjective spiritual guidance separate and apart from the written word. Thus, if the written word has no authorization for their practices, they furnish it from intangible, unprovable inner light.

3. The social gospel: The social gospel concept originated in Protestantism. It exalts the physical above the spiritual, or it may eliminate the spiritual altogether. It is preoccupied with the here and now and not with eternal salvation. Twenty-five years ago, brethren were very much opposed to church provided ball teams,

recreation rooms, and other such worldly programs. Leading brethren such as N.B. Hardeman, G.C. Brewer, and others, were very vocal in their condemnation of such. I can remember when the Presbyterians in my home town added a fellowship hall to their building. The brethren simply thought it was hilarious! They thought it was the silliest thing they had ever seen, and took it as prima facie evidence that the Presbyterians made no pretense of following the Bible. But alas, the brethren there have now built a fellowship hall that would make the Presbyterians' look like a kindergarten play room! This story has been repeated many times all over the nation. The social gospel promotions of the brethren have been copied from protestant denominationalism, and some of them frankly admit this when they argue that the church ought to do this or that because the denominations are doing it.

CONCLUSION

One of our greatest current needs is to reconvert the brethren on the uniqueness of the New Testament church. Many brethren have become so "scholarly" that preaching on how to identify the Lord's church is beneath their intellectual dignity, and is out-dated. They have drunk so deeply at the fountains of denominational seminaries that preaching on the unique features of the Lord's church would make them feel disloyal to their Alma Mater! They preach a great deal about theology, science and philosophy, but very little about the difference between the ancient order and modern denominationalism. They quote frequently from Brunner, Kirkegard, and Barth, but very infrequently from Paul, Peter and John.

In short, we have fostered a generation that is ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16), and which has a greater desire to please the world than to please God. It is high time we get out our old sermons "and ask for the old paths" (Jer. 6:16). Do you still believe that "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up"? (Mt. 15:13).

Introspection

What Is Wrong?

Self Analysis

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Under this heading we plan to print a series of articles concerning many phases of the Lord's work today. It will be a sincere effort at self analysis, introspection. Much of our worship has become routine. We are going to church more and enjoying it less. Singing at many places is without enthusiasm. Prayers are almost ritualistic. We have asked men with penetrating minds and potent pens to tell us what is wrong. You will not want to miss a one of these articles. JPN).

What Is Wrong with Today's Prayer?

Larry Ray Hafley

Prayer is a precious privilege in every faithful Christian's daily life. Because it consumes so much of one's spiritual service, it must be guarded against corruption. Prayer is a link to the Lord. It is an avenue unto the throne of grace and the "Father of mercies." It must be jealously and zealously defended if one is to "find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

There is nothing wrong with today's prayer that was not wrong with yesterday's or that will not be wrong with tomorrow's. Characteristics of men survive the ages. "There is no new thing under the sun." We shall notice obstacles to prayers that are both old and new that we might remove them and receive the full benefit of communing with our God.

PLAGUES OF PRAYER

1. DOUBT: Doubt, simply and succinctly defined, is
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a lack of faith. The unstable, the fearful, the wavering soul has no anchor with which to moor his hope. He has nothing to expect from prayer to God, for one must "ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas. 1:6-9).

Paul, while confronting the trials, troubles, and tribulations that lacerated his life, fell beneath the weight of woe in Asia and "despaired even of life" (II Cor. 11:8). However, he did not doubt! "But we had the sentence (marginal reading, "answer") of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God" (II Cor. 11:9).

Doubt is often indicated in today's prayers. Whenever people pray for spiritual purposes which they do not seek to accomplish, you may rest assured they doubt that it can be performed. What else would keep them from acting? They do nothing, and they shall receive nothing.

2. ASKING AMISS: "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (Jas. 4:3). "Amiss" (kakos) refers to anything that is low, base, or mean. Requests that are selfish--"that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (ASV)--are as common today as ever. The result is the same. The petitioners "receive not."

Solomon is an excellent example to the contrary. When God told him he had but to make his desire known, Solomon replied, "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, ...for who can judge this thy people, that is so great? And God said to Solomon, "Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself that thou mayest judge my people,...Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour" (II Chron. 1:10-12).

Prayers that are voiced to improve party position or sectarian status are here repulsed and repudiated. Contentions among brethren as to who should be the greatest in the kingdom are expressly forbidden (Lk. 22:24). "Party power" prayers with a view to preeminence are sings of a sorry character. They are offered to satisfy and gratify fleshly ambition and are not designed to edify saints nor glorify God. They are asked amiss; they are selfish; they that utter them "receive not."

3. DEMANDING, DIRECTING GOD: There is a vast difference between a humble, submissive request and an imperious demand. Some do not seem to be aware of the domineering spirit that permeates their heart, contaminates their activities and abominates their prayers.

Yes, I recognize that we are to "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16), but this has to do with our recognition of free access unto the Father, not to our posture of heart. Haughtiness is condemned in all spheres of life. This is especially true before the throne of the universe. How freely and frequently we may come to the everlasting spring of prayer to draw its refreshing waters, yet how reverently must we bow to drink! The prayer spawned in a heart of tyrannical domination is a Divine abomination.

SPECIFIC NEEDS IN PRAYER

There are at least two items that ought to be integral components of the prayers of the pious. They are often absent, and this is part of what is wrong with today's prayers.

1. AID FOR BRETHREN: Do you wish to help a brother in Christ? Ask the Lord to help him. Paul received help from the brethren in Greece while he was endangered in Asia. "Ye also helping together by prayer for us" (II Cor. 1:11). Also, he asked the saints in Rome to "strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Rom. 15:30). Thus, we need to beseech the Lord on behalf of the particular needs of brethren.

Do you long to assist a struggling church in a distant land? Ask the Lord to help them. Epaphras was with Paul and separated from his beloved in Colosse. Was he unable to help them while physically removed from them? Paul answered the question when he said, "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, . . . always labouring fervently for you in prayers" (Col. 4:12). We labor and strive together, even when separated, by means of prayer. Greater hours of such toil are much needed today.

2. LOVING MENTION OF ENEMIES: Two of the most difficult passages in the Bible concern our attitude toward our enemies. See Proverbs 24:17 and Matthew 5:44.

Our Lord endured revilings and reproaches beyond our ability to conceive. Still, he said, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). Stephen in a parallel manner suffered in the Savior's steps. Despite the lies, false charges and physical abuse, he was able in the throes of death to pray for his murderers (Acts 7:60). The New Testament tells of the passionate hatred of the Jews for Paul. They sought to ruin his influence (Acts 14:3), to stone him (Acts 14:19), to kill him (Acts 9:23; 23:12). Five times they scarred his body with lashes (II Cor. 11:24). Was Paul embittered? Did he hate the Jews? No, he did as we should do. He prayed for them. "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for . . . , my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:3). "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). Could you have done the same?

When the above plagues are present or the specific needs are absent from our prayers, we are engaged in futility. If we will remove doubt, selfishness, and pride from our prayers and will plead for others, our prayers will arise from the altar of our lips as sweet-smelling savours. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16).

Today's prayers must be molded after the Master's, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus, however, did not pray merely to provide a pattern for us. His need for and participation in prayer was as real as his suffering and temptation. Viewing Christ's habits in prayer gives eloquent testimony of what is wrong with the prayers of men today.

CHRIST PRAYED REGULARLY

The Lord's prayers were not sporadic. They were not governed by circumstances alone. In the midst of his busiest teaching labors, when his personal popularity was at its zenith, "he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed" (Lk. 5:16). Jesus did not excuse himself from prayer by saying, "There is too much to do, and I have so little time," but who would have blamed him if he had?

He, the purest of men, found it necessary to imbibe from the well of prayer. Yet, today we "don't have time." Who is busier than the Lord? Will anyone claim that his schedule exceeds the deeds of Jesus? If not, our course is before us. We must "pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:21), and continue "instant in prayer" (Rom. 12:12).

CHRIST PRAYED ALONE

"And he withdrew himself...and prayed" (Lk. 5:16). How many prayers do you offer that are not in the assemblies of the saints or around the kitchen table? Think about it. We have record of the fact that Jesus prayed publicly, but he also found it necessary to withdraw himself.

Prayer is not a public ritual. It is a private, personal matter even if engaged in with others. But I fear some saints entertain the idea that the only time one can pray is during worship services or around the dinner table. If the Lord found it essential to go apart from his disciples and cast himself down in prayer, should we not also? Or, are we stronger than he? Are we less susceptible to the

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distractions of sin? The lack of private prayer is what is wrong with today's prayer.

CHRIST PRAYED WITH THE OCCASION

A casual consideration of the Scriptures reveals that Christ's prayers were adapted to the needs of the hour. He appropriately prayed for the disciples as he was about to leave them. His words at the tomb of Lazarus were to the point. When we are prompted to pray, our prayer should be the product of the spiritual situation. I once visited in the home of a very devout Christian. I arrived at the lunch hour. When he offered thanks, he said, "Heavenly Father, we thank thee for this food. In Christ's name, Amen." At the time, I was stricken by the simplicity of it, but what else needed to be said?

Some prayers should be outlined and preached! There are those who can not engage in a brief prayer. Every prayer is long, aimless, rambling. No, I am not opposed to long prayers. Christ prayed all night (Lk. 6:12). However, a prayer need not be a lengthy oration on the state of the nation and the congregation in order to be reverent. Christ prayed concisely in John 11:41, 42. A few, finely focused words are often all that is necessary.

When the apostles offered prayer concerning who was to take Judas' place, they spoke tersely. How would brethren today go about wording a prayer for such an occasion as that? I am afraid that we would not be able to stand through it! Prayers today could often be shortened by consideration of the immediate situation.

CHRIST PRAYED WITH CONFIDENCE

No one who reads with any profit will think that I am charging the Lord with a lack of humility. When I say "with confidence," I have reference to statements such as are found in the moving and memorable petition of John 17. Jesus stated what he had done and positively expressed hope in the Father's continued blessing.

One should not say, "Save us, if it be thy will," or "Forgive us our sins as we repent and turn from them, if it be thy will." Of course, it is his will to forgive and save! Today's prayers need to express more assurance. For example, "If we are faithful unto death, we know that we shall be saved." Such statements manifest greater trust in God because they are resting in the promise that is promised us, even eternal life.

CHRIST PRAYED WITH THANKSGIVING

Our Lord let his requests be made known unto the Father, however, he did so as Paul admonishes us to do, i. e., "with thanksgiving" (Phil. 4:6). The thoughtless, thankless heart stands on the brim and brink of apostasy (Rom. 1:21). It is the retarded child of God who beseeches without a word of thanks. Is it not significant that the Savior's prayers were initiated with, "I thank thee, O Father" (Lk. 10:16), and "Father, I thank thee" (Jn. 10:41)? Inventory your prayers. How many of them begin with gratitude for God's graciousness? If we truly want to imitate and emulate our Lord's example, we must start more of our prayers today with sincere expressions of thankfulness.

CONCLUSION

There is no fault in today's prayers that can not be cured by application of the Lord's pattern of petition. If we are ever "to walk, even as he walked" (I Jn. 2:6), we must learn to pray as he prayed.

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"...is it right to call my brother doctor (of theology), even though he has had a four-year course of religious, specialized training?"

--TENN.

In Mt. 23:6-12, Jesus severely condemned the wearing of such religious titles as "Rabbi, Master, and Father." He made the basis of his condemnation the fact that all children of God are "brethren" (v. 8), thus all are of the same rank. In verses 11 and 12, he states:

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Equality is the bed-rock of the religion of our Lord. No provisions are made for caste systems or sacerdotal orders. All desires for and inclinations toward such, spring from misunderstanding the teaching of Christ, and/or human vanity.

Some brethren are so desirous of being exalted above other brethren that they make religious titles out of scriptural words used to describe certain works God has ordained, such as; minister, elder, deacon, evangelist, etc. These same brethren condemn the Catholics for wearing the title "Father"! It is a case of the pot calling the kettle black. There is not a whit of difference between the two.

If a brother has earned an academic or professional title, it is not wrong for him to wear it in any circumstances where it will be understood in an academic or professional sense. But even academic and professional titles become wrong when they take on a religious connotation.

"Please distinguish between a sin unto death and a sin not unto death, I John 5:16." --TENN.

Readers who are unfamiliar with the passage under consideration should read it. As in all cases, it should be studied in the light of its context. Its context is the entire book of First John. This book has a great deal to say about sin, all of which has a bearing on the proper understanding of the passage now in question. Let us notice:

1. Christ's blood cleanses us from ALL sin (1:7).
2. All DO sin (1:8).
3. ALL HAVE sinned (1:9).
4. If we confess our sins God will cleans us from ALL unrighteousness (1:9).
5. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father" (2:1).
6. Christ is the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world (2:2; 4:10).
7. Sin is the transgression of the law (3:4).
8. Whoso abideth in Him (Christ) sinneth not (3:6).
9. He that committeth sin is of the devil (3:8).
10. Whosoever is born of God doeth not commit sin (3:9).
11. All unrighteousness is sin (5:17).

From all the information about sin in the Book of First John, we can build the following syllogisms:

1. By the blood of Christ, God will remove every sin one will confess (1:7; 1:9).
 2. But a brother can commit a sin unto death (5:16).
 3. Therefore, the sin unto death which a brother can commit which the blood of Christ will not remove is the sin (any sin) which a brother will not confess.
-
1. Those who abide in Christ "sinneth not" (do not live a life of sin (3:6).
 2. But some brethren commit a sin unto death (5:16).
 3. Therefore, those brethren who commit the sin unto death are those who die while not abiding in Christ.



James P. Needham

SIGHT



A Look at Contemporary Events
As They Relate to Religion and Life

INSTITUTIONAL ORPHANAGES: "COLD AND CRIPPLING," MANY HAVE "LILLY-WHITE" POLICY.

Louis Cassels, UPI religion writer, had an article in the Aug. 20, 1970 issue of THE ORLANDO EVENING STAR entitled "ADOPTIONS TAKE NEW TURN." In this article he showed how that many young couples are adopting children rather than having their own as a means of slowing down the population explosion. I was particularly interested in the following paragraph from this article:

Thus, they relieve two urgent social problems at once. They help to curb population growth, and they also provide the nurture of loving family environment for children who might otherwise wind up in the cold and crippling atmosphere of an institution. (Underlining mine, JPN)

The astounding thing about some brethren's preoccupation with escalating orphan care institutions is the fact that most states are phasing them out in favor of foster and adoptive homes, and specialists in the fields of sociology and psychology have long since decided that such care is "cold and crippling."

Such testimony is one of the reasons why the so-called antis have opposed institutional care. We have contended that it is an unnatural environment, and we have had the

testimony of experts to back us up. Yet in the midst of an emotionally charged atmosphere we have been called "orphan haters," even though we were the ones who were contending for what almost everyone, including the experts, admitted is best for the child. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" (Lk. 16:8).

Another interesting paragraph from this article reads as follows:

There is a particularly acute shortage of adoptive parents for black and racially mixed children. Of 195,000 black children born out of wedlock last year, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare estimates, about 30,000 have no hope of finding a permanent home.

It is quite ironic that the majority of the church supported orphanages operated by brethren who are supposed to be the great child lovers of the world, have a lilly-white policy that excludes black children!

There are many facets of the institutional orphan home promotions which contain no rhyme or reason outside the fact that they have served as a very effective tool in breaking down some brethren's traditional opposition to church support of separate organizations. Once this was accomplished, the door was wide open and now the "liberal arts" colleges and schools are subsidized from the church treasury on the same basis as are the orphan homes. As N.B. Hardeman said in the '40's, and as Batsell Baxter said in the '60's, "They stand or fall together."

EDITOR'S ITINERARY

Brooker, Florida
March 29 - April 3
Barberton, Ohio
May 10 - 16



Worth Repeating

Articles, Excerpts and Tidbits Clipped
and Snipped from Hither, Thither and Yon

Binding and Loosing

By Bobby Witherington

"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19; cf. 18:18).

THE ABOVE PROMISE, made to Peter and then to ALL the apostles, needs to be understood and applied. Obviously, the Lord promised binding and loosing authority to the apostles, declaring, in effect, that we should be governed by "the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). More precisely, these Scriptures have to do with the question of authority in religion. Christ knew that He would "suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Matt. 16:21).

Knowing that he would not always abide in the flesh, Christ stated the means by which his followers would be guided and governed. He elaborated more at length on this subject in John, chapters 14, 15, and 16, revealing that following His ascension from earth to heaven the Holy Spirit would be sent to guide the apostles "into all truth" (John 16:13). In John 17:20, 21 He prayed for the unity of all people who would believe on Him "through their word;" i.e., the apostles' word.

Hence, we see the breakdown of authority. (1) All authority inherently resides in God. (I Cor. 11:3). (2) In this dispensation, "all power," or authority has been delegated to Christ (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:19-22). God

18 (66)

"hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son..." (Heb. 1:2). (3) The will of Christ was revealed by the Holy Spirit unto His apostles (Jno. 13:20; 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Eph. 3:3-5). (4) This will was taught "by word" when the apostles spoke in the flesh, and it was recorded by "epistle" when the apostles WROTE down the truths revealed to them by the Spirit (I Thess. 2:15; Eph. 3:3-5). We today have these truths recorded for us in the BIBLE; more specifically, the authority of Christ for us is contained in the NEW TESTAMENT, of which Christ is the mediator" (Heb. 9:15).

We must not, therefore, turn to the councils, conferences, or ecclesiastical conclaves of uninspired men to learn what to do in matters religious; rather we must turn to the BIBLE, the word of God. It is all-sufficient (II Tim. 3:16, 17), and we must not dare to take from or add to it (II Jno. 9; Rev. 22:18, 19).

But herein we face a grave threat with reference to the word of God. Men seek to loose what God has bound and also to bind what God has loosed. In general terms it may be said that all men today have been loosed from the requirements of Moses' law, and bound by the requirements of Christ's Gospel. It was said of Christ with reference to the law and the Gospel, "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9; cf. Col. 2:14).

However, this fundamental truth is all too often neither acknowledged nor accepted in the religious world. Adventists would bind on us the 10 commandments, Denominationalists would bind on us instrumental music; Catholics would bind the burning of incense; all because these things were mentioned in that part of the Bible which applied to the Jews under the law of Moses, which law was "blotted out" by the death of Christ (Col. 2:14).

Following are some things which God has bound and from which men often vainly try to get loose: (1) The Gospel of Christ, (Rom. 1:16). (2) Membership in the New Testament church (Acts 2:47; Eph. 2:16). (3) The plan of salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-38). (4) The name Christian, which God's children are to wear (Acts 4:12; 11:26; I Pet. 4:16). (5) The work of the church (Eph. 4:11-14).

Nevertheless, many often try to get loose from that which God has bound by denying the necessity of the gospel, the essentiality of the church, the "mode" and purpose of baptism, the name we should wear religiously, the all-sufficiency of the church to do her God-assigned work without the aid of human organizations, as well as the necessity of living as God has required.

Occasionally there are those who try to bind what God has never bound, or who seek to loose that which God never loosed. Invariably, this results in dissension, division, and despair. Binding what God has not bound has, in many places, caused havoc among the people of God. Uninformed, opinionated church members, who pride themselves on being "independent thinkers," have often sought to make their consciences everybody else's guide. On the other hand, there are those who viciously oppose doing certain things the Bible has plainly commanded. One is as bad as the other. Loosing what God has not loosed and binding what God has not bound is an age-old problem which dates back to the garden of Eden. Let us be careful lest we commit these sins.

1901 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



(EDITOR'S NOTE: Response to TORCH has been overwhelming. Every mail brings subscriptions and favorable comment. We are deeply appreciative of the encouragement and wide-spread interest. JPN)

BLYTHEVILLE, ARK. "I...wish for you success in your new venture with the TORCH" (Gertrude Sansom).

MEMPHIS, TENN. "Glad to hear about your taking the editorship of TORCH...I'll send in a renewal in a few days and will try to send a few names...may the

Lord bless your efforts...in editing TORCH" (J.F. Dancer).

HOBART, IND. "Larry Hafley has told me that you are assuming the editorship of TORCH. I have not received the paper before but have always enjoyed your writing...enclosed is my check...I am looking forward to receiving TORCH..." (Mike Grushon).

ST. LOUIS, MO. "It was encouraging to read recently, and to have it confirmed by your letter, that you have become editor of TORCH. This will surely be for the good of all who have had an interest in seeing the magazine succeed...I am very pleased that you will be editing TORCH" (Gordon Wilson, editor FACTS FOR FAITH).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "Congratulations on accepting the editorship of TORCH. That adds up to a lot of responsibility, but I'm sure you will do a job nothing short of excellent" (Bobby Witherington).

Then in the HALDEMAN AVENUE VISITOR of 12-23-70, Brother Witherington said:

"THE TORCH BURNS AGAIN! Bro. James Needham has accepted the editorship of TORCH. This publication, a monthly, has and will continue to do much good. In a recent letter from bro. Needham, he stated: 'TORCH is going to be to the point. We want to tell it like it is. Brethren may not agree with what we say, but they are going to know we have said it!' I LIKE THAT! Get in touch with me, and I will see to it that you receive this good, truth-teaching medium. Anything bro. Needham edits deserves to be read."

While this editor feels unworthy of these words they are deeply appreciated. With such interest and enthusiasm on the part of men like Bobby Witherington, TORCH just must succeed!

GLEN BURNIE, MD. "TORCH will improve with it's new editor. It has always had a place, and I enjoyed it when receiving the paper. I failed to renew my subscription two or three years ago. However, I am anxious to be back on the list. If you will forward the price and address I will subscribe--or bill me" (J. B. Grinstead).

PLANO, ILL. "I am praying that TORCH will soon become a light on the horizon as it was 20 years ago. You can do it" (Larry Ray Hafley).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "I...will certainly be interested in reading it (TORCH JPN) now that you will edit it...I pray that your efforts as editor of TORCH will be fruitful and will add much to the battle for truth and right" (Connie Adams).

OLD HICKORY, TENN. "We hope the magazine is a big success and are looking forward to receiving it" (Al Collins).

PLAINFIELD, IND. "Just read the TORCH today, and I find this issue a master piece, so I thought it might be possible to get 100 of this issue...to go in our tract rack, for this is something so many people need....I want to congratulate you on this work that you are so able to perform...I'll try to get some more subscriptions" (Thomas Long).

MIDDLETOWN, KY. "Congratulations on your becoming editor of TORCH. I know you will be a great asset to the paper" (Clayton Estes).

BLYTHEVILLE, ARK. "From a dimly shining and often flickering hint of light it is refreshing indeed to see a brightly shining gleam in TORCH that brings bright rays of hope for better days both for the magazine and for the cause we love and serve...Your editorial in TORCH rang more like the peal of bells of the past bringing invitations to the wanderers and warnings to those who stray than any article I've read lately" (Harold V. Trimble).

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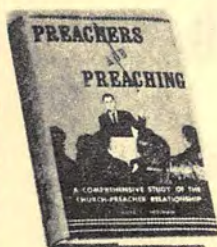
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TORCH

Volume VI April, 1971 Number 4

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Mini Message

OH, FOR THE DAYS!

*Oh for the days of clothes and curls,
When boys were boys and girls were girls.
When one could tell without gazing stare,
That a boy was a boy by the length of his hair.*

MIDI, MAXI, MINI!

*Thought I'd write a little ditty
About clothes, both maxi and midi
Not to mention that thing called mini,
Wonder when there won't be any?*

James P. Needham
2-25-71

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James P. Needham

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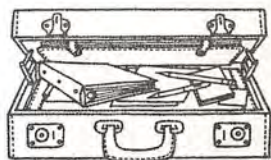
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



and Some General Principles

Abortion

Each generation must face new problems and discuss new issues. Ours is no exception. We have a tendency to feel that our problems are the most difficult of all times, but I suppose each generation feels the same way. Modern society forces Christians to face some issues that were unheard of in past generations. A new liberalized code of moral ethics has emerged, and matters are being openly practiced and discussed today that the most liberal would not have mentioned publicly 25 years ago. Like Israel of old, modern society cannot blush (Jer. 6:15; 8:12).

Gospel preachers are almost always in the forefront of new problems because they are expected to know the will of God on every issue, and thus to be able to furnish

the answers for which the brethren and the world seek. This puts them in a frightfully responsible position. But preachers, like other classes of men, come in all sizes, shapes and mental capacities and attitudes! They are no more infallible than other men, and it is dangerous for either them or the brethren to think so. Preachers need to be especially careful about what they say. They should never allow public pressure to force them to give answers they have not thought through, and which they are not convinced are true.

There always has been a strong inclination for people to follow preachers, to think of them as the end of all wisdom, and to use their ipse dixits as the law and gospel. This in spite of the fact that Paul warned us "not to think of men above that which is written" (I Cor. 4:6). The highest authority some brethren need (and have) for their religious practices and beliefs is the fact that their favorite preacher says it is alright. In some cases they are quoting something a preacher said when he was only "thinking out loud." (A thing no thinking preacher will do).

These conditions should make us preachers doubly cautious about what we say and endorse. Paul admonished Timothy to "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16). God pity the preacher who "shoots from the hip," and puts his mouth in motion without putting his brain in gear. Some brethren obviously have a "gift of tongues." We need to realize that the salvation or damnation of souls may well be decided by what we say, even in a thoughtless moment. A preacher was once asked why he did not write more for the papers. His reply was quite wise. He said, "I do not want to spend the rest of my life wishing I had not said it!" That is something to think about.

But we always have some know-it-alls among us. They can answer, without thinking and without study, any question the first time they hear it. They always have

pat dogmatic answers on the tips of their tongues, and can talk more and say less than just about anybody. Some seem to think that because they are preachers, they have the obligation to have a solution to every problem at any time one is called for. Such a mistaken concept often causes preachers to talk themselves out on a limb with a saw between them and the tree!

Today we have a new issue to face: **LEGALIZED ABORTION!** It is a red-hot problem in our time. And right away, some brethren have the answer: **IT IS AL-RIGHT!** Some preachers have already endorsed it publicly, and others are leaning in that direction. Only God knows how many church members have undergone such on the advice of brethren.

I know it is a difficult question. I know it is an emotional problem. I know that I do not have all the answers, and I also know that I do not know anyone who does! Beside that, I think I know some who think they do. But I know one thing very certain, it will be a long, long time before anyone has an abortion on my recommendation!

There are many "reasons" (excuses) for having abortions: the mother's health, the population explosion, the fetus is deformed, the pregnancy is unwanted, the family cannot afford another child, etc. etc. I have heard these a hundred times. They are all still "wet behind the ears." They have been "hatched" in the last few years since abortion began to be legalized. People never have any problem thinking up reasons why they should do what they have decided to do. I have yet to hear anyone take the word of God and show that abortion is right. All I have heard are opinions, and they do not weigh very heavily upon my convictions where such a momentous issue is involved. Beside that, the Bible says human wisdom is foolishness to God (I Cor. 3:19).

We are beginning to hear a familiar plea, "What is wrong with abortion?" Some people are always forgetting that the burden of proof is on the affirmative. We bear an affirmative relationship to our practice. Let those

who affirm that abortion is right, take the word of God and show what is right with it. That will settle all questions, and end all controversy. Until brethren can do this, they could do their own souls and the souls of others a great favor by keeping their opinions to themselves. A person has the right to hold an opinion, provided he does just that! In public is no place for a preacher to do his thinking! What we say for public consumption had better be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Otherwise we may mislead unstable souls and lose our own.

What I am saying is this: We need to be cautious about taking a public position on any issue, but especially one that involves something as sacred as human life. I am saying that this issue demands a great deal more study than it has received, and it is much too early, based upon the evidence I have heard, for anyone to be encouraging abortion. For many months I have been studying this problem. I have filed everything I have found on it in current media. I am shocked and dismayed at some of the things I read about in this area of human activity. I would like to encourage others to give this matter serious study, and give us the benefit of their study. TORCH is interested in VITAL issues. No issue is more vital right now than this one. Let us have some in-depth writing on this matter. I have asked a brother who is a physician, and an elder in the church to write an article on the subject for TORCH. I have received no response from him, so do not know if he is complying. There are other brethren who are qualified to discuss this matter both from a Biblical and a medical standpoint. They can do us all a great service by sharing their knowledge with us. I know everyone is busy, but if we are too busy to discuss such a far reaching practice as terminating a human life, we need to get rid of some of our business!

Meanwhile, I am going to continue studying for myself. I hope you will also. We hope to have some worthwhile articles on this subject from qualified sources in the near future. May God bless us as we sincerely seek to find a scriptural answer to this problem.

A Lesson from a Salesman

Leo Rogol

We often tend to become discouraged over the lack of conversions today. It seems that in many places churches have come to a grinding halt as far as growth is concerned. I often hear brethren blame present-day conditions in society for the cause of this slow-down in conversions. We often say godlessness, materialism, corruption, and such like are the reasons why we are not converting many today. I do not believe there is as much weight in these arguments as do some brethren.

In reality, this amounts to "passing the buck," or shifting the blame. I believe the reason for lack of conversions is the lack of real, genuine conversion among the members themselves.

The careful observer of social conditions will detect a definite change in attitudes of people with regard to values in life. There are more and more that are simply disgusted with a materialistic concept of life. There is a growing rebellion against false values, hypocrisy and corruption. People are looking for something true, meaningful, real; something that answers inner needs which material comforts have failed to satisfy. There is a growing awareness among many of a need for God more than a need for "things." Yes, many are turning to pseudo religions because of ignorance of the religion of Christ. Many are realizing that true contentment and fulfillment in life must come from spiritual, or religious sources.

Truly, then, there is a greater opportunity today than before to convert people to God because more and more are seeking spiritual satisfaction instead of material or physical satisfaction. Hence the reason for lack of growth is not an unfavorable social climate, but rather, a sad failure on the part of Christians to reach out to save the lost. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

As I said before, the reason for lack of conversions today is the lack of real, genuine conversions among many members themselves. There is no depth in the quality of their spiritual lives; it is very superficial and therefore cannot have any real meaning in their lives because it cannot flow from the heart the gospel does not touch. Christians are to be "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14), but if by unfaithfulness and sinful living they hide their light under the bushel, then it only stands to reason that they sit in darkness themselves like the world about them. There is a saying, "Nothing cooks on unlighted gas." Though we have the means, or the instrument of salvation, the gospel, nothing will be accomplished unless Christians manifest the fire of zeal and dedication to the responsibility given them. A life that does not radiate the light of the gospel is enshrouded in the darkness that the light should dispel. For example, if I have a flashlight to shine on the dark path before you, I will stumble in darkness myself as much as you, if I fail to shine the light. How can we expect the world to see the glorious light of the gospel, if we fail to make our lights shine and sit in darkness ourselves?

Another reason why we are so often in-effective in converting people to Christ is people do not see in us what we try to teach them. Again I say, many people are longing and searching for spiritual truths and values. But if they see so many Christians swallowed up in a pursuit of material pleasures and comforts, and spiritual values are secondary or incidental, then certainly the world does not see in us what they are seeking, and consequently, we cannot convert them to something we do not possess. There is too much formalism in our professed religion, in our worship. Truly, the worship of many is merely external ritualism, much as that of the Jews in the days of our Lord. There is little or no genuine love in the hearts of many. Truth does not touch the heart-strings and cause them to vibrate with the thrill and joy of godly affections.

Many churches dwindle away because brethren waste their time in petty bickering, jealous rivalries; and ar-

going over senseless trivialities. Too many Diotropheses in the church love to have preeminence (III John 9) and the scope of their "spiritual" exercise is stirring up factions or divisions among the brethren. Yet, should one attempt to arouse them out of their spiritual stupor, they are accused of being "innovators," and "troublers of Israel," and their characters and motives are impugned. Oh yes, they swell the chest in pride as they condemn the denominations for unscriptural doctrines and practices, and in hypocritical piety, they consign them to the everlasting torments of hell. Having thus denounced these unholy sectarians, they feel they have fulfilled their duty as "the faithful" and wash their hands free from the blood of all men.

Should a non-member visit such churches and witness these deplorable conditions, he would naturally turn away in disgust. And so with smug satisfaction the brethren sadly shake their heads and reason among themselves that the reason so few are converted is that the world today is evil and does not love the truth. Oh, how happy they are that they understand Acts 2:38! they can define "the right church," the "right pattern" for the "work" and "worship" of the church. What a pity that the denominations cannot understand all this! Brethren, can we not see that in many cases we are responsible for today's lack of growth and conversions?

In closing let me relate a story I read about a diamond dealer. A wealthy Amsterdam merchant came to New York to buy a certain diamond for his collection of fine stones. A salesman showed him an exquisite diamond and expertly described and extolled this beautiful stone. The customer listened but finally decided not to buy it because it was not what he wanted.

The diamond dealer then approached this merchant from Amsterdam and asked if he might show him the diamond again. He agreed. The dealer took the stone into his hand. He handled it ever so fondly and delicately and talked as though he were putting into words a great

(continued on page 11)

"BISHOPS"

Harold V. Trimble

Bishops -- bless 'em! -- are not as well known by name in the churches of Christ as Elders. Perhaps due to both the Catholic and Protestant uses of it, we shy away from a perfectly scriptural term in order to use one which is not so much abused. Webster, in Twentieth Century Unabridged Dictionary, says of Bishop: "Epi (upon) skopos from skopein (to look)," which literally means to look upon or oversee. Definition number one declares "early church: a spiritual overseer." Then of the Catholic church the Bishop is defined as being over a Diocese and under an Archbishop. Of Protestants Webster declares "In certain Protestant churches, a high ranking Clergyman with authority over a church district." The word "Bishop" could also mean a chess character; a sleeve; a canvas; a drink of port wine; and/or a bustle!

Disregard the non-religious definitions and think with me on the word "Episcopal" which, according to Webster, means "belonging to, vested in or governed by Bishops," and the word "Episcopalism" which is the "theory... that the authority to govern a church rests in a body of Bishops and not in any individual. Rejected by the Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church in 1870." Of course these are popular definitions of present day usage of these terms and putting them in one-two-three order, we have the practice of: (1) the early church, (2) the Catholic Church, and (3) the Protestant churches.

Now Vine, in his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, says of "Bishop" (Overseer) "(1) Episcopos lit. an overseer (epi over, skopeo, to look or watch) whence Eng. "Bishop," which has precisely the same meaning, is found in Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; I Pet. 2:25. See OVERSEER."

"Note: Presbuteros, an Elder, is another term for the same person as bishop or overseer. The term "Elder" indicates the mature spiritual experience and understanding of those so described; the term "Bishop" or "Overseer" indicates the character of the work under-

taken."

Now, having waded through Webster and Vine, and having a few years acquaintance with Peter and Paul, I find: (1) Bishops over a local church: (2) A bishop over a diocese under as Archbishop (Catholic) (3) "A high ranking Clergyman with authority over a church district." But I have not found in Webster or Vine or the Bible the definition which describes the Bishops in the churches of Christ which oversee a local congregation plus the funds of thousands of other churches! Such Bishops are not "over a local church" only; nor are they over a diocese nor under Archbishops; neither are they "high ranking Clergymen with authority over a district." If then these Bishops do not fit under any of these definitions, just what do they fit? You guessed it! They fit the Herald of Truth!

225 Lakewood St., Blytheville, Ark. 72315

A LESSON FROM A SALESMAN - continued from page 9
admiration he simply could not surpress. His admiration, his love for, and handling of the diamond only enhanced its exquisite beauty and value that before went unnoticed. The merchant then readily bought it.

Later, the merchant asked the dealer why he bought it from him, whereas he turned it down from the salesman. The dealer's answer was, "He knows diamonds better than any other man I have, BUT I LOVE THEM."

And so, dear Christian, before you can expect to reach the heart of man with the love of Christ in preaching the gospel, you must first put the love of God in your heart in the preaching of the gospel. Or, as Paul said it, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, ... and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all knowledge, ... and have not charity, I AM NOTHING" (I Cor. 13:1-2). Yes, many in the world are eager to "buy the truth." But they will not if they see we do not have it to "sell," or have it but refuse to offer it to them. Do not mutilate the truth of the gospel and then wonder why the world will not accept it. Preserve it in all its radiant beauty and you will be surprised how many will anxiously reach out to accept it.

Rt. 4, Box 39, Greensburg, Ky. 42743



Worth Repeating

Articles, Excerpts and Tidbits Clipped
and Snipped from Hither, Thither and Yon

As Others See Us

J. F. Dancer

The following quotation from the editor of "a leading Disciples publication" as he views the United Christian Missionary Society, the North American Brazil Christian Mission and the Herald of Truth is very interesting. "As a church historian, I would have to say that all three groups are on the way to closer structure. You are where we were at the turn of the century and the North American is where we were in 1917. I am amazed that a hundred congregations would send their money to one single congregation and let it and its elders operate the missionary program. That's a kind of structure Disciples couldn't affect! I read in FIRM FOUNDATION an invitation from Highland Park (Abilene?) to congregations all over the country to send its elders money to help support 100-plus missionaries serving under that congregation. In line with your last sentence, if that is 'being scriptural,' then I have no fear that the Lord will accept our United Christian Missionary Society and the North American's Brazil Christian Mission." (RESTORATION REVIEW, Vol. 12, p. 176).

For years the advocates of the "sponsoring church" type cooperation have been loud in disclaiming any resemblance in what they are doing and in the "missionary society." Here one who has no "ax" to grind and who can look at us from an impartial position says we are where

(continued on page 14)



What's Your Question?

Bible Answers to Bible Questions. Send to: James P. Needham
1600 Oneco St. Winter Park, Fla. 32789

"Would you please explain I Corinthians 7:36 for me?"
- Virginia

REPLY:

First, let us read the passage under consideration:

"But if any man think he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry."

- I Corinthians 7:36

The key to understanding I Cor. 7, is verse 26: "I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I say, that it is good for a man so to be." The entire chapter is a discussion of marriage under extreme conditions, probably presecution. Paul had said in verse 1, that under those conditions it would be better for a "man not to touch a woman." In verses 7, 8 he "would that all men were even as I myself." That is unmarried. He explains this in verse 29, when he says, "The time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none..." This probably speaks of the necessity of forced separation. It would be foolish to enter the marriage contract when they would have to live as though unmarried.

And yet, Paul is not laying down a rigid rule. He realizes that some young people were already in love, and contemplating marriage. He recognizes the pressure of passion and the necessity of relief in some cases. With this in mind, he writes verse 36. He says that if one is under pressure, "and need so require," having a "necessity" (v. 37), Let them marry, "he hath not sinned." That is, it was not a violation of God's law for them to marry, it would just be more expedient not to under the "present distress."

People sometimes misuse this passage by trying to make it appear that Paul is saying that under some circumstances pre-marital cohabitation is permitted. This is a perversion of the passage, and a case of wresting the scriptures to one's own destruction (II Pet. 3:16). All cohabitation outside of marriage is fornication, and there is no circumstance where fornication is scripturally justifiable. Any person who would so use the word of God had better think seriously about his soul.

WORTH REPEATING (continued from page 12)

they were at the turn of the century! Of course this is just his opinion, but it is the opinion of one who can look at the history of his own group and see the similarity in the activities of others.

