

Gospel Gleaner

Volume 5

Number 1

JESUS CHRIST: THE DECLARATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

James R. Lewis



Acts chapter two is the hub of the Bible. Romans 3:24-26 is the axle upon which the hub turns. The church was established on the day of Pentecost following our Lord's ascension in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. Entrance into the church was (is)

dependent upon Jesus Christ whom God set forth to be a propitiation (Romans 3:25). Christ is God's declaration of His righteousness for remission of sins that are past, and He is God's declaration for the manner through which sinful men of all ages can be made righteous in His sight. The hub of the Bible turns upon the blood of Jesus Christ through which redemption was offered to mankind (Romans 3:24), and through which God declared His justice (Romans 3:25,26). Without shedding of blood is no remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22). With the shedding of Christ's blood, forgiveness is possible, the justice of God is satisfied, and the justness of God is glorified.

God set forth Christ to be a propitiation. The terms "set forth" and "propitiation" are significant to our salvation in Christ. "Set forth" is closely related to the idea of "to declare," indicating that God "brought Him forth and put Him before the public."¹ He was **openly** declared to be the propitiation.

The word "propitiation" (Greek, hilasterion) means to be invested with propitiatory power.² The publican prayed, "God be merciful (hilasthete) to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). His plea literally was for God to be propitious, to expiate his sins. In Hebrews 9:5, reference is made to the ark of the covenant and the "mercy seat" (hilasterion). The mercy seat was the covering of the ark of the covenant. It was where God was manifest in His presence between the cherubims. It was here that the blood of the sacrifice was brought and sprinkled for the sin offering (Leviticus 16). The imagery of the Old Testament sin atonement is vivid. Christ was openly declared (set forth) by God Himself in the presence of all as the sin offering to cover the sins of mankind. The pathway to the mercy of God is paved with the blood of His only begotten Son. It is only "through faith in his blood" that this sin offering can be efficacious. It might be noted the phrase literally is "through the faith" (dia tes pisteuous). The definite article "the" may well indicate the system of faith, viz., the gospel, through which access is made to the blood of Christ. Compare Galatians 3:23, 25, 26 in the Greek where similar emphasis may be pressed, where the definite article is absent in the English, but not in the Greek.

We now come to the specifics of that which

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THE AMAZING GOD



Bill Dillon

God is amazing. He is universal, timeless, boundless, and limitless. The voice of the everlasting and omnipotent Creator calls to man in Isaiah 40:25-26, 28.

"To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding."

This would truly be a frightening world if God were just like all the rest of us, anxious, fearful, unsure and uncertain. But God has made known that He is "God and not man." (Hosea 11:9). God is exalted high and lifted up (Isaiah 6:1). Being infinite, eternal and unchangeable, He remains forever distinct from all that He has created.

The contemplation of God is the most noble of which man is capable. In the words of one, "Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of Deity." As God is amazing everything about Him shares His nature. Let us consider the amazing things of God.

God's Amazing Son

Christ is incomparable. The golden confession of Simon Peter in Matthew 16:16 was definite and deliberate, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." It could not be said of Buddha, Mohammed, or Confucius that "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the

Living God." It could not be said of Moses, Elijah or John "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The great confession spoken in reference to any other than Jesus of Nazareth is the vanity of vanities.

Jesus Christ the amazing.

"He never wrote a book, yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He has furnished the theme for more songs than all the song writers together. He never practiced medicine, and yet He healed more broken hearts than the doctor have healed broken bodies.

He is the Star of astronomy, the Rock of geology, the Lion and the Lamb of zoology, the Harmonier of discords and the Healer of all diseases. Great men have come and gone, yet He lives on. Herod could not kill Him: Satan

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could not seduce Him: death could not destroy Him: the grave could not hold Him. He is the ever perfect One."

A preacher once said, "Jesus is the only Somebody you can't match."

Any man will do well to keep the matchless life of God's Son ever before him. Put His life into yours and life becomes saner and more sensible. The apostle Paul had the correct view of things when he said, "*I am crucified with Christ, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" (Galatians 2:20).

God's Amazing Book

Only a book from God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and preserved by divine providence could have withstood the battering of skeptic's heavy hammers of centuries.

The Bible often judged by men, is rather to judge all men (John 12:48). It is indestructible (Matthew 24:35) and unchangeable (Psalm 119:89). It instills faith (John 20:30, 31) and exposes error (2 Timothy 4:2). As man's guide, it instructs on how to live (Titus 2:11,12; Romans 12:1,2). It is a book sometimes, like its Author, "despised and rejected of men." Yet, man rejects the Bible at his own peril. Proverbs 13:13 says "*whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.*" Our attitude toward the Bible is heaven's attitude toward us. No book transcends in value or power like God's amazing book.

God's Amazing Church

There is no greater nor higher institution than the church for which Jesus died. The church of the Lord is God designed (Ephesians 3:9,10); blood bought (Acts 2:47; 20:28); and heaven bound (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17). Christ is its head (Ephesians 1:20-23); the Bible is its guide (2 Peter 1:21); and God the object of its adoration (John 4:24; Ephesians 3:20,21).

It is a gospel church (1 Corinthians 15:1-4); a peoples' church (Acts 10:34,35; John 6:37); an obedient church (Acts 2:42); a praying church (1 Thessalonians 5:17); a united church (Acts 2:44; 4:32); an evangelistic church (Acts 8:4), and a triumphant church (Matthew 16:18).

The wonderfulness of this glorious Kingdom cannot be improved upon. All men and women today have the happy prospect of becoming members of God's amazing church.

Grace is the great source from which salvation flows. Ephesians 2:8,9 carries the glad announcement that "*by grace are ye saved.*" Though mankind, for its sins, was hell-deserving, yet God condescended to send His worthy son to die for us as unworthy creatures, "*For while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8). By God's undeserved and unmerited favor, man can come to accept the resplendent offer of salvation. The Corinthians were a people of sensuality and immorality, doing things beyond reproach and shame. Yet, by God's grace, they were washed, sanctified and justified from their way of living (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). They who were once the scum of the earth became the saved of the earth by accepting God's offer of grace by hearing, believing and being baptized (Acts 18:8).

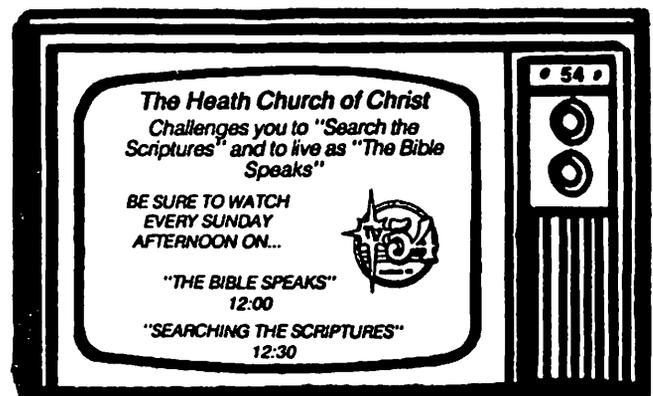
Is there a Christian who does not love John Newton's wonderful hymn "Amazing Grace?"

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound;
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.
'Twas grace that taught
My heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!"

It is with humility and happiness that we know of God's amazing son, book, church and grace. How great is God; the amazing God; our God!

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IF YOU LIVE IN THE PADUCAH
OR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS AREAS:



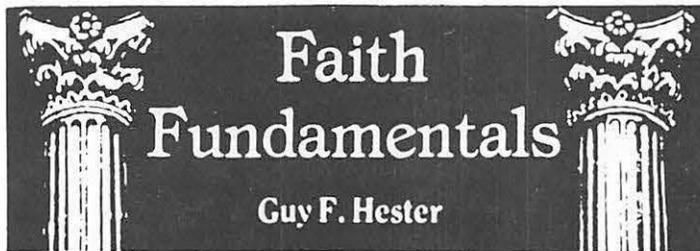
The Heath Church of Christ
Challenges you to "Search the
Scriptures" and to live as "The Bible
Speaks"

BE SURE TO WATCH
EVERY SUNDAY
AFTERNOON ON...

"THE BIBLE SPEAKS"
12:00

"SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES"
12:30

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WORSHIP



The word **worship** and its derivatives, **worshipped**, **worshippeth**, and **worshiping**, are found in the King James translation of the Bible more than 200 times. If for no other reason, this should cause us to be interested in the subject. Every one is a worshipper. We either worship God or we worship a false God. Man has an inborn nature to worship something—he will either worship the Creator or the created (Romans 1:23-25).

God, since the beginning of time, has wanted man to worship Him. Not only has He always wanted man to worship Him, but He has always been very specific as to how He wanted the worship offered unto Him. It is very evident by examples in the Bible that God will not accept worship offered that is not according to the instruction that He has given.

In the first human family, Cain and Abel, sons of Adam and Eve, both worshipped God. He accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's offering. The Hebrew writer tells us that *"by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"* (Hebrews 11:4). Since *"faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17), we know that God had given instruction to them concerning their worship. God would not accept just any worship then and neither will he today.

If we would worship God acceptably today, we must be guided by His word. Jesus said, *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:24). Here Jesus laid down two essential elements relative to acceptable worship—it must be offered in the right spirit and be according to the truth. Much worship offered to God is unacceptable because of the spirit in which it is offered. Worship is indeed a serious matter and must be treated seriously. We cannot worship God in spirit while our minds are on wordly things or while we are

whispering, laughing, sleeping or worried about the preacher running a little overtime in his gospel message. We must be sincere in our worship to God.

It is not enough for our worship to be in spirit (sincerely offered), it must likewise be in truth. It must be "by faith" (Hebrews 11:4, Romans 10:17). It must be authorized by Christ in the New Testament.

Sing

The New Testament authorizes Christians to **sing** as worship (1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Singing is authorized, it can be done "by faith." There is absolutely **no** authorization in the New Testament for the playing of a mechanical instrument in worship and God will not accept it as worship unto Him.

Pray

The early Christians worshipped God in **prayer**. We have authorization for this in the New Testament (Luke 18:1; 1 Corinthians 14:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18). "By faith" we can address our prayers to God through Jesus Christ. We may not, by faith, address our prayers to, nor through some "saint" or Mary or any other person living or dead. Such will not be heard of God.

Give

The New Testament authorizes Christians to **give** of their means on the first day of the week as worship to God (1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7). This we can do as worship in truth. There is no authorization for the church to have yard sales, spaghetti suppers, etc. for the purpose of raising money to carry on the work of the church. Such is a violation of God's word and will be rejected just as He rejected Cain and his offering.

Lord's Supper

The New Testament authorizes the Lord's Supper to be observed on the Lord's Day, the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). One may not, "by faith" eat the Lord's Supper less frequently than on the first day of every week nor on any other day than the first day of the week (Sunday). One, in doing so, would not be worshipping "in spirit and in truth" and therefore, his worship would be sinful and unacceptable.

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THE BEST REMEDY FOR SCOFFERS

Cled E. Wallace

Argument does not often impress the scoffing skeptic. A bad spell of sickness will usually do him more good than argument will. Elijah scared Ahab into going softly and putting on sackcloth and sitting in ashes by telling him bluntly that the dogs would lick his blood where they licked the blood of Naboth. A rugged Westerner told me that when a horse fell on a cowboy, the cowboy never "cussed the horse" until he got the horse off of him. Scoffing and blasphemy become silent in the presence of danger and death, which is a tribute to the faith that alone can promise decisive victory over death and the grave. There is a current story about an old reprobate who was prowling around one night and fell into an abandoned well.

As he went down he clutched a ledge near the top. Hanging precariously, he began to pray and cry and beg for mercy. His fingers became numb and his hold gave way. He fell a few inches and hit the bottom—and began to swear. The well should have been a hundred feet deep. The fact that death sobers wicked men when it comes near argues strongly for sober thinking and right living all along the journey. A man who thinks it worth while to call on God in the face of death should serve him in the prime of life. I have seen death gripping a young man whose body was rotten with disease due to his own sins. His loved ones stood by with blanched and tearstained faces. The doctor shook his head hopelessly. The final gesture of this victim of sin was to call for a preacher and cry in despair for divine help. He had nothing but contempt for preachers and prayer meetings while he was in health. To fear God and keep his commandments is still the whole duty and happiness of man. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And even a fool will take it back when the chill of death is on him.

GOSPEL ADVOCATE
September 23, 1937

VREED-EN-HOOP SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE

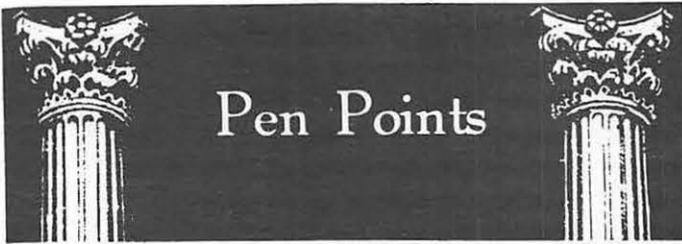
Guy F. Hester

I, along with my son Ferrell, have just returned from what I believe to be a very profitable trip to Guyana. We found the Bhola family well and the church and the School of the Bible going strong. Although we experienced some difficulty due to engine problems on the Guyana plane and were held up in Miami, all in all it was the smoothest trip that I have been on to Guyana. Our luggage arrived on time and we made it through customs with no hassle at all. Due to the delay of our flight in Miami, brother Bhola was not at the airport to meet us, but we took a taxi to Vreed-en-Hoop and "surprised" the Bholas. We were soon settled in and the students were notified of our being there and our work got underway immediately. Brother Bhola had just completed giving tests and we went over all the results and were pleased that all fourteen students made passing grades. Of course, some did much better than others, but considering their various backgrounds

and education, they all did exceptionally well. In addition to the regular studies, we gave an overview of the book of Acts and also studied such subjects as "The Second Coming of Christ," "Premillennialism," "Denominationalism," "Worship," etc.

In addition to the class work, we counseled with the students, preached seventeen times, laid out plans for our next visit in March when we will be using our students in a campaign in Parika, an area that is thickly populated, but has no church. We plan to establish a church there and use some of the students to conduct Sunday services for them.

In a letter that brother Bhola wrote to the church at Heath, he said, in part, "We are planning upon brother Hester's return to campaign in Parika where we plan to plant a new congregation and our Bible School students would be used greatly on this project.



Pen Points

REDEDICATION OR RESTORATION?

Ronnie Whittemore



"If you are subject to heaven's invitation, either as an alien sinner or as an erring child of God, why not come now as together we stand and sing for your encouragement." Perhaps every reader has heard these words or something similar hundreds of times. A

gospel preacher will conclude his sermon with a gospel invitation. Also, somewhere in the lesson, maybe at the close, he will state God's redemptive plan for the sinner outside of Christ and also mention God's terms of pardon for the wayward child of God.

Lately, some brethren are criticizing the gospel invitation and the mentioning of God's plan of salvation. Some "scholarly" brethren have decided that such an appeal breaks the flow of the lesson. If one compares a gospel sermon to a lecture or speech as given by businessmen and politicians, then the customary closing of a gospel sermon is a bit awkward and unusual. However, **gospel preaching is not a lecture or speech as delivered by worldly men.** The message is not the same. The emphasis is not the same. A gospel sermon is informative, instructional and declarative. Its intent is spiritual. Its purpose is to save the lost and edify the saved. Gospel preaching also demands persuasion. The apostle Paul wrote, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (2 Corinthians 5:11). The gospel invitation and its accompanying remarks strive to this end. It is always good and proper to extend the Lord's invitation and tell men what to do to be saved (Acts 2:37-40; 3:19).

In a public address of God's message, there are two or three types of people that preachers try to encourage to walk down the aisles in answer to heaven's call. (1) Having believed and repented, the person who needs salvation from his past sins should walk down the aisle and confess the sweet name of Christ before

men and be baptized for the remission of his sins (Matthew 10:32-33; Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3). God stresses the urgency of obeying the gospel. "...Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation..." (2 Corinthians 6:2). Every non-Christian who is accountable for his sins is implored to obey the commandments of God and receive salvation. (2) The erring child of God who has disgraced the Lord's name and His church by wicked and wayward conduct should come down the aisle and make things right with God and his brethren. The Bible teaches that God's people can fall from grace (Galatians 5:4). For that reason, God has issued a second law of pardon; whereby, His children can continue to receive the forgiveness of their sins by the ever-flowing blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). Repentance and confession of the sin and prayer unto God by the brethren on the sinner's behalf are God's instructions. (3) A Christian who has moved into the community or who has left another congregation for scriptural reasons should desire to place his membership with a faithful congregation so that he can properly be identified with his fellow laborers and be under the direction of elders. Remember that God receives glory through the church (Ephesians 3:21). One who wanders from place to place usually will not remain strong in the Lord. Too many attractions and inconveniences can lure him away.

