

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume IX

1980



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August

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March

June

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

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The Pollutions Of God's House

ROGER SHIFLET

In Jeremiah chapter 7 and verse 30, the Lord God, through the prophet, proclaims, "...they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it." Indeed in 2 Kings chapter 21, one can read of how Manasseh, the wicked son of Hezekiah, "...built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord."

Of course today God doesn't have a physical temple as He had in Jerusalem, but Paul does (in 1 Tim. 3:15) talk about "the house of God which is the church of the living God." And as in days gone by, just so in our day there are those among God's people who would "set their abominations" in Jehovah's house "to pollute it."

There is the altar to ecuminism. Turning a deaf ear to God's cry of "come ye out from among them and be ye separate," many evangelists of the Lord's church are running to associate themselves with the false religions of denominationalism. God's people are teaching denominationalists how to build up their denominations, joining "ministerial alliances," speaking to denominationalists about their "various faiths." Such evangelists are "spots and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you." They are polluting the house of God.

There is the altar to fornication. When any brother, *any brother*, teaches that an unscripturally divorced and remarried person can continue in that unscriptural marriage without sin he has "set at nought the counsel of God." And when a brother continues to press such false doctrine he is plainly guilty of causing divisions and occasions of stumbling among the brethren and, for truth's

sake, must be marked, (Rom. 16:17).

There is the altar to *militant anti-militantism*. Some brethren are very critical of criticism, very intolerant of intolerance. These "reason" (?) that if God's people will just refrain from denouncing evil and will simply hold up the good all will be well. But before Jeremiah could obey God's command "to build and to plant" he first had "to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down." Certainly brethren should be loved, encouraged, exhorted; but God's evangelists must still heed the charge to Isaiah, "...lift up thy voice like a trumpet and show my people their transgressions..." Those who would weaken the church by removing all negative preaching therefrom are guilty of polluting the house of God.

There is the altar to *entertainment*. Among many the crucial question is not "Which congregation can best meet the spiritual needs of the community?" but is instead, "Which congregation can show me the best time?" Some brethren bewail the idea that "The denominations are far ahead of us in these areas." How can the denominations be ahead of the Lord's church when they are not even going in the same direction? A brightly colored "joy bus," a cute puppet, a youth director who could pass for court jester--are these the things upon which the hope of Christ's church rests? Those who would make entertainment the goal of the local congregation are polluting God's house.

When Josiah was king of Judah he set about "to repair the house of the Lord his God." Faithful brethren today must make a determined effort to remove the pollutants and tear down the altars of those who would "set their abominations in the house of Jehovah."

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EDITORIAL

A New Year -- A New Decade

WILLIAM S. CLINE

With much encouragement from the past and continued concern for the future, we here begin a new year and a new decade with Volume IX.

When we began the *DEFENDER* we were concerned about the inroads of liberalism into the Lord's church. We, like many other brethren, wrote and warned in hopes that such would help stem the tide of the on-rushing digression. Much of what we warned against, sad to say, has come to pass. We find only sadness in such. Perhaps what so many of us said in sermons, bulletins, lectureships, and journals such as this has helped slow down and even stop some of the liberalism which had taken root in the precious kingdom of our Lord. Heaven only knows the true and lasting value of such feeble efforts. But judging as men do and deeply appreciating what has come to our attention concerning the *DEFENDER*, we express our most sincere thanks for the prayers, the criticisms, the advice, the financial support, the words of encouragement and all of the other things which have contributed to the last eight years of journalistic work.

It shall be our policy this year as in every year past to defend the truth as revealed in the inspired word, to teach, to warn and to encourage as best we know how. We constantly receive an avalanche of material which has been submitted for publication. Please understand that it is impossible to print even a small percentage of such material. We appreciate every article and intend to print them as space permits. Just because an article you submit does not find itself in the *DEFENDER* within a few months does not mean that it has been discarded. Quite the contrary is true. We would like to print 20 - 24 pages each month instead of 8, 12 and sometimes 16, but paper and postage costs prevent such extravagance in printing. Thus we seek to fulfill our purpose in as brief a space as possible.

Printing costs continue to rise, as does everything else. Yet this publication is set to continue. We shall not sit idly while our brethren go to war. The *DEFENDER* will continue to be sent to all who ask for it on a free basis. Thus our only means of underwriting the cost of the paper is through contributions from our readers. We must continue to receive these. This past year the financial help was down and the Bellview church had to underwrite a large portion of the publication costs. If you have not recently sent a small (or large) contribution, why not do so -- now -- before you forget about it?

Liberalism continues to grow stronger. The church continues to grow less and less. Sin on every hand is rampant. We must PREACH THE WORD, without addition or subtraction, to a world lost in sin.

The Twisted Scriptures - Part VI

GOSPEL & DOCTRINE

TOM BRIGHT

In previous articles under the same heading, I have been considering some of the areas of false teaching that brother W. Carl Ketcherside has advocated in his book, *THE TWISTED SCRIPTURES*.

In this article, I want to examine another theory presented by this brother which points us at the very heart and core of the gospel of Christ. This theory to which I refer is the supposed distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine."

Let us allow this brother, in his own words, to define exactly what he means. "There is as much difference between the gospel of Christ and the apostolic doctrine as there is between the sperm from which a child is begotten and the food which he eats after he is born." (page 42) "The purpose of the gospel is to enlist men in the army of Christ; the doctrine constitutes a manual of arms and book of discipline to develop the soldiers into a fighting force. The first is an announcement that the school of Christ has been opened and eligible scholars will be accepted for enrollment; the latter is the curriculum for daily study by the students, or disciples." (page 42,43) "The gospel was for the world, the apostolic doctrine for the church." (page 47) "The gospel is addressed to unbelievers and not to believers." (page 48) "The intent of the good news is to convert aliens into citizens. It is a message to the unsaved and never to the saved..." (page 63) "The 'doctrine of the apostles' consists of a course of instruction designed to bring citizens of the kingdom to a constantly increasing sense of maturity and responsibility...The gospel brings men into Christ, the doctrine helps them grow up in him." (page 63)

From these quotations, we can see the well-defined and clear cut distinction that bro. Ketcherside believes exists between "gospel" and "doctrine." The "gospel" is to enroll the unbeliever into the "army of Christ"; to announce that the "school of Christ" has been opened. The "doctrine" is the curriculum for daily study by the disciples.

To further establish in our minds exactly what he is advocating, let us notice this lengthy quotation from pages 49-50 of his book. "The chosen envoys of Christ had a special message for the alien world. That message was a proclamation of victory in Jesus. It consisted of the news of what God had done for those who were His enemies. Since it was contingent upon authority vested

in Jesus, it could not be announced until the heralds had proof that He had been "Christed" (that is, anointed) and elevated to a position of universal lordship. The proof came visibly, audibly and experientially on the Pentecost following His ascension. Immediately the message was proclaimed! The gospel was fully and completely announced on that occasion. It was fully obeyed by all who accepted it. This was not a partial seed and those who were begotten were not born deformed or malformed. They were fully formed as God's children, although immature, as are all children at birth.

"Nothing else was ever added to the gospel after that date, although doctrinal truths were revealed as required or when circumstances demanded. These truths were not part of the gospel and no one whose life was corrected or enhanced by understanding them was ever said to have obeyed the gospel again. Obedience of the gospel is an act once for all, while partaking of the bread of life is a daily performance. The gospel produces life, the doctrine is for the training and discipline of the children after they are born."

Thus, it is evident that bro. Ketcherside looks upon the "gospel" as that which was preached on the first Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and refers to that same message whenever and wherever it is proclaimed. To him, the "gospel" refers only to that message which is preached to the unbelievers, which if obeyed, it will bring one into a covenant relationship with the God of heaven.

THE REASON

The reason for this teaching, although long and involved, can be seen by allowing this brother to further explain himself. As we note further quotations from his pen, I urge you to notice that the area into which his contention draws us is the area of fellowship. Should we find that his teaching is correct, then we must remove all boundaries and extend the right hand of fellowship to all, regardless of what they teach, preach, or practice.

Let us notice some of his thoughts. "Fellowship results from the gospel, growth within the fellowship is the aim of doctrinal development." (page 63) "So long as men seek to make fellowship in Christ Jesus contingent upon conformity of opinion, deduction, under-

standing and apprehension of apostolic doctrine, rather than upon faith in Him through the facts of the gospel, that long will they be purveyors of partisan loyalties and formers of factional strife." (page 63) "No honest opinion held by one who is in Christ Jesus and who respects His Lordship, is 'another gospel.' Since it is the gospel which forms the basis of the fellowship with the Father, the Son, and with one another in Christ, such an opinion can never be made a test of union or communion in Jesus." (page 38) "This is not to say that apostolic doctrine is not important. It does not argue that we should not seek to agree upon interpretation. It does mean, however that our hope of life is not contingent upon arriving at such harmony of understanding, and that it is, and always will be, an ideal toward which we must strive. Our difference about doctrinal matters that do not relate to the facts of the gospel, are occasions for discussion, and not for division. Until we learn what is the content of the gospel we shall lose the learned and confuse the unlearned." (page 61)

Thus, the claim is made that only the "gospel," that which is preached to the unbelievers, forms the basis of fellowship - GOSPEL ONLY, not apostolic doctrine.

Furthermore, it is apparent that bro. Ketcherside believes that this distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine" is irrevocable. On page 48 of his book, he quotes from *A CATECHETICAL COMMENTARY* by William Hurte and the comments made concerning Acts 5:42, "To the unconverted they preached, and to this class this word is strictly applicable, while believers were taught all things needful for life and godliness. To the former it is, and always must be, proclamation-- i. e., preaching--while to the latter it must always be instruction concerning the Lord's will." Notice his thoughts on page 63, "The intent of the good news is to convert aliens into citizens. It is a message to the unsaved and never to the saved." Concerning the "gospel" on page 33, he writes, "It is not a message for the saved but for the lost. It is never addressed to saints but to sinners. It is never proclaimed to the church but to the world."

Thus, according to the teaching under consideration, it is a rule that is without exception, viz., the "gospel" is only to the unbelievers and "doctrine" only to the believers, and this is unalterable. (We shall come back to this thought at a later point in our writing.)

Now, if bro. Ketcherside is correct in his contention, i. e., it is only "gospel" which forms this basis for fellowship, then anything of a doctrinal nature must not be con-

sidered as that which forms the basis for fellowship.

It follows then, that if a person claims to be a Christian, he can contend just about anything he desires. We have no right to consider that person as a false teacher and to withstand him because of it. We can "dialogue" with him, but always extending the right hand of fellowship to him and accepting him as a faithful brother in Christ.

Thus, when my brother teaches the doctrine of premillennialism, he is to be looked upon as a faithful brother. If he uses the instrument of music, he is still faithful. If he claims to have been baptized with the Holy Spirit and/or to speak in tongues, he is still to be looked upon as a faithful brother in Christ and to be treated as if he were preaching and teaching the truth.

It all comes right back to bro. Ketcherside's basic philosophy; it is the "gospel" which determines the basis of fellowship. That is, did that person ever obey the gospel of Christ? Is he a member of the church? If he is, then regardless of what he teaches or practices, he is my faithful brother in Christ and the right hand of fellowship is to be extended to him. After all, the basis of fellowship is GOSPEL, not apostolic doctrine.

It is on this ground that I oppose bro. Ketcherside's teaching. I affirm that he is teaching false doctrine and in the remainder of this article, I propose to show such.

DOES THE BIBLE TEACH SUCH?

If the "gospel" always referred only to that message which was addressed to the unbelievers, then it stands to reason that every time that concept appears in the New Testament, we should be able to put this brother's definition to it: of necessity, it must fit smoothly, being in complete agreement with all that the Bible teaches. This theory should not contradict itself or any part of the New Testament. Will his distinction fit harmoniously throughout? Let us see.

I THESSALONIANS 2:9

In this context, Paul is establishing how uprightly they (Paul and his companions) had conducted themselves during their stay in Thessalonica. In verse 9 he writes, "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." He reminds them how he labored night and day so as not to be chargeable to them. Did Paul have the right to be chargeable to the Thessalonians? Evidently he did. To whom was he preaching? The Thessalonian Christians, those already

saved. What was he preaching to them? The gospel of God. Since one can only preach the "gospel" to the unbelievers (according to bro. Ketcherside), and Paul would not be chargeable to them as he preached the "gospel" unto them, it necessarily follows that Paul believed that he could be chargeable to the Thessalonians before they became Christians!

Thus, we can conclude that Paul had the right to go to a strange city and as he preached the "gospel" to the unbelievers, to expect support from those to whom he preached, viz., the unbelievers!

If this is the case, does our brethren who go into places where the church has never been established, have the right to expect support from those unbelievers whom they hope to convert? If our brother's contention is correct they do. Therefore, our brethren need to stop trying to raise money from local congregations in America and simply go to the

side), then the Corinthians were subjecting themselves unto that which pertained to the unbelievers. Not only that, but God was being glorified by such! Therefore, those who had already been called into the "army of Christ" and who should be receiving that which would "develop the soldiers unto a fighting force," were being highly commended for their evident "reversion" to the gospel of Christ, that which is supposedly only for the unbelievers!

Notice please that the subjection under consideration is the collection for the poor saints. I encourage all of these "gospel and doctrine" theorists to show me one passage of scripture, one intimation, wherein this subject can logically be placed under that which is only to the unbelievers. I know of only one way in which this subject could be placed under "gospel" and not under "doctrine," and that is by a great and mighty twisting of the scriptures. Of a truth, it must refer to that area he designates as "doctrine." Yet,

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We deeply appreciate our readers helping us in this search.

--Editor

unbelievers in foreign countries and demand support from them! Can you believe it?

2 CORINTHIANS 9:12-13

The subject of chapters eight and nine is the promised bounty for the saints in Judea. Now notice verses 12-13 of chapter nine. "For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; While by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;" Now, let us notice something. God was being glorified. By what? The Corinthians' subjection to the GOSPEL OF CHRIST! Now, since the "gospel" can only be preached to the unbelievers (according to bro. Ketcher-

side), then the Corinthians were subjecting themselves unto the gospel of Christ."

In his book, on page 51, bro. Ketcherside lists seven constituent factors of the gospel: the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, coronation and glorification of Jesus. Where in this list is the subject of the collection for the poor saints found?

Paul spoke of the Corinthians' subjection to the gospel of Christ. Will our brother be so brazen as to claim that Paul was mistaken? I hope not.

Since bro. Ketcherside's contention can not be in harmony with what Paul wrote, we must now make a choice: Bro. Ketcherside or Paul. Since his theory is in contradiction to the inspired scriptures, can we not conclude that

his basic argument is in error? If not, why not?

1 CORINTHIANS 9

In this chapter, Paul is defending his apostleship. Some had evidently leveled the charge that even though Paul had lived and preached there, he had not allowed the Corinthians to support him, thus proving he was not an apostle.

Let us note how Paul answered this. Beginning in verse 7, he wrote that none goes to war at his own cost; the planter of a vineyard eats of the fruit and the shepherd eats of the milk. In verses 8 & 9, he affirms that Moses wrote of the same principle. He states in verse 11 "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Is this not referring to his right to be supported by them? Note verse 14, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Is Paul affirming that one can get his support only from the unbeliever? Did God expect the unbelievers to support the evangelists before they became believers? If our brother is correct in his contention, this is exactly what Paul meant.

Furthermore, if it is true that the "gospel" refers to that which is preached only to the unbelievers, notice what Paul would have had to mean in verse 14, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel (only to the unbelievers) should live of the gospel (only from the unbelievers)."

As we look closely at verses 14 & 15, let us be mindful of the fact that the thoughts of these two verses are inseparably linked together and what is stated in verse 15 is based upon the principle set forth in the fourteenth verse. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." Notice, please, "...neither have I written these things..." Unto whom were "these things" written? New Testament Christians in the city of Corinth. Notice again, "...that it should be so done unto me:" What does Paul have reference to here? It was not his purpose in writing "these things" in order to receive that support to which he was entitled. Therefore, he implies that it would be right for the Corinthians to support him. Now, the only support that has been alluded to in the whole context was that those who preach the gospel (supposedly to the unbelievers) should live of the gospel (supposedly from the unbelievers). Therefore, we conclude that since

Paul refers to the fact that he had not written "these things" so that the Corinthian Christians would support him (supposedly only which the unbelievers could do), that the Corinthian Christians were unbelievers!

Bro. Ketcherside might desire to reject this conclusion, but if his contention be true, then this conclusion does forcefully and irresistibly follow.

Since his theory will not harmonize with the teaching of the Bible, should we not cast it aside and stand upon the one faith, that which has once and for all been delivered unto the saints (Jude 3)? I think so.

PHILIPPIANS 1:27

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;" Look at the word "conversation." It means "live, conduct oneself, lead one's life." The word translated "becometh" means, "in a manner worthy of; a manner of life in accordance with what the gospel declares." Therefore, Paul is instructing the Philippian Christians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, that which our brother affirms is preached only to the unbeliever.

Is Paul telling the Philippians to look back to the life they lived as unbelievers and conform themselves to it? I am thoroughly convinced that this brother does not believe this. But this is the conclusion to which we are drawn if we follow his reasoning.

Possibly he will contend that there is a certain manner of life to which the gospel calls one. Agreed! But even though this is true, this does not explain the manifest contradiction in which he finds himself. Supposedly, the gospel is that message which is preached only to the unbeliever and NEVER to the believer. Yet, Paul exhorts the Philippians to a manner of life which is becoming to the gospel of Christ.

Is it possible that Paul was unaware of this distinction? Do you suppose that the Holy Spirit failed to reveal to Paul this distinction? Or could it be that this distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine" exists only in the minds of those who are seeking justification to fellowship any and everything? I affirm without reservation that the latter is true.

Let us continue in this same passage. Paul exhorted them to conduct themselves as it becomes the gospel of Christ. Now notice the word "that." This denotes the idea of "pur-

pose," and means "in order to." Thus, Paul is telling them to order their lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ., in order that whether he came to them or was absent, that he might hear that they stood fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. Is Paul saying that they were to strive together for the faith of that which is preached only to the unbelievers? Was this to be their only concern, that which brings people into Christ? Of a truth, were they not to strive together in one mind for that which 'was to make children of God better," that which this brother designates as "doctrine." Indeed they were! Thus, the contention under consideration fails once again to harmonize with the scriptures; hence, it must be rejected as false.

In his book *THE TWISTED SCRIPTURES*, bro. Ketcherside attempts to deal with the latter portion of this verse. I now quote from pages 160-161, "(1). The faith by which we are justified was fully proclaimed on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Nothing was ever added to it as a basis for justification. The faith which justifies is "the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27) and the gospel was announced in its fulness and perfection by the heralds of the King on that day. All that was demanded of any alien to become a citizen and to enter into the fellowship of the ransomed ones was contained in this initial message. Those who obeyed its demands did not obey an imperfect gospel." Thus, we can see that he equates "the faith" with "the gospel," that which was received on Pentecost and to which nothing has been added.

Now let us continue with his thoughts as presented on page 161. "(4). On that same tour which reached as far as Derbe, Paul returned through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 'strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith' (Acts 14:22). Thus men were in the faith and able to continue in it before even one apostolic letter was penned. But the faith in which they were to continue was that which Paul had brought them." In what were they exhorted to continue? The faith, that which this brother has equated with the gospel; that which is preached only to the unbelievers. Who were exhorted to Paul to continue in the faith (that which bro. Ketcherside has equated with the gospel, that which is preached only to the unbelievers)? The disciples of our Lord!!! Who can believe it?

Is it not more reasonable and consistent with the scriptures to reject this contention and understand Paul as exhorting the Philip-

pians to walk in a way worthy of one who is a Christian, striving for that eternal abode of the soul? Indeed he was.

(To be continued)
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* * *

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* * *

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BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

MAY 11 - 15, 1980

"THINGS WRITTEN AFORETIME"

SUNDAY, MAY 11

- 9:00 IS THE LORD WITH US?.....
Charles Williamson
10:00 DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?.....
Alan Adams
6:00 THE CHOICE OF RUTH.....Bill Dukes
7:00 THE FOUR TESTS OF JOSEPH..John Bradshaw

MONDAY, MAY 12

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD (Jer. 1:10).....
George Darling
8:00 THE PROBLEM OF FELLOWSHIP..Buster Dobbs

TUESDAY, MAY 13

- 8:00 EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN
HIS OWN EYES (Josh. 21:25)....Ray Peters
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT...
Buster Dobbs
11:00 THE TIMES OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.....
Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 SHALL YE SIT HERE WHILE YOUR BRETHREN
GO TO WAR?.....John Priola
1:45 PREACH THE PREACHING THAT I BID THEE
(Jonah 3:2).....Kenneth Cook
2:30 IMMORALITY - PAST AND PRESENT.....
Jerry Foutz
7:00 RESPECTING BIBLE AUTHORITY.....
Buster Dobbs
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

- 8:00 DEMONSTRATIONS NEEDED.....Elmer Scott
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 PROVIDENCE.....Rex A. Turner, Sr.
11:00 SEVEN APPEARANCES OF JEHOVAH TO ABRAHAM
William S. Cline

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 THE VALLEY OF ACHOR - A DOOR OF HOPE
(Hosea 2:15).....James Pilgrim
1:45 TARRYING WITH THE BAGGAGE..Barry Hatcher
2:30 REBELLING AGAINST GOD'S AUTHORITY.....
Gerald Reynolds
7:00 THE ATTITUDE OF HANNAH, A MOTHER OF
ISRAEL.....Robert Taylor
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

THURSDAY, MAY 15

- 8:00 PERSEVERING PREACHING (Isa. 6:8-12).....
Ernest Underwood
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE TABERNACLE, A TYPE OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT CHURCH.....Robert Taylor
11:00 WILL MAN SERVE GOD FOR NAUGHT? (Job 1:9)
Linwood Bishop

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 WE ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME (Num. 3:30).....
Larry Reynolds
1:45 TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY.....Charles Tharp
2:30 REASONS WHY ISRAEL FELL....Raymond Bush
7:00 MAN'S QUEST FOR HAPPINESS.....
Curtis Sampley
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

THE PRAYER OF HANNAH

I SAMUEL 1:1-18

Winston Temple

INTRODUCTION:

Hannan was one of the wives of Elkanah who was of Levitical descent (compare the genealogy of I Samuel with those in I Chron.6:22 and verse 33). All the Elkanahs mentioned in the Old Testament (leaving out the one in 2 Chron.28:7, whose tribe is not stated) were demonstrably Levites, and belonged mostly to the family of Korah, from whom Samuel was descended.

DISCUSSION:

I. Verse 2 - Elkanah had two wives.

1. A violation of the Divine intention in the institution of marriage.

- (1) Our Lord made one man for one woman in the marital bond (Gen.2:22).
- (2) Our Savior spoke decidedly upon the subject (Matt.19:5).
- (3) Apostolic teaching reiterates the law (I Cor.7:2).
- (4) Lamech is the first person of whom it is recorded that he "...took unto him two wives" (Gen.6:19), and his own words tell us that he was a man of blood.
- (5) Noah and his three sons entered into the ark, each having his one wife (Gen.7:13), but the sin of Lamech became more and more common until it grew into a custom, and many better men than he thus profaned God's holy ordinance. Consider Abraham, Jacob and Elkanah.
- (6) The custom of society unconsciously colors men's characters and habits. Their very conscience is influenced by the moral atmosphere which they breathe; they become colored by the

I. 1. (6) Continued.

thoughts and actions of those by whom they are surrounded and often yield their consent to a wicked custom, the sin of which they do not perceive because of the moral darkness in which they live. It was doubtless so with those of the patriarchs who practised bigamy or polygamy, and it was so also with Elkanah.

2. This violation of Divine intention became a means of chastisement.

- (1) Elkanah had to suffer domestic upheaval because of the strife caused by Peninnah.
- (2) The strife was so bitter that it entered even into the service of the house of God (verse 7).
- (3) The history of the world confirms the teaching of this history of a single family. The nations who adhere to God's original intention in the marriage state are spared from many sorrows, and avoid many crimes which must always be the fruit of such a morally unhealthy and unnatural custom. The joys of the home life are unknown where polygamy is practised - a terrible penalty is paid by all those nations who thus violate God's holy and blessed institution. *America, Beware!!*

II. Verse 3 - Elkanah's piety in maintaining a regular attendance on the Divine ordinances is the more worthy of notice.

1. He went out "yearly", probably to the Passover as that was the only feast which the whole family were accustomed to attend (Lk.2:41).
2. "To worship and sacrifice." The worship
(Continued on page 14)

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DEFENDER

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GUEST

EDITORIAL

Spoken Against

MAXIE B. BOREN

When the apostle Paul arrived in Rome, according to Acts 28, he was allowed to speak to the chief Jews there about himself and his work. In the exchange of conversation, these chief men expressed a desire to hear more of what Paul would have to say concerning the *"sect...that everywhere...is spoken against"* (Verse 22).

Obviously, these chief Jews were calling the cause of Jesus Christ and His church *"a sect"*. In so doing, they erred, because the Greek word (*haireisis*) denotes a *"division and the formation of a party in contrast to the uniting power of truth held in toto"* (An Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words, by W. E. Vine, page 335). The church is one body! (Ephesians 4:4). It is not a sect! God *"tempered it together"* that there should be no schism in it (1 Corinthians 12:24-25).

But the significant point is that they said it was *"spoken against"* everywhere. Why? Because the church was bold in its proclamation of pure, unadulterated truth! Read Acts 4:29, Acts 7:51-53, Acts 8:4, Acts 13:49-50, Acts 20:20, 26-27, etc.

It seems to me that in our day and time the church does not want *"to rock the boat."* We've gained respectability and we like it. The approval of our fellow man has come to mean more to us than the approval of God! Too many congregations are fed a palatable diet of positive axioms and any type of aggressive boldness with plain, hard-hitting Bible truth is frowned upon.

As a result, the church of Christ today is generally spoken well of, and much of the antagonism toward it has subsided, and what little there is, is but a relic of a past era.

Most brethren like it this way. But I have a strong feeling that it is not the way it should be! If we were really heralding the plain truth to our cities and communities without favor or compromise, challenging all proponents of error to defend their false doctrines, something tells me the church would again be *"spoken against"* as once it was!

If *"speaking the truth in love,"* and boldly, causes people everywhere to *"speak against"* us, may God hasten the day when this is once again the case!

1465 West Second Avenue
Corsicana, Texas 75110

BARNABAS

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Barnabas was one of the minor, yet one of the interesting characters of the New Testament. There are certain persons in the Bible who, in a special sense, illustrate prominent traits of Christian living and character. When we think of Abraham we think of his great faith. When we reflect on Job we think of his enduring patience. In like manner one can scarcely think of Barnabas without remembering his *generosity*, his *trustworthiness*, and his *concern* for others.

GENEROSITY

Barnabas was one of the most generous men of the Bible. He is first introduced to us in the fourth chapter of the book of Acts. It was a time of emergency in the early church in Jerusalem. There were many people in need, and those who had prosperity rose to the occasion. They sold their property and bought the price and laid it at the apostles' feet. Almost parenthetically it is stated, "And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet." We sometimes hear people speak jokingly of the "widow's mite." Brethren, it's not a joking matter and the truth of the whole affair is that few of us have ever given the "widow's mite" for the widow's *mises* do not signify a small contribution but rather a generous one for they were her *all*. But Barnabas did! He gave his all, and perhaps because of the important role he was to later play, Barnabas is singled out as the example of great generosity.

Sometimes it is much easier to give all when it is small, but Barnabas gave his all when it was large, when it represented tremendous possibilities. When one practices "Pure and Undeiled Religion" he is a generous person. How many do we have in the church today who are as generous as Barnabas?

TRUSTWORTHINESS

In Acts chapter nine Barnabas is set forth as a most trustworthy individual. After his conversion, Saul went to Jerusalem. Some time had passed and he assayed to join himself to the disciples. In other words, he wanted to be identified with the church at Jerusalem. He wanted people to know that he was now a member of the church he once hated and persecuted. But Luke says they were afraid of him. Nobody, including the apostles, believed Saul was a Christian. It was a rather

tragic situation. Paul was intensely sincere, a man whose heart had been swept to the uttermost depths by remorse and genuine repentance. Yet when he went to Jerusalem, the disciples did not believe him. However, Barnabas knew that Saul was alright. He took the disciples aside and in substance said, "This man is alright. He has obeyed the Lord in baptism; he is a genuine disciple." And the amazing thing is that they *believed* him. He was an individual of such character that when he said a thing was true, it was true. No one questioned him! But this should not be the exception. It should be the *rule*. Every Christian should so conduct his life that when he says a thing is true -- it is true -- no questions ask -- no doubts arise.

CONCERN FOR OTHERS

In Acts chapter eleven Barnabas was sent as far as Antioch to preach the gospel. In verses 25 and 26 we are told that he went to Tarsus to seek for Saul, and when he found him he took him to Antioch. Barnabas was concerned for Paul.

In Acts chapter thirteen Paul and Barnabas were separated from the church at Antioch to go on what we have called "The First Missionary Journey." For months and perhaps for two or three years, through long, difficult and dangerous travels, he and Paul preached the gospel. He was willing to endanger his life for the cause of Christ. He was concerned for lost souls.

Finally, in Acts chapter fifteen Paul suggested that they revisit the brethren to whom they had preached on their first journey. Barnabas was agreeable to the suggestion, but he was determined to take John Mark with them, and Paul was determined that he not be taken along. Mark had been with them on the first journey and for some reason he had turned back soon after the tour began. Obviously Paul thought that such was enough to make valid his rejection of Mark as a traveling companion on the second journey. Without doubt this was a judgment matter based solely on opinion, otherwise there would have been harmony in the decision of Paul and Barnabas. Good overruled the situation and there were *two* teams which each made a journey instead of one. Perhaps Mark would have drifted away into idleness had Barnabas not shown concern for him. We do not really know. But one thing we do know. When Paul was in prison for his last time he sent a request for Mark to come to him and it is interesting, if not *significant* that he said, "...for he is use-

(Continued on page 14)

The Twisted Scriptures - Part VI

GOSPEL & DOCTRINE , con't

TOM BRIGHT

1 TIMOTHY 1:9-11

"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man-slayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." Notice please that in verses 10-11, Paul stated, "...if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God..." It is interesting to note that Paul joined together, in an inseparable way, the very two things which bro. Ketcherside would separate. Paul includes in the list given in verses 9-10, "...any other thing contrary to sound doctrine, ACCORDING TO..." Thayer says that this word translated "according to" means "according to anything as a standard, agreeably to." Thus, Paul is saying that he would include anything else which was contrary to sound doctrine, agreeable to (according to the glorious gospel of God as a standard) the gospel which had been committed to his trust. How can anything be contrary to sound doctrine (only to the believer), ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL (only to the unbeliever) when we have such a supposed sharp distinction here?

Let us look at the two verses and give bro. Ketcherside's distinction, "...and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine (that which is taught only unto the Church, so that they might grow from spiritual infancy unto maturity) according to (agreeable to the gospel as a standard) the glorious gospel (which is preached only unto the unbelievers) of the blessed God." Thus, Paul includes everything that is contrary to sound doctrine (only to believers) according to the gospel (only to unbelievers) as the standard. If that makes sense to you, please let me know; I would like very much for someone to explain it to me!

This, my friends, is the end to which man comes when he tries to substantiate something, so that he might please the whims of man.

EPHESIANS 6:15

In his closing thoughts to the Ephesian Christians, Paul draws upon the armor which was worn by the Roman soldier, and transfers the idea to the spiritual armor that the

Christian is to wear. In verse fifteen, he encourages them, "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Arndt and Gingrich states on page 316 that the word translated "preparation" means "readiness, preparation." Thayer says, on page 255, that this word means, "...the condition of a pers. or thing so far forth as prepared, preparedness, readiness." Concerning the passage under consideration, Thayer adds, "...with the promptitude and alacrity which the gospel produces, Eph. vi. 15."

Therefore, Paul had under consideration the state of preparedness or readiness that comes from the "gospel of peace." Now, unless bro. Ketcherside wants to argue that the "gospel of peace" mentioned in this verse is different from the "gospel" that he claims is preached only to the unbelievers, then he will have to admit the evident contradiction.