Congregational cooperation is scriptural (Acts 11:27-30; Rom. 15:25, 26; I Cor. 16:1, 2; II Cor. 11:8; II Cor. 9), and in many instances necessary to getting the work done. But we must be careful in our efforts to cooperate that we don't make the same mistakes of a generation or two ago and just call them by different names. Calling the "missionary society" by another name does not change what it is! Of course there are many in the brotherhood who can see nothing wrong with a "missionary society" so long as church contributions are "voluntary," but loss of autonomy and loss of local oversight are the same in the end regardless of whether this loss is given voluntarily or is taken!

Brethren, we need to be zealous to preach the gospel of Christ to the millions who are dying without having understood it. But zeal without knowledge is a dangerous thing (cf. Rom. 10:1-3). I'm not suggesting that we lose any of our zeal to reach the lost -- we need more of it! I'm suggesting that we let our zeal be directed in a way that cannot be questioned and that will get the job done. The early church preached the gospel to the whole world (Col. 1:6, 23) WITHOUT missionary societies or anything like it -- just each church working! -- So can we!

KNOW THE TRUTH, Feb. 11, 1971



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



(Editor's Note: Judging from the enthusiasm manifested in the mail we are receiving, TORCH is coming alive, and burning ever more brightly. Our mail gets more encouraging every passing day. Again we say, thanks for the encouragement. We shall try to live up to your expectations. JPN).

MEMPHIS, TENN. "Just a note of appreciation on the work in TORCH. I received the second issue today with the 'new look.' The content is excellent and the appearance is attractive. I sent brother Farris a 3 year renewal for me, and 8 new names. Will try to add more on later..." (J.F. Dancer).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "...Glad to see you going into such a good work as the TORCH. We shall look forward with great anticipation to receiving each issue, May God bless you and your family in all your good works" (Jesse Lee Johnson).

GLEN BURNIE, MD. "Received TORCH today. Very good. The paper has a place, and a bright future with you as editor. Its arrival reminded me of my 'forgetfulness.' Here are 10 names and \$10.00 (Jb Grinstead).

GARY, IND. "Again, let me express my sincere desire to see TORCH 'lit' again, and hope for you a profitable and good work in this endeavor" (Glenn Shaver).

AKRON, OHIO. "Enclosed is \$41 to enter 41 names to take TORCH for one year at your club rate offer as of (87)

your 12-22-70 letter. I'm glad you are taking the editorship...I pray for great success. We need more good papers, if we could just get people to benefit from them" (Morris Norman).

GIBSONBURG, OHIO. "Your article on page 13 Vol. VI, January 1971 of Torch on THE SIGNS OF OUR TIMES, to me is directly to the point and should be in a tract or mimeographed for distribution. My eyes and ears tell me exactly what you wrote concerning the SIGNS OF OUR TIMES. The battle seems almost to gigantic in nature as I read your article and others that come my way. I think I have been in the best geographical location for some over twenty years to have had the opportunity to survey the TRUTHS you speak in the article. I have had the sad experience of being with two congregations that are 'SOUND' -- ALL SOUND!

"I plan to read this article to the Toledo congregation. Have appreciated your bulletin from Expressway, and your articles in other Periodicals. The best to you and those who are with you in the publication of TORCH.

"If congregations would PAY preachers as they should and treat them like BRETHREN, we would not lose so many" (Ray Corns).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The article THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES has received wide response and commendation. Others have expressed interest in its being put in tract form. One church wanted 100 of this issue for its tract rack. --JPN).

LEXINGTON, ALA. "...I appreciate what the TORCH editor is saying. I certainly agree with what you have written in the first two issues and believe what you are saying needs to be said" (Billy K. Farris, Publisher).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We especially appreciate the encouragement from our hard working publisher. --JPN).

GREENSBURG, KY. "...I really was impressed

with your article, READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Of course, I read it when you were up here in a meeting, but then it was not all completed, anyway, I got a fresh look at it and you really drive the points home extremely well. I am confident that paper will be of high quality with you as editor" (Leo Rogol).

BLYTHEVILLE, ARK. "I am so enthused about TORCH that I may impose on you while my intentions are to help, both with articles and subscriptions. (Wow! we like that kind of imposition! JPN). Power to you and it! Don't burn out a bearing. Take a little time out for golf and we'll play a game some day" (Harold V. Trimble).

EDITOR'S NOTE: I personally value nobody's encouragement more than Harold Trimble's. He is a friend of long standing -- a true friend. He has influenced my life as a preacher and otherwise to a tremendous degree. I owe him a debt I can never pay. He gave me wise counsel even before I was married, and much encouragement when I was trying to learn how to preach. I have known "Fran", his good wife, all my life. As Harold says, we were raised only a "wagon greasing" apart, and our fathers were fellow-elders in the little country church. I highly value their friendship, dedication, and encouragement through the years. --JPN).

GREENVILLE, S. C. "Just in case you have not spotted me, I am the associate editor of CAROLINA CHRISTIAN. I have just finished reading the second issue of TORCH under your editorship, and I want to extend to you my congratulations.

Your writings are clear, forthright, and to the point. You have said some things that I feel very strongly about and you have said them well. I thought your first issue was a masterpiece -- one that was worthy of the former editor of TORCH, the great and unique Foy E. Wallace, Jr. I certainly do not agree with all your conclusions, but I would be untrue to God, to myself, and to you if I let that destroy my appreciation for the truth you do teach and the vivid way you present your message.

I especially like the way you waded into Ira Rice in your second issue. I have said for many years that Ira is fighting liberalism with one hand and sowing the seeds of it with the other (in what you vividly call his "free-wheeling promotions" and his disrespect for the rule and authority of elders).

Although I am what you call a liberal, I would have you to understand that, in my conception, 95% of us in your classification agree almost wholeheartedly with most of what you say. I differ with you in that I believe the church is not a home (and that a child must have a home and that the church can provide a home for it when needed), in that churches can cooperate to do the work of the church as long as each church is left independent, and in some cases on individual action vs. church action. But we agree in saying that we must have Bible authority for everything we do. I do not believe that one (either an individual or a church) can serve God without instructions from God. Here is where, in my conception, 95% of us "liberals" stand. You are thus branding us "liberals," not because of our rejection of Bible authority, but because we have honestly and sincerely reached a different conclusion on how to apply certain Bible passages. This is the truth in a nutshell and I think this is what Ira Rice was trying to say (although I often differ more with Ira than I do with you). At any rate I am working and praying that we may someday reach common (but they must be scriptural grounds." (Howard Winters).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The above letter is greatly appreciated. I appreciate its spirit and its attitude. I shall make brief comments about three or four statements in the letter.

(1) I know "the church is not a home" but it can provide a home for one for whom it is scripturally responsible. But this is not what "liberal" churches are doing. They are not providing a home for the needy, a human board incorporated under the laws of the civil state is providing the home with the churches' money. I also

know that the church is not a sack of potatoes, but it can provide such for those who need it, if they are its responsibility. But the church cannot send money to the board of directors of Potatoes Incorporated that it may provide potatoes for the churches needy.

(2) I too believe that "churches can cooperate to do the work of the church as long as each church is left independent." But the "liberal" churches are not engaging in cooperation in which churches are "left independent." When a church surrenders its money for evangelism to a sponsoring church, it is not "left independent" to the degree that it surrenders the right to direct how that money shall be spent. In such a case, either the sending or the receiving church loses its independence. If the sending church surrenders its right to say how the money shall be spent, to that degree it loses its independence. If the receiving church is told by the sending churches how to spend the money they send, then the receiving church has lost some of its independence because the sending church is now dictating what it shall do. It is no longer completely independent, because it is being subjected to outside control. If such does not destroy congregational independence, neither did the missionary society.

(3) Our brother's statement that "You are branding us 'liberals' not because of our rejection of Bible authority, but because we have honestly and sincerely reached a different conclusion on how to apply certain Bible passages" makes me look rather ugly on the surface, but such a statement is an oversimplification of the problem. Our difference with our "liberal" brethren is more basic than a difference in "conclusion on how to apply certain Bible passages." Our difference is in our whole approach to Bible authority and how it is established. We call our brethren "liberal" because they have taken certain liberties with Biblical authority, not because we happen to differ on how to apply a passage or two.

Our brother says they have not rejected Bible authority and should not be called "liberal." Is he saying that liberalism is rejection of Bible authority? If so, then

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those who introduced the missionary society and instrumental music were not liberals because they did not reject Bible authority. I will go even further than that and say that those Ira Rice calls liberal have not rejected Bible authority, to hear them tell it. Out-right atheists are about the only folks I know of who openly reject Bible authority. Nearly all religious people in this country claim Bible authority for their practices, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating, not in the cook's claims! If we are going to wait for people to openly deny Bible authority before charging them with liberalism, we are going to have a long wait! Besides, when folks finally get around to that, it is too late to save them.

It is very possible that brother Winters and I are closer together than I had thought. If so, I rejoice. I think however, that we need more elaboration of our differences. I would like to propose that he and I engage in an exchange of articles in the CAROLINA CHRISTIAN and TORCH. If we are as close together as he seems to think, we desperately need to work out the differences that remain. He says he is "working and praying that we may someday reach common (but they must be scriptural) grounds." What better way is there to work for unity than to talk about our differences in a brotherly manner. I shall look forward to a response from brother Winters. I express again my highest gratitude for his letter and his kindly disposition. --JPN).

HOBART, IND. "Thank you once again for what appears to be an increasingly valuable paper. I wish you every success and will try to promote the paper at every opportunity." (Mike Grushon).

DALLAS, TEX. "I am enclosing a check for \$31.00 for 29 new subscriptions plus one two year renewal... We will be looking forward to receiving TORCH magazine and wish you much success in this endeavor" (Leo Christ).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "We hope your magazing is successful and you can reach many people with the truth" (Joe and Dorothy Dunaway).

"Church Buildings"

Donald R. Givens

To begin with, I think church buildings are wonderful tools if used properly and scripturally. I believe a nice, adequate and functional church building can be a help in the work of the Lord, and I believe there is generic authority for them (Heb. 10:25; Js. 2:2). BUT I am also thoroughly convinced that church buildings can be a profound hinderance!

Yes, church buildings (or our erroneous attitude towards them) have a tendency to lull us into the delusion that mere attendance at the building is the sole substance of Christian living. In other words, we sometimes think that religion is confined to what happens INSIDE those four walls. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Can you deny that some Christians act as if the church building is where their "religious life" takes place, and everything else is "secular?"

Yes, church buildings can be used properly; but I frankly believe that frequently they are considered in an improper light. If the big, nice, new church building is simply an appeal to our pride, we are dead wrong. If we desire one or meet in one in order to put forth a good front, we have let them be a hindrance to us. If we think that a nice new edifice will take the place of personal soul-winning, we are again dead wrong.

Sometimes a congregation will isolate itself inside a church building, and then the distant cries from the lost outside world are effectively drowned out. Brethren, I

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beg of you, is there not something wrong with us if we spend more on utilities, carpets, drapery and cushions than we do on edification and evangelism? Our walls of brick and mortar occasionally become as millstones about our necks. If you do not believe me, just go into a church business meeting sometimes, and listen to all the talk, talk, talk, about our brick and mortar, carpets and linoleum, benches and parking lots; and do not hold your breath until someone brings up a SPIRITUAL matter regarding the salvation of lost souls!

Can you deny that brethren all over this good land of ours are spending thousands upon thousands of the Lord's dollars planning, building, and furnishing, and keeping up church buildings... all the while the lost and perishing world is headed for hell?

Why is it that brethren can spend many, many dollars on the construction, repair, and upkeep of physical property, but when receiving an appeal from a gospel preacher who is sacrificing and without sufficient funds to feed his family, these same brethren "cannot afford" to help?? What book have we been reading? Where did we get our "great commission?"

What is the solution? Stop building and maintaining any kind of a meeting place? NO. But remember where the emphasis and importance lie -- on EVANGELISM, not on structures erected to satisfy our pride and ego.

Church buildings are a means to an end -- the salvation of souls -- and not an end within themselves.

It is the precious gospel; the gospel lived by and taught by PEOPLE which wins others to Jesus, and NOT brick and mortar; carpets and drapery.

With the love of God in our hearts; the knowledge of God in our heads; and the Bible in our hands, let us go forth as soul-winners for Jesus.

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We Recommend...

FACTS & FAITH

Volume I Number 8

August, 1970

MORAL CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

All human systems of ethics break down at some critical point. *Hedonism*, the pursuit of pleasure, as a philosophical ethical system, collapses when it is discovered that the pleasures of the moment have a sting in them; they bring pain in the next moment. *Situationism* breaks down when it becomes necessary to define an "ethical situation" where love is the only law. Those who read textbooks on ethics with a critical eye will find many inconsistencies.

I become more and more convinced that the Bible is the word of God as I find it speaking with a clear and unconfused voice with reference to moral and ethical conduct. It has the ring of divine authority. In the Bible the moral plane is lofty and noble. Right is always right, and wrong is always wrong, without any confusing of principles. Sin is throughout condemned, while righteousness is approved. Never is wrongdoing rationalized or excused.

The Bible even records, without apology, the wrongs as well as the good deeds of its "heroes." Books written by men, especially the biographical type, tend to play up the good in their subjects, while softening down the bad traits. But the Bible is completely objective. It tells of the lies of Abraham, the deception of Jacob, the adultery and murder of David, and the cowardice of Peter. And it tells these things *without approval*. If these same men are pictured otherwise as great men of God, it is made very clear that their spiritual greatness depended on their repentance and on God's grace. There is no moral confusion here.

Sometimes unbelievers will point to what they call "impure" stories in the Bible, which they say cannot be read decently before a mixed audience. But those who read such stories from the Bible know that they are always written in such a manner as to arouse disgust against evil, not lust. Sin is described in plain language, but it is never approved. No one has been known to fall into sinful ways as the result of reading such things in the Bible, while it is the testimony of many that they have been saved from those very sins by reading of God's attitude toward them in language plain enough to be understood.

Add to this the fact that wherever the Bible has gone, and has been obeyed, good has been the result. A rejection of the moral principles of the Bible has always led to degeneration and chaos. Such an one as Bertrand Russell dares to criticize the Bible's morality in his *Why I Am Not a Christian*; but this is the same Bertrand Russell who, in spite of his brilliance, was judged in 1940 unfit to teach students at New York City College because his writings were "techerous, libidinous, lustful, venerous, aphrodisiac, irreverent, narrowminded, untruthful, and bereft of moral fiber."

EVIDENCE STUDIES

GORDON WILSON, EDITOR

FACTS FOR FAITH

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MUSIC DIET

By RON HALBROOK

"The Wilder, The Better"

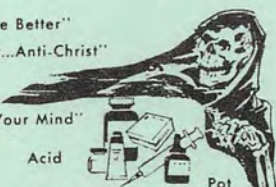
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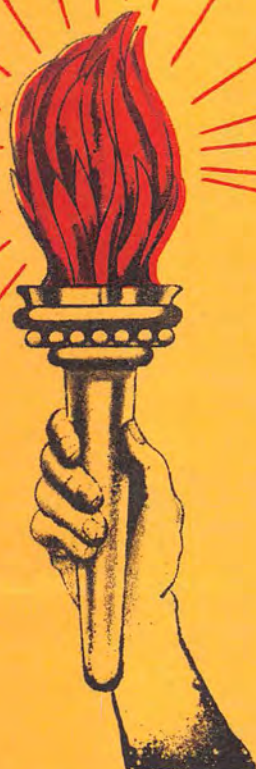
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TORCH

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*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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THESE TIMES

These are times of great confusion;
Of wars and riots, and moral contusion.
When right is judged by might and power,
Bringing us death and the terrified hour.

These are times of fun and pleasure;
Of lack of rule and moral measure.
When youth tries to find its role,
Without a thought of saving its soul.

These are times of devisive strife,
Of material goals and wasted life.
When homes to our country and beloved land,
Send us youth without purpose or plan.

These are times of generation gaps;
Of promised treasures without guiding maps.
When youth blames age for its troubles and fears,
But offers no better for the coming years.

These are times of the mini and mod;
Of religious confusion and the "death of God."
When men murder and steal, and cheat and lie
Thinking its life to live and death to die.

These are times like those that are gone;
When men gather what others have sown.
We're sowing today what tomorrow will reap,
Is it good and wholesome, or shoddy and cheap?

James P. Needham, 2-25-71

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Editor

James P. Needham

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher

Golden Rule Treatment Among Brethren

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

Men, learned and unlearned, believers and unbelievers, have marvelled at this remarkable law of "human relations." Its absolute correctness and timeliness do not surprise the sincere child of God, for he realizes that it came from the Son of God, of whom it was said, "Never man spake like this man" (Jn. 7:46). It is sad, but true, however, that this rule often receives more *lip* service than *heart* service, even among brethren. It is not surprising to find money-grubbing, dollar-grabbing worldly people ignoring it, but it is quite frustrating, to say nothing of disgusting, to see *brethren* act like they don't know it exists.

VIOLATIONS OF THE GOLDEN RULE EXEMPLIFIED

1. *For a case in point, see POST MARKS in this issue:* A young preacher sincerely challenged the teaching of some brethren with whom he disagreed. The periodical in which the challenged teaching appeared, was started with the avowed purpose of helping young preachers. When one such sought an openminded study of a point of difference, they neither returned his articles, nor responded to him in any way. Does anyone suppose that these brethren feel they have followed "the golden rule"?

2. *Power-hungry influence peddlers:* Then there are certain power-hungry preachers among us who aspire to the positions in the kingdom which Zebedee's wife sought for her sons (Mt. 20:21). They desire to be second in rank only to Jesus Christ, and they will walk on anybody who gets in their evil way. They will smear character, misrepresent facts, misquote and misapply statements, and work under cover to chop down someone else so they will look taller. They will trample under foot the rights of God, to attain their nefarious designs. They zealously

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seek you in no good way (Gal. 4:17). They constrain one to support their scheme that they may glory in his flesh (Gal. 6:13). They "have men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16). A brother was once described in these words, "He is never a part of anything he does not control."

Words cannot describe the political skullduggery and the cloak-and-dagger shenanigans some preachers have pulled against their fellow preachers in order to feather their own nests at the expense of others. They will peddle their influence among brethren in neighboring congregations so they will promote them for meetings, even if it means ingratiating themselves with brethren of unsavory character against a godly local preacher. What do they care, their design is to further their power and influence, so they can write glowing reports about how their services are in demand among the brethren and how many meetings they hold per year. They seem not to care about the misery, grief and heartache they cause others, but let someone raise a little finger against them, and he will be crucified on a cross of vengeance and hate by unscrupulous means. One act of opposition to such characters and one's name is "mud" from then on--these individuals never forget it, or miss any opportunity to malign the character or destroy the influence of a supposed enemy. Their tongues are full of bitterness.

3. *The brotherhood promoters*: All kinds of promotions, scriptural and unscriptural have been advanced by dubious means. The promoters have compassed land and sea for donations to their pet projects, from both churches and individuals, with no felt obligation to account to the donors for the disposition of the monies collected. While many such projects have done much good, they are often just expressions of the promoters' selfish political ambitions; an effort to use the money and influence of others to build a *personality cult*. Whether one is a friend or foe to such promoters is determined by whether or not he contributes money or influence to the building up of the project, glorifies the kingfish, and keeps his mouth shut about any shortcomings he sees in it. The promoters are always on the lookout for new sources of finance and influence because past contributors are constantly learning the facts, opening their eyes, dropping out, and being looked upon as *less than worthless* by the "powers that be" in the promotions. Those counted as the

best friends of such undertakings are always the greatest financiers, provided they don't make any demands for *fair treatment* in exchange for what they contribute. To expect golden-rule treatment in many such promotions is to learn that they are not governed by such a rule.

The street only runs one way--from others to them. Reciprocity is a stranger! by such a rule--they often don't seem to know the meaning of it. One is supposed to contribute his money and/or influence and accept without criticism or question what the project managers dish out. It is often the case that those who contribute the most can expect the least. These promotions are frequently one-man operations--political power structures to promote the power and influence of the man in the driver's seat, but promoted by an emotional appeal to the great good they are accomplishing. The good the projects claim to do is often exaggerated, making much of the advertising false and misleading.

These projects often become more important than the church and the truth in the minds of the promoters and some supporters. To maintain the widest possible support, the establishment refrains from taking a position on matters they claim to believe are wrong. They are always looking for someone else to act as their hatchet man. They can think of a thousand diplomatic reasons why they should not take a public position on given issues. The real reason, however, is that they are more interested in dollars than in principles. Support of their pet projects is equated with soundness in the faith, and loyalty to the truth. Criticizing the church evokes no comment from such people, but the slightest criticism of their project, even if it is designed to be constructive, is a crime punishable by life in exile from friendship and good will.

Brethren with the most money and influence are elevated to honorary positions with strong implications that they should not say or do anything that will offend the establishment. And this often works out very well for people who are willing to trade a few dollars for a position of honor that may in turn give them an ego boost, enhancing their self-image of great importance.

4. *The merchandiser*: A prevalent example of a violation of the golden rule is the many brethren who look

upon the church as an house of merchandise. Today one can find brethren generally and preachers in particular who are exploiting their acquaintance with brethren for financial gain. Brethren today are selling everything from "soup to nuts," and are making a lot of money at it. Often they exaggerate the properties of what they sell, or make promises they do not keep. They may know very little about the business they are in, but they do pretty well in spite of that, because many church members are naive enough to believe that if a product is sold by a brother (especially a preacher) it surely must be good. (A better rule would be, "If it is sold by a brother, you had better watch it.")

Certainly brethren have the right to be salesmen, and to sell to other brethren, but they have an obligation to follow "the golden rule." There are two principles that we should always remember: (1) It is sinful to exploit brethren, and (2) To be more interested in dollars than in souls will cause one to be lost. Number two is especially applicable to preachers.

We have known of brethren who moved from one church to another, using the church directory to canvass the church to try to sell vacuum cleaners, Bibles, insurance, clothing, household products, etc. Some have had the brass to ask the preacher to write an endorsement of the product as a means of pressuring the brethren to buy. One brother sold insurance with a "scriptural" pitch. He made it sinful not to buy his insurance because one has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel *if he doesn't provide for his own!* I knew a brother who advertised his dry cleaning business among brethren of a given city. Across the bottom of his ad he quoted Gal. 6:10, "Do good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith."

One of the greatest offenders, due to the amount of money involved, is the construction business. Churches have done a great deal of building during the past several years. Brethren of all descriptions have been clamoring for part of the profit. Some have been accomplished builders, and have dealt honestly with the churches. They have performed a valuable service. Others have palmed themselves off as builders, who couldn't drive a nail in good soft mud! Some have gotten into the church building trade with dreams of becoming an over

night millionaire, and their main interest was in getting their hands on the take and getting out of town; sometimes leaving behind: unpaid bills, unfulfilled promises, inferior buildings, and disgusted brethren. These have made it very difficult for those who would do a good job.

We have come to a sorry state of affairs when we look upon the church and brethren as "an house of merchandise" (Jn. 2:16). It is sickening to see some brethren look upon other brethren, not as beloved brethren, but as an opportunity to feather their own financial nests. It is disgusting to see brethren who are more interested in selling something than in saving souls, and who will misrepresent and double-deal in order to accomplish their goals. I have known of brethren who pressured young couples into buying insurance they knew they could not afford. I know preachers who spend every spare moment during the meetings they hold trying to sell something, even to the point to taking advantage of social gatherings arranged by the local preacher to peddle their wares. More than once I have seen the local preacher's wife knock herself out to fix a nice meal for the visiting preacher and invite other members in, hoping to have an enjoyable period of brotherly association, only to have the visiting preacher turn it into a merchandising session, a sales meeting. Is that golden-rule treatment? Would these preachers like for their wives to be so treated?

Akin to this is the practice of promoting products under a false pretense. The host is to invite a group of people over. They are left with the impression that it is a *social* visit, just a *friendly* get-together. Once the party is underway, the high-pressure salesman takes over and presents a sales pitch to a captive audience!

5. *Employer--employee relationships among brethren:* Many are the instances of trouble between brethren in the area of employer--employee relations. Observation has shown that the problem can come from either side of the table. There is a strong tendency for brethren in such business relationships to expect too much of each other, and thus to violate the golden rule. If the employing brother is a lover of money, he will likely milk every ounce of energy out of his employees at the lowest possible price. He will demand more of his employees than he would be willing to give for the same money. He may ex-

pect his employees to give more work for their pay because he is a brother.

On the other hand, the employed brethren may think the employer owes them some special consideration because they are members of the church. They may seek to take advantage of him at every opportunity.

It is amazing how money changes brethren. We may think of a brother as a very loveable, dynamic person when we see him at church, hear him preach, read his writings, or associate with him in his home, but he may become a cheating shyster when it comes to business dealings. Where money is involved, he undergoes a complete personality change. He would not hesitate for a minute to take advantage of a brother, if it means a few dollars in his pocket. Some brethren even take pride in their ability as "sharp traders."

Violations of the golden rule by brethren in business dealings often create tension throughout all the churches in an entire area. Brethren who have been mistreated have told other brethren the details of the difficulty. An atmosphere of tension prevails and relationships among brethren are strained.

CONCLUSION

This could go on indefinitely. The point should be clear--the evidence overwhelming. These are a few common violations of the golden rule. "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you..." (Heb. 6:9). Brethren need to ask themselves, "Is this the way I would want to be treated?" If your answer is no, then stop handing such treatment to others.

We have no right to expect more love, understanding, tolerance, respect, or fair play from others than we are willing to give them. No person is a *prima donna*. Just ordinary common sense would tell a reasonable person that if he wants friendliness, fairness, respect, understanding, tolerance for his shortcomings or good will from others, then he should demonstrate such qualities toward them. We have to live in the world with others, and life has a mysterious balance to it. It is uncanny how people reap what they sow, even in this life.



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



ATHENS, ALA. "Dear brother Needham: I am thankful to be receiving TORCH, especially in view of your kindness. The first two issues were just plain GOOD, said some things that needed to be said. Your comments on 'soundness' came as water to the thirsty ground. You have said, 'They shall not pass,' and may God uphold your hands and heart to stand by that determination.

"I am herewith sending two articles for possible publication in the TORCH. (See these elsewhere in this issue jpn). In view of your guidelines on length, you are perfectly welcome to delete some paragraphs or otherwise edit 'SOME CHURCHES DON'T CARE FOR THEIR WIDOWS,' if you should wish to use it at all.

"The other article was sent to *The Spiritual Sword* with a respectful request to print it or let me hear from them in some way. It was also sent to bro. Gus Nichols with the request for him to let me know if I had missed the truth. This was back in October, but their response has been DEAD SILENCE. I don't mind saying that such inaction strikes me as mighty queer in view of *The Spiritual Sword's* avowed aim of helping to prepare young preachers for a defense of the faith.

"Are we who are younger preachers to be called to open-minded study, and then be IGNORED when we seek that very thing?! If this is the type of hypocrisy many young preachers object to when they turn to liberalism, then I will add my protest to their chorus!--not that classical liberalism is any solution, but I shudder to think of the effect on one of those young men if they should pursue open-minded study with *The Sword* writers and get the response of DEAD SILENCE! Is this how our (liberal) brethren propose to SAVE a generation of preachers?

"Of course, you did not print bro. Nichols' article and it is really *The Sword* who is responsible to print it, if anyone is. But since they evidently will not print it (or even answer my Oct. letter), possibly your readers could benefit from it, particularly those who are receiving

ing *The Sword*.

May God bless your every effort in the truth." --Ron Halbrook.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Judging both of the aforementioned articles to be timely, we are printing them in this issue of TORCH. We believe that they deserve careful consideration, which they obviously did not get from *The Sword* and Gus Nichols. The careful reader will be impressed with bro. Halbrook's sincerity as well as his ability as a writer and thinker. He does not deserve the treatment he received from those immediately involved in this exchange, but unfortunately, this is the same treatment these brethren give anyone (young or old) who dares to call in question what they say.

Brother Halbrook tagged it right when he called it "hypocrisy." That is what it is! Brethren Warren and Nichols have evaluated themselves as champions of the faith for many years. Brother Warren has prided himself as the great logician who can dispense handily with any challenger. Brother Nichols has earned the title as the old war horse! He has probably had more debates with denominationalists than any gospel preacher now living. Both of these brethren have been *trigger happy* when it comes to debates--they would debate the time of day at the drop of a hat! But since brother Warren switched to the liberal side of present issues, he has had *one debate* on these issues with Cecil Douthitt. He was so proud of his efforts in that discussion that he *threatened to sue Douthitt, if he published it!!!* But even at this, he is *one up* on brother Nichols--he has not had the *first debate* on the issues. He has written and lectured through mediums where he had an iron curtain of protection from the opposition. Brethren have tried desperately to get him to discuss these issues, and to this good day their score is ZERO.

Our advice would be that brother Halbrook not think that these brethren gave him the silent treatment because they despise his youth, but because they despise the truth! This is obvious from the fact that they have given the same treatment to men as old and able as are they.

We are glad to give space to brother Halbrook's articles, and trust that they will receive a careful reading and an hearty response. He is an outstanding young man, and we hope to have other articles from him and others like him as time goes on --jpn).



What's Your Question?

Bible Answers to Bible Questions. Send to: James P. Needham
1600 Oneco St. Winter Park, Fla. 32789

* QUESTION: *

"I need some help in understanding I Cor. 7:10-15.
Does the word 'depart' in these verses mean
divorce? Does the word 'bondage' mean marriage?
If an unbeliever leaves a believer, does this
break the marriage bond? Is the believer at
liberty to remarry?" --Ohio

REPLY:

There are several parts to this question, so we shall consider each separately.

(1) "Does the word 'depart' in these verses mean divorce?" No. A divorce is a legal dissolution of the marriage contract. One may depart without such legal dissolution. Hence, to depart is not equal to divorcement.

(2) "Does the word 'bondage' mean marriage?" Again, the answer is no! Verse 15 reads, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under *bondage* in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." If we were to substitute *marriage* for *bondage*, it would read thusly, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under *marriage* in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." The meaning is that if an unbelieving companion leaves the believer, the believer is not obligated to do the duties of a marital partner. There is no obligation to try to live together against the unbelieving partner's will.

(3) "If an unbeliever leaves a believer, does this break the marriage bond? Is the believer at liberty to remarry?" Again, the answer is no. The departure of the unbelieving companion does not break the marriage bond, and the believer is not free to remarry. The only grounds
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for dissolving the marriage bond and remarriage is fornication (Mt. 5:32; 19:9). I Cor. 7, does not furnish a second reason for such for the following reasons:

(a) *The principle of reconciliation in verse 11.* A separation with no cause stated is considered in verse 11. Paul says there are two alternatives, "remain unmarried, or be reconciled." If this is the command where no cause for the separation is stated, how would religion's being the cause of the separation (v. 15) change it? The overruling principles throughout Paul's discussion in I Cor. 7, are *peace* and *reconciliation*. Divorce and remarriage do not comport with this context.

(b) *The possibility of converting the unbeliever of v. 16:* In discussing the conduct of the believer where an unbeliever has abandoned because of religion, Paul says in verse 16, "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man whether thou shalt save thy wife?" Paul is telling the believer to be careful of his or her actions when your unbelieving companion departs, because you may save your unbelieving companion. This would hardly be the result if the believer divorced the unbeliever and married another!

These considerations make it impossible that Paul allows a second cause for divorce and remarriage. Persons arguing this must ignore the context, which is always a very arbitrary and dangerous practice. Someone said, "A text without the context becomes a pretext." A "pretext" is exactly what these verses become when they are isolated from the train of thought in progress throughout the chapter. We must always handle aright the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15).

Men constantly try to find a loophole in God's marriage law. We must not allow it to happen. When all the clever arguments have been made, Jesus' words will still read, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doeth commit adultery" (Mt. 19:9).

SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRED? RENEW TODAY!

Some Churches Don't Care for Their Widows

Ron Halbrook

The above statement has been used to justify church-sponsored institutions to care for the widows of a number of congregations. May we suggest that you test this principle or line of argument and, at the same time, test yourself. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith" (II Cor. 13:5).

A TEST

You may simply circle "T" or "F" in order to indicate "True" or "False."

- T-F 1. Some churches don't do enough missionary work; therefore, the churches should establish and support institutions to carry on missionary work.
- T-F 2. Some churches don't do enough to edify the young and old saints; therefore, the churches should establish and support human organizations dedicated to this work.
- T-F 3. Some churches don't give as they ought to; therefore, the churches should establish and support boards responsible to tell each church its "fair share," to conduct fund-raising campaigns, and to send out money-raisers.
- T-F 4. Some churches don't discipline the unruly as they should; therefore, the churches ought to establish and support institutions to handle disciplinary cases.
- T-F 5. Some churches don't sing as they ought to; therefore, the churches should maintain human organizations to provide highly trained choruses.
- T-F 6. Some churches don't use good judgment in building, maintaining, and improving meeting houses; therefore, the churches should establish a Church Property Board in each state to oversee the meeting houses.

- T-F 7. Some churches don't choose well-prepared preachers; therefore, the churches should maintain college-seminaries or a board to examine and certify preachers.
- T-F 8. Some churches don't provide for elderly preachers who can no longer serve as they did in the strength of manhood; therefore, the churches should maintain Retirement Centers for preachers.
- T-F 9. Some churches don't have properly qualified elders or any elders at all; therefore, the churches should maintain institutions to evaluate and ordain men for the eldership in each church.
- T-F 10. Some churches don't encourage women to develop in that great realm of usefulness to which they have access; therefore, the churches should maintain institutions to carry out such training.

EVALUATION

If you answered ten "True" and none "False" or ten "False" and none "True," then you are at least consistent. The principle involved is the same in each case. Here is an admitted problem; there must be some solution. Either the "institutional" solution is valid (expedient, lawful, allowable, scriptural) or it is not.

If you answered one or several questions "True" and the others "False," you may wish to go back and change some answers. Upon what principle did you mark some "False?" Why did this principle not consistently apply? Upon what principle did you mark some "True" and some "False?" If so, you will have more trouble proving *why any are false* than the leopard will have shedding his spots.

If you have answered some false, you are *not* necessarily "anti-widow," "anti-edification," "anti-cooperation," "anti-discipline," "anti-music," "anti-meeting house," "anti-women," "anti-preachers," "anti-elders," or "anti-progressive." It may very well be that you see an alternative solution which you can read about in the Bible.

RECOMMENDATION

It is obvious that some churches do neglect their duties. The first clause of each statement above is true, without a doubt. All agree that such churches must be taught something. The question is, "What shall they be taught--a human solution or a God-given solution?" The weakness of some churches is no justification for further weakening them by offering human solutions.

Weak congregations can be taught the human solutions offered above, or they can be taught the God-given solution to each weakness. The Bible solutions for each of the above weaknesses can be found in (1) I Thess. 1:8, I Pet. 5:2; (2) Eph. 4:11-12; (3) II Cor. 9:7; (4) Rom. 16:17, I Cor. 5:4-5; (5) Eph. 5:16, Col. 3:16; (6) Heb. 10:25, I Pet. 5:2; (7) I Tim. 4:16, I Pet. 5:2; (8) I Cor. 9:14, Gal. 6:10; (9) Tit. 1:5, Acts 6:1-7; (10) Acts 20:28, Tit. 2:1-5.

You may wonder, "But, what if the churches do not respond to such teaching? What are we to do then?" If people *will not* practice the truth, there is no human solution! They will simply be lost (Matt. 7:21, II John 9). That is exactly what hell is made for--to receive people who *will not* practice the truth, along with the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41, II Thess. 1:7-9).

You may desire to do all God's truth and yet find you are part of a church that *will not* practice the truth or anything else. Then, you are "unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (no matter what the sign over the door says). Or, you may find that you are a part of a church that *will not* practice the truth and so has resorted to counterfeiting, substituting human solutions for the divine. You, too, are "unequally yoked" (no matter how big a name the preacher has, what college he attended, or how sweet he seems to be). There is a divine solution for you. "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, SAITH THE LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Cor. 6:17).

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith!" By the way, there is a divine solution to the original problem suggested in the title to this article. Can you find it in the Bible? Examine your Bible and examine yourself!

500 Chandler St.
Athens, Ala. 35611



Worth Repeating

Articles, Excerpts and Tidbits Clipped
and Snipped from Hither, Thither and Yon

JUNK

Bill Cavender

Older people remember the radio "Fibber McGee and Molly" show. The McGees would stack junk in their closets. Fibber would absent-mindedly open a closet door and out would pour the piled-in junk. Molly would always laconically and loudly say, "Heavenly days, McGee."

Preachers are great collectors of tid-bits of junk. I suppose that if any one good thing can be said for preachers moving about every few years, it is that they have opportunity to get rid of accumulated junk.

Churches can become like Fibber McGee's closets and preachers' garages -- filled with junk! Many Christians are junk Christians. Many churches, in their inordinate desire to have numbers and big memberships, are no more than junk churches where all the accumulated spiritual trash of a city can find haven and rest. Many preachers, in order to make a name for themselves by "additions" and numbers, are perfectly willing to claim as "spiritual growth" all the cast-offs, rejects, discontents and dis-fellowshipped from other churches.

In one way at least, I suppose that such junk churches are good, in fact, almost a necessity. What would cities be without trash heaps, and what would families do without garbage cans, trash sacks, and attics to store junk in? The tragedy of churches being spiritual junk piles is that outwardly they appear respectable unto men, have a name that they live (but are dead), and claim faithfulness to Jesus and His word when in reality they are endorsers of sin, unfaithfulness and ungodliness, and encouragers of evil-doing and evil-doers.

(continued on page 18)

Discussing a Defense of the Faith

Ron Halbrook

The Spiritual Sword is an excellent publication. The work of defending the faith is both scriptural and relevant, to the utmost. The Getwell brethren of Memphis should be commended for this "work of faith and labor of love." We who are young preachers may well give attention to this publication and the Word of God that we may be "much more bold to speak the word without fear."

Some excellent material has been provided from the pen of brother Gus Nichols. All that we may glean from men of such rich experience should be treasured, as we search the scriptures. All such men would have us to know that our "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

Brother Nichols' article "Do Good Unto All Men," *The Spiritual Sword*, October, 1970, contains much pure water from the wells of divine writ. With gratitude for all that is good, the following thoughts are submitted for further study.

Quotations from Deut. 14, 16, and 26 are presented to show that the "fatherless and the widow...were fed of the tithe 'in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there'" (page 18, *The Spiritual Sword*). Did the Lord authorize the Jews to turn this money over to an external board, which in turn would provide dispensaries? Or, could the money be turned over to an external board which would actually dispense the goods? Would such be "according to the pattern showed thee in the mount?"

Acts 11, I Cor 16, II Cor. 8, and Rom, 15 are quoted to show that one church did "contribute to another local church...in New Testament times" (*Ibid.*). These and other passages show the goods can be given "unto the home of the widow and her fatherless children" (*Ibid.*, page 19). Did the Lord authorize the brethren to turn this money over to an external board, which in turn provides dispensaries? Or, could the money be turned over to an external board which would actually dispense the goods? Would such be according to the pattern showed thee in the New Testament?