Following the preacher's sermon, a good custom which has been observed through the years is to stand and sing an invitation song for those described above. However in recent years, this method has been abused even to the point of undermining God's gospel and the seriousness of sin. More and more, there are Christians who walk down the aisle, not to place membership with the congregation nor to confess sins and ask for God's forgiveness, but they come stating that they want to "rededicate their lives unto the Lord." Friend, this writer is confused when such takes place. First, the person does not come forward publicly stating that he has committed public sin. Instead, he or she (in a round about way) acknowledges that he has not lived up to his potential. Well, who has? "Rededication" is a determination that every Christian should make every day. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves..." (2 Corinthians 13:5). However, if a person has committed sin, then an earnest desire to grow spiritually

is not equivalent to receiving a pardon for that sin. *"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented: but the sorrow of the world worketh death"* (2 Corinthians 7:10). Second, the awfulness and shame of sin are ignored when one states that he wants to "rededicate" himself to the Lord. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1John 1:9). Friend, sin is serious. Simon the sorcerer was told to *"repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity"* (Acts 8:22-23). Peter plainly and frankly explained the terrible danger that Simon's soul faced if he should remain in his sin. The tragedy and grave consequences of sin were not overlooked. James stated, *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"* (James 5:16). The Bible describes and teaches **restoration** of the soul, not "rededication" of the soul (Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6:1).

Now perhaps some are thinking, "Preacher, you are getting rather picky." Friends, this writer is not speaking of those who may desire the prayers of the church on behalf of sick relatives, or because of hardships and trials that have tested their faith. But friend, think for a moment. When was the last time that you can recall that an **erring** child of God who brought shame and disgrace upon the Lord's church, came down the aisle and **confessed his sin and asked for the prayers of the church?** On one occasion, this writer witnessed at an area gospel meeting that about five young people came forward during the invitation song and wanted to "rededicate" their lives to God. Had they sinned against God? They did not say so specifically nor did they mention their sins. Were they desiring the prayers of the righteous saints because of sickness or death of loved ones? Evidently not, such was not expressed. Were they acknowledging weaknesses like neglect of Bible study and personal prayer? They did not say. Had they been disobedient children to their parents? They did not say. Had they sinned against God privately in which personal penitence, confidential confession and private prayer unto their Heavenly Father would have been sufficient? They did not say. This writer did not know why they came

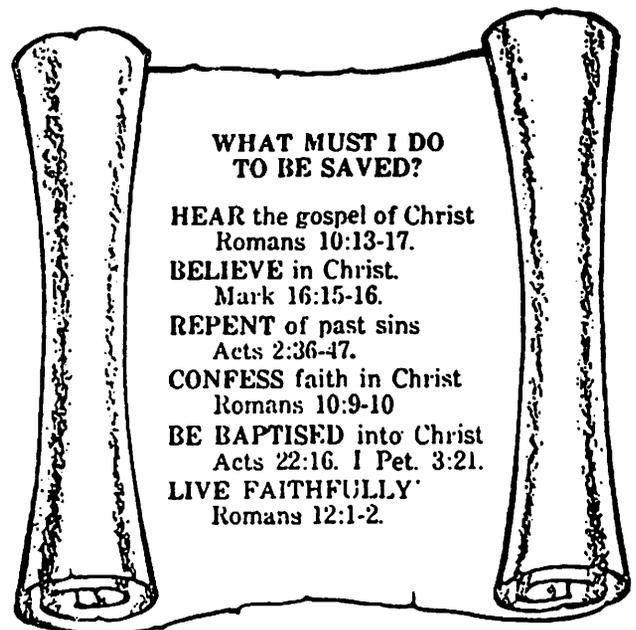
to the front and he doubts whether anyone else actually knows why.

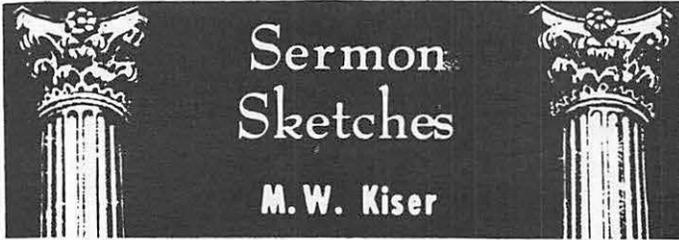
This "rededication" idea when applied to sin actually **whitewashes** sin. At the least, it downplays sin. When people make a public statement of wanting to "rededicate" their lives to God, what are they actually saying? If one has sinned publicly by stealing, then why not state, "I have sinned. I am guilty of stealing." Then the guilty one admits his sin. Those sinned against know and God knows that the guilty is making amends. If he has sinned only against God, then he should go to his closet in prayer with a penitent heart. The public invitation is not designed to accommodate everyone's personal sins. If so, then everyone would come down the aisles each time that the saints assemble.

This writer fears that the young people especially are not being taught properly the danger and serious consequences of sin—death (Romans 6:23; James 1:13-15). By saying, "I want to rededicate my life to God," they are avoiding the acknowledgement of sin. When confronted by Nathan the prophet concerning his sin with Bathsheba, David said, *"I have sinned"* (2 Samuel 12:13).

The lesson is simple. One must know what sin is. We, as Christians, must admit to sin and make things right with God. We must teach our children these things. We must be reminded also. Denominationalism uses the word, "rededicate." The Bible uses the word, "restore." Let us "speak as the oracles of God."

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FORGETTING GOD Jeremiah 2:32

Introduction:

1. Give some background information regarding the life and times of Jeremiah the prophet.
2. The Reader's Digest has the section called, "My most unforgettable character." Nobody is forgotten any more than our Lord!
3. Forgetting the Lord appears to be an impossibility.
 - a. God's warnings show it is probable (Deuteronomy 6:10-15; 8:11-14).
 - b. History proves it is possible (Judges 3:7; Isaiah 17:10; Romans 1:28).
4. In view of our subject, let us consider the following:



- I. **The Care of God for Man** (Psalm 8:4; Hebrews 2:6).
 - A. God cares for man's physical needs (James 1:17; Matthew 6:11, 25-30).
 - B. God cares for man's social needs (Genesis 2:18; Proverbs 18:22).
 - C. God cares for man's spiritual needs (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:15; Matthew 1:21; Romans 5:8; 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - D. God cares for man's eternal needs (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Philipians 3:21).

II. The Callousness of Mankind toward God.

- A. Young people waste their lives in sinful indulgences.
 1. References: Ecclesiastes 12:1; Galatians 5:19-21; James 4:4.
 2. Illustration: When the tomb of Charlemagne was opened two centuries ago, the skeleton was clothed in purple holding a sceptre in the bony hand; seated on a marble slab with a New Testament on its knee and a finger pointing to Matthew 16:26.

- B. The word of God is disregarded and disobeyed by the majority (2 Peter 3:2; Mark 16:15-16; Ephesians 4:4-6).
- C. Provisions for the needy are withheld (Matthew 25:31-46).
- D. The kingdom of heaven is given leftovers of time, talents, and treasures (Matthew 25:14-30; 6:19-21, 33; 2 Peter 1:9).
- E. The gospel invitation is being ignored (Matthew 11:28-30; Acts 24:24).

III. The Consequence of It All.

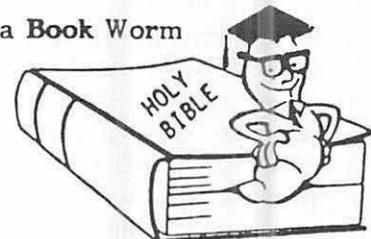
- A. There will be no "passover" on the resurrection morning.
 1. References: John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:12-13.
 2. Illustration: There is a burial ground in Poland where names have been left off of stones; thinking the angel of death will passover when calling the names of the righteous and wicked.
- B. Forgetting God will not go unforgotten (Deuteronomy 8:19; Psalm 9:17; Isaiah 65:11-12; Lamentations 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
- C. A rich landlord once oppressed a poor widow.
 1. Her son saw it and upon becoming a great artist portrayed this horrible thing on canvas and placed it where the landlord could see it.
 2. It smote his conscience, but he could not buy it.
 3. We will face this life again, but not in reincarnation as the popular song "Highwayman."

Conclusion:

1. We have seen that the act of forgetting God is an ungrateful, demonstrated, tragic act.
2. While you are forgetting God, you are remembering the Devil! Why does he get so much of our time when he has done nothing good for us.
3. Remembering God is more than saying "yes" to His existence. It is submitting to His will.

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Be a Book Worm



JESUS CHRIST:

(Continued from front page)

has been declared by God in the setting forth of His Son. In a word, it is God's righteousness. In verse 25, His righteousness is declared "for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." This statement gives strong affirmation that God did right when He was forgiving sins that had occurred in Old Testament days. Forgiveness of all sin, any sin, at any time, before or after the death of Christ, is forgiven only because of the atoning blood of Christ. Berry's Interlinear is helpful here. The phrase "for the remission of sins that are past," is rendered, "in respect of the passing by that had before taken place sins." God had passed by the sins that had taken place without exacting penalty for the sins. He did so, and could do so justifiably, because of the eventual atonement for those sins being made by the blood of Christ.

Verse 26 gives emphasis to the time element of God's righteousness being made manifest. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness." "This time" is in contrast to any previous time. It is now, Paul said, in the gospel age, through the blood of Christ that God's righteousness is made known to all (cf. Romans 1:16, 17). God's righteousness is established because of two things. One, He is just, and two, He is the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. He is just purely because the penalty for sin has now been

paid. The demands of justice have been met. God passed by imposing death, the just penalty for sin, upon man in time past; but now, in the death of Christ, whom God "set forth," the price for man's sin has been paid. God, Himself, is the justifier in that it was He who provided the sin atonement, the propitiation for our sins.

It is evident that the truths of this passage are central, not only to New Testament Christianity, but to the entire scheme of God's redemption of man. Almost all of the great and essential elements of salvation are brought together here in the third chapter of Romans, verses 24-26. These essentials are identified by the terms: redemption, grace, mercy, faith, law (implied by God's standard of righteousness), propitiation, just, justifier. In each and every reference to these lofty truths, it is the Lamb of God who is central to the establishing of each. Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God is declared.

-Endnotes-

¹Vincent, Marvin R., Word Studies in the New Testament, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1969, p. 43.

²The Analytical Greek Lexicon, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1970. .

*Pennville church of Christ
Route 2, Box 147
Summerville, GA 30747*



VREED-EN-HOOP SCHOOL

(Continued from page 5)

As time goes by and our students gain more experience, we would, under the guidance of brother Hester, be able to spread out and establish more congregations where there is none. With this type of thrusts, there would be great expansion and opportunities would be given for our students to teach and preach. We are in desperate need of your prayers....Brethren, we are greatly encouraged and enthusiasm is high! We are praising God for his

help and blessing upon us."

The Lord willing, brother Larry Montgomery and I will leave on March 7 and arrive in Guyana on March 8. We need your prayers and thank you for your continued support in this great work.

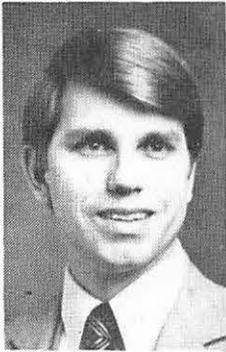
Although our last trip was not a campaign, we baptized five. Pray for these new Christians that they might remain faithful and grow into useful servants for His cause in Guyana.

*1101 Airport Circle
Jasper, AL 35501*

Women Of The Word

Dennis Gullede

THE WORTHY WOMAN Proverbs 31:10-31



We hear of many types of women these days. There are beautiful women, career women, sophisticated women, and liberated women, but you hardly ever hear of a godly or "worthy woman" (1 Timothy 2:10). That is because the world is not interested in such.

The description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 is the apex of womanhood. It is "designed to show what wives the women should make and what wives the men should choose."¹ We have the abridgment of this in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and 1 Peter 3:1-6. The manner in which the question is put in verse ten suggests that a truly "worthy woman" is difficult to find. But she can be found where women of the Word are found. Indeed, the world needs the stability and strength of godly women. They are needed in the home. Mothers who work at home are the unsung heroines of society; few see or appreciate what they do.² They are needed in the community (Matthew 5:13-16).

Herein is a picture of womanhood that is by no means unbelievable, but rather attainable to all who aspire to it. We have before us the character of a woman of genuine worth; first, in general (verses 10-12), secondly, in its component parts (verses 13-29), and thirdly, in summary (verses 30-31).

The Worthy Woman In General (Verses 10-12)

1. **She is worthy ("virtuous," KJV).** The word "worthy" literally means, "a woman of strength," or power both of body and mind. She may be the weaker vessel physically, but she is often superior morally and spiritually. The word describes those who are "able" (Exodus 18:21). It describes character (Cf., Ruth 3:11). It should be remembered that in Proverbs Solomon gave many warnings regarding "strange women," that is, the fornicating, lewd, lustful and adulterous type.

2. **She is trustworthy (verse 11).** Her husband has no cause to fear anything which he entrusts to her, whether it be his name, home, livelihood or children. Married couples must be able to trust each other. No marriage can survive in jealousy and mistrust. It is a mistake to marry someone you cannot trust.

3. **She is good (verse 12).** She is a good helpmeet (Genesis 2:18). She has her husband's good always in view. Her good is unmixed—she will do him good and not evil. Her good is constant and permanent, that is, "until death do us part."

The Worthy Woman In Particular (Verses 13-29)

1. **She is a willing worker (verses 13-15).** In the home she is noted for her industry and labor (Titus 2:5). She is no sluggard (Proverbs 6:6). "Man works from morn to set of sun, but a woman's work is never done. She is chef, clothes designer and maker, interior decorator, gardener, educational director, budget keeper—sweetheart and mother. She holds more positions than the entire presidential cabinet."³ Note in these verses that she, (A) Is a good keeper of her home, (B) Cares for her family, and (C) Sees that they are well fed and tended to.

2. **She is business like (verse 16).** She provides for the growing needs of her family. The word "consider" suggests that she is wise and prudent and does not make financial decisions without careful forethought. The management of a home is no small time business. Home is where character is built, happiness is created and enlarged and souls are prepared for eternity. (Ephesians 6:1-4; 1 Peter 3:1-3; Ephesians 5:22-33).

3. **She is strong (verse 17).** The worthy woman has a strong physical body. She takes good care of herself because health care is not a trivial thing to the Christian (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). You will not find her out all hours of the night drinking, and smoking and destroying herself. The very acts of bearing and rearing children requires a physical stamina that most men know nothing of.

4. **She is appreciative (verse 18a).** That is in regard to things that are good (Romans 12:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:21). She perceives the value of her work even when no one else does. She has a sense of value regarding good things for her family.

5. **She is watchful (verse 18b).** This suggests the idea of preparedness. It is a fact that



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Thank you,
Stanley Freeman
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I pray this letter finds you in good health and your work advancing the cause of Christ.

The men of the Grand Ledge congregation would like to request that a bundle of 15 copies of your paper, GOSPEL GLEANER, be sent to the church building.

Thank you for your stand for the truth and may the Lord continue to bless your endeavors as you "earnestly contend for the truth."

In Christ's Service,
Keith B. Cozort
Grand Ledge, MI

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Please add my name to your subscription list.

Fraternally,
James E. Rogers
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Thank you.
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Dear brethren:

I received a copy of the GOSPEL GLEANER from brother Guy Hester several months ago and found the articles are very interesting and sound. I would appreciate it if you could send me a copy of the publication and if you have some back issues, I would like them also. Please find enclosed a small contribution for the great service you are providing for our Master.

May God continue His blessings on this great effort.

In Him,
James L. Powell
Pinon, New Mexico

Dear brother Dillon:

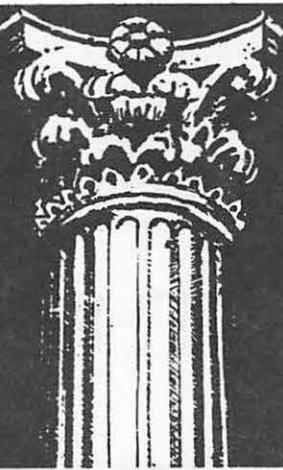
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Gospel Gleaner

Volume 5

Number 2

THE STRICTNESS OF GOD'S LAW

Roy J. Hearn

(Prefatory: Before this article is written, a prayer is sent forth to the throne of God that (1) They always be strictly in harmony with God's word; (2) that the writer may have wisdom to say what is needed and to couch each article in proper language; (3) that readers have no trouble understanding; (4) that these writings will help strengthen the faith of readers; (5) that there by God will be glorified and His word exalted and respected. Your prayers to these ends will also be appreciated).