Now, to what contradiction do I refer? His contention is that the gospel is preached unto the unbelievers and doctrine is taught unto the believers and this is irreversible. Paul exhorts the Ephesian believers (which must receive only doctrine) to the preparedness or readiness which comes from the "gospel of peace" (which is assumed to be taught only to unbelievers)!

I beg any of these "gospel and doctrine" theorists to answer, how can any believer gain that readiness, that preparedness to which Paul alludes, which in turn comes from that which is preached only to the unbelievers? Surely that to which Paul alludes in this passage can only fall into that area which they classify as "doctrine."

Therefore, we see again that the supposed distinction between "gospel" and "doctrine" cannot be verified when put to the test. Thus, it must be rejected completely.

It is seen from a diligent study of the Bible that this fanciful distinction is not made in the New Testament. The terms "doctrine," "faith," "gospel," "truth," and "word" are used interchangeably as merely different ways of referring to the same body of truth.

We will agree that once one has rendered obedience to that which brings him into Christ, that he never obeys that again. And we will agree that he continues to grow from immaturity unto maturity, but this is a long way from proving what some desire to prove by a violent twisting of the Scriptures.

In Galatians 1:6-7, Paul expresses amazement at the fact that the Galatians were deserting unto another gospel, which was no gospel at all. The totality of this epistle makes it evident that the "another" gospel was the law of Moses. There is little doubt that the Judaizers were teaching the same things in Galatia that they had taught in Antioch, i.e., "...Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). In short, they were teaching that one must keep the law of Moses as well as the law of Christ.

Therefore, when Paul speaks of the Galatians as deserting to another gospel, he DOES NOT have under consideration only that which is preached to the unbelievers. It is evident from a study of this epistle that Paul was writing to Christians about their relationship to God as they were moving themselves from the one gospel (whole body of truth) unto "another" gospel which was not "another."

However, if bro. Ketcherside's theory be correct, then Paul had specific reference to the Galatians preaching something other than he had preached unto unbelievers, in order that they might enlist them in the army of Christ. In other words, the thoughts of Gal. 1:6-7 dealt specifically with the Galatians being in the process of changing what they preached as the terms of admission into Christ. The totality of the teaching of this epistle proves this to be incorrect.

"But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed" (Gal. 1:23). Notice bro. Ketcherside's comments upon this verse. In the context from which the following quotation is taken, he has the "gospel" (according to his definition) under consideration. "The gospel which Paul proclaimed in Galatia did not originate with man...It was 'preaching the faith he once tried to destroy' (Gal. 1:23). What was that faith? "And I said, Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in thee" (Acts 22:19). It was belief in Jesus which Paul sought to destroy. It was faith in Jesus which he later proclaimed." Notice please: According to the theory under consideration, as Paul preached the GOSPEL, he was proclaiming the FAITH he once tried to destroy, which was belief in Jesus. Bro. Ketcherside puts this "belief in Jesus" into the framework of that which he would classify as "gospel" (only to unbelievers). According to his own use of Acts 22:19, Paul beat and imprisoned those who believed in Christ (which he has already equated with "gospel," that only to the unbelievers). We conclude therefore, according to his contention, Paul beat and imprisoned unbelieving believers!

In these passages, Paul refers to that event recorded in Acts 15:1ff, in which it was determined that Paul, Barnabas and certain others should go to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders concerning the question whether or not the Gentiles had to keep the law of Moses.

Titus, being a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised because some false brethren were making an issue of this very thing. Paul stated that he did not submit to these false teachers, and the stated reason was "...that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

According to the theory under consideration, the "gospel" applies only to unbelievers. Why then, did Paul speak of it in this way? What did the fact that Titus (a believer) was not compelled to be circumcised have to do with the "gospel"? But Paul stated that he did not submit to these false brethren "...that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." But this issue revolved around one who was a Christian.

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Of course the answer is simple. The so-called distinction is not recognized in the New Testament. But it would seem that our brother should harmonize this with his contention without a twisting of the scriptures.

GALATIANS 2:11ff

Peter, along with others, were guilty of hypocrisy when certain brethren came from James to Antioch. Previously Peter had eaten with the Gentiles. But, fearing those from James, he separated himself from the Gentiles.

Paul said that in so doing "...they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel." The word translated "according" means 'agreeable to, or in accordance with, the truth of the gospel.' What were they doing? Separating themselves, making fleshly distinctions according to the law of Moses; Paul said that they were not walking agreeable to the truth of the gospel. But, supposedly, the gospel is only to unbelievers. Peter, Barnabas, and other Christians were

not walking according to the truth of the gospel (which is only to unbelievers), therefore, Peter, Barnabas and the other Christians were not believers! Can you believe this?

WHAT SHALL WE CONCLUDE?

The things which I have presented in these writings were written in opposition to an obviously illogical, unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine that is being promulgated by the liberal element in the church.

The implications of this teaching would be disastrous to the New Testament church. Should this theory be accepted by churches of Christ (sadly enough, it has and is being accepted by some), it would remove any distinction whatsoever between that for which Christ died (Acts 20:28) and churches which are of man's origin and unacceptable unto the God of heaven.

In that which we have considered in these writings, there can be no unity. It is nothing more than union, a compromise of just about every principle which our Lord has left us. It is nothing more than disregarding the standard and boundaries given by God, and standing upon the quicksand of man's philosophy.

Truth, the cause of Christ has suffered and will continue to suffer, as long as weak kneed and spineless Christians refuse to contend for that once and for all delivered faith (Jude 3).

If that for which bro. Ketcherside contends is accepted by the church today, our children's children will have no concept whatsoever of New Testament Christianity.

Please let it be understood that I have no animosity whatsoever towards bro. Ketcherside personally. I affirm without fear of successful refutation that he is a false teacher; and I stand ready to discuss this with any person, at any time, at any place, whether it be publicly or privately.

The doctrine? I oppose it with all of my being. The man? I pray that he might see the truth and turn from his erroneous teaching.

May God richly bless you as you walk in the light (1 John 1:7).

BARNABAS (Continued from page 11)

ful to me for ministering." Thus we see the end results of the concern which Barnabas had for John Mark.

CONCLUSION

Barnabas was a friend and companion of the

great apostle Paul. He was a Levite from the island of Cyprus. He was highly respected among the leaders of the church and many think he was a most prominent member of the church at Jerusalem. But more than all, he was a true child of God, a Christian who bowed in humble submission to his Lord, and practiced pure and undefiled religion.

THE PRAYER OF HANNAH (Continued from page 9)

II. 2. Continued

relates to the name of the Lord, who dwells in His chosen place in the sanctuary, and is the expression of the remembrance of this name before the Lord. In the sacrifice worship is presented to the Lord as the act by which the offerer brings himself and all that he has to the Lord.

3. If the Law given by God to Moses had been observed, Elkanah would (unless he was now more than fifty years of age, which seems unlikely) have been required to officiate in his turn in the service of the tabernacle (See Num. 8:24-26). That he did not do so is only one evidence among many, of the low state of religion at the time.

4. "Lord of Hosts," (Jehovah Zebaoth). Here first used as a Divine name. It represents Jehovah as ruler of the heavenly hosts, i.e.; the angels (Gen. 32:2) and the stars (Isa. 40:26); it is simply applied to Jehovah as the God of the universe. This appellation occurs sixty-two times in Isaiah, sixty-five in Jeremiah.

5. Shiloh, i.e. "Rest". The tabernacle was set up here in the days of Joshua (Josh. 18:1). Its position is described in Judges 21:19. This quiet place, situated on a hill (Psa. 78:54), was the scene of the mighty revolution brought about in the history of the theocracy by the call of Samuel to be the prophet of God and by the overthrow of the priestly house of Eli.

III. Verse 4 - The whole family took part in the feast of the peace-offerings.

That this sacrifice was a praise or thank-offering (Lev. 7:15) is clear from what follows. "Portions" - of that part of the peace-offerings which belonged to them that offered. This was the whole, except the fat, which belonged to the Lord, and the breast and the right shoulder, which belonged to the priest. This feast was intended to be of a joyful character (Deut. 12:12; 16:11).

IV. Verse 5 - "A worthy portion," probably means a mode of expressing favor (Gen. 43:34). "The Lord had shut up her womb." Childlessness was not only held to be a misfortune, but a Divine punishment (Gen. 19:31; 30:1,2,3).

V. Verse 6 - "Her adversary," i.e., Peninnah.

- VI. Verse 7 - Every year Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion.
- VII. Verse 9 - "Temple," or palace, so called not on account of the magnificence of the building, but as the dwelling place of the God-king of Israel as in Psalm 5:8.
- VIII. Verse 10 - "And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore."

1. If a woman has prayed with so much importunity to obtain a son from God, how ought we to pray to be His faithful children.
2. That simple Hannah on her knees, with her face toward the tabernacle and the mercy seat, and her lips trembling with her prayer, became the link of a chain in the revival of piety and patriotism in the promise land. Her day of small things was to be succeeded by a life which would shed its blessings upon the chosen people, and illuminate a chapter of Hebrew history.
3. Hannah took the right course of prayer to receive comfort. Paul said (1 Cor. 4:13), "Being deformed we pray."

IX. Verse 11 - "And she vowed a vow. . ."

1. This vow contained two distinct points:
 - (1) That she would dedicate her son to the Lord in a life-long service, while as a Levite he was only bound from the age of 20 to 50 (Num. 8:24, 25).
 - (2) That "no razor should come upon his head," by which he was set apart as a Nazarite for the whole of his life. There is no notice in the Pentateuch of a Nazarite for life; but the regulations for the vow of a Nazarite of days are given in Num. 6:1-21.
2. Of the Nazarites for life three are mentioned in the Scriptures: Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist. The only one actually called a Nazarite is Samson.
3. That the Nazarite vow was essentially a sacrifice of the person is obviously in accordance with the terms of the law (Num. 6:2). See Rom. 12:1,2.

X. Some Practical Observations of our Study.

1. The Book of Samuel takes up the thread of history where the Book of Judges lets it fall, towards the end of the forty years' oppression by the Philistines (1 Sam. ch. 7). The author of the books of Samuel only mentions Eli because his history is so closely interwoven with that of Samuel.
2. Our study has in the main addressed itself to three characters; namely, Elkanah, Peninnah and Hannah.
3. Elkanah.
 - (1) Elkanah means he who God acquired or purchased, and is both in its signification and use a Levite name.
 - (2) He was a man that believed in worshipping His God at the proper time

X. 3. (2) Continued.

- and in the proper manner.
- (3) Even though he was a God-fearing man in several ways, he was living in a degenerate society.
- (4) The contamination of the times rested on him; he had two wives.
- (5) This caused him much discomfort.
- (6) He tried to be a good husband who patiently tolerated the insolent humor of Peninnah, and comforted defected Hannah with words of tender affection.
- (7) As we can not concur with his two wives' situation, we can concur with his attitude. Peter said in 1 Pet. 3:7 - "Likewise ye husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."
4. Peninnah, one of the wives of Elkanah.
 - (1) Had both sons and daughters.
 - (2) She was an adversary to Hannah and a grief to her husband.
 - (3) She provoked Hannah to fret because she had no children.
 - (4) She not only sowed discord at home, but she took it into the house of the Lord (1:7).
 - (5) Peninnah is an example of those who think themselves to be saints because they participate in Holy things and partake of Divine blessings. "For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. 6:3).
5. Hannah - the most devout of the two women.
 - (1) Peninnah may have the more children, but barren Hannah hath the most love.
 - (2) She humbly submitted herself to her husband and to her God. The wife is to cling to her husband in reverence (Eph. 5:31,33).
 - (3) She felt unworthy to partake of the Holy feast, but instead, in bitterness of soul, she poured out her heart unto the Lord and wept sore. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 51:17).
 - (4) Even though she had a loving, kind and considerate husband, she could not find comfort. True consolation must come from Jehovah (Phil. 4:6-7).
 - (5) She not only had the right attitude toward her husband Elkanah, her adversary Peninnah and her God, but she had the right attitude toward her family. If she was to be blessed with a son, she would dedicate him to the Lord's service. What a contrast between this woman, Hannah, and those of 20th Century America!!
 - (6) Let us ponder these thoughts in our hearts as we try to serve our God.

SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL
MAY 11 - 15, 1980

SUNDAY, MAY 11

- 9:00 IS THE LORD WITH US?.....
Charles Williamson
10:00 DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?.....
Alan Adams
6:00 THE CHOICE OF RUTH.....Bill Dukes
7:00 THE FOUR TESTS OF JOSEPH..John Bradshaw

MONDAY, MAY 12

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD (Jer. 1:10).....
George Darling
8:00 THE PROBLEM OF FELLOWSHIP..Buster Dobbs

TUESDAY, MAY 13

- 8:00 EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN
HIS OWN EYES (Judges 21:25)..Ray Peters
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT...
Buster Dobbs
11:00 THE TIMES OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.....
Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 SHALL YE SIT HERE WHILE YOUR BRETHREN
GO TO WAR?.....John Priola
1:45 PREACH THE PREACHING THAT I BID THEE
(Jonah 3:2).....Kenneth Cook
2:30 IMMORALITY - PAST AND PRESENT.....
Jerry Fausz
7:00 RESPECTING BIBLE AUTHORITY.....
Buster Dobbs
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

- 8:00 DEMONSTRATIONS NEEDED.....Elmer Scott
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 PROVIDENCE.....Rex A. Turner, Sr.
11:00 SEVEN APPEARANCES OF JEHOVAH TO ABRAHAM
William S. Cline

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 THE VALLEY OF ACHOR - A DOOR OF HOPE
(Hosea 2:15).....James Pilgrim
1:45 TARRYING WITH THE BAGGAGE..Barry Hatcher
2:30 REBELLING AGAINST GOD'S AUTHORITY.....
Gerald Reynolds
7:00 THE ATTITUDE OF HANNAH, A MOTHER OF
ISRAEL.....Robert Taylor
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

THURSDAY, MAY 15

- 8:00 PERSEVERING PREACHING (Isa. 6:8-12).....
Ernest Underwood
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE TABERNACLE, A TYPE OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT CHURCH.....Robert Taylor
11:00 WILL MAN SERVE GOD FOR NAUGHT? (Job 1:9)
Linwood Bishop

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 WE ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME (Num. 3:30).....
Larry Reynolds
1:45 TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY.....Charles Tharp
2:30 REASONS WHY ISRAEL FELL....Raymond Bush
7:00 MAN'S QUEST FOR HAPPINESS.....
Curtis Sampley
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1980

Unity In Religion

PAT McGEE

PS.133:1 - "HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY."

Unity is wonderful. Unity is one of the most important words in the human language. Unity in anything is important but especially in religion.

But there are many, many people who never consider disunity in Christianity harmful, dangerous or even unnatural. Unity in Christianity is something the world knows nothing about so the world takes disunity for granted. It has never seen anything but lack of unity, therefore it could know nothing of true unity. Religious disunity reaches into homes and keeps families from being close and marriages from being happy. Nations have actually gone to war because of religious disunity. Every facet of human relationships are touched by religious disunity and usually to the man of the street the subject is taboo. But most significantly religious disunity hinders the word of God and is one of the biggest, if not the biggest problem confronted by the Lord's church.

Religious disunity is a major factor in disbelief in God, Christ and the Bible. Religious disunity causes millions to find it extremely difficult to "learn of the teaching whether it is from God" and to "know the grace of God in truth". Religious disunity nullifies the prayer of Jesus in John 17 and actually makes Jesus a liar. Religious disunity causes man to go against inspired teaching. Religious disunity infers that the Godhead is the author of confusion and division. Religious disunity places man's opinions and desires on the level with God's authority. This is what religious disunity does. Not one good thing can be said for it. No one has ever been blessed by it. Never shall any good come from it. It originates from the pit of Hell

and was conceived in the mind of Satan. Its fruit is too evil and the results are so vile that to be called a good and healthy situation is to call God the Devil!

The greatest majority of what is called "Christendom" and even some who call themselves members of the Lord's church will try to explain away and or condone religious division. This is usually done by one of two ways.

1. **COMPROMISE.** Some have vainly attempted to bring about religious unity or to explain away disunity by compromising their beliefs. So many times in the mixed marriage the parties either (a) go to the wife's church (b) go to the husband's church (c) both going to a new church (d) not go to any church at all. For an excellent study on compromise please read again the story of Moses and Pharaoh in Exodus. God had called Moses to bring the Israelites out of Egypt into the land of promise. When Moses asked for permission to lead them out Pharaoh refused (Ex.5:2). So God sends the plagues to change Pharaoh's stubborn will. Then Pharaoh proceeds to make four compromises with Moses (Ex.8:25, 28; 10:8-11,24), but each one failed for God doesn't make compromises with evil and error.

But many have forgotten and think no more of truth than to just offer it in compromise with error. The Ecumenical movement of today is nothing more than to just agree to disagree. God and truth are never considered. There are many religious groups who think they have achieved unity in a union of disunity. They agree to have differences but promise to not make an issue of it. Can God's people accept this kind of unity? God forbid!

(Continued on page 19)

GUEST

EDITORIAL

(USPS 935-520)

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IMPETUOSITY

Bob Howton, Elder

The hunter watched with quickening pulse as the big buck emerged from the brush and started in his direction. Twice he started to shoot, but 500 yards was too far, so he waited. Then as the deer stopped and looked in another direction, he fired and missed. A fisherman felt the tug on his lure and immediately gave a strong jerk to set the hook. He "felt" the big lunker but never saw him. He got away. A construction foreman examined the concrete footing and checked his calender to try to determine if the foundation had "cured" properly. His impatience prompted him to instruct the carpenters to go ahead and erect the building. It looked beautiful when completed, but the strain and weight were too much for the improperly cured foundation. It cracked, then crumbled.

I find it hard to understand how we can look at such simple but realistic parallels in the business and sports world and not learn a lesson which will reflect worthily upon our Christian endeavors. I will be the first to admit that the Lord's Body is plagued with procrastinators and those who believe "we ought to wait and see," but I am appalled at those who exercise no care, no concern, no judicious investigation, no patience, and no wisdom as they flounce from one "unthought" failure to another.

"Prove all things" would dictate caution. "Try the spirits" would impose some serious investigation. "Run with patience" would demand that we forego our immature and spurrious actions. "Sitting down and counting the cost" should eliminate impulsive actions which usually lack proper judgment and mature thinking. "Make full proof of thy ministry" would enjoin planning, vision and careful consideration of the outcome of each Christian endeavor. But alas! Myriad are the poorly planned and hastily executed ideas of mankind, which rob the lost of the message of salvation and deny help to the destitute as the Lord's money is poured down "rat holes" and wasted on "things" which cannot edify or help -- just so some brother can claim he believes in "ACTION".

Church of Christ
Cottondale, Alabama 35453

UNITY IN RELIGION

2. TOLERANCE. Numbers of people will condone religious division under the word tolerance. Either they will just go along with error and false teaching, put up with it, or just plain ignore it. Usually there are three reasons given for this kind of tolerance. (a) It is said that "people are different and that because of this we need different kinds of religious beliefs." Well, weren't people different in the first century? Why didn't the Lord know this and give each kind of person his kind of church? Poor God just doesn't know as much as those who make this claim. (b) Others will tell us that "each church will give a different emphasis to Bible doctrines but all are teaching the same truth and believe the same basic things. One church stresses one teaching more than some other church but all churches actually are united." We even hear people today claiming that "there are different segments of denominationalism who are all in the great universal body of Christ which is spiritual and not visible." This is not only unscriptural but it's horribly illogical. If we will just weigh these words we will find them to be as empty as a balloon. When religious disunity struck the first century church you don't hear inspired writers explaining it away by claiming each segment or group was just giving a different emphasis to truth but each were right and in the larger non-visible universal body of Christ! They said if the teaching varied from the inspired teaching that the guilty would lose their souls and that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God (11 John 9). (c) Then we hear men say that "the differences in religion and the causes for disunity in Christianity are because of varied interpretations of the Bible." These different interpretations are caused by either culture, teachers, parents, religious traditions or heritage, environment or personalities. Each person has a right to his own interpretation of the Bible and interpretation is governed by the above mentioned reasons and therefore religious division could not be wrong. Some will even claim that we cannot understand the Bible alike and be in agreement on its teachings. Those who will be so bold to say this do nothing less than to deny the truth and call God a liar! It was God who said we *could* understand the Bible, agree upon its teachings and all be of the same mind and judgment (1 Cor.1:10; Eph.3:4). You may have your choice, God or man.

There are at least two reasons why Chris-

tians cannot accept compromise and tolerance (as discussed above) as the answer to the religious divisions among us today.

1. Christianity is not a man-made system of doctrines that can be believed or discarded according to the choice of man.
2. God has always demanded unity on *His* terms, not mans. If there is ever to be unity in the religious world it will be because the religious world decides to unite on what the Bible says (*not* as some sarcastically say "on Church of Christ understanding of the Bible") and if they will not do this there can never be true religious unity.

Now do we say these things because we hate everyone or because we feel we are better or smarter than others? Are we making ourselves modern Pharisees by voicing the above words? Do we look down our religious noses at all others and claim to be holier than them? Do we boast that our interpretations (if there is such a thing) are better than all others? Do you find us saying that those in denominational churches are either stupid or insincere? Have you heard devilish men say that "our church is better than your church" or make the claim that "if you're not a member of the "Church of Christ" (as some want to make us say) you'll go to Hell?" Are we running around telling everyone that their mother or father is burning right now in Hell? Some would persuade you that this is our attitude and that we are nothing less than narrow minded bigots.

I speak the truth in Christ (God is my witness). We are saying nothing more than "let God be true." We are not judges but with love and grace in our hearts we want all to know what God says in His Word, the Bible. It matters not if we win a personal victory, but our compassionate concern is for a lost deceived world. The world (denominationalism included) thinks it's right. Would you go on through life without warning them? (Ezek.33). God will judge you if you do.

Brethren let us "speak the truth in love" (Eph.4:15). Don't weaken the truth and don't forget to speak in love. Both are necessary and to leave either undone is to show that you don't love man or God.

N. 5th and Grape
Abilene, TX 79601

THE PRAYER OF HANNAH - PART II

I SAMUEL 1:1-18

Winston Temple

INTRODUCTION:

Hannah was one of the wives of Elkanah who was of Levitical descent (compare the genealogy in I Samuel with those in I Chron.6:22 and verse 33). All the Elkanahs mentioned in 2 Chron.28:7, whose tribe is not stated) were demonstrably Levites, and belonged mostly to the family of Korah, from whom Samuel was descended.

DISCUSSION: In this prayer we have --

I. A Recognition of God's Faithful Performance of His Promises.

1. When a parent promises to meet his child in a certain place at a certain time, and the child is found waiting at the appointed place at the given time, the act is a declaration of faith in the parent's faithfulness.
2. The child's position and attitude denote a recognition of the truthfulness of the parent's word.
3. God had promised to "meet the children of Israel" in an especial manner in the tabernacle (Exod.29:43), "in the place which He should choose to place His name there" (Deut.16:11).
4. Hannah's choice of the house of God as the place whence she would direct her prayer (where she would look up for help in her sorrow) is a declaration that she believed the Divine Word.
5. Her presence there declares that she believed in another Presence there -- even of Him who was known to Israel of old to "dwell between the cherubims" (Exod.25:22; I Sam.4:4).

II. A Recognition of God's Knowledge of the Secrets of the Human Soul.

1. "She spake in her heart, only her lips moved" (verse 13).
2. Speech of some kind is necessary if one human being would communicate with another, and there are some thoughts and feelings which not being capable of being put into words, must remain forever uncommunicated to any earthly friend.
3. In this sense the heart is compelled sometimes to "know its own bitterness" and "no stranger" can "intermeddle therewith" (Prov.14:10). "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of man which is in him? . . ." (I Cor.1:11).

III. Continued.

4. The human body is the means by which the human soul reveals itself, and yet it conceals often more than it reveals. So word is the body of thought; the great means of making known among men and yet it often hides more than it makes known.

"He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit" (Rom.8:27).

5. God hears the "groanings which can not be uttered" (Rom.8:26). Hannah recognized this truth when, without words, she speaks to the Eternal God.
6. By her silent prayer she shows she was penetrated with that sense of the Divine Omniscience which filled David's mind when he wrote, "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and know me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off" (Psalm 139:1,2).

III. A Recognition of Obligation to God Before the Petition is Granted.

1. "Thine handmaid." Hannah was God's handmaid whether the blessing she craved was granted or withheld (Phebe, Rom.16:1).
2. A servant (while he acknowledges the relation) is bound to obey his master's commands - to acquiesce in his will, whether that will always concides with his or not. Jesus is the perfect example. (Peter started his second epistle with, "Simon Peter, a servant..." Paul started Romans, "Paul, a servant...").
3. Hannah was under an obligation to serve Him, whether He fulfilled her heart's desire or not.
4. She admits that her obligation will be increased if God grants the desire of her heart: "If thou wilt look upon Thine handmaid," but she does not make her obligation to God depend upon her prayer being answered, and she does not bargain with God. (Matt. 25:21 -- Good and faithful servant.)

IV. A Recognition of God's Care for the Individual.

1. That system of government and that code of laws are most perfect which take cognizance, not only of a nation as a whole, but of the special need of the individual when it meets the need, not of men in a mass merely, but of each man. This can be done but imperfectly

in human systems. This is not the case in the Divine administration. His laws take hold of the individual man, and His providence works for each one, without injury to any. Each blade of grass drinks in the sunlight and is watered by the showers, as abundantly and as sufficiently as though it was alone upon the earth, instead of being a unit amid countless millions. And so each soul is as much the object of God's care as though He had no other creature to care for. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father, But the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:29,30).

- V. A Very Specific Statement of her Desire.

- VI. A Recognition of the Divine Working in and Above Natural Laws.

- VII. A Dedication of the Desired Blessing to
the Service of the Giver.

1. "If thou wilt give unto Thine handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life."
2. God's gift to her should be her gift to God.
3. The way to obtain any benefit is to devote it, in our hearts, to the glory of that God of whom we ask it. By this means shall God both pleasure His servant and honour Himself; whereas, if the scope of our desires be carnal, we may be sure either to fail of our suit, or of a blessing (James 4:4).

This prayer of the Hebrew woman, Hannah, may serve as a model for all prayers in all circumstances in all ages. It is especially worthy of the study of those who are pleading with God, not for the gift of children, but for the spiritual life of children already given - of mothers whose daily and fervent prayer is put up to God that those whom He has given to them may be in a spiritual sense "sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty."

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"HE LOVES THE PREEMINENCE!"

Gerald W. Miles

Most of the problems in many congregations of the Lord's church today come from a one-man-rule. God never intended for one man to make all the decisions in the church. God placed a plurality of elders over the work and warned them against "Lording over" the congregation (1 Pet.5:3). The elders have no right to force THEIR will on the church. If it is a matter of a "thus saith the Lord", they must obey God. Matters of opinion cannot be FORCED on the brethren.

Congregations which have no elders must do the best they can to carry out the will of God. It is in the "no elders" churches that the "one-man-rule" is most evident. The best way for these brethren to settle matters of church business is in a general business meeting. All decisions must first be scriptural, and second, acceptable to the majority. When one man takes it on himself to RUN the church HIS way, you have many problems in the making. In 3 John 9, John makes reference to a man named Diotrephes. This man loved to have the preeminence in the church. From what John said, we can conclude that Diotrephes made ALL the decisions in this congregation. In verse 10 John points out that Diotrephes was even casting some out of the church if they did not go along with HIS decisions. He was going to either RULE or RUIN. In most cases when one takes this attitude he RUINS. In Colossians 1:18 Paul tells us that Christ is to have the preeminence in ALL THINGS. Diotrephes had placed himself in the position of Christ by taking the preeminence which alone belongs to Jesus. He had no right to cast anyone out of the church since he did not place them in it to begin with. In Acts 2:47 we learn that God adds those to the church who are being saved. No man can cast one out of the church since no man can add anyone to the church.

When one man takes it upon himself to RUN the church, he sins and those who follow him blindly and allow him to have the preeminence sin also. Good and faithful brethren should put a stop to a one-man-rule. They should

stop it whether they have a majority on their side or not. God and one man standing for the right makes a majority. If something is sinful, no majority is needed to condemn it.

In many cases the "ruler" of a congregation has control of the church treasury and spends the money as HE sees fit. HE tells the brethren when to buy something and what to buy. This situation makes me sick to my stomach. Who does a mere man like this think he is anyway? He is not GOD. The members of the church should begin to tell him what HE will do with the Lord's money. They should first get the treasury away from him and then admonish him to repent of his wickedness. In 2 Thessalonians 3:6 Paul COMMANDS the brethren to withdraw themselves from any brother who walks disorderly. If usurping the authority of Christ is not walking disorderly, pray tell what is? If faithful brethren do not stop a one-man-rule, you can chalk up another victory for Satan. Those who allow sin to go unrebuked are contributing to the work of the devil. *Evil triumphs when good men do nothing.* Any congregation with a one-man-rule is not the church for which Jesus died. Why do brethren suffer at the cruel hands of self appointed dictators and never raise up with the sword of the Spirit and sever the hand of oppression? God never intended for His people to be RULED by a mere human as far as spiritual matters are concerned. Those brethren who do not speak out and lend a hand to rid the church of such men are partakers of the evil deeds of these dictators. The Lord does not need "yes men" in the church. He needs men of great faith and conviction who will battle Satan no matter what the cost here on earth. HOW LONG, O LORD, HOW LONG? How long will "good" men sit idly by and let sin run rampant and then gripe and complain about the conditions in the church? WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE? Yes, too many LOVE THE PREEMINENCE but the preeminence belongs to Christ. WHAT WILL YOU DO TO SET THINGS RIGHT???

P.O. Box 670
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IF WE HAD BUT ONE SERMON TO HEAR

Clifford Dixon

It has well been said that preachers as dying men preach to dying men. Some people heard their last sermon last Sunday. Others will hear their last sermon this week. If we knew that we had only one sermon to hear what would we like that sermon to be?

1. We should not want it to be a sermon to sooth our itching ears because this is not soul saving preaching. This kind consists of fables but not the word which will save our souls (2 Tim.4:1-4). The idea of everybody is all right, take your choice, or do what you think is right is not the preaching of the apostles.

2. We should not want to hear a dramatic lesson with theatrical effects to stir our emotions but have nothing for our intellect. The great swelling words of vanity are characteristic of false teachers but are really clouds without water (Jude 12,13).

3. We should want clear and plain preaching of the gospel without any effort made to spare our feelings but which will clearly show us our duty to the Lord. This preaching should include the plan of salvation as found in the Great Commission (Mk.16:15,16; Matt. 28:19,20; Lk.24:46,47). This preaching should rebuke sin and compliment righteousness.

4. We should want Christ exalted as Savior and Lord. This twofold teaching is what causes people to escape the pollutions of the world (2 Pet.2:20). We should want to be challenged to receive Christ as Lord and to walk in him (Col.2:6).

5. We should want to be challenged by this last sermon to greater love (John 13:34,35), greater works, (1 Cor.15:58), closer prayer life (1 Thess.5:17), more meaningful worship (John 4:24), and to a dedicated life of purity (James 1:26,27).

6. We should want our shortcomings to be rebuked and our sins brought out so we would see the need of repentance (Num.32:23; Lk.12:2; Lk.13:3-5). We should want exposed the things that are contrary to the will of God such as the works of the flesh (Gal.5:19-21). God holds us responsible if we do these things.

7. We should want all religious error exposed so we would not be guilty of practicing it. We should want Paul's statement that if any other gospel is preached than that he preached the one bringing the message would be accursed (Gal.1:8). The idea of faith only saving should be shown by James 2:17-26 to be false. The doctrine of praying through should be shown by Matt.7:21-23 to be false. Any other false way can be exposed in the searchlight of the word of God.

8. We should want chapter and verse preaching from the word of God. Peter's sermon on Pentecost day had quotations from Joel 2:28-32; Ps.16:8-11; 2 Sam.7:11,12; and Psalms 110:1 (Acts 2:14-36). Every sermon preached by an apostle or one the apostles laid their hands upon was chocked full of scriptures. They showed that the New Testament was a fulfillment of the Old Testament. They gave an authoritative gospel because they were inspired and they proved beyond any shadow of doubt what they said by the scriptures. The only authoritative preaching today is the unbiased preaching of the word of God.