In the study of church history, do we not find that the brethren were first disturbed and finally divided over the idea of external boards? Such boards were set

up to receive and dispense funds for the obviously good works of sending out preachers, printing tracts, and caring for the needy. The acceptance and defense of such boards signified a change in attitude toward authority, though it was not recognized by many well-intentioned men at the time. The change eventually caused many departures from the divine pattern. The problems of external boards are upon us again, some for caring for the needy, some for printing various materials, some for sending out preachers. Do not the acceptance and defense of such boards signify a change in attitude toward authority, unintentional though it may be? Will not such a change cause many departures from the divine pattern?

The Spiritual Sword and brother Nichols should be commended again for their effort to create a healthier attitude toward Bible authority. We who are young preachers have much to gain from careful study of those who would pass the faith on to another generation. But may we respectfully submit that any practices which are accepted and defended without the approval of the holy writings, will weaken the faith of young and old alike. In theory and in practice, in thoughts published and deeds actualized, may we all love one another and walk by faith.

- 500 Chandler St., Athens, Ala. 35611

(WORTH REPEATING continued from page 16)

I am not speaking of newborn babes in Jesus, of the weak and untaught, of the discouraged and distressed, of the persecuted faithful in Christ, nor of the penitent and contrite spirits who cast their cares upon Jesus, for He careth for them. I am speaking of those who were "born and raised" in the church but who will always be spiritual babes; of the constant critic, murmurers and complainers; of those who will not cooperate with elders or with other brethren in Christ's work; of those who refuse to give their money liberally, who refuse to attend services regularly, who refuse to feel obligated to Christ and the church; of those who sin against God and the brethren, yet will run off to a junk church harboring ill-will, malice and strife in their hearts, never repenting and never asking for nor receiving forgiveness; I am talking about those who are disfellowshipped and withdrawn from due to sin and misconduct who can begin attending a junk church and be greeted with open arms and friendship, and never be told they must repent and straighten up their lives and evil deeds and words.

MESSANGER OF TRUTH, Imhoff Ave. church, Port Arthur, Tex.

NOT JUST FOR FUN

SESSIONS IN SATIRE

SPOOFS, GOOFS, AND PROOFS

Paul's Third Letter to Timothy

James P. Needham

Dear Timothy:

I feel that I owe you another letter. Experience and new discoveries have convinced me that I was pretty harsh and unrealistic in the other two letters I wrote you. For instance, I admonished you to suffer hardship with the gospel; to make *full* proof of your ministry; to give thyself *wholly* to it, and not become entangled with the affairs of this life. I don't know where I got the foolish notion that preachers should get so wrapped up in preaching the gospel that they can't make a lot of money like the rest of the brethren. (I might also add that at the time I wrote those narrow-minded admonitions, I did not know how unfair with preachers the brethren could be).

While preaching over at Philippi, I converted a lady who is a seller of purple. She is quite a business lady, and she has convinced me that I have a fantastic opportunity to make a lot of money in her trade, what with all my travels among the brethren. (Believe me, after what they did to me at Philippi, I am ready for something else!).

Lydia (that's the lady I converted) has a real attractive sales plan. I can make a good profit on the purple I sell, and I can get others to sell under me and make a nice profit on what they sell. She assures me that I can get rich over night in this business, and I believe her. I could then give all of my time to preaching for small, struggling churches that can't pay (unless I can find a big one that can).

Furthermore, she has convinced me that this is not only an opportunity for me to make a lot of money, it

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is also my Christian obligation to spread the knowledge of Lydia's purple to others. You see, Lydia's purple enhances one's image so much that I feel like I owe it to the brethren to tell them about it and insist that they buy it from me. It is almost sinful not to share this outstanding product and golden opportunity with my brethren

Since I took on this new venture, I am a new man. My family says I am much easier to get along with, and all my neighbors act different toward me, you see, I talk with them about Lydia's purple now, instead of telling them of their religious error. I seem never to get around to that anymore. In many ways I feel that I am a better preacher now than I was before because I can say what needs to be said without worrying about where the next meal is coming from. It is impossible for one who lives of the gospel to preach what the brethren need to hear for fear they will cut off the pay. Beside that, I have found that one just can't make any money preaching.

Oh, I know I wrote you that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, but that, really, is debateable. I do know this: the brethren are not going to take care of me when I am old, so why should I give so much of my time to preaching the gospel and saving souls that I neglect the all-important matter of saving dollars for my later years? Beside that, I am tired of having to move every two or three years! What's more, I may never get this golden opportunity again.

Timothy, I have been a seller of purple only a short time, and already I am making several thousand per month. Not only am I selling a lot of purple in my meetings, I have signed up some of the leading preachers in the brotherhood including Cephas and Apollos--which reminds me of one of my biggest success stories over at Corinth. You know those enterprising Corinthians! I have so many brethren in that church selling purple, that some people are referring to it as the purple church! The brethren have decals all over their chariots advertising LYDIA'S PURPLE. It is really something to see! They even gather in little groups at the services according to which preacher signed them up to sell purple. Some are saying, "I sell for Paul," others, "I sell for Apollos," and yet others,

"I sell for Cephas." They really have a rivalry going. Each group is trying to out-do the other, and all they talk about before and after (and sometimes during) the services, is how much purple they sold last week. Those Corinthians have made me a lot of money! In fact, business is so good over there that I am seriously considering settling down there and just preaching as I have opportunity, which probably won't be very often. But it is just as well, I have developed this thing to the point now, that I have very little time for preaching any way, except maybe on Sunday. I want you and the brethren everywhere to know, however, that I am not quitting preaching--no sir! I could never do that! Why should I? I have all these old sermon outlines I have made up through the years, and I can get one ready in a little while and make enough money by Sunday preaching appointments to pay my weekly contribution. Then I will be preaching for nothing, which is more than I was doing before, so I will really be doing more for the Lord than before.

Timothy, I felt that I owed you this explanation since I was the one who influenced you to leave the business world to preach. I feel that I have done you a disservice, and I want to make it up to you. With your merchandising ability, you could sign up under me and become a part of my organization and make up for all the money you lost while trying to live on the starvation wages the stingy brethren paid you.

Now, don't worry about the criticism from fellow-preachers and brethren. They are just jealous--they would do the same thing if they had the ability, and were not so lazy. Everybody loves money, and would be glad to make more of it, if they could, And don't worry about all the time it takes to sell purple. Remember, you are doing a service, and that is what Christians are supposed to do. Beside, just remember that the preachers who will criticize you don't spend ALL of their time preaching. They attend the olympic games and fish in the sea of Galilee. Of course, when they do this, they are not exploiting their relationship with brethren to make money, but it is best to play down this angle. Don't ever allow that notion to become widespread. Always deal with the matter positively. Say that you have found an outstanding product that has done a lot of good for you, and you feel

obligated to tell your brethren about it. I have found this the most effective defense, and one most brethren can't meet.

So, if you are interested, Timothy, and I feel like you will be, just drop your work there at Ephesus and come over and spend a few days with me and I will sign you up, sell you a nice sample kit, and train you. Better still, get the brethren there to invite me for a meeting and I will spend most of my time telling them about Lydia's purple. Also, we can call a mass meeting of all the brethren in that area, and really have a good week. In this way, you can get some valuable training and I can exceed my quota that sister Lydia has set for me.

I must go now. In the time I have spent writing this letter, I could have talked to two or three people about Lydia's purple, (I never talk to anyone without mentioning it) and made more money in these few minutes than you will make all week as a preacher. I look forward to hearing from you soon. I am anticipating an affirmative answer from you. Freedom, happiness, and financial independence are knocking at your door. Why not open it?

Yours for Lydia's purple,

Paul, Sales representative
(and part-time preacher)

P.S. Timothy, since this epistle seems to contradict some things I said in my other two letters, I suggest that you destroy it lest it become a part of the New Testament. That would prove quite embarrassing. Paul.

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*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

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"How Do You Do"

If you have no time for a medical review,
Never ask some folk, "How do you do?"
For they will think you're just dying to know
Of all their ailments from head to toe.

How they cannot sleep when they go to bed,
For the terrible ache in the top of their head.
They've got a pain in the back and side,
That hurts all time when they walk or ride.

They went to the doctor just a while ago,
And he gave them a shot for an aching toe.
Prescribed a remedy that never fails,
For their gout and flu and ingrowing nails.

He told them what to drink and eat,
And how to relieve their aching feet.
And when he finished their medical check,
He pronounced them to be a physical wreck!

But in spite of this, they say they're fine,
Except for a pain in their leg and spine.
"But don't you worry," they say with a sigh,
"For I'd have to get better, before I'd die!"

And so they say, with a painful grin,
"I'm really fine for the shape I'm in!"
"I'm so much worse than I was, you see,"
"But so much better than I expect to be."

James P. Needham
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Editor

James P. Needham

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher

Freeloading Churches

A Bad Situation Described

James P. Needham

Many new churches have been established during the past twenty years. Some of them have been necessary in order that sincere brethren might worship with a clear conscience, others have been started at the childish whims of certain over-zealous brethren who caught "issue-itis" and seemed to think splitting a church and starting a little struggling group in some store front was the penicil of success and glory!

But regardless of the circumstances which originated these many new churches, many of them have been dependent for 10 to 15 years. Some are no closer to being self-supporting today than they were the day they began. They have always been, and seemingly always will be, on the welfare rolls of other brethren and churches. They have become the brotherhood beggars. They know the Lord said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," but receiving is good enough for them! They are constantly on the lookout for some preacher to hold them a free meeting, or some church that will supply such, while they practice minimal giving and hand-me-down religion.

In some of these churches there is exploitation of others with malace aforethought! We have known instances where the question of a new building, air conditioning, new pews, redecorating the building, etc. etc. arose, and the basis of settlement was not, "can we afford the cost?" but, "what will our supporting churches think about it?" "Will they cease supporting us when they hear about what we have done?" There are several instances where such churches have spent considerable money for luxuries in the interest of their own personal comfort, but still depend upon other churches to support, or partially support, their preacher. Churches have been known to go in debt for everything but the preacher's salary! Somehow brethren can see a difference between borrowing money for air conditioning, new pews, etc., and making a loan for evangelism. They can jsutify the former, but not the latter.

This is not to say that all dependent churches are unworthy--far from it. This writer has held many, many meetings for such congregations, and was glad to do it. He

has also held some for churches that proved to be unworthy of his or anyone else's generosity! I have preached for "poor" churches at my own expense, when the members made more money, wore better clothes, drove better automobiles, and lived in better homes than I did. I have also held meetings for "poor" churches that had more money in their treasury than the church that was supporting me. I once drove thousands of miles to hold a meeting for a church which did not pay me enough to defray my expenses. While I was there one of the members who was in the dry cleaning business charged me a \$5 cleaning bill!

WHY THIS CONDITION EXISTS AND PERSISTS

But enough description of the condition. We need to examine the reasons for it, and seek some remedies. The following list of reasons probably is not complete, but should be of some help in improving the situation.

1. *Some churches have more money than time and care:* Some churches have an abundance of funds above what is necessary for their local program. These churches know enough to realize that the Lord did not put the church in the banking business, and therefore this money must be used in His work. These days there are always more dependent churches than there is money to support them, so there is always someone with his hand out where there is money available, whether it be in the church or out of it. Elders and other brethren are just too involved in worldly matters to investigate those who ask for their help. The easiest thing to do is start sending them a monthly check. That requires very little time and effort. There are churches which dole out money to works all over the world with very little knowledge of what or whom they are supporting. Their intentions are good, but their judgment is bad.

They may be supporting the preacher for a church which could support him themselves if they had to, but they realize they do not have to as long as others will do so. They may be supporting the preacher for brethren who deliberately keep their contribution below a self-supporting level, like the welfare recipient who refuses to work because it would raise his income and render him ineligible for his welfare check. They may be supporting the preacher for a church that has more money in its treasury than they have, but refused to use it to help themselves.

We do not really help a man or a church when our generosity destroys the incentive to help self. Such "help" hinders and corrupts the recipient.

2. *Some churches want too much too soon:* This is the instant age! Instant coffee, instant potatoes, and instant money! We see young people get married who think they must have everything their elders have--instantly! They want a new car, new furniture, a new house, new clothes, etc. They want too much too soon! Well, some young churches are just like them! The first thing they want is a new building. They often go deeply in debt to build one that far exceeds their needs, then expect other churches to come to their rescue and support their preacher for ten or fifteen years while they pay for it. We are aware that circumstances alter cases, and this is no blanket condemnation of all situations. It is intended as a rebuke to extremes and abuses. It should not be applied beyond that.

3. *Some dependent churches are not trying to get off the welfare roll:* Some churches are just not trying to become self-supporting. They refuse to carry on an active program of local evangelism. They may resent the preacher someone else supports for them because he constantly tries to get them to do something that will cause them to grow and become self-supporting. In fact, some dependent churches are dependent because they *refuse* to work. Instead, they spend all their time and energy in petty strife arguing over trivialities, while their neighbors go to hell. Some supporting churches do not have the slightest idea what they are perpetuating with the money they dole out. It is about time they made an investigation.

But what can be done to improve this situation, and get unworthy churches off the welfare roll? That is a big question. We may not be able to provide an iron-clad answer, but here are some constructive suggestions:

1. *Closer contact between churches and those they support.* I have been a long-time advocate of this for more reasons than the one under consideration here. Preachers who receive support while preaching for dependent churches, are often lonely individuals. They often speak of the seeming disinterest of the supporting churches. Nobody ever comes around, and they have a feeling that their re-

ports are not read, or at least, not taken very seriously. If we could get supporting churches to feel a responsibility to KNOW what their money is supporting, we would have the problem largely settled. They should send someone, at least once a year, to investigate the works they are supporting. This might not be possible in all cases, but some means of closer contact between givers and receivers must be found. Some churches are supporting works they know very little about, and preachers they have never seen nor heard.

2. *Pre-commitment investigation:* Supporting churches should always make an investigation before they commit themselves to the support of a work. If it is not possible for them to send someone to make the investigation, they should talk to or correspond with brethren who have knowledge of the situation.

3. *Decide on the basis of merit, not influence or friendship:* Some preachers have very little trouble raising support because they know the right people. Others ten times more worthy, may have a hard time because they do not know anyone of influence, and are relatively unknown themselves. Every week we receive letters from worthy brethren wanting our help in raising support. They say we do not know anyone, and have very little influence. This almost says that who gets supported is decided by who has the most political power behind the scenes. I do not like the smell of that, do you?

Support should be given freely to any work that is determined to be worthy regardless of friendships or influence. There are hard working, sincere brethren in certain parts of the country who have a constant struggle because they are not very well known in the "brotherhood." They have to depend upon someone who is to help them raise support. When brethren receive solicitations for help, they should make an investigation and decide it solely on merit, not on the basis of "brotherhood" influence, or whether the solicitor is a friend of the "big preachers."

When support is given on any other basis than merit, there is a strong likelihood that it will be given where it will not do the most good, and may even be given where it is not really needed. We should all be interested in using the Lord's money to further His cause, not personal friendships and political patronage.

Sound or Anti?

Leo Rogol

Those who oppose institutionalism, sponsoring churches, etc. are often dubbed "antis" by their opponents. We have come to the place (a number of us) where we use "anti" synonymously with "faithful," "loyal," or "sound." However, in far too many cases, brethren can truthfully be called "anti," but certainly CANNOT be called "sound." Their "soundness" may be likened to Paul's example concerning the gift of tongue-speaking: *"For if a trumpet give an UNCERTAIN SOUND, who shall prepare himself for battle?"* (I Cor. 14:8). Some churches are so marked by confusion, strife and apathy that, really, so far as being "sound" is concerned, it is very "uncertain."

I believe too many of us have a very neat, cut and dried concept of faithfulness. Simply because brethren have opposed sponsoring churches, etc., they feel they have *"really fought the issues."* I believe their primary motive in "fighting issues" was fighting WORK. They were not as much concerned about opposing UNSCRIPTURAL work as they were about opposing WORK--period! Their real issue, therefore, is work, scriptural or unscriptural!

Some consider it an unmistakable mark of "faithfulness" to be "opposed to liberals." (I am not trying to justify the liberals). But if they were hard pressed to say what they mean, they could not turn to the New Testament and define, or justify, their opposition, or even specify what they oppose. Neither can they tell WHEN or WHY one is "liberal." They can vaguely recall some names, or terms, like "orphan homes," "herald of truth," "sponsoring churches," but really, they do not know or care what it is all about. They have not the slightest idea what really is involved. ALL some know about "the issues" is that a "big split" took place in the "church across town" and "we had to pull away from the liberals."

Some brethren are "anti" by nature. They are ready to jump into the middle of any fuss and oppose just about anything and everything. They are fighters by nature. They are DISAGREEABLE. They do not have to know, and do not care to know, the PRINCIPLE behind any issues over which differences arise; just to be "agin'" something is enough reason for them to be "anti." I have heard it often said that *"Brother so-and-so is in the liberal church*

because his daddy or uncle is there." Well, that is about the same reason why many are "sound"--they went where the pull was the strongest. Or, maybe it is the other way around; a brother, uncle, or some other kinfolk is in the liberal church, and because of a personal, family feud, they went the other way. They just happened by circumstance to land in the right camp. Hence, the church where so-and-so belongs MUST BE WRONG because of a PERSONAL difference with a certain individual of that church. That is about all the depth of conviction some brethren have on "the issues."

It is quite evident that many who are OPPOSED TO UNSCRIPTURAL practices are EQUALLY OPPOSED TO SCRIPTURAL ONES. There is no virtue in opposing unscriptural practices, if such opposition is motivated by a negative complex. A dead "sound" church is no more scriptural than an unscriptural liberal one.

James wrote: *"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin"* (4:17). Failing to do that which is right and scriptural is just as much a sin as doing something unscriptural. For example, Paul wrote: *"...and he gave some apostles...evangelists...pastors, and teachers; FOR the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"* (Eph. 4:11,12). God specified the organization of the church "FOR" the specified work. Both the ORGANIZATION and the WORK must be what God "gave." Now, some churches have a scriptural organization, but are engaged in unscriptural work. Other churches may be scriptural in organization, but completely lacking in work--the "FOR" in view of which God gave the organization. A FAILURE TO ACCOMPLISH THE WORK IS AS UNSCRIPTURAL AS PERVERTING IT. Jesus said, *"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away..."* (Jn. 15:2). So we see that God rejects those who do nothing while opposing the liberals, as well as the liberals who violate scriptural patterns.

To illustrate: Let us compare conditions as they might exist in a conservative and liberal church in a given community. The "sound" church has existed for perhaps 25 years. By denouncing the liberals for endorsing and/or supporting the herald of truth, etc., they feel they have "fought the good fight of faith" and have earned their RETIREMENT. Through all these years they have not grown numerically, and are dead spiritually. They just "keep house for the Lord." It is hard to get anyone even to clean the building. They fuss and grumble about every

little petty triviality. Not one is interested in personal evangelism, or visitation. Even though there are some well-to-do business men in the church, their contributions are shamefully low, and throughout all these years they have depended upon other churches to support their local preacher.

In all this time they have not initiated a single program of constructive work. On the contrary, they have resisted such. As their membership is steadily dwindling, they cut back on what little they have been doing. They give up the bulletin or the radio program because it is too costly, or "it does not do any good." They will not admit the truth that they do not want to work. After all, if they can save money by cutting down on expenses, that will give them more money in the bank. Some brethren think a large bank account is a greater achievement than spending the money in scriptural work. God did not command us to "lay by in store" just to hoard it! Of course, if they can save money by curtailing some work, they feel they can reduce their contribution. Some brethren are very gifted at finding ways and means of saving money at the expense of badly needed work. They are interested in saving dollars, not souls!

About the only sign of life among them is the annual gospel meeting they hold, which is poorly attended by the membership. The preacher is expected to do all the work of advertising the meeting. He runs his legs off in the community inviting people to the services. Then during the meeting the song leader, or some other brother, piously admonishes the brethren to "pray for the success of the meeting" and "invite others to come." Of course, he has not even DREAMED of doing it himself. His admonitions are just a customary meaningless ritual.

Their time in business meetings is spent in discussing (arguing) what color to paint what; whether to erect a sign at the edge of town, and other trivial, physical things which should be INCIDENTAL to the main concern of a sound church. And then the preacher is expected to take care of these trivialities, if the brethren decide to do them.

When the preacher bears down on these lifeless, indifferent, "sound," "faithful," and "loyal" brethren, they become concerned about it--the preacher is stirring up trouble--we want peace. So they begin to think about getting another preacher who can REALLY "build up the

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church." "He has been here nine months and has done nothing but preach against us." And when they can not find a preacher to work with them (work FOR them, rather), they lament the "preacher shortage."

On the other hand, the liberal church, which has been in existence for only a few years, is involved in personal work (which is scriptural in itself). They are reaching out to contact the people in the community whom the "faithful" have shamefully neglected. They are consistent and active in their visitation program, and when the "sound" brethren see them surpass them in growth, they charge, "They will use any gimmick to attract people." The liberal church, although there only a few years, has exceeded the "sound" church because of an active interest on the part of ALL members--not just the preacher. They are characterized by peace, harmony and zeal, which to a great extent is lacking in the "sound" church. They have a daily radio program which the "conservative" church gave up because it "costs too much," although, as I said, there are enough well-to-do business men in the church to carry the program without strain, if they had a mind to work. I dare say that if I were a non-member and visited both of these churches and had to make a choice between them, I would cast my lot with the liberals because they make a greater impression of practicing what they preach. (Mind you, I say this as if I were a non-member and ignorant of the issues).

Now these "sound" brethren criticize the liberals for their unscriptural positions (and I must also). But their history of failure, apathy, and a lifeless spirit are just as unscriptural. Are they sound simply because they oppose unscriptural practices and organizations? Perhaps some brethren who share their spiritual illness would answer in the affirmative. But I cannot do so! Why? Because *"by their fruits ye shall know them"* (Mt. 7:20). Their history has proven that their opposition to unscriptural work is motivated and marked by their lack of desire for ANY work. The only sign of life among them is their opposition to liberalism, which they can hardly define due to scriptural ignorance. They have settled down in a rut of senseless quibbles over trivialities. That is the extent of their "spiritual soundness." Their definition of that term, however, is not God's.

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What Is Wrong?

Self Analysis

What Is Wrong With Today's Elders?

Bobby Witherington

The general theme, "what is wrong," deserves and demands sober consideration on the part of every child of God. Especially is this true with reference to "today's elders." For this reason I submit this article. However, I do so with "fear and trembling," being mindful of my own shortcomings (at least some of them), and fearful that some may be influenced to belittle the "office of a bishop" because of my portrayal of many things wrong with some (not all) who serve as bishops, or elders.

Hence, it behooves me at the outset to make certain things clear; namely: (1) I am NOT a promoter of the "no elder" theory. Example and precept affirm that God's plan includes having a plurality of qualified overseers in the local church (Acts 14:23; 20:17-32; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:5). (2) I DO appreciate and respect those godly, qualified overseers who are faithfully taking heed to themselves and to the flock of God among them (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:1,2). Their burdens are heavy, their responsibilities are great, and they deserve the prayers and cooperation of all under their oversight.

However, in a general sense, it is an evident fact that much is wrong with "today's elders." I sadly concur with the evaluation of bro. James A. Allen, as quoted in bro. H.E. Winkler's book, *"The Eldership."* Bro. Allen said: "The eldership is definitely the weakest link in the churches of Christ" (pages 22,51).

It is folly to expect a local church to rise higher, stand firmer, wax stronger, or become more spiritually inclined than its eldership. What is wrong with today's

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elders? We submit the following:

MANY "ELDERS" ARE SIMPLY NOT QUALIFIED

It is my understanding that one becomes an elder by: (1) qualification, and (2) appointment. But all too often, men are appointed who are not qualified. Please read I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. It is significant that both accounts use the word "MUST" with reference to the qualifications listed (I Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7). Furthermore, both accounts list the qualifications that must be possessed by "a bishop" (singular), and not the combined, or sum total qualifications of the eldership. Some brethren mistakenly believe that if one brother has *some* of the qualifications and the other brother, or brethren, possess the *remainder* of the qualifications, than the *eldership* is qualified! This type of reasoning (?) does not even make good nonsense.

It is not my purpose herein to present an exhaustive treatise on all the qualifications presented by inspiration, nor even to give a dissertation on the phrase "husband of one wife," or to launch into a discussion concerning whether or not "children" (plural) can include the singular term, "child." By and large, I believe the greatest mistake made on the part of brethren in general is the tendency to look out and select some brother who is a congenial, "jolly good fellow," who is married, and whose children have their "names on the roll" --- irrespective of the other qualifications equally important. In many instances these brethren do not know the difference between "stand up" and "sit down," have wives who "wear the pants" of the family, whose children are untaught, and who would not know how to *begin*, let alone "be ABLE by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers!" (Tit. 1:9). But they are regular "pew warmers," their wives are too, their children usually "go to church," we like them, the Bible says have elders, so let's appoint them! So brethren all across the nation appoint the *unfed* and expect *them* to be able to "feed the flock!"

SOME DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS THEIR WORK

The expression, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Tim. 3:1), suggests that *work is involved*. Elders must not be mere "figureheads,"

"yes men," or "office holders." They have work to do. The "office of a bishop" and the "work" of a bishop constitutes two things which "God hath joined together," and which man must not "put asunder."

But what is their work? Some (by their practice) seem to think that their work consists of: (1) "meeting and greeting," (2) seeing that the preacher is paid, (3) looking after the building and grounds, and (4) maybe occasionally teaching a Bible class. In all too many instances this is just about the sum total of what some "elders" do as elders. They fail to distinguish the difference between overseeing the meeting house and taking heed "to all the flock" (Acts 20:28).

Regarding the work of elders much can be learned simply by studying the different Greek and English words by which they are designated. There are three Greek words and six corresponding English words which suggest the nature of their work. These words are (1) "*Presbuteros*," translated *Elder* or *Presbyter*; (2) "*Episkopos*," translated *Bishop* or *Overseer*; and (3) "*Poimen*," translated *Shepherd* or *Pastor*. These words are used interchangeably and often refer to one body of men, the elders of a local church.

Looking at the first term more closely, we find that *Presbuteros* is used with respect to: (1) AGE (Lk. 15:25; Acts 2:17; I Tim. 3:1), and (2) RANK or OFFICE, whether used with reference to the Jewish Sanhedrin (Matt. 16:21; Acts 4:5,23, *et. al.*), or "those who in separate cities managed public affairs and administered justice" (Lk. 7:3), or among Christians, with reference to "those who presided over the assemblies (or church)" (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17; I Pet. 5:1,5; *et. al.*). "The title '*episkopos*' (overseer) denotes the function; '*presbuteros*' (elder, presbyter) the dignity." (See *Thayer's Lexicon*, page 536 and 537). It is significant that the word "*Presbuteros*," when used with respect to rank, or office, referred to people who possessed *authority* and *solemn responsibility*. I deem it nothing short of preposterous that some, who pose as Gospel preachers, would *deny* that the eldership constitutes an "office" with authority! Of course, the authority is both outlined and limited by divine decree, but it is present nevertheless. However, the sin is great, and the consequences are disastrous when men of authority do not know the nature of their

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authority, and when men of responsibility refuse to fulfill their responsibility.

Basically, the work of elders is two fold: (1) taking "heed" to themselves, and (2) taking "heed...to all the flock" (Acts 20:28). However, much is involved in this two-fold work. Those who take "heed" unto *themselves*: (1) look to "the word of his grace" (Acts 20:32); (2) examine themselves, whether they "be in the faith" (II Cor. 13:5); (3) "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18); (4) hold "fast the faithful word" (Tit. 1:9); (5) and are both "hearers" AND "doers of the word" (James 1:22). Godly elders, who take heed "*to all the flock*," activate themselves so as to: (1) "feed the church of God" (the local church, Acts 20:28); (2) "admonish" the saints (I Thess. 5:12); (3) "rule well" (I Tim. 5:17); (4) "convict the gainsayers" (which includes using the word of truth to stop the mouths of "vain talkers and deceivers," Tit. 1:9-11); and (5) "watch for souls," (Heb. 13:17).

I think it significant that the word "*Poimen*," translated shepherd, or pastor, is used with reference to the function of elders. A good *shepherd* will: (1) lead by example (Jno. 10:4); (2) protect the sheep from wolves (Jno. 10:11-13); and (3) seek to round up and restore promptly a straying sheep (Lk. 15:3-5). Furthermore, a good shepherd will cut off ("withdraw" from, in the case of elders) a sick sheep who can not be nursed back to health, or one whose presence will contaminate the rest of the herd.

What is wrong with today's elders? As to rank, or office, some so conduct themselves that the "office" is disrespected. As to "overseers," many are *overlookers* instead; they overlook their responsibilities. As to shepherds, many, instead of leading the flock "in the paths of righteousness" (cf. Psalms 23:3), are being led by the flock. (It is a disgrace when shepherds demonstrate less zeal and less vision than the flock they lead!). With reference to taking "heed" to themselves (Acts 20:28), so that their "faith" can be followed (Heb. 13:7), some are so conducting themselves that those following them are being led down the paths of neglect, disobedience, and apostasy to the shores of eternal ruin.

MANY ELDERS WILL NOT "STAND UP AND BE COUNTED"

"To stand" (Eph. 6:13) is the responsibility of every Christian. Elders, as stewards of God (Tit. 1:7), charged with the responsibility of watching for souls and resisting false teachers, must have sufficient courage and spiritual fortitude to stand for right and against evil.

Many otherwise good churches have been stymied. Preachers have been fired; some have gotten discouraged and quit preaching. Souls have been lost. Sin has been condoned. Apostasy has developed. Much of this has happened because many congregations have been handicapped by the presence of some spineless, pussy-footing "elders" who were more concerned about their "position" than the purity of the church!

Elders, who are sufficiently Christ-like to love "righteousness" and hate "iniquity" (Heb. 1:9), can be depended upon to "flee" from sin, "follow" righteousness, and "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:11,12).

NOT ENOUGH ELDERS ARE SEEKING TO REPLACE THEMSELVES

It is a fact! Elders die too. If the Lord does not come first, not a single elder living today will get out of this world alive! Their mortality rate is one per person. The places are numerous where elderships were dissolved due to the death of an elder, leaving the brethren without a plurality of qualified men. Any good elder should remember two very important items: (1) No church is fully "set in order" when it lacks a plurality of qualified men serving as elders; (2) It takes time and consecrated effort for men to attain the qualifications required.

Hence, godly elders should see to it that such a program of work is pursued that will result in the growth and development of qualified men to be appointed and to serve in this "office." By the same token, they should so live their lives and do their work as elders that the young men coming up will WANT to qualify as soon as possible. Along this line, I verily believe that one reason why so few "desire the office of a bishop" (cf. I Tim. 3:1) is because so many, who are serving as bishops, have been so neglectful of their duties that the dignity of the "office" and the importance of the "work" have been impaired in the minds of multitudes.

CONCLUSION

One important point not discussed herein is the congregation. When brethren are rebellious, the members worldly, and the sheep are constantly straying, it is difficult for elders to "rule well." If it is God's will for elders to "rule," it is also His will for members to "submit." Many professed Christians are constantly berating the elders for not doing their work, whereas, in reality, if they DID do their work, many of these same professed Christians would be withdrawn from.

When elders "rule well" brethren should express their gratitude. Elders are human! They need to know that they are appreciated, that the members pray for them, and they should have assurance of the submission of the saints in everything right and Scriptural. The work of elders, by its very nature is difficult (though rewarding when done as God directs); thus, it behooves every Christian to live so as to help make the elders' work both joyful and fruitful. Speaking "evil of dignities" (Jude 8) and speaking evil of elders is a favorite pastime for many self-righteous, shiftless, lazy, busybody worldlings.

We should never condone or tolerate sin in elders, but on the other hand, we should never be so ungrateful that we forget to lend them our support in every Scriptural effort. Brethren, the hour is late, the need great, and the consequences momentous. Let us give heed.

Murray, Kentucky 42071

Subscription Errors

Even under normal circumstances, it is hard to keep everybody's subscription account straight. It is doubly difficult during an influx of subscriptions like we have had during the past three months. In addition to this, we have switched to a completely different system of addressing. This means that a new addressing plate had to be made for each subscriber. We ask your *tolerance* and *help* in this area. Let us know of any error in your subscription. Notify us if you know of anyone having a problem with their *Torch* subscription. It is never our intention to wrong anyone, but we will make honest mistakes occasionally. We are anxious to correct all such.

JPN

A Living and Abiding Word

Michael E. Grushon

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Pet. 1:23). The apostle Peter speaks of a new birth that is brought about through the agency of a message that has been revealed by God. Peter makes five affirmations concerning this word. It is powerful (effecting a new birth); it is incorruptible; it originates with God; it is alive; and it is abiding. Every Christian needs to have a deep appreciation for what this apostle has said concerning the word of God.

First of all, we notice that Peter said the Christian is "born again" through the word. This view is in accord with that expressed by the apostle Paul when he said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is God's power unto salvation because "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:12). Without faith the new birth is impossible, yet the word is necessary in order for faith to develop. For as John said, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples...but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn. 20:30,31).

Secondly, we observe that the word is incorruptible. Although not all men will accept the simple truth contained therein, the truth of the word itself is not changed. Men may "wrest the scriptures to their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16) by misapplication and willful arrogance, but such activities do not cast reflection upon the incorruptible quality of the message itself. Much time and toil have been spent by those who reject the inspiration of the scriptures in their attempts to disprove the Bible's claim to inspiration, but they have toiled in vain. The authenticity and purity of the scriptures have been maintained and capably defended by those who believe in the inspiration of scripture.

Thirdly, we see that Peter affirms that the word is from God. The Bible leaves no question concerning its

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origin. Within its pages the writers constantly acknowledge the fact that it is not their thoughts, ideas, and commands, but those of the God of heaven, that are being recorded for us. Thus Moses could say unto Pharoah, "The Lord God of Israel saith," and the prophets introduce their writings properly with "Thus saith the Lord," because they recognized that their teaching was the word of God. Even our Lord could say, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn. 12:50). Peter was right when he said, "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 Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21).

Fourthly, we must realize that the word is living. In this day and age many consider the Bible message to be dead. The words which are declared in the inspired pages are considered irrelevant to modern man with his modern needs. However, with due consideration, we can see that modern man is basically no different from his forefathers who walked and talked with the Biblical writers. The modern man of Chicago, New York, or London commits the same types of sins, uses the same meager excuses, and even follows basically the same types of philosophies as did his counterpart in ancient Rome, Athens, or Corinth. Therefore the letters to Rome, Corinth, Galatia, and the others accurately depict the problems besetting the church and the nation in this the twentieth century. Interestingly, modern man is still urgently in need of that vital message that can improve his lot in life today as it did in the first century, by making him a child of God. Not one thing has been developed in the intervening eighteen centuries that so meets the needs of modern man as the "old, old, story." The word is alive and desperately needed in this age.

Finally, we observe that God's word is abiding. Other schools of philosophy may appear upon the scene and then swiftly pass, but God's revealed will remains with man. We recognize that in his rebellion against God, man may refuse to have God in his knowledge, but the word still remains, and it is by that word that man will be judged. In fact, those who turn their backs upon God are usually well aware of the fact that it is abiding in this age. Is not deriding and railing against the scriptures one of

(continued on page 20)



James P. Needham

SIGHT



A Look at Contemporary Events As They Relate to Religion and Life

The Surgeon General and Evolution

In a T.V. interview on the TODAY show, the Surgeon General of the United States recently made the following statement:

"Man has a barrier that prevents foreign chemicals from entering his brain. This developed over thousands of years of evolution."

This is a fair sample of the extent to which atheists are seeking to brainwash the public with evolutionary propaganda. One would think that a man in the position of the Surgeon General would be a bit more scientific and objective than to make such an absurd affirmation. I am just sure that the Surgeon General knows that evolution is not a scientific fact. I am positive that he is sufficiently knowledgeable in this area to know that he did not state a *fact*--no, not even a theory--but an hypothesis; just an educated guess--going *light* on the education! Evolution has not been proven, and cannot be proven. It is a faith, purely and simply, just as theism is a faith. Evolutionists often get bent all out of shape about the absurdity of accepting anything by faith. They make this their prime objection to theism, and then turn right around and accept evolution which requires a thousand times more faith than theism.

How does the Surgeon General KNOW that this barrier around the brain "developed over thousands of years of evolution." He stated a scientific fact when he said such a barrier exists, but he "slipped a cog" when he sought to tell of its origin. He can prove the barrier, but he could not prove that it was developed through a

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process of evolution, if his life depended upon it. That is just a guess on his part, and a guess which neither he nor any other scientist can prove. I would have no objection to the Surgeon General stating this as *His opinion*, but this he did not do. He made a very *dogmatic assertion*, as though nobody in the world would question it. The very fact that the Surgeon General of the United States made such a statement will be enough to convince some people that it is a fact. Here is a grave danger. We all need to learn to do our own thinking, to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess.5:21).

A Living and Abiding Word continued from page 18

the favorite pastimes of atheistic philosophers? This is evidence that it is abiding because, although they refuse to accept it, those who reject it feel that it must be discredited by constant attack. In this age, as well as others, the Bible has been subjected to constant criticism from godless men, yet it remains while its detractors and their philosophies pass into obscurity. Truly, "The word of the Lord endureth forever."

Peter has demonstrated that the word of God is a vital force in all ages because of its saving power, divine origin, ageless message, and enduring quality. Therefore as Christians we should appreciate it, love it, apply it, and defend it. It should be our hearts' desire and life-long goal to, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

220 N. Liberty St.
Hobart, Indiana 46342

Coming Issues

We have some real vital material planned for *Torch* in the coming months. It will be material every Bible student will be interested in. It will be practical material that you will want to file, and keep for future reference. We do not have a large "over print," so if you want this material, you had better get your subscription in TODAY. JPN

SUPPOSIN'

Harold Trimble

"Is Christ divided?" I Cor. 1:13. Suppose the answer to this question is "yes." Then one could follow Christ while going north while another could follow Him while going south. One could be His disciple while going east while another could be just as faithful while going west. This is not, however, a likeness of Christ but it is a true picture of churches which claim to be following Christ. "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" I Cor. 3:4.

Now suppose each point of the compass were a church. There would be "East Church," "West Church," "North Church," and "South Church." "Is Christ divided?" No, but the church is! Christ prayed, Jno. 17:22, "That they may be one" even as he and the Father are one.

Just suppose that North, South, East and West churches were determined that Christ's prayer be answered and God be pleased in each. Would they not come together and agree to eliminate the things which differ and embrace the truth on which all can agree? If that were the disposition of honorable representatives of various bodies and such an agreement were made one of the first questions to be resolved would be "What creed shall we have which can unite us?"

East church suggests the "Westminster Confession" which, saith he, is an old and honorable creed. West church objects and suggests the "Thirty Nine Articles of Faith." South church sees the consternation of each as these suggestions are made and says "Let us take the Discipline." Immediately North church says "Friends, can we not all agree on "Pendleton's or Hiscox's Manual"? The confusion pictured is not exaggerated for it is a reality which is being more confounded day by day by the making of more creeds which means more division.