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the Bible is the verbally inspired word of God and a faithful translation into another language is still the inspired word of God, and just as binding as when originally written. In view of the fact that so many today reject the Bible as being authoritative, it is thought to be worthwhile to be impressed with the strictness of God's inspired word.

Law Defined

Briefly stated: "Law is a rule of action laid down by the superior to be obeyed by the inferior." All things are governed by law, and there are two types: **Impressed** and **expressed**. God has **impressed** his laws upon all nature, that every plant and animal bring forth after his kind (Genesis 1). The planets move with precision, according to law. In all nature the laws are strict and unchangeable. The Bible contains the **expressed**

(spoken or written) law addressed to the human mind. It is designed to order the life and conduct of humanity. Christ is the law-giver, and every soul is required to hear him or be destroyed (Acts 3:22-23).

One is saved, made free from sin by law. This is clearly stated in Romans 8:2. Jesus said the truth makes free (John 8:32); but God's law is truth (Psalm 119:142, 151), therefore, one is made free by the law of God. The word of Christ is "the law of faith" (Romans 3:27). God's laws are not according to human wisdom, but are to be respected and obeyed (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). In view of the increasing attitude that God's laws are not binding, but are elastic, it is in order to be reminded that nobody sets aside God's will without guilt. Things written aforetime were written for our learning (Romans 15:4), and can make people wise unto salvation (Ephesians 5:17; 2 Timothy 3:15).

Some Apparently Foolish Laws of God

1. The Passover. No question that God could have saved Israel from Egyptian bondage without any conditions. But in preparation he required them to sprinkle animal blood upon the side posts and lintels of the doors, otherwise the firstborn in every house would die. To fail was folly (Exodus 12). Present-day

(Continued on page 3)



Editorial...

THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

Bill Dillon



"Other books tell us what men suppose, the Bible tells us what God knows." The Bible is now what it has always been; the one great inspired book. No other volume is the guide book of life for the Christian. The Bible speaks everywhere with divine

authority, thus it demands man's submission. As the Bible is the fountainhead of authority in religion, how can any man rightly answer the probing questions of life unless he goes to the Bible?

The Bible reveals what only can be learned from the Bible, "What is salvation and how is it obtained?" The Bible is comprehensive in its knowledge of eternal things. "If every book but the Bible were destroyed, not a single spiritual truth would be lost." Its sacred contents beckons men to "give attendance to reading" (1 Timothy 4:13); "Meditate upon these things" (1 Timothy 4:15); and "study to show thyself approved...rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). In John 8:32, Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"; since we are only free to the extent that we have knowledge, it is imperative to read, meditate and study.

Precious knowledge gleaned from the sacred pages tells us we can free ourselves, and others, from the false doctrines taught in the name of Christianity.

If we are assailed by doubts, the Bible speaks with certainty to dispel the doubts as morning dew before the sun (John 20:28; Luke 1:4).

The ineffable light of the Divine Volume sheds its rays on matters beyond this word (Luke 16:19-31; John 14:1-3); and directs us how to conduct our lives in this present evil world (Titus 2:11, 12).

The knowledge of God's will and way for us is scoffed at by some but the knowledge

of powerful Bible truths has satisfied millions and brought peace and joy to more souls than you and I could count. If the Book of Knowledge is rejected, what is offered in its place? Only the empty speculations of unbelief. We need to ponder well the immeasurable difference between true knowledge that divine revelation brings and the false knowledge begotten in the restless minds of vain men. Despise not the former unless you are abundantly satisfied in your own contemplations that the latter has something solid and certain to give you.

There is a God. He is a God of Knowledge. He is able and willing to communicate with his creation. Hebrews 1:1, 2 tells how God has spoken and continues to speak. Romans 10:8 says, "The word is nigh thee."

P. O. Box 506
LaFayette, GA 30728



Be Wise . . .
Study Your
Bible!

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EDITORS: Bill Dillon & Ronnie Whittemore

THE STRICTNESS OF
(Continued from front page)

religionists would offer many excuses for not doing so, but would have had to suffer the consequences.

2. The Brazen Serpent. Numbers 21:4-9 reveals that on one occasion when Israel sinned, fiery serpents were sent among them and many died. Moses prayed for mercy and the Lord instructed him to make a serpent of brass, place it upon a pole in the midst of the camp, and those who looked upon it would be healed. What a foolish way to heal snake bite! The virtue was not in the brazen serpent, but with God, and He healed those who obeyed his condition. What of those who refused to look?

3. Restoring Sight to the Blind. John 9:1-10 tells of a man born blind. Jesus made an ointment of clay, placed it upon the eyes of the man and ordered him to wash in the pool of Siloam. The man obeyed and received his sight. The healing power was not in the water, but with Christ who healed him upon his obedience. Though this and other laws given were contrary to human wisdom, they "got the job done" and the blessings promised were never received until the conditions were complied with. Other examples could be given but these suffice to show that God has not outlined his will to conform to human wisdom.

**Examples of the Strictness
of God's Law**

1. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-7). God bore witness that Abel was righteous (Hebrews 11:4). This testimony was based upon Abel's obedience, because he walked by faith (Romans 10:17). Cain's worship was rejected. Why? Cain was a liberal. He felt it unnecessary to abide within the limits of God's law of worship. He seemed to think that because he had some kind of faith he ought to be accepted. He was not, and serves as warning to us today, that in no wise should God's word be altered or ignored.

2. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2). Their duty was to burn incense in the tabernacle service, but to do so they used fire from an unauthorized source. It was "strange fire." They took undue liberty with God's word. God burned them to death at the door of the tabernacle. This teaches us that when God tells what to do and how to do it, that eliminated all else. No liberties. No act of worship now unauthorized in the New

Testament reaches the throne of God. (See Proverbs 14:12; 28:26; 30:6).

3. King Saul. Please read 1 Samuel 15. Exodus 17:8-15 tells of an unprovoked attack upon Israel in the desert by the Amalekites. Some 400 years later God commanded King Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites and all their possessions. However, Saul and the people spared King Agag and the best of the flocks and herds. Upon return Saul said to Samuel, "I have obeyed the commandment of the Lord." As brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. said, "About that time an old cow bellowed and called him a liar" (1 Samuel 15:14). They almost had obeyed the Lord's command, but their partial obedience turned out to be total disobedience. This teaches us (Romans 15:4) that nobody can deliberately set aside God's command and be acceptable to Him. Perhaps King Saul in his vanity wanted to make a great display.

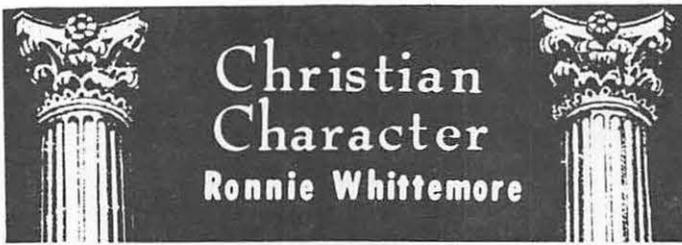
Samuel showed Saul that God has greater delight in one's obedience than in mere sacrifice. Ostentation, showiness and display have never been part of God's plan for man. To follow ways unknown to the Bible, unauthorized by God's word, is rebellion, and is yet as the sin of witchcraft, iniquity and idolatry (1 Samuel 15:23). Saul was rejected for his rebellion. "*There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Proverbs 14:12).

4. Uzzah's Innocent Act. Second Samuel 6:1-7 records that as the Ark of the Covenant was being removed from the house of Abinadab back to Jerusalem, it was being hauled on a new cart, driven by Uzzah and Ahio. When the cart was shaken, spontaneously Uzzah put forth his hand to steady it, and as soon as his hand touched the Ark, the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, and he died there by the Ark. **Why?** Was he not honest? Did he mean to disobey God? Was his heart not right? Perhaps, but he violated a positive command of God: "*Neither shall ye touch it lest ye die.*" With the many examples before us, who can presume to take liberties with God's word and do what he pleases as long as he believes and is sincere? All perversions bring the condemnation of God (Galatians 1:6-9).

**The Law of Christ Is
Also Strict**

Seeing that every transgression under the law of Moses received a just recompense

(Concluded on page 8)



THE A-B-C'S OF A CHRISTIAN



From Romans to Jude, God has given His people twenty-one epistles that are full and complete with instructions on how to live the Christian life. It often has been stated that the book of Acts tells one "what to do to be saved" while the

epistles tell one "what to do to keep saved." The New Testament is filled with warnings that the child of God can fall from grace and lose his soul, even though he may have obeyed the first principles of God's gospel. The apostle Paul cautioned, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"* (1 Corinthians 10:12). He also alerted those believing Jews who were returning to the faulty law of Moses, *"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whoseever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace"* (Galatians 5:4).

There are many key passages that describe the proper traits and characteristics that every Christian should possess. The apostle Peter wrote about building upon the foundation of one's faith with virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity or love (2 Peter 1:5-7). Paul wrote of the fruit of the Spirit which *"is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance"* (Galatians 5:22-23). However, within the framework of God's marvelous Book, there are other qualities which Christians need in this trying time. They are the A-B-C's of Christianity.

A Is for Aggressiveness

The apostle Paul's signal for alarm in the first century is just as appropriate now, in this century, as it was then. *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived"* (2 Timothy 3:13). He forewarned the Ephesian elders, *"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you,"* ⁴

not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). No wonder part of God's requirements for elders is that they be willing and able *"to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"* (Titus 1:9). Jesus foretold of *"wolves in sheep's clothing"* (Matthew 7:15). Paul alerted the Corinthians of *"false prophets, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ"* (2 Corinthians 11:13). And as the Christian looks around him, he acknowledges that *"they are not all dead yet!"*

But the mere admittance that such teachers and their false doctrines exist is not enough. The war has been waged between good and evil, right and wrong, Christianity and heathenism. Every Christian must fight battles daily. In so doing, he is instructed to *"contend for the faith"* (Jude 3) and to be *"set for the defence of the gospel"* (Philippians 1:17). And brethren, that cannot be accomplished by apathy or indifference. The soldier in God's army cannot be passive. He cannot idly sit by while others *"fight the good fight."* This part of the Christian life requires AGGRESSIVENESS. The Christian certainly needs the "shield of faith" to defend the truth, but he also must draw the "sword of the Spirit" and attack. It often has been said that the best defense is a good offense. Jesus drew His sword at the bank of the Jordan River and threw away the scabbard (Matthew 3:13-17; 10:34-42).

A Christian will be *"ready always to give an answer"* (1 Peter 3:15). He will *"be ready unto every good work"* (Titus 3:1). He will gladly proclaim the gospel everywhere, even in the face of adversity (Romans 1:15; Acts 21:13). His spirit will be stirred within him at the observance of error and wrong doing (Acts 17:16). In a nutshell, he will be AGGRESSIVE in every way in serving the Lord.

B Is for Boldness

Just as zeal should be accompanied by knowledge, likewise, aggressiveness should be coupled with boldness or courage. Barnabas and Paul exemplified boldness whenever they faced hostile audiences of the Jews in the synagogues. On one occasion, *"when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming...Paul and Barnabas waxed*

(Continued on page 5)

bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:45-46).

Daniel also typified courage and boldness when he "purposed in his heart" that he would not defile himself with the king's meats and wine (Daniel 1:8). As a result, he had to face lions in their den. Joseph had the boldness to flee the lustful advances of Potipher's wife even though he was imprisoned because of her lies (Genesis 39). John the Baptist was beheaded for his boldness and James was killed with the sword for his courage, but they would not swerve from the truth of their God. Peter and John were arrested for preaching Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Acts 4:10), but they boldly remarked, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). In fact, their boldness was a testimony to their being with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

Christians face daily trials. They must endure mockings. They encounter ridicule in the work place, the classroom, and sometimes at the church building. Yet, they meet these challenges and disputings boldly. They refuse to play the part of a coward. Christians understand the need to add boldness to their character.

C Is for Compassion

In this cold world of the twentieth century, compassion is sometimes a forgotten trait. The high crime rate and lack of judicial justice have made skeptics of would-be "samaritans" and suspects of the truly needy. It is an unwise thing in this day and age to hitchhike and it is equally unwise to pick up hitchhikers. Once open doors are latched and bolted. Everything from a bicycle in front of a store to a newspaper machine on the corner must be chained and locked.

But, however cynical one may be, the Christian cannot lose his compassion for the lost and needy. It is always better to be taken advantage of because of good intentions than to turn away from someone who may really need help whether spiritually or physically. Jesus taught, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). Yes, Christians are duty-bound to "visit the fatherless and widows" (James 1:27) and to "preach the gospel to

every creature" (Mark 16:15); however, these deeds should be motivated by compassion, not just duty.

Compassion will lead the Christian to be hospitable (Romans 12:13), kind and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32), honest and peaceable (Romans 12:17-18), merciful (James 3:17), and caring (Galatians 6:1-2). The realization of the severe consequence of sin (Romans 6:23) and the certain day of judgment will urge Christians to preach the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:10-11). The recognition of their own sins and faults will cause, even spiritually strong Christians, to restore the spiritually weak (Galatians 6:1).

Christians must have the proper balance in their lives. Sometimes brethren are aggressive and bold in defending the truth, but they lack compassion and leave undone many good deeds. On the other hand, many brethren are compassionate when it comes to benevolence and evangelism, but they lack aggressiveness and boldness when it comes to taking a stand for the truth. But the A-B-C's of the Christian will include aggressiveness, boldness and compassion. Does your character possess all three?

10015 Woodville Rd.
Kevil, KY 42053

PLAN OF SALVATION

GOD'S PART

1. The great love of God for man. (John 3:16)
2. He gave Christ as the Savior. (Luke 19:10)
3. Sent the Holy Spirit as a guide. (John 16:13)
4. Gave the Gospel as "the power" unto salvation. (Romans 1:16)
5. Provided atonement by the blood of Christ. (Romans 5:9; Colossians 1:14)

MAN'S PART

1. Hear the Gospel. (Romans 10:17; John 8:32)
2. Believe the Gospel. (Hebrews 11:6; John 20:31)
3. Repent of past sins. (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
4. Confess faith in Christ. (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32)
5. Be Baptized. (Galatians 3:27; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)
6. Be faithful unto death. (Revelations 2:10)

COPING WITH BEREAVEMENT

John H. Renshaw

Knowing that many members of the church have lost loved ones recently, it is with an earnest desire to be of some small support in these trying times that the following thoughts, derived from recent experience and excellent books on the subject, are penned.

First, realize that you are not alone. Death and grief are as old as the human race (Genesis 3:19; Hebrews 9:27). Yet, death cannot be treated as just another fact of life. It is inevitable and universal, but not to be taken lightly. Since it is inevitable, coping with death should be a preventive measure, as with any other such event. A study of the subject may help prevent some of the bitter effects of grief in ourselves and others. "Forewarned is forearmed."

Second, one should know what to expect when death comes. Expect denial of the fact of the loss. This will prolong the grief. Expect an immediate period of shock, causing numbness, feeling as if in a daze, anger, self-pity, frustration. Expect prolonged depression and its effects. At the top of all stress charts is death, especially the death of a spouse. This is often caused by remorseful feelings, "Did I do all I could? Did I let them know I loved them? Why did I speak so sharply, become so resentful of their needs?" Expect emotional symptoms of this deep depression: withdrawal from others, an unusually aggressive attitude, "No you don't know how I feel, either!" Restlessness, loss of sleep, failure to eat properly, conviction that one is losing his sanity, abnormal absent-mindedness, indifference to the necessary on-going of life, seeming loss of faith. Remember that "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). Read of David's bereavement (2 Samuel 18 and 19). Expect some self-pity, but inordinate self-pity is to be avoided. God has **not** singled us out. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34, 35; Romans 2:11). Self-pity will cause others to avoid us, thus depriving us of much helpful sympathy and assistance.

Expect physical symptoms. As Susan Seliger wrote in *McCall's*, June, 1984, "Stress is not a disease, but it has been linked to most of the leading killers and cripplers—heart disease, cancer, diabetes, accidental injuries, suicide, cirrhosis of the liver...(it) can make us more susceptible to migraines, lower-back pain, renal failure, recurrent flare-ups of

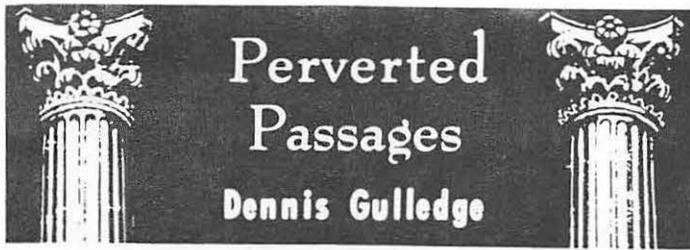
herpes, even skin blemishes." Arrhythmia, weakness, exhaustion, shortness of breath, loss of appetite, a general tired, run-down feeling, a feeling that one is losing his sanity—all these are symptoms to be expected by the bereaved.