9. We should want that last sermon to have a tender appeal to obey the Lord. As Paul stated, "Knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men" (2 Cor.5:11). On Pentecost day Peter answered their inquiry with "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Then he with many other words testified and exhorted them to save themselves from that untoward (crooked) generation (Acts 2:40). The Lord instructs his servants to go out into the highways and hedges, and compel men to come in (Lk.14:23). The closing chapter of the Bible states, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

In short, if we had but one sermon to hear we would want that sermon to include the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

P.O. Box 507
Jay, FL 32565

SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

MAY 11 - 15, 1980

"THINGS WRITTEN AFORETIME"

SUNDAY, MAY 11

- 9:00 IS THE LORD WITH US?.....
Charles Williamson
10:00 DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?.....
Alan Adams
6:00 THE CHOICE OF RUTH.....Bill Dukes
7:00 THE FOUR TESTS OF JOSEPH..John Bradshaw

MONDAY, MAY 12

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD (Jer. 1:10).....
George Darling
8:00 THE PROBLEM OF FELLOWSHIP..Buster Dobbs

TUESDAY, MAY 13

- 8:00 EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN
HIS OWN EYES (Judges 21:25)..Ray Peters
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT...
Buster Dobbs
11:00 THE TIMES OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.....
Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 SHALL YE SIT HERE WHILE YOUR BRETHREN
GO TO WAR?.....John Priola
1:45 PREACH THE PREACHING THAT I BID THEE
(Jonah 3:2).....Kenneth Cook
2:30 IMMORALITY - PAST AND PRESENT.....
Jerry Fausz
7:00 RESPECTING BIBLE AUTHORITY.....
Buster Dobbs
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

- 8:00 DEMONSTRATIONS NEEDED.....Elmer Scott
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 PROVIDENCE.....Rex A. Turner, Sr.
11:00 SEVEN APPEARANCES OF JEHOVAH TO ABRAHAM
William S. Cline

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

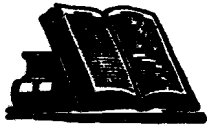
- 1:00 THE VALLEY OF ACHOR - A DOOR OF HOPE
(Hosea 2:15).....James Pilgrim
1:45 TARRYING WITH THE BAGGAGE..Barry Hatcher
2:30 REBELLING AGAINST GOD'S AUTHORITY.....
Gerald Reynolds
7:00 THE ATTITUDE OF HANNAH, A MOTHER OF
ISRAEL.....Robert Taylor
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

THURSDAY, MAY 15

- 8:00 PERSEVERING PREACHING (Isa. 6:8-12).....
Ernest Underwood
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE TABERNACLE, A TYPE OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT CHURCH.....Robert Taylor
11:00 WILL MAN SERVE GOD FOR NAUGHT? (Job 1:9)
Linwood Bishop

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 WE ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME (Num. 3:30).....
Larry Reynolds
1:45 TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY.....Charles Tharp
2:30 REASONS WHY ISRAEL FELL....Raymond Bush
7:00 MAN'S QUEST FOR HAPPINESS.....
Curtis Sampley
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL" Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 4

APRIL, 1980

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Darling passed away on March 27 in his home in Fort Deposit, Alabama. The May issue of the DEFENDER will be a memorial issue to brother Darling. In the meantime, we are carrying the following article which was the last one we received from his pen.

"HIT -- BUT BE SWEET"

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

Quite often I hear the old bromide slithering off the tongue of some backboneless member of the church, "You need to learn how to disagree without being so disagreeable!" This usually happens after you have locked horns with some of the denominational preachers of the town, or called some brother to tow that has stepped out of line doctrinally. One would almost wonder if such a statement was from the scriptures and if he should not be ashamed to get right in and dig the Devils in any of their false doctrines. According to some it would be perfectly alright to just smile sweetly and do nothing to stir up his opponent.

I'll go along with this attitude if we are disagreeing over which is the best road to take to California; but where it is a matter of doctrine, where it affects the church and the souls of men are jeopardized, and will be misled for possibly centuries to come as a result of it, I can't understand how any Christian can say, "We can disagree but we don't have to be disagreeable."

Important issues demand HARD HITTING, and hard hitting makes things disagreeable. Ask Elijah on Mt. Carmel. The issue was between idolatry and the God of heaven. It was not something to smile sweetly about and not get ruffled. Of course old Elijah handled the situation in an uncouth manner when he dealt with those devils in such a way that they knew they had been DIS-agreed with. In fact he was getting down right sarcastic when he called out to the poor deluded "fire worship-

pers" and said: "Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is musing, or he has gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure, he sleepeth and must be awakened." Surely Elijah knew they were honest and sincere! They continued their ceremonies, crying, cutting themselves til the blood gushed out. Brother you can be sure that Elijah's speech did not make for conciliation. He wasn't trying "to get along with" these false teachers. It was war unto the death as far as Elijah was concerned. And brethren, you know Elijah must have been doing something right. God blessed him, when he took the whole bunch down to the brook Kishon and "Slew them there". I doubt very much if the prophets of Baal thought Elijah was trying to be agreeable.

Certainly Elijah was not orthodox according to my "Disagree but don't be disagreeable" brethren. Those false prophets didn't like it to be sure, and neither did old idolatrous, ungodly Jezebel. It meant war from then on and a threat upon his life; but God was with him.

Go back and ask another God-blest character, Micaiah, as he is called before Ahab and Jehosaphat. He and Ahab were in disagreement, but Micaiah didn't try to be agreeable with Ahab. His message was a disagreeable message. When Zedekiah smacked him on the cheek, it was disagreeable. When he called him a liar it was disagreeable, but God blessed Micaiah's prophecy and it all came true to the letter.

[Continued on page 27]

Editorial

PRAYERS at the LORD'S TABLE

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Men who lead public prayer have a special responsibility to think what they are going to say so that the congregation can follow them and say "Amen" to what is said. Not only should the prayer be THOUGHT OUT, it should also be SPOKEN OUT. Too many times this writer has had trouble hearing the public prayer from the front pew.

At this writing I am concerned about the prayers that are offered at the Lord's table. It is my conviction that too often our prayers are *stereotyped*. They come forth as mere words that have been memorized through the years and instead of being the thoughts of the person they are the sweet soundings and words that have been handed down through the generations. We have all noticed this. When brother "A" was called upon to pray, we knew, word for word, what he would say. When brother "B" was called upon to lead the prayer the same was true of him. I have seen children that had memorized the prayers of certain brethren and made a game of quoting them! Brethren, this ought not to be.

The prayers at the Lord's table are glaring examples of lack of thought and memorized words and phrases. How many times does the second prayer begin, "In like manner, Father. . ." And 9 times out of 10 there has been no manner expressed in the first prayer or in a short talk at the table. Admit it brethren, practically all of us are guilty of this.

In our prayer at the Lord's table we usually take time to tell Christians what the bread and the fruit of the vine represent, as if they didn't already know. If we are not doing it for the sake of Christians then who are we doing it for? Must we tell God what the items represent? Must we preach to the non-Christian in the prayer?

How often do we address our prayer to God and then talk of Him shedding His blood on the cross? How often do we ask God to bless the bread and the fruit of the vine? This was done nearly 2,000 years ago. Why not follow the Lord's example? When He took bread, He gave thanks. We should do the same; Give thanks for the bread and the fruit of the vine.

The prayer at the Lord's table is not the time or place to pray for "all the sick and afflicted the world over." It is not the time to pray for "all the missionaries on foreign soil or in difficult fields." This is *not* the time for a general prayer. It should be a specific prayer for a

specific purpose.

Brethren, please do not misunderstand me. *My writing here is not to rebuke. My purpose is not to make fun.* God forbid that I ever do such a thing! I am concerned about our worship. Men only improve when they are taught to do so. Don't let what has been said cause you to become so self conscience that you cannot lead a prayer. On the other hand do try to improve in your leading prayer. All of US have room for improvement.

"FIGHT -- BUT BE SWEET"

When the Jews said to Jesus, "Thou bearest false witness of thyself; thy witness is not true," they were calling him a liar! This would indicate they were not in agreement. Jesus in turn called them "Bondservants of sin" and then accused them of trying to murder him because he had told them the truth. To make the disagreement more disagreeable, he added, "You are of your father the devil. . . ." Try to figure out from that whether Jesus was trying to be agreeable with those fellows. They called Jesus a Samaritan, (the dirtiest thing they could think of). That sounds as though two cannot walk together unless they be agreed, and BE AGREEABLE if each actually believes what he is affirming. No sir, when Jesus was dealing with misleading men who persisted in doing wrong, their disagreement was not agreeable.

Stephen, before the High Priest and the Jews gives us another little incident that the Holy Spirit records as being a disagreement that came to be almost DIS-agreeable. They were in opposition to the cause he represented. He gave them a great summary of the history of Israel...Now read the CONCLUSION of his sermon! That speech was not intended to be agreeable!

Brethren, if a man is worth arguing with, then he is worth arguing with, with all your might. If an issue is worth discussing, it is worth giving it everything you have. If you do that, you may not be agreeable. In fact, you may be downright disagreeable, but at least you have tried, and that earnestly, to let the opposition know they are wrong. They may bite you and stone you like they did Stephen. They may crucify you like they did Christ, but you'll be in good company.

I've been preaching the gospel for thirty eight years and I have never seen so great a tendency on the part of the members of the church to compromise the truth.

"PREACH THE WORD, BROTHER!"

A STATEMENT

SINCE THE FIRST ISSUE IN FEBRUARY, 1972, THE DEFENDER HAS EXERTED A WHOLESOME AND WIDESPREAD INFLUENCE. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND AIMS AS THEN SET FORTH BY THOSE WHO STARTED THIS PAPER ARE AS TIMELY NOW AS THEN. THE SAME IDEALS AND LOFTY PRINCIPLES SHALL CONTINUE TO GUIDE ITS COURSE.

WITH LIMITLESS CONFIDENCE IN THE INSPIRATION, ALL-SUFFICIENCY AND AUTHORITY OF THE WORD OF GOD, WE STAND AND SHALL CONTINUE TO STAND.

THROUGH THESE PAGES WE PROPOSE TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE, POSITIVELY AND AGGRESSIVELY THE PURE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. WE SHALL WITHSTAND AND OPPOSE ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT IS CONTRARY TO THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE ENCOURAGEMENT THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED AND THE SUPPORT YOU HAVE GIVEN. WE EARNESTLY APPEAL TO LOVERS OF TRUTH EVERYWHERE FOR THEIR CONTINUED HELP AND SUPPORT. WITHOUT YOU THE DEFENDER COULD NOT CONTINUE. THE COST OF PAPER CONTINUES TO RISE LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE. SOME OF YOU HAVE BEEN ON OUR MAILING LIST SINCE THE BEGINNING, BUT WE HAVE NEVER RECEIVED A CONTRIBUTION FROM YOU. SURELY THIS HAS BEEN JUST AN OVERSIGHT ON YOUR PART. WHY NOT SEND US A CHECK TODAY?

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

Brother Darling wrote the above on March 11, 1980 before he passed away that month.

Have You Read Your Bible Today?

WINSTON C. TEMPLE

Several years ago, this writer preached in a meeting for the then existing Parker church of Christ in Panama City, Florida. Since that time, the Parker congregation merged with the Springfield congregation thus forming the Eastside church of Christ. During the meeting with the Parker congregation, a brother made an announcement concerning a fellowship dinner that was to be sponsored by one of the congregations in the city. Brother Franklin Camp was to be the guest speaker. Having heard so much about brother Camp, this young preacher was determined that he would not miss such an opportunity to hear this faithful gospel preacher. It had been said by many that brother Camp had studied the Bible on the average of five hours each day for the past thirty years or more. After hearing him speak, this writer can certainly attest to the validity of the story told about him and his daily Bible studies. After all the guests had finished their meals, the master of ceremonies introduced brother Franklin Camp. Rising very slowly, brother Camp apparently looked directly at this writer, who at that time was a very young preacher, and asked: "Have you read your Bible today?" The young preacher was perplexed. He had read his Bible the day before, for he had just completed the meeting with the Parker congregation, but he had not read it that day. Immediately, he began to rationalize as to why he had not read it that day. As brother Camp continued to quote and explain one passage after another, the young preacher's reasons for failing to read his Bible vanished into guilt. More than likely brother Camp will never know the lasting impression which he made on that young preacher that night and as one can see that after many years it continues to serve as an admonition to read the Book every day.

Brother Camp was careful to emphasize that to properly read the Bible involved far more scrutiny than just a casual glance. *Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* shows that the word "read" means primarily, "to know certainly, to know again, recognize." The apostle Paul writing to the church at Ephesus said: "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Eph. 3:3,4).

On one occasion when Jesus' disciples were

hungry, they on the sabbath day went through a field and began to pluck the ears of corn and began to eat. The Pharisees rebuked Jesus for allowing his disciples to do what they deemed to be an unlawful action. Jesus replied: "...Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless: But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Matt. 12:3-8).

Jesus was showing them that they had not read the Scriptures with understanding. The case of David eating the shewbread showed that necessity rose higher than the ceremonial letter of the law. The case of the priest profaning the temple showed that even though they respected the ceremonial law, they profaned the temple by the very fact that the sabbath day was the busiest of all days as far as their labor was concerned. The thought is: If the priests in the service of the temple can break the letter of the law and be blameless, how much more can the disciples of him who is Lord of the temple do so in his service and by his authority? The argument, "...But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless," is that mercy toward these hungering disciples was more acceptable to God than sacrifices at the altar; though sacrifice was the crown of all Jewish rites. The quotation is from Hosea 6:6, and is also quoted in Matt. 9:13. It shows that all our forms, rites and ceremonies are worthless before God unless we have kind and merciful hearts. The sabbath was made for humanity, the Lord of humanity is Lord of the sabbath; therefore, he had the right to make any change in it, in the interest of mankind, that seemed to him wise.

On another occasion the Pharisees came tempting Jesus. They said: "...Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them

(Continued on page 30)

THE KIND OF PREACHING NEEDED TODAY

JOHN G. PRIOLA

Ours is a day and time when the church in many places is having problems. No doubt the reasons for such are numerous. For example, it could be said that people are apathetic; they are not as receptive to truth today as they once were. There is a great deal of truth in that. Many people don't want to study things eternal. But when all is said and done, one of the reasons we are having problems is due to the kind of preaching that is being done. Without the proper kind of preaching the church will not remain strong. Whether we like it or not and whether we accept it or not, there is still a tremendous amount of truth in the statement, "As goes the pulpit so goes the church." Realizing that the kind of preaching that is done is so important, what kind of preaching should elders and members demand of their preacher?

First, they should require of him that his preaching be Christ centered. It needs to be Christ centered because God's plan for redeeming man is centered around the Christ. In fact it has been said that the Christ is the center and circumference of the Bible. Take your Bible and examine the preaching that is done in the book of Acts. From beginning to end you will find that it is Christ centered. All throughout you have it being emphasized that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God. As an example, in Acts 17:2-3, Luke records, "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." Oh how we need to get back to preaching that is centered around the Christ. When we get back to Christ centered preaching, we will get back to growing spiritually and numerically. What we need to do is repent and give up our twenty to twenty-five minute speeches on social issues and get down to the brass tacks of preaching Christ. When we do, we will be preaching the cross; we will be preaching the church, without shame for doing so; and we will be preaching the plan of salvation without any hesitancy. But in many places we do not preach a Christ centered message like years gone by. And who is to blame? Preachers this would never have happened if we would have kept our noses in the Book. It would never have happened if we had not yielded to the whims of the brethren. Elders this would not have happened if you would have demanded study out of your preach-

ers instead of "pastoring". Members this would not have happened if we would have studied the Bible like we should have. Brethren, let us get back to requiring Christ centered preaching.

Next, let us get back to preaching that is filled with Scripture. We need to realize that we have no more of a right to simply make assertions than do people in denominationalism. Our sermons need to be filled with evidence, and the evidence that they need to be filled with is Scripture. Go back to the book of Acts again and see how those great men used scripture. It does not matter how many people agree with our position, it does not matter how many scholars agree with us, and it does not matter how many "prominent" brethren agree with us, if we don't have a passage of scripture to support what we teach them something is wrong. I am not saying that it is wrong to quote people; I am saying that we first need scripture quoting, then people quoting. Let's have less of Ann Landers and more of Paul, less of the liberal theologians and more of Peter.

Furthermore, we need preaching that is distinctive. Something is wrong with our preaching when those same lessons could be delivered in a denominational church and not create a stir. We need distinctive preaching to the point that names will be called if necessary. Brothers and sisters, what is your reaction when the preacher makes reference to denominations from the pulpit and actually calls them by name? Are you displeased, upset, or embarrassed? If so, shame on you.

Elders what are your reactions when the preacher makes such references? Do you call him in and demand of him that he not do so? I know of some elderships who have. Jesus called denominational names. The Pharisees and Sadducees were religious sects in the days of our Lord. In Matt. 16:6, He said, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Some brethren would have asked Jesus to "tone it down".

There are times when denominational names need to be called. Many people in denominationalism don't know what their denominations teach, and we need to inform them. We need more exposing of the denominations to let people know there is a difference between the Lord's church and all denomina-

tions.

Not only do denominational names need to be called, but there are times when congregations, and individuals, need to be exposed. If the cause of Christ demands it we need to call by name Highland, Crossroads, Lynn Anderson, Chuck Lucas, etc. Granted it is never easy to do such, but the purity of the church rests upon our doing so.

Finally, we need preaching that is life changing. That's the type of preaching Paul did. In 1 Thess. 1:9, Paul said of the Thessalonians that they "...turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." Notice the change. They "turned" from idols to God. We must preach to get people to turn. We must convince them that they are sinners and that God is going to bring them into judgment. Unless people are convinced they have sinned, and that judgment is coming they will not see the need to change their lives. One of the reasons that we don't convert more people than we do is because we preach in generalities. We need to be more specific. We need to preach on what sin is and on what is sin. Our Lord did not hesitate to specifically point out the sins of people. Look at Matthew 23 and see how specific He was. Preaching needs to be life changing and to be life changing it needs to be specific. We must make people see that the lesson applies to them.

HAVE YOU READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY?

made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder" (Matt.19:3-6).

With America's present divorce rate (about one out of every three marriages ending in divorce) it is obvious that its people are not reading the Book; and especially they are not reading it with an obedient heart.

Time and time again the Bible is replete with rebukes and admonitions directed toward us to read the Bible correctly. Observe the following, dear reader:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt.22:29).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a

workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Tim.4:13).

"And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col.4:16).

"I charge that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren" (1 Thess.5:27).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet.3:15).

Notice, if you please, some examples of Bible readers:

MOSES - "...took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Ex.24:7).

EZRA - "...had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10).

JOSIAH - "And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD" (2 Chron.34:30).

THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH - "And Philip ran thither to him and heard him read the prophet Esaias and said, Understandest what thou readest?" (Acts 8:30).

And last, but certainly not least, we should not overlook the noble Jews of Berea who "...received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Brethren, have you read your Bible today?

* **CONTRIBUTIONS** *
* *
* Jerry Lindesmith.....\$30.00 *
* Eugene Walp..... 10.00 *
* Paul Curless..... 12.00 *
* Tom Snyder.....15.00 *

ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD

Gerald W. Miles

We often wonder why the church of the Lord is not making the kind of progress in the 20th century that it made in the 1st century. The Bible holds the key to this question and to every other question of a spiritual nature. The reason the church is not growing now like it did in the first century is because men are not preaching and teaching now like they did then.

In Acts 20:27 Paul said that he had not *"shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."* Much preaching is being done today but little is as effective as it was in Paul's day. WHY? In many cases, it is because the WHOLE COUNSEL of God is NOT being preached. Preachers are pressured into preaching what men want to hear by the threat of being fired if they do not do so. Many members of the church just cannot stand to hear what God said on certain subjects. This is not new, however. Paul told Timothy many years ago that men would *"not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"* (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Those men are present today. They will not hire a man to preach for them unless they consider him a "faithful" gospel preacher and then they will threaten to fire him if he preaches anything which is "controversial". What do they want? They want to be told how good they are and that they need not quit doing what they want to do.

In many cases of pressure against preaching "hard" sermons, those who do not like such cannot find anything UNSCRIPTURAL in the lesson to attack so they do the next best thing and attack the preacher. What is usually said is that the preacher preached the truth but he did not have any LOVE when he said it. HOGWASH! If a preacher preaches the truth, it is the truth even if he did not have any LOVE. While it will be agreed that the attitude of the preacher plays an important part in any lesson, can we say that some lessons are not worthwhile because they were delivered in perhaps harsh tones or a harsh manner? Jesus was rather harsh in some of His lessons. Will any man accuse Jesus of not having any LOVE??? Fess up now brother, you just do not like to be told that you are

wrong and you take your anger out on the preacher! Telling someone they are lost is not an easy task nor a pleasant one. But, IT MUST BE DONE! What kind of words can be used to make this easier? Will it be easier to tell a man he is lost if you are grinning from ear to ear? IT ISN'T FUNNY! Just because a preacher does not laugh his way through a lesson does not mean he has no LOVE. If he really did not have any LOVE, he would not be preaching such lessons in the first place. He would tell men what they want to hear so they could go on to Hell in peace and he would not care in the least!

Any preacher who is worth his salt will not be pressured into pleasing men. He will do what pleases God even if he is fired (Gal. 1:10). The whole counsel of God must be presented to deliver one's soul. Those things which are not easy to take must be preached right along with that which is popular. Church discipline will have to be preached along with the love of God. Pointing out sin will have to be done along with praise for well doing.

The church today is not as strong as it was in the first century because many have not been giving the church the diet it needs. Preachers who shy away from that which the church really needs are destroying the influence of the church. Sin is winked at by the elders and the preacher is afraid to say anything because he might have to move. Is it any wonder that the world around us wants nothing to do with the church? This writer has been "transferred" because of the preaching of unpopular truth. So be it! The word must be preached or men will be lost. The whole counsel of God is needed more now than ever before in our society.

We need to get away from ear tickling preaching and get back to soul stirring preaching. Preachers need to be more concerned with souls than with jobs. Those who gripe and complain about "hard" preaching are the ones who need it the most. When one makes mean and hurtful statements about the preacher, they are hurting themselves more than they are the preacher or teacher. It is high time we preach and/or listen to the WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD!

SIXTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL
MAY 11 - 15, 1980

"THINGS WRITTEN AFORETIME"

SUNDAY, MAY 11

- 9:00 IS THE LORD WITH US?.....
Charles Williamson
10:00 DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THE BIBLE?.....
Alan Adams
6:00 THE CHOICE OF RUTH.....Bill Dukes
7:00 THE FOUR TESTS OF JOSEPH..John Bradshaw

MONDAY, MAY 12

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD (Jer. 1:10).....
George Darling
8:00 THE PROBLEM OF FELLOWSHIP..Buster Dobbs

TUESDAY, MAY 13

- 8:00 EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN
HIS OWN EYES (Judges 21:25)..Ray Peters
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT...
Buster Dobbs
11:00 THE TIMES OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.....
Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 SHALL YE SIT HERE WHILE YOUR BRETHREN
GO TO WAR?.....John Priola
1:45 PREACH THE PREACHING THAT I BID THEE
(Jonah 3:2).....Kenneth Cook
2:30 IMMORALITY - PAST AND PRESENT.....
Jerry Fausz
7:00 RESPECTING BIBLE AUTHORITY.....
Buster Dobbs
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

- 8:00 DEMONSTRATIONS NEEDED.....Elmer Scott
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 PROVIDENCE.....Rex A. Turner, Sr.
11:00 SEVEN APPEARANCES OF JEHOVAH TO ABRAHAM
William S. Cline

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

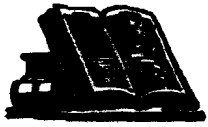
- 1:00 THE VALLEY OF ACHOR - A DOOR OF HOPE
(Hosea 2:15).....James Pilgrim
1:45 TARRYING WITH THE BAGGAGE..Barry Hatcher
2:30 REBELLING AGAINST GOD'S AUTHORITY.....
Gerald Reynolds
7:00 THE ATTITUDE OF HANNAH, A MOTHER OF
ISRAEL.....Robert Taylor
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark

THURSDAY, MAY 15

- 8:00 PERSEVERING PREACHING (Isa. 6:8-12).....
Ernest Underwood
9:00 THE BOOK OF MALACHI.....Roy Deaver
10:00 THE TABERNACLE, A TYPE OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT CHURCH.....Robert Taylor
11:00 WILL MAN SERVE GOD FOR NAUGHT? (Job 1:9)
Linwood Bishop

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 WE ARE ABLE TO OVERCOME (Num. 3:30).....
Larry Reynolds
1:45 TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY.....Charles Tharp
2:30 REASONS WHY ISRAEL FELL....Raymond Bush
7:00 MAN'S QUEST FOR HAPPINESS.....
Curtis Sampley
8:00 THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.....Winfred Clark



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 5

MAY, 1980



George Edward Darling, Sr.

October 5, 1915 - March 27, 1980

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George Edward Darling, Sr.

October 5, 1915 - March 27, 1980

William S. Cline

The week had been a perfect one. Warm spring rains had gently watered the land. Trees were budding and the earth was putting on its fresh, new coat of green. The smell of fresh tilled soil filled the air as crops and gardens were committed to mother earth in anticipation of a bountiful summer harvest. But on Thursday morning of that week the pull of the powers from celestial realms were exceedingly strong and brother George Darling cut the last feeble moorings that held him here and went home.

Like the ripening fruit, his well balanced soul mellowed until the day it fell. The toils of life only served to strengthen his character. He was as meek as a lamb in his dealings with people, but he was as strong as a lion when it came to truth and principle. He was affectionately known far and wide as "brother D." by those who loved the Lord's church. He so unselfishly gave his life to others that possibly he was never met by a man that did not benefit from it.

I first met brother Darling in the fall of 1970. I can safely say that a lifetime of closeness and true friendship developed between us in the precious ten years that we knew each other. I held three gospel meetings where he served as the local evangelist. He held two at Bellview. We worked closely together for about two years when he preached in Pensacola. I shall never forget the joy of the day he moved to town and sadness of the day, when because of his stand for the truth, he was forced to move. He stood by my side in the publication of the DEFENDER from the very beginning. He was present when the first seeds of thought were sown concerning the Bellview Preacher Training School. He was the "key note" speaker for the Bellview Preacher Training School Lectureship each year. We fished together, traveled for the cause of Christ together, sang together, rejoiced together and wept together. Hardly a week went by during those ten years that we did not talk to each other. He was my family's personal counselor. He was my true confidant. I would have trusted him with my soul. He was a true and loyal friend. Words haven't been composed that can tell what he meant to me. My world is not the same anymore. There is an awfully empty place against my sky, since brother Darling took his journey to

eternity.

On numerous occasions I had the opportunity to get a glimpse of the bigness that was in him. On personal matters his heart was big and mellow; but where truth was involved there was iron in his soul. He loved the truth with all of his being and he literally gave his life to the proclamation and defense of it. He preached nearly four-score years. He served churches from California to Florida and from Iowa to Alabama.

He was a powerful preacher. He could draw both tears and laughter from an audience at will. His preaching led thousands to a knowledge of the truth. Knowing the terror of the Lord he could persuade men to obey the gospel. He was the only man to ever conduct a meeting at Bellview wherein someone responded to every invitation of the gospel that was extended. He rebelled at what some today call "gospel preaching". He believed that preaching should be simple, Bible based, plain, pointed and powerful. He never apologized for preaching the word of God. "Preach the word, brother" became one of brother Darling's trademarks. For several years every article he wrote for the DEFENDER and every lecture he delivered concluded with that simple, yet profound exhortation. Many a young preacher was inspired by brother Darling to take a strong, uncompromising stand for the truth. Many pulpits across the brotherhood have a clearer ring for the "old Jerusalem gospel" because brother Darling lived and his influence lives on.

He was a powerful writer. At his funeral I delivered what I considered to be the perfect eulogy to brother Darling by reading from many of his articles which he had written for this paper. His pen was pointed and sharp. There was no crevice of darkness where sin or the sinner could hide from his pen. He possessed the ability to express himself in such a way that it has seldom been equaled. He addressed himself to the problems of the day, and though now being dead he still speaks through his writings. Beginning in June we will reprint several of his articles so that those of you who missed them a few years ago may have access to them now. In those beginning years the DEFENDER only went to a few hundred people whereas today it goes into several thousand homes. People that knew and loved brother Darling have requested copies of his articles and we are happy that we can answer that request in this way.

It is folly for me to attempt to analyze all of the abilities of this great man. But it is rewarding to remember him; however, the multitude of things that flood my mind can never find place even in an eulogy such as this. I remember his analysis of our riding

in a Volkswagon. He said that it was "true togetherness". I remember his stories of preaching the gospel in California in the 40's. Those stories shall always have a fond place in my memory. I remember the first time I heard him close out a service with the booming, "Shake hands and be friendly," Somehow you felt guilty if you didn't do just that. I remember him standing in pulpits and "cracking the whip" against sin. You never wondered where brother Darling stood on any issue. I remember his being behind a lady that was too busy with something to go when the light turned green. He promptly got out and told her to, "Go ahead, lady, that is as green as it will get in Florida." He had quite a sense of humor. I could write pages of his quips and antics. I remember his plainness. He preached once on elders sitting on the "money pot". The next day he met such an elder and told him he should have been present the night before for he had talked about him in his sermon. He then proceeded to explain in no uncertain terms how he had done such. A coward would have never felt comfortable around brother Darling! I remember going to the Freed-Hardeman Lectures with him. I often thought that every preacher and elder there must have known "brother D.". He was that kind of man. When you were with him, even in a crowd, you were with friends. But I then learned why. In the 50's and 60's he was one of the busiest and most popular gospel preachers in the brotherhood. I remember an eldership telling him they needed to have the sermon concluded by a certain time for obvious physical reasons. The next Sunday when that time arrived he promptly stopped his sermon in the middle of a sentence. He knew how to make points stand out. I remember his ability to keep matters in perspective. Once a man was quite upset with brother Darling's sermon and accused him of being told what to preach. This giant of a man, who had quit work in the oil fields of California to preach the gospel, told the brother that the man didn't live who could tell him what to preach. (I believe that.) The man then said that brother Darling had preached his entire sermon right at him, but brother Darling wasn't to be intimidated. He said that he had known a lot of important men and that he didn't know just who this man was, but that he had never known anybody important enough to deserve five minutes of a sermon much less thirty minutes. I remember how he loved seafood. On one occasion he arose at 2 in the morning just to get to Pensacola in time to take Winston Temple and me to a seafood restaurant to eat grouper. I remember how he loved to fish but because of such a heavy work load never did much of it. In the years we were together we spent some precious and memorable hours in a bass boat. I remember how he loved to sing. Sometimes when we were traveling together we would literally sing for hours. His mellow baritone voice

still rings in my memory. I remember the most successful Vacation Bible School Bellview ever had. Brother Darling led the singing (or "played the clown" as he called it). Children loved him as he loved them. And how I remember how he loved to lead singing in the worship. Few men could get a congregation to sing better than brother Darling. His song leading made you want to exceed your ability. I remember his determination. He once told me that if every haint in hell stood against him and if every member of the church turned against the truth he intended to die preaching the gospel. I'm thankful that God granted him that desire.

I remember how he taught respect for gospel preachers, especially those advanced in years. When we had brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. at Bellview for a meeting, brother Darling drove several hundred miles to be present. On the final night of the meeting he came to me and said, "You have been careful to express appreciation for brother Wallace each service, but you need to really show your appreciation and respect tonight. You wouldn't be where you are tonight and you would not have it as easy as you do if it were not for brother Wallace. I think you owe it to brother Wallace and to yourself as a young gospel preacher to really show your respect and appreciation." I shall long remember that night and the great lesson brother Darling instilled in my mind. He was always that way. Standing in the background, helping someone else. He freely gave of himself.