All of these men, being pious, realize "We do not well"! One asks Mr. West "Do you believe the Bible?" "Certainly!" What about you, Mr. South and Mr. North? "Most assuredly!" Then here is our creed (which means "I believe") for we all claim belief in the inspired word.

Now that progress is being made and the creed is settled, what name shall the church wear? Immediately one would suggest "East," "North," "South," "West," even as each suggested his creed. Have we not agreed to take the Bible? Why not let the Bible settle this? The church is the creation of God, but He is not the creator of creeds and names. The proposal is so reasonable that concord is reached immediately. Away goes "East church" as well as "East creed" but so goes West, North and South church and creed! In their stead comes the "creed" all claim to believe, the Bible, and they can just as easily allow the Lord to settle the matter of what the church should be called. Any, and all scriptural designations are welcome and acceptable; such as: "The church of the Firstborn," "church of God," or "churches of Christ." Heb. 12:23; Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16.

These and all other points of disagreement will have to be faced and settled by the word of God, if religious and honourable people are to be *one* as Christ prayed. The platform of such unity is set forth by Paul in Eph. 4:4-6. "There is ONE BODY and ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE GOD...." Agreement is had by East, West, North, and South churches that there is ONE SPIRIT, ONE HOPE, ONE LORD and ONE GOD but declaim that it is too narrow minded to be the same Author when he said "There is ONE BODY, ONE FAITH and ONE BAPTISM."

Christ prayed, remember, "That we all be one" and gave us the "ones" which would make us "one" in His word. Wouldn't it be so wonderful if we were all united, gathered together, Mk. 13:27; all of us "one in Christ," Gal. 3:28, but, I SUPPOSE, I'M JUST SUPPOSING!

225 Lakewood St.
Blytheville, Arkansas 72315

Bulletins Please

This editor would be very glad to receive bulletins from any churches which publish them, regardless of what the editors believe on current issues. If I am not on your mailing list, please see that I get on as soon as possible. I profit greatly from such periodicals. Thanks in advance!

-James P. Needham

TORCH, BIGGER THAN EVER !!

We are elated by the fantastic reception of *Torch* since this editor assumed the chair. Our publisher tells me the mailing list is now larger than it has ever been since he revived *Torch* in January 1967. We continue to appreciate the many encouraging letters and shall continually try to be worthy of your confidence. Evidence that we are serving a need makes all the time and effort expended worthwhile. For lack of something better, we say THANKS!

Since January first, we have carried on a subscription campaign. We lowered the yearly subscription rate to rock-bottom: \$1.00 in clubs of ten or more. We appreciate the tremendous response given. The yearly subscription price has now reverted to \$3.00 single, and \$2.00 in clubs of ten or more. Why not send us a list of subscriptions TODAY!

James P. Needham

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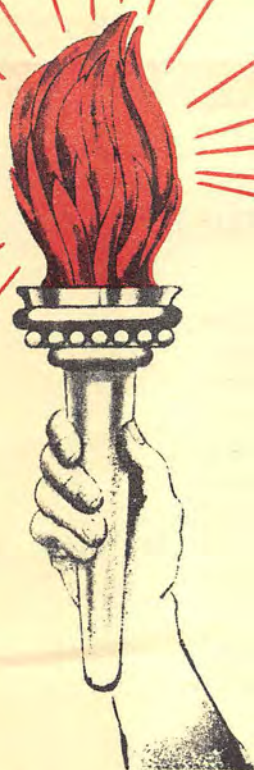
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TORCH

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Number 7

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Mini Message

PITY THE POOR MOTHS!!

From the looks of today's fashion,
There must be a fabric ration.
Moths are planning a demonstration
To protest their deprivation.
Trying to save their starving souls
By getting on the welfare rolls
Going to become poor starving wrecks,
Unless they draw their welfare checks.
Can't survive on the bare expanse
Left uncovered by hot pants.

James P. Needham
6-2-71



Editor
James P. Needham

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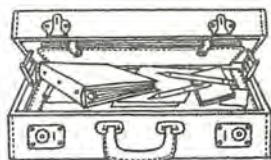
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



Replying to a Response from Clifton Inman

In the May issue of TORCH we printed two well written articles by brother Ron Halbrook of Athens, Ala. One of these articles was in response to an article in THE SPIRITUAL SWORD, and was sent to that publication, and to brother Gus Nichols who authored the reviewed article, for comment and publication. It received neither! Brother Halbrook then sent the articles to us for possible publication. We thought them worthy of print, and since they had been long delayed, we printed both of them in the same issue.

These articles from a young preacher obviously set brother Clifton Inman's teeth on edge. A few days after he received the issue he wrote me as follows:

"Dear Brother Needham:

"I have just read your article on 'Golden Rule Treatment Among Brethren.' To almost everything in the article I wanted to say a hearty, 'Amen.'" Then I read 'POST MARKS.' This along with Brother Ron Holbrook's article seem to me to be an outstanding violation of the very principle which you had so ably set forth.

"Do you ever receive mail which you are not able to answer immediately? Do you ever receive mail which you do not answer for some other reason? Are you hypocritical if you thus behave? Would it be using the golden rule, if without finding out, I accused you of hypocrisy?

"If you want to know my answer to the questions, it
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is false to each of the questions. What is yours?
Then answer the following:

"T F Some churches do not receive all the Bible teaching they should receive; May someone start a human institution which he calls Torch to supplement this teaching for all who will pay a stipulated fee?

"When you see that the questions do not cover the ground as thoroughly as you thought, it should help you to reassess the whole situation and see that an orphans' home is formed by brethren and then people contribute (congregations contribute to) the orphans and their needs, not to an institution.

"Though churches should not maintain human organizations to maintain highly trained choruses, could a church have a singing school and invite people from other congregations? When you answer this I have another question. Let this one suffice for now."

Sincerely, Clifton Inman

I am not going to reply to the part of this letter that attempts to reply to brother Holbrook's argumentation. I shall give brother Holbrook opportunity to do that in a future issue. I will say a few words about brother Inman's charge that I violated the golden rule when I printed these articles and charged THE SPIRITUAL SWORD and brother Gus Nichols with hypocrisy.

In the first place, it seems a little strange that brother Inman who preaches, publishes a monthly paper, operates a rather large religious supply business, lives about a thousand miles from where THE SPIRITUAL SWORD is published, and is in no way connected with it could find time and reason to comment upon these articles while seeking to excuse THE SPIRITUAL SWORD editor and Gus Nichols from doing so on purely imaginary grounds.

For brother Inman's information, I sincerely try to answer all the mail I receive, especially if it challenges something I teach. It just so happens that I know that others have received the same treatment from Gus

Nichols under similar circumstances. And while we are talking about golden rule treatment of brethren, there is no man in the church today who can surpass Gus Nichols in failing to practice it. When he talks about the "antis" he gets beside himself, and the epithets and the diatribes seem never to get bitter enough for him. Yet, when he is in controversy with the denominations, sugar would not melt in his mouth, and his attitude is exemplary. He is very generous to his opponent, and every bit a gentleman. I leave it to the good judgment of the reader to discern the reason for the difference.

If brother Inman thought to embarrass this editor thinking him ignorant of the character of those involved, he has miserably failed, and has assumed too much. I have had encounters with brother Gus Nichols and know how he reacts when someone challenges him on what he says about our current disagreements. I do not think for one minute that I have violated the golden rule by calling a spade a spade, especially when I have the knowledge that what I say is correct. It is no violation of the golden rule to call hyprocrisy what it is.

Since brother Inman so heartily endorses what I said about golden rule treatment among brethren, he needs to have some second thoughts about his own practice. He obviously thought I had gone off half cocked. Now that he knows better, what will he do about it. We shall see just how hearty is his endorsement of my article on golden rule treatment of brethren.

Brother Inman is a prime example of brethren who violate the golden rule. He seems to practice a philosophy that sees only good in those of his party, and only bad in others. When some one writes an article on the golden rule, he can say "a hearty amen" to everything in it but what applies to someone in his party. He then seeks to defend the guilty by fabricating a straw-man fallacy. For shame!

As previously indicated, we shall not make any attempt to defend brother Holbrook's argumentation, or review brother Inman's reply to it. We are convinced that brother Holbrook is willing and able to defend what he wrote. We will just mention this however; If brother Inman is unable to distinguish the difference between TORCH and a church-supported benevolent society, there is little hope

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for any great progress in this discussion. Orphan homes have boards, presidents, etc. etc. and beg and receive church contributions. Torch is an effort of a few individuals to preach the gospel by way of the printed page. It receives no grants from churches, and does not claim to do the work of the churches. It does not have a board of trustees and is not even incorporated. It is about as parallel to a benevolent society as brother Nichols' treatment of brother Holbrook is to the golden rule.

BOOKS BY THE EDITOR

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Why I Cannot Attend a Liberal Church

E. Warren Needham

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It is with a great deal of pride that the editor presents the following article. It is written by his oldest brother who left a lucrative trade to engage in full-time preaching. He has made remarkable progress, and accomplished much good. To my knowledge, this is his first article in a publication of this type. We hope it will not be the last. It shows a depth of thought, and should be profitable to all. jpn)

Quite often questions are asked about the errors of some of the liberal practices in the church; those supporting human institutions, church-supported recreation and banquet halls, etc. After more than twenty years of these practices, many are not able to understand the severity of the departures. It is hard for some to see the difference between a human institution and the church. Even though they are separate organizations from the church but constantly beg and receive money from the church treasury to do work the Lord assigned the church to do in a few instances, but in many others soliciting and taking money from churches to do things that the church is *not* to do or support.

It is amazing to observe how gullible some good people are in going along with these innovations by lending moral support and by being associated with those congregations. Some attend with reservations, but contribute of their means to salve their consciences into thinking they are doing what the Lord commanded in I Cor. 16:1-4. Sometimes an effort is made to "pass the buck," or "put the monkey on the back of someone else," the elders, or leaders of the church by reasoning: "I have laid by in store, and if they misuse it, I am not responsible." Everyone who has such ideas needs to face the facts and admit this is not right. When one knows something about what is being done, HE is a party to it if he does not oppose it, or aids it by his presence and finances. God knows what we are doing and *will not be mocked*. One may successfully browbeat every effort others make to show him the error in such, but God Almighty keeps the records and will

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judge by the things that are written in the Book of Life, as compared with what is written in the Book of God, see Rev. 20:12-15.

I submit here some reasons based upon the New Testament, why a child of God cannot attend a liberal church or be associated with such as I have set forth in the above.

(1) I would become heretical by supporting heresies, cf. I Cor. 11:18-19. The Lord's church has an obligation to act against persons who are so involved (Tit. 3:10).

(2) I would become a party to the sin that is mentioned in Gal. 5:20, which involves being self-willed, which causes divisions, parties, and sects. This sin is condemned by God also in II Jno. 9-11.

(3) I would become a party to making the local church something larger or smaller than the Bible authorizes (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2).

(4) I would be guilty of encouraging the liberal-minded by my presence. They, perhaps, would interpret such as support of their "cause" (sect, heresy, party, etc.).

(5) I would be associated with and aiding "Presumptuous men" which is forbidden (cf. Psal. 19:13; II Pet. 2:10). The liberal movement has within its ranks a strong element of self-importance; self-willed and proud people who take liberties which God does not allow.

(6) I would be guilty by association and by not speaking as the Oracles of God, and not ministering by His authority (I Pet. 4:11). I cannot associate with people who think presumptuously that they know better than God how His work ought to be done. God will destroy those of such arrogance (I Cor. 1:19).

(7) I would be fellowshiping an element that will *disfellowship members and elders* who ask for Bible authority for the things being done. (Yea, fire preachers).

(8) I would be abiding with those who will padlock the door of the church building and get court orders to keep brethren out of the meeting house who disagree with their admitted opinions and so-called expediences. Also they

will sue at law which is contrary to I Cor. 6:1-7.

(9) I would be condoning those who *do not* believe the word of God is all sufficient and that it furnishes us completely unto every good work God wants done (I Tim. 3:16-17). Therefore, the Bible is not their authority in everything, only in some things. Their works reveal unbelief, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Mt. 7:16a).

(10) I would be aligning myself with people who have a denominational spirit toward the word of God that asks "Where does the Bible say we *cannot* do such and such a thing?" instead of producing Bible authority for *their* practices.

(11) In most cases I would be associating myself with a group that has within its ranks preachers and elders who will not openly contend for the truth with their brethren as commanded in Jude 3, with regard to their innovations, but who will evade and ignore invitations and challenges to do so. "Be not ye therefore partakers with them" (Eph. 5:7). "Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:10-11).

(12) I would be party with a movement that has within its ranks the parochial school system in its beginning stages, -- in most cases in the kindergarten stage, but a few with the upper grades.

(13) I would be a part of a movement that has within its membership men who are teaching and supporting the building and maintaining of church hospitals and clinics from the church treasury. Also schools and colleges that teach liberal arts along with some religious subjects. Repeating the errors of which Israel of old was guilty when they looked upon other nations (denominations) around them and desired to have a king (human devices) (cf. I Sam. 8:5,19-20). Therefore, were not satisfied with God's arrangement.

(14) I would be associating with a group who believes *in* and *has* missionary societies to preach the gospel, such as Herald of Truth, World Radio, and etc. (One church taking the oversight of money from hundreds, even thousands, of congregations to preach the gospel via their plans rather than spending their own money to do

their own work to the extent of their ability, thus violating local autonomy).

(15) I would displease God by fellowshipping those who do not follow after things which make for peace, and things by which one may edify another. Therefore, such things as athletics, parties, games, dinners, and etc. supported from the church do no true spiritual building or peace making with God or those who are satisfied with God's way of edifying the church (Eph. 4:11-16). A child of God must be opposed to such in the church and to keep it pure from worldliness (Rom. 14:19).

Christians cannot work and worship with those who do not recognize Christ as the source of all spiritual strength (Phil. 4:13). Those who furnish recreation and food for the purpose of entertaining sinners in the church program are not seeking the righteousness of God where it is found, compare Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16. Rather they are serving their own bellies (Rom. 16:18). Also they are leading many blind into the ditch (Mt. 15:14). "Woe unto you, ye blind guides (Mt. 23:16a).

The sanctified, Jn. 17:17, cannot fellowship *expediences of man* only the expediency of God (I Cor. 10:23-24). For a spiritual work to be expedient it must first be *lawful* (scripturally authorized). Therefore, church-supported benevolent institutions, schools, colleges, hospitals, clinics, and all church supported recreation are not *lawful* therefore, are *scripturally inexpedient*. Those who would be spiritual need to know the benefit of humility. "And he (Lord) said unto me (Paul), My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:9).

There are more things being done than mentioned here, but I trust this will suffice to show the errors that are involved when one associates himself with this movement that has grown so bold in the last 18 to 25 years.

Someone perhaps is ready to say, "The church where I go does not do all *these things*," and will accuse me of falsifying. I know all churches are not as far along as some, but as soon as a church is identified with any part of liberalism, it will begin to use men in teaching and

preaching who *do* go all the way in just about all *these things*. Therefore, it is a package deal and just a matter of time until the evolution of liberalism takes its toll.

While using and followshipping such men who *believe, teach, and support* those innovations, which we term liberalism, they become guilty with them and of them by association (See II Jno. 9-11).

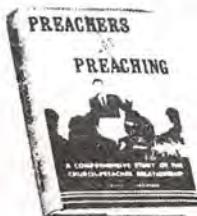
The laws of our land will convict a person for aiding a lawbreaker -- for just handling some of his goods, etc. God is even more severe in His punishment of those who violate *His* law.

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GOSSIP

John Humphries

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" (Lev. 19:16; Also cf 1 Tim. 5:13 & Jas. 3:1-18).



Gossip involves telling and/or listening (with the wrong intent and purpose in mind) to something uncomplimentary concerning someone. We wish to make some suggestions as to when the intent and purpose (attitude) is not right and thus constitutes gossip. Every time we exchange information concerning others, it is not necessarily gossip. (For example, we are not discussing in this study the exposure of false teachers, troublemakers, etc. Warnings must be given to others concerning such, and it is not talebearing or gossip to do so (See I Cor. 1:11: II Tim. 4:14-15; etc.).

But note the following instances when gossiping does occur:

1. GOSSIPING OCCURS WHEN WE TELL AND/OR LISTEN TO SOMETHING UNCOMPLIMENTARY ABOUT SOMEONE WITH THE ATTITUDE OF ENTERTAINMENT. This is gossip and, therefore, sinful. In other words, we are not telling or listening because we are sympathetic and want to *help* the person; we just want to be entertained at someone else's expense. We get a good laugh over someone's misfortune. A person is in trouble, and we think that it is a good funny story to tell and/or listen to.

2. GOSSIPING OCCURS WHEN WE TELL AND/OR LISTEN IN ORDER TO BUILD UP OUR OWN EGO. Some people are perverted enough to feel big by trying to make others small. They say, "Look how bad or how stupid John is for doing so and so!" This means: "Look how good or how smart I am because I do not do so and so." The more they talk (gossip) about another's mistakes and sins, the more they inflate their own ego.

3. GOSSIPING OCCURS WHEN WE TELL AND/OR LISTEN FOR SPITE. Because we do not like some person, we like to tell or hear about their failures or problems. Help them? Never! Spite them? Every chance we get! How many uncomplimentary stories have been spread abroad concerning an individual (or a church for that matter) because of spite! How many good names have been tarnished because of malice! How many times has the gospel of Christ been hindered in some city because of spiteful, gossiping tongues!

4. GOSSIPING OCCURS WHEN WE TELL AND/OR LISTEN IN ORDER TO GET REVENGE. When we feel that we have been wronged, the Scriptures teach (Mt. 18:15-17) that we must go to the offender and get things right. However, the gossip would rather *"get something on"* the other person and spread it around in order to have revenge. Just remember, folks, that God will have the *"last word"* (Rom. 12:19).

5. GOSSIPING OCCURS WHEN WE TELL AND/OR LISTEN TO SOMETHING UNCOMPLIMENTARY ABOUT OTHERS *"JUST TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY."* Some people think they are being *"newsy"* when they are actually being *"nosey."* They think they are just *"passing the time"* when they are really just *"wasting time"* -- theirs and others. Do they discuss another's misfortune or misconduct in order to find out how they can help the individual overcome his difficulty? No! They are only *"bumping their gums"* just to pass the time, or to have something to say.

Please observe that:

1. GOSSIP PREPETUATES LIES THAT OUGHT TO HAVE DIED. Our conviction is that the overwhelming majority of hurtful rumors are false. (cf. Acts 21:21). When we play *"gossip"* at parties, we learn that anything which is repeated several times cannot be recognized. Our memory is not infallible (cf. Jn. 14:26). Consequently, many times we mistake the facts, and thus, the tale is perpetuated. We should allow the hurtful rumor to die for lack of mouths and ears to give it life (cf. Pro. 26:20).

2. GOSSIP ASSASSINATES CHARACTER AND MAKES INNOCENT PEOPLE SUFFER. As we said before, when people repeat a story several times it gets (maybe unintentionally) twisted, and thus innocent people are labeled and libeled

without just cause. There is great danger (to others as well as to our own souls) in repeating rumors. When we ruin someone's good name, we have rendered them a grave injustice (Pro. 22:1)!

3. GOSSIP POURS GASOLINE ON THE BODY OF CHRIST, lights the match, and then, when the flames of discord, division, alienation, etc., are consuming the local church, the gossipers say, *"I told you so"* (i.e. that there was trouble in the church). Yes, and they were the biggest part of the trouble! (Study Jas. 3:5-6). A gossiping few can destroy (or make very difficult) the work of many. Compare, for example, one man in a bulldozer who in one day can pull down a sizable building that has taken dozens of man weeks to build. Brethren can labor for years in building up a church and some can *"labor"* for a few months and tear it down. In Pro. 6:16-19, the work of the gossip is described along with God's attitude toward such devilish work.

4. GOSSIP IS USUALLY ONE SIDED (OR BIASED) AND EXTREMELY PREJUDICIAL. *"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him"* (Pro. 18:17). Putting this into other words: -- One story is good till the other is told. (Nuff said!)

5. GOSSIP REVEALS A LACK OF BROTHERLY LOVE. How can I say that I love my brother in Christ as I proceed to tell and/or listen to all of the *"dirt"* about him that can be dug up (cf. Pro. 16:27). How can I smear him and love him at the same time (Jas. 3:8-10)? Remember that love wants to edify, while hate seeks to crucify our brethren in the Lord.

6. GOSSIP DESTROYS FRIENDSHIPS (Pro. 16:28; 17:9). This is such an obvious and common occurrence that we hardly need to comment further. We have all seen this happen. *"Brightest links of life are broken"* by evil, gossiping tongues. In the words of the hymn,

*"Love is much too pure and holy,
Friendship is too sacred far,
For a moment's reckless folly,
Thus to desolate and mar."*

Gossiping is an ugly, ungodly, deceitful, and soul-destroying habit that must be broken and replaced with

words that edify. (Study Eph. 4:29-32). If I am discussing some unfortunate aspect of another's conduct, I must do so because I am deeply concerned about his soul and want to help in some way, either by word or deed. If I cannot help in some direct personal way, then I can at least pray for him. And I can let the person with whom I am talking know my intentions in the matter, encouraging him to take brotherly actions. My attitude in hearing and/or telling makes the difference between gossip and *concerned* discussion of another's failure or sin.

In the light of James 1:19, which states: *"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath,"* we must THINK before we speak! Otherwise, we may have to PRAY later asking God to forgive us for speaking out of turn. Also, we will have the difficult task of winning our offended brother back (Pro. 18:19). Many times have we *later* been so thankful that we were *"slow to speak!"* On the other hand, there have been many times when we were greatly embarrassed because we spoke before we thought! Follow the Lord's advice in this passage (Jas. 1:19) and you will be on your way to overcoming the sin of gossip. *"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body"* (Jas. 3:2).

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Worth Repeating

Articles, Excerpts and Tidbits Clipped
and Snipped from Hither, Thither and Yon

"Transient Churches"

Robert West

For a number of years we have preached against those who have come to be known as "transient members." These are the members who jump from one congregation to another, never staying with any of them long enough to become part of the local church in its work. But there is another practice that needs attention -- the establishing of "transient churches."

This practice has been occasioned by members going on hunting, fishing, or camping trips over the week-end in localities where there is no church of Christ. Not wishing to fail to assemble with the saints, they promptly "establish" a congregation consisting of all the brethren in the hunting or fishing party. They lay aside their rifles or rods briefly on Sunday morning, "call the congregation together," and proceed with their worship.

I wish to register some sincere objections against this practice:

1. *The example set by this action would tend to discourage regular attendance with a local congregation.* In most cases, these "transient churches" are "established" only once a year during the vacation time, or hunting season. But if we can be justified in doing this one week-end, then why not the next? and the next? in other words, what would make it *right* for a family of Christians or a few brethren to become a church in the mountains *one* Sunday, to facilitate their recreation, while it would admittedly be *wrong* to continue this practice indefinitely?

Some would justify the practice on the ground that they are too far away from the nearest congregation. But the real question is whether we have the right to *wilfully* place ourselves in a position where it is impossible to assemble with a scriptural congregation, out of the mere consideration of our own pleasure.

2. *It subordinates worship to pleasure.* The only possible reason for the practice is to facilitate pleasure. They go to hunt or fish; not to worship. The worship then becomes incidental to the purpose of their trip. What if I decide I want to sleep a few hours later on Sunday morning; therefore, in order not to miss worship services, my family and I "become a church" and worship in my home? What would be amiss with such a practice? If we are justified in establishing a congregation in order to enjoy a few hours of fishing, why couldn't we do the same to enjoy a few hours of sleeping?

3. *It ignores the purpose of establishing, and the function of, a local congregation.* The church is *not only* a worshipping entity, it is a compact *working* organization (Eph. 4:15-16; I Tim. 3:15). But are these "fly-by-night" churches *working* organizations? Of course not! They exist solely and exclusively for the purpose of worship.

4. *It ignores the organization of the church.* Have you ever heard of one of these groups having bishops and deacons? Of course you have not. Do any of them work toward this goal? Never! But why not? It could only be because they realize themselves that they are a group of people different from the church you read about in the Bible.

Search the pages of the New Testament as diligently as we may, we shall not be able to find authority for establishing a temporary congregation out of no higher motive than to facilitate a few hours of pleasure of what ever kind it may be.

Does this mean that a Christian cannot go hunting or fishing? Certainly not. But it does mean that we should plan our outings and vacations so we can continue to serve the Lord in His own appointed way. I am well acquainted with many godly Christians who are ardent outdoorsmen and frequently enjoy their hobby, but without sacrificing their service to their God. It is simply a matter of putting first things first. And, even if it comes to the point of giving up a few hours of pleasure to serve God, remember that this is little enough to sacrifice for Him who gave all for us. *The Record*, 5/23/71

A Friendly Message to the High School Graduates of 1971

James P. Needham

You now have lived seventeen or eighteen years in this old world. Suddenly you find yourself thrust out of your home and into areas of responsibility that you hardly knew existed. You may be planning to enter the field of higher education, or you may have decided to take a job. In either case, you are about to see the world from a new perspective. Many of you have been shielded from what you are about to see by parents who loved you and wanted to protect you from the realities you must now face. Some of you will take on the new responsibilities in stride, others may become disillusioned and discouraged.



While you have had some contact with the adult world, you have never seen it as you now will see it. If you have not already discovered it, you will find that these adults come in all shapes, sizes and mental attitudes. Some will be impatient with youth, others will cut you down because of your youth, yet others will take great pride in helping you along the way to full-fledged adulthood. You should learn early what is called the golden rule: "Therefore whatever you want others to do for you, do so for them..." (Mt. 7:12). This is really, the only rule to follow. You will find more who do not follow it, than who do, but do not allow that to hinder your practice of it.

If you do not want adults to equate you with all youth, do not be guilty of equating all adults with the few bad ones you know. If you would not want others to violate your rights, be sure you do not violate theirs. If you want to be loved and respected by your fellows, love and respect your fellows.

You will hear much about the generation gap, and what a mess the adults have made of the world. You will hear about how corrupt is the establishment, and how the system does not work, and ought to be scrapped. Today's youth is basically intelligent, but misled. The radicals and the extremists would lead you to believe that things are different today than they were in the past. It is a colossal fraud. No new generation ever found the old to its liking. It is the spirit of youth to want change, and often to want it too fast. It is often the spirit of adulthood to resist change, and to resist it too much. Change is good, if it is for the better, but it must be determined to be better before it is adopted. Change for the sake of change is a flight into youthful fancy which often tears down what it took years to build. Change that trades outmoded ways for better ways, is just plain good sense. In the matter of changing the system, or revamping the establishment, we must have an healthy balance of the vigorous imagination of youth and the wisdom of adulthood.

Up to this point in your life, you have been concerned with getting through school to please your parents. You have not looked very hard for a goal in life. You will now search for a goal, and it will become important to you, as it indeed should, but do not allow it to become all-consuming of your life and attention. Never allow it to overshadow your spiritual goal which must always be first and foremost in your life. Do not allow your goal to confuse your sense of values, and distort your sense of purpose. Remember that everything of a material nature is only temporary, and will not last when life is finished. Do not trade your birthright for a mess of pottage.

As you go out into the world, remember that "bad company corrupts good morals" (I Cor. 15:33). If you lie down with dogs, you will get up with fleas. If you sleep with hogs, you will smell like swine. You cannot spend all your time with unspiritual people and maintain a spiritual goal. You cannot keep birds from flying over your head, but you can prevent their nesting in your hair. You must associate with the people of the world, even some bad "eggs," but you do not have to absorb their thinking or conduct. You cannot pray, "Lead us not into temptation" if you walk into it with your eyes wide open.

You are probably the best informed young people the

world has ever known. In today's youth there is much to be admired. Your courage in opposing war, and desiring peace is laudable. You want to be free to live in a world of peace, rather than led as a sheep to the slaughter to die to protest the commercial interests of the wealthy whose materialistic goals are foreign to yours. You want to live and let live, to love and to be loved. You want to improve the messy world the previous generation has left to you, and leave a better world to your children. How admirable! How idealistic!

But remember, the best place to attain your worthy goals is in the kingdom of God. Its ruler is the Prince of peace, and its maker is the God of love. While you must live in the world, you must not live out of the kingdom. The goals and the sense of values much of today's youth claims to seek are all found in the kingdom of God. The best way to improve your generation is to live by the principles of the man of Galilee. Those who cop out with drugs, hop into trouble. While they say they want to improve the world in which they live, they destroy their intellectual and moral ability to do so when they pollute their bodies and distort their minds with drugs.

Adults must strive to keep faith in youth. Youth must learn to respect adults. Working together we can make the world a better place. We can advance the kingdom of God, and take the gospel to the teeming millions of lost people. Pulling against each other, we can accomplish very little that will be beneficial to either.

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Get Out of Yourself

Donald R. Givens

You need to get out of yourself. I need to get out of myself. We all need to move out of ourselves. Can you truly say: *"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"* (Gal. 2:20)?

If was as though Paul had moved out of his own body, and the Lord Jesus had moved in! It was no longer Paul directing Paul, but Christ directing, guiding, and living in Paul. Did not Jesus emphatically state, *"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"* (Mt. 16:24)? Notice: it is not *"deny himself of something..."* but *"deny HIMSELF!"* Humble self and exalt the will of God (Mt. 18:4 and 23:12).

Paul practiced that which he preached and preached that which he practiced, telling each Roman brother *"not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think"* (Rom. 12:3). After all, even *"Christ also pleased not himself, but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me"* (Rom. 15:3).

"Conversion is like refitting an old ship and employing it in the service of a new and better master. Christ takes possession of the ship and puts on a new pilot and a new compass, and throws overboard everything that is evil, and fills her with a better cargo, and turns her toward heaven. It is the same ship, but her course is changed." ("How To Be Saved" by M.M. Davis, p. 137).

Christ took possession of Paul. Every genuine conversion results in the old self moving out and the Lord moving in. No longer is SELF the pilot and compass, but *"bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"* we let Him control the rudder.

Let us erase selfishness from our hearts and implant sacrificial love; exalting God's will above our own. How many *"church fusses"* and personal wrangles would this settle? How many could even get started? Get out of yourself. Let the LORD move in. Turn ot the LORD and cleave to the LORD (Acts 11:21,23). Give Him your whole heart.

Eternity is getting closer with every breath you take.

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POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



KETCHIKAN, ALASKA "Just a short note to say I enjoy reading your TORCH magazine. May I inquire why it is called TORCH? Must be a reason. Anyhow, it seems sound in the scriptures as near as I can determine. Thanks for mailing it..." (*Violet Silverthorn*).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: TORCH was started in 1950 by Foy E. Wallace, Jr. I have no idea why he named it TORCH other than his desire to bear the torch of truth. This is the desire of the present editor and publisher.

This sister wrote a lengthy letter in which she made some comments endorsing our recent editorial on abortion. She also commended our MINI MESSAGE on the mini skirt. We are always appreciative of the letters we receive from readers jpn).

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. "For the TORCH, I say 'The TORCH GLOW can pierce the darkest night.' Keep your pen active in the truth. We both wish you every success in spreading the Gospel in Winter Park and in your writing for TORCH." (*George and Dorothy Bittner*).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "You are doing a great job on TORCH. I especially liked the article on Protestantism." (*Bobby Witherington*).

PLANO, ILL. "TORCH is proving to be worth twice the money. I can face those whom I have urged to subscribe with a confident air of 'I told you so.'" (*Larry Hafley*).



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FACTS & FAITH

Volume I Number 8

August, 1970

MORAL CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

All human systems of ethics break down at some critical point. *Hedonism*, the pursuit of pleasure, as a philosophical ethical system, collapses when it is discovered that the pleasures of the moment have a sting in them; they bring pain in the next moment. *Situationism* breaks down when it becomes necessary to define an "ethical situation" where love is the only law. Those who read textbooks on ethics with a critical eye will find many inconsistencies.

I become more and more convinced that the Bible is the word of God as I find it speaking with a clear and unconfused voice with reference to moral and ethical conduct. It has the ring of divine authority. In the Bible the moral plane is lofty and noble. Right is always right, and wrong is always wrong, without any confusing of principles. Sin is throughout condemned, while righteousness is approved. Never is wrongdoing rationalized or excused.

The Bible even records, without apology, the wrongs as well as the good deeds of its "heroes." Books written by men, especially the biographical type, tend to play up the good in their subjects, while softening down the bad traits. But the Bible is completely objective. It tells of the lies of Abraham, the deception of Jacob, the adultery and murder of David, and the cowardice of Peter. And it tells these things *without approval*. If these same men are pictured otherwise as great men of God, it is made very clear that their spiritual greatness depended on their repentance and on God's grace. There is no moral confusion here.

Sometimes unbelievers will point to what they call "impure" stories in the Bible, which they say cannot be read decently before a mixed audience. But those who read such stories from the Bible know that they are always written in such a manner as to arouse disgust against evil, not lust. Sin is described in plain language, but it is never approved. No one has been known to fall into sinful ways as the result of reading such things in the Bible, while it is the testimony of many that they have been saved from those very sins by reading of God's attitude toward them in language plain enough to be understood.

Add to this the fact that wherever the Bible has gone, and has been obeyed, good has been the result. A rejection of the moral principles of the Bible has always led to degeneration and chaos. Such an one as Bertrand Russell dares to criticize the Bible's morality in his *Why I Am Not a Christian*; but this is the same Bertrand Russell who, in spite of his brilliance, was judged in 1940 unfit to teach students at New York City College because his writings were "lecherous, libidinous, lustful, venerous, aphrodisiac, irreverent, narrowminded, untruthful, and bereft of moral fiber."

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TORCH

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August, 1971

Number 8

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



LOUISVILLE, KY. "Before I forget it, I want to shout a loud 'Amen' to your satire in the May issue of TORCH. I have heard much good comment from a number of brethren about this. I thought you were hitting a nerve which has long needed to be disturbed" (Connie Adams).

LOUISVILLE, KY. "I read your last TORCH this morning. I thoroughly enjoyed your article about Lydia's purple" (Glenda Harned).

GREENSBURG, KY. "I received the May issue of TORCH... You sure do put a punch in your articles--and where it's needed the most. You just have a unique way of putting things across and that is what makes your reading material so effective" (Leo Rogol).

continued on page 22



Editor

James P. Needham

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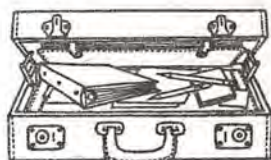
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



The Located Preacher Question Again!

From time to time some few brethren question the scripturalness of what we call "the located preacher," that is, a preacher who is employed by, and lives and works with a church and is paid a salary. Various qualifications are put upon the opposition to this practice by its proponents when we begin to argue the question, and it is difficult to pin them down and know just what they oppose. The changes and modifications are desperate efforts to plug the holes punched in the position by the darts of truth.

Some very able men have advocated this position. While I have not questioned their sincerity, I have doubted their soundness. The toll of time has sustained the suspicion that they operated by principles of interpretation that are unsound. Consequently, they have moved further and further from the truth and deeper and deeper into error. Indeed, this tragedy befell this movement a few years ago, and left it in disarray. Carl Ketcherside and Leroy Garrett went from extreme radicalism to extreme liberalism and left their brethren standing out in the rain without an umbrella. Very little has been heard from the proponents of this position since. Now we see evidence that the movement is trying to get its boots on again.

We have received several letters of late in reference to this matter. Some being troubled by advocates of the position have asked for help in its refutation. Others have condemned the located preachers in letters which concerned other matters. At least two of our detractors have been women. They have attacked the located preacher as a sort of a pope, a "paid talker," and one who

"preaches for a price," and who teams up with the elders to lord it over the flock. One sister argued at length for a greater part in the local church than God intended that women should have, even perverting the scriptures to sustain her erroneous conclusion. A "one man pastor system" is all wrong, but a *one woman* one seems to be alright. A "pope" is bad, but a "popess" seems to be fine!

The arguments of those who oppose the located preacher arrangement always have been basically the same. They have pandered to prejudice through falsely labeling the set up as "the hireling pastor system," they have impugned the motives of such men by accusing them of preaching for money--"so much preach for so much pay," and they have warped and twisted the scriptures in a tortuous way to make them support their contentions.

The charge that located preachers preach for pay is quite absurd in view of the fact that most such men could make more money at something else, and many such men have quit more lucrative jobs to preach the gospel. An appeal to prejudice is unworthy of any individual who claims to be a Christian, and perversion of the scriptures is a most serious offense against God.

It always has been strange why advocates of error in the church want to disturb and take over churches that were started and developed by advocates of the things they oppose. They never go out and preach their doctrines and start churches, they want to take over what someone else has sacrificed to build. In every generation some crusaders come along to bemoan some practice, identifying it as the cause of all the church's problems. When such people draw away the disciples after them and take over churches, we would expect these churches to boom in growth and activity, but they do not! They do the very opposite: they die on the vine! Examples of this are too numerous to need proof.

It is true that some churches depend too much upon the local preacher, but not many churches will grow numerically or spiritually without the help of such an one. The stock and trade reply to this is always that it proves that the churches are built around the preacher--the "pastor." Well, it might prove this, but then it might not. It just might prove that the Lord's plan for the local church is not being followed completely. Some churches have men who are able to sustain them, but many

more are not so blessed. This is one reason why churches which have been taken over by this idea have died on the vine. The proof of the pudding is in the eating! It is easy to spin theories and air opinions, but lets get down to facts. I do not like to soar on the clouds of fantasy! When saints come to worship they want to be edified, not bored to tears by some sincere brother who is doing his best, but whose best is not sufficient to challenge their thinking and increase their Bible knowledge. Such may be alright occasionally, but a church fed on such a diet week after week will develop severe malnutrition.

It always has been a glaring inconsistency in this position that it attacks the located preacher as an "hireling pastor," yet advocates what is known as "Evangelistic oversight." Let us notice their own statement of this doctrine:

"They (those who oppose evangelistic oversight,jpn) tried to take the authority away from the evangelist in congregations where no elders have yet been appointed, where he was left by the apostle Paul to *oversee* and *supervise* and correct deficiencies, setting things in order that were wanting, appointing elders in every city (Titus 1:5). *This passage teaches that the authority of an evangelist in a congregation he has established, or in one that he was left in, is the same as an elder in a congregation he has been appointed in*" (Quoted in a paper sent to me by brother Miller, La Grange, Ga.) (Emphasis mine, jpj).

"In Titus 2:15 Paul said, 'These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke *with all suthority*. Now here the apostle Paul told Titus to reprove, rebuke with all authority. *Paul told Titus that he could reprove, and he could rebuke, not partially, not with some authority, but he said, 'With all authority.'* That means with all the authority that was given to Christ, that was channeled through His ambassadors to these individuals. If all authority, or power both in heaven and on earth means all power in Mt. 28, all authority in this particular proof text means the same. One elder or a dozen has only the authority to do what has been set forth in the Scriptures, with respect to prosecuting the duties of their office, and so it is with the Evangelist, in a congregation where there are no Elders, these

duties must be performed and God has decreed that in such cases the evangelist assume these duties, and *this means he would have as much authority as any elders has 'all' or 'full' authority.* So I cannot see for the life of me what difference it makes how the evangelist gets there, whether he moves there, goes by, called there, sent there, flew, walked, stayed for ten days or ten years...regardless to who does not agree with it *the Evangelist is the only one that has authority in the absence of qualified Elders.* This is Bible facts that no intelegent person should dispute" (Ibid.) (Emphasis mine, spelling and grammar his, jpn).