Third, one should think of all the **benefits** of bereavement, surprising as this may seem. For the faithful Christians, death is a welcome change to a much better life, especially if they have known nothing but suffering for some time. This one precious truth has been more comforting to this writer than all else combined. Read Revelation 14:13, 21:4. It is understandable that the pain-wracked often desire death (Job 6:1-4, 8,9; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Philippians 1:21-24). This was true even of the suffering Saviour (Luke 22:41, 42). The fact of suffering and death causes mankind to desire a better existence (Hebrews 11:14, 15), where "*there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain*" (Revelation 21:4). Thanks be to God, it is provided, and our Christian departed loved ones enjoy it, now and forever! Everything that takes us **away** from God is **evil**, and everything that brings us **toward** God is **good**. Once we have accepted this standard, we can see bereavement in a different light.

Bereavement makes us kinder, more understanding, more sympathetic, more loving. It enables us to better comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3-7). It enables us to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2). It teaches dependence on God and others, rather than ourselves (James 4:15). It teaches us to "*weep with them that weep*" (Romans 12:15). It teaches that the righteous must also suffer, lest people be righteous merely to escape suffering. Our Saviour was "*a man of suffering, and acquainted with grief*" (Isaiah 53:3).

Fourth, the bereaved should realize that help is available. Medical help is available. Current intensive research into the harmful effects of stress has contributed much, and Jesus says the sick need a physician (Luke 5:31, 32). Spiritual help is available (Matthew 11:28; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Galatians 6:2). Current emphasis has produced many excellent

(Continued on page 11)



"HANDLING ARIGHT THE WORD OF TRUTH"

Author's Note: In this installment of "Perverted Passages," we will seek to deal with



2 Timothy 2:15. This passage is often quoted by preachers with emphasis on the word "study" in the King James Version, and the point is driven home that we should study our Bibles more than we do. It is my conviction that the real meaning of the word

study, in this verse, is often missed, either wittingly or unwittingly, and we endeavor to limit its application to our "burning the midnight oil" in Bible study. A proper understanding of this passage will show that, not only does the Word of God demand a more intense personal perusal but, as the context demands, a proper breakdown and exegesis.

As a departure from our usual format, this material is presented in outline form. For many of the thoughts presented herein, credit is given to brother Wayne Jackson in chapter three of his book entitled, "A Study Guide to Greater Bible Knowledge."

Introduction:

1. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, ASV).
 - a. "Study" in KJV, if given its proper force, means, zeal, earnest desire, effort and haste (Cf., 2 Timothy 4:9, 21).
 - b. "Handling aright" (ASV)—lit., "cut straight." "The thought is that the minister of the gospel is to present the truth rightly, not abridging it, not handling it as a charlatan (see 2 Corinthians 2:17), not making it a matter of wordy strife (verse 14), but treating it honestly and fully, in a straightforward manner" (M. R. Vincent).
2. It is possible to have a head full of Bible knowledge, but have it so confused as to misrepresent its real meaning.

- a. The need for handling the Bible aright implies that it may be mishandled.
- b. Upon what basis shall we proceed?

I. Appreciate the Nature of the Book You Are Dealing With.

- A. Remember what it is—God's saving word (James 1:21).
- B. Remember what it contains:
 1. Perfection—not to be supplanted or supplimented (Revelation 22:18).
 2. Words of truth and soberness (Acts 26:25).
- C. Remember what it does (Psalm 19:7; Hebrews 4:12).

II. Understand the Different Covenants in the Bible.

- A. There are three dispensations:
 1. The Patriarchal
 2. The Mosaic
 3. The Christian
- B. Where are we today? Christ is the end of the Law (Romans 7:6; 10:4).

III. Distinguish between the Permanent and the Temporary.

- A. Many things of God were intended to be age lasting (1 Corinthians 13:13).
- B. Some things were temporary and passed away when their purpose was fulfilled.
 1. Miracles (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).
 2. The Ten Commandments—Law of Moses (Galatians 3:24-25).

IV. Separate Custom from Principle.

- A. Customs change with the times, but principles do not.
 1. With some people a custom in the Bible becomes a fixed law.
 2. It is dangerous to confuse custom with principle.
- B. Example #1: Foot washing (John 13:4-17).
 1. This was a common practice when sandals were worn. There is no authority here or elsewhere to make foot washing a "church ordinance."
 2. Jesus gave his disciples an object lesson in humility.
- C. Example #2: Women wearing a veil (1 Corinthians 11:2-15).
 1. There are levels of subordination (verses 3-5). The veil was a symbol of subjection.
 2. Paul did not originate the custom, but gave sanction to it for his time.
 3. The principle of authority/subordination is taught elsewhere (Ephesians 5:22-33).

(Continued on page 8)

"HANDLING ARIGHT"

(Continued on page 7)

V. Understand the Difference Between the Circumstantial and the Spiritual.

- A. The circumstantial are those matters which are incidental; not essential.
- B. The spiritual embraces the true meaning of the command involved.
- C. For example: A friend of mine once told me of her trip to the Bible lands, and her baptism in the Jordan River. She had, at that point, already been baptized for the remission of her sins (Acts 2:38).
 1. Does the fact that one is baptized in the Jordan River make his or her baptism any more valide than if it were done in a baptistry? Jesus' baptism in the Jordan was circumstantial. He could have been baptized in any body of water.
 2. The true spirit of the command is that baptism involves remission of sins and is a command we must obey (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16).
- D. For another example: The single cup in the Lord's last supper is merely circumstantial (Mark 14:23).
 1. Indeed, the word "cup" refers to the contents and not the vessel itself

(Matthew 26:27-28).

2. For one to make an issue over "one cup" in the Lord's Supper means that he misses the true spirit of the command.

VI. Be Honest in Your Approach to Bible Study at All Times.

- A. Build a good, workable library, but as much as possible be an independent student.
- B. Never attempt to devise "new" or "novel" ideas on Bible themes.
 1. Always remember that many smarter than you have gone before you.
 2. Adopt and keep the spirit of the Bereans (Acts 17:11).
- C. Never hesitate to say, "I do not know," if indeed such is the case. Let that be your incentive for further study.
- D. Pray for wisdom (James 1:5).

Conclusion:

1. One of the most essential tasks is to handle God's Word aright.
2. Much confusion is the result of much mishandling.

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THE STRICTNESS OF

(Concluded from page 3)

of reward, the question is asked, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," spoken first by the Lord (Hebrews 2:1-4)? There is no escape. Every soul who will not hear (obey) the Lord will be destroyed (Acts 3:22-23). To take undue liberties with the word of God is to despise it. Those who despised God's law given through Moses died without mercy (Hebrews 10:28). Apostle Paul states that those who thus despise the law of Christ will suffer greater punishment (Hebrews 10:29). What is greater than physical death for violations?

The law of Christ is unalterable, unchangeable, indestructible (Matthew 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23). Everyone shall meet it at the judgment (John 12:48-50). Merely calling upon the name of the Lord is insufficient (Luke 6:46). No alien sinner has ever been saved through prayer only. To be saved one must obey the will of God (Matthew 7:21-23).

Jesus showed that the difference between a wise man and a foolish one is determined by whether or not he obeys the words of Christ (Matthew 4:24-27).

There is nothing more plainly taught in God's word than that one is not to take liberties with it. God forbids addition or subtraction in any way (Deuteronomy 4:2; 5:32; Galatians 3:15; Revelation 22:18-19). To deliberately add a point of doctrine is a perversion, and to minimize any command of God is the same. Both equal perversion and bring condemnation. "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:6). "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 28:26). Let us not be among that number. Those who are inclined to liberalism in religion should take another look at what God has demanded and what he requires now.



MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Harry W. Pickup

Generally speaking, the world does not know what the church actually is. The reason for this perhaps is that most people are not church conscious. The world, therefore, cannot appreciate the church until it knows what it is. Many professed Christians do not know what the church is. Their names may be written on the rolls of some church, but their idea of the institution itself is purely denominational.

It is often difficult to erase the formed opinions of men with respect to institutions that have been in existence for several hundred years. For this reason many people have come to feel this denominational conception of the church so strongly that they will not listen to or read anything that even smacks of countering their accepted ideas of religion and the church.

The purpose of this article, and the three following articles, is to give to the honest student the facts—Bible facts—regarding the best-known, but very little known-about, organization, the church of the Bible.

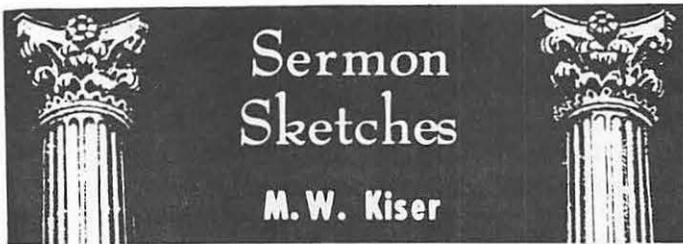
1. The church is the "called out." By this is meant called out from the world. The word itself—the original Greek preposition "ekklesia" ("church" in the English) is a derivative of two words that mean "called out." Jesus clearly understood this when he said in Matthew 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build **my church**." Hence, he gave it a mark of distinction from all of the other churches of his day. His church was not a revision of some of the old standards; it was not an addition to the Jewish synagogue worship in any sense of the word, and was not connected with Judaism in even a remote manner. It was an institution separated from all of the organized religions of his day. It was the **"called out."** Why should he establish something that was to be governed by a **new** covenant or law, and make it a part of, or to be connected to, a law that was to be nailed to the cross and taken out of his way? Well, he did not! His church was "called out" of the world and all institutions connected with the world.

2. How is the church "called out?" This is an interesting point in itself, but one that is easily answered. The church that Christ built was called out (from the world, sin and error) by the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14). There is nothing that actually separates man from sin, error and such like except the gospel. Christ told the apostles to preach the gospel to the world. He knew it would separate men from the world and would call them into his kingdom.

In this enlightened (?) age we are hearing a great deal about a **social gospel**. What is meant by a "social gospel?" Practically speaking, those who know what it is understand that the "social gospel" is one that appeals to the world; one that does not have any strict rules in it, and talks only about general things, with no specific instructions at all, but a conglomeration of indefinite phrases; one that never tells anyone how to be saved or how to live the Christian life. The gospel of Christ—the one that calls people out of the world—unclothes the sinner, exposes error, religious and otherwise, and shows the man of God how to live a life of acceptability. The "social gospel" is a weak-kneed system of theology, whose framework boasts of a structure very much like the backbone of the proverbial jellyfish.

3. What is the mission of the church? Of course the church **does** have a mission. Some things, however, that it does sometimes is not exactly its mission. Negatively speaking, it is not the mission of the church to furnish anyone with social prestige. This may be contrary to general belief, but, nevertheless, it is true. God's highest conception of society is to be a Christian; but it is not the idea of the Holy Spirit, Christ or God that one of the **missions** of the church is to afford man with an exclusive social club. People who come into the church with that in mind miss the mark and will go to perdition in spite of the fact that their names are written over the social register of every society connected with the "four hundred."

It is likewise not the mission of the church to entertain. When the church begins to get its crowd and its members by entertainment, the affair gets old mighty quick, and those who come in with that flimsy inconception are valueless to the cause. When individuals attend church services simply to hear Mr. Bla Bla sing a solo or the Twin City Four render a quartet number, they had just as well stay at home; they can get it over the radio just as well, and ten to one



WHEN JESUS SAID "NO"
Luke 4:1-13

Introduction:

1. We like to be agreeable. We like to get along. Sometimes we must say "no" to maintain moral strength.

2. This was the beginning of the most remarkable battle of all ages. (See: Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:10).

a. Satan is a powerful personality.

1) He is opposed to Christ and every Christian (1 Peter 5:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:12; Acts 26:18).

2) He is responsible for all deception, sin and acts of disobedience (John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:13-15; Ephesians 2:2).

b. Jesus came to destroy Satan's work. He was tempted (Hebrews 4:15), yet He did not sin (1 Peter 2:2).

3. What is the difference between a "temptation" and a "trial?"

a. Temptation is seduction to do evil; a solicitation to do wrong.

b. A trial seeks to discover and reveal moral qualities.

4. It is to the temptation of Jesus that we turn our attention. It came at a significant time: After His baptism and before He began His public ministry.

5. Jesus faced three specific temptations. Namely . . .

I. The Wilderness Temptation

A. Background: A solitary place, cut off from human sympathy.

1. The temptation takes place after a forty-day fast.

2. This number is associated with a probation period.

3. Satan watches for a vulnerable point.

B. Appeal: Natural appetite.

1. It appeals to a legitimate body function; it is a temptation to satisfy a normal desire in a way other than a God-given way.

2. God has given laws to check and direct these functions that we not live as beasts of the field (2 Peter 2:12-14; Jeremiah 5:8).

C. Reply: Jesus saw beyond the needs of the body to the needs of the soul.

D. Lessons:

1. Those who live by bread alone believe in satisfying needs by any means (2 Thessalonians 3:8-12; Ephesians 4:28).

2. Those who live by the Word of God seek to please God (Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 7:8, 11; Matthew 5:28).

3. Do not allow your body to become a tool of Satan (2 Samuel 11:2; 1 Timothy 2:9-10; Romans 6:19).

II. The Mountain Temptation

A. Background: Satan knew Christ's kingdom plan (Genesis 3:15; Colossians 1:13).

1. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Satan offers a short cut around the cross.

2. Consequence—we would have had a new king, but no Savior.

B. Appeal: Human pride.

1. Satan just suggested that Jesus achieve an end by means that were not holy. Souls are constantly sold for honor, glory, power and prestige.

2. The wise man's words apply: Proverbs 16:18.

C. Reply: Philippians 3:19; Ephesians 5:5; Matthew 6:24

D. Lessons:

1. Sin is often marked under false labels: distinction, respect, sophistication, etc.

2. Sin is often excused by some because of social pressures.

3. Sin often comes about because of compromise, surrendering principles, and ignoring the conscience.

III. The Temple Temptation

A. Background: It was the southern wing of Herod's temple, some 450 feet high. Josephus commented that it was so high that it made one giddy to look down and one could not see the bottom.

B. Appeal: Religious sentiment.

1. Satan will use Bible language to gain advantage even though he misquotes and misapplies (Psalm 91:11-12).

2. Some would not mess with gun powder, or go over a fall in a raft, yet they

books in this field. Ask the librarian at the school, or this writer, or your doctor, for titles of such works.

Remember that you are not alone. Know what to expect. Be aware of the benefits of bereavement. Seek the help that is available, and may God bless you in this trying period of your life.

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MISSION OF THE CHURCH
(Continued from page 9)

it will be better talent! They will not miss a blessing, either, for they did not have the right thing in mind in the first place.

It is the mission of the church to uphold and preach the truth. The church is the pillar of the truth, and should thus preach and uphold it. The truth is God's word, whether people like it or not.

It is the mission of the church to identify itself with the mission of its Head, Jesus Christ, thus to seek and save the lost.

Every item of the work and mission of the church is connected with the redemption of man. Broadly speaking, the mission of the church is the redemption of the human family. This work is first, last and all the time, and everything that it does is in order to lift man from sin and fit his soul for heaven.

GOSPEL ADVOCATE
December 2, 1937

presume on God and deliberately walk in the way of temptation.

C. Reply: With scripture.

1. Again, Jesus demonstrates the superiority of the Word of God over the books of men.
2. No other volume has within it the power that we need to overcome evil.

D. Lessons:

1. The religious world is constantly emphasizing some passages to the exclusion of others (John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:21) and building on the sensational.
2. Brethren focus on some principle to the neglect of other truth.
 - a. Love: promote softness.
 - b. Numerical growth: lower standards.
 - c. Unity: promote compromise.
 - d. Purity: promote unforgiveness.
3. To put oneself in a dangerous position to prove that God cares is both sinful and foolish.

III: Old Christian once met former mistress. He went the other way. She cried out, "It is I." He replied, "It is not I."

Conclusion:

1. Why did Satan tempt Jesus (Hebrews 2:17-18)? Had Jesus fallen, we would be looking into hell with no hope at all.
2. Satan's tool kit is the same (1 John 2:15-17).
3. Jesus answered every temptation with the Word. We can do the same (Ephesians 6:17; Psalm 119:11; James 4:7).
4. Now if you are tempted to continue in sin, "It is written..." (Hebrews 2:3).

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ATTENTION READERS!