Most of all I remember what he meant to my family. He was like an extra grandfather to my children. My oldest daughter had determined long ago that when she got married "brother D." was to perform the ceremony. He affectionately called my son his "buddy" and Mary had known him since her second birthday. I have few regrets, but one is that my youngest was less than a month old when brother Darling passed away. She will be poorer for not having known and loved and respected him.

It seems like a tragedy that those possessed with all of the virtues that make men great cannot live forever. It certainly seems like brother Darling should have been allotted more than 64 years. This world needs men like him. But there is consolation. He fought his battles; he experienced his heartaches, but he is free from them for evermore, and now he can rest from his labors.

It is strange what a different world this is with him gone. I leaned so heavily upon him that it will be difficult walking with-

out him. Five weeks and five days after his passing I still find it hard to believe he is gone. Seven days from today when the lectureship has its beginning I will find it even harder to accept the fact that he is not standing in the pulpit to deliver the opening speech. His life's sun has set, but there comes back from that set of sun the rays of noble life to enrich the world we live in. I am thankful that through the providence of God I will be able to call him back at will through the medium of memory when I need his counsel. All he ever meant to me he still does; only his fleshly presence has departed. I realize that it is not our place to question; but that it is ours to love, and to honor and to respect and to mourn. We love his person; we honor his memory; we respect his life; and we mourn his departure. It is selfishness on my part that cries out for his personal presence. His golden voice has been silenced and won't be heard again this side of eternity's shore. His powerful pen has been stilled and the scribe's tools have been laid aside. But as long as the printed page endures and as long as our memory can serve our needs to recall his life and his preaching we have a place in our hearts and our lives for him; and he says to every one of us -- "Preach the word, brother."

Life has a strange way of moving on and not pausing for even a moment. Even when great men die. If such were not true this world would never know anything other than sorrow and tears. Thus it was on a lonely hill top in a quiet cemetery, in an out-of-the-way place in Central Alabama that we committed brother Darling's body to mother earth in anticipation of the resurrection; and it was with this hope that we turned from that grave side to face another day, to live as he lived in hope and anticipation of a glad reunion on resurrection morning.

Following is an article that brother Darling had written out on his legal pad which we are producing here. It is a powerful demonstration of what brother Darling believed preaching should be.

Lest you get the wrong impression from these eulogies, we are going to allow brother Darling to speak for himself. He had been asked to prepare a lecture on Jeremiah 1:10 for this year's lectureship. Obviously the article which follows was in preparation for this task. From just a casual reading of this article one can see brother Darling's love for the truth and determination to stand for the right and to encourage preachers to do the same.

We have produced the article in his hand writing so that gospel preachers can have it to treasure.

Preach The Word Brother (Cass -)

In many areas today gospel preachers are being told that they should remain silent on controversial and debatable issues. "We are not bothered with these things here in _____ so why spend our time and yours in discussing them from the pulpit?" Brethren, this is a dangerous as well as a mistaken idea! In more than thirty years of gospel preaching, I've never known a time when it was more urgent for men of valor to be heard. The liberal attitude that is sweeping so many into a swirling sea of man made projects, gimmicks and promotionalism is becoming more popular day by day. Voices are heard urging us to be more tolerant of error and false teachers of false doctrines. We are so afraid of offending someone. This, to me, is so much "hogwash." Have we forgotten Galatians 5:11 and 1 Corinthians 1:18-29. Paul said that the preaching of the cross is offensive and foolish to those who do not believe.

~~Further~~ It is advocated by many that we look to the denomination and their tactics in fund raising and are told, "Their methods of doing things appear to work better in the twentieth century than the obsolete ideas of the first century". This has the familiar ring of 1 Samuel 8:19-20 "Give us a king that we might be like the other nations". The ever increasing desire to walk down the primrose path of fleshly desires and worldly appetites demands that "valiant men ~~for~~ the truth" (Jeremiah 9:3) cry out in protest.

Unfortunately, the men who will take a stand against the Devil's cunning devices are few. Too many preachers of today will refrain from exposing error for fear of offending someone or becoming unpopular and will therefore compromise the truth. In their refusal to take a strong stand against sin they do become more popular with the majority, but Jesus said, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you" (Luke 6:26)

These cowardly preachers receive little, if any, support from the pew warming brethren that demand that they soft pedal the truth. Those who advocate soft preaching have no concept of the gospel. Brother, Jesus was willing and ready to speak on the controversial issues. He lived a stormy life, was ridiculed, beaten and crucified for what He taught and the way He taught it. Read Matthew 23. Our Lord fought Satan, and ~~he~~ didn't use cream-puffs at twenty paces in the duel. There was no let up in His battle for the souls of men. His plan of attack was to throw down and destroy then plant and build. He ~~would~~ have been defeated had he taken "the middle of the road policy" that is advised by our hyper-sensitive brethren today.

Make no mistake about it - there is no such thing as a noncontroversial policy with a gospel preacher, nor with the church. Truth is

antipode to error and truth is the only thing that will free us from sin (John 8:32) When truth is preached, controversy is bound to arise, and when it does, Christians should be ready to defend the truth. (Philippians 1:17)

To gospel preachers we would urge, as did Paul in 2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word!" Not opinions, for preaching opinions ~~will do~~ and binding opinions will do the truth a great ~~dis~~ disservice. Preach the Word, not human speculations or messages of compromise. Stay with the Word, letter by letter and word by word. Preach it boldly and preach it in love (Ephesian 4:15) without departing from or diminishing "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Serve God and forget the praises of men! Rebuke those with ~~st~~ itching ears! Be ready to suffer the consequences. (2 Timothy 3:12) The world hated Jesus because he preached without compromise (John 15) and the world will hate you if you do the same. but remember 2 Timothy 2:12 "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" Don't ~~be~~ ~~to~~ develop a persecution complex, but when it does come, and it will, read Matthew 5:10-12. Remember too, if we do not preach the truth "Woe is unto me" (1 Cor. 9:16)

Preach the Word, brother.

George E. Harding, Sr.

Heart Attack Fells George E. Darling, Sr. Final Rites, Burial Are At Fort Deposit, Alabama

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

Those who came to the funeral service for George E. Darling, Sr., March 29, 1980, never experienced anything quite like it. It was a gray, cloudy, misty Saturday morning outside the packed auditorium at Fort Deposit, Alabama; but inside hope with great expectation filled the place like a victory song.

Instead of giving over to the grief we all felt at the passing of this great and good soldier of the cross, we made the rafters ring with songs he loved - *We'll Understand It Better By and By* and *Victory in Jesus*, led by Ira Y. Rice, Jr.; and *Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All*, led by "Toog" Barganier.

After the singing and the initial prayer (offered by Gerald Miles), a long eulogy was delivered to brother Darling by Ira Y. Rice, Jr., based on their friendship and mutual experiences of some 38 years. After a second prayer (led by John Priola) Ernest Underwood presented a masterly, powerful address on "A Prince in Israel Has Fallen"; and the funeral sermon was preached by William S. Cline, wherein he presented the heart of brother Darling's religious thinking over the past decade as evinced by his voluminous writings in *The Defender*. If the spirit of our departed loved one was situated where he could see and hear what was done and said at this great memorial service, surely he must have been pleased. It was almost as if he being dead was yet speaking to the large number who

came.

And they came. They came not only from Fort Deposit, where he had lived, loved and labored the closing years of his ministry (including the local Baptist and Methodist preachers, who heard the truth as he would have preached it); they came from Pensacola, Florida, and from Meridian, Mississippi, where he preached for many years before that; and they came from New Jersey, Michigan, California and Tennessee.

Following the closing prayer at the building, led by brother Cline, the funeral continued on to the Myrtlewood Cemetery, nearby, where scriptures were read by Daniel Denham and Emery Hardin, and where the final prayer was given by Winston Temple.

At his passing, brother Darling was 64 years of age, having been born October 5, 1915, in the State of Mississippi. He died March 27, 1980, resulting from a massive heart attack in his home at Fort Deposit.

Besides his wife Doris, George is survived by four daughters, Mrs. Darlene Bruno, of New Jersey; Mrs. Judith Clifton, of California; twins Karon and Sharon Darling, of Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee; by one son, George E. Darling, Jr. of Florida - all of whom were present for the funeral; and by six grandchildren.

My True Friend George E. Darling

Linwood E. Bishop

True friendship, the kind that is steadfast and constant, in good times and bad, the kind that continues to grow and flourish under all circumstances and conditions over a period of thirty-eight years is a rare but precious thing. It is something to be appreciated and cherished far above rubies. I am sorry to say that it has not been my good fortune to have enjoyed this kind of friendship with very many men. Of course, like most of you, there have been multiplied thousands whom I have known and loved across the years and whom I considered my friends. Some of these have even grown and become stronger as the years passed; others endured but for a while. But "there is a friend that sticketh closer

than a brother." George E. Darling was such a friend. Without doubt, he was one of the three or four closest and most beloved friends I have ever had. I have often thought of our friendship as being very much like that of David and Jonathan.

Brother Darling was one of the biggest and best men whom I have ever known. Of course, all who knew him know that he was a physical giant, but those of us who knew him well, know that he was even a greater giant morally and spiritually. In all of the thirty-eight years that I have known him, not even once have I ever known him to be little, mean or petty about anything. He was a man of deep-

rooted convictions and strong character and he lived by these principles.

George was a man of great faith. I have seen him through situations and under circumstances which would have shattered and made shipwreck of the faith of many, but not so with George; he never wavered. He certainly was no "reed shaken by the wind".

He was one of the most courageous men whom I have ever known. He seemingly did not know the meaning of fear. He was always ready to stand up and speak out, regardless of the dangers, when the truth and the cause of Christ was at stake. Scholarship, reputation and popularity of others did not scare him. Knowing him as I did, I firmly believe that he would have willingly sacrificed his life

if necessary in defence of the truth.

George Darling was a rather rugged individual in many respects, but he also had the capacity for tender mercy, deep and abiding love and compassion. He had a heart (spiritual heart) as large as his physical body.

If time and space would permit there are many other worthwhile things that I could and would like to say, but perhaps this will suffice for the present. I do want to say, however, that Lillie and I are not able to express in words our feelings of great loss in the death of our beloved brother Darling, but it is our steadfast hope and expectation that we shall meet again.

A Eulogy to the Memory of *George E. Darling, Sr.*

Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

There was nothing "sissy" or effeminate in the makeup of George E. Darling, Sr., who passed from this life from a massive heart attack March 27, 1980, at his home in Fort Deposit, Alabama, where he served the closing years of his long career as a minister of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Taking his example from his Master, he, truly, could be touched with the feelings of others' infirmities; yet he himself was very much a man such as the one who overturned the tables and drove out the money changers from the temple.

Never shall I forget that day in April, 1942, when I first laid eyes on our esteemed brother, now departed. Although he was preaching on weekends at San Luis Obispo, 30 miles south, he was making his living as a butane plant engineer, at Paso Robles, California, where I had just accepted work as a gospel preacher.

It was during World War II. Brother Fred McClung was serving then as a chaplain at Camp Roberts nearby. We had some 30 civilian members of the church meeting in the old Woman's Club Building, in Paso Robles. I was to serve as McClung's civilian contact making it possible to keep in touch with Christian soldiers he served on base, when they would be in Paso Robles on pass over the weekends.

I LIVED IN THEIR HOME

Because of the crowded conditions in Paso Robles at the time, what with many of the wives and families of officers and enlisted men living there to be near their husbands and fathers in training at Camp Roberts, it seemed impossible to find a place to live at first. Consequently, I moved in with George and Doris and their two little Darlings - Darlene and Judy - living with them for several weeks until finally I found a renovated chicken house I could move into. I shall always be grateful for the exemplary hospitality of this wonderful family especially during those early days in Paso Robles.

Even though his work at the butane plant was hard and strenuous, George, who was then 26 years of age, always put his Lord first. I soon became aware that his was an exceptional talent indeed.

"Did I ever tell you that you are going to hell?" I asked him one day. "No, why?" he exclaimed. "Anyone who can preach like you can and does not preach full time *ought* to go to hell," I replied.

He said he would have to talk it over with Doris.

NEW PREACHER AT COALINGA

Well, of course, it was a new idea for

Doris, his wife. She had not married him to be a preacher. Besides he was making what was then considered "good money" - \$300 a month. There was the family support and the children's schooling to think about. But when she finally *did* make up her mind to his being a preacher, she did not hold back; she was in it with him *all the way!*

Meanwhile, I after 14 months of preaching at Paso Robles had returned to Norman, Oklahoma, to complete a degree in journalism at the University of Oklahoma. Thus, in the spring of 1944, while there, here came a postcard from George Darling, postmarked *Coalinga, California*, announcing that he was the newest full-time preacher in the brotherhood - at Coalinga; that he had given up \$300 a month as a butane plant engineer to accept \$60 a month as a gospel preacher; and that he and his growing family were about to starve.

His suggestion was that I come there, hold them a gospel meeting, then see if there was not some way to convince the brethren to increase his support at least so he and his family might live.

THEY RAISED IT TO \$150 A MONTH

Well, just as soon as school was out, I headed for Coalinga. We did indeed have a most wonderful gospel meeting - 15 precious souls being baptized into Christ during the two weeks it continued. George was having tooth trouble, however, and had to have them all extracted the day before the meeting closed. Nevertheless, in as much pain as this caused him, he had plates put in the next day so he could lead the singing for the closing night of our meeting. With one of the most golden baritone-tenor voices I had ever heard, he was by far the best song leader in the congregation; and he was determined that our meeting close out the very best possible way.

With the euphoria of that meeting still thrilling the hearts of the members, on that closing night, I said publicly that they were going to pay me for my work in that meeting; however, that they were going to have a business meeting the following night and raise the Darling's support at least to \$150 per month - or that I would be back for a "free" meeting on Tuesday that they would never forget!

From that day until this I never have been back to Coalinga; however, they did indeed have that business meeting the following night and raised George's salary - to \$150.00. At least he could survive!

SWEEPING OUT BEER BOTTLES FOR LORD'S SUPPER

After finishing my degree at the University

of Oklahoma that summer, next I accepted work with the church at San Rafael, California. While there the work at Central Oakland, California, just across the San Francisco Bay from San Rafael, came open. They asked me to help them find a preacher. I stepped to the telephone, called George; he was interested, and he and his family moved there for their second work.

The church at Central Oakland was meeting in a rented hall over an old beer tavern at the time. Well do I remember the Darlings having to sweep out the beer bottles from that hall every Lord's Day morning in order that they might meet for the Lord's Supper.

While there, it was decided to purchase property for the work in Central Oakland. This was George's first (of many) successful fund-raising efforts for the cause of Christ. He and brother Robert R. Price were so enthusiastic about raising funds for Central Oakland's building that it was said if they met on the street they would take up a collection from each other!

The church met on 20th Street for a time; then an opportunity presented itself to buy the church property on 25th Street. Brother Darling raised the money for that property, too - and the church in Central Oakland still meets there until this day.

LARGEST YOUTH MEETING, YOSEMITE ENCAMPMENT

When I hear of these enormous so-called "Soul-Winning Workshops" nowadays, folks seem to have forgotten that some of the greatest meetings ever held in the old days were perpetrated by George E. Darling, Sr.

For instance, starting in August, 1945, we had begun having inter-congregational youth meetings every Friday night in Downtown San Francisco. We had 55 turn out the first night; 72 the next. Then the brethren at Richmond, across the Bay, wanted it - and 111 came. After that it began to mushroom. Within two months we were having 278; within six months, 725. More than 1,000 came to Sacramento; 1,250 to San Jose. Then George Darling wanted to try it at Central Oakland.

He, as was his custom, decided to pull out all stops. Renting the Oakland Civic Auditorium Theater, which seated 1,952, he set out to fill it. Advertising went out all over the State of California and even into Nevada and Oregon. Brother George S. Benson was to fly out from Arkansas to be our speaker; however, just as the time was almost upon us, he came down with influenza; so we got Albert Lovelady to fly up from Los Angeles instead.

(Continued on page 44)

"A Prince In Israel Has Fallen"

Ernest S. Underwood

As I helped conduct the funeral of our beloved George E. Darling, Sr. I was reminded of Moses as he ascended Nebo's heights to die and be buried by the angels of God. Surely, on that day a great prince of Israel had fallen. However, because of his love for God and God's people the path was smoother for Joshua, his successor, to trod.

When the great and courageous prophet Elijah was taken up, Israel was deprived of the presence of a great man. The bearing of his mantle by Elisha was made easier because of the path he had paved.

When, after fighting the good fight of the faith, the finishing of his course, and the keeping of the faith, the apostle Paul took his departure from this earthly domain, it could be rightly stated that a great prince of spiritual Israel had fallen.

So it is with George E. Darling, Sr. When this great man was gathered to Abraham's bosom on March 27, 1980, a great prince of men had fallen. Like those who had gone before him, he made the path easier for those of us yet younger who must continue the journey.

George was a prince of a husband. His wife Doris was his "Lady" whom he loved and respected as a suitable help-meet. He recognized her as a source of strength and encouragement. When he would become despondent over the actions of some unfaithful member of the church, or by some false teachers who were attempting to destroy the church which he loved so deeply, her calm "Now, George!" would cause him to sit back and reflect. One could always see in those watery eyes of his the deep love and appreciation he had as a husband of his loving wife.

George was a prince of a father. I did not know the older children personally, but I knew them through him. Their pictures were always on his desk, and they were the topic of much conversation between us. He loved them deeply. It was in his office in Alexandria, Louisiana that he made the most difficult request of me that has perhaps ever been mine to perform. In that request he said, "Ernie, _____ and _____ are not as faithful to the Lord as they should be. When you preach my funeral I want you to look right at them and tell them that their father's dying request and desire was that they be faithful

unto death." The love of this father transcends the grave even now in a call to faithfulness. Although I did not know the older children, I did know the twins. They kept George twisted around their fingers and he enjoyed every moment of it. Often when we were traveling together to a faraway lectureship he would be anxious to get home to "his girls". Truly, the children were blessed with such a prince of a father.

He was a prince of a man when it came to encouraging fellow preachers, especially those either training to preach, or just starting out. He loved the Bellview Preacher Training School. He helped in the planning of it, and encouraged young men to attend it. His by-line "Preach the word, brother" was said to young and old alike. We shall miss his cheering words of encouragement.

Perhaps most of all, George was a prince of a preacher. He had a style all his own. On many occasions he gave me copies of his sermon outlines, but it took a George Darling to preach them. His preaching reached down to little children and caused them to develop an appreciation for the Bible. They loved George. His preaching also reached down into the hearts of the adult listeners to bring out the best in them. It cut like a sharp sword into the hearts of the careless and unfaithful. One could not be indifferent to his preaching. There was not an inch of compromise with any doctrine in his preaching.

I never knew of a faithful Christian who knew him who didn't love him. On the other hand, I didn't know of very many hirelings and hypocrites who didn't hate the stand he took. Some of these went to the extent of using their influence to get him fired, but this didn't cause George to quit preaching the truth.

George was a man of great love. He loved the church, his family, fellow preachers, and he loved peace and harmony among brethren. He hated every false way and opposed the same with all his might.

My final words at his funeral were the quoting of Psalm 120:7 and making the application to the life and teachings of George E. Darling, Sr. This passage states, "I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war." And so it was with him.

A EULOGY TO THE MEMEORY OF

Did we fill the auditorium? Not quite. But it took more than three acres to park the cars and some 25 chartered buses that arrived; and by actual count we had 1,640 people in the service that night - by far the largest single meeting the churches of Christ ever had held in the 11 western states until that time.

That was in 1946. The following year Central Oakland was in charge of the great Yosemite Camp Meeting, which, until then, thought 600 campers was a marvelous crowd; however, with George Darling ahold of it, close to 1,500 turned out. In fact, the huge Yosemite encampments now being held each year got their biggest boost the year that brother Darling was in charge.

BEST MAN AT MY WEDDING

That same summer of 1947 was when I finally decided to quit being single and take a wife. Brother Robert R. Price, of Richmond, performed the ceremony; and George Darling was my "best man".

From then on our respective careers as gospel preachers blossomed. George did "local work" in several states, including not only California, but Texas, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama, as well. He held gospel meetings in at least 20 states. Always full of missionary zeal, he not only went himself wherever he was called, but he was forever helping raise support to send others, too. In fact, over the more than 25 years that Vada and I have served as missionaries, we always knew that we could count on the backing, both financially and in every other way, of George and Doris Darling.

Even as late as last year, he arranged for me to come speak to the church at Fort Deposit on behalf of world evangelism - and when we were raising support so the Tommy Alford's could go to Taiwan, he got the church there to purpose \$100.00 per month to this - and really hoped for more!

DEEP CONCERN FOR THE TRUTH

When the anti-cooperation movement first raised its ugly head in California, back in

1946, brother Darling refused to be swayed by it. He contended for the faith then; and he continued to do so all across the years intervening, including the rise of Liberalism among the churches of Christ.

When I first brought out my books against Liberalism, Modernism and Pentecostalism - *Axe on the Root*, Volumes I, II and III - George not only bought them himself, but he encouraged great numbers of brethren to buy them, read them, and then heed their dire warnings of what was happening to the cause of truth. He became a staff writer for *Contending for the Faith* - and was with William S. Cline on *The Defender* from its inception.

George Darling felt that just two things were important in life, when you got right down to it: 1) to live for Jesus while here below, and 2) to be ready to go to heaven when you die. In his view, it would have been better you had never been born than to lose your soul at the end of life's way! Consequently, in all things religious, he was consistent in demanding a "thus saith the Lord" for all that we are, believe, say and do - and those he accounted to be his special friends were all like-minded as he.

NEIGHBOR DONATES FINAL RESTING PLACE

So typical of the way folks who really knew him always seemed to respond to George was the lady across the street from where he lived in Fort Deposit donating a burial plot for his final resting place at Myrtlewood Cemetery. As it happened, he had gone over to visit her husband practically every day last year when he lay dying of cancer. After her husband passed, of course, she wanted to do something to show her appreciation - and this was it.

The lady gave a plot for his burial not only large enough to accommodate brother Darling, but also his wife Doris, when she, too, must go the way of all the earth.

All these things were recounted at the funeral of this great, godly Christian preacher - and no one who heard it could ever question that one of the genuinely magnificent servants of his Lord had passed that way.



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother George Darling passed away March 27, 1980. Following is a reprint of an article he wrote for the DEFENDER which was published February 25, 1972.

In These Days Of Love Everybody

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

The preacher who, in reality, when put to the test, believes nothing, unless it be "live and let live"; usually stands for nothing, or at least for less than he professes to believe. He looks for worldly friendships and makes a special appeal for those in the "money bracket"; seeks the easy way; sails with the wind, floats down stream; is a hail fellow well met; runs in the middle of the road; carries water on both shoulders; smiles a sickly smile and sweetly talks of peace even with the Devil; is blown about by every wind of doctrine; (especially if it looks as though it will be more popular and more money will come in from that source); forms an unholy alliance with the "would be skkolars"; becomes a denominational lover and steers clear of saying anything that might cause one of them to realize that they are lost; refuses to expose sectarianism's damnable false beliefs; invites the "faith only" heretics and "Jehovah's Witnesses" as well as the "Sweet Spirited" Campus Evangelism affiliates to occupy his pulpit; refuses to preach what God's word teaches on marriage, divorce and remarriage; and smiles on the Devil's method of entertaining lost souls. That person cannot understand why a faithful gospel preacher stands out against such things nor can he understand why any preacher would separate himself from a preaching brother of long acquaintance, because of CONVICTION.

Conviction that is built on the word of God does not change in order to advance the man who stands behind what he believes. The

losing of friendships, held dear through the years was the lot of Paul, and it will be the lot of every man who stedfastly refuses to "Let the bars down" and fellowship everybody and everything that claims to be "Sweet Spirited".

Let us remember in these days of LOVE EVERYBODY (even the Devil, if he smiles sweetly and publicized his humility) that God's word is still our standard; and if it means that we lose every friend we ever had on God's green earth for the sake of Christ and His church, then so be it.

Some people can be quite "chummy" with a preacher who is unfaithful to his marriage contract. One who is so nice he cannot live in the same house with his own wife of his youth is dealt with very tenderly. They can show mercy and hobnob with preachers who deny the simple and plain teaching of the New Testament. (Of course under their breath they do not agree with him, doctrinally, yet allow him to address the congregation week after week?????)

They can be merciful and friendly with the biggest compromisers that exist on the face of the earth and do it with impunity, even going so far as to place such on programs in prominent places, thus sanctifying every soul that hears them. They can be kind and merciful with preachers who are as worldly as the Devil. They can be 'tolerate' with those who are rebellious, as factious as Hymenaeus and

(Continued on page 47)

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DEFENDER

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Editorial

The George E. Darling, Sr. Memorial Library

William S. Cline

On Wednesday the 9th of May the Bellview elders named the library of the Bellview Preacher Training School in honor of one of the dearest friends the school has ever had or could ever hope to have. Brother Darling had been a part of the school from the beginning. Even when it was in the "dream" stage he was present looking forward to the time when men trained at Bellview would be preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. When the school began in 1973 his encouragement and financial support was present as it was on a constant basis until his death. He was personally responsible for thousands of dollars being raised for the support of the school. He was responsible for students coming to the school. Many received his personal encouragement to preach the gospel. One in particular is now preaching the gospel in Taiwan. Many of the friends that we call "dear" are such because of brother Darling. He was the strong tie that bound the Bellview Preacher Training School to some of the greatest preachers of our generation. No one ever gave so much, so freely to the Bellview Preacher Training School as did brother Darling.

The Bellview elders have never made a decision which was any more appropriate than to name the library in honor and memory of brother George Darling. Already hundreds of dollars have come into the school to help build this memorial library. One person alone sent \$600.00. Great care is being taken in purchasing works for the library in brother Darling's name. He would surely be proud of every volume. Special emphasis is being made in the area of restoration works and homiletical works. No man loved nor stood any stronger for the restoration than did brother Darling. No gospel preacher ever emphasized more the need for powerful, plain, pure expository preaching than did brother Darling.

Any of brother Darling's friends who wish to do so can send a contribution in his memory to the Bellview Preacher Training School with a notation for the library. I know that there are many gospel preachers who could raise one hundred or more dollars for the library. This way you could help people help others train men to preach the gospel of Christ through the influence of one of the great gospel preachers of our time -- George E. Darling, Sr.

We received, after our May issue, the following

article concerning the death of brother Darling. Because brother McGee was such a close friend we are carrying the article at this time.

"WHEN A GREAT SOLDIER FALLS ---"

PAT MCGEE

When a great soldier falls, the cause for truth suffers. His comrades stand in silent sorrow and mourn his missed presence. We wonder, how can we continue the battle without such a valiant and stalwart defender? Who will move into the ranks and bravely take his place? Such men are not replaced with ease and swiftness. Certainly this is especially true in reference to the passing of my dear friend and brother, George Darling.

Brother Darling was himself a great soldier of the cross and a friend to all who joined him in the good fight for the faith. I never knew a Christian with a kinder and sweeter disposition mixed fully with the strong dignity of set convictions and a bold stand for truth. It is sad that he can no longer be with us in this present battle for the truth of the gospel. We needed him and even in a true sense "he being dead yet speaketh."

I feel personally blessed and eternally benefited because I knew and was greatly influenced by brother Darling. I was blessed by knowing and having fellowship with him in the extending and defending of the gospel here below. He is now blessed to go on to be with the Lord.

IN THESE DAYS OF LOVE EVERYBODY

Alexander, deceitful as the Archangel of hell and as big a liar as Belial. These love everybody advocates who are so merciful with the deliberate and well known wrong doers are so quick to draw the trigger on any person, preacher, elder, deacon, teacher or whatever, who says, "No, I am going to take my stand on the Bible, taking its truth, refusing to become a partaker in their evil ways." There is no MERCY OR LOVE for that man. He is to be a cast out from that time on. He is accused of being evil spirited, narrow minded, egotistical, overbearing, unkind, hard to get along with, having a "fat lip" and "quick pen", and anything else that will do him injury to the one with whom they speak.

Sin is referred to at least 689 times in

the Bible, and the preacher who condemns sin in any sinner, is either going to cause that one to REPENT or REBEL! No true Christian expects to be shown love and mercy from the sinner who is caught in his sins, and rebels and determines to continue in them. According to the word of God, sinners go to hell because they will not repent of their sins, and that includes the lovely and lovable sins of the "heavy contributors" in the church who want to live as the devil but still want to shut the preacher's mouth on the subject of their sins.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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*	Rocky Thompson.....	\$ 5.00 *
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*	J. A. Wakefield.....	5.00 *
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Let's Kill A Chicken

BOB HOWTON, Elder

Way back years ago, my wife was attempting to kill a fat fryer so we could have fried chicken for supper. She grabbed the fryer by the neck and began spinning him around and around at arm's length, without twisting his neck at all. When she threw him on the ground, he lay there befuddled and groggy for a minute or so, then hopped up and ran off. Trouble was--she hadn't killed a chicken--she had only disturbed him for a short while. I recall another incident in which a city girl had always enjoyed fried chicken until she saw her farmer uncle lay a chicken on the chopping block and whack his head off with an ax. Her statement subsequent to that episode was, "I'll never eat another piece of chicken as long as I live."

In dealing with sin, one of the great tragedies in the Lord's Body today is that of brethren (elders, deacons, preachers and members alike) who decide that it's high time to do something about sin in their lives, or in the lives of others, but like my wife's "chicken killing" they start out wrong, continue the same way, and eventually end up wrong. They don't crucify the old man of sin

and death, they merely shake him up a bit as they pussyfoot around issues, soft-soap their way past clear-cut decisions and whitewash the blatant wrongs so they'll appear respectable and acceptable.

Another tragedy is that of witnessing the complete exposition of sin and reacting like the city girl by refusing to accept the simple truth, "If you want fired chicken, somebody has to kill a chicken." If we desire pure and undefiled religion, we've got to "kill" sin where we find it. If we don't have the stomach for that kind of action, we might just as well make up our minds to the fact that we'll be living in and with sin for the rest of our lives.

Visiting a delinquent member and telling him in love that he's wrong is neither unkind nor unscriptural. Labeling wrong doing by individuals or "churches" as sin is what God requires. To do less is to do less than we should. Brethren, let's quit slinging sin "round and round". Let's kill it where we find it.

*Church of Christ
Cottondale, Alabama 35453*

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FIRE AGAIN!

HAROLD THOMAS

My wife sat in the living room waiting for my return. When I walked in, she knew immediately what the outcome of the special business meeting had been without my having to say anything. Both of us had known for weeks that the end was near.

The situation we found ourselves in was a familiar one. In fact, we have come to realize that getting fired is just one of the occupational hazards involved in preaching. It happens to all preachers at one time or another. The only thing different this time was the fact that we had barely gotten all of our belongings unpacked! Usually the "honeymoon" lasts a little longer than a year, but this time it didn't. So once again we will begin the search for boxes in which items can

be packed and we will start scouring the brotherhood papers in search of leads concerning new places to work. Sometimes I don't know how much longer I can continue to put my wife and children through the nerve-racking, heart-rending and outright physical ordeal of moving first here and then there.

This time the basic problem had involved the stand I had taken in regard to such things as social drinking, dancing, females being called upon to lead prayer when there were males present who could and should have taken the lead, plus the fact that I contended that the days of Genesis, chapters 1 and 2 were 24-hour days and that no position in regard to the Genesis record should be held by the faithful child of God which would in

any way weaken or compromise the Biblical record and make it appear to be anything other than a straight-forward account of literal history. Brethren are awfully sensitive about these things in the present age of liberalism, modernism and progressivism which seems to have swept over our brotherhood as surely as the tide sweeps in at the coast.

There was a time when I would sit at home and worry about what getting fired was going to do to my reputation as a preacher. There was a time when I would worry about what I was going to do to feed and clothe my family. Not any more! Somehow, it doesn't bother me like it used to. You see, I have come to realize that Paul's charge to young Timothy as contained in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 wasn't written solely for Timothy's benefit. I have also come to realize that it wasn't written simply because Paul wanted to insure that there would be four chapters in his second letter rather than three. Neither was it written because Paul couldn't think of anything better to say at the moment. Rather, inspiration wanted Timothy and all future preachers to be acutely aware of a situation that would arise in time which would present some difficulties in preaching and proclaiming God's word.