It comes with poor grace for men who believe in such popery to charge a humble "located preacher" who disclaims all authority over the congregation so far as oversight is concerned with being an "hireling pastor." Paul said the evangelist has all authority to speak, exhort and rebuke (Tit. 2:15), but where does he say that an evangelist is given authority to make decisions for and supervise the church, or do the work of elders?

This is really the same position advocated in the past by Carl Ketcherside and his brethren, and it will follow the same course. Those evangelistic overseers of the Ketcherside persuasion seldom ever got around to appointing elders, so the evangelist oversaw the churches for many years. Sometimes one evangelist would oversee several churches. In other cases when they came to a church that had elders, they "de-eldered" it and subjected it to evangelistic oversight. So really the way to "scripturalize" a church is to "de-elder" it and put it under the oversight of an "evangelist."

One of the big objections to the "located preachers" is that he preaches where there are elders, and once a church has elders, the evangelist is supposed to move on to one that has none. So, the way to solve that problem is just never get around to appointing elders. This is the way to have a "located preacher." One of the above quotations says the preacher can stay "ten days or ten years," as long as no elders are appointed. Talk about a "located preacher"! I never lived with one church ten years in all of my preaching life, and yet I am supposed to be one of those monsters called "a located preacher." I guess my fatal mistake has been that everywhere I have

been I have followed Paul's advice and appointed elders where such was scripturally possible. I would have been alright had I not done this!

SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

Those advocating this position have always been characterized by circuitous reasoning. When one of their objections is answered they jump to another, etc. until a complete circle is made. Then it is around and around and around, covering the same material over and over again. Just here we shall consider three of their main objections:

1. *Stay*: They have objected to the length of time the preacher stays with a given church. We have pressed them to tell us how long he can stay. Their preachers have stayed for long periods at one church, so we have tried to get them to tell us just how long is too long. They finally get around to saying it does not matter how long the preacher stays with a church, it is what he does while he is there. To which we agree. You see, one of the above quotations says a preacher may stay "ten days or ten years." So, we are ready to jump to another objection.

2. *Pay*: Then they jump to the pay proposition. They object to the preacher's being paid a stipulated salary. They impugn the paid preacher's motives. He is "preaching for money," "he is a paid pastor," "an hirling pastor," etc. Then, when we get down to arguing the right of preachers to be paid (I Cor. 9), they say, "we do not object to the preacher's being paid, and paid well for his work." Which is obvious, since the objectors also are paid by churches for the preaching which they do. So, we are now ready to jump to another objection.

3. *Preaching where there are elders*: Next they say their objection is to a preacher's preaching for a church that has elders. They contend that elders are supposed to do the teaching, "pastoring," not a preacher, and they cannot pay the preacher to do their teaching for them. (as if someone so contended). But we notice that they preach where there are elders. The elders in the churches of this persuasion call in preachers for lengthy meetings, Bible readings, etc. When we mention this, they say, "We are not saying that a preacher cannot preach where there

are elders, he just cannot live there and be paid a stipulated salary." So we jump from the "preaching-where-there-are-elders" objection, back to the "stay" and "pay" objection, so we are right back where we started, and are ready to start around again!

One of the prime mistakes of this persuasion has been its condemnation of all "located preachers" on the basis of some specific abuses. We admit that there are abuses, but this does not change the principle that it is right for a preacher to live with and work out of a church and to be financially supported by it. There are abuses among them also, and surely not one of them will deny it. We have known of several churches under one "evangelist." we have known of their moving in and "de-eldering" churches and subjecting them to "evangelistic oversight," etc. If abuses prove the "located preacher" is wrong, then abuses prove "evangelistic oversight" is wrong.

It is true that some "located preachers" are professional pastors. They are lazy, inactive, and exercise undue and unscriptural influence over local churches, but they are exceptional, and are not typical of the general run of preachers among us. Most men are dedicated to the work of preaching the gospel. They do not spend all their time preaching for the local church, but are active in meeting work; often in difficult places. Many local churches are very generous in sending their preachers to other places where they are needed worse than at home. When these brethren are at home they are busy preparing edifying lessons for the congregation, teaching special classes in the building and in homes, publishing teaching bulletins, lesson materials, etc. Such men cannot be fairly identified with the few who abuse their privilege.

CONCLUSION: If my mail is any indicator, we had better begin to teach on this subject. It looks like the "movement" is trying to regroup, and make a fresh attack. Let us not go into battle with wet powder. Let us all study the subject with an open mind. Let all "located preachers" take inventory of their own lives and activities to see that they contain nothing that would give credence to the contentions of those who try to capitalize on certain abuses. We are convinced that the "located preacher" can be defended by the scriptures when he does the work of an evangelist. There is no scriptural defense for his doing anything else.

Brother Inman's Objections Considered

Ron Halbrook

"Dear Brother Needham:

"I have just read your article on 'Golden Rule Treatment Among Brethren.' To almost everything in the article I wanted to say a hearty, 'Amen.'" Then I read 'POST MARKS.' This along with Brother Ron Halbrook's article seem to me to be an outstanding violation of the very principle which you had so ably set forth.

"Do you ever receive mail which you are not able to answer immediately? Do you ever receive mail which you do not answer for some other reason? Are you hypocritical if you thus behave? Would it be using the golden rule, if without finding out, I accused you of hypocrisy?

"If you want to know my answer to the questions, it is false to each of the questions. What is yours? Then answer the following:

"T F Some churches do not receive all the Bible teaching they should receive; May someone start a human institution which he calls Torch to supplement this teaching for all who will pay a stipulated fee?

"When you see that the questions do not cover the ground as thoroughly as you thought, it should help you to reassess the whole situation and see that an orphans' home is formed by brethren and then people contribute (congregations contribute to) the orphans and their needs, not to an institution.

"Though churches should not maintain human organizations to maintain highly trained choruses, could a church have a singing school and invite people from other congregations? When you answer this I have another question. Let this one suffice for now."

Sincerely, Clifton Inman

We deeply appreciate *Torch's* policy of allowing freedom of discussion in printing "Some Churches Don't Care For Their Widows" (May issue), in allowing brother Clifton Inman's objections to be heard, and in allowing a response at this time. Liberty to speak becomes license when it becomes one-sided with no allowance for objection, examination, and discussion. Most religious teachers today want *license* to teach their doctrines. Anyone who teaches publicly, by that very act, invites and should expect full, open examination. Teaching God's Word is not the art of self-defense for selfish satisfaction, but a labor in love of God and man, seeking all the truth we can find and spreading it as far as possible. Our courage should be like Paul's, our humility and willingness to change like Saul's (Acts 8; Heb. 13).

Brother Inman and this writer have nothing personal against each other, having never so much as met. We have both spoken in defense of God's truth, as best as we understand it. Genuine love and mutual respect are not lost simply because we disagree. Our desire is to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

OBJECTION NO. 1. *Brother Inman's first objection is that both my letter and the article published "seem to me to be an outstanding violation" of "Golden Rule Treatment Among Brethren."* My letter referred to the failure of *The Spiritual Sword* and brother Gus Nichols to so much as acknowledge a letter and article sent to them. It is most perplexing, and we say this without the least intent of unfairness, it is inexplicably puzzling to hear constantly some of the brethren calling for unity and open discussion and then to have them consistently ignore letters of appeal for help in studying the matters which have divided us! Would brother Needham have been showing fairness and sincerity to have completely ignored brother Inman's letter? License (not liberty), the art of self-defense, and unbrotherly conduct, with a fair sprinkling of hypocrisy, would have led brother Needham to inaction and dead silence. *Could brother Inman have objected without violating the Golden Rule?* He could, and we did. Brother Inman thinks we should have found out why our requests received silence. *How -- write another letter???* Where apologies are in order, we stand ready to make them; but, we cannot apologize for objecting strenuously to the IRON CURTAIN OF SILENCE erected by some brethren. "Let us consider one another!" (Heb. 10:24).

OBJECTION NO. 2. In "Some Churches Don't Care For Their Widows," we suggested ten true-false questions in an effort to study the institutional principle in relation to congregational responsibility. Our brother answered exactly as we did: "If you want to know my answer to the questions, it is false to each..." Are we agreed to the eleventh question implied by the title to the article?

T-F 11. Some churches do not care for their widows (or orphans); therefore, the churches should establish and support institutions (boards, societies, corporations) for the purpose of providing such care.

How now, brother Inman? We do not intend to be tricky, unfair, or subtle in the least. We believe there is an institutional principle involved. Do *The Spiritual Sword*, brother Nichols, and brother Inman not see that this is what divided brethren a hundred years ago, and that this is what is dividing brethren today?

Our brother objects that the questions offered "do not cover the ground as thoroughly as you thought." He then offers what we would call a "bonus" question in the classroom: "T-F Some churches do not receive all the Bible teaching which they should receive; may someone start a human institution which he calls Torch to supplement this teaching for all who will pay a stipulated fee?"

May we respectfully submit that the question is confusing in format, with no intent of avoiding an answer. We are glad to deal with the principle he is raising and trust he will not object to our dealing with it exactly as we did in the original article: T-F 2. Some churches do not do enough to edify the young and old saints; therefore, the churches should establish and support human organizations (*Torch*, Bible Herald Bookstore, a college, a corporate home-and-school) dedicated to this work.

Brother Inman has already answered "false," as we have. Neither of us think churches should make donations or contributions, *either* for the sake of the organization itself or for the work's sake.

Just here, we should notice question eleven again. We

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believe that if the church can make contributions to human institutions which in turn provide, arrange, and oversee homes, and thus fulfill its duty to a *needy widow*, then the church can make contributions to institutions which in turn provide, arrange, and oversee preachers and thus fulfill its duty to an *unconverted widow*. Thus, no *church* contributions to Torch Publication Co. and no *church* contributions to Torch Widow-Care Co.! Individuals may build and maintain such institutions, but *not churches*.

Actually, our brother's question confuses what one may do in an *individual capacity* with *congregational activity*. Thus, we might break his question into two questions: (1) T-F "Some *churches* do not receive all the Bible teaching which they should receive." TRUE! (2) Yes-No "May an individual start a human institution which he calls *Torch* to supplement this teaching for all who will pay a stipulated fee?" YES! The first one suggests *congregational action*, the second *individual action*, and surely we are agreed there is a difference (Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:16; 1 Cor. 12:14). The two questions should not be thrown together.

The following questions, some review and some "bonus." with hints, will summarize and clarify the main issue raised by brother Inman, i.e. *individual* and *congregational* activity:

T-F 1. Some churches do not do enough missionary work; therefore, the churches should establish and support human institutions to carry on such work. *Hint*: Churches may buy material from organizations such as Harding College, Bible Herald Bookstore, *Torch*, or Old Paths Book Club. But, *the institutional principle* involves a number of churches building, maintaining, and contributing to a committee, board, corporation, or society for the purpose of providing evangelization. We all understand that this is not a matter of contributing to an organization just for the sake of the organization, but with the intent of evangelizing.

T-F 2. Some churches do not do their proper benevolent work; therefore, the churches should establish and support human institutions to carry on such work. *Hint*: Churches may purchase materials, hire personnel, or buy services from organizations such as Red Cross, Rexall

Drug Co., Boles Home, Athens Nursing Home, Lester Hospital, Mayo Clinic, Kroger Grocery and Southern Sash Lumber Yards. But, *the institutional principle* involves a number of churches building, maintaining, and contributing to a committee, board, corporation, or society for the purpose of providing benevolent care. We all know that this is not a matter of contributing to an organization just for the sake of the organization, but with the intent of providing benevolence. (Bro. Inman says we should recognize that contributions are sent to "the orphans and their needs, not to an institution.")

T-F 3. Some individuals do not do enough Bible study; therefore, individuals should establish and support institutions to carry on Bible instruction. *Hint:* This is basically how such organizations as Harding College, Florida College, Bible Herald Bookstore, *Torch*, and Old Paths Book Club were started; there are also some economic factors involved, as "for all who will pay a stipulated fee."

T-F 4. Some individuals recognize a need for more benevolent work; therefore, individuals should establish and support institutions to carry on such work. *Hint:* This is basically how such organizations as Red Cross, Lester Hospital, Mayo Clinic, some drug and research organizations, and corporate homes for the care of the needy were started; sometimes the economic factor is only minor, sometimes it is of greater significance.

T-F 5. Whatever organizations individuals may establish and support in doing good works (encouraging Bible study, helping the needy, etc.), churches may establish and support. *Hint:* The answer to this question will indicate whether *churches* may build and maintain organizations such as Florida College, Harding College, Bible Herald Bookstore, *Torch*, Old Paths Book Club, Red Cross, Lester Hospital, Mayo Clinic, Rexall Drug Co., Boles Home, Athens Nursing Home, Kroger Grocery, and Southern Sash Lumber Yards. The economic and benevolent purposes involved in these human institutions are mixed in various proportions, but all of them exist within the framework of the free enterprise system. Each one tries to accomplish some good purpose, while also keeping a relatively healthy economic status. They all are human enterprises, established by human guidelines, and must *both choose and expedite* the ways, means and methods which human judgment

deems best. All agree that this is the realm of individual action for making a living and doing good as we are taught to do in Eph. 4:28. All agree that the church may purchase whatever goods, services, or materials such organizations produce. *But whether churches have the right to build and maintain such organizations with the intent of fulfilling their responsibilities is the issue.*

If this institutional principle is accepted by the churches, they may build and maintain various organizations for widow care, mission work, edification, encouragement of proper giving, discipline, song training, meetinghouse care, preacher training, elderly preacher care, appointment of elders, training women to grow, or anything else a church is responsible to do.

OBJECTION NO. 3. *Brother Inman seems to think we have overlooked or circumvented the following point. "Though churches should not maintain human organizations to maintain highly trained choruses, could a church have a singing school and invite people from other congregations? When you answer this I have another question."*

When the church pillars and holds up the truth, whosoever will may come...come to learn, come to obey, come to help and be helped. If brethren can see that *"churches should not maintain human organizations to maintain highly trained choruses"* or to execute singing schools, why can they not see that *"churches should not maintain human organizations to maintain" widow-care or orphan-care homes or anything else! Churches should not maintain human organizations, period!* In regard to singing schools or care of the needy, neither should churches invite a need bigger than the resources of the local church and then invite the resources of other churches. The local church should not set itself up as a centralizing executor for other churches nor look to human institutions as centralizing executors, but should edify itself in love (Eph. 4:16).

May God unite us in Christ, bind up our wounds, and place us foresquare upon the Firm Foundation of Diving Truth. "Let all that you do be done in love" (1 Cor. 16:14).

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Pat Boone's Apostasy

James P. Needham

Pat Boone and his family are gone, perhaps forever--sad fact! It has been expected for a long time. It was almost inevitable in view of the circumstances. His fate was predictable.

Pat and his family have now joined the people of the "holiness" persuasion; those claiming to have the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He has written a book about his conversion to that sect. It is entitled: A NEW SONG. I have read it with tears. It tells a sad, sad story. It ought to be read by every Christian. It contains many valuable lessons. I would like to note some things I have observed from reading the book:

1. *Pat was weak from the start:* He admits as much in the telling of his story. While in the beginning of his career, he stayed with some righteous principles, it was more out of pressure from his wife and brethren than out of deep conviction. That this is true is proven by his early drift from these principles when the pressure of the entertainment world began to mount. He felt intimidated by the snide remarks and the fun poked at him by his peers.

2. *Pat was exploited by his brethren:* When his driftings began to trouble his conscience, he went to elders and preachers in the liberal camp with which he was affiliated. They had foolishly tied the fortunes of the church to Pat and other popular figures, and did not discourage his participation in night club entertainment, social drinking, etc. Naturally, this only served to accelerate his apostasy. In his book he does not tell of one counselor he consulted who discouraged his participation in such activities.

3. *Pat, not being prepared for high finance, got into monetary problems:* He made a lot of money fast. He made some unwise investments, and practically went bankrupt. More and more of his time, energy, and attention were given to materialistic considerations. He left God out of his life, and began to "waste his substance with riotous living" (Lk. 15:13).

4. *"Evil companionships corrupt good morals"* (1 Cor. 15:33). Pat was associated with moral libertines more and more and with religious people less and less. Such will almost inevitably distort one's moral judgement. It was more than Pat could tolerate. His principles began to slip, and he began to drink, gamble and lust for other women.

5. *His marriage and his career were endangered.* Shirley, his wife, held out for a long time. She desperately tried to save Pat from the inevitable consequences of his mode of life. But, as usual, one cannot help a person who has no desire to be helped. Her efforts erected a barrier between them. They had less and less in common, and his career was less and less profitable. He could not sleep, he had no communication with his wife, and very little to do except attend wild Hollywood revelries. His domestic difficulties finally climaxed, and he resolved to leave his family. His wife tearfully begged him to stay. They decided to try to find a solution.

6. *Pat sought help in the wrong place:* It was inevitable that if Pat sought help in solving his problems at this point, he would turn to the wrong source. How could anyone think he would turn to the preachers and elders he had known, since they had helped to bring him to his present situation? He looked elsewhere. Yes, to the holiness groups who *were known* to oppose the very things that had partially engineered his downfall: drinking, dancing, reveling, gambling, etc. etc. His participation in such activities had not been discouraged by his own brethren, so why would he turn to them for help in solving the problems these sins had caused.

As I stated earlier, Pat's own story of his life betrays a certain weakness. It is obvious that his religion had been more out of tradition, than out of personal conviction. Having been reared in and around Nashville and David Lipscomb College turned out to be definite liabilities, for he had absorbed a denominational church of Christism that sticks out like a sore thumb in almost everything he says. He never was acquainted with the church we read about in the Bible, he was a member of a popular "church of Christ denomination." Consequently, he had never had a real personal relationship with God. He had a "form of godliness, but denying the power thereof ..." (2 Tim. 3:5). When he really needed religion, the

kind he had faded like a pipe dream, and he was ripe for change.

Since his religion had been of the head and not of the heart, and since he naturally indentified all churches of Christ with the one he had come to mistrust, he turned elsewhere. Since his "head" religion had failed him, he turned to a "heart" one rather than to the Biblical combination of both. He swung from one extreme to the other.

7. *The sensationalists move in:* When Pat was ripe for picking, the emotional sensationalists moved in and gathered in him and his family. They prayed with Pat and his family, and they all were eventually "baptized with the Holy Ghost" and given "a beautiful prayer language." (spoke in tongues). All of their problems are now solved (they think) because God has given "miraculous" evidence that He is with them. No more need for *reason* and *serious Bible study*, leave everything to the *emotions*. No more need for doctors, just pray and God will heal all physical diseases!!

CONCLUSION: Pat and his family are now associated with some denominational "holiness" group. He helps in their big healing campaigns all over the world, not realizing that they are exploiting him just as did the liberal "church of Christ."

And what did the liberal church of Christ do? Oh, they followed the scriptures to the letter: They withdrew from him! After they helped him apostatize they withdrew from him! That is like giving a child icecream and telling him he will get a whipping if he eats it!

There are many needed lessons in the Pat Boone story: We should never tie the fortunes of the Lord's church to men, regardless of their prestige; If we lie down with dogs, we will get up with fleas, "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." We all need a religion which consists of a happy balance of head and heart. Exclusion of either one, will lead to trouble.

We should all pray for Pat and his family. We should also pray for his brethren who betrayed him, and sold him down the river. They are as lost as he is. How sad to contemplate the results of Pat's action; the loss of his

and Shirley's souls, and that of their 4 girls. And even more: Pat is now perverting the same scriptures to substantiate his position, that the holiness sects have always perverted. He has an evangelistic zeal, and his influence can well lead others into his error. Realizing this, James D. Bales, a close friend of Pat's and a professor of Bible at the liberal Harding College, has written a book in answer to Pat's. He is desperately trying to prevent others from being influenced by Pat's book.

This type of phenomina follows religious liberalism, like night follows day. It all started like a little snow ball at the top of the mountain, but as it rolls down the mountain side, it gets bigger and bigger, and there seems to be no way to stop it. Pat is not the first of the liberal brethren to claim Holy Spirit baptism, and the ability to speak in tongues he never learned, and he will not be the last! Many liberal churches of Christ are having a problem with this matter.

When the liberal brethren first took the position that we can do *one thing*, regardless of how insignificant, for which we do not have Bible authority, they crossed their Rubicon--started a course of action which is difficult to reverse. The sky is the limit! The only way to reverse their action now, is to scrap their whole liberal system, and come on back to the Bible in everything. We must "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11), and do all things by the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17). It is impossible for the liberals to rectify their present plight by attacking claims of Holy Spirit baptism. That is about like treating an heart attack by trying to ease the pain in the left arm! They must get to the source of the trouble which is a loss of faith in the authority of the scriptures as an all-sufficient guide in religion.

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We indeed live in a land of prosperity; a land that flows with milk and honey. We have technological advantages that far surpass any previous age. All of which *should* equal the ideal means by which the kingdom of God could flourish and grow. But, alas, it is not so. Why? The means to an ideal spiritual end have become *the end* themselves. Men prosper and suppose their gain is godliness. They feel they are rich and in need of nothing. They merely keep house for the Lord (if it does not interfere with their third job) by signing a check now and then that the "work of the Lord might be carried out." I wonder how many of such realize that they are poor, miserable, blind, and naked in the sight of God. I fear the result the sin of covetousness will have on the eternal destiny of many lukewarm church members. God demands that the affections of the hearts of his children be set on the things above, *not* on the things on the earth. I am afraid materialism has replaced or choked the spirituality of far too many in the Lord's kingdom. Many churches are dead on the vine because of it.

Consider some definitions: *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* defines covetousness as: "a desire to have more, always in a bad sense, is used in a general way in Mark 7:22." A verb form found in 1 Cor. 12:31 suggests a different and proper meaning, to "desire earnestly." We should, of course, desire spiritual things, but this is the exact opposite of the sin under consideration. Notice this definition found in *The Comprehensive Analysis of The Bible*: "an inordinate desire for the possession of riches or money, or wealth of any sort; also the inordinate desire for the possession of something of supposed value belonging to some other person." This is very much akin to and includes materialism which Webster defines as the tendency to give undue importance to material interests. He that hath ears, let him hear. Brother, are you too entangled with worldly, material, selfish interests to accomplish any thing worthwhile for the Lord? I mean *spiritual* activities. I mean those things that pertain to your salvation and the salvation of others. How long has it been since *you* talked to someone about their soul, since *you* prayerfully *studied*, not just read or scanned your Bible?

The severity of this sin is indicated by the fact that no covetous man will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 13:12)

6:10; Eph. 5:5). This is so because it is idolatry. We scoff at men actually bowing before a literal heathen idol, but we are guilty of the same sin when we exalt material interests and desires to a place of preeminence in our lives. Millions are bowing before the gods of science, sex, and siver, modernism's holy trinity. All such try to make God into their own image rather than making themselves into the image of God. Their love is set on "things" rather than on God (1 John 2:15).

The severity is also indicated by the command for brethren to withdraw themselves from brethren guilty of this sin (2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor. 5:11). Brethren brag about being the New Testament church and doing everything the Bible says, but treat lightly such passages if they do not ignore them altogether. O consistency, thou art a jewel! I wonder what would happen if elders everywhere would clamp down on this sin and churches would withdraw from everyone guilty. I suspect the membership of many churches would be reduced considerable. How many cases have you known of where discipline was meted out for this sin?

Since we cannot know the hearts of men, let us consider some signs which indicate the presence of materialism and covetousness. Many brethren work two or three jobs. Why? Necessity? In but few cases. Usually one will notice they live in a new or expensive house, have a color TV, a late model car and many other such items; all at the expense of duty of God and their spiritual development. Some, due to talent and good management, have all these things and much more, but have not sacrificed fidelity to God in the process. Others, filled with envy and greed, pay a great eternal price that they may "keep up with the Joneses."

Mothers shun the duties of the home that they might have that extra income. Their poor children become confused as to which house is home and which woman is their mother. They learn quickly the value of their parents. Sound familiar?

Brethren, let us center our thoughts on God's law (Psalm 1:2), rather than constantly on "things" that we want, and use what we have to the glory of God. After all, that is what these things are for. "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6).

*318 Bennett Street
Pontiac, Illinois 61764*

Needham's Notes

Camp-Hafley Debate



I have received a printed copy of the *Camp--Hafley Debate*, published in paperback. It is a book of some 215 pages, plus charts. It is quite unusual from the standpoint that it was published by Wayne Camp, President of some Baptist school in Peoria, Illinois. Why he wanted to publish it, is difficult to understand. He is a very ordinary Baptist quibbler, whose debating ability is about average. He offered the usual Baptist arguments and sometimes was quite confusing in his presentation. As is customary with most Baptist preachers, he ignored argument after argument, and could not be persuaded to reply to them by repeated reminders by brother Hafley.

This was close to the first debate for both opponents and both conducted themselves in a fine way. Good order prevailed. Brother Hafley did a creditable job of handling the dodges and quibbles of his opponent. The debate seems to have been printed as it was taken from the tape recordings. While this causes it to read a bit awkwardly in places, it is worth reading. You can order it from: Larry Hafley, 602 W. Lee, Plano, Ill. 60545. \$2.00.

Article on Abortion Coming Soon

In a recent issue we made a plea for qualified brethren to write on the subject of abortion. We mentioned that we had asked an elder who is also a physician to write a special article on the subject. He has agreed to write such an article, and it is in process now. We hope to publish it in the near future. Perhaps we can put it in tract form. We are deeply concerned with this issue, and feel that it affects church members as well as people of the world. If you have not subscribed to TORCH, do so NOW. You will not want to miss this vital article.

Red Bluff, Pasadena, Texas

Part of this issue of TORCH is being prepared during a meeting with the Red Bluff Rd. church in Pasadena, Texas. This is a fine church. It has three good elders,

and a very active program. It assists in the support of some 16 different preachers all over the country. Ralph Williams is the local preacher, and he does a good job. He is loved and respected by the brethren. The Red Bluff meeting resulted in 26 responses. The church really got ready for that one! Glory be to God. jpn

POSTMARKS - continued from page 2

ROCHELLE, ILL. "I have intended to write you since I received my second issue of TORCH, however I am not usually much of a letter writer. Having known you since I was a child, I have respected and admired you for a long time. Now that I am a young preacher I especially am thankful to you, and men like you, who are of great help to young men like myself. To date I have enjoyed TORCH, and feel that it is of great value to any and all who read it

"I not only wrote to commend you for your efforts in TORCH, but also to tell you how much needed your book PREACHERS AND PREACHING has been. All young preachers should read this book, either before they decide to preach, or right after they have begun the work. I hope you will continue to write, and may God bless you in every scriptural work you undertake." (Dennis Shaver).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We are constantly encouraged by the comment we receive about TORCH. I am especially thankful for the many letters I receive from younger preachers expressing appreciation for our efforts. My heart is with such men and it has always been my ambition to be of special help to them as I can. In line with this same thought, I received this comment in a letter from a young preacher recently:

"My heart is in whatever James Needham is involved in. Your counsel, your suggestions, your advice, your brotherly and fatherly support are not soon forgotten. I shudder to think WHERE and WHAT I might be today were it not for you and your unselfish help to me and my family."

All our efforts and heartaches in the work of the Lord are made worthwhile when we receive such a letter. One must be humbled by the enormous possibilities of his influence for both good and bad. Each person leaves "foot prints on the sands of time." Where they lead is determined by each individual.)

God Doth Care

"The heavens declare the glory of God,"
The shinning sun, the clay, the clod.
He is present every passing hour,
Caring even for the blooming flower.

I see God in the birds that fly,
In the swimming fish, and the baby's cry.
He's in places, broad and narrow,
Caring even for the fallen sparrow.

God is here, God is there.
He even numbers our fragile hair.
He cares for me both night and day.
He even hears me when I pray.

God doth care for the meekest plan
Of the littlest child and the biggest man.
He's even aware of the nimble squirrel,
For God is caring for His wonderous world.

From God's presence, we cannot go;
To the falling rain or the drifting snow.
Men may scoff and men may curse,
But God is caring for His universe.

Vain men think God cannot know
What they do and where they go,
But God is caring for the babbling brook,
And keeping our diary in His record book.

To His judgment we're moving fast
To meet the record of our past.
Even the secrets of word and deed,
For God doth care for our hate and greed.

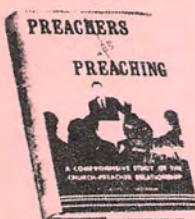
We should learn from the things we see
That God doth care for you and me;
Devote our lives to His work and plan,
And justify His making man.

James P. Needham
6-22-71

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TORCH

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*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher

OF PREACHERS, PONTIFFS AND PROJECTS

As a rule, gospel preachers are great men, but they are subject to error and sin just like everyone else. History will show that preachers have had a tremendous influence on the world. All combined, it would probably outweigh the influence of any other class of men who have lived. This one fact places a burden of responsibility on the shoulders of those who preach that is staggering to contemplate. There is great need for caution and thought in every word and deed.

Influence poses a great danger both to those over whom it is wielded, and to the one who wields it. No better example of this can be mentioned than King Saul. He was a very humble man when God chose him to rule His people. He felt unworthy, and sought to beg off. But once he was in office, he was spoiled by its power. He became vengeful, pontifical and mean. He even flew in the face of God. He felt no compulsion to be guided by His word, and sought to kill David, His anointed.

We have seen humble, unassuming men become dictatorial preachers. Some men cannot handle any position of influence. It goes to their heads, and spoils them. They may have quit humble occupations to preach the gospel, or be barely out of their teens. They may be "babes" as preachers, but they feel compelled to pontificate on every problem that arises. They are preachers, and preachers are supposed to be answer men and problem solvers, so without any great knowledge or experience, they think they can settle any difficulty. A very young preacher recently said to another preacher, *"I live in _____, if you have any problems, just call me."*

There are others with a great deal more ability than young or inexperienced preachers who are even more dangerous. They may be editors, college presidents or widely known preachers. They are not content to be humble, hard-working gospel preachers, they are self-appointed "brotherhood" regulators. As individuals or as groups they often create a broad power base which is dangerous. They tend to think of the church in terms of a party with

themselves as the head. Centers of power and influence are developed which become political power structures with a dangerous influence over the thinking of brethren and churches. They become jealous of their power and position and quick and harsh in their reactions to the slightest criticism of their machine, regardless of how well-intentioned. Objectors and honest inquirers are either written up or boycotted. Lines of fellowship are quickly drawn over that which is admitted by all to be an optional expedient. Belief in and support of their projects are not essential to going to heaven, but are essential to having their fellowship.

Some of us can remember when being written up in the GOSPEL GUARDIAN or the GOSPEL ADVOCATE was tantamount to being kicked out of the church in the minds of many. I am old enough to remember when one would not be employed by some churches unless he attended a certain college. College lectureships become party conventions to some who *attend* them, and to some who *produce* them. They are also thusly conceived in the minds of some churches and elders who urge their preachers to attend to be associated with the party faithful, and learn the latest party line. To some, being asked to participate in such a lectureship is equal to being "canonized," and the church whose preacher is so honored is elevated to the highest rank in party circles. A preacher once said to me that he felt he was developing quite well as a preacher, but if he could just be asked to write for a certain paper and to speak on a certain college lectureship without it's being promoted behind the stage, he would feel that he had sort of arrived! Whether we like to admit it or not, with many this is the criterion by which big and little preachers are determined.

Elders often attend the college lectureships to look for preachers to either work with them, or hold their meetings. Colleges and editorial offices have often become preacher placement agencies, wielding undue influence over churches and preachers as to WHO preaches WHERE. As a younger preacher, I was once employed by an eldership because I *"Had been keeping the right company,"* namely, certain brethren who were publishing a widely-read periodical. Many churches look to a college to train, screen, and recommend their preachers for them. The highest recommendation some preachers could have is that of their college professor.

It is the old, old story of the tail wagging the dog. "Brotherhood" projects are most always introduced as expedients and service organizations, but grow into matters of faith and SERVED organizations. In the minds of many they subordinate the churches, and become their headquarters. They become pulse-feelers, and manipulators of the churches they claim to serve. One college president is reported to have said, *"The colleges can get along without the churches, but the churches cannot get along without the colleges."* I heard an elder say that he thought the church should have someone from a certain college to hold a meeting for them every year or two because it keeps the college before the minds of the brethren. Through many years it has been the practice of some churches near the colleges to employ the professors as preachers to enable them to teach at "brotherhood" colleges for a pittance of a salary. This has often occurred to the detriment of these churches.

In such cases the tail is wagging the dog! If a church wants to employ a gospel preacher for a meeting or as regular preacher who HAPPENS to be connected with a school, that is one thing, but for it to deliberately employ such an one and pay him out of the church treasury in order to help a human institution, that is a horse of another color. It is really just a left-handed way for the churches to contribute to the colleges. That and making an out-right church contribution to the college is the difference between tweedle dee, and tweedle dum. To be sure, most churches would deny that they deliberately employ such men to help the schools, but God knows the facts and so do I in some cases. This may be straight talk, but it is the truth.

It is hard for the powers that be in the "service" organizations to keep from thinking of themselves as representatives of the "brotherhood." College lectureships have been labled as the event of the year for the brotherhood. On the other hand, it is hard for some brethren to avoid being influenced by such thinking. Some are more influenced by WHO SAID IT, than by WHAT IS SAID. The highest authority they need or want for their faith and practice is that their favorite *preacher, paper or president* said it is alright. Papers and schools have generated many parties among the brethren. Some brethren look upon papers as party organs, and upon the colleges as the party seminaries. Such organizations are frequently considered the official interpreters of the scriptures.

All human parities have human heads and human spokesmen, but only the Lord speaks to and for the church. Regardless of how great and good men may be, or how worthy their aims or good their intentions, they do not speak for anyone but THEMSELVES in matters religious. Speaking for myself, I can say rather quickly and candidly that they do not speak for me and I resent anyone's thinking they do. The person or church who thinks some human organization can speak for the "brotherhood" has out "denominated" the denominations. There just about always have been some who thought in this vein. In the introduction to the HARDEMAN--BOGARD DEBATE, this statement appears, "*N.B. Hardeman, speaking in behalf of the churches of Christ...*" I am unaware that "the churches of Christ" had a convention and authorized some individual to speak in their behalf.

Humility befits the people of God. Preachers are commanded to be examples of the believers (1 Tim. 4:12). Paul told Timothy, "*In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves*" (2 Tim. 2:25). There is nothing about the Bible's instructions to a preacher that would encourage him to be an ego-maniac, and an iron-fisted dictator. Some mistake the instruction to be *firm* and *sound* to demand of them a dogmatic, unbending disposition even in matters of opinion and judgment.

Some preaching brethren carry an air of infallibility more fitting to a pope than a gospel preacher. When problems arise, they settle them immediately and officiously by forming some very rigid opinions on them which become the norm by which everyone else is to settle them. Their words are uttered with an officious air of finality. It is law and gospel because THEY are who THEY are. To disagree is to deny the faith. The "clergy" has spoken.

These brethren are the fastest "guns" in the church. They shoot either from the hip, or from ambush! They seldom shoot straightly or fairly! They delight in being feared as the greatest gunslingers around! and they are feared! I have never been ashamed to admit that I am afraid of some things, especially a wayward gun!

These brethren's concept of discussing issues is attacking some person. As one preacher said about debating: "*You have got to whip the man. It is not enough just to answer his false doctrine.*" When such brethren write a-

bout issues, they bluster and blow and threaten. If their opponents do not "straighten up," they are going to bring the wrath of the party down on their heads. Their writing and preaching are filled with hateful words, and false accusations. They delight in using analogies that are insulting and injurious to the pride of those they oppose. These men are engineers, but they build *walls* instead of *bridges*.

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to write an article of this nature because its author realizes that he needs the admonitions as badly as anyone. Too, there is always the danger that those who need the lesson the most will apply it far beyond its intended scope, and thus make misapplications of what is said and so destroy the good it could have done them. It is very hard for anyone to be consistent. We keep forgetting what we did and said yesterday! Many of the things we have said about the "liberals" apply equally to some of us. Some of them are no more partistic than are some of us. Some of us have out "institutioned" them, only we have gone about it in a slightly different way. We have condemned the "liberal" brethren for dividing the church over their expediences (human institutions). There are ominous signs that some of the "conservative" brethren are about ready to do the same thing. One does not have to believe in, promote or financially support any human institution on earth in order to go to heaven. That being true, how can we ever make such a test of fellowship. One can be "institutional" without defending church contributions to such.

The relationship of individuals to human institutions has been an issue for centuries. It is a question that will never be settled to the satisfaction of all. If some brethren do not believe they have a right to exist, I have no quarrel with them. I believe otherwise, but I am not ready to split the church over it. In the early church some believed one could eat meats sacrificed to idols. Others denied it. Paul said it is indifferent to God, and cautioned them not to choose up sides on the matter and split the church over it. Any time one admits that belief in and support of human institutions is optional, he is obligated to apply to them Paul's rules found in Rom. 14.

A DOCTOR CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT THE NEW ABORTION LAWS

Curtis J. Torno, M.D.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is an article we promised to obtain back in the April issue. We have finally obtained it, but feel it was worth the waiting. Brother Torno can speak with authority on this matter. He has attended over 2000 births and has practiced medicine for over 20 years. He is an elder in the Red Bluff church in Pasadena, Texas, and has done a great deal of preaching. Hence, he is qualified to speak both from a medical and a scriptural point of view. We commend the article to your careful reading. jpn)

INTRODUCTION

With the recent passing of very liberal abortion laws in several States and with the possibility and consideration of their being adopted in many other states, there is brought yet another problem to the sincere Christian.

For all our national existence, abortion has been illegal, disapproved and considered sin except for certain specified conditions. In most areas, abortions could be performed only in cases of rape, incest, exposure to certain diseases that harm the fetus (Rubella) and peculiar circumstances where allowing the pregnancy to continue would be certain to endanger the life of the mother. Even in these cases, at least 2 or 3 physicians must agree, or certify that the facts of the case warrant the interruption of the pregnancy. In some areas and hospitals a special review board must be consulted and grant their approval before it can be performed.

1. THE LIBERALIZED LAW

Now with the extremely liberal laws in some states, the only requirement is that the woman want the abortion and the pregnancy be less than 20 weeks gestation. "Woman's lib" and the "new morality front" (which is really the "old immorality" in a mini-skirt and hot pants) have

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)

Abortions: A Big Business

By Walter Trohan

WASHINGTON — Abortions have become a multimillion-dollar business in New York City.

As a new and growing business, it is being promoted by such Madison Avenue techniques as advertising and circulars.

IN THE FIRST THREE months of this year, it is estimated that about 10,000 abortions were performed in New York City.

No estimates are available for the rest of the state, where the liberal abortion law also is operative.