"Searching the Scriptures" is a half-hour Bible program with a question-and-answer format that airs each Sunday afternoon at 12:30 from Jackson, Tennessee and Paducah, Kentucky. This work is overseen by the Green Plain church of Christ in Hazel, Kentucky. Brother Gilbert Gough serves as the moderator.

On April 16 and 30, two special programs aired. The subject was: "The Fancies and Fallacies of Premillennialism." Brethren Wayne Cox, Michael McDaniel and Bill Crossno were the panelists. Transcripts of those programs have been printed in booklet form. If you would like a copy of this publication, please write: "Searching the Scriptures, c/o Green Plain church of Christ, Route 2, Box 212, Hazel, KY, 42049. The transcripts are free.



Readers' Response

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Dear Sirs:

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In Christian love,
Johnie Scaggs, Jr.
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Dear brethren:

I was reflecting on the fine brothers and sisters who earnestly contend for the one faith which was once delivered unto the saints. It makes you sad to know some have drifted from the true doctrine. I thank you again for standing for the truth; it's brothers like you and others who help me to have the courage to take a stand for Christ and his truth, but always in love for lost souls for people are dying without God and without hope.

May God bless us all, as we strive to live for him.

Christian love,
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Gospel Gleaner

Volume 5

Number 3

Discipline

Robert C. Oliver

Recently, this writer has heard a number of times the statement made that the church is not practicing discipline as it is directed to do. The question then arises, "Why is this so?" It seems reasonable that if we know that we are not in harmony with the Word of God, then we will determine why and correct the problem. Therefore, let us notice a few possible reasons why some churches today are not practicing the Bible doctrine of discipline.

One possible reason is that many today are number-conscious. Many would rather see a large crowd of people who are lost than a smaller number who are saved. It oftentimes builds our ego to see the building beginning to fill up to its capacity. If we are small in the first place, there may be a fear of becoming even smaller. The numbers just may be what we are seeing. Numbers are important because every number represents a soul whom we have the opportunity to teach. But, leading one who is in a lost state to believe that he is safe does nothing to teach and save that soul. It jeopardizes that soul and many others as well. We are to practice discipline in an attempt to save that one (1 Corinthians 5:5) as well as the rest of the church (1 Corinthians 5:6-7). Therefore, when we fail to practice discipline because we do not want to risk losing one of our members, we are defeating our own purpose.

Secondly, it may be the case in some instances that a failure to practice discipline is the result of a fear of losing financial contribution made by the erring brother.

This could especially be true of a smaller congregation where the church is struggling to stay above water or of a larger congregation that depends upon a very liberal giver. Again, this defeats its own purpose. First, the erring brother if left in his error will likely continue to decay spiritually until he no longer gives of his means anyway. Secondly, if left unchecked this sin will continue to spread (1 Corinthians 5:6) causing widespread spiritual decay and death in the church. This of course would lead to a much greater financial loss. It is therefore more financially sound to discipline the erring brother than to look the other way.

A third possible reason for lack of discipline in the fear of hurting someone's feelings. Often people shirk their duty to point out error because they do not wish to kindle the anger of another. It is the duty of a Christian to try to live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:18). But, this does not mean that we are to overlook sin for the sake of peace. Jesus clearly taught that obedience to His will would cause division in some cases (Matthew 10:34-37). We would not refrain from warning someone that his house was on fire simply because he might get mad at us. Neither should we be afraid of angering someone by warning him that he is in a spiritual fire. Our brother who needs to be disciplined falls in this same category. It is far better to anger him than to stand by and see him burn. He will probably be even more angry with

(Continued on page 11)

Editorial

Reasons For Encouragement

Bill Dillon



All Christians at some point in their work have felt the icy finger of discouragement. Discouragement suffocates and stifles as well as hinders and halts. In our human weakness, we feel as if a noose has tightened around our spirits and we forget about certain

facts which give us hope and rekindle our zeal in spreading the gospel.

Through the dark and dismal clouds of discouragement, we look for the sun. Let us keep before our eyes certain reasons to be encouraged and strengthened in Christian living. These things will fill our hearts to the brim with joy and enthusiasm.

There are five immensely important considerations:

OUR CAPTAIN

In Hebrews 2:10, Jesus is referred to as *"the captain of their salvation."* Such a description fits the Lord as no one else. The captain is all to the ship; plotting the courses the ship will take through treacherous narrow-necked channels, thick fog and rough seas. Christ is all to the Christian as well (Colossians 3:11).

Jesus is the Captain who has sailed the stormy seas of life successfully and overcoming temptation. Hebrews 4:15 describes the Lord as *"tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* Moreover, Christ has *"left us an example, that ye should follow his steps"* (1 Peter 2:21).

OUR EXAMPLE

The lives of great men of faith who have gone before serve as tremendous magnets pulling us in the right direction. Caleb demonstrates an overcoming faith second to none when he said, *"Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spoke in that*

day; for thou hearest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said." Caleb's strength was not in himself, but in the greatness of his God.

David's example of courage in the face of challenge was just as striking. The shepherd boy said to king Saul, *"Let no man's heart fail...thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine"* (1 Samuel 17:32).

Hebrews 11 is a long list of faithful souls of the past who were not intimidated by their fears but were made invincible by their faith. Each had human weaknesses like you and I. But through the stormy blasts of affliction and tribulation, they kept courage by keeping faith.

OUR CHALLENGE

The words of John 4:35 are encouraging. Jesus said, *"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."* It is comforting to know that every disciple is needed to carry out God's work.

(Continued on page 9)

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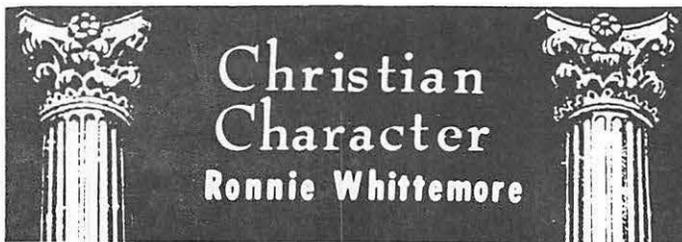
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THE BURDENS OF LIFE



It is a fact of life for all men to have burdens. *"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life"* (2 Corinthians 5:4). Some of life's burdens

are visible. There are physical infirmities such as, poor eyesight, deafness, arthritis, etc. These afflictions lead to many hindrances—unable to drive, poverty stricken, ill family members, etc. Other of life's burdens are invisible. Many men and women are battling and struggling daily because of burdens. They are people of great patience and endurance (Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-4).

The first few verses of Galatians 6 records the various burdens that may inflict a man during his life. Specifically, Paul wrote, *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ...For every man shall bear his own burden"* (verses 2, 5). The word "burden" in verse two comes from the Greek word, "baros" which means "load." This "load" may be a "burden of difficulty, sorrow and pain." In this sense of the word, Christians are to bear one another's burdens. In verse five, the word "burden" comes from the Greek word, "phortion" which means "pack." This word implies "one's duties before God and that for which each one is personally responsible." The Bible teaches us to do three things with our burdens.

"Every Man Shall Bear His Own Burdens"

There are some burdens which cannot be accomplished by others. A person cannot rely upon others to fulfill those obligations over which he is personally responsible. In Matthew 25, the servants to whom were given five talents and two talents bore their own burdens. The man to whom was given just one talent neglected his talent and probably thought that he could lean upon the deeds

of his fellow workers. But the one-talent man was cursed and punished by his lord for not bearing his own burden (Matthew 25:26, 30).

What are these burdens which one must bear himself? First, there is the burden of sin. *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one"* (Romans 3:10). *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). Sin has always been a personal matter. Consider king David (Psalm 51:3-4) or Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:22) or Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:4; 1 Timothy 1:15). When groups of people sin, God charges each guilty person. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him"* (Ezekiel 18:20).

Second, there is the burden of obedience. *"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness"* (Romans 6:17-18). Friend, nobody can believe on the Lord or in the gospel for you. Nobody can repent for you. Nobody can confess your faith in Christ for you. Nobody can be baptized for you. And nobody can live the Christian for you, but you! Friend, you may have the godliest father and mother, or godliest family ever to walk upon this earth, but you are still responsible for your own obedience (Mark 16:16).

Third, there are burdens of duties. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"* (1 Corinthians 15:58). *"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work"* (John 9:4). Nobody can perform the Christian duties of others by proxy. An active and faithful spouse cannot do the work of the other spouse. A preacher is not hired to do the work of the members. Elders and deacons are not charged to perform the charges of all the members. Bible class teachers cannot do the studying for their students.

Fourth, there is the burden of judgment. Nobody can stand at the judgment bar of God for another. *"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God"* (Romans 14:12). *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may*

THE BURDENS OF
(Continued from page 3)

receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). There will be many surprised people on the last great day for different reasons. And one group will be those who thought that the church as a whole did a great work, only to find that they are lost for not working too! How foolish it is for God's children to try to get lost in a crowd and hide behind the work of others; therefore, he neglected his own burdens (Psalm 33:13; Hebrews 4:13).

"Bear Ye One Another's Burdens"

There are some burdens which are to be shared with others. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:4). A careful study of the context of Galatians 6:1-2 will reveal that the key to verse two is found in verse one. A primary part of mutual burden-bearing is the seeking and helping of those who have gone astray. The word "restore" means "to set in joint again" as a dislocated bone is set in place by a doctor. Hence, one is restored to his proper place by the sincere reproofs and fervent exhortations of others. This restoring is to be done in the proper spirit, "the spirit of meekness." Many needed reproofs lose their effectiveness when given in the wrong spirit. Reproof that proceed from sincere affection and concern will do the greatest amount of good. But Galatians 6:2 also has a broader meaning.

There are other types of burdens that can be shared. First, there is the burden of sorrow. "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15). "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). Although one cannot take certain burdens himself nor stand in another's place, there are a number of things which a person can do to help others to bear their burdens. People need visits, meals prepared, and errands run. They will need help with chores and household duties. Sometimes the help may seem small to the helper, but it is a tremendous aid to the one in distress.

Second, there is the burden of material necessities. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). "If a brother or sister be naked,

and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:15-16). Whatever opportunities and abilities that one may have, he needs to relieve the physical burdens of others. In cases of orphans, a church may take money out of the treasury or do so as individuals, but in either case, it must be done! There are many missionary works that need food, medical supplies and other necessities which faithful brethren can supply.

Third, there is the burden of physical infirmities. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James 5:14-15). As in the cases of burdens of sorrow and physical necessities, Christians can help others. The sick and shut-in need personal visits, cards and especially prayers. What efforts are being made as individuals to share in these burdens? Jesus explained in His parable of the "good Samaritan" (Luke 10) the great need for compassion. Every person must ask and answer for himself: "Have I done my part in comforting the sick and even the dying?"

"Cast Thy Burden Upon The Lord"

There are some burdens that are beyond the reach of human effort. These burdens are to be cast upon God. He has promised to sustain His children (Hebrews 13:5-6). God is, after all, "our shelter in the time of storm."

God will take away some burdens. Perhaps a person has been burdened at some point and has prayed unto the Father as did Jesus, "Remove this cup from me." And perhaps it has been removed. However, sometimes God does not remove the burden, but He simply gives one the strength to endure and bear his load. The apostle Paul prayed for his thorn in the flesh to be removed three times (2 Corinthians 12:7-10), but instead God's grace was sufficient for him. We, too, may have burdens in which it is for our good to bear them and God will provide the strength.

But when it comes to those burdens that seem unbearable and beyond human help, one can have comfort and peace of mind

Faith Fundamentals

Guy F. Hester

"BORN OF THE SPIRIT"



Few Bible subjects have sparked as much controversy as has the Holy Spirit. It is very difficult for many to see how that one can be "born of the Spirit" and not be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus talked about the birth of the Spirit

in his conversation with Nicodemus.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:" The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:1-8).

It cannot be denied that in the process of becoming a child of God, one is "born of the Spirit."

At first, Nicodemus did not understand. He thought that Jesus was talking about a natural birth. He asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" It is then that Jesus explains, "That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Thus it is the Spirit (the invisible man) that experiences

the birth of the Spirit. Jesus used the wind to illustrate: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Just as one cannot see the coming and going of the wind, neither can one see the spirit of man when it is born of the Spirit into the kingdom of God.

Let us now look at another passage. Paul said, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). Who are sons of God? "As many as are led by the Spirit of God." But how are we led of the Spirit? Are we led by a direct operation of the Spirit separate and apart from the word of God? Or, are we led by the word of God? It is by the Spirit that we are led! It is by the Spirit that we are born again! How does the Spirit lead us to become sons of God or in being born into his family or kingdom? Peter said, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23).

In every birth there must be a begetting. Just how is one begotten so as to be born again? The apostle Paul gives us the answer: "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Corinthians 4:15). Just as in the nature of a fleshly birth there is first a begetting and then a bringing forth; in the Spiritual birth, one is begotten by the gospel, the word of God, and is brought forth from the waters of baptism—thus, "born of water and of the Spirit."

Someone may ask, "Do you mean then that the word is the Spirit?" No, the Word is the medium or instrument through which the Spirit operates or works in the lives of men today. The Holy Spirit came and guided the apostles "into all truth" (John 16:13). He taught them "all things" and brought "all things" to their remembrance that he had said unto them (John 14:26). Thus when one is led by the Word as it was given to the apostles and written down in the New Testament, he is "led of the Spirit" and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14).

To further show that the Word is the instrument through which the Spirit works, Paul said, "And take the...sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). Then Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit...Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of

"Closet Liberals"

Gary Colley

It seems that we live in a day when many are "coming out of the closet," but it is sadly in their immorality and error, and not from the "closet" of prayer spoken of by the Lord (Matthew 6:6). Some hide in the "closet" and just wait their time when they think they have a following or no faithful opposition to make their move to lead the church into error. If there is one thing more dangerous than a known liberal, it is a "closet liberal."

Liberalism is an attitude of mind that allows some to go beyond the authority of the Bible with little if any restraint of conscience or conviction of Truth.

This writer has always thought that if we could enjoy singing a good song more than once we can also enjoy a funny story more than once. One such story, enjoyed again recently with friends, concerns the puny little whimpish fellow who was married to a domineering wife. When asked if he was hen-pecked, he softly answered, "No, I just have hen-house ways!"

This story reminds me of some of our brethren who do not desire to have the designation of "the dreaded word Liberal" as was said by our former President against the opposition in the last election, but if they are not indeed liberals they sure have "hen-house ways!" Like the wolves that are about to attack the sheep, all the while looking away from them as he circles closer and closer, so our liberal brethren seem to think no one can spot them and "mark them" until they have already destroyed many of the fold. (Please read Acts 20:28-32; Romans 16:17). They become awfully upset when someone "blows their cover" and their error is pointed out! Just as when you catch a man in a lie, he then becomes your enemy, it seems to follow that catching one of these "wolves" in his mischief as the same result (Matthew 7:15).

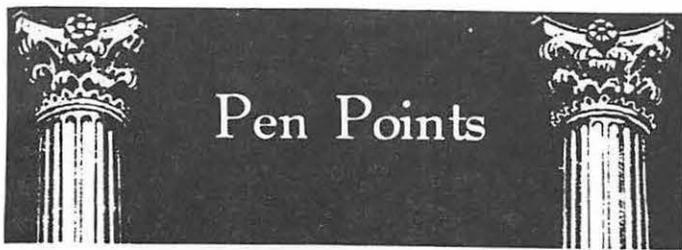
Brother B. C. Goodpastuer made a statement a few years ago that went something like: "When one walks like a duck, talks like a duck, associates only with ducks, and takes on every appearance of a duck, pardon me if I mistake him for a duck!" If one does not want to be known as a liberal thinking person, let him put away his loose thinking and liberal ways toward God and sacred things (2 John 9-11).

It is not my habit to try to use "labels" loosely nor do I believe others desire generally

to do so, but sometimes its use seems necessary to warn and protect unsuspecting souls. We often wonder if a man has not given up conviction and turned in the wrong direction when after years of using the solemn form of address (thee, thou, thine) in prayer unto God, he uses you and your, or mixes the solemn and common forms in reference to God (Hebrews 12:28). Or, if when he says he "sees no harm" in the "new translations," that are filled with and are propagating denominational errors, that such a one should not be suspect, that he does not strongly believe any longer in the verbal inspiration and authority of the sacred scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Some of these take the next step to think that the Holy Spirit is guiding and speaking to them directly, just as He did the prophets of the Old Testament and apostles and prophets of the New Testament. Some "decide" that Jesus is not any longer the "only begotten" Son of God, but God's "only," "unique," or "beloved" Son, as they follow the modernist liberal line. Some no longer see the mission of the church as the New Testament teaches, of preaching the Gospel to the lost, edifying the saved, and helping the needy, but suggest a "social gospel," entertainment filled mission, foreign to the Bible. Some "would not be opposed" and suggest that it is perfectly in harmony with truth to have music with singing; or humming, whistling, and making noise with the mouth, which they "think" is the same as singing (Ephesians 5:19). Some do not mind singing unscriptural words or thoughts in praise, as if to tell a lie was not the same as singing one. Some think themselves "apostles," "prophets," "witnesses," and/or "ambassadors," of the Lord, though they have not the qualifications according to Truth.