If we are honest in our interpretation of these passages, we will be forced to admit that those to whom Paul referred as being unable to "endure sound doctrine" includes most assuredly members of the body of Christ as well as those in the denominational world. In fact, I believe that the primary group of individuals under consideration was and is those whom I affectionately address as "brothers and sisters in Christ".

Perhaps, at this point, some who read this article will tend to ignore its message on the grounds that it is just another article written bemoaning the lot of a "poor preacher". If this is what you are doing, I plead with you to hear me out before passing judgment on me or the article.

Some preachers need to be fired! Some are not preaching the truth. Some are weak and compromising in their presentations of God's word. Some are morally and spiritually unfit for the ministry. These ought to be fired if they refuse to be corrected in these matters.

However, a man who loves the truth and who contends earnestly for the faith deserves the respect, support and encouragement of elders and all other faithful children of God. Such

a man should be allowed to preach the truth in love but without fear or favor. Godly elders and godly members ought to lift up his hands in the battle against sin as surely as Aaron and Hur lifted the hands of Moses and helped him to hold up his arms when Israel was engaged in fierce battle with Amalek at Rephidim. Members of the Lord's church should love and appreciate the man who has the courage and conviction to stand and "preach the word". His family deserves the security of tenure and the comfort of having roots in a community while working with a congregation.

Fellow preachers, let me address the remainder of my remarks especially to you. I recall very keenly an occasion when Mid McKnight spoke to a group of fledgling preacher-students during a chapel service at the Preston Road School of Preaching. I was seated in the rear of the chapel. I was a freshman student. Though I do not recall all of the things he had to say to us, one thing I shall never forget. He said, "Fellows when you have finished your course of studies here, go out and find you a job in the secular world and support yourself as you preach God's word. If you will do this you will never have to worry about what the brethren will do when they get upset with you for preaching the whole truth and nothing but the truth of God."

I was so young and naive then. I just couldn't believe that brethren would do anything, especially to the preacher which would be anything other than Christ-like. But eight years on the firing line (no pun intended) has opened my eyes and taught me something different. The "special business meeting" and the anonymous letters and the forgotten and broken promises have given me a good reason to stop laughing at statements like those made by brother McKnight. You see, there have been times when I had to seek secular work in order to support myself and my family while I sought to preach the gospel. The apostle Paul was not above "tent-making". Neither am I. Though I am not advocating that we abandon full-time work for this kind of an arrangement, I am saying that knowing how to run a tractor and being able to plow, knowing how to do carpenter work, or a host of other honorable trades, does, at times, come in mighty handy.

Brethren, if the church is to survive in the present age of liberalism, modernism and the open indulgence in sinful practices on the part of some members, "tent-making" could become more fashionable for gospel preachers! Nothing, but nothing, is more important if we are going to be loyal to God, than "preaching

the word". When Paul told Timothy to "... watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" he was surely warning us that "afflictions" would arise and come our way.

Getting "fired" for preaching "the word" is a light "affliction" indeed, when compared

to what God will bring upon us if we preach a weak, watered-down and compromised gospel. In fact, I have come to realize that getting "fired" for preaching the word is an honor! I can stand getting "fired" for preaching the truth, but I don't think I can handle the "fire" I will get if I don't.

119 Palo Alto
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Man's Amenability To Christ's Law, Especially As It Concerns Marriage - Part I

MAC DEAVER

Jesus intended that his law or gospel be preached to all the nations. He said unto his apostles, "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15). During the days of Jesus' ministry God was still working with mankind under two divinely authorized systems of religion, Patriarchy and Judaism. This had never been the ultimate arrangement for which God was preparing. Mankind could not be united spiritually on the basis of these two systems. Spiritual fellowship could not be mutually extended nor received by these two groups, Gentiles and Jews. Mankind could not have a united fellowship with God, because the law of Moses presented a barrier to such. Thus, God through Christ nailed the law of Moses to the cross, and made spiritual unity among Jews and Gentiles a possibility.

Speaking of the Christ, Paul wrote, "For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:14-16).

Patriarchy was a religious system by means of which no Gentile could actually be saved (in the ultimate sense), because it was a law system. As such it imputed sin and made possible death's reign (Rom.5:12-14). Judaism was a religious system by means of which no Jew could really be saved (in the ultimate sense), because it, too, was a law

system (Rom.7:7ff; Gal.3:11,12).

What man needed was a grace system, not a law system. Both the Jew and the Gentile, to be saved, needed more than the law systems under which they lived. They all, as do we, needed the blood of Christ which made possible the last divinely authorized religion, Christianity - God's grace system for all mankind.

Thus, in time God made it possible and necessary that the Jews and Gentiles come out from under their respective laws, and to submit themselves to the ultimate grace of God in the religion of the Christ, for God was extending, in this final divinely authorized religion, ultimate salvation to all men (Titus 2:11-14).

In this chapter, attention will be focused upon three particular matters. First of all, it shall be pointed out that all men became amenable to the law of Christ in principle as the gospel progressed ethnically. Secondly, it shall be discussed that all men became amenable to the law of Christ in practice as the gospel progressed geographically. And thirdly, attention will be given to the problem of apostolic understanding of the law of Christ as the divine binding law upon all men.

THE GOSPEL IN ETHNIC PROGRESSION

Luke in Acts 1:8 gives what could well be considered the book of Acts in capsule. This verse gives the brief outline according to which the gospel advanced under divine guidance. It is a verse which indicates that

the gospel would not cover the earth so immediately as to make it automatic that all men would become amenable to it on the day of Pentecost. Rather, the verse points out that the progress of the gospel throughout the world would be a gradual process. Ethnic progression would include the gospel's going to the Jews (in Jerusalem and Judea), the Samaritans (in Samaria) and to the Gentiles (in the uttermost part of the earth).

In Acts 2 God shows that all Jews are now under the authority of Christ's law, in principle. It is God's will that all the Jews be taught the gospel message. But, not all Jews are present on Pentecost. It will take time for all of them to hear. But the point is made in Jerusalem that the message of Christ is for the Jews (Acts 2:39). Proselytes (non-Jews who have accepted Judaism), are also included with the Jews as under the New Testament law. Paul's policy, after the conversion of the first Gentile (Acts 10) was to enter a town and preach to the Jews first and then to Gentiles (Acts 13:46; 17:1-4, 10-12, 16-22; 18:5,6, etc.). It is very significant that God chose the day of Pentecost as the day on which to establish the church, because on that day Jews from every nation under heaven were present in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5). This circumstance greatly facilitated the spread of the gospel, as quickly as possible, throughout the Jewish community. The persecution against the church at Jerusalem contributed to the spread of the gospel among the Jews also (Acts 8:1-4; 11:19).

The gospel reached the Samaritan camp in Acts 8:5. Thus, all of these relatives to the Jews became in principle amenable to the gospel for the first time.

Finally, in Acts 10 the gospel is preached to a Gentile and his household, thus proving that Gentiles were intended by God to come under the umbrella of the gospel (Acts 10; 11:18). The church at Antioch of Syria contributed greatly to the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles (as well as Jews) in supporting the word of Paul (Acts 13:1-3), who had a special mission to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:8).

THE GOSPEL IN GEOGRAPHIC PROGRESSION

In the previous section the point was made that God showed that all Jews (Acts 2) and Gentiles (Acts 10) were in principle amenable to the gospel. In this section the point will be made that each man (Jew or Gentile) became amenable to the gospel in practice (actually) as the gospel became accessible to him.

All the Jews present on Pentecost of Acts 2

became amenable to the gospel. But the Jews not present could not be held accountable for that which they could not possibly have learned as yet. The same is true in regard to the Gentiles. Cornelius and his household became amenable to the gospel in Acts 10. But all Gentiles could not be said to be accountable to the gospel in actuality, for the simple reason that it was utterly impossible for the Gentile world to be aware of the gospel message immediately at or after the conversion of Cornelius' household. God does not require the impossible. And it would have been impossible for the Gentile world to have known immediately what Cornelius and his household found out by God's miraculous intervention, that is, that Gentiles were to become one with the Jews in the church. It would take time for that message to be carried throughout the Gentile camp.

A good example of some Gentiles becoming aware of the gospel for the first time is the case of the Athenians (Acts 17:16-34). All Gentiles had, up to the time the gospel reached them, been responsible for worshipping the true God of heaven, even though they did not have a written revelation from him (Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:20,21). They were without excuse for serving the creature rather than the creator. Yet, in Acts 17:30 to the Athenians Paul declared, "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." Is Paul saying that God had been excusing Gentile ignorance respecting the worship of the one true God? To answer in the affirmative would be to take a position that contradicts Acts 14:17 and Rom. 1:20,21. Well, what ignorance was being overlooked by God? It was the ignorance of that which had not been revealed to them, that is, the gospel message which was being taught to them for the first time by Paul. They had not been accountable to the law of Christ because the gospel had not been revealed to them. Thus, their ignorance of it was an excusable affair. (Their idolatry was not, for it was in violation of moral law.) But now, through Paul, God was declaring to these Athenian Gentiles the same message being delivered to other Gentiles and Jews, that is, the gospel of Christ, the acceptance or rejection of which they would be held accountable.

In this transition period in which Jews were being brought out from Judaism into Christianity and Gentiles were being brought out of Patriarchy into Christianity, it is interesting to note that the gospel was finding people in varying spiritual conditions. The gospel came to Jews and proselytes who were not being faithful to Judaism, and, hence, stood in need of repenting of their sins (Acts 2:38). The gospel came to Jews

and devout proselytes who were being faithful to Judaism and who were thus "urged to continue in the grace of God" (Acts 13:43). The gospel reached Gentiles who were not being faithful to their patriarchal system (which evidently consisted primarily of moral law, Rom. 2:14,15; Acts 14:17; Rom. 5:14) and, therefore, needed to repent (Acts 17:30,31). And, finally, the gospel reached Gentiles who were being faithful to God, and who were saved by the gospel in the sense that they were being² pulled off the "sinking ship of Patriarchy"² (Acts 10).

It also needs to be observed that as the gospel came to these four groups of people, it found them in varying marital conditions. The gospel came to Jewish men who were likely living with a wife other than the first, with the first wife having been put away other than for fornication during the time when God suffered such to be the case (Matt. 19:3-8). This may well explain why none on Pentecost (as far as we know) was told to put away his wife. This may further explain why none else in the book of Acts (as far as the record shows) was told to put away his wife before becoming a Christian. The reason for the absence of such a demand would be that men lived under the tolerance or suffering of God during the transition period (from Judaism to Christianity for Jews and from Patriarchy to Christianity for Gentiles) up until the time the gospel became accessible to them, at which point their heretofore divinely tolerated marriages would be sanctioned in the Christian period due to the time and circumstances in which the marriages had (with God's allowance, Matt. 19:3-8) taken place. A transition period from one divinely authorized religious system to another involves certain complexities which do not characterize non-transition periods. When one suggests that there is nothing in the religious literature of the Ante-Nicene period which would indi-

cate that those being taught the gospel were instructed to change their marital conditions, he ought to consider (1) the transition period up to 62, 63 A.D. and (2) that not all Ante-Nicene brethren did the right thing.

If anyone on Pentecost had been living in a marital condition or sexual relationship which God disallowed in all periods (Patriarchy, Judaism, Christianity), then he would have to repent (Matt. 14:4). There could have been present on Pentecost a Jew who had someone else's lawful wife for his own, and who was told to repent of that relationship, for Peter exhorted those present to save themselves, and this was done with "many other words" which were not recorded (Acts 2:40). Notice that is is not said that all who heard the word received it. Rather, "They then *that* received his word were baptized..." (Acts 2:41).

Some of the Corinthian brethren had been adulterers (1 Cor. 6:9-11), but, of course, had to repent before they could be baptized (Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19).

(TO BE CONTINUED)

FOOTNOTES

¹The Athenians had been guilty of idolatry. This was in violation of their moral law, but not in violation of their civil law. For a good treatment of this matter, see the *Warren-Fuguey Debate*.

²Freed, Arvy Gleen, *Sermons, Chapel Talks and Debates* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1930) p. 152.

³Harrell, Pat E., *Divorce And Remarriage In The Early Church* (R.B. Sweet Company, Inc. 1967) p. 226.



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 7

JULY, 1980

Counselling Preacher Mania

W. R. CRAIG

It seems, these days, that a great many of "our" preachers want to be experts in everything except preaching the gospel! We have "experts" running around the country promoting (for a fee, of course) such things as, "How to Increase Contributions" in "Three Unusual Days," "How to Increase Attendance" with "Bussing, Showing movies in the church building" (recently the attraction was KING KONG, -- 'bring your own popcorn and pop') "Special programs for different age groups, divorced folk and singles." And so on it goes ad infinitum!

Just now a favorite "expert field" among many of "our" preachers is called COUNSELLING. They advertise themselves as COUNSELLORS and specialists in Mental Health. It has become a mania for a great segment of men who purport to be "gospel" preachers. Brother Idus England recently addressed himself to the problem, and a problem it is, as follows:

"MALPRACTICE INSURANCE" ... "In the May 6 DAILY OKLAHOMAN, an article titled 'Lawsuits Send Clergy Scrambling for Malpractice Insurance,' points up a new low in America's attitude toward religion and an equally low base of operations for 'clergy'. The suit was initiated by a Catholic couple whose son had sought help from a Protestant church before committing suicide. The parents sued the church and its 'pastor' for wrongful death, negligence, outrageous conduct, and 'clergy' malpractice."

The thing that is so alarming about all this is the attitude back of it that would prompt such people to do such things, and the attitude of "clergy" who are more concerned about social ills than they are about preaching the gospel. (Of course, if they were preaching the gospel they would not be "clergy".)

There is another point here that strikes closer to home than many realize. Many of "our own" people disagree with me, but so be it! A lot of "preaching" brethren have spent more time in qualifying themselves to be COUNSELLORS (in some cases to meet civil and state requirements) THAN IN STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD TO PREACH THE GOSPEL! THE WORK OF A PREACHER IS STILL "PREACH THE WORD" (2 Tim. 4: 2). And the gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16).

Some feel that we cannot properly teach folk with problems unless we have experienced their problems - but one does not have to be a reformed drunk, immoralist, or thief to know that the Bible condemns these things. Nor does he have to have a PhD in philosophy or psychology to know what the Bible teaches as to man's REAL needs! We are not knocking education as such, but we pray for the time when all preachers regardless of their educational background will learn that THEIR WORK IS TO MAKE THE SOUL RIGHT WITH GOD. Then the person taught can usually, (1) correct his OWN problems, (2) learn to live with them as long as they do not conflict with his Christian living, (such as consequences of past mistakes) or (3) seek professional help from those who deal with these problems that have a scientific angle.

Any problem that a preacher cannot solve with a "THUS SAITH THE LORD," he should leave it alone! And those "clergy" (brethren or whoever) who involved themselves outside the "WORK OF AN EVANGELIST" (2 Tim. 4:5), then let them buy their "Malpractice" insurance and face the possible consequences."

AMEN! When preachers get back to doing what God intended for them to do, and leave the "doctoring" to those who really know how
(Continued on page 60)

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There is a need for preachers who will "cry out" against all false doctrines and innovations being promoted in some quarters of the brotherhood. Men who are not hirelings are needed to "stand in the gap" wielding the sword of the Spirit, slashing and hacking every false doctrine, and putting the advocates of the same to flight. Preacher friend, are you such a man, or must the Lord look elsewhere?

Christians who refuse to be swayed by the world with all its glitter are sorely needed. In reality these are the only ones who constitute the strength of any local church. They are the workers; they are the ones who are dependable. All others are dead wood which will eventually be pruned by the God of heaven.

Finally, there is a dire need for godly

elderships who take seriously the task of tending the flock. There will always be those "wolves in sheep's clothing" who would rend the flock. The elders must "stand in the gap" on an ever vigilant basis and guard against the smooth talker who would with guile and deceit lead souls astray with his perverted ways. Elderships must demand that the teachers, preachers, personal workers, etc., be builders of walls - walls of truth as revealed in Holy Writ.

In Ezekiel's day God was unable to find a man who would "build up the wall, and stand in the gap." If today He should be searching for such a person -- and He is -- would He find these characteristics in you?

1535 Christine Cove
Covington, TN 38019

A STATEMENT OF CORRECTION

Winston C. Temple

In the April, 1980 issue of the DEFENDER I wrote an article entitled, *Have You Read Your Bible Today?* In the article I quoted Matthew 12:3-8 and made the following comment:

"Jesus was showing them that they had not read the Scriptures with understanding. The case of David eating the shewbread showed that necessity rose higher than the ceremonial letter of the law. The case of the priest profaning the temple showed that even though they respected the ceremonial law, they profaned the temple by the very fact that the sabbath day was the busiest of all days as far as their labor was concerned. The thought is: If the priests in the service of the temple can break the letter of the law and be blameless, how much more can the disciples of him who is Lord of the temple do so in his service and by his authority?"

Necessity does not abrogate law! This fact was brought to my attention by one of our subscribers (brother Jody L. Apple of Algood, Tennessee) to the DEFENDER. In David's case, Jesus expressly admits that what David did was unlawful (Mt. 12:4). The Pharisees evidently thought David's act was excusable, otherwise, they could have retorted on Jesus thusly; out of your own mouth we condemn you: you class your act with David's; but David sinned, and so do you. Jesus was using the case of David to show the Pharisees that if they did not condemn David, then why should they condemn his disciples? Jesus used the example of the priests to teach them the same

lesson.

The pulling of the corn and the eating of it was in fact not a violation of the law (see Deut. 23:25). The same was true in regard to the priest's duties on the sabbath day (Lev. 24:5-9; Num. 28:9). In regard to the priests, the Pharisees' interpretation of the law of the sabbath day would force them to say that the work done by the priests on that day was an actual breaking (profaning) of the law. This was certainly not the case as we have already observed. The *only law* the disciples actually broke was the false one contained in the minds of the Pharisees' tradition.

The statement which I made in regard to Jesus being Lord of the sabbath also needs some correcting. It is true that Jesus had the authority to change the law, but it needs to be pointed out that at the time of this event in Matt. 12, he *did not* change it. He was not arguing to abrogate or to change the law. He was arguing for a correct interpretation of it. I did not intend for my previous article in the April issue to teach "situation ethics" but as it was written, it certainly could lend credence to such doctrine. In order to correct my previous error, I hope that I have in this article offered the proper explanation. I appreciate brother Apple pointing out this mistake and I am more than willing to repent of any error taught and to bring forth the proper fruits to show my repentance which I feel I have done in this article. May God help me to always seek for truth and when found, obey it from the heart.

Man's Amenability To Christ's Law, Especially As It Concerns Marriage—Part II

MAC DEEVER

The case of Timothy's mother may be a case of a Jewish woman who married a Greek (which before the cross was not permissible, Ezra 10:11,44) after the death of Christ and who in time became a Christian (Acts 16:1). Or she could have married the Greek man before the cross in violation of the Mosaic law, but had lived on into the period of Christianity in which the marriage became scriptural since she was no longer under the law of Moses. To become a Christian she would still have to be sorry for the sin committed.¹

The gospel came to those who had never been married, and who if they did marry would have to comply with the complete demands of the law of Christ. Timothy would be in this category (Acts 16:1; 1 Tim. 4:12; 11 Tim. 2:22) as well as others unnamed (1 Cor. 7:25ff).

It is conceivable, though there is not an explicit reference to such cases, that there were some non-married persons who had been divorced under the Mosaic system (or Patriarchal), but who would have a right to remarry under the Christian system because their divorces complied with the law of God under which they had lived. At least it could be said that their divorces had been allowable (Matt. 19:8). They would have a right to remarry under the law of Christ.

And the gospel also reached widows and widowers (1 Cor. 7:8,9,34) who, of course, had a right to remarry (Rom. 7:1-6).

And the gospel came to those who had been married only once to parties to whom they had a right to be married under their respective laws (Mosaic and Patriarchal). The demand that an elder must be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2) would encompass this marital condition, though not restricted to it. One could be a one-wife husband in other ways. (He could be scripturally married to a second wife after his first wife's death. And he could be scripturally married to a second wife after having put away his first wife for fornication).

All men and all marriages were finally brought under the authority of the law of Christ as the law of Christ came to be preached to them, or at the time it became accessible to them. There are a few passages in the New Testament which declare that a given area had access to the gospel. Paul wrote, "...so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached

the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:19). And Luke recorded, "And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10). And there is one passage in the New Testament that affirms that the Great Commission was finally carried out completely. When Paul wrote Col. 1:23, he said, "...the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister." The book of *Colossians* was written from Rome about 62 or 63 A.D. By that time the transition period from Judaism to Christianity and from Patriarchy to Christianity was completed for every Jew and Gentile. All men were now living under the authority of the Christ. The Great Commission was fulfilled.

THE GOSPEL

AS A BINDING LAW IN APOSTOLIC UNDERSTANDING

That the apostles did not at first understand the full scope of the authority of the gospel is seen in the fact that none of them understood on Pentecost that it was to become a binding law upon Gentiles. The Holy Spirit by whom the apostles preached (Acts 2:1-4) declared that the Gentiles would be called (Acts 2:39), but Peter and the other apostles did not at all understand the point (Acts 10:1-16,28,34; 11:1-18). It required several years in order for the apostles to come to an understanding of the full implication of their sermons in Acts 2.

After the conversion of Cornelius and his household, the apostles understood that Gentiles were to be recipients of the gospel (Acts 11:18), but they did not all understand that the gospel was to be *the* binding law upon them. Some needed clarification as to whether or not the law of Moses was binding upon the Gentiles as well as the law of Christ. It had been revealed to Paul that the Gentiles were not under any obligation to Moses but to Christ only (Acts 15:1,2; Gal. 2:1-5). In Acts 15, at the "Circumcision Conference," the other apostles came to understand the truth regarding this important matter. The Gentiles were not under law to Moses, but under law to Christ (Acts 15:22-29).

Regarding apostolic understanding of the binding nature of the law of Christ upon Jews, it needs to be pointed out that in Acts 2, the apostles did not understand that the gospel was to be *the* binding law over the

Jews, completely taking the place of the law of Moses. As subsequent history recorded in Acts proves, they, as well as other Christian Jews thought that Jewish Christians were under obligation both to Christ and to Moses. At the "Circumcision Conference" James seems to have anticipated an objection that if Gentiles are freed from responsibility to Moses, the law of Moses will be neglected. James declares in Acts 15:21, "For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath." He seems to be saying that the Jews, with Christian endorsement and accompaniment, will continue to observe the law of Moses.²

In Acts 21, Luke supplies us with a case that conclusively shows that the Jewish Christians lived for a time with the view that they were bound to Moses and Christ. Paul was instructed by James and the elders at Jerusalem to pay the sacrifice expenses of four men who had a vow. This Paul was to do so that the Jews in Jerusalem who had come from Asia would "...know that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the law" (Acts 21:24). James and the elders make it clear that they understand that the Gentile Christians are not under obligation to Moses. That was settled at the conference earlier held in Jerusalem (Acts 21:25). But that conference had nothing to do with the Jewish Christians' relationship to Moses. They still uphold the view that Jewish Christians are obligated to Moses as well as Christ. After all, there had been no clear announcement on this matter. Thus, Paul does abide by their counsel and pays the sacrifice expenses (Acts 21:26). It is interesting to note there is never a conference held (as far as the record shows) to discuss this matter of the Jewish Christians' relationship to the law of Moses.

If Paul acted sincerely in Acts 21 in paying the expenses for the four men (and there is no reason to suspect that he did not), then it is clear that he, as well as James and the elders, thought that Christian Jews were obligated to Moses as well as Christ.

But that brings us to a very interesting problem. In Gal.6:15 Paul wrote, "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." One becomes aware of the problem when he realizes that the book of *Galatians* was written from Greece, (likely Corinth) before the incident involving the four men with a vow took place. Paul wrote *Galatians* about 56 or 57 A.D. in the period covered by Acts 20:1-3 (consult works on Introduction).

That means that Paul by inspiration had al-

ready affirmed that one's keeping the law of Moses is simply not necessary. But in Acts 21, James and the elders want the Asian Jews to know that Paul believes in Jews keeping the law, including himself, he being a Christian Jew (Acts 21:20-24).

Now, how does one go about reconciling the words of Paul in Gal.6:15 with the action of Paul in Acts 21? One knows that what Paul wrote was true for he wrote by inspiration (1 Cor.2:12,13). So the problem is not with what he wrote. Being inspired would not, however, prevent sinful conduct (cf. Peter in Gal.2:11), so one might think that Paul sinned in Acts 21 in giving in to the counsel of James and the elders. But, there is another alternative which explains the situation completely, and which in the absence of any note of insincerity on Paul's part in Acts 21, and in the heretofore absence of divine clarification on the matter, seems to be the solution to the whole affair.

When Paul wrote Gal.6:15 by inspiration, he did not understand the complete significance of that remark. While the Holy Spirit intended that remark to entail both Jews and Gentiles, Paul in his own mind understood it to apply to Gentiles only. This would be comparable to the twelve apostles preaching on Pentecost by the Holy Spirit, not understanding at all that the gospel was to go to the Gentiles even though the Holy Spirit intended that it so do (Acts 2:1-4; 39). On Pentecost the Holy Spirit showed he intended the gospel for Gentiles as well as Jews and the Jewish apostles understood that it would go to Jews only. In *Galatians*, the Holy Spirit intended that Paul's remark would include Jews as well as Gentiles, and Paul took it to include Gentiles only. Thus, appears the situation on Pentecost in reverse!

It ought to be considered that Paul's action, then, in Acts 21 was no more sinful than was the action of the apostles from Acts 2 to Acts 10 in refusing to preach the gospel to Gentiles. What was lacking in both cases was divine clarification.

Well, if the foregoing be true, when did divine revelation clear up the matter so that the apostles could understand that the law of Christ had completely done away with the law of Moses so that Jewish Christians had no obligation to the former law at all?

It may be that five or six years after the Acts 21 incident, Paul already had had clarification on the matter, for when he wrote *Ephesians* from Rome in 62 or 63 A.D., he said, "...whereby when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ" (Eph.3:4). Many Jewish Christians,

including some apostles (cf. James, Acts 12) died before God revealed the relationship between Jewish Christians and the law of Moses that was to be the final and abiding relationship throughout the duration of the Christian system. And as the conference held in Acts 15 showed that Gentiles were to be under the authority of the Christ (and without any obligation to the law of Moses), just so in the books of *Romans*, *Galatians* and *Hebrews* God through inspired writers proved conclusively that Jews were under obligation to Christ (and they, too, without being under obligation to Moses at all).

FOOTNOTES

1 This situation would be comparable to a man's putting away wife A not for fornication and marrying wife B. In time wife A dies. Now the man's marriage to wife B is scriptural, because his first marriage bond is actually severed (Rom. 7:1-6), and he is free to be married to another. Yet, he could not be forgiven of the crime committed against God and his first wife unless he actually regretted what he had done when he did it. This would involve his having to experience godly sorrow (11 Cor. 7:10).

David could not have returned Bathsheba to

Uriah for Uriah had been killed. Yet, David came to regret his sin of adultery and murder for which he had before God been blameworthy (Ps. 51:1-4). Under God's tolerance in the Mosaic system, David was allowed Bathsheba as well as other wives he had already taken (1 Sam. 25:43,44).

This brings us to a very curious truth. There are some sins which cannot be committed again by the same people with each other. For example, a couple that engage in pre-marital sex with each other and who have a scriptural right to be married to each other cannot continue to commit that sin with each other after they have married each other. Yet, the pre-marital sex was in violation of the teaching of Christ, and the couple would need to genuinely regret the act taking place at the time it did. But there is no sense to their saying that they will not commit the crime with each other again for it is absolutely impossible for such to occur again. This must not be confused, however, with a case where the man and woman have no scriptural right to marry each other in the first place.

2 McGarvey, J. W., *A Commentary on Acts of Apostles* (Nashville: B.C. Goodpasture, 1961) p. 186.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother George Darling passed away March 27, 1980. Following is a reprint of an article he wrote for the DEFENDER which was published March 24, 1972.

POT SHOTS

GEORGE E. DARLING, Sr.

COUNTERFEITERS IN THE CHURCH

Our government is on guard continually in an endeavor to protect itself and the American people from counterfeiters. They use every means known to science to catch every counterfeiter and to put him in prison. They make their designs so intricate that it is almost impossible to duplicate them, and they print the money on paper that is a secret formula to prevent anyone from "making money". Even with all this precaution, there are counterfeiters that are so good at their chosen profession of deceiving the government that they reap millions of dollars annually in our nation.

What would you think of a government agent who would deliberately work with a gang of

counterfeiters, sharing in their profits, while he was being paid by the government to protect us? What would you think of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover if he called in a "specialist in counterfeiting" to teach his agents how to cheat the government while they drew a salary from the government to protect it?

THAT IS EXACTLY THE POSITION OF THE PREACHER AND ELDERS WHO MAKE UP THE PROGRAMS WHERE THEY INVITE MEN WHOM THEY KNOW ARE TEACHING A FALSE DOCTRINE... (whether they teach it from the pulpit, orally, or by their practice in life).

If it is right that our government seeks to find out the counterfeiters and prosecute them, it is just as right that elders and their "PROGRAM COMMITTEES" be careful what

kind of men they put into the pulpits and on the programs to teach the unsuspecting public that comes to hear them speak and teach. Counterfeiters in money, only cause us to lose dollars. Counterfeiters in the SPIRITUAL REALM, DIVIDE THE LORD'S BODY, and cause men and women to lose their lives for Christ and their souls throughout eternity.

BRETHREN, THE WOODS ARE FULL OF RELIGIOUS COUNTERFEITERS IN THESE DAYS OF COMPROMISE, DAYS WHEN SOME ARE TRYING TO GIVE PEOPLE A PAINLESS RELIGION WITH NO CHARTER OR DISCIPLINE.

DIPLOMATS IN THE PULPIT--SINNERS IN THE PEWS

"Our preacher is so diplomatic and discreet!" -- well, well, ain't that sumpthin! Some uninformed and misinformed church members think that being diplomatic and discreet is something new. But a long time ago a nation of people were demanding that variety of preaching from the prophets of God.

"Now go, write it before them on a table, and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever. For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah; that say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us the RIGHT things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:8).

God answered them in these words:

"Because you despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely thereon; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in an instant."

That doesn't sound like "smooth things", does it?

These diplomatic preachers are the ones who can stand in the pulpit and preach (?) with the "beer guzzling tobacco worms" occupying the front row; the card sharks and "liquor license holders" in the second row; and the dancing, worldly minded strip-teasers and lodge members on the third row; and be just as silent on sin as the tomb. They will pronounce you a diplomat and will favor a high salary. If a man wants to be a diplomat in a church where a small faction of the wealthier members have decided to rebel against the eldership and the preacher, disrupt the whole church program and publicly humiliate the name of Christ and His church in the community, just look off into space and speak about something you think will "tickle their ears." If you are supporting some "WORTHY CAUSE" (?) such as "Campus Ministry", your diplomacy and discreetness will be liberally rewarded.

If you are preaching in a church whose baptized membership know far more about the dress of the entered apprentice candidate than they do about the qualifications of elders; whose membership puts the lodge ahead of the church and the teachings of the lodge above their confession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God; if you are really discreet, more than likely, the lodge members will get together (they stick tighter than fleas) and who knows, they might even recommend that you be considered for the Chaplain of their lodge. Then too, if you are diplomatic enough you will get along well with the dirty story telling, dancing, card playing and profane membership of that lodge who in turn will come in and run the church into the dirt while they pay you well to "ramrod the show".

When called to speak at a meeting of the local Ministerial Alliance, by being discreet and diplomatic you can be recognized as the "dynamic leading clergyman of your denomination"...(But brother, don't cut loose and tell the poor souls the truth, for if you do you will be evil spoken of -- even called indiscreet).

If you are officiating at a lodge funeral where you know the Masons are going to tell the folk present that the dear departed brother has gone to meet the "Supreme Architect of the Universe" (G. A. O. T. U.), while they promise him eternal life by the placing on the casket of acacia branches; be sure to be diplomatic and let the ignorant folk there believe that Masons and other lodge members are going to heaven ANOTHER WAY. If you are discreet and diplomatic you may form an alliance with the undertaker and in time you will have a sizeable income from diplomatically lying at lodge funerals...