There were 34,826 births in New York City during the first three months of the year.

PRIVATE MEDICAL services report 303.5 abortions for every 1,000 births.

However, not all abortions have to be reported to these services, or to the city's Bureau of Maternity Services and Family Planning.

The public wards, clinics and city hospitals report a ratio of 436.3 abortions for every 1,000 births.

It is said these institutions are patronized by lower income women.

THE BUREAU reported a 56 per cent drop in pregnancy related deaths in the three-month period.

However, with abortions substantially reducing pregnancies, a drop in pregnancy related deaths is to be expected.

Not all abortions are performed on residents of the city, because anyone in the country who wants an abortion is invited to take advantage of the

law which made abortions legal in the state last year.

But reports from public wards, clinics and city hospitals would indicate most of the abortions are being performed on city residents.

REPUTABLE MEDICAL men are barred from advertising under their own code.

In the case of abortions, this medical canon is being avoided by the creation of abortion placement or referral services which do advertise and then send patients to doctors who register with them.

Such services have placed ads in various publications, especially college newspapers, stating that an abortion may be arranged by phone and proceed on the patient's arrival in New York City.

Virtually every practicing physician and even retired physicians have received letters urging them to send patients desiring abortions.

These letters say a patient will be guaranteed a hospital bed and a certified gynecologist.

"IT IS ANTICIPATED that the cost of an abortion will range from cost-free, for an indigent New York resident, up to an average cost of \$225 for patients in private care, depending upon the period of gestation, the nature of the operation and the institution in which it is performed," according to the letter to physicians.

It is estimated that the total cost of abortions for the first three months of the year was at least \$1,500,000.

ORLANDO EVENING STAR

pushed the acceptance of these new laws. These new attitudes are a part of the sexual revolution and sexual promiscuity that has generally loosened the moral restraint of our time.

2. THE CHRISTIAN AND THE LIBERALIZED LAW

The question that remains is "May a Christian approve of, or participate in these new abortion laws?" Is it all right now because it is legal? The answer of course is no. We know that liberal divorce laws do not change God's laws of marriage and divorce and we can simply conclude that changing civil abortion law does not change God's law nor should it change the Christian's attitude toward it. It does not make it right for Christians just because it is legal. If abortion is murder, it is still wrong.

3. WHY ABORTION IS SINFUL

Why is abortion wrong? Simply because it is a taking of a human life. Exodus 21:22-25, tells about the penalty of an accidental interruption of a pregnancy. If the *accidental* interruption is wrong, why would not the *deliberate* interruption be even more wrong? Abortion is murder, if the fetus is a soul. So the question becomes, "When does a fertilized egg become a soul?" or "when does life begin?"

4. WHEN DOES THE FETUS BECOME A LIVING SOUL?

As a physician, I conclude that life begins when the egg is fertilized, and is implanted in the womb. This gives it all the essentials for life and development, and it is then a life and thus a living soul. There is no other time that one could assign to the beginning of life. God breathed into the newly-formed Adam "the breath of life, and he became a *living soul*" (Genesis 2). *He became a soul when he became alive. The fetus has become a soul when it has life. It has life when it becomes implanted in the womb.*

When the fertilized ovum implants in the womb, it becomes a living thing (acquires life) and it also receives its own soul. If not, at what point does God add the soul? *The soul came with the life in the first man and so it does now in God's laws for the creation of new souls.*

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 12)

Moral Issue Seen In Abortion Report

By LOUIS CASSELS
UPI Religion Writer

A report from the New York City Health Department brings into sharp focus the moral issue involved in liberalized abortion laws.

The report reveals that since abortions were legalized last July 1, in 26 cases abortion procedure brought forth a fetus that displayed unmistakable signs of life.

ONE FETUS survived the ordeal of birth-by-abortion, and now is a normally developing four-month-old girl.

The other 25 lived for only a few minutes after a suction apparatus snatched them half-formed from their mother's womb. But all of them had the characteristics of live babies — heartbeat, gasping for breath, muscular movements.

It is necessary to lay out these grisly facts in detail because they make clear that abortion may, under some if not all circumstances, involve the deliberate destruction of bona fide human life.

THE ROMAN Catholic Church has contended, in its losing battle against liberalized abortion laws that life begins at the moment of conception and the termination of pregnancy, even at a very early stage, is morally equiva-

lent to murder.

Protestant moralists generally reject this view. They argue that true human life does not begin until the fetus "quickens" — about 12 weeks after conception. On this basis, many large Protestant bodies have endorsed legislation authorizing legal abortion in the early months of pregnancy if there are sound medical reasons for it.

Most Jewish scholars hold that a fetus is "mere fluid" until 40 days after conception, but thereafter is at least a "partial person." Although Jewish teaching condones abortion for "grave reasons" — that is, when necessary to save the mother's health — rabbinic opinion tends to view even a therapeutic abortion as an act of homicide, akin to killing a man in self-defense.

SUPPORTERS of unrestricted abortion assert that a fetus should be regarded simply as part of the mother's body until the actual moment of birth. Thus, they say, the mother has the same right to discard an unwanted fetus as she would have to get rid of an inflamed appendix or abscessed tooth.

The New York abortion law tries to compromise the question of when life begins by permitting abortion at any time up to the 24th week of pregnancy, but not thereafter.

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God's law of procreation is not only for the production of new bodies, but is also for the production of new souls as well. I conclude therefore, that like Adam, they begin together. *When life begins, a soul is also created.*

5. ABORTION IS THE TAKING OF LIFE

Since abortion is taking life, needless to say, no Christian may participate in such, either to perform one or to procure one for himself. We must settle these things in our own minds. No one questions that abortion is termination of life. We all agree that life is there, we only disagree as to whether a soul is present. However, it is the taking of life from another human being that is wrong. Since life is present, the taking of it would be wrong, even if the soul were not present.

6. ABORTION VS. CONTRACEPTION

Some would argue that contraception then is taking life and is therefore wrong. Quite the contrary; contraception is the *prevention* of the formation of life and is another matter altogether. Abortion is not a form of contraception (preventing pregnancy), but rather is the *termination* of pregnancy (conception of life) after it has begun. Abortion may be a form of *birth control* but it is *not* a form of *contraception*. Contraception is now wrong because it only *prevents* the formation of life. *Abortion terminates* life long after it has begun. By this definition, it is *murder*!

7. ABORTION VS. ORDINARY SURGERY

There is a concept of abortion that considers the fetus as a part of the mother's body like an appendix that can be removed at her will, whenever she chooses. This is not a true analogy. The appendix is not a living soul. It does not have life in itself. It is not the product of a union of two life cells. There is no soul or life involved in removing an appendix. Thus the analogy is entirely without foundation.

8. THE PHYSICAL--SPIRITUAL BIRTH ANALOGY

There is also another concept that compares physical birth to the spiritual birth. This idea says that since there is no spiritual life until after baptism (birth),

then there is no physical life until after birth. In Acts 14, Elymas the sorcerer was condemned and struck blind because he sought to spiritually abort Sergus Paulus (interfere with his spiritual conversion). If that analogy holds true, then it would still be wrong (condemned by God) to interfere with the physical birth process, once it is initiated. Even if we use a spiritual analogy, it would prove that abortion (interruption of life after conception) would be wrong.

9. ABORTION FROM A MEDICAL STANDPOINT

Let us look at abortion from the medical standpoint now. Spiritually and for a Christian, I have tried to prove that it is a sin and condemned by God. However, let us look at some of the physical effects of abortion. In 25 years of medical practice and experience, I have seen many instances where abortion resulted in a guilt-ridden conscience (and even physical harm). I have rarely seen it produce much good. It does nothing to strengthen the individuals it touches. It does not have the value of making patience, and making the person more understanding and strong. It is rather the easy way out, the way of least resistance and the way that undermines character and integrity. Even in the tragic cases of teenagers and unwed pregnancies, *I do not think it is ever the answer*. To have the baby; to give life and then to adopt it out (thus providing another home with a much wanted and loved child) is a strengthening and patience-producing experience for the person involved.

It takes mental preparation, growth and maturity to consider all the factors and then to bear the child and give it up to a good Christian home. It requires nothing but selfishness, the desire for personal gain and the easy way out (but many times defiling the conscience) to have an abortion. I feel strongly that I have seen many young girls strengthened, matured and helped by the experience of carrying through their unwanted pregnancies and being reassured that a pair of loving parents are available to care for the child. I have seen nothing but grief, disillusionment, tears, and spiritual and physical weakness from those who resorted to abortion. I am afraid the new liberal abortion laws will encourage many to resort to abortion, even in violation of their own consciences and their own good.

Psychiatrists are expressing concern about the effects of abortion on women who feel bereaved, but cannot mourn as they can when they have lost a child as the result of miscarriage or of a stillbirth. Of course, women vary in their response to abortion, depending on how they envisage a conceived child.

The woman who thinks of her unborn child, no matter how young, as an individual; the potential bearer of a name; having a soul and an innate personality, cannot lose that child without a sense of deep loss.

We only are beginning to understand what are the different consequences of abortion. Researchers in Catholic countries are discovering its effects upon women who are unable to live out the experience of mourning.

These are long term problems. There are others as well. Almost no one has asked about the effects on men's attitudes toward and feelings about the unborn child; toward the woman who has the abortion, or toward themselves. Continuing conflict about liberalization and law enforcement can not deflect our attention from these very serious issues.

Margaret Mead says in the July issue of REDBOOK, "...For the truth is, reliance on abortion is at best a poor solution. It is humane to interrupt a pregnancy in certain circumstances--when a woman has suffered rape, or when disease threatens the normality of the fetus or the life of the mother. But abortion, no matter how phrased, is too close to the edge of taking life to fit into a world view in which all life is regarded as valuable" (p. 41, REDBOOK, July, 1971).

Let us keep our thinking correct and not be taken in by the notion that a thing is right because it is legal. It is easy for the shallow-minded to be deceived by such thinking.

1029 E. Thomas St.
Pasadena, Texas 77502

+++++
+ SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE UNITED APPEAL/COMMUNITY CHEST +
+
+ NEXT ISSUE → → → → → → → → → → WATCH FOR IT +
+
+++++
14 (206)

MAKING A NAME TO REMEMBER

Dudley Ross Spears

Most of the famous men in world history are remembered because of their connection with either a war or a cause. Take men like Alexander the Great, Napoleon and Adolph Hitler; you remember these men largely due to their relation to wars. The same is true of presidents of this nation. George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, "Teddy" Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt all were related to a war.

Some historical analysts strongly believe that many wars were started by a politically ambitious man so that he could long be remembered. Others have thought that wars have been started as a solution to economic problems facing a nation. I once heard a man say, "What we need is a good war to make the economy healthier."

All this is a tragedy. What is even more tragic is that in religious circles the same thing has been true. Many religious wars have been waged as the result of some man trying to make a name to be remembered. Some religious conflicts have been perfectly justified and some men were pushed into the fore of the fight. However, other men have pushed themselves into the fore of the battle in order to be considered as "pillars in the brotherhood."

Some religious papers have had their origin as a vehicle for an ambitious man who desired recognition and fame. Others have been ways and means to feather a nest financially. When an issue is being debated hot and heavy, there are always some who want to capitalize on it and start a paper. And yet more, there are some papers that seem to join an issue in order to preserve themselves financially.

Religious papers are sorely needed. We live in a time when more people are reading more than at any other time in our generation. The educational level is the highest this country has ever known. But, when papers become tools in the hands of ambitious men, they cease to have the right to exist.

Jesus said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

NOT JUST FOR FUN

SESSIONS IN SATIRE

SPOOFS, GOOFS, AND PROOFS

A "DEAD" CHURCH'S REPLY

Bobby Witherington

Dear John:

At the request of the visionary elders and the "on the ball" members of the popular church of Christ here in Sardis, I am responding to your sarcastic letter in which you referred to us as "dead." (cf. Rev. 3:1). I feel compelled to set the record straight and, being the preacher here, also a summa cum laude graduate of the Mitylene Christian college, I know I am qualified to speak.

How dare you call us "dead"! I'm going to let the impressive records speak for themselves. Observe the following: Our elders have recently assumed the oversight of Asian Evangelistic Outreach by which all of Asia will be able to hear the Gospel. We have employed the able services of such men as Hastel Haxter and Ron Hallen Hawk to assist us in heralding the truth. These men are dynamic, great preachers and are uniquely qualified to preach the truth without offending others. In fact, some of the Pagan religions in our area have already requested some of these brethren's sermons for their own people!

Furthermore, we are conducting workshops across the country. Big name preachers have conducted these workshops, and they have succeeded in lining up the brotherhood to help financially support the tremendous burden of work over which our elders have humbly assumed the oversight. These men, along with the able help of the editors of the Gospel Advocate and the Infirm Foundation, have succeeded in blackballing those antis who would dare oppose our work. In fact, those antis are dying on the vine and are the subjects of much opposition. Witness Smyrna, for example.

In addition, we would have you take note of the other

good works we endorse and stand behind. We send money to Laodicea to assist in their vast benevolent program, and Laodicea sends money to us to assist in our evangelistic program. In fact, we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to pay administrators to keep track of the dollars we swap and to keep the brotherhood informed of what we are doing.

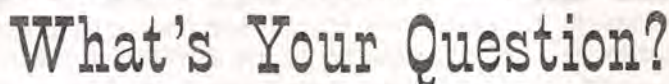
There was a time when we had such men as Hideout Hoods to defend our practices in public debate. Brother Hoods, incidentally, is a brilliant scholar who at different times has ably contended for both sides of these issues, but has never changed his position on a thing! However, we have quit endorsing these debates because we've learned that debates don't help our cause. People get confused. Nevertheless, we keep our cause before the brotherhood and even send elders Hawyer and Heese throughout the land to inform others of our good works and to solicit more money.

It rends our hearts to see a brotherhood divided over such good works which we have undertaken, but we are determined to keep on the march. Our influence has thrust several energetic, dynamic pulpiteers to the front, and their popularity is growing by leaps and bounds. We especially appreciate the good work of brother Airy West who recently received the Demetrius Silver Shrine Award, and we rejoice to know that those who worship "the great goddess Diana" are not nearly so opposed to us as they once were.

Brother John, we hope you will take note of these impressive records and correct the false impression you conveyed in your Revelation letter. We are aware of your long service in the cause in which you believe, and we would hasten to inform you that if you would write in your confession to the GOSPEL ADVOCATOR that we will forgive you. You will be popular again, and we will joyously count you in full fellowship again. We believe also that we can get you relocated from your exile in Patmos.

Inasmuch as I am scheduled to leave today on the Cretian Campaign For Christ to work with brother Hivan Hewart, I must hasten to close this letter. But brother John, please correct your statement that we are a "dead" church. If you desire, I will discuss this matter further

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)



Bible Answers to Bible Questions. Send to: James P. Needham
1600 Oneco St. Winter Park, Fla. 32789

REPLY:

1. *Difference between liberals before and after the apostasy:* There is no difference between persons who were once members of a true church and those who have become members of a church since it went liberal insofar as their sonship is concerned. They were both taught the same plan of salvation, therefore both were born into the family of God, and became sons of God (Jn. 3:1-5). That both are in error, I would not deny, but not on the essentials of sonship.

2. Wouldn't those baptized since the division be classified with denominationalists? No, because denomination-
alists do not teach the essentials of sonship. They teach
varying forms of Calvinism, such as faith only, salvation
through prayer and without baptism, etc. No person can
become a child of God without being born again. Those who
are born again, are children of God, even though they may
have some spiritual deformities.

3. *If there is no difference between the two, why do we consider people in the Christian Church of today as denominational?* This depends upon which people in which Christian Church we are talking about. There is a conservative wing and a liberal wing. Those in the liberal wing no longer teach the scriptural plan of salvation. Those taught by these would not be children of God, therefore, they are members of a denomination, not sons of God. The conservative wing of the Christian Church teaches the scriptural plan of salvation, therefore those who obey it are children of God, though in error.

4. *What about our social association with such?* We can not associate with any person in error in any way that would lend encouragement to his error (1 Cor. 5), or put us in the position of partaking of his error (2 Jn. 9-11). This would go for a denominationalist, a member of a liberal church, or a member of the local church where we worship.

MAKING A NAME TO REMEMBER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15)

exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him become your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:25-28).

35 Par Ave.
Orlando, Fla. 32804

A "DEAD" CHURCH'S REPLY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16)

with you when I arrive on the boat with the Cows for Patmos, a church of Christ project in which I am especially interested.

Sincerely,

Demas Departar

NOTE: Any similarity between current events and persons is intended. (bw)

HALDERMAN AVENUE VISITOR, 9-9-71
Louisville, Kentucky



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



FROSTPROOF, FLA. "Though I have been negligent about getting this subscription in, I haven't been slow to advertise the TORCH. I wish you much continued success. I hope you and the TORCH continue to prosper and to encourage saints to stand fast while behaving themselves properly" (Terry Partain).

MEMPHIS, TENN. "First, a line to tell you how much I have enjoyed the TORCH. J.F. Dancer put me on your mailing list and I look forward to every copy" (Shelby Sims).

ROMULUS, MICH. "I am totally in sympathy with your article on '*Free-loading Churches*.' But I want to tell you about one incident that will be interesting and encouraging to you, an exception to the generally true statement, 'Churches have been known to go in debt for everything but the preacher's salary!'

When I moved to the Romulus church three and a half years ago, Phil Morr, now in Australia, was here. He and I worked together for one full year before he left. About midway through that year our money ran out and Phil, who is an airplane mechanic besides being a fine preacher, got a job. He worked on airplanes for several weeks, but it soon became apparent that he would need to be free to travel a great deal in order to raise his Australian support, besides its being a great waste of his ability. Consequently, the Romulus church borrowed enough money to put him back to work fulltime until his Australian leaving date, a period of several months. About the end of this year we will pay the last payment on this loan.

I don't blame you for never having heard of such a thing. There aren't many churches like this one" (L.A. Mott, Jr.).

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Mott is right; I was encouraged by his good letter. All who read his letter must agree that the Romulus church is exceptional, and should be highly commended for such great faith. We are always happy to print the other side, especially when the other side looks like this. jpn).

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

Dennis L. Shaver

(EDITOR'S NOTE: With the following article came a letter that stirred mixed emotions in this editor. I have reference to the following two statements; (1) "Having known you since I was a child, I have respected and admired you for a long time," and (2) "I also have sent you the first article I have ever tried to write." These comments move me. They impress me with the fact that I am getting older, and with the grave responsibility older preachers have to encourage and help those who are younger. It is with considerable pride, therefore, that TORCH prints Dennis Shaver's very first article. It is a good one, and we hope it will not be his last. jpn).

Change in denominationalism is an every-day practice. I am sorry to say, it is even in some churches of Christ. I write this to and on behalf of the young people in the church which Christ established (Mt. 16:18).

Those of us who are young Christians (I am 23 years old) need to be thinking about the church 20, 30, or 40 years from now. Where and what will the church be then? Will it be a changed church, or will it still be the church of the New Testament? Young Christians need to start preparing now to serve as elders, deacons, teachers, preachers, and strong, grounded Christians in the church of the future.

At times I think we have forgotten our creator (Gen. 2:7), and our purpose in life. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:19,20). For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:7,8). We belong to God, both body and soul. "All souls are mine" (Ezk. 18:4). We sometimes forget that God gave us everything we have, and He owns all of it. Indeed, we are the Lord's. It is time we start working for the Master (2 Tim. 2:21) that His church may never decrease,

but rather grow and be "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15).

We need to recall that wonderful moment we received the gospel with gladness of heart, and were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-20; Heb. 9:12). Remember? Then you were ready to conquer the world for Christ. Now, remember that you are a child of God, and we are the people of God (2 Cor. 6:16). Let us show our appreciation of Christ's death for our sins, and our thankfulness to God for giving us the opportunity to serve Him in His church.

The only way the church of Christ will remain the church of the New Testament in the future is by Christians growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ (1 Pet. 2:1,2). Youth is the perfect time for learning and growing. It is not a time for sowing wild oats, or "doing your own thing," as some people advocate. God is not mocked, we will reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7). Youth is the time to put all our hope and trust in God (Psa. 71:5), and to do all we can for Him, and not for ourselves. *"Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth"* (Ecc. 12:1). Now is the time to give God all our service.

Paul said it best in I Tim. 4:12, *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."* Let us not rob God of the youth which He has given, but let us work while there is still time. I implore the young people of today, let the church in the future be the church of the first century.

Rt. 3, Box 49
Rochelle, Ill. 61068

Religious Discussion

October 18, 19, 21, 22

SUBJECT: "THE GODHEAD"

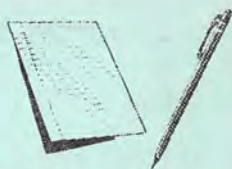
DISPUTANTS: CARROL R. SUTTON - D.L. WELCH

SESSIONS 7:00 P.M.

EAST CULLMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 608 4TH ST., S.E.

Cullman, Alabama

Needham's Notes



NEEDHAM AND SPEARS TO THE PHILIPPINES

All who have kept up with the news have been thrilled by the progress of the Lord's work in the Philippine Islands. Brethren Cogdill and Willis spent about 30 days there in 1970. Brethren J.T. Smith and Connie Adams just returned from a 30 day visit in which a great deal was accomplished. Filipino brethren would like to have two American brethren visit them each year. They have inquired as to the possibility of Dudley Ross Spears and this editor coming in 1972.



We have agreed to go, and are making our plans accordingly. We will likely spend the month of February among our Filipino brethren, doing what we can to help in the great work they have underway. We are looking forward to this opportunity with great anticipation. We have some very extensive work planned for the trip. The fact that we live in the same area, and have been close friends for many years will be definite assets to our plan.

We shall need to raise about \$2,000 each (\$4,000) for travel and expenses. The Palm Springs Drive church in Altamonte Springs, Fla. where I work has agreed to continue my support while I am away, and the members have, within one week following the decision, in pledges and contributions, raised over 1/8 of my travel expenses. We think this is outstanding.

Any persons or churches who would like to help in this worthy work may do so by contacting: Dudley Ross Spears, 35 Par Ave., Orlando, Fla. 32804, or James P. Needham, 1600 Oneco Ave., Winter Park, Fla. 32789. We would welcome your fellowship in the furtherance of the gospel in the Philippines. If you cannot have fellowship with us in a monetary way, we solicit your prayers for us and the work we plan to do.

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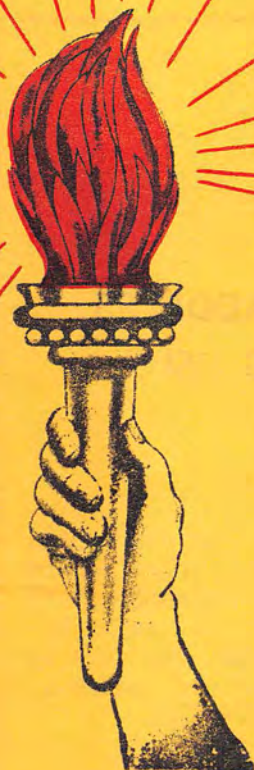
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TORCH

Volume VI October, 1971 Number 10

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

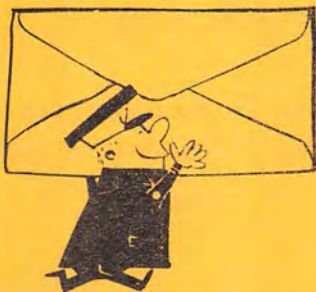
WHY CHRISTIANS CANNOT SUPPORT UNITED APPEAL



NEEDHAM - SOHL DISCUSSION CONCERNING UNITED APPEAL

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher

Editorial-

Why Christians Cannot Support United Appeal

James P. Needham

INTRODUCTION

It is about time for the annual UNITED APPEAL campaign to get under way with all the whoopla and the ballyhoo of Madison Avenue. The Executive Directors and their staffs are racking their brains for some new clever little line that will have great propaganda value in the campaign. Printing presses are running over time producing brochures, booklets, and ads that will make you feel guilty if you do not give. Men in high positions in the community are now being picked to occupy some honorary office in the campaign with some flattering title.

Many Christians are deeply concerned about UNITED APPEAL, or COMMUNITY CHEST, or whatever it might be called in your community. They have given to it under pressure for years with some second thoughts about the propriety of such action. Very little has been said about it in the public media that would be of help to them in this annual dilemma. It is high time this matter be given some serious thought. It is sinful to violate one's conscience (Rom. 14:23), or to bid God speed to evil (2 Jn. 9-11; Rom. 1:32).

A great many church members are unconcerned about this problem. They couldn't care less about the issues involved in it. There are at least three reasons for such unconcern: (1) They are *uninformed*, and do not really know what is involved. (2) They are *misinformed*. They have been brainwashed and hoodwinked by UNITED APPEAL propaganda. (3) They *fear* the results of a thorough investigation. They are afraid to learn the real facts about UNITED APPEAL, realizing that if it is wrong for Christians to support it, they must take a stand and cease so doing which would require of them more conviction than they have. They profess the old philosophy that ignorance is bliss, and what one does not know will not hurt him.

Due to the fact that the agencies supported by COMMUNITY CHEST differ in each community, this article must

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deal with general principles. Christians in a given community who are interested in being specific, should go to the local headquarters of this organization and ask for all available literature. It will give the history of the organization in that community, the annual goal, the local agencies supported, etc. This data will enable preachers, elders, and others to apply these general principles to the specific local situation.

CLARIFYING THE ISSUE

1). *One cannot object to all agencies supported by UNITED APPEAL:* Some of them are good and worthy of the Christian's support. But we must keep in mind that there is no way we can support even these worthy ones THROUGH UNITED APPEAL. Reasons for this will be given later.

2). *We must not question the good intentions of most of the persons involved in the annual campaign.* Their interest in the community's unfortunate is commendable. They are, in many ways, unselfish and dedicated people.

3). *One must not question the motives of many church members who have supported UNITED APPEAL in the past.* We believe they are in error in so doing, but honestly so. We must help them learn the facts and implications of their actions, believing they will make the right decision once they view them.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY CHEST, OR UNITED APPEAL?

It is a community fund raising organization consisting of paid employees and volunteer workers. Each local community has its Executive Director and a paid staff which operates the local organization. The agencies it supports vary from community to community and will be governed somewhat by the size of the community. The member agencies share in the yearly budget proportionately, but this does not mean that they will not carry on fund raising campaigns of their own in addition to what they receive from the UNITED APPEAL.

The COMMUNITY CHEST organization makes its own laws and sets its own standards to be met by organizations which wish to share in the funds it raises. These standards are often arbitrary, and frequently protect the prejudices of the local organization, as well as certain

political blocks within the community.

The COMMUNITY CHEST organization has a long history in America. It has steadily grown in power until today it is fearsome to behold in a country known as "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

WHY CHRISTIANS CANNOT SUPPORT COMMUNITY CHEST

There are many reasons why Christians cannot scripturally support this organization. Space will not allow an exhaustive treatment of all of them, but here are some of the more important ones.

1). *To support UNITED APPEAL is to support activities which violate the scriptures:* An investigation in most communities will reveal that Catholics, Jews, and the Salvation Army come in for lion shares of the annual budget. One will also find that many organizations which sponsor dances and encourage the use of alcoholic beverages are subsidized by this organization. As noted earlier, one must not lend encouragement or support to evil. To do so is to become partaker of it (2 Jn. 9-11). To support UNITED APPEAL would also put one in the position of having fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness, which is forbidden (Eph. 5:11; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

2). *UNITED APPEAL uses ungodly tactics in their campaigns:* Investigation will show that among the favorite tactics of the fund raising campaigns are these:

a). *Coercion through employers, schools and churches.* The top executives in the local corporations are flattered with pompous titles in the campaign. In order to receive the applause of the organization for their outstanding community service, they go all out to be able to report 100% participation in the campaign by the employees of their particular corporation. Employees are often threatened with dismissal, promotional passover, and other forms of intimidation in a coercive effort to get them to participate. Our children are subjected to the pressure in the schools. Children are browbeaten for donations, and discriminated against if they refuse. For instance, those who give receive a small pin. Those who do not, receive none. Hence, if one has no pin, he is somewhat discriminated against, is he not? I know of one teacher who said to her class, "We are all going to eat a sandwich today." She took up the remainder of their lunch

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money for UNITED APPEAL. One small school came up with only \$200. The students were told, "You did not give enough. I know you had more money than that." Every effort is made to get the preachers and churches involved in the campaign. Many denominational preachers beat the drums loudly for the annual campaign. UNITED APPEAL often will send out ready made ads for church bulletins.

The Bible teaches free-will giving. It knows nothing of coercion or assessment. (See 1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:7; and Acts 11:27-30).

b). *Through misrepresentation, UNITED APPEAL seeks to arouse guilt feelings in those who do not participate.* One will find such expressions as these in campaign ads: "Wear your fair share pin with pride. It shows that you are somebody who cares." IMPLICATION: If you do not give and wear a pin, you do not care about the needy! "Please be fair, give your share." IMPLICATION: If you do not give through UNITED APPEAL, you are not fair! One organization which refused to support UNITED APPEAL was told by a local Executive Director, "You will get the credit for keeping us from reaching our goal."

The Christian will not be intimidated by such implications and misrepresentations. He will feel no guilt for not participating. He should feel guilty if he does!

c). *COMMUNITY CHEST campaigns appeal to the bandwagon complex in society:* Those who refuse to give "The united way" are made to look like odd balls. A strong appeal to conformity is made, "everybody is doing it." But again, the Christian will not be swayed by such tactics. He knows the Bible says, "Thou shalt not follow after a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2).

d). *UNITED APPEAL practices deception through book-keeping camouflage:* They say the donor can "earmark" his gift for the agency of his choice, implying that he can thus avoid supporting those organizations that violate his conscience. This is a farce and a sham. The various agencies are budgeted a certain percent of the annual collection. If more than this percentage of the total is earmarked for a given agency, that agency still only gets its allotted percentage. Thus, "earmarked" money just makes more funds available to the general fund to go to agencies that violate the Christian's conscience.

This writer had a lengthy correspondence with the Executive Director of UNITED APPEAL in Louisville, Ky. in 1967. (See elsewhere in this issue). We asked the Director if an agency received all money "earmarked" for it. His answer was, "The question is strictly academic." We pressed hard for an answer, but never got one. The reason is obvious.

e). *UNITED APPEAL makes false and misleading claims:* In a book entitled, FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BOOK, Louisville, Ky. they claim, "...the UNITED WAY...is THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY to relieve the heartaches and hardships of others..." They claim this in spite of the fact that 4.2% of the funds raised is spent for administration. In Louisville in 1966, this amounted to \$113,805.61. (You can check this statistic in your community). According to them, it is better for the agencies to get PART of the money than *all* of it! UNITED APPEAL is "THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY." How do we know this? Why, UNITED APPEAL said so! If it is the best way, it is better than the Bible way, because the Bible way is not the UNITED WAY!

f). *UNITED APPEAL uses flattering psychology:* As stated earlier, they flatter local executives by giving them pompous titles in the annual campaign. This in turn puts them in the headlines, which in turn is good advertisement for their companies. Then once the campaign is over, a big victory banquet is held in honor of the dignitaries, and who picks up the tab but the donors!

3). *UNITED APPEAL is bureaucratic benevolence:* This is readily admitted in their literature. In the Louisville, Kentucky FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BOOK, they say, "As more and more we came to know our neighbors less and less, personalized neighborly acts of charity had to give way to special philanthropies staffed by trained professionals." Now we know what it is all about. The Bible teaches Christians to do "personalized neighborly acts of charity" rather than turn it over to a bunch of impersonal bureaucrats (Jas. 1:27; Gal. 6:10). One's light will not shine very brightly through such a basket of bureaucratic benevolence (Mt. 5:16).

4). *UNITED APPEAL is administered without regard to the wishes of the donors:* If the administrators decide to use the money contrary to the wishes of every one of the donors, nothing can be done about it. A Christian is treading on dangerous ground when he submits his money to

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the control of such a tyrannical power. UNITED APPEAL is very bold to tell us what is our "fair share," but they reserve the right to use it as they see fit without regard to the donor's conscience. They not only claim this power, there are concrete examples of their using it.

In the 1967 campaign in Louisville, Ky. the local labor council contributed about 1/3 of the annual goal of UNITED APPEAL. They got upset because UNITED APPEAL refused to accept KENTUCKIANA CENTER as a participating agency. KENTUCKIANA is a school and day care center for crippled children which is connected with the local Chiropractic association. Local political blocks threw their weight against KENTUCKIANA'S participation, and UNITED APPEAL disposed of the matter in these words:

"A service as controversial as this should not be supported by Community Chest funds which would have the effect of causing thousands of individuals who are opposed to chiropractic treatment to support this service indirectly" (COURIER--JOURNAL AND TIMES, July 30, 1967).

Such inconsistency is too absurd for words! Of all the people on earth to plead conscience, UNITED APPEAL ought to be the last! I did not think they knew such a thing as conscience existed. We have been crying conscience all through the years, and have not been heard. But let a local power block yell conscience, and UNITED APPEAL suddenly becomes conscience conscious!

Here is a case where an organization whose members contributed 1/3 of the annual budget could not influence UNITED APPEAL to support an agency which was giving their children much needed care. (I am not here arguing the merits of Chiropractic. Such does not come within the scope of this article. I am using this concrete case as an example).

5). *UNITED APPEAL is a tyrannical organization:* As shown above, it is taxation without representation. Our forefathers said such is tyranny. UNITED APPEAL is tyrannical because it seeks to destroy individual initiative by promoting proxy benevolence. It seeks to destroy the right of choice by assuming the right to decide who shall be helped. It seeks to destroy personal freedom by obtaining donations through pressure tactics. God created

man free, and any person or group of persons that would take away this freedom is going against God's plan. When we allow an organization to take away our freedom of choice as to how we will spend our money, or whom we will help, we are creating an atmosphere in which such organizations can take away our freedom of choice as to how and where we shall worship God. In far too many cases in America we are losing our freedoms by default. We lack the fortitude to fight for them.

CONCLUSION

A great many church members continue to support the Community Chest through their employers because of the high pressure applied by them for 100% participation. They fear the consequences of refusing to give. To be sure, this is the line of least resistance. It is a compromise of one's convictions, and a failure to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3). These people need to realize that there are multitudes of their brothers and sisters who have never given. They are willing to take whatever consequences that may follow, but have found in 99% of the cases that the threats are not carried out. But even if they are, it is time we let the courts decide whether a company has the right to dismiss an employee for refusing to violate his conscience. This writer stands ready to contribute to and help raise funds for pursuing such a case in the courts.

People who refuse to stand up for their freedoms do not deserve to have them, and history will show that no people ever lost them who were willing to contend for them. The best way to lose our freedoms is for good people to do nothing.

ERROR CORRECTION

In an article by Dr. Curtis J. Torno, *A Doctor Christian Looks at the New Abortion Laws*, published in the September issue, there was a typographical error which changed the meaning of one sentence. On page 12 (204) under part 6, ABORTION VS. CONTRACEPTION, the fifth sentence should have read: Contraception is not wrong because it only prevents the formation of life. (BKF)

Needham -- Sohl Discussion Concerning United Appeal

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In the editorial of this issue reference is made to a controversy with UNITED APPEAL in Louisville, Ky. in 1967. In the course of that controversy, I had a lengthy correspondence with Mr. William A. Sohl, Executive Director of UNITED APPEAL in Louisville. The particular point I was pursuing with him is a very vital one since it concerns "earmarked" contributions and involves the "bookkeeping camouflage" to which the editorial makes reference. Since Mr. Sohl's attitude and argumentation are typical of the COMMUNITY CHEST generally, we include this correspondence for what it may be worth to our readers in dealing with the same problems in their respective communities. We shall omit the addresses on the letters to conserve space. My first letter was directed to Mr. James H. Pence, Community Chest President, Louisville, Ky. He referred me to Mr. Sohl and the remainder of the discussion was with him.

10-24-67

Dear Mr. Pence:

I would very much appreciate your answering the following question in reference to the United Appeal Campaign:

If you receive more money that is designated for a given agency than you have budgeted to it, does that agency receive the excess?

For instance: If you were to budget 10% of your goal to the Boy Scouts, but you receive gifts that are designated for them that amount to 20% of your goal, what happens to the overage?

I receive many inquiries concerning this, and would appreciate your giving me the proper answer.

I thank you very kindly,

S/ James P. Needham

10-30-67

Dear Mr. Needham:

The question raised in your letter of October 24 to Mr. James Pence, President of the Community Chest, is strictly academic.

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The vast majority (over 95%) of our contributors have faith in our representative form of government and are willing to entrust the distribution of their gifts to an unpaid citizens committee which takes the time and trouble to investigate thoroughly the needs and resources of our member organizations.

In these days of expanding government operations, it is extremely difficult--if not impossible--for the average citizen to see that his contribution is "so applied as to do the most good" as Thomas Jefferson conceived when he helped frame the Constitution of our country.

Actually, many years ago one of our neighboring cities asked all their contributors to help its budget committee by designating how they wished their funds spent. They were successful in getting 80% of their gifts so designated. Only three of eighty-eight agencies had designations in excess of their needs as established by the budget committee.

In those three cases, individual donors unanimously--without exception--specified a second and third choice when they were informed of these circumstances.

Incidentally, in checking our files, I do not find where you have pledged your support for these vital community service organizations.

Since none of our agencies receive as much as half of their budget designated, I can assure you that your gift will be used by the agency or agencies of your choice.

I would hope that regardless of your personal feelings regarding the Vietnam situation that you would recognize that there are 7,000 of our local citizens serving our country there, and you would be willing to help the Red Cross get an emergency message to them, or a glass of filtered water or a refreshing shower at a U.S.O. Certainly I would hope that you would have compassion for the blue baby or the person needing open heart surgery who depends upon our blood banks for survival.

I would assume that you would have real appreciation for the tremendous job done by our Boy and Girl Scout organizations and even the innocent child born of an unmarried mother that is placed for adoption by our Family and Children's Agency.

When you give the united way, you are like the Good Samaritan who provided funds to the innkeeper to enable our agencies to serve as your agent to nurse the sick, feed the hungry, and bring comfort to the weary for "even the least of these my brethren."

S/ William A. Sohl

11-1-67

Dear Mr. Sohl:

I have your letter of Oct. 30, 1967, in response to a question I raised in a recent letter to your organization. A few comments are in order:

1. You realize, I am sure, that you did not answer my question. All you had to say about it was that it "is strictly acedemic." One definition of "academic" is "that which is of no practical value." I suppose this is what you meant. I am very certain that this is what you think. A forthright answer to my question would have had no practical value to UNITED APPEAL, so you took "the fifth amendment." I suppose you think the public will continue to support a public organization which REFUSES to answer vital questions about its policies and functions. I say the intelligent public will become more and more suspicious of an organization to which it is expected to contribute almost \$4,000,000 per year, and yet which feels no obligation to reveal its policies or budgeting philosophy. Such refusal indicates that something is being done that you do not want the public to know about.