It appears that none of these want to be called "liberal" in thinking, but every Bible student must know that they surely have "hen-house ways" and "appear as ducks." It is high time that we accept Paul's exhortation to *"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light...be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is"* (Ephesians 5:14, 17).

THE MESSENGER
East Main church of Christ
Murfreesboro, TN



Pen Points

THE PATTERN OF SOUND WORDS

Ben F. Vick, Jr.

The apostle Paul commanded Timothy, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 1:13). The American Standard, of 1901, says, "Hold the pattern of sound words..." This verse demands that we know the meaning of words and that we use healthy words in our speech and writing.

The Bible speaks of different kinds of words. The preacher sought out "acceptable words" (Ecclesiastes 12:10). We are not to be deceived by "vain words" (Ephesians 5:6). Those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine, Paul said, Use "good words" and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17-18). Paul commanded Timothy not to strive about "words to no profit" (2 Timothy 2:14).

Many people in the world and some in the church use words which do not measure up to the pattern of sound, or healthy, words. Words are the wheels upon which the vehicle of thought travels. If our words connote a wrong meaning other than what the scriptures teach, then our words do not conform to the pattern set forth in the New Testament. It then behooves us to change our vocabulary to harmonize with the New Testament.

Some words do not measure up to the pattern found in Holy Writ because neither the word nor the thought conveyed is found there. Other words are scriptural words but are not used by some today as the writers of the Bible used them. In order to know the meaning of a word, we must understand what the author meant when he used the word. The context will bear out the meaning.

Some Words Or Expressions Not Found In Scriptures Which Connote Error

1. "Get religion." Religion is not something one gets—like a sickness or a disease. It is something one practices. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows

in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

2. "Join the church." According to the Bible, one does not join the church. In Acts 2, when the church was established, we read that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (2:47). When one complies with the commands of the gospel, the Lord adds him to the church. When an individual has repented of his sins, confessed his faith in Christ and been baptized for the remission of his/her sins, the Lord adds that one to the church. No one votes as to whether an individual is worthy to be a member of the Lord's church. The Lord decides if that person has complied and then does the adding.

3. "Pray the sinner's prayer." Nowhere in the scriptures does one ever read of an inspired man demanding that one "pray the sinner's prayer." In John 9:31, we are told, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." Though these words were spoken by the blind man, the Jews recognized that what he said was true. They did not refute him. Even in the Old Testament these words are found: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

4. "Share Christ" or "share my faith." One cannot divide Christ into pieces as one would divide a pie and share with others. Paul did not share Christ but preached him. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2). Neither can one "share his faith." Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17). Paul said, "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Corinthians 4:5).

Some Words Found In Scriptures, Yet Misapplied

1. "Witnesses." Some speak of witnessing for Jesus. Yet the word witness is used in reference to an eyewitness. The apostles were eyewitnesses of the Lord (Acts 1:8; Hebrews 2:3-4). We are not witnesses of the Lord, but we are to believe the testimony presented by the witnesses of the Lord.

2. "Sanctuary." Many in the religious world want to apply the word sanctuary to

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THE PATTERN OF
(Continued from page 7)

the auditorium where worship takes place as if the the auditorium *per se* were a holy place. The word *sanctuary* means a place set apart. Thayer says the word in the original means "of things which on account of some connection with God possess a certain distinction and claim to reverence, as places sacred to God which are not to be profaned." The word is used in reference to the ground where Moses stood before the burning bush, the tabernacle, the holy of holies, and the temple. In the New Testament, the word is used in reference to either the above or heaven itself (Hebrews 8:1; 9:1-2). But nowhere does the New Testament refer to the place where the saints meet as being holy ground, or the "sanctuary."

This does not mean our worship, wherever it may be, is not to be reverent, for "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psalm 89:7). Neither does that mean the place in which we worship should be misused or abused.

If the auditorium is the sanctuary, or a holy place, *per se*, then any use of it other than for God's intended purpose would be wrong, which means that we had better not be discussing any matter of temporal affairs there. Thus, no mention of the weather, health, gardens, ball games, cars, houses, etc., can be made in "the sanctuary." We had better discuss such temporal matters either before or after entering "the holy place." But, then, why should we stop with just the auditorium? Was not all the church property bought with the Lord's money? Brethren, what proves too much proves nothing.

The tabernacle and temple were types of the church. They were holy. Today, the priesthood is holy, not the building in which it meets (1 Peter 2:5, 9).

3. "Pastors." This word in the New Testament is found but one time in the King James Version (Ephesians 4:11). It is never used in reference to the church in the singular, i.e., *pastor*, but in the plural, *pastors*. It means shepherds. It refers to the overseers, or elders, of the local congregation. Never is it used of the local preacher.

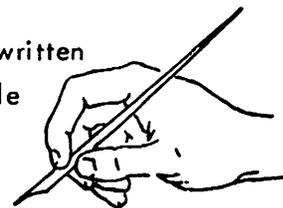
The failure to use scriptural terms in their proper setting demonstrates either a failure to understand them or a lack of interest to hold fast the form of sound words as Paul commanded Timothy. Unscriptural words are the children of unscriptural ideas. It may be that many unsound words are being

used today because too many (including preachers) are getting their ideas from denominational dogma rather than from New Testament teaching! Brethren, let us get back to a study of God's word in the main and hold the pattern of sound words!

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Nothing could be written
plainer than what Bible
writers write on the
subject of baptism.



"BORN OF THE"
(Continued from page 5)

God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:22-23).

If the Holy Spirit operated miraculously upon the hearts (spirits) of sinners to bring about the new birth then all men would be saved without any condition on his part or else the Holy Spirit would be a respecter of persons because some are born again and others are not. It was Peter who declared, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

When one believes the Word to the saving of his soul by repenting of his sins, confessing Christ to be the Son of God and is baptized for the remission of his sins, he has been "born again...of water and of the Spirit." Paul wrote to the Galatian brethren: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27). Paul said they were children of God after they had been baptized into Christ. If one becomes a child of God through the new birth and these Galatians became children of God when they were baptized, then it follows that the new birth takes place when one is baptized. Thus it is in baptism that we have both elements of the new birth: "water and the Spirit."

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Restoration Reachbacks

A DISTINCTIVE PLEA

F. G. Allen

Unless we have a distinctive plea, we have no right to exist. The day we become like the denominations around us, that day ends our right to exist as a distinct religious people. If we have a distinctive plea, in that consists our strength. I believe that our distinctive principles are made less prominent in our pulpits now than formerly. I do not mean that our preachers should be always on what is called "first principles." Very far from it. But I do mean that our members should be deeply indoctrinated in the things that distinguish us from other religious peoples. The better this is understood the more it will be appreciated and the more firm and consistent will be the Christian life.

When people are led to believe that sectarianism is about as good as New Testament Christianity, their influence for the cause for which we plead is positively hurtful. Whenever we begin to curry favor with the sects and fawn upon them for recognition, we are certain to say, but little about a plea that lays the axe at the root of the whole denominational tree. Whenever we begin to curry favor with the world, we are certain to fall in with the world's notions and adjust ourselves to the world's ways. Hence, much of that in which churches now indulge in the way of worldly amusements, carnal methods of raising money, the spirit of mere entertainment in the worship, etc., is due to the fact that they copy the sects rather than the New Testament churches, and are filled with the spirit of the world instead of the spirit of Christ.

The religion of Christ is a religion of spirituality. When you take the spirituality out of a church, you take the life out. You may have members and wealth and culture left, but the power of divine truth and love is gone.

GOSPEL DIGEST
February, 1956

REASONS FOR

(Continued from page 2)

In industry a man feels secure by the knowledge of plenty of work to do. Children of God are laborers not loafers. Let no Christian be idle in the fields of labor for the idleness in God's kingdom always results in activity in the Devil's. Labor for souls. Each soul is a potential triumph. Each conversion is a victory.

The challenge is to work while it is day for the night comes when no man can work (John 9:4).

OUR COMPANIONS

The diligent endeavors of those about us is a stimulant to increased courage. In Acts 28:15, we find Paul taking heart due to activities of his brethren. The record states when Paul saw his companions in the faith, "he thanked God and took courage." Paul had heard of the work of these Christians in Rome and his joy is multiplied to be in their presence.

To hear of the success of others is not a matter of jealousy, but a fuel to ignite

us to break free of the ropes of lethargy and begin to stir for God.

OUR REWARD

Endurance through harsh trial produces patience (James 1:2-3). Persecutions carry divine designs and are meant to spur us on not inhibit spiritual progress (Hebrews 12:5-6). Suffering in the name of Christ is reason to glorify God (1 Peter 4:16).

At the end of life's journey the greatest reward is given. God has promised the "crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4:8). Let the saved rejoice in hope of eternal reward.

Discouragements are many. Unstable brethren, heartless indifference to the gospel, worldliness in the church, personal conflicts and tragedies are matters to be faced and dealt with, not brooded over in despair. Christ gives us more encouragement than Satan does discouragement. The scriptures teach that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

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DOES EVERYONE HAVE A RIGHT TO HIS OWN BELIEF?

Roy J. Hearn

Introduction:

1. Satan has impressed many that anyone is his own standard.
2. One may have a legal or personal right, but God's law is not determined by civil law or one's conscience.
3. Let the Bible determine.

I. Reasons One Does Not Have A Scriptural Right To His Own Belief

- A. Christ is absolute in authority (Matthew 28:18).
 1. God said to hear Him (Mark 9:7; Acts 3:22-23).
 2. Must do God's Will only (Matthew 7:21-27; Hebrews 5:9).
- B. God forbids variation.
 1. Addition (1 Corinthians 4:6 [R.V.]; 2 John 9).
 2. Subtraction (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18-19).
- C. Only one source of authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 1. The New Testament (Hebrews 10:9-10; Galatians 3:15).
 2. No change allowed (Galatians 1:6-9).

II. Bible Examples Showing One Does Not Have Such Right.

- A. Cain (Genesis 4:3-5). Opinion versus faith.
 1. God prescribed the worship (Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17).
 2. Cain substituted his own belief. It was rejected.
- B. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2). God did not say not to.
- C. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 26:5; 23:1).
 1. Followed own conscience.
 2. Contrary to Christ.

III. Some Things In Which We Have No Personal Right.

- A. To choose the name we shall wear in religion.

1. Given by Jehovah (Isaiah 56:5; 62:2; Acts 11:26).
 2. Only "Christian" divinely given (1 Peter 4:16).
- B. To determine to what church to belong.
 1. Physical infant cannot choose his family.
 2. Nor can one born into God's family (1 Timothy 3:15; Acts 2:47).
 3. No right to join another (Revelation 18:4).
- C. To determine our personal course in Christian service.
 1. Belong to Christ (1 Corinthians 6:20).
 2. Holy lives (James 1:27; 1 Timothy 5:22).
 3. Worship (Hebrews 10:25-29).
 - a. In spirit and truth (John 4:24; 17:17).
 - b. Not all worship acceptable (Matthew 15:9; Acts 17:23).
- D. To determine how we shall be saved (Proverbs 14:12; 28:26).
 1. God's plan is the same for all (Acts 10:34-35).
 2. All must obey the same (Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:30; 8:37; 2:38).

Conclusion:

1. Man is a free moral agent.
2. Has two choices: Accept or reject.

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[Editors' note: This guest outline was written by brother Roy J. Hearn, faithful preacher and former director of the Memphis School of Preaching. This outline is just one of more than an hundred which has been published by *First Century Christian*. Anyone interested in purchasing this outstanding book of sermon outlines may write: *First Century Christian*, P. O. Box 341704, Memphis, TN 38184.]

"I have my own ideas about
religion. I'll do as I
please."



DISCIPLINE

(Continued from front page)

you on the day of judgment when he realizes you did not even try to stop him from following the pathway to destruction.

A fourth possible cause for lack of discipline is "no concern." If we indeed have a concern for our fellowman and believe what we teach concerning everlasting punishment, certainly we will try to stop our brother from going to a devil's hell. This means one of two things must be true for those who know what God's will is. Either they have no concern for their brother or else they do not really believe in the torments of hell. Which are we willing to admit? To admit either is to admit that one has fallen short of being a faithful Christian.

Preachers sometimes fail to stand solidly upon the truth and insist upon discipline being practiced because of a fear of losing their job. Concerning this, let us simply state that if one preaches for a congregation of people who will fire him because he teaches the truth and desires to save them from hell, he does not have much of a job anyway. The time has long since come when people often do not wish to hear sound doctrine (2 Timothy 4:3-4). But, it is the preacher's job to "preach the word" anyway (2 Timothy 4:2).

Finally, one last possible reason for a lack of discipline is a lack of teaching on the subject. Hosea stated many years ago, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). People are still being destroyed by this terrible evil. Christians fail to carry out the command to study (2 Timothy 2:15). Preachers fail to carry out their responsibility to declare all the counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

Yes, discipline must be practiced. The Bible teaches us to do so. Also, the Bible teaches us that a failure on our part to try to correct those who are in error places us in a position of being guilty (Ezekiel 3:17-21; Acts 18:6; 20:26-27).

Let us save our own soul as well as the souls of others by practicing discipline in the church as God has prescribed.

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<p>THE CHRISTIAN SAYS</p>  <p>YES!</p>	<p>THE SINNER SAYS</p>  <p>NO!</p>
<p>TO THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD</p>	

THE BURDENS OF

(Continued from page 3)

by casting those burdens upon the Lord. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:5-7).

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EXAMPLES OF CONVERSION					
PREACHING	BELIEVED	REPENTED	CONFESSED	BAPTIZED	SAVED
PENTECOST ACTS 2:14-41		REPENT VERSES 37-38		BAPTIZED 38-41	REMISSION OF SINS 38-41 SAVED
SAMARIA ACTS 8:5-18	BELIEVED 10			BAPTIZED 10-12	
EUNUCH ACTS 8:26-38	BELIEVED 30-37		CONFESSED 37	BAPTIZED 38	RELOANED 38
SAUL ACTS 9:1-18				BAPTIZED 18	SIN WASHED AWAY 9:10-18
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BIBLE-CENTERED PREACHING

Franklin Camp

Another root of the restoration was Bible-founded and Bible-centered preaching. The men that set about to call man back to the Bible knew the Bible and preached the Bible. The Bible was their textbook. This root is fast drying up. There is too much preaching today that has everything in it except the Bible. I may not know whether a man is quoting from Norman Vincent Peale, or not, but I know enough about the Bible to know when a man is quoting from it. It is a tragedy for a man to get up in the pulpit with a Bible and never use it. Some would do the church a service if they left their Bible at home and got into the pulpit with a stack of magazines and Dale Carnegie's books so the man in the pew would know what was taking place. It is high time we put the preacher back in the study with his Bible and let him know we expect him to "get with it and preach it." Some sermons I have heard recently would not have been tolerated in the country church where I grew up. He might have preached one, but that would have been the limit. They wanted the Bible and a man either preached that or he did not preach at all.



Readers' Response

[Editors' note: Lately we have been receiving many address changes from the recipients of the GOSPEL GLEANER. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and consideration in making us aware of your change of address. It saves the church about 30¢ per change.]

Dear brother Whittimore:

Please add my name to the mailing list for GOSPEL GLEANER. I recently saw your paper and appreciate it. Keep up the good work!

In Christian love,

Kenneth Jarrett
Trenton, TN

Dear brethren:

Please send the GOSPEL GLEANER to my sister...She lives alone, is disabled and doesn't drive, so I believe she will really enjoy receiving this good magazine.

Thanks very much,

Maxine Short
Indianapolis, IN

GOSPEL GLEANER
10025 Woodville Road
Kevil, Kentucky 42053

Forwarding & Address Correction Requested

Dear Sirs:

Thank you for your fine magazine the GOSPEL GLEANER. One of the elders gave me an old copy and I found it to be of great help. From that one copy I have preached two sermons, both of which were very sound and full of scriptures.

Please put me on your mailing list.

Thank you very much,

Leonard Santee
Bryant, AL

Dear bros. Dillon & Whittimore:

While looking through several past periodicals, I came across a couple of yours. I enjoyed reading them. Please add me to your mailing list for GOSPEL GLEANER.