It is the popular thing to be diplomatic and discreet. You can get along with your neighbors and with the enemies of God for awhile. But in Malachi 2:1-3 God's prophet speaks the truth -- very undiplomatically:

"And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. (They had been quite diplomatic through the years.) If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory in my name, saith Jehovah of hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Behold I will rebuke your seed, and will spread dung on your faces, even the dung of your feasts; and ye shall be taken away with it."

That was not diplomatic, but God has seen fit to record Malachi's sermon, while the diplomatic priesthood has not one sermon of

theirs recorded. Misdeeds that they had perpetrated were exposed but their slipshod infidelity is buried with their shame.

Oh, God help us to rid ourselves of these "DISCREET DIPLOMATS" and to realize that we are servants of God, sworn, charged and commissioned to serve Him, FIRST, LAST and ALWAYS.

COUNSELLING PREACHER MANIA

to do it, then everybody will be better off! The same holds true for all the other "experts" and "promoters" who sail under the false colors of PREACHING THE WORD, but who in reality are nothing more than religious racketeers!

Fellowship Restored

GUY F. HESTER

Since moving to Indianapolis, in April, 1979, to work with the Garfield Heights Church of Christ, it has been my constant desire to get the elders of the Garfield Heights church and the Shelbyville Road church together to discuss the problems that have divided these two churches for the past several years and to try to bring about a reconciliation. I was able to arrange such a meeting on Monday night, June 30, 1980. A wonderful spirit prevailed and another such meeting was scheduled for one week later on July 7, 1980. This meeting resulted in the following statement:

We, the elders of the Garfield Heights Church of Christ and the Shelbyville Road Church of Christ, have resolved the differences that existed between us. We wish to make it known to all concerned Christians everywhere that we, the elders of the Garfield Heights and Shelbyville Road congregations, have repented of any and all wrong doing on our part and call upon the penitent of both congregations to do the same. We are most happy to announce that fellowship has been restored and that we can work together in the furtherance of the kingdom in the Indianapolis area. We request that this statement be read from the pulpits and published in the bulletins of the Garfield Heights and Shelbyville Road congregations. We take this means of apologizing to individuals that may have been offended in any way, intentional or unintentional, and we ask your forgiveness and prayers.

GARFIELD HEIGHTS ELDERS

s/ Robert L. Jent
s/ Alvin Cook
s/ Earl F. Dobbs
s/ Donald R. Allison

SHELBYVILLE ROAD ELDERS

s/ William F. Bartley
s/ Benton H. Kemp
s/ Clarence M. Short

Brother Ben Vick, who has recently moved from Birmingham, Alabama, to Indianapolis, to work with the Shelbyville Road church was also invited to be in these meetings. Brother Vick was certainly a source of encouragement to all by his presence and his words of admonition.

2842 Shelby Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 4620



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL" Phil 1:16

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AUGUST, 1980

EDITOR'S NOTE: We fully recognize that the "day" of the crucifixion of Christ is not of any "soul-saving significance". The everlasting, important fact is that he did die.

The following article is being presented as "food for further thought". We do not intend for any confusion to be created. We simply intend for brethren to examine their traditional beliefs and as we have stated, use this as a means of further examination of this subject.

These are times that one (especially an editor) is almost fearful of suggesting anything that might be out of step with what is "traditionally believed" in the brotherhood. Almost invariably someone picks such things up as a new cause to champion, and through some means in various times and places, some form of division seems to be created. However, we feel that we should not allow the mishandling of knowledge by a few to discourage study and examination of God's Word. On the other hand, it is not our intention for this to be pulpit material and thereby create unnecessary confusion in the Lord's church.

Approximately four years ago brother Denham and I began to discuss the day of Christ's death. Through those years on three or four occasions he and I have continued those discussions. Recently I asked him if he would compile the various materials we had discussed plus the much additional material he had researched. He was most happy to do so and the following is the fruit of the meticulous, thorough and scholarly work of brother Denham.

The Identity Of The Day Of Christ's Death

H. DANIEL DENHAM

The format which we shall follow in this treatise is:

I. Introduction

- I. Introduction
- II. The Possibilities Proposed
- III. A Matter of Time in Dating
- IV. Further Considerations Relative to Time
- V. A Traditional Reckoning
- VI. An Alternative Day
- VII. The Inclusive System of Time
- VIII. The Day of Preparation
- IX. The Events Between the Lord's Death and Burial
- X. The Chronology of the Passion Week
- XI. Further Chronological Considerations
- XII. Typological Considerations
- XIII. Summary

Our Lord declared unto certain of the scribes and Pharisees: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). This prophecy was given as a "sign" to those present as evidence of His Divine authority. This utterance occasioned the comment of the Sanhedrin, following His death by crucifixion and His subsequent burial, that, 'we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again'" (Matt. 27:63). As a result, Pontius Pilate, then governor of Judaea, permitted the Jews to make the sepulchre
(Continued on page 64)

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EDITORIAL...

Esau In The Church Today

Winston C. Temple

Esau was the first of twins that was born to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen.25:25,26; Cf. Rom.9:11-13). He was a hairy man and a great hunter of the field (Gen.25:28). Due to the prophecy in Gen.25:23 concerning him and his brother Jacob, and due to his own attitude of heart, Esau and his descendants had to, for a number of years, serve his younger brother, Jacob and his descendants (Gen.25:23; 27:39,40; Cf. 2 Kings 8:20 for the fulfilment of the prophecy). At forty years of age Esau took unto him two Hittite wives which were a grief of mind unto his parents (Gen.26:34,35). He was the ancestor of the Edomites (Jer.49:7,8). The Edomites were a continual force of contention and strife to the descendants of Jacob, the children of Israel. They refused passage of the Israelites through their land when the nation of Israel was marching toward Canaan (Num.20:18-20). The prophet Ezekiel stated that they "...shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword..." (Ezek.35:5). Edom made wars against Israel (1 Sam.14:47). They joined forces with the enemies of Israel (2 Chron.20:10) and even aided Babylon in her final overthrow of Judah (Ps.137:7). Their hatred can further be seen in the massacre of the Hebrew children at the time of the birth of Jesus. According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, the Herod on the throne at that time was an Edomite.

The part of Esau's life which gives us the background for our lesson is the event of him selling his birthright. Let us read the story from the Scriptures.

"And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentil; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright" (Gen.25:27-34).

Esau was like many in the church today. Let us

consider some of his mistakes and make some applications.

Esau did not have his priorities in order. He was more concerned with his physical condition than with the blessings that would have been his to enjoy had he not sold his birthright. He said unto Jacob: "...Feed me..." (Gen.25:30). "For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil.3:18, 19). Many today in the church of Christ have the same problem. They, like Esau, are busy with the cares of this world. In order to secure this world's goods, they will rise early and labor late even sometimes to the point of despair of life, but if they are asked to do some small thing for the Lord and His church, they gripe and complain that they are too busy. We are told very plainly what order our priorities should be (Matt.6:33). We are warned to not love the world nor the things therein (1 Jn.2:15-17). We are exhorted to "Do all things without murmurings and disputings" (Phil.3:14). Many people are so earthly bound that they are not any heavenly good!

Either the man Esau could not or would not see any value in his birthright. He said: "...I am at the point to die: what profit shall this birthright do to me?" (Gen.25:32) Not only would it have given unto him physical blessings, but it would have rendered the greatest of all spiritual blessings, the divine approval of God Almighty! All informed Bible students are aware that through Jacob's lineage ultimately came the Messiah who blessed all His faithful people in turning them from their iniquities.

Listen carefully as we read: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25,26).

Many people of modern times cannot see the blessings that come from Christian marriages. The value of a Christian home and family seems to escape their thinking. The almost countless broken homes and disrupted families shout unto us the truthfulness of such statements! Faithful dedicated families are the

bulwarks of the church and the nation. Little do most wives realize what great blessings they have because they are married to a faithful Christian man; likewise, most husbands are blinded to the blessings that their faithful Christian wives bring them. Permit us to mention a few of these blessings:

1. Lifelong companionship through all the trials and tribulations (Matt.19:3-9).
2. With the exception of their relationship to Christ, the husband-wife relationship is the closest one possible for mankind (Eph.5:22-33).
3. What a blessing it is to have children given to parents by the grace of God. "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant" (Gen. 33:5). They are the heritage of the LORD. "Lo children are a heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them;..." (Ps.127:3-5), and
4. True love with all its attended blessings (1 Cor.13).

If the value of a Christian marriage does not seem to register on the minds of most people, how could we expect them to see the ultimate value of a spiritual relationship with the Christ and His church? All spiritual blessings are in heavenly places in Christ (Eph.1:3). All the promises of God (salvation, the resurrection from the dead, heaven) are in the Christ (2 Cor.1:20).

Like Esau, many so called Christians would sell their birthright of spiritual blessings for a mess of this world's pottage. As he was, so are they; as he did, so do they! "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb.12:15-17).

Brothers and sisters in Christ let us take heed lest we be named Esau!

THE IDENTITY OF THE DAY OF CHRIST'S DEATH

materially sure from human tampering. A Roman guard was set before the tomb of our Lord and a seal placed upon the stone before the tomb borrowed from one Joseph of Arimathea.

The New Testament, in speaking of the longevity of the Lord's stay in the tomb speaks of it as "three days and three nights" (Matt.12:40), "after three days" (Matt.27:63) Mark 8:31, 9:31; 10:34), "in three days" (Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-22), and "the third day since"- in regard to the fact that the first day of the week when He was raised was "the third day since" His sufferings, death, and burial (Luke 24: 21). The Bible, thus, teaches that the interval of time between our Lord's death and His glorious Resurrection was "three days" (generically) and "three days and three nights" (specifically).

What are we to make of these passages? What conclusion(s) is (or are) to be reached it (or they) must satisfy these passages. This is self-evident to even the most casual student who believes that the Bible is the inerrant, all-sufficient, and verbally inspired Word of God. What would be the advantage of affirming the inerrancy of the Bible, while maintaining a position (or positions) which opens its pages to the ridicule of skeptics and infidels as inaccurate? Surely, "the legs of the lame are not equal."

II. The Possibilities Proposed

There are two basic possibilities as to the identity of the day of the crucifixion of Christ. The first is the traditional view maintained by many leading expositors and able students of the Bible. This view holds to a Friday crucifixion of the Lord.

The second possibility postulates that the crucifixion occurred before the Friday of the Passion Week, preferably on Wednesday of that week: as Tuesday and earlier would be so far removed from the Passover as to destroy the Passover's connection with the death of Christ, and as Thursday of that week was the day of the Passover-falling upon April 6th of that year (A.D. 30) with the moon being full¹ and as the crucifixion did not fall upon the day of the Passover (John 19:14,31).

Thus, in our study we shall be concerned with a comparison of the Friday and Wednesday possibilities to the evidence of the Bible. "As in all things we ought to justify our conclusions by adequate evidence."²

III. A Matter of Time in Dating

The year of our Lord's death corresponds properly to the year A.D. 30 and not A.D. 33 as set forth by the 6th century calendar of Dionysius Exiguus, who calculated 4 to 6 years later than the actual date of the Lord's birth - thus throwing his chronology off course. The Gregorian reckoning of 30 A.D. is far superior and corresponds more closely to the Roman annals which place the year of the death of Herod the Great in 750 Anno Urbis - marked from the time of Rome's foundation. As Herod died shortly after the birth of the Christ (Matt.2:1-19), this would place His birth about 749 or early 750 Anno Urbis, which corresponds to the reckoning of Gregory the 13th. Dionysius sets this event in the year 754 Anno Urbis.³ The Gregorian calendar harmonizes better with the date of A.D. 70 as the year of the Destruction of Jerusalem. Dionysius would place it in the year 73 A.D.

IV. Further Considerations Relative to Time

First, in our study we must recognize the fact that the Jews reckoned time from "even unto even" (cf. Lev.23:22). Such a system is called "Civil Time" corresponding to the "Civil Day" which "began at sunset and ended at sunset of the next day, instead of from midnight to midnight with us."⁴ Thus, it was from 6 P.M. to 6 P.M.

Second, the Jews also observed natural day and natural night. "Natural Day" was from sunrise to sunset, and "Natural Night" was from sunset to sunrise⁵

Third, when the Jews spoke or wrote of the "Passover", they spoke of it in four lights:

- (1) The Event recorded in Exodus 12:29, 30, and which occurred at midnight on the 14th of Nisan or Abib;
- (2) The Feast enjoined as remembrance of the Event (cf. Exodus 12:3-17) and called the Feast of Unleavened Bread (cf. Luke 22:1; Matt.26:17; Mark 14:12; John 13:1).
- (3) The Meal of the Passover Lamb (Ex.12:3-8; Lev.23:5; Matt.26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7, 8; John 18:28).
- (4) The Day of Passover, which was to be observed as a sabbath (Lev.23:6-8; Num.28:18, 25; Ex.12:16; Matt.26:2; Mark 14:1; 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14,31). This fell on the day of the 15th of Nisan.

V. A Traditional Reckoning

The most commonly held view of the crucifixion, as pertaining to the time of its occurrence, places it sometime about 3:00 P.M. (the Jewish Ninth Hour, Mark 15:34) on Friday,

the 16th of Nisan. Thus, it is postulated by many commentators and chronologists that Christ yielded up His Spirit on Friday.

However, this has often puzzled many readers of the Bible as to how the time interval between late Friday afternoon and early Sunday morning can be figured out to be three days and three nights. This concept in *exact* time allows only two nights, one day, and a very small portion of another day - if even that much!

The solution often given by the advocates of this view is that "a day and a night" simply is another way of reckoning an inclusive "day". This is referred to as the "inclusive system of time". Thus, it is concluded that the Jews considered a fraction of a day as a whole day. Hence, it is reasoned that there was:

- (1) A *part* of Friday (a very small part, approximately three hours), or a "day and night,"
- (2) *All* of Saturday, which constituted another "day and a night", and
- (3) A *part* of Sunday (*again*, a small part), which accounts for another "day and night", or the third day.

The basic problems of this reckoning lie in two key assumptions:

- (1) First, that Friday was the day of crucifixion, and thus a harmony is to be sought.
- (2) Second, that this inclusive system of time was the intent of the New Testament records of this grand Event.

VI. An Alternative Day

"But", someone may inquire, "if Christ were not crucified on Friday, then upon what day was He crucified?" The answer is of course obvious. He was crucified on a day which was "three days and three nights" prior to His glorious Resurrection. I believe the preponderance of *evidence* points to a 3:00 P.M. crucifixion on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan. Thus, I submit that our Lord was nailed to the cruel and narled Tree of Calvary on that date in the annals of history. The initial burial procedures, including the removal of the body from the cross, would have consummated about sunset (or 6:00 P.M.). Marking from *that* time we arrive at *exactly* "three days and three nights" to the beginning of the "first day of the week" under Jewish time, which began at 6:00 P.M. Saturday (Matt. 28:1-6).

Astronomers have determined that in the year A.D. 30, which according to the Gregorian Calendar - which is precise to only several seconds off over a four hundred year period, is the accepted year of Christ's death, burial, Resurrection, and Ascension, that the Passover fell on Thursday, April 6, with the moon being full that day, which corresponded to the Jewish day of the 15th of Nisan.⁶

VII. The Inclusive System of Time

It is well known that the Jews often did reckon any part of a day as a whole day. Rabbi Elazar ben Axaryah states: "A day and a night is an *Onah* (Hebrew for a portion of time), and the portion of an *Onah* is as the whole of it,"⁷ Hence, the basis of the argument for an inclusive use of time for Matt. 12:40 is presented.

However, the application of this point to the case of Matt. 12:40 is not proper: as it overlooks the fact that "when the number of 'nights' is stated as well as the number of 'days', the expression ceases to be an idiom, and becomes a literal statement of fact, and there were not three 'nights' between Friday evening and Sunday morning by any process of reckoning," so writes Dr. W. Graham Scroggie.⁸ Therefore, Matt. 12:40 cannot be explained away by the Jewish use of the word *Onah*, but indeed says what it means and means what it says! Such a premise demands a day other than Friday as the day of the death of the Lord of glory.

VIII. The Day of Preparation

John records in John 19:14: "And it was the preparation of the Passover. . ." that Christ was sent forth to be crucified. This was about the third hour Jewish time (Mk. 15: 25), and the sixth hour Roman time (John 19: 14). He hung upon the cross six hours until 3:00 P.M., the Jewish ninth hour. The *day* of this event was the day of *preparation* before the Passover.

Luke writes: "And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on" (Luke 23:54). And Mark records regarding this day: "And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath" (Mk. 15:42). From these there appears to be a contradiction between the various accounts.

However, John eradicates this misconception by writing: "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day). . ." (John 19:31). Thus, John calls the *Passover* a *Sabbath*. This is further clarified by the

expression "an high day", or a special day of holy convocation. Moses declared in Leviticus: "These are the feast of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month (Nisan) *even* is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread, In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein" (Lev.23:4-7). Such a convocation was occasioned by a meeting and a special day of worship.⁹ (Cf.Ex.12:14-20).

Thus, when the Passover fell on any day other than the weekly sabbath, there were two sabbaths in that week - as well as two more (one on the seventh day of the feast, the 22nd of Nisan - Ex.12:18, and another weekly sabbath) in the following week. The root meaning of the word "sabbath" is "rest, cease, interrupt."¹⁰ This was the case of the Passover; it was to be a cessation from labours.¹¹ The Jews were to honour the Passover even as a Sabbath. It was a day of rest: for in that day Jehovah had given them rest from the hand of Egyptian bondage (Cf. Ex.13:3). Thus, John harmonizes with Mark and Luke: for it was both the Passover and a High sabbath."

The Passover was a special Sabbath, and hence would have maintained its own day of preparation. The basic idea of the term παρασκευή (preparation) is "a making ready, preparation, equipping." It also refers to "that which is prepared, equipment," and, according to Dr. Thayer, it thus refers to "the day on which the Jews made necessary preparation to celebrate a sabbath or a feast."¹² The verb form παρασκευάζω appears four times in the Greek New Testament always carrying the primary idea of "to make ready, or prepare" (Cf. Acts 10:10; 1 Cor.14:8; 2 Cor.9:2,3). Though the term παρασκευή was often associated with the "sixth day of the week" or Friday as demonstrated by many extra-biblical works,¹³ "this is not," says the noted scholar Henry Alford, "its natural meaning."¹⁴ Dean Alford further suggests that the application of the term to Friday in connection with John 19:14 never would "have been thought of in this place, but for the difficulty arising from the whole Passover question."¹⁵ According to McClintock and Strong (vol. III page 746), "It would seem that Greek readers would understand this phrase (παρασκευή τοῦ πάσχα) only of the preparation for the Passover. It would require good proof to lead even a Jew to understand it as an abridged way of saying 'the preparation for the Passover-Sabbath'."¹⁶ Thus, the conclusion is drawn

that the Passover is *not* to be taken - as many have taken it - to have fallen on the weekly Sabbath in the year of the Lord's death.¹⁷

The question may be raised, "How was the day before the Passover to be observed as a day of preparation?" The answer is two-fold. First, according to Prof. Geikie, on the day before the Passover all leaven was removed from every house before noon in anticipation of the week of unleavened bread.¹⁸ After a thorough hunting for the leaven and its casting out and burning, the head of the family declared, "Whatever leaven remains in my possession which I cannot see, behold it is null, and accounted as the dust of the earth."¹⁹ Second, it was such due to the preparation of the passover meal itself (Cf. Matt.26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7-9). There is strong evidence that the Pharisees and the Sadducees differed on what day the passover was to be eaten due to the use of different calendars by both parties.

Therefore, we conclude that the expression "the day of the preparation of the passover" refers to the day of the week which fell immediately *before* the passover regardless of what day the passover fell upon, and that the passover was to be considered a day of rest - a Sabbath - or "an high day" (John 19:31). We further conclude that this would be in keeping with the primary use of παρασκευή and its verb form: as the practice of the Jews conformed to such a use.

The day of preparation was the day *before* the high Sabbath, which was the Passover. The Passover fell on Thursday in the year of the Lord's death. We thus conclude and contend that the day of preparation was Wednesday.

How does this contention harmonize with the events associated with the death, burial and Resurrection of the Christ? How does it harmonize with the chronology of the Passion Week? How does it affect Old Testament typology? These questions we purpose to deal with as we proceed in our inquiry.

IX. The Events Between the Lord's Death and Burial

If it be granted that Christ yielded up His Spirit at 3:00 P.M. on Friday, and was buried before 6:00 P.M. on Friday - the latter occurrence being necessary because of the beginning of the weekly Sabbath at 6:00 P.M. on Friday and ending at 6:00 P.M. on Saturday under Jewish Civil time, then, at least, a sizeable number of key events *must* have taken place within those 180 minutes on Friday afternoon.

(1) The deputation of the Jews to Pilate in

John 19:31 to seek that the legs of those crucified on Golgotha might be broken to consummate their death that they might be removed before the Sabbath day must have taken place during this time span - as it is the case that when the soldiers came to Jesus - after He had given up His Spirit (cf. v. 30; Mk. 15: 34-38) - they saw "that He was dead already. . ." (Jn. 19:33).

(2) Pilate had to hear the request of the Jews and then send his soldiers or messengers from Jerusalem to Mt. Calvary with his order respecting their request.

(3) The soldiers came and broke the legs of the two malefactors crucified with the Christ, and perceiving that Jesus was "already dead", one pierced His side with a spear upon which blood and water poured forth as testified to by the Apostle John, (Jn. 19:32-34).

(4) Afterward, Joseph of Arimathaea went unto Pilate "secretly for fear of the Jews" and besought of him the body of Jesus (John 19:38; Mk. 15:43). Geikie suggests that it may even have taken a bribe to insure Joseph's safety before Pilate and the securing of the body of the Lord.

(5) Pilate called a centurion and asked him if Jesus had been dead "any while" (Mk. 15: 44).

(6) The centurion made inquiries - and may even have sent to Golgotha for news - and then reported to Pilate, who *thereupon* gave permission to Joseph to remove the body (Mk. 15:44, 45).

(7) Joseph then went to the market, or bazaar, and purchased some fine linen, which transaction would have required some time to accomplish (Mk. 15:46).

(8) Joseph then went to Golgotha from Jerusalem with the linen and the document of permission from Pilate.

(9) Upon verification from the centurion supervising the crucifixion, Joseph - with the help of friends and/or servants as he could not accomplish the feat alone - took down the body and probably wrapped it in a *cloth*. Thereupon they bore the Lord's body to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea, for to lay it there in that borrowed tomb (Matt. 27: 59, 60; Mk. 15:46).

(10) The women from Galilee followed after the procession (Lk. 23:55).

(11) Joseph, with help, probably removed the now much soiled cloth, and washed the body of the bloodstains, and then wrapped it in a

single clean linen cloth, or sheet, *without spices* (Matt. 27:59; Mk. 15:46; Lk. 23:53).

(12) The body was then lain in Joseph's new tomb (Matt. 27:60; Mk. 15:46).

(13) During these events, the women watched while noting the place where the body of the Master had been lain (Matt. 27:61).

(14) A *great* stone was rolled across the mouth of the tomb, and the mourners and friends departed (Matt. 27:60; Mk. 15:46; 16:4).

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CONTRIBUTIONS		
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*		*
*	Sammy D. Cooper.....	\$25.00 *
*		*
*	James Mettenbrink.....	20.00 *
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*	Raymond Bush.....	10.00 *
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*	Hairston Brantley.....	25.00 *
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*	Eugene Walp.....	10.00 *
*		*
*	Jerry Lindesmith.....	30.00 *
*		*
*	Roy Stromberg.....	10.00 *
*		*
*	Mrs. Will Winchester.....	5.00 *
*		*
*	Danny Davis.....	10.00 *
*		*
*	Mrs. Hilda L. Forgy.....	6.00 *
*		*

(15) The women returned to the city after having seen the body entombed without it being embalmed (Lk. 23:55).

(16) Nicodemus, unknown to the women, procured a great quantity of expensive spices in order to embalm the body, and with these made contact with Joseph of Arimathaea (Jn. 19: 39).

(17) The women went to the market and purchased the raw materials for spices, which were then prepared by grinding and cooking them, (Lk. 23:56; cf. Mk. 16:1). This would have been an extensive undertaking requiring hours to properly complete. Some authorities maintain that such preparation required a full day to complete.

(18) Joseph, Nicodemus, and probably servants, returned to the tomb, removed the great stone, took off the single linen cloth (σινδών), and bandaged the limbs and body in line cloths (διδύνα, John 20:6,7) with spices, and with a separate linen sheet for the head in a napkin (John 20:7). At some point in the burial process *one* linen cloth became or was replaced by several strips or sheets of linen cloth: as it is the case that δίδύνα is plural in number.²² (Cf. John 19:40).

(19) The stone was rolled again before the mouth of the tomb, and the men departed.

(20) The chief priests and Pharisees, having gone before Pilate on the Passover (15th of Nisan, "the next day, that followed the day of the preparation") in order to receive permission to set a watch (or guard) before the tomb, "went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch" (Matt. 27:62-66). The probability is that the watch and seal were set *after* the work of Joseph and Nicodemus the second time at the tomb: for no disciples would be allowed near the tomb, nor permitted to break the Roman seal upon the stone to gain entrance.

(21) The women having prepared the spices, rested on the Sabbath, i.e. from 6:00 P. M. Friday to 6:00 P. M. Saturday (Luke 23:56). On the first day of the week (Saturday after 6:00 P. M.), very early in the morning, they came to the sepulchre with the spices which they had prepared (Luke 24:1).

Surely, it must be conceded that all of these events could not have transpired in but three hours. None which concerned mercantiles and labors can be relegated to Saturday, which was the Sabbath. The markets were closed, and no labor could be hired or engaged in after the Sabbath had commenced. These facts produce an un-get-overable dilemma for a Friday crucifixion. However, a Wednesday crucifixion would satisfy all of these key events timewise.

Unless we are to regard the Gospel Accounts as a mass of contradictions regarding the crucifixion and burial of Christ, we are led to the conclusions that "the day of preparation" in each is the same, and that the Sabbath referred to in Matthew, Mark, and Luke as associated with "the day of preparation" is the Passover, "an high day" (or high Sabbath), and that there were *two* Sabbaths in the Passion Week, and not one. There were the "high day" Sabbath, or Pass-

over, and the weekly sabbath, which fell that year on the 17th of Nisan.

Two key passages endorse the latter conclusion. First, Luke 23:54-56 makes mention of a Sabbath (no definite article in the Greek text is present) that "drew on" following the crucifixion. Afterward the women - having "beheld the sepulchre" - prepared spices and ointments (obviously the ones purchased, Cf. Mark 16:1). Then Luke makes reference to "the" Sabbath day. The article is present, and demonstrates (or, at least, as a general rule it demonstrates) a distinction of "an object. . . from other objects of the same kind."²³ The women "rested" on this day "according to the commandment" (Cf. Ex. 20:10). Second, Matthew states that it was "in the end of the sabbaths (plural)" that the women came to the tomb. This is significant in view of (1) Luke's reference to two Sabbaths, and (2) Mark's use of the singular number in the genitive to refer to the day when the women rested after buying and preparing their spices (Mk. 16:1).

X. The Chronology of the Passion Week

If we accept the Friday view, then the journey of our Lord from Jericho to Bethany, which occurred *six days* before the Passover (John 12:1), would fall on a Saturday, or the weekly Jewish Sabbath. This is the general view espoused by most Friday advocates. Such a journey (well over ten miles) would have been far more than "a Sabbath-day's journey" which was enforced by the Rabbis.²⁴ To have travelled that far on the Sabbath would have been a violation of this rabbinical tradition as well as the basic principle laid down by Christ Himself regarding such traditions which conflicted not with the law (Cf. Matt. 23:1-3).

However, a Wednesday crucifixion allows for this. Christ was in Bethany six days before the Passover (John 12:1). This would be Friday, the 9th of Nisan. A day later He entered the city of Jerusalem from Bethany (John 12:12), which lies a "Sabbath-day's journey" from Jerusalem (Acts 1:12; Luke 24:50). This would be the Sabbath, the 10th of Nisan on which day the paschal lamb was chosen (Ex. 12:3). The evening of the Sabbath, after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Savior returned with His disciples to Bethany. This probably occurred before the beginning of the first day of the week (the 11th of Nisan) around 6:00 P. M. Saturday. (John 12:12-19; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 4:16; Zech. 9:9; Matt. 28:1-6).

On the "morrow", the 11th of Nisan, He

returned to Jerusalem in the company of the disciples. This would be the first day of the week (Cf. Mk.11:11,12). On this day we have the cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the Temple (Mk.11:12-18). That evening He "went out of the city" and later returned "in the morning" on the 12th of Nisan (Mk.12:19,20). On this day we have the fig tree incident recalled, and the teaching of the Lord in the Temple, as well as the famed Olivet Discourse to the Apostles (Mk.11:20-25; 11:27-12:44; 13).

At the end of this day, we find the Lord once more in Bethany sitting at meat, which under Jewish custom was eaten after the day's work was complete - it being the main meal of the day (Cf. Ruth 3:7); how He returned, or exactly when He returned to Bethany we know not; however, we do know that it was at the close of the day (c. 6:00 P.M. Monday) that He sat "at meat" (Mk.14:3). In Mark 14:1 we find that it was "two days" before the Passover. The record states, "After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread". I conclude, therefore, that Christ sat "at meat" on the 13th of Nisan, our Monday evening.

The following day (the 13th of Nisan) we have the preparations for the observance of the Passover made by the disciples (Matt.26:17-19; Mk.14:12-16; Lk.22:7-13). The preparations made on this day were probably in keeping with the practice of the Pharisaical party who differed as to the day of observance from the Sadducees.²⁵ The former observed it on the 14th, while the latter did so on the 15th under "civil time" (the evening of the 14th under "national time"). A thorough discussion of this is to be found on pages 774 to 784 of *The Gospel According To John* by Leon Morris.

That evening (now the 14th of Nisan, Tuesday evening) the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper are observed. The Sadducees, the priestly party, would observe the Passover meal later on Wednesday evening, the 15th of Nisan (Cf. John 18:28).

After the Supper, we have the Upper Room Discourse, the journey to and agony of Gethsemane, the Arrest and Trials of Jesus, the Journey to Calvary and the Crucifixion, and the hasty entombment of the body by Joseph (Cf. John 13:1-19:37; Matt.26:20-27:56; Mk. 14:17 - 15:41; Lk. 22:14-23:54). At evening of Wednesday, the day of Passover begins, the 15th of Nisan has come, and the ungodly host of Satan revels over the smit-

ing of the heel of the promised Seed (Cf. Gen.3:15).

This brings us down to the Passover in six days (John 12:1) with no day even missing: as the Friday view generally presupposes! From the 9th of Nisan to the 14th is six days, and *then* comes the Passover.

Furthermore, to contend that Christ ate the Passover on Thursday night is not feasible: if the Passover fell on Thursday. Thursday night would be the 16th of Nisan, and the Bible clearly teaches that Christ ate the Passover *in the evening* of the day upon which generally signalled the *beginning* (the preparation day) of the feast of unleavened bread. This was on the 14th day of Abib, or Nisan (Lev.23:3-6; Num.28:16-25).

XI. Further Chronological Considerations

If the Wednesday view be granted, then a harmony can be found for all the events associated with the death and burial of the Lord. If it fail, then with the traditional view we are forever locked in disharmony and contradiction of scripture. If the Bible is harmonious (and it is), then the Wednesday view follows. A Friday crucifixion gives no answers to these problems in chronology.

If the Wednesday view be taken then the following harmony is presented:

(1) From 6:00 P.M. Wednesday to 6:00 P.M. Thursday was the "high day" Sabbath of the Passover (the 15th of Nisan).

(2) The next day (our Friday) the women purchased the spices and prepared them in order to anoint Jesus' body. After this Sabbath "was past" the women purchased the items. This refers to the "high day" and not the weekly Sabbath, which was the next day, or Saturday (Mk.16:1).

(3) Nicodemus and Joseph embalm Jesus' body on Friday, and later the tomb is sealed and a watch is set.