2. Your remarks about "our representative form of government" hardly fit UNITED APPEAL. Did the people who give through UNITED APPEAL elect you to your position by popular vote? Do the donors' wishes influence the decisions made by UNITED APPEAL officials? (When answering this question just remember that UNITED APPEAL recently refused to include KENTUCKIANA CENTER in its 1967 budget, even though people who supply approximately 1/3 of that budget wanted you to). Are you trying to tell me that in a representative form of government, the tax payers do not elect their representatives, and that their wishes do not influence the decisions made? Is this UNITED APPEAL'S concept of a representative form of government? Mr. Sohl, that is not representation--that is dictation! It is taxation without representation. Since you seem quite fond of quotations from the forefathers, I would remind you

that they had a nice little description for that: they called it TYRANNY.

3. You say that "the average citizen" cannot "see that his contribution is "so applied as to do the most good." Who said so? Why, Mr. Sohl did! I suppose we are supposed to accept that as "law and gospel." Are you saying that "the average citizen's" contribution does more good when he gives it to your organization which takes 4.2% (nearly \$114,000 last year) of it for administration, and uses the majority of the rest of it to subsidize organizations that are contrary to his conscience? Is that your concept of "doing the most good"? Actually, one's contribution does more good when he gives it directly to the agency of his choice because then the agency gets 100% of the money rather than 95.8% of it. I wonder what qualifies your "unpaid citizens committee" to better decide how to spend the public's money than the public itself. If they are all that qualified, maybe we had better turn over the rest of our family budgeting to them!

4. I am not quite able to see what your illustration from a "neighboring" city proves, unless it is that a program of giving through UNITED APPEAL where the donors decide who gets the money CAN WORK! I am sure that is not what you were trying to prove by it, but that is what it proves. So, let us hear no more of the idea that this sort of plan cannot work.

5. I could have saved you the time and trouble of "checking" your files to see if I had "pledged" to support your agencies. I am very frank to tell you that I have never given a dime through UNITED APPEAL, and as long as it subsidizes organizations which violate my conscience, I will not support it in the future. You see, I happen to know that I live in a free country (unlike many who feel that they have to give to UNITED APPEAL to save their jobs, or to escape its intimidation). While you were citing for me the constitution, you should have quoted that part that guarantees me the free exercise of conscience and religious convictions.

I gathered from your mentioning of the fact that I have not pledged to give brought you to the conclusion that you had no obligation to answer my question. It just so happens that a large number of people who have supported UNITED APPEAL are depending upon me for answers to this and other questions concerning your operation. I

would not have any serious objections to your organization if you guaranteed that all money subscribed to a certain agency would go to that agency. Your hedging manners have convinced me that my suspicions that it does not are well founded. You may not owe me an answer concerning this matter, but you owe one to these people who are depending upon me for answers. I thought your organization believed "in the representative form of government"!

6. You say, "I can assure you that your gift will be used by the agency or agencies of your choice." Mr. Sohl, if you could assure me of this, why did you hedge the question? Can you assure this to every contributor? That is what I asked you, and you said it "is strictly academic." Why did you come now and answer the question in reference to me ONLY? What about the public generally?

Now, just as a matter of practicality, Mr. Sohl. if what you said is true, will you please give me just one good reason why I should give my contribution to UNITED APPEAL which will use 4.2% of it for administration? If you will give it to the agency I choose, why should I not give it to the agency I choose? Why should I send it to them by you which will cost me 4.2%, when I could send it by U.S. mail for 5 cents? Do you have any economists on your "unpaid citizens committee?" If not, I suggest that you select a few so they can show UNITED APPEAL the difference between five cents and 4.2%! After all, since you are so intensely interested in helping the unfortunate, you should want them to get all the money possible.

7. The next step in your letter is one of my main reasons for refusing to support your organization. One of UNITED APPEAL'S most disgraceful tactics is an effort to intimidate those who do not support it by ugly implications and insinuations. You seek to MAKE IT APPEAR that since I do not contribute to UNITED APPEAL, I would not help in getting an emergency message to a soldier serving our country, or provide for him a drink of filtered water, or a refreshing shower at a U.S.O. I would have no "compassion for the blue baby or the person needing open heart surgery." I have no "appreciation for the tremendous job done by our Boy and Girl Scout organizations and even the innocent child born of an unmarried mother." If this is not what you meant, why did you cite all these things? What do you know about my personal benevolences? It just so happens that I have supported the Red Cross for years, but not through UNITED APPEAL.

If everything else about your organization were perfect, this one obnoxious feature would drive many from the support of it. You people seem to think that if a citizen does not give the united way, he is some sort of a heartless wretch who cares nothing for the unfortunate. That demonstrates just how intoxicated you are with feelings of indispensability. I am not disposed to boast (as is UNITED APPEAL) about my benevolences, but I dare say they would compare favorably with yours, and yet, I have never given a dime to UNITED APPEAL. So, you see, one can help the unfortunate without giving UNITED APPEAL 4.2% of his contribution, or violating his conscience.

By using UNITED APPEAL'S "logic," I could prove you have no compassion for the poor unfortunates at KENTUCKIANA CENTER. Your "unpaid citizens committee" decided they cannot share in UNITED APPEAL funds, so, arguing as you do, you are unconcerned and unsympathetic toward these poor unfortunate children. If your conclusions and ugly implications are valid, so are mine.

In paragraph #2 of your letter you say that "over 95% of our contributors...are willing to entrust the distribution of their gifts to an unpaid citizens committee..." I categorically deny your statistics. I personally know of many, many people who give to UNITED APPEAL, not because of any "faith" in your "unpaid citizens committee," but because of fear of the intimidation and the pressure which your tyrannical super-organization brings to bear upon them through their employers and other means.

Your preachments, Mr. Sohl, in your final paragraph show that, as a preacher, you make a good "Executive Director." You try to use "the Good Samaritan" to justify what your organization is doing. Will you please tell me: Where is an organization like UNITED APPEAL in the story? Where is the organization which took 4.2% of his funds for administration, then passed on the remainder to the inn that took care of the unfortunate? Where is the agency of the agency that helped the man? Where is the ungodly and un-American pressure that was applied to the giver designed to force him to support something that violated his conscience? Where is the "unpaid citizens committee" which arbitrarily decided which "inn" would administer the "good Samaritan's" gift? "The Good Samaritan" is my case, not yours. It is "theological suicide" for you to try to use "the Good Samaritan." You had better stay with Executive Directing, Mr. Sohl, and leave the preaching to someone else!

Mr. Sohl, I want to say in conclusion, that I, along with many others, feel that your organization is arbitrary, tyrannical, vindictive and uses tactics which are un-American. What is most important to Christians is the fact that it supports operations which are contrary to Bible teaching, and therefore of their consciences.

I have no personal animosity toward you or anyone connected with UNITED APPEAL, but I deplore your arrogating to yourselves the supposed right to decide how the public's benevolence shall be administered. In its present form, UNITED APPEAL is a blight on a democratic society, subversive of the American principle of freedom of religion and conscience, and obnoxious to every Christian in the world who really knows what it stands for.

May I thank you for engaging in this exchange with me. It has been profitable to me. I understand more about your organization now, and am better prepared to urge that people not support it until some changes are made. I would be very happy to engage in further discussions of our differences.

S/ James P. Needham

11-6-67

Dear Mr. Needham:

The final paragraph in your letter of Nov. 1 elicits several responses.

First, we are always interested in trying to find better ways to do our job. You plan to urge people not to support it until "some changes are made." If you would share your good ideas with me, perhaps we can bring about those changes which would make it possible for us to better serve the community.

At the same time, I wish that you were "better prepared," but fear that you really are looking for more reasons to justify your preconceived ideas than to accept the explanation in the spirit in which it was given.

It was not my intention to "take the Fifth Amendment" or refuse to answer any reasonable questions put forth in a reasonable manner.

We try to administer these programs as fairly and as equitably as possible without any discrimination. My assurance to you that your contribution would be forwarded to the agency of your choice is the same assurance that I

would give any other donor asking the same question.

For your information, the Board of Directors of our Community Chest are elected at the annual meeting of the donors to which all contributors are invited.

My understanding of a representative form of government is that the people select someone to "represent them" and to act in their behalf on the basis of more facts and information than is readily available. (Used in the sense that newspaper headlines and summary statements do not tell the whole story. Few people are willing to take the time to review all the facts that are available!). In other words, I expect my representatives to take the time and make the effort to be well-informed on the issues presented and exercise their judgment based on those facts and not necessarily the popular misconceptions or inadequately informed popular opinion.

The decision regarding Kentuckiana was based on the studied opinion of a well-informed group of citizens. The duly elected representatives on the Executive Committee of the AFL-CIO city council spent four and one-half hours reviewing in detail every aspect of this problem with members of the Community Chest Executive Committee and agreed that the facts justified our action.

Certainly we were aware that some--not all--members of organized labor were interested in this organization. We also have been asked to include other projects sponsored by substantial individual donors. But I submit, would you respect us more--or less--if we were to disregard everything except who asked that this agency be admitted?

I am sure you have had many occasions to stand on principles in support of an unpopular decision. I am sure that the members of our Board would much prefer to have made an easy decision in this matter, and it is to their credit that they have allocated funds for the care of these children through an accredited and approved method of treatment.

You have labored the point of the Chest overhead at length. Certainly it would be wonderful if everyone would voluntarily send in their contributions in response to a simple announcement. I doubt if it works that way in your church, and the recent full-page ad, the TV and radio announcements, prove that it does not work that way for our Chest. And I might add that even when you send your check direct, some of it must be spent for the accounting,

telling others of the services, and to pay the administrators' salaries.

I hope that you will share your ideas of a better way of doing this along with your suggestions of the changes you feel should be made in order for us to merit your wholehearted support and endorsement. I suggest this in all sincerity and with deep appreciation for your consideration and possible help to do a better job.

S/ William A. Sohl

11-21-67

Dear Mr. Sohl:

Thank you for your reply to my recent letter. I assure you that it is a pleasure for me to engage with you in this exchange. Perhaps it will result in a better understanding. You have requested that I share with you my ideas as to how Community Chest might be improved. I am happy to do so. I make the following suggestions for your careful consideration:

1. *Give every donor the assurance that every cent of his gift will be given to the agency he designates except what Community Chest takes out for administration.* This is what I was trying to get you to say in my initial letter, but you said my question was "strictly academic," hence you did not answer it. You still have not answered it directly. It seems a very simple question. You can answer with only one short word, "yes," or "no." Your refusal to do so leads me to believe that the question touches a tender spot in your organization's structure. I suspect that your providing the donor a place on the pledge card to designate his preferred agency is a book-keeping camouflage, and if a given agency receives more designated funds than you have budgeted for them, they still get only what you have budgeted. I would be happy to learn that my suspicion is false. You are the only one I know in Louisville who can confirm or dispel my suspicion. Thus far you have said the question is "strictly academic."

2. *Or, if you choose to maintain the present set-up in which you give to participating agencies a percentage of the money received, remove from the list of agencies those which are operated by religious organizations, and those which sponsor dances.* It is a violation of the consciences of many to support Community Chest when it sub-

sidizes activities which violate their convictions. Community Chest recognized this as a valid objection in the recent Kentuckiana controversy. On refusing to admit Kentuckiana as a participating agency, your Health and Welfare Council said:

"A service as controversial as this should not be supported by Community Chest funds which would have the effect of causing thousands of individuals who are opposed to chiropractic treatment to support this service indirectly" (*COURIER--JOURNAL AND TIMES*, July 30, 1967).

This quotation officially recognizes my reason for not supporting Community Chest. It is a violation of my conscience to support Community Chest as long as it uses part of its receipts to subsidize religious organizations which violate my convictions, and agencies which sponsor dances. If you have the right to refuse to admit Kentuckiana because it would force some who do not believe in Chiropractic treatment to support it indirectly, then surely others have the right to refuse to give to Community Chest because they would be forced to indirectly support activities to which they are opposed. If you argue against this objection, you will argue against your own committee--they made the argument in the recent Kentuckiana controversy. I have been making it for years.

I would have no objection to Community Chest's present financial policy, if it would remove the agencies mentioned above. I believe it would be a rather expedient way for the community to share the load of caring for its unfortunate. I could and would support it. I would urge others to do so.

3. *Cease its high-handed coercion.* Community Chest's present method of raising funds is a blight on and a disgrace to a democratic society. The practice of threatening people with dismissal from their jobs, and implying that those who do not support it do not believe in helping the needy, etc., are efforts to intimidate people for not giving regardless of the nature of their reasons for refusing. You were so concerned about consciences in the Kentuckiana case, why not in mine? (And I assure you that I speak the sentiments of thousands known to me). Even if your organization does not include agencies that violate the conscience of a single donor, I still affirm that you have absolutely no right to try to force people to do their benevolences your way. This is supposed to be a

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free society.

You can see my point here if you will place yourself in my shoes. I assume that you are against Communism. Now suppose some organization which subsidizes the Communist party tried to force you to give to it. Would you give? This is a similar situation to that in which many citizens find themselves in the annual United Appeal. They are not against every agency subsidized by Community Chest, but feel that a part of their contribution will go to the support of agencies which violate their consciences. If this is false, you should say so.

In paragraph 3, of your letter you state that you fear that I am looking for more reasons to justify my preconceived ideas rather than to accept the explanation in the spirit in which it was given. Mr. Sohl, I respectfully submit that while your power in the Community Chest may be great, it is insufficient to enable you to look into my heart and discern my motives. You did not give me an explanation. You went into a long dissertation on representative government, and talked about how heartless I am because I refuse to support Community Chest. You could have answered my question much easier. I have no "preconceived ideas." You are measuring my corn in your bushel. You have the preconceived idea that I have preconceived ideas.

You state that you had no intention to "take the Fifth Amendment or refuse to answer any reasonable questions put forth in a reasonable manner." I suppose this is a very good justification for refusing to answer my question, if we let you decide what is reasonable. You are, in effect, saying that my question was not reasonable. Please explain what is unreasonable about it.

You talk all around my question, and seem to try to indicate that you have answered it. Let me ask it again: Do you guarantee that all designated funds will be received by the agency stipulated? You can answer yes or no. I will be as fair as possible. I am allowing that you will take your 4.2% out of these donations for administration. I have in mind what is left over this is done. Will the designated agencies get ALL that is stipulated for them?

You tell me that "The Board of Directors of our Community Chest are elected at the annual meeting of the donors to which all contributors are invited." I kindly remind you that I never asked you about this. I asked, "Did

the people who give through UNITED APPEAL elect you to your position by popular vote?" I surmised that the Citizens Committee was elected by the citizens! I was asking about how you got elected. You lectured me on the representative form of government. I just wanted to know if you are practicing it. It is strange why you answer questions I do not ask you, and refuse to answer the ones I do ask you!

I do not doubt that your committee refused to admit Kentuckiana as a participating agency for reasons that seemed good to them, but they don't have to seem good to me or anyone else. Your committee must live with its conscience, but so does everyone else. You laud your committee for their courage in sticking with an unpopular decision, yet you condemn me for sticking by one.

You think it is to the committee's "credit that they have allocated funds for the care of these children through an accredited and approved method of treatment." Accredited and approved by whom? You are implying that Kentuckiana is not an approved and accredited agency. I suppose you knew when you said this that Kentuckiana is approved by the state and federal government. The state licenses the Chiropractors that donate their time to help the unfortunate children in the clinic, and the federal government gave them a long-term lease on the facilities they are using. Now, who has the power to decide that Kentuckiana is not worthy to receive a share of the Community's charity funds?

You got rather exercised at my mentioning the 4.2% administration fee taken by Community Chest. You remind me that if one sends his "check direct, some of it must be spent for the accounting, telling others of the services, and to pay the administrator's salaries." To be sure! And rest assured that giving through Community Chest does not eliminate this necessity, so when one gives through Community Chest, *two* accounting fees must be taken out. You have made your operation look even worse!

You requested my ideas and suggestions as to how to improve Community Chest. I have given them in all sincerity. I am anxious to receive your reaction. It would greatly please me to see the organization altered in such a way that all citizens could support it if they desired to do so, your belief to the contrary notwithstanding.

In conclusion, May I remind you again, that my discussions with you involve more than just this writer. I

speak the sentiments of thousands known to me, and many more thousands not known to me. There is a growing awareness among members of the churches of Christ that Community Chest cannot be supported under the present set-up. There are about 20 such churches in Jefferson County. You may console yourself by thinking you are discussing this matter with one individual, but more and more you will come to realize that this is not true.

I assure you that I would be glad to support Community Chest under the proper circumstances. While I might prefer some other means, I would not oppose it (nor would my brethren) if the changes suggested herein were made.

/S/ James P. Needham

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Sohl quit the discussion at this point. He never replied to the above letter in which I complied with his request that I tell him how to improve UNITED APPEAL. Nor did he ever answer my question about "earmarked" donations. I was very anxious to see his response to my suggested charges in their policy. He neither responded nor effected the changes!

These points stand out rather clearly in the light of the above exchange:

(1) *UNITED APPEAL is not responsive to the wishes of the donors.* It is taxation without representation. They are tyrannical. They assume arbitrary power over the money given, giving the donors no voice in who shall be helped.

(2) *A program where the donors designate the agencies they want to help can work.* Mr. Sohl cited a city in which it was tried and was successful. If it would work in that case, why not in every case?

(3) *UNITED APPEAL resents and seeks to intimidate those who question it.* There is a bit of sarcasm in much that Mr. Sohl says. It is obvious that he resented my probings.

(4) *It is sinful for a Christian to support UNITED APPEAL, if it includes agencies which propagate religious or moral error.* No amount of effort can justify such support. One had about as well give his donation to the Catholic Church or the Salvation Army as to give it to UNITED APPEAL which in turn gives it to them. There is no way to show a difference.

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TORCH

Volume VI November, 1971 Number 11

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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Mini Message



MAXI, MINI, MIDI

Maxi, mini, midi,
Oh, what a pity!
Midi, maxi, mini,
Shame they have not any.
Mini, midi, maxi,
Call me a taxi!

James P. Needham
2-25-71

TORCH



Editor

James P. Needham

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Billy K. Farris, Publisher

CORRECTING IN THE SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS

Paul admonished, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Tim. 2:25,26). "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

The Bible makes it very clear that we are our brother's keeper. We are duty bound to look after his welfare. To encourage him when he does right, and in meekness correct him when he does wrong. But while the Bible stipulates the duty to correct a brother when he sins, it also regulates the manner in which this should be done, namely, in the spirit of meekness. Meekness is humility, or the lack of arrogance. It is characterized by the absence of a selfrighteous spirit. It considers self, realizing that the tables may be turned later, and thus deals with others as it would want to be dealt with. To correct in the spirit of meekness is to practice the "golden rule," "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..." (Mt. 7:12).

This very basic rule is frequently violated among us. It is so easy to become "cocky" when we think we are right. We sometimes prevent others from accepting the

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truth because they detest our egotistical attitudes. They identify what we call the truth with our offensive dispositions and say, "If that is the truth, I want no part of it." A salesman may have the best product on the market and still starve because of the offensive way he approaches potential customers. They cannot help but identify his product with his attitude and offensive manners. Herein is a much needed lesson for God's people.

Much of the strife, division and confusion in the church through the ages have been caused, not by ambiguous revelation, but by the objectionable methods by which some people have sought to propagate the truth. It is the purpose of this editorial to discover how we can know when we are and are not correcting in the spirit of meekness.

WE DO NOT CORRECT IN THE SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS:

1. When we delight in humiliating the person in error: There is a manifest lack of compassion in some of us. We have a tendency to put our foot on the neck of the person in error. Religious debating has been brought into ill repute by this tactic. They often have been *shouting contests*, and efforts to see who could most effectively *humiliate* the opponent. Some debaters profess the philosophy that "You must not only refute the error, you also *whip the man*." Those who operate by this rule usually delight more in the latter than in the former.

We often use illustrations and analogies that are insulting. These wound the personal pride and injure the dignity of individuals in error and make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to accept the truth. They often question his integrity and make him feel like 30 cents with the three rubbed out!

This delight in humiliating one's opponent is often a manifestation of a *personal psychological problem*. Some people have a psychological need to feel superior to others. Religion may be their best and/or only chance to do this. Hence, when they catch another in error, they really chop them down because it makes them feel taller.

This desire to humiliate the person in error may also spring from a desire for *personal vengeance*. On the basis of personal dislike, or a previous confrontation in

which the tables were reversed, a person now has a chance to get *revenge*. He goes after the person in error with "hammer and tongs" because he now has a chance to "get even." Hence, religion to him is a matter of "eye for an eye, and tooth for tooth."

A study of the history of controversies in the church cannot help but convince one that the strong effort at personal humiliation in them was sometimes motivated by *political ambition*. They were "brotherhood" power struggles to see who was going to have the most *influential paper* or *school*, or who was going to be the "*biggest*" *preacher*. It seems quite incredible that brethren would drag the name of Christ through the mud for such trivia, but I am firmly convinced that it has been done regardless of its absurdity.

2. *When the error we are correcting is fabricated from a false construction of the other person's words:* Most of us are quite adept at stating the other fellow's position for him. If we are not correcting in meekness, we read between the lines, manufacture our own definitions of his words and even put words in his mouth. This is called a straw-man fallacy. A country doctor is said to have told a man with a cold to take a cold shower and dry by a fan because this would give him pneumonia. He said he could not cure a cold, but he was death on pneumonia! We often do for the "patient" what the doctor told him to do for himself! We can not "cure" what our opponent has, so we give him something he does not have because we know how to "cure" it.

This is one of the most prevalent tactics in controversy. We have seen it used in almost every debate we have ever heard. Our denominational friends can not meet the teaching that baptism is for remission of sins, so they give us a good case of "water salvation," and they are death on that! Institutional brethren have found themselves unable to meet the Bible teaching of the absolute sufficiency of the church, so they have given us a good case of "orphan haters," and they are death on that.

A good rule to follow is to let the opponent state his own position. Even with this, it is easy to misconstrue his words and misrepresent his position. If we are correcting in meekness, we will treat others as we would

want to be treated. Nobody enjoys being misrepresented, or having his words twisted to mean something he does not believe.

3. *When arrogance and belligerence characterize what we say.* When we are correcting in the spirit of meekness, there is no room for *personal* threats. If we have the truth, the truth will refute error, not the earthen vessel that bears it. When one shoots the gospel gun and the enemy falls, we must give glory to God rather than to self. There is a tendency on the part of those who have had a few public debates to seem to boast of *their* efforts as though *they* had devastated the opponent. While this may not be one's intention, it often comes out as though it were.

One cannot help but be impressed with the meekness of the apostle Paul. He said, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). As a young preacher I once attended a debate. At the conclusion of the first night, I said to my brother, "You really devastated him tonight." He replied as diplomatically as possible, "No, the truth did." While he may have intended it as a *mild* rebuke to an eager young preacher, it "came on strong" to me! It was a valuable lesson to me, and I have never forgotten it. As *messengers* of God, *WE* have nothing to glory of.

We constantly need to challenge the proponents of error with THE TRUTH, not with our PERSONS, *our abilities*, or the power of our position. We must not feel that we are a treat to any false teacher on earth. We must feel that the *truth* is. The manner in which we challenge error, however, often reeks of arrogance and belligerence. We sound like "Mohammed Ali," "I am gonna whup you, boy!" "I am the greatest." "My ability is fine, I predict you'll fall in nine!"

Then, our belligerence often shows following the debates. We write glowing reports of *our* own efforts, and boast that our opponents will never meet us again. They are now running scared. This may be true, but they may be more scared of our tactics than of the truth! I have never been reluctant to admit that I am scared of some things. I am afraid of a skunk and a rattle snake and a saber-tooth tiger.

While I realize that more than the pronouns we use is involved in arrogance and belligerence, some people use the personal pronouns, "me," "my," and "I" in a suspicious way. Some brethren are constantly challenging someone to "meet *me* in public debate, and *I* will show the audience who has the truth," etc. rather than suggesting that we publicly discuss or debate the matter and let the people decide where the truth lies.

4. *When we clothe our efforts to correct in analogies and epithets that are caustic and insulting.* One's meekness is hardly visable when he appears to be attacking the person he supposedly is seeking to correct more than what he teaches. We must always speak the truth of God's word in a plain way. Paul used "Great plainness of speech" (2 Cor. 3:12). So must we. But we must also speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). A vitriolic attack upon the person of an opponent can hardly fulfill this demand. Regardless of how plain we get in our presentation of the truth, those we seek to correct must be aware of *our love* for them. We realize that they may not always acknowledge this when their attitude toward the truth is not right. When one does not love the truth, attacking the attitude of the one doing the correcting is a favorite practice. We must realize that one's love is not lacking just because someone says it is.

I once knew an elder who invited his denominational neighbor to a gospel meeting. The first night he went, the preacher just walked all over him! He vowed he would never go to hear him again. The next year a different preacher held the meeting, so he invited him again. The first night he went the preacher preached almost the same sermon as had the previous preacher, and the man loved it. He made many favorable comments about the sermon, and told his elder neighbor he wanted to go some more. The elder was quite surprised and said to him, "The preacher preached almost the same sermon as the one who so offended you last year, Why did you not like the last one, and yet you are very fond of this one?" The man replied, "Well, both of them told me I am going to hell, but that fellow last year acted like he was *glad of it!*"

This really gets to the heart of the problem. Love does not mitigate drastic action, but love must *show through* the drastic action. We sometimes have to be quite

caustic in family and church discipline, but its objects should be able to see our love in it, even though they may not always acknowledge it at the time. The Bible says, "For whom the Lord *loveth* He *chasteneth*..." (Heb. 12:6). God's chastisement proves His love.

5. *When humor and sarcasm take precedence over scriptural teaching:* Debates are often won or lost in the minds of some people on the basis of which opponent was the *cleverest* and the most *humorous*. The features of a debate that are most frequently mentioned by some people are the *humorous incidents*. I once heard a debater described as having "kept the audience in stitches from beginning to end." Sounds like some folks had a *good time*, but how much *truth* did they learn? I am not saying all humor is out of place, but it can very easily be over done.

6. *When we seek to personally damage the one we consider to be in error.* Once a brother took a different position on current issues. When another brother heard about it, he said: "I will straighten him out over night. I supply most of his business needs, and I will cut off his credit, if he does not change his mind." Preachers who work in small, hard places and are supported by other churches have often felt the knife of personal injury. A vicious rumor or a bad *report* by way of the grapevine has often been sufficient to terminate their support without giving them a chance to be heard. Cloak and dagger campaigns against such brethren have been carried on among their supporting churches by brethren who disagree with them on some issue.

Paul said, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:4). Some brethren have either not read this, or else they blatantly ignore it. The fact that one has the political power to personally injure the person he considers to be in error does not mean that he should, or that he has the right to do so. Might does not make right. Such carnal efforts are hardly correcting in the spirit of meekness.

When brethren engage in this sort of treatment, there is no real desire to correct in any spirit, to say nothing of meekness. It is hard to imagine that brethren can be so inconsiderate as to want to bring financial hardship upon a brother in Christ, regardless of how severe

disagreements might be. There would be a time when we could no longer support a brother should he be unrepentant in error, but even then the reason should be that we cannot bid him godspeed in error (2 Jn. 9,10), and not because we desire to see him and his family suffer. It goes without saying, however, that such a serious action should be taken on better evidence than a grapevine report.

CONCLUSION

Something has made many brethren inconsiderate on others, even their own brethren. Some have lost the ability to have compassion on those they believe to be in error (Jude 22). They seemingly have no real desire to teach or correct the erring brother. If I read Gal. 6:1 properly, such a disposition indicates a lack of spirituality. It says the spiritual is to restore the fallen. If there is no desire or effort to do so, then spirituality is lacking. There are some who are ready "at the drop of the hat" to write off the erring brother as useless and worthless.

Much of this is due to excessive interest in personal pride. Some seem to be more interested in vindication of self than in saving those they consider to be in error. There is no evident desire to save him, but rather to deliver a death blow to his influence and economy. Often the efforts expended to try to correct him are so self-righteous and egotistical that they drive him further into error. There is a manifest lack of appreciation for the value of a soul. The demands of love are being ignored and frustrated. The mean and hateful campaigns of some against their brethren place them in the category of those who seek to remove motes from a brother's eye when they have beams in their own. Some hate error, but only when it is in the other fellow.

A brother recently said to this writer, "Thanks for being a real human being." I thought, is this something to be commended for? But then Peter spoke of those who were "As natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed..." (2 Pet. 2:12). Some have lost their humanity, to say nothing of their Christianity. It seems that "man's inhumanity to man" is becoming a way of life with some in the church, or should we call it a brother's unbrotherliness to brethren?

THE "WHAT IF..." SYNDROME

Jeffery W. Kingry

It has been my experience in teaching people that when they run out of "thus saith the Lord..." they turn to "What if...." "What if...." is a devious way of avoiding the truth which is as old as Balaam, and is often difficult to deal with. Difficult, not because there is no answer, but because the answer is prejudicial to the hearer. For instance, trying to teach a Baptist the necessity of baptism for salvation, one often hears, "What if the repentant, confessing believer slips on the way to the river, cracks his skull and dies? Are you telling me that he will be lost?"

Then there is the brother that one tries to lead out of institutionalism. He stops you in the middle of Col. 3:17, and says: "What if someone left an orphan on the doorsteps of the church? Would the church just leave it to die because they can care only for saints?"

This is not the only place one hears this appeal. When discussing the war question, do brethren search the scriptures diligently? Usually the "argument" goes something like this: "What if the Godless Chinese invaded our virgin soil and attempted to take over our democratic government? Would you sit idly by and permit them to destroy all that is good and dear to you?"

This tactic reminds me of the Pogo comic strip. The petty bureaucrat confronts Pogo with a list of questions for a postal census: "Why do you hate your postman? Yes or no." Pogo's puzzled expression might parallel any befuddled teacher of the truth in a similar situation.

What constitutes truth is not dependent upon the hypothetical question, or situation. The repenting, confessing believer is lost because his sins have not been washed away. But this loaded question ignores the plain teaching of the Bible that "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9), and "for everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk. 11:10). But what good

is an appeal to the scriptures to those who have already made up their minds?

What about the poor orphan? "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27). This still does not give authority to the liberal brother to build an orphans home with the church's money, but HE thinks it does. And, to him, you still hate orphans, even if you are the only one caring for them scripturally.

No matter how you answer your military brother, you come out an unpatriotic parasite in his eyes. You can quote Jas. 4:1,2; 2:13; Matt. 5:7; Jn. 18:36; Col. 1:13, etc. until you are blue in the face, but to those who equate Christianity with Americanism, scripture has little appeal.

Be of good heart, brethren, for you are not alone in your labor. "For the servant is not greater than the Lord," said Jesus, "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you." The Lord had to contend with the same kind of ignorance and prejudice.

"The same day came to him Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection, and asked him, saying, Master, Moses said if a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother." One can almost see the smug look of satisfaction on their faces as they married off the hypothetical woman to seven men, and then they popped what they thought was the clincher, "Therefore, in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven for they all had her."

Jesus made his appeal to the scriptures and set a standard for all of us when He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. 22:23-33).

When dealing with ignorance of a similar nature let us always remember that God has given us an answer in His word to every question that may be asked of the hope that is within us. Only through study of that word will we ever be able to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

Kirkland, Illinois 60146



ARE WE BOUND TO DIVIDE?



Dudley R. Spears

Men often do many foolish things, but none more foolish than unnecessarily severing their friendships or fellowships. Life is a short span of time filled with much trouble and toil. It is pictured as a "strait" way which means that life is no bed of roses. While we are in this life, all the friends we can have will not be too many and the closest fellowship we may enjoy will be none too close.

There is no sadder division in the world than that which needlessly tears asunder brethren in Christ. Any intelligent reader of the scriptures is familiar with the numerous injunctions against division and more admonitions for unity and peace (John 17:20-22; Rom. 15:6; I Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27 and many more). But still among those who profess to believe the word of God and are professedly committed to following it without deviation, there is division and factionalism.

In spite of the fact that division and schism are condemned as works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-20), many of us who claim to be spiritually minded and led by the Spirit seem more committed to division than to peace and harmony. We cannot claim to be led by the Spirit and walk in needless division and disruption of fellowship (Eph. 4:3).

I suppose that the old saying is true that "A fool is he that comes to preach or prate, when men with swords their right and wrong debate." (This statement is attributed to Torquato Tasso, an epic poet of the 16th century.) This is vividly demonstrated when those who make efforts toward unity are bitterly criticized and castigated. It is sad that men let their mouths and pens run unbridled and lower their attitude to an ugly plane in their denunciation of those who simply make an effort to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

In the past few years this malady has increasingly crept into the ranks of those who have stood shoulder to shoulder against digression and institutionalism. For a while we stood together for the all-sufficiency of the local church to do all its work without sponsoring-church-combines and human institutions. But that did not last.

A defection took place when "new ideas" were thrown out regarding the nature of the local church and the elders the scriptures teach should oversee it. Friendships of long standing were destroyed and fellowship in the greatest work on earth was demolished. Faithful preachers became heretics and despite earnest pleadings, doggedly spread their opinions and heresies to the hurt of the Lord's cause.

From all appearances another rift is on the horizon. This time the problem seems to be the place of colleges that include Bible teaching as part of their curriculum. History records a sad chapter of our past when the era of "Sommerism" brought division over the colleges. Then there was a serious rift over the "college-in-the-budget" question. In the past, division was apparently unavoidable and bitterness and rancor attended its evil way.

Is division hanging over us today like an ominous cloud? To say the least, with actions, reactions and reactions to reactions being editorialized with more and more vehemence, one could safely say that the cloud is thickening. But are we bound to divide again? At the risk of being regarded a "fool," by Tasso's definition, I for one plead for a moratorium on this *action* and *reaction* business. I do not mean that we should kill all discussion of Bible questions, but in order to avoid tragedy, we need to stop the *acting* and *reacting* that is building up resentment and destroying friendships. A law of motion states that "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." I think it is Newton's third law of motion. I know it has to do with physics. However, it also works in other matters. A moratorium on actions and reactions will give time for feelings to calm down so that sensible and Godly discussions of such matters as the place colleges should have can be held in the proper atmosphere.

My feelings and the intent of this article can best be expressed by words of inspiration. "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with" (Prov. 17:14). The time to stop a division is before it gathers such momentum that it is impossible to impede its progress.

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THE MORAL BANKRUPTCY OF INFIDELITY AND HER HANDMAIDS

Ron Halbrook

There is as much undesirable and abhorrent in Infidelity's handmaids as in the old wench herself. Religious Liberalism and Modernism are as devoid of moral strength and courage as is their Mistress. They are morally bankrupt because they sold what was of great value for that which is of no lasting value, and thus sustained a shattering deficit.

Specifically, they traded the proposition that the Bible is the mind of God revealed "in the words which... the Holy Ghost teacheth" for the proposition that all the religious experiences of all peoples, places, and times have something to contribute to piecing together our conceptions of what the mind of God *may* be. Eternal Verities are exchanged for admission into the Great Search of blind men in a dark room for a black cat that is not there.

The ledger must show the following. *Loss*: the knowledge of how to worship, serve, and please God, i.e., right relation to God. *Loss*: the knowledge of man's origin, nature, duty, happiness, and destiny, i.e., right relation to self and others. *Result*: moral bankruptcy and eternal ruin.

The following are typical examples of how Liberalism and Modernism operate in the red morally.

1. William Bross, Lieutenant Governor of Illinois in 1866-70, gave \$40,000 to Lake Forest University in memorial of his son Nathaniel, who died in 1856. The gift was given in 1890 with the specific stipulation in the Trust Agreement that the interest on the money for each decade would be used to produce books on Christian Evidences. His stated object was "to illustrate...and to demonstrate, the divine origin and authority of the Christian Scriptures" and thus to spread an "evangelical" understanding of God, the gospel of Christ, "and plan of salvation...to the end of time." He was securing funds to finance material showing the Bible to be consistent with "science," "history," or any other "department of knowledge." He even directed that the first volume would be Mark Hopkin's *Evidences of Christianity*.

Circumstances required Vol. 2 to be issued first, in 1904. But Modernism and Liberalism were about their work on the Lake Forest campus by then. Prof. Marcus Dods was invited to lecture on "The Bible: Its Origin and Nature" and his material was published as Vol. 2 of the Bross Library. On pg. 150 and 165, he says that the Bible (1) contains "the true" and "the false," (2) is not consistent with history and science, and (3) is *not* "an external, irresistible authority....an authority easily accessible and easily applied" in determining "truth."

This immoral breach of trust and agreement can be rationalized by the Liberal and Modernist in the same way that it would be by an Infidel. Their pockets are stuffed with blank checks--the "moral right" to do as they please. There's one clear advantage to writing checks on a bankrupt account: no more troublesome limits to what one can write!

2. New England Congregationalists (fundamental, evangelical, Puritan, Calvinistic) established Harvard in 1636, only to see it looted by a Liberal-Modern movement about 1800. Andover was established to replace the loss; many bequests were moved from Harvard to Andover; and, a meticulous system of legal and moral protection was erected. The Associates Creed of not less than 33 specific statements was drawn up, embodying all the basics of Con-

gregationalism. Every professor was required to make this profession of faith, *publicly, every five years.*

Hardly a hundred years passed before the handmaids of Infidelity had eaten through the insulation. In the 1890's, not just one, but five professors were teaching that the Bible was "fallible and untrustworthy even in some of its religious teachings" in spite of their public profession of faith in the Bible as "the only perfect rule of faith and practice" (Article 2 of Creed). Fifteen other Articles were violated also.

The professors hid behind the claim that they accepted the "substance of doctrine;" "to understand the creed one must read between the lines," said Prof. Baldwin. That's what Prof. Satan told Eve, for he was the first Modernist! The Courts upheld the professors at Andover...but not at Eden. J. Henry Thayer was a unique exception in the history of 19th century Liberalism. He left Andover in 1882 to go to Harvard, rather than stay and act out a lie. Finally, Andover was moved to Harvard (renamed Cambridge) in order to fulfill the aims of the donors of funds and endowments!...which is about like Jesse James robbing a bank in order to fulfill the aims of the investors and depositors.

3. A few other schools established, funded, and endowed by Fundamentalists, but hijacked by Modernists, include: Amherst, Antioch, Bryn Mawr, Union Theological Seminary, University of Chicago, Rochester Theological Seminary, Colgate, Hamilton, Crozer, Chicago Theological Seminary, Oberlin, Garrett Biblical Institute, Boston University School of Theology, Hartford, Ohio Wesleyan University, College of the Bible, *et. al.*

Antioch College, Ohio, was founded by members of the Christian Church. Due to financial difficulties, Antioch accepted a \$100,000 Unitarian subsidy on the condition that all "theological qualifications" in trusteeship be abandoned and yet with the understanding that it would remain under Christian Church control. Horace Mann, a Unitarian at heart, became (outwardly) a member of the Christian Church in order to be President of Antioch. His hypocrisy in unveiled by his Liberal friend Theodore Parker who objected to Mann's "conversion" in view of the "moral contempt Mann felt for the absurd and debasing theology of the 'Christian.'"