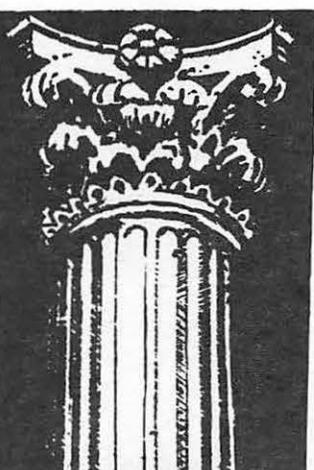
Yours in His service,

James H. Gravelle
Rush Springs, OK

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Gospel Gleaner

Volume 5

Number 4

Parents, Teachers and Children

David Stevenson

"...Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Children are indeed a priceless and precious possession. The Bible shows us that the teaching of a child is important. This is to be the responsibility that falls upon the parents. Many Bible examples show us the strength of God's word in the child's life if the parents bring up the child to follow God. In Genesis 18:19, we learn that Abraham would cause his children to follow after him in the ways of the Lord. We can see also that in 1 Samuel that Samuel's godly mother, Hannah, contributed greatly and mightily to Samuel's devotion to God. Also we can see in Joshua 24:15 that Joshua proclaimed the loyalty of his family in God's service. One can also see the great influence of godly parents in Luke 1:6 and that John was to be the forerunner of Jesus. Lastly, we notice the life of the young man Timothy, and that his grandmother, Lois, and mother, Eunice, played a great role in this man's life. Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:5, *"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."* Here it shows us that the teaching of God has been a great help to aid Timothy in the faith of God. Paul also exhorts Timothy to follow in the way he had been taught. *"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation*

through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:14,15).

The parents who bring their children to Bible study are to be commended for doing so. Even to those who have "little ones" (babies) are doing a great service to their children. I am always glad when I see these "little ones" walk in the door with a Bible in their hand and look around and utter the words "class, class" and point to their classroom. Indeed, these "little ones" are at an age that they are learning and picking up many things very quickly. To see them learning of the church, Bible study, God, Jesus and even the little things (simply saying the name Jesus and God, learning Bible related songs, etc.) is indeed a great beginning in their walk toward God. This should give any parent a feeling of joy, as well as other Christians, as they begin their learning of God.

Parents and teachers alike should realize that teaching children about God is an important thing because God said it was (Ephesians 6:4). Therefore, teaching should not only be in Bible "class" but also at home as well. It is important to God and should be important to parents. To those who bring their children to Bible "class", we encourage you to keep up this good work in your child's walk toward God. And now a word to every member of the Lord's church, let's all be good examples to children and be in Bible "class" ourselves.

Route 1, Box 165
Celina, TN 38551

Editorial

The Rose Garden Gospel

Bill Dillon



Much modern religious terminology leaves the distinct impression that the true believer in God shall have a trouble free life. The televangelists are hawking their gospel wares with promises of a problem free life for Christians.

They say, "If you just trust in Jesus all your problems will disappear." Such terminology appeals to many but betrays a misunderstanding of the true meaning of the Christian life. Where does the Bible say the believer's life is problem free? Does God promise the Christian an exemption from tribulations? Are God's people guaranteed a walk upon paths of flowery ease? Has God promised believers a rose garden? What do the lives and experiences of Bible characters tell us?

CONSIDER JESUS

Jesus once said in reference to His heavenly Father, "I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). God also said, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). Jesus lived with the smile of heaven upon him. Yet, He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). The life of the Lord just doesn't fit the "rose garden gospel."

CONSIDER MARY

Another example is Mary, the mother of Jesus, who was told "thou hast found favor with God" (Luke 1:30). It was also said of her, "a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also" (Luke 2:35). Mary, though a righteous soul, would endure the painful horror of seeing her son die. The "rose garden" theology doesn't fit her life either.

CONSIDER THE APOSTLE PAUL

Saul of Tarsus is an excellent example of a man who obeyed the gospel but wasn't promised a walk through the rose garden but "how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). Saul wasn't told how easy the going would be but how great the suffering would be. The rose garden gospel doesn't fit the great apostle Paul.

CONSIDER THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

Barnabas and Paul exhorted the early disciples by saying that they "must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Why didn't the apostles tell the brethren to "just trust in Jesus and all your problems will disappear?" Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica that they "should suffer tribulation" (1 Thessalonians 3:4). These

(Continued on page 9)

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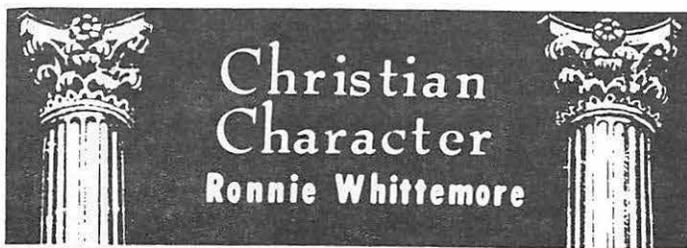
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A FORGOTTEN SIN

There is a serious and deadly disease among us that is quite common to every race and gender, yet it is seldom mentioned.



Medical doctors and mental physicians are able to treat the symptoms of this dreaded illness to some extent, yet they usually do not prescribe the cure that is readily available to all who wish to rid themselves of

this affliction. Ordinary symptoms of this disease are: headaches and heartaches, nervous stomachs and nervous minds, wearisome days and sleepless nights, depression and frustration, pessimism and neglect of duty. This horrible disease is WORRY or ANXIETY and the cure is TRUST TRUST IN GOD.

The Sin of Worry

The dictionary defines "worry" as: "feeling anxious, distressed or troubled" or "nagging concern." "Anxiety" is defined as: "a state of uneasiness and distress about future uncertainties; apprehension; worry." Worry or anxiety should be distinguished from "concern," that is, true concern which carries the meaning of: "being interested in, important to, or affected by." Concern could reach a stage of worry and anxiety, but usually "concern" is the stage before worry; however, one must be careful not to allow his concern for something or someone to become anxiety or worry. Most people worry about things that never happen.

Jesus taught about the sin of worry or anxiety in His "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 6:25-34). He said, "*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment.*" Then Jesus used a couple of illustrations and appealed to common sense to drive His point home. He referred to the "*fowls of the air*" and said, "*...they sow not, neither*

do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" He then pointed out the lilies of the field and stated, "*...how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you?*" (Matthew 6:26, 28-30). The Master Teacher also appealed to their logic, asking, "*Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*" To ask is to answer. We cannot add one inch to our height by thinking about it or worrying about it. But notice how Jesus described these people who worry and fret—"**O YE OF LITTLE FAITH**" (Matthew 6:30).

The Deception of Worry

Admittedly, many men and women will acknowledge the disapproval of God and the lost state of man when the "sins of the flesh" are committed (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11), but they are slow to recognize that worry is also a sin. And the great danger is that this sin is committed continually by people who would not yield to the temptations of the "sins of the flesh," yet they have given their minds over to an internal sin that destroys faith and trust in God. God does not place sin in categories of degree as if one sin were worse than another. Neither should we. Sin is sin. All sin, any sin will separate man from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Therefore, WORRY will also cost a person his soul if he persists in this sin without repentance.

How sad it is that people deceive themselves into thinking that they are in a saved state when they are lost because of worry. How awful it is for people to believe that they have great faith and trust in God when actually they deny His ability and power to protect, provide and strengthen His own people.

The Cure of Worry

Jesus describes people who worry as people of "little faith." That may seem strange to those who profess to be Christians; however, a simple study of what faith is should make Jesus' statement ring true to dull ears. Faith is: "*...the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is based upon the testimony and evidence of God's Word (Romans 10:17).

A FORGOTTEN SIN
(Continued from page 3)

When God promises never to fail or forsake His children, He is true to His Word (Hebrews 13:5-6). When God promises to provide a way of ascape for every temptation, He means it (1 Corinthians 10:13). When God promises



an eternal resting place for our weary souls, He will provide (John 14:1-3). When God promises to care for His children by providing the necessities of life, He will do so (Matthew 6:33).

It should be noted that God's promises are not exclusive of man's part. Man may pray to God for his daily bread, but he cannot expect God to drop it

on his plate without man's doing his part. Man will work. God will provide the abilities and opportunities. Therefore, instead of worrying, man should WORK! If one has one all that he can and certainly God has done what He can, then the mind should be free from worry.

One of the great attributes of the Hebrew youths was their trust in God. Before being cast into the fiery furnace, their declaration was NOT that God would deliver them, but that He could, IF He so desired and they were willing to place their lives in His hands! (Daniel 3:17-18). That is TRUE FAITH!

We may be concerned about the condition of a neighbor's soul or a friend's health or even the spiritual decay of the nation, but the answers are not found in worry and anxiety, but rather in teaching and prayer. Let us be long on faith and short on worry.

10015 Woodville Road
Kevil, KY 42053

SALVATION FROM SIN

WHAT IS SIN? I JOHN 3:4 JAS. 4:17

ALL HAVE SINNED. ROM. 3:23 I JOHN 1:8

NOT ENOUGH TO BE

IN A WAY PROV. 16:25, JER. 10:23
MATT. 7:13-14

RELIGIOUS GAL. 1:13-14
ACTS 8:26-39

HONEST ACTS 23:1
ACTS 22:16

MORALLY GOOD ACTS 10:1-6 & 48

BELIEVER JAS. 2:19-26

ALMOST PERSUADED ACTS 26:27-29

"HEAR YE HIM"

MATT. 17:5

BELIEVE MARK 16:16
JOHN 8:24

REPENT ACTS 2:38
LUKE 13:3

CONFESS MATT. 10:32-33
ACTS 8:37

BAPTIZED MARK 16:16
ACTS 2:38

WHO? MATT. 29:19 ACTS 8:12 **HOW?** ROM. 6:3-4

THUS ADDED ACTS 2:41-47

REDEEMED ACTS 20:28
COL. 1:13-14

ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST EPH. 1:3

BLESSED ARE DEAD

Rev. 14:13

ETERNAL LIFE

I John 5:11

SALVATION

II Tim. 2:10

NO CONDEMNATION

Rom. 8:1

NEW CREATURE

II Cor. 5:17

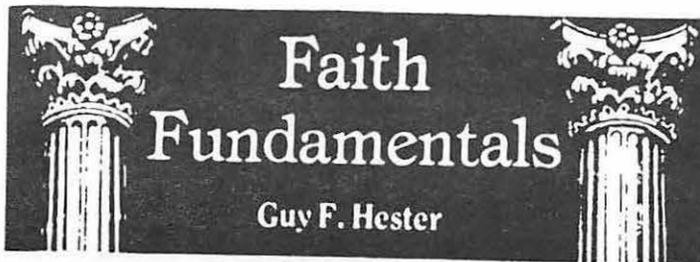
Baptised Into. Gal. 3:27

Confess Unto. Rom. 10:10

Repent Unto. Acts 11:18

Believe Unto. Rom. 10:10

HEB. 5:8-9 ROM. 2:8-9



THE SIN OF FAULTFINDING



Jesus said, *Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the*

beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then thou shalt see more clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5).

Perhaps there is no sin more common than the sin of faultfinding. Husbands find fault with their wives (the next time you find fault with your wife's judgement, stop and think about whom she married), wives find fault with their husbands, children with parents, parents with children, etc. Even in the church, it seems that there are those who are constantly looking for faults in others. In the church we have a lot of "spectator Christians." They expect the preacher, song leader, Bible school teacher, etc. to "perform for them" while they sit back and look for their mistakes, find fault and criticize.

Jesus said of the fault finders of his day, *"But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified in her children"* (Matthew 12:16-19).

Faultfinders are never reasonable, logical nor consistent. They found fault with John because he neither ate nor drank and they

found fault with Jesus because he did eat and drink.

What is Faultfinding?

(1) **Faultfinding is being hypercritical.** There is a difference between being critical and hypercritical. Not all criticism is bad. There is constructive criticism. Hypercriticism delights in criticizing for its own sake. It is condemning one because of difference in judgement [Example: food and drink of Romans 15]. It is the exaggeration of matters of judgement and expediency.

(2) **Faultfinding is putting personal prejudice in the place of principle.** Jesus instructed, *"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgement"* (John 7:24). We need to make certain that it is the error of the man, or his sin, that condemns him and not our own prejudices. It is putting personalities in the place of principles. It is so easy to drift from principles to personalities. It is so easy to justify those whom we like and condemn those whom we dislike.

(3) **Faultfinding is forming an opinion without all the facts.** We must not judge without full information. We also must have knowledge of the Word of God as it relates to those deeds.

(4) **Faultfinding is imputing motives.** It is not always possible for us to know the motive behind the deed. Paul asked, *"What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of the man..."* (1 Corinthians 2:11). Yet, human behavior can never be properly evaluated without taking into account the motives. No court assesses a penalty for a crime until the motive is established.

(5) **Faultfinding is a failure to try to understand the circumstances.** It is not being willing to excuse or exercise mercy. It is condemning the person instead of the deed, the sinner instead of the sin.

What Jesus Said About Faultfinding

(1) **Do not be a faultfinder.** *"Judge not, that ye be not judged."* This sounds like a very personal and practical reason, but what does it mean? It simply means that we will get back just what we give. As we do to others, they will do to us. Usually those who are always finding fault with others are the most sensitive to criticism themselves. They delight in pointing out the faults of others, but are very much upset when any mention is made of their own faults.

(Continued on page 7)

The Passover

James R. Lewis



The Passover is one of three annual feasts, instituted by God through Moses, which the Hebrew people observed. It is directly connected with the exodus of the Israelites. In fact, its primary purpose to the Jews was to commemorate the Lord's passover of the households of the Israelites, who had the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon the lintel and the two side posts. That night the Lord smote the oldest son of the Egyptian's houses. Hence, Pharaoh let Israel go free from bondage. Israel was delivered. The passover and its related ordinances would be kept forever (Exodus 12:14).

The name "Passover" is used in reference to four things in the Scriptures:

- (1) For the passover lamb (Exodus 12:21);
- (2) For the passover supper (Numbers 33:3);
- (3) For the passover festival lasting seven days beginning on the fifteenth day of Abib (later called Nisan). This is referred to as the "feast of unleavened bread" (Exodus 23:15).
- (4) And, for "Christ our passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Time It Was To Be Observed

The time of the Passover festival began officially on the evening of the fourteenth day (or fifteenth day's beginning) of the first Jewish month, Abib. However, preparation began on the tenth day of the same month when the lamb or kid was selected and put up until it would be killed on the fourteenth day (Exodus 12:3). If any one could not keep the Passover in the first month by reason of a long journey, or being unclean by contacting a dead body, then provision was made for them to keep the Passover beginning on the evening of the fourteenth day of the second month (Numbers 9:10-12).

Ceremonial Observance

Ceremony was strict and very closely adhered to in the Passover and days of

unleavened bread. The lamb to be selected must be either from the sheep or the goats, a male without blemish of the first year (Exodus 12:5). The lamb was to be killed on the evening of the fourteenth day. It is generally accepted that this took place around 3:00 p.m. One lamb would be offered for each family. If the family was less than ten in number, then two families could share a lamb. Twenty would be the maximum. This was done in the home when Israel was in Egypt, but later was done in the court of the tabernacle or temple (Leviticus 17:4; 2 Chronicles 35:1-11). When the lamb was slain, its blood would be drained into a vessel. The priest would sprinkle it at the bottom of the altar. The fat was cut from the animal and burned in the fire. The animal was roasted whole without a bone being broken.

The Passover was to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (Exodus 12:8, 11, 46). Not only was it to be roasted without a bone being broken but also it was to be eaten without breaking a bone (Numbers 9:12; Exodus 12:46). The first Passover was to be eaten while standing on their feet. Later they reclined around a table (John 13:23). They were to eat it with their loins girded, with shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands. None was to be left until morning. Any leftovers were to be burned in the fire.

The uncircumcised, along with the unclean, were forbidden to partake of it. Strangers were allowed to keep the Passover, but must keep it according to the same ordinances as the Jews (Numbers 9:14).

New Testament Significance

The New Testament Christian finds significance in the Passover in that it was a type of Christ. *"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened, For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"* (1 Corinthians 5:7). Only those protected with the blood of the lamb on the door post and those who remained inside their houses were safe that night in Egypt when the Lord passed over. Today only those under the protection of the blood

This text is not a prohibition of all judgment. This fact is easily seen in the context. Look at verse 6: *"Give not that which is holy unto dogs..."* Thus we must exercise judgment and discrimination. Notice verse 15: *"Beware of false prophets..."* Can one do this without exercising some kind of judgment? Also note verse 20: *"...by their fruits ye shall know them."* This calls for judgment on our part.