(4) The second Sabbath in the week begins at 6:00 P.M. Friday and ends at 6:00 P.M. Saturday. On this day the women rest (Lk.23:56).

(5) After sunset on the first day of the week (beg. 6:00 P.M. Saturday, end 6:00 P.M. Sunday under Jewish time, Cf. Acts 20:7-11),

the Lord came forth triumphantly from the tomb, and the women discover this on early Sunday morning. (See Matt.28:1-6. Also note the meaning of the "dawn" in verse one which carries the import of "dawning toward or beginning" of the first day. Thus sundown Saturday).

By this reckoning, there were not only the three hours, from 3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday which could account for the events listed earlier, but there would be all of Friday, or the 16th of Nisan. Thursday and Saturday, being Sabbaths, could not be used.

On Wednesday, Joseph hurriedly buried Jesus' body, but on Friday the process of embalming the body with the spices which he purchased and with the aid of Nicodemus could take place. This would readily account for the use of the singular *συνδόν* to refer to the cloth which was wrapped around the body when it was first lain in the tomb, and the use of the plural *ὀθόνια* to refer to the grave clothes lying in the tomb after the Resurrection (Cf. John 19:40; 20:5-7).

Also on Friday the markets would be opened where the wealthy Nicodemus could purchase - already prepared - spices from a "perfumer" or apothecary. The women could also purchase, at a much lower price, the raw goods for the preparation of the burial spices. Thus, the Lord's body, having been hastily entombed on Wednesday, could be embalmed on Friday by Nicodemus and Joseph, while the women (not knowing of this event) made preparations to embalm the body - which they set out to do on the first day of the week after resting on the weekly Sabbath. A Friday crucifixion can make *no allowance* of time to accomplish these great tasks of love bestowed by these disciples on behalf of their stricken Master.

XII. Typological Considerations

The paschal lamb was in several ways typical of God's Paschal Lamb, Jesus Christ. (1) It was without blemish (Ex.12:5), and so was He (1 Pet.1:19). (2) It was to be chosen on the 10th day of Nisan to be slain (Ex.12:3), and He entered Jerusalem triumphantly on that day to the accolades of the people (Jn. 12:1). (3) It was killed "between the two evenings" (of the 14th and 15th of Nisan, (Ex.12:6, marg.), and so was He (Matt.27:45-50). (4) Its blood procured salvation and deliverance at the institution of the Passover (Ex.12:7,12,13), and so did His (1 Pet. 1:18,19). (5) Not a bone of it was broken

(Ex.12:46), nor was one of His (Jn.19:36). (6) It was eaten without leaven (Ex.12:14-17); and so we are obligated to partake of Christ - the living Bread come down from heaven - without the leaven of sinfulness (1 Cor.5:7, 8).²⁶

Truly, Christ is "our Passover" who is slain "for us" (1 Cor.5:7). He is the "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world" (Jn.1:29). The paschal lamb was the type, and He is the great antitype thereof. When the earthly paschal lamb was being slain by the unreflecting, unbelieving priests, God's own Lamb offered to man and selected for thirty pieces of silver was expiring on a tree on Golgotha's brow.

If we maintain what the Bible says, that Jesus was slain *before* the Passover "high day", then the type is marvelously fulfilled, but the traditional reckoning disrupts the typological symmetry in a number of points.

XIII. Summary

A Wednesday identification of the day of crucifixion calls for a Thursday identification of the Passover. This accords with the evidence of astronomy. It also would call for the Passover being observed as a Sabbath. This again is afforded under the general and primary understanding of the terms "Sabbath" and "preparation". These facts permit the feasibility of such a theory.

The chronology of the Passion Week and the events associated with the death and burial of Christ, especially the act of embalming done by Nicodemus and Joseph and prepared for by the women, infer that Wednesday was the day on which the Lord yielded up His Spirit and was carried into Abraham's Bosom. Through this typology was fulfilled respecting the Old Testament paschal lamb type perfectly and symmetrically.

A Friday crucifixion cannot account for this chronology nor for the time *necessary* to accomplish the events implied and explicated as associated with the crucifixion. It only provides capital for infidel arguments against the Truth by introducing many apparent contradictions. The tradition of Good Friday, Ash Wednesday, and Palm Sunday return to the papal dust from which they sprung when the Friday theory is rejected. Skepticism and Catholicism have no hold where this theory is not, but accept it, and the infidels have whereof to howl and the Romanists whereof to

seize and imprison.

But with a Wednesday crucifixion new light (nay, the old Light from revelation's lantern, is given to Matt.12:40 and a host of other passages. The pronouncement by our Lord of being in the heart of the earth "three days and three nights" becomes a vigorous and vibrant challenge to the enemies of the Truth: as if He were pronouncing - not simply the fact of His Resurrection, nor even the time - but the *exact* time (seventy-two hours after His burial), and daring the Jews and all the host of Satan to prevent it. Victory would be complete and precise. The leaders of the people caught the significance of the prophecy and sought even the might of Rome to stay the raising up of the Son of God.

As Dr. Scroggie has well stated, "Of course, what matters first and last is that Jesus died for us, and the day of His death in no way affects its virtue, but as students of and believers in the Scriptures we should endeavour to know the facts of any given matter, especially when a tradition which has been held for centuries exposes the records to the charge of being historically unreliable."²⁷

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A SWEET SAVOR OF CHRIST

QUENTIN DUNN

"But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place. For we are a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one a savor from death unto death; to the other a savor from life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, corrupting the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ" (2 Cor.2: 14-17). Wherever Paul went he diffused the savor of the knowledge of God. In preaching the gospel of Christ he was a sweet savor of Christ. Savor was a sweet smelling sacrifice and was well pleasing to God.

Paul's work in preaching the gospel was acceptable to God, whatever the result of his labor. To those who believed and obeyed he was a savor from life unto life, to those who disobeyed he was a savor from death unto death. Preaching the gospel had a double effect; it hardened the hearts of the disobedient and softened the hearts of the receptive. Preaching the gospel has a double effect today.

Paul was not sufficient of himself, his

sufficiency was of God. He could do all things through Christ who strengthened him. No man today is sufficient of himself to preach the gospel. No school can make him sufficient. One's sufficiency is of God. To be a sweet savor of Christ one's triumph must be in Christ.

Paul was not as many, corrupting the word of God. There were many false teachers and they deceived many. The false teachers were selfish and their glory was their shame. Paul was unselfish and sincere. These qualities made him a sweet savor of Christ.

To be a sweet savor of Christ one must preach the truth without fear or favor. He must be sincere. He must not corrupt the word of God. Many today corrupt the word of God by minimizing the importance of a "thus saith the Lord". Some corrupt the word by minimizing the importance of the resurrection, the one church, etc. To be a sweet savor of Christ one must declare the whole counsel of God. His life and example must also be in harmony with the will of God.

1106 A Street
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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL" Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER, 1980

"Perilous Times Shall Come"

Gerald W. Miles

Nobody wants to be a "prophet of doom". However, there are many things which must be said which sound like a "prophecy of doom". This is not new, however. Almost two thousand years ago the apostle Paul gave such a gloomy prophecy. In 2 Timothy 3:1 he states that in the *"last days perilous times shall come"*. He goes on to state what manner of men shall come upon the scene. Just reading the list given here sounds like a modern-day newspaper editorial. It would seem that many of these things are now upon us.

Among the things listed by Paul is that class of people *"without natural affection"*. Could this possibly be referring to HOMOSEXUALITY? Is this a problem of our day? There are approximately 20 million homosexuals in this country. These are now trying to get the courts of our land to grant them the same rights as those whom they call "straight". These homos want us to give them our children in the classroom at school. They want us to be present as they "preach" to us about God's will. (As if they knew it!) We are asked to allow them to be accepted as "normal" human beings. Can we do this? NOT AND PLEASE GOD, WE CAN'T. Paul warns that these will come and then adds, *"...from such turn away"*. In order to please God, we must turn away from these. In the Old Testament, men of this sinful practice were put to death (Lev. 20:13). Everything in God's whole existence cries out against these sinful people. Their sin is as old as mankind and it is just as sinful now as it was six thousand years ago! Yes, these are perilous times. Will we sit idly by and allow these to get laws passed which will allow them to teach our children their sinful practice? Will we just do nothing and allow

them to subvert our society to the point that we no longer can distinguish between right and wrong? HOW LONG WILL WE BE SILENT??

Another thing which is running rampant in our society is the sin of abortion. This has been talked about a great deal lately. It seems that many do not consider the taking of a human life as murder. God said that the wilful taking of a life was murder and that all who do such will be lost. Many today are asking our country to FINANCE this wholesale slaughter of innocent babies. This is not only repulsive, it is downright disgusting. It is sad enough for people to go ahead and do this but it is even worse when they ask US, the American taxpayers, to pay for it. I, for one, am against the whole matter. I say, if they want to do this, let them go to those who are no better than they are and let them foot their own bill for it. When our government pays for that which is sinful with our tax money, they are doing a grave injustice, not only to the constitution of the United States but to the will of God as well. Our constitution provides for the "LIFE" and "LIBERTY" of all who come under its rule. Those who sin by killing an innocent baby should be punished by the law of that constitution which they seek to destroy. What makes the killing of a child who is six months old more sinful than the killing of a fetus in its fifth or sixth month? Both are living beings, created in the image of God. Abortion is murder any way you slice it and all who do such are accountable to God for this sinful act. Yes, these are perilous times.

Over two years ago the Alabama legislature defeated the ERA. All of us who are trying
(Continued on page 75)

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EDITORIAL...

GOSPEL MEETINGS CAN BE SUCCESSFUL

JOHN G. PRIOLA

It seems that these are times when many are growing weary in well-doing. Some are losing confidence in our nation and others are losing confidence in those of influential positions in our brotherhood. Some people even talk about losing their faith. Others begin to wonder if God's Word is as powerful as we have always taught it is. In essence, many have wondered if there were any people left who were seeking for truth. Well, there are. If you need a good shot in the arm, just read on. What you are about to read will strengthen you. What you are about to read will help you realize that there are those left who still love the truth as much as ever; that there are those left who still believe God's Word is as powerful as always; that there are those left who still appreciate good old Bible preaching and that there are those left who still believe in the authority of God's Word.

The last week of August, brother Bill Cline went to McDougal, Arkansas, to conduct a gospel meeting. McDougal is a small town, population about 300, located in northeast Arkansas. Brother John Bradshaw, a graduate of Bellview Preacher Training School, is the local minister. Brother Bradshaw graduated from Bellview in January of this year and moved to McDougal. Since that time he has taught and converted nine people out of denominationalism. The congregation at McDougal had worked *hard* for this meeting. In fact, they averaged thirty to forty visitors from the denominations each evening. It was necessary to put folding chairs in the aisles and around the pulpit. In a town of about three hundred, attendance for this meeting averaged about 125-135. And brethren, as already stated, these visitors were not simply brethren from neighboring congregations; rather, they were people from the community who were members of denominational churches.

Brother Cline said it had been years since he had held a gospel meeting in which he did not deliver one lesson, as we say, directed to the church. This was a meeting filled with lesson after lesson to those who were lost. This was a meeting where the oneness of the church was held high, where the distinctive nature of the church was upheld, where the necessity of being a member of the church was sounded forth and where the sinfulness of denominationalism clearly rang forth from the pulpit.

Results: Five conversions and one erring sister

restored who had apostatized and become a member of a denomination. This is in addition to others who were restored.

We learn from this?

First, we can learn that there are still people left who are hungering and thirsting for God's Word. The next time we wonder "what's the use", think back to McDougal, Arkansas.

Secondly, we can learn that the Word is still God's power unto salvation. The Word of God preached clearly and boldly can still prick peoples hearts so that they will cry out and say, "Men and brethren what shall we do?"

Furthermore, we can know that there are still people around who respect the Bible as God's authoritative Word. This was a town where the Bible was on the dashboard of most trucks and where people read and respected God's Word. When challenged to find where people were voted into the church, those people went to their Bibles to prove it. When they could not find it, some forsook the errors of their way.

Also, another great lesson we can learn is that gospel meetings are still beneficial when members do not rely upon the preacher to do it all. The brethren at McDougal had prepared for the meeting. Not only that, they kept *right on* working during the meeting. They voiced their "Amens" during the sermon instead of apologizing for it afterwards. They took their Bibles and went to the homes of those who had visited and studied with them. Yes, they baptized people at all hours of the night. They were not ashamed, nor apologetic of the lessons. Those who were converted were not children of members (although that is important) but were adults, (ranging in age from nineteen to fifty) who came out of denominationalism. The preacher did his part but so did the brethren in McDougal. Bill Cline will be the first to tell you that it was the work of the brethren in McDougal that made this meeting what it was. Good gospel preaching is needed, but real results come when the members do not rely upon the preacher to do it all.

Next, we can see that good old Bible preaching won't run earnest enquirers of truth away. Those people were not run off by that type of preaching. They were made to see the difference between the Lord's church and denominationalism. They were made to know that one needed to get out of denominationalism and into the Lord's church. No, they were not "sneaked up" on, but they were moved by Bible preaching to get out of sin

and into Christ.

Last, but by far not least, one can see the return on their investment. John Bradshaw is a graduate of Bellview Preacher Training School. Many people across our brotherhood sacrificed hard earned dollars to help John and others prepare to preach the gospel. Many times, brethren wonder if it is worth it. McDougal, Arkansas, and God's Word say, "yes it is!" Brethren, our hearts rejoice at the news from McDougal but we need your help. Those congregations and individuals who have helped and who are presently helping us had a part in the success at McDougal. Without your help, much of it would not have been possible. With your help, we now have men not only in McDougal, Arkansas, but located in places all around the world. Those of you who are helping, will you continue to do so? Those who can help, will you not likewise do so? We know that it takes a sacrifice upon your part and we appreciate it. Every dollar that comes is a hard earned dollar sacrificed by those who love God, and who are concerned about the lost. Is it worth it? Yes, Matthew 16:26. Can we depend on you?

** **

"PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME"

to live as God would have us live were glad to see this thing go down for the third time in Alabama. Many are in favour of this thing. They know not what they ask! Most of those who are for the ERA do not really understand the full implications of this amendment. They think all that is involved in this bill is the rights of women. NOT TRUE! There are things in this bill that most of those who desire the passage of this bill would be against. For instance if this passes, women will have the right guaranteed by law, to preach in the pulpits of our churches. Some do not see anything wrong with this. God's law forbids such (1 Cor. 14:34). God must be obeyed in all things. If the churches of Christ were to deny a woman the right to preach, she could take them to court and probably win. You see, there is more to this than meets the eye. If churches refused to let women preach, the government could make these churches pay income tax as a punishment. Yes, these are perilous times.

All of this goes to show how far man will go when he is not trying to obey God. When one serves Satan, he is capable of ANYTHING. Unless we get back to serving God, we might all find ourselves in serious trouble. God might not keep America free much longer. David of old said that a nation whose God is Jehovah is blessed. IS OUR GOD REALLY JEHOVAH???

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SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

- | | | |
|-------|------------|---|
| 9:30 | E. ESTES: | The Church—And Its Concern For The Lost |
| 10:30 | G. ELKINS: | The Church—The Bride Of Christ |
| 7:00 | L. WARREN: | The Church—And Its Concern For The Faithful |
| 7:50 | B. SMITH: | The Church—A Molder Of Homes |

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

- | | | |
|-------|--------------|---|
| 9:00 | G. COLLEY: | The Church—And Singing In Worship |
| 10:00 | C. PUGH: | The Church—The Preparation By John The Baptist
And Jesus |
| 11:00 | R. SHARP: | The Church—And The Crucifixion Of Jesus |
| 1:00 | D. BUCHANAN: | The Church—God's House |
| 2:00 | C. CATES: | The Church—God's Husbandry |
| 3:00 | D. SZTANYO: | The Church—Its Unity |
| 7:00 | G. MUSIC: | The Church—The Blood-Bought |
| 7:50 | A. HIGHERS: | The Church—And The Sword Of The Spirit |



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Pat McGee



Don McWhorter



Avon Malone



Noel Merideth



Roy Sharp



Billy Smith



Dick Sztanyo



Robert Taylor, Jr.



Rex Turner

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother George Darling passed away March 27, 1980. Following is a reprint of an article he wrote for the DEFENDER which was published April 21, 1972.

The Unseemly Attitude Of Rabid Preachers

GEORGE E. DARLING, Sr.

The acceptable purpose behind all gospel preaching is the conversion of the soul; but conversion implies not only a change to righteousness; but also a change from sin. Conviction of sin is absolutely necessary in bringing about genuine repentance, and the idea that men can be convicted of sin by teachers who remain silent about sin is contrary to all reasonable thinking. Too often such senseless thinking is due to the desire to justify the doctrinal laxity of many preachers and pseudo-Bible scholars among us today. Is there any wonder that we have so many who have been baptized, but not converted? Such statements as: "The truth never antagonizes people, only the unseemly attitudes and mannerisms of rabid preachers!" Or, "People are never offended when they are under the influence of my preaching," *should* and *will* never be heard from the lips of any preacher who dares to preach against sin.

The practice of sectarianism is sin, just as much so as any other sin that is denounced in the word of God. Sectarianism must be condemned as soundly as any other form of unrighteousness. Men must be converted to New Testament Christianity and from sectarianism and silence. Because we are afraid of offending or hurting someone's feelings, only makes for more sin. Such statements as "What would people think should they come to our services and hear the preacher calling names and condemning his brethren?", shows how little thought we give to the importance of truth. Why are we not concerned over whether or not these same people will hear the truth of God's word instead of sectarian error and plain old fashioned "holyyrollerism"?

How presumptuous can we be? Do these preachers, elders, et.al., think that they can improve on the "unseemly mannerisms" of Jesus? Was Jesus discourteous when He taught the truth? The answer is obvious, but let me ask then, WHY WAS HE HATED SO BITTERLY? He was insulted, maligned and terribly mistreated. I believe that it was because His condemnation of sin and exaltation of righteousness conflicted with the beliefs and trends of the religious people who wanted to hold to their own emotional experiences and traditions.

Was Paul "beaten with many stripes", cast

into prison, stoned and reviled on every hand because he was such a mean, hard-hearted, caustic and disrespectful witch hunting fanatic? Certainly not! Then why, with all the Bible examples of resentment expressed by people toward the truth, do some still want to place blame upon a man with courage to preach without fear or favor? Pharaoh hated Moses. Elijah emphatically condemned the sins of degenerate Israel, and as a result was hated by Ahab, who called him a "trouble maker". John the Baptist condemned Herod for his adultery with his brother's wife. His adulterous wife became so angry that she schemed to have the head of the preacher. (This type of woman still acts the same way when her sins are exposed.) Too bad we did not have a few of our preachers of today there to advise John to "just let things alone and give them time to work everything out", and that by being patient and kind toward them, even though they were living in adultery, he might win them! Yes sir, if John had just tried a little harder to *communicate* he might have been able to marry the dancing daughter and gain a part in the YELLOW GARTER REVIEW. Poor old John the Baptist, he just lived 2,000 years too soon. This is that rabid, uncouth, uneducated rabble rouser of whom Jesus said that none were greater.

If secular history can be accepted as authentic, all of the apostles with the exception of one, died unnatural deaths as a result of HOSTILITY and ANIMOSITY toward them by a world that *hated the truth*. I would like for some of these liberal minded, love everybody, mealy mouthed preachers to explain Paul's statement in Gal.4:16: "So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?" Does not necessary inference derived from this passage forcibly teach that men do resent the proclaimer of the truth because of their hatred for the truth? If not, exactly what thought does the passage suggest?

BROTHER PREACHER, IF YOU ARE HAVING NO OPPOSITION; IF NOTHING THAT YOU SAY OFFENDS ANYONE: THEN YOU NEED TO CHECK UP, SOMETHING IS HAYWIRE. ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU ARE SERVING THE LORD? THE DEVIL WILL SEE TO IT THAT YOU HAVE OPPOSITION--IF YOU OPPOSE HIM, THAT IS.

AND YOU CAN QUOTE ME ON THAT!

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"The Church's Foundation" - - Psalm 11:3

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7:30 P.M. "The Autonomy of the Church"
—Garland Elkins

Saturday, November 8

9:30 A.M. "Loosing Where God Has Not
Loosed" —Garland Elkins

10:30 A.M. "Perfectionism in the Church"
—Bill Hamrick

11:30 A.M. "Binding Where God Has Not
Bound" —Alan Highers

2:00 P.M. "The Church is Not a
Denomination" —Johnny Ramsey

3:00 P.M. "Unity in Diversity"
—Tom Bright

4:00 P.M. "The Restoration Movement"
—Alan Highers

7:00 P.M. "Church Growth"
—Johnny Ramsey

Sunday, November 9

9:30 A.M. "Women and the Church"
—Foy Smith

10:30 A.M. "Virgin Birth of Christ and
the Church" —Alan Highers

2:00 P.M. "The Place of the Old Testament
in the Church" —Hugo McCord

3:00 P.M. "Fellowship"
—Tom Bright

4:00 P.M. "The Church and Young People"
—Foy Smith

7:30 P.M. "Psalm 11:3"
—Hugo McCord

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DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil. 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER, 1980

Gymnasiums

JIM E. WALDRON

According to the *World Book Encyclopedia* a gymnasium is a special room or building for instruction and practice in physical training. The word gymnasium comes to us from the Greek language. In ancient Greece the word was applied to public places set aside for athletic sports. The first gymnasium built in the United States was built at Amherst College in 1860. Gyms, as they are commonly called, are now found on the grounds of practically all schools and colleges in this country. Besides this, many organizations such as the Y.M.C.A.'s and certain churches have built gyms. It is to the question of the churches of Christ building gymnasiums that we now direct our attention.

The work of the church of Christ is to preach the gospel to the whole earth (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). That is the salvation of souls through evangelism. Saving the lost also involves the edifying or perfecting of those who are converted by means of evangelism, even as it is written: "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up even as also ye do" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). This building up or edifying was and is to be done through exhortation as Barnabas exhorted new saints in Antioch to "...cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). The third thing the church is authorized to do in its work of saving the lost is benevolence. For James says, "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

A careful search of the twenty-seven books

of the New Testament reveals that the church is to be totally absorbed in seeking and saving the lost and that evangelism, edification, and the work of ministry (benevolence) are the only authorized means of so doing (cf. Ephesians 4:12). The church is no more authorized to make recreation and athletics a part of her work than she is to make instrumental music a part of her worship. Note what the much loved and esteemed B. C. Goodpasture wrote on this very point: "For the church to turn aside from its divine work to furnish amusement and recreation is to pervert its mission. It is to degrade its mission. Amusement and recreation should stem from the home rather than the church. The church, like Nehemiah, has a great work to do; and it should not come down on the plains of Ono to amuse and entertain. As the church turns its attention to amusement and recreation, it will be shorn of its power as Samson was when his hair was cut. Only as the church becomes worldly; as it pillows its head on the lap of Delilah; will it want to turn from its wanted course to relatively unimportant matters. Imagine Paul selecting and training a group of brethren to compete in the Isthmian games! Of his work at Corinth he said: 'For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.'" *Gospel Advocate*, May 20, 1948, p.484).

The World Information Bank maintained by the Webb Chapel Church in Dallas, Texas reports that the churches of Christ have fewer than 500 missionaries serving on foreign fields while the Mormons and "Jehovah's Witnesses" number their foreign workers in the thousands. When we are doing so very

(Continued on page 87)

GUEST EDITORIAL

"For I Determined Not To Know Any Thing Among You, Save Jesus Christ, And Him Crucified"

(1 Corinthians 2:2)

David P. Brown

The mission of a gospel preacher is to forget the appeal of whatever eloquence he may have; divorce himself from playing on the sympathies of his auditors by "death bed tales"; cease from whatever "personal testimonies" or "witnessing" he could employ to draw men to himself rather than to the Christ, and forsake all human philosophies and methodologies. The gospel of Christ is the saving power of God! (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

In the book of Acts the Holy Spirit has selected and vouchsafed for time and eternity sufficient accounts of conversions and non-conversions. Hence, for preachers or anyone else to give their own conversion "testimonies" is nothing less than a testimony of their own lack of confidence in those selected by Jehovah.

Of certain ones Isaiah charged, "...*their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:*" (Isaiah 29:13). When we substitute our testimony for the sacred witnesses of the Bible we are persuading men by unauthorized means. Therefore we are found guilty of drawing men to God "*by the precept of men.*"

Indeed it is sad to hear preachers testify of their life of sin and their "personal encounter" with and "surrender" to Christ. Graphic do they illustrate their life before their "confrontation with Christ." Emotionally do they pluck the heart strings of innocent boys and girls with tales of sin so black. Marvelously they sway their audience with a hypnotic song of their glorious conversion. Sadly we search in vain for the Christ but we cannot see him for the preacher.

Proper awe and respect for Jehovah must be built upon the fear and love of God. Such is accomplished when men declare the wisdom of God. "*For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*" (1 Corinthians 1:21).

We plead for all, especially preachers, to return to Jerusalem. With Luke journey through the sacred pages of Acts of apostles and learn that "*Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God*" (1 Corinthians 1:24) is our staff, stay and plea in turning men to Jehovah.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother George Darling passed away March 27, 1980. Following is a reprint of an article he wrote for the DEFENDER which was published May 29, 1972.

A Hiding Place

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

Isaiah prophesied of a time when "A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice, and a MAN shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, as the shade of a GREAT ROCK in a weary land" (Isaiah 32:3). Many sermons have been preached on this "Man" who was to become our hiding place from the wrath of God. We know the MAN and the ROCK refer to Jesus (Romans 8:1). It is wonderful to know that we can have forgiveness and find IN CHRIST a hiding place of security. It is the most wonderful thing on earth to be able to tell others, who are lost and undone, of this place of safety.

So many times the preacher loses sight of the QUALITY of the folk to whom protection is promised. The HIDING PLACE is promised only to those who have REPENTED of their sins; to those who have died to sin and who live no longer therein; to those who have put to death the deeds of the flesh and to those who are led by the spirit. Jesus demanded that before any man could be saved he must obey Him, and this includes REPENTANCE. A change of mind that brings about a change of conduct. If there is not a change of conduct, there has been no repentance. Jesus did not send His disciples out to make a big show of numbers before the world. He sent them out to call men and women unto Him in genuine repentance. There is no HIDING in Jesus without REPENTANCE.

Because men have been tempted by "NUMBERS" and a "STRONG CHURCH" numerically, which usually pays a "fat salary" too, giving the preacher a "big name" in the brotherhood, and prestige, the emphasis upon repentance, which was COMMANDED BY JESUS IN LUKE 24:47, has been almost entirely deleted from sermons in the "large" pulpits. They have surrounded themselves with unsaved people who think, because they have been baptized (ceremonially ducked) that they are HIDING IN CHRIST, when in reality they are simply hiding in a great multitude of sinful people just like themselves, AND GOD SEES THEM JUST AS CLEARLY AS HE WOULD IF THEY WERE STANDING ON THE TIP OF WASHINGTON'S MONUMENT IN WASHINGTON, D. C. They are hiding in an ecclesiastical organization that says to the preacher, "See not;

and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us RIGHT THINGS, SPEAK UNTO US SMOOTH THINGS, PROPHECY DECEITS," and they do this because they are still a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of Jehovah" (Isaiah 30:8-10). Thank God, Isaiah did not stop there. READ ON! "Wherefore thus saith the Lord, (the Holy One of Israel) Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely thereon; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in an instant." We often quote that the man who has been repeatedly warned shall be cut off and that without a chance to fix things up, but we forget that the same thing is prophesied of folk who will not repent and who persist to do perverse things, (this would include everything from lodge membership, social drinking, gambling, adultery, flirting with other men's wives, homosexuality, etc.; etc.), while they HIDE in the LARGE CONGREGATION. When the break in the wall comes SUDDENLY these people will be found exposed instead of hidden as they supposed.

If a preacher is true to God's word, he will emphasize REPENTANCE. He will not busy himself by being on constant watch for the well-to-do and the respectable sinner that will add prestige to his membership. He will busy himself by trying to improve the quality of the saints that the world is looking to for example.

BY GOD'S GRACE, let us remember that if we have built on falsehood and deception that God has said, "I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet: and hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (Isaiah 28:17-18). IN CHRIST THERE IS SAFETY, BUT NO MAN CAN GET INTO CHRIST WITHOUT REPENTANCE. This doctrine cuts down the SHOWY NUMBERS. Those who are SAFELY HIDDEN IN CHRIST, will be the only ones who will stand justified in His sight forever.

Let us point men to the ONLY hiding place
(Continued on page 87)

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH THE PERVERTED KIND

HAROLD DRIVER

Today, we are hearing a great deal about "Gay Rights". This is the right of homosexuals to live as they wish and be accepted by society in general. They insist they are only doing what comes natural to them. One must do his own thing, they say. Little do they know or care that homosexuality is a sin in the eyes of God.

When I was twelve years old attending a movie in Nashville, Tennessee, I had my first Close Encounter With The Perverted Kind. While attempting to watch the movie, my rights were violated. A man in his mid-twenties sat down beside me and began making advances toward me. He did not care that I was only a child, or that I was uninterested in his approaches. The end result was that I left hurriedly from a movie that I had paid money to see. This was my first Close Encounter With The Perverted Kind but by no means was it the last.

Five years later, while waiting for a bus, a man sat down on the bench beside me. He had his proposal printed on a book of matches. All one had to do was read it and answer "Yes" or "No". I thanked God that my bus came two minutes later. Only two years ago, when I worked for an auto parts distributorship, the management hired a homosexual. He did not have much to say to me after he found out that I was a preacher of the gospel. He did manage to entice a 19 year old "boy" to start going to gay bars with him. Nothing that I could say prevented this young man from becoming a victim of this perverted expression of human sexuality.

In Romans 1:26-32, the Apostle Paul listed a number of sins which will keep a person out of heaven. This list includes homosexuality. He stated that some women had changed the "natural use of their bodies into that which is against nature." He also said that some men had left "the natural use of the woman and burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."

In I Corinthians 6:9-10, Paul says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,

nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Paul has reference to homosexuals when he refers to the effeminate and abusers of themselves with mankind. These verses prove without a doubt that homosexuality is not a sickness or a disease; it is a sin. After mentioning this list of sins, including homosexuality, that will keep a person out of heaven, Paul continues, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor.6:11). He shows by this that the sin of homosexuality is forgivable. Just as some of the Corinthians who had practiced homosexuality were able to be pardoned, those today who have engaged in homosexual acts can be forgiven and in the same manner - by the blood of Christ in obedience to the gospel.

Parents must teach their children that homosexuality is a sin in the eyes of God. We must teach them that it has and always will continue to be wrong no matter how popular or how widespread it becomes. Television and movie screens today are literally flooded with themes which portray homosexuals as an abused, enslaved minority. Homosexuality is being lauded both subtly and flagrantly as an accepted, alternative life-style. Homosexuals are urging passage of legislation to legalize homosexual "marriages" and to permit homosexuals to adopt and rear children. We must educate our children to this Satanic effort to enslave our minds and to convince us that "evil is good and good is evil". We must prepare them for Encounters With The Perverted Kind as they are becoming more open and aggressive with their advances. If we don't, they may fall prey to this cancerous evil and become spreaders of this perverted sexuality themselves. Anita Bryant rightly stated that the greatest threat of this sin was in the fact that "Homosexuals cannot reproduce their own kind. They must recruit." Where do they recruit enlistments for Satan's war against God's will? From among your children and mine. We as God's people must take a stand for what is right - RIGHT NOW!

God help us to do so before it is too late!

We Cannot Stand That Type Of Preaching Here

WINSTON C. TEMPLE

"Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, 'Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words.'"

(The typical hypocrite in the church today would say to the most influential preacher firer: 'We need to get rid of that preacher! Why, he wil' tear up the church.'")

"For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'"

("You know brother _____ that our preacher is too hard and personal in his approach. And besides, he is always talking about distasteful things such as death, judgment, hell, etc. You know our people just can't stand that type of preaching.")

"And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.'"

("He is always putting people down. I certainly don't want to spend my money in support of such a man. Let him get his bread from some other congregation. After all, we are a prominent church. We just cannot permit such repugnant sounds coming from the pulpit to represent this church.")