Modernist W.C. Morro wrote "*Brother McGarvey*," in which he shows how McGarvey planned, shaped, and raised a great deal of the finances for The College of the Bible in Lexington, Ky. The resources and all that the college was meant to be originated in men who Morro admits were "ultraconservative" and who gave of themselves because they expected the school to follow "in the course he (McGarvey) mapped out for it." Morro says this "cannot be denied" (p. 202). Yet, he happily relates (and he contributed to this) that the college "broke with the traditions of the past and proceeded along new lines" (p.203). He seeks to defend himself from the *obvious* charge of fraud by saying that McGarvey was not "followed literally but in spirit" (p. 254). Shades of Andover and "substance of doctrine!" It is as though the executor of Stalin's will had given his gold to Billy Graham's Campaign Fund since, after all, they both wished "in spirit" to spread "the truth." It is the sweet kiss of Judas and a moral outrage written upon a check of moral bankruptcy.

4. Louis Cassels, UPI religion writer, tells of denominations using "an ingenious device for propagating permissive statements about sex without taking official responsibility for them" ("*Religion in America*," *Athens News Courier*, June 18, 1970). A "study commission" simply issues the statements under the auspices of the denomination, and thus the permissive are saved for the church. Then if protest gets loud, officials simply remind the dissident that the report is just for "study," and so the stricter-minded are saved for the church.

Modern denominationalism is shot through and through with Liberal duplicity and double-talk. It stands for the same thing that Infidelity has always stood for: *NOTHING!*

5. Neo-orthodoxy is not "new" anything in its substance. It's old--the same *old* lies. It's just a new way of telling the same old lies. The neo-orthodox preacher still reads about the virgin birth in December and the resurrection in April, but he does not instill deep convictions of the Biblical concept of these matters. By silence, compromise, and subterfuge he first anesthetizes and then amputates faith in the virginborn, raised-from-the-dead Son of God.

Unusual condor was shown by "Rev." W.S. Morgan in
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tract no. 223 of the American Unitarian Association. This Baptist minister and Yale graduate advised his fellows in the world of Theological Termites, "Don't label your heresy....Give them heresy in such a fashion that the very saints will not suspect it. Bad ethics, you say! I say, very bad° But this is the only way in which hundreds of orthodox pulpits can be held." Someone nailed ole "Rev." when they realized he had not preached on the cleansing blood of Jesus in three years! Someone Else will be nailing up such fur coats on Judgment Day, and with good cause (Matt. 7:15,23). We must beware and fight while it is still day, for the victims of Modern wolves are not getting to be fewer.

CONCLUSION: PRAY YE TO THE LORD FOR ZION!

To get a glimpse of such vile wickedness, devious, designing, undermining the walls of Zion, lying in wait to plunder and loot and enslave the saints of God, is to appreciate the so-called "vindictive" Psalms. They were no more vindictive in a base, human way when David wrote them than they are now. They are our songs and prayers today as we face the secret counsels, lying snares, and heathern ragings of the enemies of truth.

In many quarters, the church is compromising with denominationalism and hobnobbing with Modernism. Formalism and "our tradition" is becoming a way of life to many of the Lord's people. A dark shadow of silence in the pulpits and lack of conviction in the pews is reaching across the Holy Mountain. The handmaids of Infidelity are never far behind centers of influence, centralized projects, big money pools, ambitious titles, proud positions, politics, string-pulling, and influence peddling, *all of which are growing* where simple truth once grew. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

After the manner of David, pray ye to the Lord for Zion! Mark ye well her bulwarks. Teach transgressors. Sing aloud! Sacrifice. Fear not, spare not! Wash you, make you clean. Tell it to the generation following. "For God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

506 Hoffman St.
Athens, Ala. 35611



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



ROSEBURG, OREGON: "I really enjoy the TORCH. You deal with current matters according to Bible teaching better than anyone I have ever read after. Keep up the good work and may the Lord bless your efforts."--Milton L. Anderson

TAYLOR, TEXAS: "It is with love in our hearts for Christ and His church that we write you this letter showing our strong disapproval for the attitudes and opinions expressed in your bulletin, TORCH. These very negative attitudes and opinions are being printed so as to appear to be scriptural commands, and bulletins of this nature are causing much destruction in the Lord's church today. Therefore, we wish our names to be removed from your publication list, as we cannot support any works of this kind." --Mr. and Mrs. Jerry D. Ash

(EDITOR'S NOTE: How are we to correct the supposed error when our critics do not bother to specify what they are? jpn).

TUPELO, MISS. "I continue to enjoy your work on the TORCH. It is a shining light in the midst of so much darkness. May it live long." --Tommy Davis

KIRKLAND, ILL. "Thank you for your time. Keep up the good work, TORCH is a useful tool." --Jeff Kingry.

HUTTO, TEX. "Please remove my name from your mailing list. I did not subscribe to your magazine and I do not wish to receive it." --Gilbert W. Tham.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Another example of criticism without specifics. We always try to comply with such requests, but it hurts a little to realize that there are people among our brethren who have a sectarian spirit: a closed mind and Bible. jpn).

LaGRANGE, GA. "On pages 5,6 of the Aug. TORCH you quote 'a paper by bro. Miller, LaGrange, Ga...' I fear the readers might think I'm teaching that rotten doctrine; so will you please put a notice in the next TORCH explaining this quotation was being fought by E. H. Miller; not taught by him.

"In addition to giving the above information, I would like for you to quote the last paragraph in the paper that I am sending you another copy of. In that short article I present on pages 2-4 the work of an evangelist; giving Bible teaching for this, and also showing from the meaning of the word that this 'EVANGELISTIC AUTHORITY' doctrine that some are now preaching as in years past, just cannot be true!" --E. H. Miller.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We here quote the paragraph bro. Miller requested:

"I want someone who differs with what I have taught, and with what I believe to be the truth, to try and show me one Bible verse that teaches when an evangelist moves into a congregation (either with or without elders) and places membership with that congregation, and begins to 'reprove and rebuke with all authority' (as the Bible teaches he should), that he will have ANY authority OVER that congregation that ANY other faithful Brother in that congregation doesn't have. Yes, he can ordain elders, perform marriages, and do some things others cannot do; but he still HAS NO AUTHORITY OVER THAT CONGREGATION THAT THE LEAST FAITHFUL BROTHER IN IT DOESN'T HAVE! If you differ with me in that statement, try as hard to prove I am wrong as I have tried to prove you are wrong."

We apologize for leaving any impression that bro. Miller teaches the doctrine of evangelistic oversight. The paper, from which we have quoted, and which was authored by bro. Miller, is a refutation of the doctrine. jpn)

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Needham's Notes



THE PEORIA DEBATE

On the nights of Aug 23,24, 26,27 I moderated for Larry Hafley in a religious discussion with Mr. Wayne Camp of the Landmark Baptists. The proposition was on the general church question, with apostasy excluded by written agreement since they discussed that subject for four nights in May 1971.

The discussion was well attended, though not as well as one might hope. Mr. Camp's people came in large numbers.

The discussion covered a wide range of subjects under the general headings of: origin, name, doctrine and practice. Such a broad proposition requires much preparation in order to respond to a vast number of subjects which the opponent might bring up.

Brother Hafley was well prepared. He did a very fine job. He presented much of his material on charts which were projected for the audience to see. He had good command of his material, and presented it in a very forceful manner.

Hafley and Camp are of a new generation of debaters. Both are in their early thirties, and have sort of "cut their teeth" as debaters on each other. They are fast friends, and conduct themselves as real gentlemen in their discussions. Both were obviously well prepared for this encounter.

Mr. Camp is a very personable young man. He receives wide acclaim among his brethren, and is president of their school for preachers conducted by the Beverly Manor Baptist church in Peoria,

Brother Hafley has conducted several debates on a variety of subjects over the past 2 or 3 years. He is a very able young preacher, and debater. He has done an outstanding job of defending the truth in that section of the country. We should all thank God for a young man of

his ability. When so many able young men are entering the professions, or the business world, it is refreshing to see one like Larry leave a lucrative position as a teacher, and preach the gospel at a great sacrifice. I know of no man who has worked harder to prepare himself to preach the gospel than Larry Hafley.

Something which speaks well for Larry, is the fact that the Paris Ave. church (his home congregation) has chosen him to represent them in three discussions with Mr. Camp. This is no small achievement for anybody. He acquitted himself well, and the Paris Ave. brethren are well satisfied with his work.

Good order characterized the discussion from beginning to end. The audience was respectful, reverent and attentive to both speakers. Only one point of order was raised during the debate, and it was settled without difficulty.

One cannot attend such a discussion of the scriptures without great profit. They leave no room for the false idea that debates do not do any good, and are productive of harm. What possible harm can result from a sincere presentation of differing view points. It is an excellent way to study the Bible, or any other subject.

WRITTEN DISCUSSION IN TORCH?

Brother Hafley is trying to arrange a written discussion between the editor and Mr. Camp to be published concurrently in TORCH and Mr. Camp's paper. Final details have not been worked out, but Mr. Camp is favorable toward the idea, as is this editor. We will keep you informed as negotiations proceed.

THE HALBROOK ARTICLE

The article in this issue by Ron Halbrook is especially worthy of note. It demonstrates how the wolf lurks in sheep's clothing while God's sheep graze placidly in the field of gullibility and indifference. You must agree that this article by a budding young scholar shows much thought, preparation and excellent research. I pray that there will be many more such outstanding young men who will use their talents for the Lord instead of some secular interest. I also pray that they will ever keep their feet on the ground and their heads in word of God.

PUBLICATIONS BY THE EDITOR

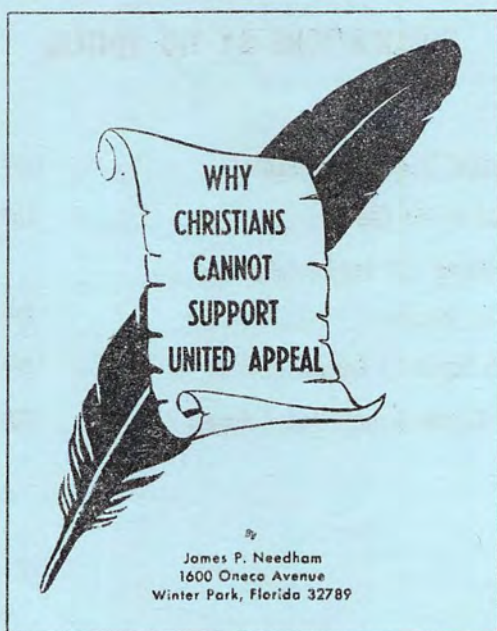
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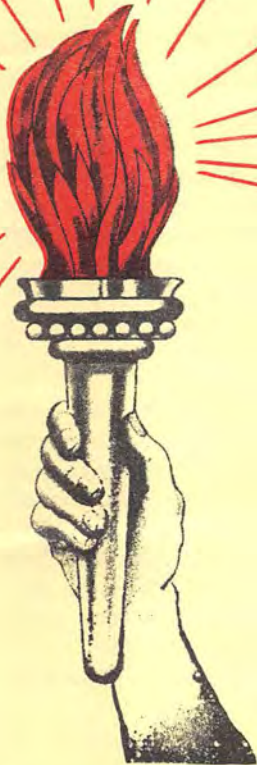
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TORCH

Volume VI December, 1971 Number 12

*"The God of the Great Endeavor gave me a torch
to bear,
I lifted it high above me, in the dark and
murky air."*

--Elizabeth Finley

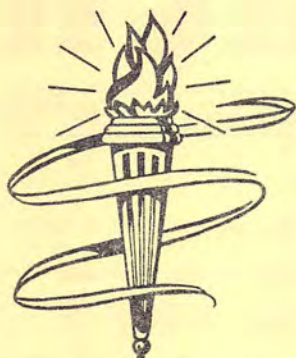
*We do not write to be understood,
but so we cannot be misunderstood.*

LOOK INSIDE FOR THESE THOUGHT PROVOKING ARTICLES

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FIRST YEAR OVER

It seems impossible, but this writer has edited 12 issues of TORCH. The time has slipped away, and we have reasons to feel that the first year has been a very profitable one, not financially, but spiritually. TORCH is now larger than it has ever been and we are constantly being encouraged by an overwhelming response from our reading audience.



Renewal time will soon be here for the many hundreds of people who subscribed soon after the present editor took the chair. We do not want to lose a single subscriber. Why not sit down right now and renew your subscription? Only \$3.00. Better still, why not send us a club of 10 with your check for \$20.00. We think you will be glad you did.

- James P. Needham



Editor

James P. Needham

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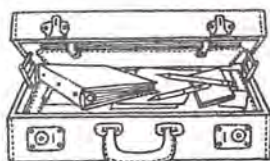
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Billy K. Farris, Publisher



Editorial

James P. Needham



Volume Six Completed

This issue is the last number in Volume VI. It completes the first volume under the present editor. How the time has flown by! It seems impossible that it was twelve issues and twelve months ago that I sat down to a desk in a motel room in Bowling Green, Ky. to write my first editorial! What excitement and expectation characterized that feeble effort! What hope! What ambition!

It has been a pleasant and profitable 12 months. The task of editing TORCH has required considerable time, thought and prayer. Some decisions have been very difficult, some easy. Some articles have been written at a humble, messy desk in the garage of my home, in someone's home where I was a guest during a meeting, or on a Jet knifing its way across the country at 600 miles per hour. Some have been written at a meditative early morning, at a fatigued late night hour, or at spare moments during gospel meetings. All this simply says that an editor's work is never done. There is always something he can do. There are letters to write, questions to answer and articles to compose. And why would one undertake such a weighty responsibility? A casual reading of POST MARKS will answer that question. It is the evidence of good done--the appreciation of the reading audience--that keeps an editor going.

The effort is justified when one is approached at a gospel meeting by a stranger who says, "I feel like I know you. I have read, enjoyed and profited from your articles in TORCH. I have driven a hundred miles to hear you preach." It is at such moments that one is staggered at the potential of his influence, and sees the need to be a bit more careful about what and how he writes.

THE GROWTH OF TORCH

From an almost certain demise, TORCH has come back strongly in Volume VI. From a subscription list of about 500 one year ago, we are now approaching 2000! The circulation is now much larger than it has been since TORCH was revived, and we are not through yet! The volume of incoming subscriptions indicates that it has not reached its peak.

YOUR RENEWAL IS A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

It is now renewal time for those who subscribed when this editor took the chair. The percentage of renewals will indicate the degree of confidence our readers have in our product. We cannot find words to express our appreciation for the hundreds of people who subscribed a year ago as a vote of confidence in the new editor. Whether he has justified that confidence will be determined by the rate of renewals. There is every indication that we shall have reason to rejoice. Every effort shall continue to be expended toward justifying the readers' confidence and meriting his continued support.

This is just the beginning! If you liked Volume VI, you certainly will not want to miss Volume VII! We are just now getting settled in to the editor's chair! Signs point toward a continued upsurge in TORCH. We are encouraged by the large number of writers who now send us well-written articles saying they "want them published in TORCH." Naturally, such action is an inspiration to us. Due to the complete revamping of the paper at the beginning of Volume VI, the editor has produced a large part of the material during the past year, but there is more and more a trend away from this. We have many articles on file from good men. Indeed, the future looks bright.

THE INDEX

We are trying a little experiment. Most periodicals publish only an author index in the last number of each volume. While this is very helpful, it leaves a lot to be desired when one would like to find material on a given subject. We herewith publish not only an author index, but also a subject index. We are enthusiastic about it. We believe the readers will appreciate it; especially those who keep the back issues. We shall be anxious to have the reader's response to this.

OUR SUBSCRIPTION SPECIAL THIS YEAR

During the first three months of 1971, we conducted a subscription campaign at the unbelievable rate of one dollar. We would like to be able to repeat that this year, but increased costs make it impossible. If you subscribe to other periodicals, you know that just about all of them have raised their subscription fees at least a dollar per year. This is necessitated by increased production costs, plus postage increases.

In viewing the situation, we have decided to give you a special deal, not by reducing our subscription fee (which we would gladly do, if we could), but by not raising it. It shall stay as is: \$3 per year singly, \$2 per year in clubs of 10 or more. We assure you that we must cut every possible corner to make it on this, but we are determined to do it, at least for the time being. You can help us keep the subscription at this figure by helping increase our circulation. We are depending upon volume rather than increased prices to carry us through the next year. This means more diligence on the part of all who are interested in our efforts.

OUR THANKS TO A HARD WORKING PUBLISHER

We owe a vote of thanks to brother and sister Billy K. Farris and family. They produce and mail TORCH from the basement of their home. That is no little undertaking! Brother Farris owns several thousand dollars worth of printing equipment. He and his family produce TORCH from scratch without remuneration! It is a tremendous contribution to the Cause of Christ. If the average reader knew what all is involved, he would pronounce TORCH a bargain at \$10 per year!!

ORDER YOUR BOUND VOLUME NOW

Brother Farris reserves 100 copies of each issue for bound volumes. When they are gone, there will be no more. If the material appearing in Volume VI has been worthwhile to you as it appeared, think of what it will mean sitting on your book shelf indexed both as to authors and subjects. All the material will be at your finger tips for ready reference. Order yours today. Only \$5. We also have some bound volumes from past years. Why not order one of each. They will make a valuable addition to your library.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MARTYR SPIRIT?

Tommy Davis

A cancer has struck some children of God. The cancer is eating away at the Martyr spirit. The concern for faithfulness seems to be leaving us. It seems as if a rushing mighty wind is sweeping more and more into lukewarmness and decay. Too many are more concerned with self rather than God (Mt. 6:33). Where has the Martyr spirit gone? Have we forgotten about our responsibility?

WORSHIP has become a social hour and a fashion show to many. If a man comes into the assembly in shabby clothing he is too often given an inferior place (Jas. 2). Some folks think more of TV, ball games, fishing, and hunting than they do of worship (Jn. 4:24). When they do actually worship they wish they were somewhere else (Col. 3:1-5). What has happened to the love of proper worship? What has happened to the love of singing, praying and learning? Has the worship of God been completely blotted out by this cancer?

WORKING is a forgotten art of the first century. It seems as if time is the element under consideration. No one has any! I wonder who is trying to pull the wool over our eyes? We need to be reminded of the fact that we will all stand before Christ one day (2 Cor. 5:10). When we obeyed the gospel we were to be new creatures in Christ, but some have forgotten that. It is a serious thing! No one can get to heaven on a bed of ivory or in a rocking chair. The Christian is to work now and rest later in heaven (1 Cor. 15:58). Have we closed our eyes to the parade of passing lost souls? (Jn. 4:34-35).

STUDY HOURS are few and far between. It could have been said that most members of the Lord's church knew the Bible a few years ago, but today some do not even know enough to quote the plan of salvation to an alien sinner. The idea of study at home is too old fashioned for some. Many do not have time for study or family prayer. Have we forgotten how to grow? (1 Pet. 2:1-2). Have we closed our eyes to truth? Don't we want to grow and serve God acceptably? HAVE WE NO SHAME? The lack of knowledge has caused trouble in practically every generation. Will we be a party to the next apostacy because we did not have enough knowledge to defeat error with the sword of the Spirit?

Has the Martyr spirit been forgotten? (Eph. 4:16). If not, I suggest we get back in our places and get to work (1 Pet. 2:5).

MISSING SERVICES is now a habit with far too many. In fact it has become so bad in some places that the church building could be locked and only a few would come to complain of no proper worship services. Have we let the Martyr spirit slip? Some folks do not care about God any longer. They know the truth, but they will not follow it. It is tragic that this attitude is plaguing the church today. Is there no shamefacedness left in God's people? Do you get scared to admit to faithfulness when your friends are around? Wake up my brethren!

The pleading words of Christ are being rejected by far too many. The Martyr spirit is something we see very little of any more, except in God's word. We must wake up before it is too late. We must shout the warning from the highest roof top and plead with men and women to repent. We cannot let this opportunity go by. There are souls of men at stake! Let's revive the Martyr spirit before it is too late.

1110 Simpson
Tupelo, Mississippi 38801



POST MARKS

Sharing Our Mail



TUPELO, MISS. "I believe that TORCH has filled a void that has been there for a long time. I enjoy each issue very much. The articles are timely and to the point. Thanks for your efforts via TORCH." --Tommy Davis.

MASON, O. "TORCH looks much better since you have been editing it." --James Cooper.

ATHENS, ALA. "Donna and I continue to appreciate your work with TORCH. I appreciate your open militancy against sin and for Christ--this is what makes it a favorite in (271)

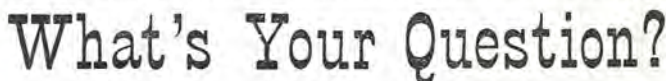
our home.

"Thank you for the opportunity to teach through the pages of TORCH. The encouragement you gave in your last letter was especially appreciated. In fact, I guess it was somewhat of a boon to my desire to write-and you will now suffer the consequences! Enclosed are 3 articles--all forged from the fire in my soul to teach God's word plainly and forthrightly, or, as you express on the cover of TORCH, to write so as not to be misunderstood. Your judgment in any editing or altering will be understood, especially since my articles are sometimes too long for the amount of space you may have...Thank you again for this opportunity and your encouragement and always be assured that I stand ready to cordially receive your advice and suggestions.

"I thought just maybe bro. Inman would drop bro. Nichols or THE SPIRITUAL SWORD a card and suggest they drop me a couple of lines and thus vindicate his letter to you. Whether he did or not, it is still as you would expect: no word from either!" --Ron Holbrook.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Holbrook's expectation evidently has not been subjected to the wear and tear that mine has. I learned a long time ago that "This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed..." (Mt. 13:15). Nothing more has been heard from brother Inman except that he continues to either misrepresent or misunderstand our opposition to human institutions to do the work of the church. In a recent issue of his periodical, BIBLE HERALD, he writes a scathing article against his opposition in which he refers to us as "Pinch Pennies." It is the same old story of seeking to cast us in the role of being against helping the needy. It is very difficult for me to believe that brother Inman does not know better. His attack is prejudicial, and unworthy of a brother in Christ. I sincerely hope and devoutly pray that these brethren will someday learn to be a little charitable toward those who are opposed to their human innovations. jpn)

BRAWLEY, CALIF. "Brother Ralph Reece has recently handed me a copy of the magazine, TORCH, issue for May 1971. I must say the content of the issue is exceptionally good in my estimation. I would appreciate it if you would begin sending me the paper...keep up the good work." (Garreth L. Clair)



Bible Answers to Bible Questions. Send to: James P. Needham
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QUESTION: Concerning religious debates

"Is it wrong to engage in religious debates? I find
 some passages which seem to be for it, and others
 which seem to be against it. For: Job 23:7; Prov.
 25:9; Acts 17:17. Against: Isa. 58:4; Rom. 1:20;
 14:1; 2 Cor. 12:20; Phil. 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:3,4; 4:7;
 6:5; 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:14; Tit. 3:9." --Ohio

REPLY:

A basic rule of biblical interpretation is that one passage must never be interpreted so as to contradict another. A true Bible believer can never accept the idea that the Bible contradicts itself. The Bible claims to be unerring, infallible. If this be true, it cannot contain even one contradiction because truth never contradicts truth.

When, therefore, we have passages which seem to contradict, we obviously do not have all the facts--we do not understand all that is involved. We may be giving a wrong definition to a word, or our misunderstanding may be due to a weak or faulty translation from the original Old Testament Hebrew, or New Testament Greek. Thus, any instance of seeming contradiction must be given serious consideration and diligent study.

If the word "debate" has the same definition in those passages that are *for* it and those that are *against* it, the Bible obviously contradicts itself. We cannot accept this. It would mean that the word of God contains error. I don't believe this, and I know the inquirer does not. We must, therefore, look into the meaning of the words translated "debate." This is the key to solving the problem.

The word ERIS, translated "debate" in Rom. 1:29, and 2 Cor. 12:20, appears 10 times in the Greek N.T. and is defined: "Contention, strife, wrangling" (Young's Analytical Concordance). It is translated: debate (Rom. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:20); Strife (Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 3:3; Gal. 5:20; Phil. 1:15; 1 Tim. 6:4; Tit. 3:9); Contentions (1 Cor. 1:11). Strife is a work of the flesh which will cause one to be lost (Gal. 5:19-21).

The word translated "dispute" is from DIALOGOMAI, and in its various forms it means: "Reasoning." "To seek diversly," "To reckon diversly." (Young's Anal. Con.).

Another word translated dispute (SUSETESIS) is defined, "To seek together, or jointly." (Young's Anal. Con.).

PARADIATRIB is also translated "disputing" and is modified by "perverse" (1 Tim. 6:5). Harper defines this word to "waste time, delay, useless disputation."

Then there are those passages which both command and command disputing, contending and debating (Prov. 25:9; Acts 17:17; Jude 3, etc.).

What are we to conclude from all this? It is obvious that debating, disputing and contending can be right or wrong, depending upon its motivation, matter, and manner. It is wrong if its motivation is strife, (Rom. 1:29; 2 Cor. 12:20), its matter is perverse (1 Tim. 6:5) and its manner is doubtful (Rom. 14:1). It is right if its motivation is love (Eph. 4:15), its matter is "the faith" (Jude 3), and its manner is "as becometh saints" (Eph. 5:3).

Much of Jesus' personal ministry was spent in disputes (debates) with the false religions of the time (See Mt. 15,23, etc.). Brethren from various places met in Jerusalem and had "much disputing" over whether or not the Gentiles had to keep the Law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:7). Paul often "disputed" (debated) with false teachers (Acts 17:17, etc.). Jude found it needful....to write...and exhort...that ye should earnestly contend (EPAGONIZOMAI, to contend strenuously in defense of, Harper) for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3).

These persons were not in violation of God's law when they were so engaged. They were rather doing His will. It certainly would not be wrong for us to follow their example. We should "avoid profane babblings, (1 Tim. 6:20), "shun profane and vain babblings," (2 Tim. 2:16), and are not to "strive about words to no profit" (2 Tim. 2:14), and yet we are to "*earnestly contend for the faith*" Jude 3), and "*wrestle...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Eph. 6:12).

But someone is ready to say, "But I have attended religious debates that were regular dog fights and mud slinging contests." To which I reply, "so have I." But that does not mean that all debates are wrong, or that all debates are of such nature. Soap is not to be debunked just because it is abused on halloween night!

I freely admit that debating is easily abused, but that does not make it wrong in principle. It is a very good place for unwise, unstable, and self-seeking individuals to do much harm to the truth as they seek self aggrandizement and personal glory. We have all seen it so abused, but we must not conclude that this proves that all debating is condemned. It just means that debating of that sort is condemned. I would not engage in or encourage any such encounter, but would gladly sanction and participate in a debate which is motivated by an honest quest for truth, or afforded an opportunity to preach the truth to people who do not know it, or to strengthen people in it.

We should not throw up our hands and quit because some have abused debating. We must arrange and conduct more and more of them in the proper manner. We should "over come evil with good" (Rom. 12:21).

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PROPER PREACHING

Donald R. Givens

In I Thess. 2:3-6 Paul discusses the nature of their (Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy's) ministry in Thessalonica. He elaborates on the character of their conduct among the Thessalonians. The Christians there knew full well how Paul and his companions had behaved (1:5; 2:1,2,5,10). With the Thessalonians as witnesses to his *conduct* and with God as witness to his *motives*, Paul emphasizes the sincerity and purity of their proclamations and actions. The manner which these preachers used to gain converts to Christ was not such as to delude the people. Their's was proper preaching.

The following is a brief study of I Thess. 2:3-6:

1. *Their exhortation was not of error* -- A delusion or mistake was not the source of their preaching. Their exhortations did not spring from lust for temporal power nor were they motivated by fanciful notions. As Paul said in verse ten: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblameable we behaved ourselves toward you that believe." The Thessalonians knew of their consistent godliness, and they knew their motives were absolutely unselfish.

2. *Their appeal was not from uncleanness* -- ("impurity" -N.A.S.B.) None of their preaching or conduct had sprung from impure motives. No one could successfully accuse these servants of God of having carnal or immoral interests. The teaching of pagan philosophers led to a life of lust and impurity, but the results of gospel preaching are just the opposite.

3. *Their appeal was not made in guile* -- Not only must we preach the truth, but it must be proclaimed with godly, upright motives. Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were not trying "to catch with bait, (deceit)." An atmosphere of trickery was nowhere found among these evangelists. Perhaps some enemies of the cross had made this charge against Paul and his traveling companions; if so, the charge was utterly devoid of truth. In their efforts to convert the Thessalonians, these evangelists had never been guilty of corruption, deceit, or cunning craftiness

- traits so frequently seen in pagan preasts and philosophers.

4. *They were God-pleasers and not men-pleasers* -- The popular applause of men was not the aim of Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy. Their primary concern was unfaltering allegiance to the will of God and not the "voice of the people." Those proclaimers today who "put their finger into the air to see which way the wind is blowing" have nothing in common with these dedicated evangelists. What concerns you most in your preaching?...the praise of other humans, or the approval of God?

5. *They had not used words of flattery* -- They did not flatter men's ears in order to blind their eyes to the commands of repentance and purity of life demanded by the gospel. Paul did not flatter them in order to conceal from them their sinful guilt and spiritual danger as do many modern hirelings. Speaking smooth words of flattery is a common tool of the insincere teacher seeking to satisfy selfish ends. God's Word clearly condemns hypocritical praise given to promote selfish interests. "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their lusts (and their mouth speaketh great swelling words), showing respect of persons for the sake of advantage" (Jude 16).

6. *They were not motivated by greed* ("cloak of covetousness," A.S.V.) -- Paul and his companion preachers were definitely not religious racketeers bent on lucrative gain. They would not misuse their ministry by promoting selfish gains. Greedy motives were absent from Paul's heart as seen by his sacrificial life. Kelcy says: "They had not used any kind of pretext (cloak) to cover up the real motive (greed)...The idea of preaching the gospel with the thought of material gain was especially abhorrent to Paul (see Acts 20:33). He here strongly avows that they had not preached the gospel pretending to love the souls of men, but all the while having covetous designs in their hearts. They had not pursued the work they were doing in an effort to satisfy selfish interests nor with an inner greed for material gain" (*The Letters of Paul to the Thessalonians*, by Raymond C. Kelcy, p.42).

7. *They had not sought glory from men* -- The plaudits

(continued on page 18)

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

INTRODUCTION

Leo Rogol

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In this issue we begin a series of articles by Leo Rogol on modern Seventh-day Adventism. It is an excellent and informative study. We know of no man among us who is better qualified for such a presentation. Brother Rogol was reared in this denomination. His father was president of it, and was so outstanding in it that he was brought to America from Poland to serve in that capacity. Brother Rogol was converted through the efforts of his good wife, Katherine, and the excellent help of brother Hubert Moss, Jr. We are enthusiastic about this series of articles by brother Rogol, and commend them to your careful reading. jpn)

The doctrinal platform of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination is defined in their very name: "Seventh-day" establishing the fact that they believe the seventh day Sabbath to be binding upon us in the New Testament dispensation and, "Adventists," establishing the fact that they teach the imminent return of Christ to earth. They teach the thousand year reign of Christ on earth.

In this series of articles I wish to deal with some of the false doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventists as well as some of the changes in their doctrinal platform. However, in this section I wish to deal with some false charges brought against the Adventists. We must be very careful when dealing with Adventists or Adventism that we do not misrepresent them. This can be embarrassing to our position as we attempt to show the error of this denominational body. They play upon these misrepresentations and use them to their advantage to gain the sympathy of their listeners by showing them how persecuted and mistreated they are. I shall set forth some frequently made statements which are not correct.

1. For example, the charge is made that they dressed in ascension robes, climbed to house-tops to await the Lord's coming in 1844. Although this may be true of many

of those early Adventists, this was not the accepted nor approved practice among the Advent Movement of 1843-44. When I say, "Advent Movement," do not confuse this with the "Seventh-day Adventist" denomination. There was no denomination as the Seventh-day Adventists at that time. Actually, the Advent Movement of 1843-44, led by William Miller, a Baptist preacher, was composed of people from a number of churches or denominations. This included the Disciples, or Christian Church. The Advent Movement was not organized into an organic body, or denomination. It had no headquarters. While many in various churches denounced this movement, there were many others who joined Miller in the proclamation of Christ's second coming. Miller never attempted to draw people from a denomination to form another, but appealed to people in all to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord.

The Adventist denomination was not formed until some years after the Great Disappointment (of 1844, when Christ did not return). The Seventh-day Adventist denomination no more recognizes or endorses the "ascension robes" worn by some fanatics than did the leading elements of the Advent Movement, including William Miller himself.

2. *Others say that Miller founded the Adventist denomination.* Nothing is further from truth than this idea. In fact, there were several denominations which sprang up from the Advent Movement of 1844, including the Church of God (headquarters in Marion, Indiana). Hence, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination was not the only body to emerge out of that movement. William Miller repudiated all his charts and speculations of prophetic symbols upon which he based his message of Christ's return in 1843, then later in 1844. He rejected the "light" on the Sabbath and had nothing to do with the Seventh-day Adventist church. I will deal with this in a later section. Incidentally, Mrs. White did not originate the doctrine of Sabbath-keeping. A Captain Joseph Bates (captain of a ship) introduced this subject and Mrs. White merely accepted it and endorsed it by a "heavenly vision."

3. *The charge is also made that E.G. White, prophetess of that denomination, founded it and was its governing leader until the time of her death in 1914.* This is also untrue. The church was (and is) governed by the General Conference, its President, with headquarters formerly in

Battle Creek, Michigan, but presently in Tacoma Park, Washington, D.C. Mrs. White did not found the Adventist denomination, and she never served as President of their General Conference, although her husband did for a short time prior to his death. She was their "inspired" prophetess who gave "counsel" to the denomination.

4. *There is also the charge made that Adventists place her writings above the Bible.* We must be very careful as to our treatment of their claims concerning her writings. In one sense this is wrong, but in another sense they are to blame themselves. She herself wrote: "The Spirit was not given--nor can it ever be bestowed--to supercede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teachings and experience must be tested." (THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, Intro. pg. vii.--Quoted from QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE, an Adventist publication) However, any question about an interpretation of a Bible passage is settled by an interpretation by Mrs. White's "inspired" statement. Hence, in reality, she is the final judge as to the meaning or interpretation of any Biblical passage or subject. Yet Adventists hold to the dual standard of inspiration, a "greater" inspiration, that of the Bible, and a "lesser" inspiration, that of Mrs. E.G. White's writings. She places herself in this latter category. But more on this later.

OUR TREATMENT OF THE LAW

This is another area in which our brethren (and others who oppose Adventists' teaching on the law) often err. Some claim that, while the Ten Commandments, or the Law of Moses, prohibit the overt, or external, act, it did not deal with the intent of the heart. Incidentally, Adventists make a distinction between "The Law of God" which they call the Ten Commandments, or the decalogue, and the "Law of Moses," which they call the "ceremonial law." However, there is no such distinction made, either in the Old Testament, or the New.

But getting back to our point, some say, for example, that the Jew could transgress the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," by the actual act, but was not guilty if he had the *desire in his heart*. They often quote Matt. 5:27-8 to "prove" this. Some seem to think that "It was said by them of old" refers to the law as it had originally been given by Moses and that it was

inadequate to deal with the sin of the heart. Really, this refers to the seventh commandment as *corrupted* by the "fathers" and probably by the Pharisees long before the time of Christ. Jesus was restoring the original design and meaning of that commandment. Jesus was speaking to the *Jews living under the Law of Moses* and correcting their corrupted views.

Again, some say that while the law said, "Thou shalt not kill," it did not forbid the feeling of hate in the heart of man. A closer look at the Old Testament law will disqualify such an idea. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother *in thing heart...*" (Lev. 19:17). Again: "Beware that there be not a *wicked thought* in thy *wicked heart...*" (Deut. 15:9). Further: "Yea, *in the heart* ye work wickedness..." (Ps. 58:2). And finally, did not David pray, "Create in me a *new heart...*" (Ps. 51:10). Jesus said concerning the "Great Commandment," "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all *thine heart...*" (Matt. 22:37), which is a quotation from Deut. 6:5.

Some people seem to think that the Sermon on the Mount was to establish principles in the new dispensation. While many of these things apply to us today, it is so only because they are taught in the New Testament, and not because Jesus was binding New Testament principles upon Old Testament Jews. If principles of the gospel were in force at the time Jesus spoke these words, then we may as well say the kingdom already existed at that time for the Word is the seed of the kingdom. Hence, we cannot appeal to passages like Matt. 5:27-8 to say Jesus was showing a difference in principle of obedience between the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ. To say that this passage teaches that while the Jew was condemned only for the act of sin, while the New Testament condemns the sin of the heart, is to give this passage a meaning the Lord did not intend.

One characteristic among Adventist preachers, much like that of Jehovah's Witnesses, which brings reproach upon their work, is to berate non-Adventists for their "lack" of knowledge of scriptures, for perverting the Bible about the Sabbath, but then fail to face one who challenges their attacks.

I once attended an Adventist meeting where the preacher made such attacks on others. He claimed no "nominal

Christian" preacher can defend Sunday observance by the Bible. He challenged anyone to present a proof-text that the Sabbath is not binding and that we are to observe Sunday. (Actually, we do not "observe" the first day; we simply "observe" certain items of worship on that day, and therefore that was a misrepresentation.)

Immediately after services I approached this preacher in the company of some of his members and told him that since he made these charges publicly, I was willing to meet him in public discussion to give him the chance to prove me wrong and prove his charges to be correct. His answer was, "We don't believe in public debating." To which I replied, "you believe in publicly making false charges, teaching false doctrine, but do not believe in public defense against your false charges, nor public examination of your false doctrine." Upon which he quickly disappeared out the back door into the night. I just couldn't help but think he felt mighty little after that.

Quebeck, Tenn. 38579

PROPER PREACHING continued from page 13

of the populace meant very little to these proclaimers (cf. I Cor. 4:3) because they were imitators of Christ who said: "I receive not glory from men...How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?" (John 5:41, 44). And it was Paul who reminded the Corinthians: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4:5). Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy were not lovers of applause nor seekers of fame.

Do not these meaningful verses say much to all gospel preachers and all saints who are to proclaim and practice God's Word? The motives and method of these evangelists were just, godly, and upright. Can we do less?

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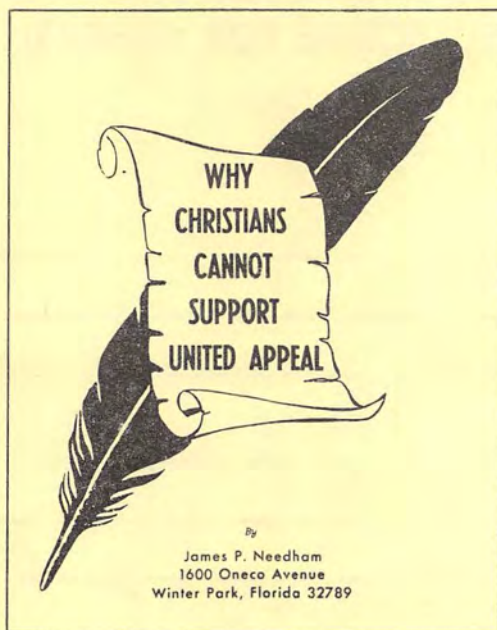
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