The judgment that is condemned is a self righteous, faultfinding judgment. It is possessing a feeling of superiority. Peter wrote, *"...Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble"* (1 Peter 5:5). It is the tendency to regard others with contempt.

(2) Do not try to help others correct their faults or even look at the faults of others when we have faults equal to or even greater than those of our fellow man. *"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?...Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye"* (Matthew 7:3,5). This is not a prohibition of helping a brother correct his faults, but rather a prohibition of hypercritical faultfinding. Paul said, *"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"* (Galatians 6:1). Paul says that it is the "spiritual" who may help a brother in correcting his faults. That is one who considers himself, looks at his own life, and remembers that he is subject to the same temptations. The one who is "spiritual" is the one who has removed the beam from his own eye and can now *"see clearly to cast out the mote"* out of his brother's eye (Matthew 7:5). Let us help our brother get rid of his faults, but let us first get rid of our own.

We can profit by the faultfinding of others regardless of what their intention might have been in their criticism of us. Although the critics's motive may not be good, and his choice of time and place to criticize may be most inappropriate, that does not mean that we cannot learn from his remarks. There is the possibility that there is some truth in the criticism that he has given. We can train ourselves to learn from unpleasant truth from our critics.

The Pharisees found fault with Jesus because He ate and drank with sinners (Matthew 9:10-13). Simon Peter found fault with Him because He allowed a sinful woman to touch Him (Luke 7:36-39). If Jesus, the sinless Son of God, could not escape the faultfinders and critics of His day, should we expect to escape them today? The first rule in learning how to deal with those who find fault is to accept that a certain amount of it is inevitable. In fact, the Bible warns us against trying to please everybody (Luke 6:26). Recognize that it is inevitable that people will find fault with you if you follow Christ; for, all of those who *"live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."*

1101 Airport Circle
Jasper, AL 35501

**Have you noticed that the man
who says that he is kept away
from Church Services because of
hypocrites seemingly is not influ-
enced by them anywhere else?**

THE PASSOVER
(Continued from page 6)

of Christ and secure in His house, the church (1 Timothy 3:15), are safe against the day of God's wrath. The following are some of the ways in which Christ could serve as the antitype of the Passover lamb:

1. He was without blemish (1 Peter 1:10). *"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*
2. He was killed in the evening (Matthew 27:45-50).
3. His blood provides salvation and deliverance (1 Peter 1:18,19).
4. Not a bone of Christ's body was broken (John 19:36). *"For these things were done, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."*
5. The blood of Christ is called the "blood of sprinkling" (1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 12:24).

As Christians, we are greatly blessed to be under the protective blood of the Lamb of God. Although we do not keep the Old Testament Passover, we recognize its significance as that which points toward our deliverance from the bondage of sin realized in the shed blood of our Passover, Jesus Christ.

Rt. 2, Box 147
Summerville, GA 30747



Restoration Reachbacks

CHRISTIAN UNITY

H. Leo Boles

The unity taught in the New Testament is the unity of Christians. They are united to Christ and to each other. The New Testament knows nothing about "church unity" in the modern sense of that term; neither does the New Testament teach anything about denominational unity. Many religious leaders are stressing "unity of the denominations." If every denomination in the world could be united into one denomination, this would not be the unity which is taught in the New Testament. Even if all the churches of Christ should be federated by some superorganization, we still would not have the unity taught in the New Testament. This unity in the New Testament is presented in many ways.

There are many Scriptures which bear directly on the subject of unity; there are many more that indirectly teach the idea of unity. Frequently, the New Testament declares that Christians are the body of Christ. *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread."* (1 Corinthians 10:16,17.) Again, Paul declares to the church at Corinth: *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit...That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof."* (1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, 25-27.) Again, Paul declares of Christ that *"he is the head of the body, the church."* (Colossians 1:18.) And again: *"So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another."*

(Romans 12:5.) Once more: *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."* (Ephesians 4:4-6.) These Scriptures and others that could be quoted show clearly that all Christians constitute the one body of Christ, in which there should be no division; these emphasize the unity of Christians.

Christians, the Kingdom of God on Earth

The church is the kingdom of God on earth. Since Christians constitute the church, they compose the kingdom of God on earth. Jesus said to his disciples: *"Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God"* (Luke 6:20.) The Holy Spirit said through Paul to Christians at Colosse: *"Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love"* (Colossians 1:13.) John, in writing of Christians, said: *"Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father"* (Revelation 1:5,6.) Christ has been crowned "King of kings, and Lord of lords"; he is the King of his kingdom. Every Christian has sanctified or set apart Christ in his heart as Lord. *"But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord"* (1 Peter 3:15.) Christians are subject to the law of Christ; they acknowledge the regal authority of Christ. The kingdom of Christ is an organic unity. Christ is not divided, neither does he reign over a divided kingdom. The one Lord demands unity among his subjects. All the Scriptures that apply to the unity of the body of Christ may be applicable to the unity of the kingdom of God. The tendencies toward denominational unity today are strong evidences of the belief in the New Testament teaching of unity. There is a struggle to get back to apostolic unity as is taught in the New Testament. It can be done only by giving up denominationalism.

Christians, One In Christ

Christians are not only in Christ, but they are one in Christ. This is emphasized by Christ in his prayer recorded in John 17. *"Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me"* (John 17:20, 21.) This union for which Christ prayed was a

(Continued on page 11)



THE MAN GOD CALLED A FOOL

Luke 12:13-21

Introduction:

1. Somewhere in the Bible there is a character whose disposition matches yours and mine. Who is it?



2. One in the company of Jesus did not have his mind on Jesus' sermon, and raised a question off the subject.
3. Christ took advantage of the occasion to put up a warning sign that continues

to be seen throughout the book (1 Timothy 6:6-7, 9-11; Colossians 3:5-6; Ephesians 5:5).

4. Why did God call this man a fool?

I. He Left God Out of His Life.

- A. The story abounds with personal pronouns, but not God's name. See James 4:13-15.
- B. Practical atheism does not deny the existence of God, but a place for God (Psalm 14:1). See also James 1:17; Psalms 127:1.
- C. If he had acknowledged this truth, his fate would have been different (Matthew 6:33; Psalm 9:17).

II. He Left His Fellowman Out of His Life.

- A. There were other barns to be filled (widows, orphans, lost souls).
- B. There is a practical side to our religion (Matthew 22:37-39; Luke 10:30-36; Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:10; James 1:27).
- C. Those who never think of the divine source of their blessings will never think of a divine purpose for them either (Luke 16:19-31).

III. He Thought His Soul Could Be Satisfied with Material Things.

- A. The fool's philosophy is: "eat, drink and be merry." "If it feels good do

it."

- B. Material things will never satisfy the soul (Matthew 4:4; 6:19-20; 16:26).
- C. He died a poor man (Revelation 3:17). No reconciliation, no peace, likeness, or fellowship with God.

IV. He Thought He Had A Perpetual Lease on Life.

- A. Your casket may have already been made (Proverbs 27:1; James 4:14).
- B. Material things add neither quality nor quantity to our lives (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- C. What God said to this man can be said to all one day!
 1. How much did he leave behind?
 2. Everything!

Conclusion:

1. This man was typical, not exceptional. Our Lord did not talk about exceptional people.
2. What would God call you? (Matthew 7:24-27; 25:1-13).
3. If changes are needed in your life, why not make them now. For this night thy soul may be required of thee!

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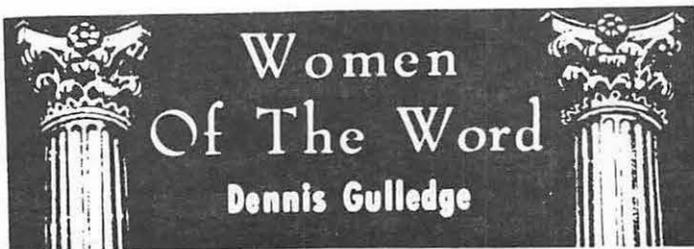
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THE ROSE GARDEN
(Continued from page 2)

examples show the rose garden gospel is a false gospel.

The advantage for the Christian isn't the promise of an easier life and immunity from misfortune. The Christian is promised strength to endure (Isaiah 40:29-31; Psalm 27:1; 46:1; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:13). He is promised that his burdens shall be no greater than he can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13). He is promised that his trials have meaning and significance (2 Corinthians 1:4; Romans 5:3; 1 Peter 1:6-9). He is promised that at the end of life's fretful and fitful fever there is an inheritance reserved in heaven (1 Peter 1:4).

Let the reader beware of the modern religious "Pied-Pipers" promising things God has not promised. The wonderful things God has promised will be more than sufficient to see us through the oceans of sorrow we must cross.



THE WOMAN AT JACOB'S WELL (Part 1)



In John 4 is one of the most important meetings between two people that we find in the Bible. Any meeting between man and God is important, but here we find Christ the Son of God in dialogue with a most unlikely subject. We find here an unlikely subject because

this individual was a woman and the disciples "marveled that he talked with the woman" (John 4:27). Why was it so amazing that Jesus conversed with a woman? The significance of John's statement is seen in the bitter prejudice that existed toward women in his day. Talking with a woman was contrary to the custom of the doctors of the Law, by whom it was said that, "A man should not salute a woman in a public place, not even his own wife," and that it was "better that the words of the Law should be burnt than delivered to women."¹ And one of the prayers in the daily service of the synagogue was, "Blessed art thou, O Lord...Who hast not made me a woman."² This meeting was unusual in a third way because this individual was a sinner. The Pharisees ridiculed Jesus as one who "receiveth sinners" (Luke 15:2). If anybody else other than Jesus, had been sitting at Jacob's well the day the Samaritan woman came along, the conversation recorded in John 4 (or anything even remotely related to it) might never have taken place.

John said that Jesus "must needs go through Samaria" (vs. 4). Why the necessity? It was necessary to travel through Samaria if one was to go from Judea (the southernmost province of Palestine) to Galilee (the northernmost province). It was not unusual, however, for some, owing to the hatred which existed between the Jews and Samaritans, to go the long way around, thus taking over twice as long to reach their Galilean destination. But, even more important than this being the shortest route there was the work of God to be done in Samaria (vss. 34-35).

The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans went back many centuries to the Assyrian captivity of the ten tribes. The ancestors of the Samaritans were first brought into the land of Israel by the Assyrian king, following the captivity of Israel (2 Kings 17:24-41). When a remnant of the two tribes of Judah returned from the 70 year Babylonian captivity and began the reconstruction of the temple in Jerusalem, the Samaritans sought to assist in the work. This gesture was refused and a bitter rivalry began between the two peoples which never subsided (Nehemiah 2-4). Soon after the Jews' temple was rebuilt, in the days of Nehemiah, Manasseh sought permission of Alexander the Great to build a temple of Mt. Gerizim which would rival that of the Jews. The Grecian leader granted that permission and the Samaritan temple was built in about 332 B.C. and stood until the days of John Hyrcanus in 129 B.C.

While the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, Jesus certainly did. The Lord was above all religious, social and racial prejudice. If Jesus had been party to the hatred of people, then he would never have spoken with the woman who ventured to Jacob's well that day, but because he spoke with her, this woman learned four of life's most important lessons in the span of a very short time. The lessons which she learned in so brief a time many people never learn in a life time, no matter how long that may be. What were these lessons? In this two part article, I will suggest four:

I. Eternal Life (vs. 10-15)

The woman at Jacob's well learned about eternal life. There are many people who never learn that there is more to life than just this life. The humanistic notion that this life is all there is has a death grip on the human race, and freedom from worldly bondage is found only in the life which Christ offers (Luke 12:13-34). This life is not sustained by physical food, but by divine (Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2). The water at Jacob's well yielded only a temporary satisfaction to a thirsty person, as physical fulfillment can only do. Our bodily cravings will continue no matter how many times they are gratified. No matter how often one quenches his thirst he will thirst again.

The Lord here makes the distinction between earthly and physical blessings. There is no worldly comfort which gives lasting satisfaction, but Christ is the source of eternal,

This union for which Christ prayed was a visible union. "That the world may believe that thou didst send me" suggests visible unity. This is further emphasized by the words of Christ when he said: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34, 35.) The love that Christians are to have for each other impels them to be one in Christ. All the churches of Christ are alike in type of character, faith, love, joy and peace; they constitute the one body and are "severally members one of another." Christians are so closely united, if faithful to the Lord, that if "one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26.) Any division or strife is contrary to the fundamental relationship that Christians sustain to each other. All division among the people of God is condemned. (1 Corinthians 1:12; 2:1,2; 3:1-3.) James and Peter in their writings reprove sharply Christians for strife and divisions; they also urge unity in brotherly love. (James 4:1; 5:9,16; 1 Peter 1:22; 2:1; 3:11; 4:8.) Nearly all of the New Testament writers have emphasized the unity of God's people.

Christians, Brethren

God is our Father, Christ our elder brother. Christians constitute the family of God; hence, they are brethren in Christ. This indicates their unity. This term "brethren" is applied to Christians more than two hundred times in the New Testament. It implies the unity of a family. "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren" (Matthew 23:8.) "This saying therefore went forth among the brethren" (John 21:23.) "Let there be no stirfe,...between me and thee,...for we are brethren" (Genesis 13:8.)

GOSPEL ADVOCATE
March 28, 1940



"I am very broad on religious matters," say those who want union without unity. Yes, and they are probably narrow on opinions, great on promises, little on faith that works by love, big on worldly pleasures, wide on innovations, long on entertainment, and short on the Word of God!

satisfaction, but Christ is the source of eternal, unending, life-giving water. Who may have this eternal sustenance which Jesus spoke of? Jesus answers in saying, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). In other words, righteousness must be that which one intensely seeks after. John wrote, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Revelation 21:6; Cf., 21:17).

May our reaction to the gospel be like that of this woman when she said to Jesus "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (vs. 15). Even though it appears that this woman, like Nicodemus (John 3), was not then fully aware of the true nature of the life of which Jesus spoke, at least she could ask for the gift which had already been assured her (vs 10). So many people will not even do that much! Jesus said of the Jews, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). It is true even today that stubbornness of heart, rather than the inability to find the way of truth, is the fatal error of so many people. Again, Jesus said, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40). The reader will notice that Jesus made an attractive offer to the woman and she became interested, even if she did not understand all that it was about.

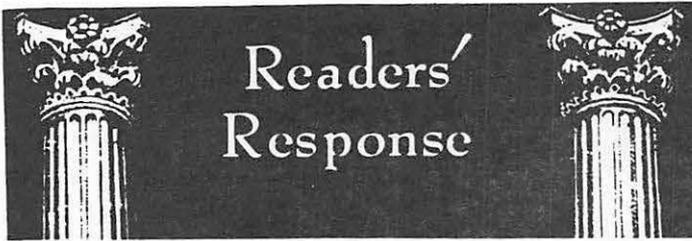
How often do we use this effective approach in holding out to others that eternal satisfaction which every person longs for, which the world and man-made religion cannot satisfy? There is that nameless unsatisfied longing which God has instilled in us which will feel the frustration of something lacking until we find the truth of God which sets us free (John 8:32). There is a thirst within us which only living water can quench, and which only Jesus Christ can satisfy. (To be continued)

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ENDNOTES

¹B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962), p. 74.

²Ibid.



Readers' Response

Dear brethren:

While I appreciate your paper, I have decided to stop receiving it. Please remove my name from the list.

Jim Boyd
Convoy, OH

Dear Bros. Dillon and Whittemore:

My mother is dying and not a member of the Lord's church and I am having a bad time in letting her go. I'm not able to talk death with her. I went to church and two wonderful things began to happen for me. Bro. Larry Albritton preached on the reality of hell and heaven and my long time friend and sister in Christ was restored and prayed for.

Then I read in the April-June GOSPEL GLEANER about "Coping With Bereavement" and in the July-September GOSPEL GLEANER about "The Burdens of Life". These things really relieved my mind about letting mom go in death. I just hope and pray for her best outlook. I'm really torn inside about her, but being with the Christian brothers and sisters at Westside church of Christ sure helps me alot. Please, I and my family, really need your prayers. God bless your good work.

Juanita Talbott
Chandler, IN

GOSPEL GLEANER
10025 Woodville Road
Kevil, Kentucky 42053

Forwarding & Address Correction Requested

Dear Editors:

I visited the Clinton church of Christ in Clinton, N.C. two weeks ago and Robert C. Oliver gave me some copies of GOSPEL GLEANER. I found the material within well written. It's encouraging to know we still have those who are following in the old paths. Would you add my name and another elder for a free subscription. Thanks so much...May God bless this work.

James T. Brinkley
Saint Albans, WV

Dear brethren:

I received a copy of the GOSPEL GLEANER and find it very helpful.

Please add my name to your mailing list.

Thank you.
Barclay Riley
Gates, TN

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