"Then Amos answered Amaziah, 'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and

the Lord said to me, 'Go prophesy to my people Israel.'"

("I know that the preacher keeps saying, 'I am only preaching the Bible;' but he doesn't have to be so vindictive.")

"Now therefore hear the word of the LORD. You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'"

("Before I forget it, I just cannot tolerate the negative manner in which he addresses our church. If visitors heard him, they would think that we are out-right sinners. He is always saying, 'Dancing is a sin, smoking is a sin, immodest clothing is a sin, etc.'")

"Therefore thus saith the LORD; 'Your wife shall be a harlot in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be parceled out by line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land!'"

("Last but not least, I am tired of hearing him quote Matt.7:21 and then say, 'At judgment day, many that profess to be God's children will be cast into outer darkness.' Of course, I know that he is not talking to me!")

Writer's note! If any preacher desires to be fired immediately, if not sooner, read this article to the congregation where you serve.

(Scripture quotes taken from Amos 7:10-17.)



FIGHTING CHRISTIANS ARE LOVING SERVANTS

G. K. WALLACE

It is commonly said, "The church of Christ fights everybody." We, as members of the church of Christ, do not fight anyone. It is strange that anyone who claims to be a Christian will circulate such a malicious slander. Dogmatic preachers will say publicly and privately that we, as Christians, are fighting everyone in the community. We, on the other hand, say that we are not fighting anyone but only seeking to uphold the teachings of the Bible and the principles of Christian living as exemplified by Jesus our Lord.

In order to be saved one must believe the gospel of Christ with all his heart (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16). To believe the gospel one must be taught the gospel. Are we fighting souls when we ask them to hear and believe the gospel?

The Savior of the world said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Do we fight men when we ask them to do what the Lord said? It seems to me that the man who tries to talk a man out of doing what Jesus said to do is the one who is fighting others.

If gospel preachers tell men to do just what Jesus said to do, men will say "they are fighting." If on the other hand, when men say, "He that believeth and bows his head and raises his hand shall be saved," the world will stand up and cheer. "Bow your head and raise your hand" is the general procedure of the modern revivalist. "Bow your heads and raise your hands," they will say. The preacher will say, "I see one over here, God bless you. I see one up in the balcony, God bless you." Of course no one can peep but the preacher. Some of the preachers threaten their audience with a curse if they peep as does the preacher. If one so preaches the world will applaud, but if one dares preach the Book just as it is, someone will say, "the preacher fights." He who preaches Mark 16: 15, 16, as it is written, is preaching what Jesus said. If one preaches "Bow your head and

raise your hand," he is preaching the way of the world.

Whether it be fighting others to preach man's ways or God's ways judge ye. To preach the way of man is to fight both man and God! The old mourner's bench system is still in vogue. Instead of hitting the "sawdust trail" the old mourner's bench has been moved to the back of the house or "right where you are." "Just bow your head and raise your hand" is the same system that has been used by rabble-rousers for ages. The mourner's bench has been moved from the front of the building to "right where you are."

The stock objections to telling men just what Jesus said is to ask, "What will become of people in heathen lands who have not been baptized and know not of baptism?" We reply by asking what will become of those same people who know not to "raise their hands and bow their heads?" If it is suggested that missionaries will be sent to tell them about Christ and to "raise their hands and bow their heads," then we suggest that the missionaries do what Christ said do and thus not fight the poor heathen.

If one is going all the way to Africa or India to tell someone about Jesus, why not tell him what Jesus said? To do otherwise is to fight the heathen. Truly, those who tell people just what Jesus said are the real friends of Christ. Those who tell men something else are not only fighting men, but they are also fighting God.

Be it remembered that the Lord's church does not fight anybody. God's people strive to help everyone. He who fights a servant of God when he is telling men what God says is fighting God. "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." (Acts 5: 39).

—The Spiritual Sword

little to reach the 4.4 billion lost souls of this world, how can we turn the resources of the church to the secularism of athletics and recreation?

When Christian parents plan recreation or athletics in a Christ-like atmosphere for their children it is a fine thing. Such secular responsibilities fall on the home and family. However, we are at present in the churches of Christ in danger of perverting the work and responsibility the Lord has given his people to do in advancing the kingdom. In many places the situation with the church is very similar to the situation in Jerusalem as described by Ezekiel just prior to Jerusalem's fall to Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. The prophet said of Jerusalem's leaders, "they have made no distinctions between the holy and the common..." (Ezekiel 22:36). The work of the church of our Lord Jesus is a holy thing and it ought not to be perverted by getting the church into the business of providing and promoting athletics and recreation by building gymnasiums and such like. We ought to do as Ezekiel said would be done in the restoration, "teach (God's) people the difference between the holy and the common..." (Ezekiel 44:23). That is, teach them what God has authorized the church to do, whether it is in the area of the worship or the work of the church.

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and be sure we instruct them how to get in and HIDE before the fires of hell sweep away their false hiding places in large unconverted memberships of worldly show and formalism.

Look closely at the congregation where you attend, see if the elders are men who have their eyes open to what is going on in the local church and in the brotherhood. Look over the membership and see if you find godly people who LOVE THE LORD. (They won't have to tell you, you can tell by their actions). I know you will not find perfection, you should not expect to, but before God, you should be able to find those who are trying their best to follow the teachings of the BIBLE.

THE FORT WORTH LECTURES 1981

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Who's The Trouble Maker?

GERALD R. REYNOLDS

From time to time it has been said, "He is just a trouble maker" or that "He is troubling the church". I have known some "trouble makers" in my day, but wonder who is really the trouble maker?

Is the trouble maker the one who contends earnestly for the faith, opposes error and stands for the truth? Or is the trouble maker the one who contends earnestly against the faith, opposes truth and stands for that which is wrong?

The church is having its trouble, as it has had in time past. The trouble does not come from the side of Deity, but from men. Men today will and do accept the doctrines and commandments of men rather than the will of God. Paul said they would (1 Tim.4:1,2; 11 Tim.4:3,4).

Why do we have trouble today concerning: Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage; The Work of the Holy Spirit; So Many Versions (Perversions); Authority of Elders Questioned; Immorality Condoned; Dividing the Assembly; and

Womens Role in the Church, just to mention a few. The trouble lies in the neglect to accept God's standard of authority, the Bible. (Think about it!)

When one tries to warn us, and lets us know what the Bible says on the subject, he is called a trouble maker, a troubler of the church.

We have perhaps listened to the cry "peace, peace" so long that we get upset when one tries to make us aware of the real trouble. Preachers cry, "peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jer.6:14). We have been lulled to sleep with peaceful sermons and now we desire peace at any cost. We now call the preacher of truth a trouble maker, because he disturbs our peace.

Who is the trouble maker? Is it Paul? He certainly was referred to as a trouble maker (Acts 16:20). Is it YOU? Those of you who have perverted the truth, or you who have compromised, or you who sit by and allow the Lord's church to be taken over by liberals.



DEFENDER

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL." Phil 1:16

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER, 1980

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother George Darling passed away March 27, 1980. Following is a reprint of an article he wrote for the DEFENDER which was published June 30, 1972.

WHY?

George E. Darling, Sr.

Maybe, it's because I'm a little older, or maybe it's because I appeal to the younger preachers as a sounding board. Many times I have preachers come to me bemoaning the fact that they are mistrusted. These men are sad because the brethren seem to have so little confidence in them. They condemn the elders and others for being skeptical of them and their actions.

There is a remedy for just such situations. It can be remedied once and for all by this method. (The same remedy will work for the congregation that is wondering "WHY" they do not have the fellowship and cooperation of sister congregations). When someone doubts your orthodoxy just come out into the open, hiding nothing and make a clear statement of just where you stand. If one makes a clear statement of his position then both the Christian and the modernist and liberals know where he stands. There will be no doubt anymore, but as long as a man persists in playing in both camps, and carrying water on both shoulders, riding two horses at once and doing the "Split" he can expect to be treated with "Care".

The reason why men are mistrusted is almost invariably because they refuse to take a definite stand. One day they are TOTALLY CONVINCED that participation in certain questionable projects are "WRONG", and they are going to openly oppose and cut off all support to such. The next day they are AGAIN

upholding this very thing that was wrong the day before. They had rather be mistrusted than they had to take a definite stand one way or the other. It takes courage to meet the enmity of people, but as sure as one comes out in the open and aligns himself with the cause of TRUTH he is going to meet opposition.

An honest man doesn't mind being investigated, but a crook always hollers. An honest man does not mind telling inquirers just where he has been, where he has worked or where he has slept, but a crook always resents investigation. A true and faithful gospel preacher does not mind being investigated, and a CROOK ought to be investigated whether he likes it or not!

It is better to come clean, to be safe than sorry, to be definitely on one side than to try to play both sides and have everybody liking you. The world hated Christ because He testified that its works were evil. (John 7:7.) BROTHER, TAKE A STAND ON THE LORD'S SIDE, and be definite!

A man is known by what he promotes, condones and opposes! More commonly you hear this expressed, "A man is known by both his friends and his enemies." If a man, (please keep in mind that the same rule applies to a congregation or an eldership), upholds unscriptural works or heretical teachers, whether this be in the form of a denomina-
(Continued on page 91)

EDITORIAL

POTPOURRI

With this issue of the DEFENDER the 1980 publication year comes to a close. From the beginning we have always taken the month of December off--it has always been a welcome vacation from the toils of journalism. We would like to think that you will miss the paper and that you will look forward to it being in your mail again sometime late in January or early February.

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Every year the Bellview Preacher Training School continues to grow. This fall we are only one short of capacity enrollment and prospects are that we will have full capacity in January. We could not do the work we are doing in training men to preach the gospel without the faithful assistance of many of you who read the pages of the DEFENDER. In January we intend to carry an article concerning the men in the school and some of the desperate financial help that two of those students have. As for now, we thank you for your concern, your constant prayers and your much needed financial help which has gone to support men who are willing to give their lives to the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

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Since 1973 the pages of the DEFENDER have been warning brethren against the dangers, yea the heresy of the TOTAL COMMITMENT MOVEMENT. Many have been alerted by these warnings and numerous other such warnings to the errors of the movement and in many places the on-rush of error has been stopped.

The sad side of the story is that great numbers of brethren have not been the least bit interested in the warnings and as a result some have been swallowed up by the error only to realize they were in it before it was too late. Several months ago it was known that over 25 churches had been split by the TOTAL COMMITMENT MOVEMENT (Crossroads Philosophy). There is a larger number on the verge of splitting, but at the present are able to "hang on". In 1979 even the *Gospel Advocate* finally became concerned enough to print several articles against the movement. That same year, I know Ira North preached against it (I heard the tape.) as did Batsel Barrett Baxter. This is rather convincing proof that the movement was getting widespread and dangerous for the above to go on public record against it.

Then the impossible to explain began to happen. In June, 1979 Ira North appeared on a workshop in Pensacola along with an elder and a preacher from the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. I was told no one would think he endorsed it for he had spoken against it; and that it was too late to cancel; and that those who had invited him were strong supporters of the *Amazing Grace* television

(Continued on page 96)

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WHY?

tional ministerial association or a project concocted by our brethren designed to draw away disciples from the OLD PATHS, taking his place among them, recognizing them as his brethren in Christ, you can know that that brother does not promote New Testament Christianity! If he merely condones this mongrel association and says nothing for or against, you can know that his convictions do not run deep enough to cause him to cry out with a voice like a trumpet against the sin and division caused by these rebellious leaders(?) and that he is refusing to abide by the divine revelation of God.

On the other hand if a man openly opposes the ring leaders of digression, refuses to attend thier hodge-podge assemblies, obeys the Lord's injunction to MARK them that are causing division and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which was learned, and TURNS away from them...and preaches with all his might that there is BUT ONE CHURCH and not 300 plus, people know where this man stands.

The world is watching to see what you promote, condone and oppose. They watch the man who opposes the bringing into the church an organization that proposes to be Christian, while teaching doctrines that are designed to eat the very vitals of the Lord's body. The devil is as subtle today as he was in the Garden of Eden. The world is watching to see if you have the same spirit that Jesus had when He said, "I testify that the world's works are evil" (John 7:7). Preachers who have taken their stand to denounce the world and its evil doings are watching other preachers to see if they are promoting, condoning or opposing those things which they KNOW to be of the devil. It is a smart thing to take time out and before God, examine your program of life and see into what waters you have drifted. Do you promote, condone and support the efforts put forth by the unconverted in your congregation to get members into the church through an appeal to their fleshly desires? Are you converting them to a program that appeals only to their emotions? Don't think that you can sit back and scratch your head in deep meditation, while trying to excuse yourself for not being the CHRIST MAN. YOU ARE KNOWN, PREACHER FRIEND, BY WHAT YOU PROMOTE, CONDONE AND OPPOSE.

From what we have said, you can surely see what a DANGEROUS thing it is to take chances with the Devil and play around with the enemies of Christ. When you do, you are going to lose the respect of the godly and the fellowship of those who are desirous of following the "Old Paths". You may make your

overtures of reconciliation, you may write letters and send out invitations, but you need to read Nehemiah 4 through 6. Sanballat, with others sent to Nehemiah saying, "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (Neh.6:2). Nehemiah realized it was a scheme to do him and God's work harm and his answer was, "Oh, No!"--"I'm too busy to come down to you...Nehemiah knew what a lot of preachers and churches have never learned, and this is you just do not DARE PLAY AROUND WITH THE DEVIL AND THE ENEMIES OF THE LORD'S WORK. IF YOU DO YOU WILL LOSE YOUR HEAD.

I know that this article will fall into the hands of some Christians who want to do God's will, but who have been confused, or kept in the dark as to what has been condoned, upheld, supported and promoted by the preacher and the leaders of their congregations. I pray that you will heed the warning and stay at a safe distance from those who would pervert the gospel and finally destroy the church for which Christ died.

Ministers of the Gospel have a tremendous responsibility in this present hour. They are working under the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot compromise with the desires or the demands of men.

The good minister of Christ Jesus is---

*An ambassador, not a diplomat.
An evangelist, not an entertainer.
A minister, not a dictator.*

HE MUST PREACH--

*The divine Word, not human wisdom.
Christ, not culture.
Conversion, not civilization.
Regeneration, not reformation.
Christians in action, not smug satisfaction.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

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"Shall Not The Judge Of All The Earth Do Right?"

Gerald W. Miles

You and I both know that things are not exactly right in our country today. Things are being done which should not be. Many things are even being made legal which go beyond God's law. When one goes beyond the law of God, he sins. "To go beyond" is the meaning of the word TRANSGRESS. In I John 3:4 we read, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." From this we can see that when one goes beyond God's law, he is a sinner. Where will all this legalized sin end? WHO KNOWS?

In our society,* we have men who are made judges over us. Many of these are made judges over us without our knowledge or approval. These men are supposed to be on our side, but, are they? Many of these men like to think of themselves as gods with the power to make or break the life of some helpless individual. Many of these so-called judges will take money to allow some criminal to get off with a light sentence. One does not have to be too smart to figure out what is happening. It seems that the guilty go free while the innocent suffer. It is bad when a good, law-abiding man goes to jail while the criminal who was trying to rob him goes free! It is bad when the family man goes to jail for trying to protect his family against burglars and these same burglars go free on legal technicality. It is bad when men have no right to protect themselves and their families and thieves have the right to rob, rape, and plunder with no fear of the law.

January 22, 1973 was one of the blackest days in the history of this nation. It was upon this date (BLACK MONDAY) that the U.S. Supreme Court passed into law a ruling which legalized the mass murder of innocent unborn babies. These "judges" ruled that unborn babies were not protected by the Constitution since they were not really "beings" in a "meaningful" or "complete" sense. THESE ARE THE KIND OF MEN WE HAVE MAKING LIFE AND DEATH DECISIONS FOR OUR COUNTRY!!!!!! It makes one wonder what we are coming to! Since this ruling, about 4,000 babies each day are murdered in Alabama. I for one do not like it and I am not ashamed or afraid to say so! Every one of the "judges" who voted to legalize this mass murder will burn in hell unless he repents of this grave sin. Many of these men are not concerned with the welfare of the country as much as they are concerned with doing what they want to do and playing god! We look around us at all the other BLACK MONDAYS and wonder where we will go

from here. If this is any indication of things to come, GOD HELP US. How long will it be before all these "judges" again get together and declare that handicapped, insane, mentally retarded, and aged people are not "beings in any complete or meaningful way" and declare open season on them? Will we see this in our life time? I HOPE I NEVER LIVE TO SEE IT! Many judges today are not doing right.

In Genesis 18:25 Abraham asked the question, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" Yes, God will do right. We might not see any justice here but one day, we will! Jesus told us that His words will be our judge in the last day (Jn. 12:48). Time and time again we have pictured for us the judgment scene with God on the throne. You and I will witness this because we will all be there (See Heb. 9:27). Judges today can be bought. No man will buy his way out of hell because God will be a just judge (2 Tim. 4:8). Judges today are influenced by a man's social or political standing. This will make no difference with God because He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Those judges who have legalized the murder of innocent babies will be there before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of themselves (2 Cor. 5:10) and I would not want to be in their shoes. Those judges who have allowed innocent men to suffer and let the guilty go free will have to explain this to God. All that is done on that great day will be JUST AND RIGHT. Men will not go away from that court saying that justice was not done. All men will know that God's ruling was righteous.

Yes, the judge of all the earth does do right. He is giving men a chance to repent (2 Pet. 3:9). Those who take advantage of this will live eternally with God and those who do not will live eternally in hell where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Rev. 20:10). Men ought to think soberly about this. Yet, most people do not give it a second thought. They had rather not think about such things. One day the grim reaper will call for them and they will wish they had prepared for the day.

Our judges ought to look to God before they make a ruling which will cause their eternal souls to burn in hell. Let us all pray that our justices will recend their sinful rulings and begin to meet out justice as God wills it to be done. The judge who does not do so is in for a shock at the last day. THE JUDGE OF THE EARTH DOES RIGHT!

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

Winston C. Temple

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Man.

(1) Name. Zephaniah, "Tsephan-yah" a name which is borne by three other individuals in the Old Testament. (See 1 Chron. 6:36-38; Jer. 21:1; Zech. 6:10). In the LXX and the Vulgate, it appears as "Sophonias." It means "Jehovah Hides" or "hidden of Jehovah."¹

(2) Ancestry. His lineage is traced by him back to "Hezekiah" (RSV). "...Amariah and King Manasseh were brothers, Gedaliah and King Amon were cousins, Cushi and King Josiah were second cousins, and Zephaniah was third cousin of the three kings Jehoahas, Jehoiakim, and Zechariah; thus putting the prophet into familiar relationship with the court, to which his message seems to be specially directed (e.g. 1:8)...."² Hezekiah would have been the great-great-grandfather of Zephaniah. This would make the prophet of royal blood.

2. Place of Author's Home.

(1) "This place" (1:4) suggests that Jerusalem was his home.

(2) His knowledge of the topography of the city (1:10,11) also points to Jerusalem as his home.

3. Time of Writing.

(1) Somewhere within the reign of Josiah, 639-608 B.C. (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chron. 34:3ff).

(2) Josiah's reign can be divided into two parts, separated by the great reform of 621.

(3) Arguments in favor of Zephaniah's prophecy falling in the latter part of Josiah's reign.

A. Deut. 28:29,30, is quoted in Zeph. 1:13,15,17 in a manner which shows that the former book was well known, but according to the modern view, the Deuteronomic Code was not known until 621, because it was lost (2 Kings 22:8).

B. The "remnant of Baal" (1:4) points to a period when much of the Baal-worship had been removed, which means subsequent to 621.

C. The condemnation of the "King's sons" (1:8) presupposes that at the time of the utterance they had reached the age of moral responsibility: this again points to the later period.

(4) Arguments in favor of Zephaniah's prophecy falling in the early part of Josiah's reign.

A. The youth of the king would make

3. (4) A. Continued.

it easy for the royal princes to go to the excesses condemned by Zephaniah (1:8-9).

B. The idoltrous practices condemned by Zephaniah (1:3-5) are precisely those abolished in 621.

C. The temper described in 1:12 is explicable before 621 and after the death of Josiah in 608, but not between 621 and 608, when religious enthusiasm was widespread.

D. Only the earlier part of Josiah's reign furnishes a suitable occasion for the prophecy. Evidently at the time of its delivery an enemy was threatening the borders of Judah and of the surrounding nations. But, the only foes of Judah during the latter part of the 7th century meeting all conditions are the Scythians, who swept over Western Asia about 625 B.C. At the time the prophecy was delivered their advance against Egypt seems to have been still in the future but eminent (1:14); hence the prophet's activity may be placed between 630 and 625, perhaps in 626. If this date is correct, Zephaniah and Jeremiah began their ministries in the same year?

4. Political Background.

(1) In Judah.

A. Read 2 Kings 22, 23; 2 Chron. 34,35. Note especially 2 Kings 22:15-20.

B. Hezekiah (reformer); Manasseh (rebel); Ammon (rebel); Josiah (reformer).

C. Josiah came to the throne at the age of eight. At the age of sixteen he began to seek after Jehovah and at the age of twenty he began to purge Judah.

D. Josiah's reforms.

(A) Josiah's reforms were indicative of his character. As proof of this statement we offer the following passages: 2 Kings 22:19 and 2 Kings 23:25, respectively. "...because thy heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before Jehovah, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith

4. (1) D. (A) Continued.

Jehovah. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to Jehovah with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him."

(B) The reforms listed:

- a. The preliminary abolition of idolatry.
- b. The repair of the temple.
- c. The discovery in it of the Book of the Law.
- d. The consequent national reformation by the king; and lastly,
- e. The national observance of the Passover.⁴ (See 2 Kgs. 22,23 and 2 Chron. 34).

(2) In the East.

- A. Josiah evidently remained loyal to the Assyrian King, Ashurbanipal, who died c.a. 633 B.C.
- B. After Ashurbanipal, the Assyrian Empire began to disintegrate.
- C. 625 B. C. Nabopolassar, King of Babylon declared the independence of Chaldea from her Assyrian Lords.
- D. War between Babylon and Nineveh.
- E. Cyaxeres, the King of the Medes, took Asshur, the old Assyrian capitol in 614 B.C.
- F. Nabopolassar, assisted by Cyaxeres, took Nineveh in 612 B.C. In 610 B.C. the Babylonians and their allies took Haran. The Assyrians attempted to retake Haran in 609 B. C., but failed; thus ending Assyria's power.⁵
- G. Pharaoh - Necho of Egypt tried to help Assyria by marching north with his army (609 B. C.). Josiah attempted to stop him but was killed in the battle. For four years Egypt dominated Judah, but in 605 B. C. Necho was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchomish, west of Haran. This was in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer.46:2).
- H. Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk prophesied during Josiah's reign.
- I. Shallum succeeded Josiah. He was placed on the throne by popular demand. His name was changed to Jehoahaz. Pharaoh - Necho put him in chains and sent him to Egypt as a prisoner.
- J. Necho then placed Eliakim, the oldest brother of Jehoahaz, on Judah's throne. His name was changed to Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim came under the control of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon after Necho's defeat in 605 B. C. Jehoia-

4. (2) J. Continued.

kim now transferred his loyalty to the new ruler, but later on failed to pay tribute and had to be punished (2 Chron. 36:6; 2 Kings 23:35-36; 24:1; c.f. Dan. 1:1-3). At this time most likely, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego were carried captive to Babylon (Dan.1:1-7).

K. The next king was Coniah or Jehoia-
chin. He proved disloyal to Nebuchadnezzar and again the Babylonian army came to Jerusalem. 10,000 Israelites were taken to Babylon in 597 B. C. Among them was Ezekiel, the prophet.

L. Zedekiah, Judah's last king joined a coalition with Tyre, Sidon, Ammon, Edom and Moab against Babylon. Zedekiah begged for clemency and Nebuchadnezzar evidently gave it, but this was short-lived.

(A) In 588 B. C. another ambitious Pharaoh (Hophra-Apries) sought Judah's help against Babylon.

(B) Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, took Zedekiah; killed his sons and seventy others in Zedekiah's presence; with this horrid picture on his mind, his eyes were put out.

(C) Jerusalem was utterly destroyed (2 Kgs. 25:9).

(D) Three different groups taken to Babylon 605, 597, and 587-86 B. C. End of the Kingdom of Judah.

M. Remnant of Judah.

(A) Poor, discouraged and leaderless.

(B) Nebuchadnezzar appointed a man named Gedaliah as governor.

(C) Jeremiah was allowed to remain in Judah.

(D) Gedaliah was murdered by Ishmael. Civil war resulted. The leaders fled to Egypt and took Jeremiah with them.⁶

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

THROUGH JUDGMENT TO BLESSING

- I. LOOK WITHIN!--Wrath coming on Judah (1:1-2:3).
 1. The Purpose of Jehovah to Judge (1-6).
 2. The "Day" of Jehovah "At Hand" (7-18).
 3. And so -- Plea to Jerusalem (2:1-3).
- II. LOOK AROUND!--Wrath on all nations (2:4-3:8).
 1. West, East--Philistia, Moab, Ammon (4-11).
 2. South, North--Ethiopia and Assyria (12-15).
 3. And So--"Woe" to Jerusalem (3:1-8).
- III. LOOK BEYOND!--After Wrath, Healing (3:9-20).
 1. Conversion of Gentile Peoples (9).
 2. Restoring of Covenant People (10-15).
 3. And So--The new Jerusalem (16-20).⁷

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

NOTE: The book may be properly divided into three main sections as follows --

I. LOOK WITHIN--Wrath Coming On Judah (1:1-2:3).

1. The purpose of Jehovah to judge. (1-6).
 - (1) Mankind had degraded himself to the point where God would not turn away His wrath (Gen. 6:5-8; 7:21-23).
 - (2) Key word (1-6) "EVERYTHING".
 - A. 1:2 - Everything that has sinned or that will suffer as a consequence of sin. The animal creation will suffer as a result of man's transgressions.
 - B. The Apostle Paul said in Rom. 8:20-22, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope...For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."
 - (3) The judgment is on Judah, no one else is mentioned.
 - A. Mt. 3:12 - "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees."
 - B. The words and phrases such as:
 - (A) Utterly sweep away; overthrow the wicked; cut off from this place the remnant of Baal.
 - (B) Shows that Jehovah will be thorough in His judgment and that He is no respecter of persons.
 - (C) 2 Cor. 5:10; c.f. v.12 - "At that time I will search Jerusalem with Lamps..."
2. The "DAY" of Jehovah "At Hand" (7-18).
 - (1) "Be silent before the Lord God!" Irreverence of people indicated.
 - (2) Key word (7-18) "SACRIFICE".
 - A. Who is the sacrifice?
 - B. The wicked, selfish and debauched, inhabitants of Jerusalem.
 - (3) The prophet's message falls on hard hearts and heads. "The Lord will not do good, nor will he do ill" (12).
 - (4) They were "...thickening upon their lees..."
 - A. They were living on their wealth in idleness and indifference (12).
 - B. Shocking reality was that they were not going to enjoy this wealth (Mt. 6:19-22).
 - (5) The day of the Lord is: Near, Hastening fast; its sound is bitter; it is a day of wrath, anguish, ruin, devastation, darkness, gloom,

I. 2. (5) Continued.

- clouds, and a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities.
- (6) The reason for this terrible day is "...Because they have sinned against the Lord!!" (17).
3. A plea to Jerusalem (2:1-3).
 - (1) A call to repentance.
 - (2) Why should they repent?
 - A. "...before you are driven away like the drifting chaff;
 - B. ...Before there comes upon you the fierce anger of the Lord;
 - C. ...before there comes upon you the day of the wrath of the Lord."
 - (3) Those that could repent (the humble) should seek the Lord.
 - A. WHY? "...perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the wrath of the Lord.
 - B. The blood bought church of Christ is the humble's hiding place today (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5).
 - (4) Zephaniah unlike Amos (Ch. 1:2-4) brings his denunciation first to Judah and then to her enemies.
- II. LOOK AROUND -- Wrath on All Nations (2:4-3:8).
 1. Philistines (2:4-7) - East.
 - (1) Gaza (strong) (Azzah) shall be Azobah (forsaken...)
 - (2) Ashkelon (the busy market place) shall be a desolation...
 - (3) Ashdod (might) will be driven out in the noon day (easily).
 - (4) Ekron (deep rooting) shall be up-rooted.
 - (5) Cherothites (certain) the word of the Lord is against you.
 2. Moab and Ammon shall become as --
 3. Sodom and Gomorrah, 2:8-11.
 4. Ethiopia shall be slain by (Jehovah's word, 2:12).
 5. Assyria shall be destroyed...Nineveh, a desolation, (13-15).
 6. The wicked Gentiles will suffer with the wicked children of God! Just payment for unjust transgressions. (Rom. 6:23).
 7. Why woe to Jerusalem? (3:1-2).
 - (1) She listens to no voice.
 - (2) She accepts no correction.
 - (3) She does not trust in the Lord.
 - (4) She does not draw near to her God.

NOTE: Neither did she heed the fall of her sister, Israel in 722 B.C. (c.f. 1 Cor. 10:12).

- (5) Judah's officials, judges, prophets and priests were corrupt. What a description of America today!
- (6) The Lord in her midst sees and knows her sin...He constantly shows mercy and justice to her.
- (7) Yet, they know no shame (5).
- III. LOOK BEYOND -- After Wrath Healing (3:9-

111. Continued.
30).

1. Conversion of Gentile peoples (9).
2. Restoring of covenant people (10-15).
3. The new Jerusalem (16-20).
 - (1) The Gospel age (Jno. 10:10).
 - (2) All one in Christ's church. (Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:12-16; Heb. 12:22; 23).

PRACTICAL LESSONS OF PERMANENT VALUE

1. There are two sides to the personality of God; Mercy and Goodness and strict justice and terrible judgment against those who rebel against him.
2. A man's belief about God largely determines his conduct.
3. It is universally true that one tends to become like the God he worships.
4. The wrath of God is a terrible thing when turned against the sinful people.
5. Earnest warning is sorely daily needed to draw us back to the paths of God.
6. The Day of Jehovah is inevitable for all men of every rank and station.
7. God's eternal plan has been the salvation of every nation on earth.
8. Those who scoff and boast and fight against God's people shall suffer the wrath of God.
9. God's ministers should put strong emphasis upon the spiritual nature of God's kingdom.
10. God gives assurance that the humble ones who seek Him will be safe in His presence in the day of doom.
11. The promise that joy will displace mourning and tranquility will follow the storm, should bring encouragement to the righteous.
12. The wicked cannot hide or escape the Day of Jehovah.
13. Riches, wealth or honor will not save one in that day.
14. God's purpose is not to break out with vengeance and destroy, but to cleanse and refine and save those who will allow Him to save them.
15. You should flee to the place of refuge now before the Great and Terrible Day of Jehovah comes! Flee to the arms of Jesus, He will save...you need never fear.⁸

Footnotes

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6. Hester, H. I., *The Heart of Hebrew History*, (Liberty: The Quality Press, Inc., 1962) p. 243-245.
7. Baxter, J. Sidlow, *Explore the Book*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1969) p.220.
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program and he saw no need to create a conflict there. HOW about that! Then the White's Ferry Road School of Preaching had Chuck Lucas to speak for them and they adopted some of the Crossroads methods. They put out a general statement to the brotherhood supposedly denying any affiliation with Crossroads but they never once said so. HOW about that! Wouldn't it have been easy to say, "We in no way endorse Chuck Lucas, the Crossroads church nor the Total Commitment Movement." As the old country boy said, "Thems my sentiments exactly."

1980 has seen the growth of error in the Lord's church, but it has also seen an awakening to that error. For this we can be thankful. Perhaps there is going to be a turning back to conservatism in religion and in political government. To this end we shall continue to hope, pray and labor.

Those interested in some excellent material on the Total Commitment Movement may order five lessons on tape from FARLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST, 12113 S. Memorial Parkway, Huntsville, AL 35803. Price \$5.00. Or, you may order printed material from Walter Wagner, Box 152, Slater, S. C. 29683. Price: \$1.95 each; 2-10 copies \$1.75 each; 11-up, \$1.50 each. We, personally, do know the W.E. Wardlaw tapes to be exceptionally good material.