

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Volume VIII

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DEFENDER

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

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Date Of The Book Of Revelation???

H. DANIEL DENHAM

DATING THE APOCALYPSE

One of the most interesting areas of Bible study is the enquiry of the dates of volumes. The date of the penning of a book of the Bible is oftentimes a tremendous aid in comprehending the message of the book under scrutiny. This writer has drawn the precarious assignment of writing in regard to the date of the Book of Revelation, as the title to this installment intimates. The need for such studies is immense: as it is the case that erroneous assumptions can often be dispelled through them.

We propose in the concourse of this discussion to examine the three primary dates advocated by students of the Apocalypse. The first we shall examine is the celebrated *Late Date*, which is placed during the persecution of Domitian, c. A.D. 95. The second is the *Early Date*, which is advocated as being con-signed to the Neronian persecution of A.D. 64 to 68. The final date we shall examine is a *Medial Date*, which places the penning of the book as occurring during the reign of Emperor Vespasian, A.D. 69 to 79.

JULIUS CAESAR
AUGUSTUS B.C. 27-A.D. 14
TIBERIAS A.D. 14-37
GAIUS CALIGULA A.D. 37-41
CLAUDIUS A.D. 41-54
NERO A.D. 54-68
GALBA A.D. 68
OTHO A.D. 68-69
VITELLIUS A.D. 69
VESPASIAN A.D. 69-79
TITUS A.D. 79-81
DOMITIAN A.D. 81-96

THE LATE DATE

The testimony of Irenæus is considered the bastion of the evidence for the *Late Date*.¹ The actual testimony runs: "...for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign."² However controversy has reigned over this particular rendering. F. H. Chase has contended that the pronoun 'that' does not refer to the Apocalypse, but to John, and thus the reference to Domitian is indicative of the longevity of the apostle's life.³ Others have maintained that the verb should properly be rendered 'began to be (made) known' and not 'was seen'. If such be the case, then the reference may be to the beginning of the prophecy's fulfillment (cf. Rev.1:3), and not to the date of its penning by John. Robert Young even offered the explanation that the name Domitianou, referring to Nero who was called Domitius, was mistaken for Domitianikoo by Sulpicius and Orosius in Irenæus' statement, and that "*most succeeding writers have fallen into the same blunder.*"⁴ The obscurity of the testimony, as it has come down to us, must be considered as weak and inconclusive to demand the *Late Date*. However, such a strong historical tradition as was derived from this testimony is suggestive, and cannot be discounted as being without merit.

We do know that the book was written from Patmos (Rev.1:9), and that probably due to John's imprisonment on the island as a consequence of banishment. Clement of Alexandria speaks of John's return from Patmos "*after the tyrant was dead.*"⁵ Eusebius supposed

[Continued on page 6]

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DEFENDER

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Problems Ahead

Editorial

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Several years ago when I first heard certain brethren (and few they were) talking about the danger confronting the church regarding the errors of Pentecostalism, I like many others, thought these men were at best honestly mistaken. How could a church that had fought so hard and so long and so successfully against Holy-roller-ism allow the errors of such to become a problem? Had we not soundly defeated the holiness doctrines in debate on every hand? Hadn't our children grown up thinking that things related to the Holiness-Pentecostal errors were more like disease than doctrine?

As it turned out, the ones who were honestly mistaken were those of us who thought that such errors would never find their way into the Lord's church. We have now lived to see (1) women leading prayer in the presence of men; (2) women preaching to men (sometimes with a puppet on their hand, but nevertheless preaching); (3) gospel preachers claiming to be led by the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the word; (4) preachers, Bible class teachers, deacons and others claiming the existence of miracles for us today; (5) the doctrine that miracles will continue until Christ comes again; (6) the doctrine of living above sin being expressed more and more; (7) the use of old time testimonials in youth meetings, retreats and even in some assemblies; (8) the claim to speak in tongues; (9) the use of prayer partners (can you believe it!); and many other things which do not come to my mind at this moment. It is hard to believe that it has happened but all the same--it has happened!

As we look forward to the coming year and the years ahead, we can only wonder what the future has in store for the church. We see areas that have become problems that we find it hard to believe, yet we think that they will wax worse and worse. In addition, we see other areas that are beginning to surface and we feel that if something is not done these, too, will take their toll on the church just as the Pentecostal errors have taken their toll.

We are already having tremendous problems regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage. This problem has been around for years but in the last two or three years it has grown like cancer. And such is no wonder because this

false doctrine appeals to people's *emotions* and *desires*. Who would have thought that the time would come when leading preachers in the brotherhood would advocate some of the erroneous doctrines that are now being expressed in debate, the printed page and from the pulpit, not to mention the private teaching that occurs daily.

Years ago some writing was done which taught that elders only had the authority of *example*. We are suggesting that brethren beware! This is an "up and coming" and very popular doctrine. Preachers and brethren who hate the Biblical doctrine of the authority of elders are going to fan the flame of this error and unless something is done we will have our work cut out for us on this one. You think this won't become a problem? Well, what did you think about "Holy-roller-ism" 25 years ago?

There are already large numbers of brethren that are espousing the doctrine of *Realized Eschatology*. You may say that no one could teach in the church that Jesus' second coming was in A. D. 70 and get away with it--well, they are teaching it and they are leading brethren away by the hundreds. And close on the heels of this error is the error of *Premillennialism*. Don't rest in your rocking chair on this one and say "we whipped that error 40 years ago" for it is alive and growing today. We have preachers who are now bold enough to say that they are not so sure that the doctrine of premillennialism is wrong and members are not taking them to task over it. Several years ago a good friend of mine was told by an eldership not to say anything against premillennialism for it would hurt some members feelings. Up until that time I thought premillennialists were like African witch doctors (not one within a thousand miles) and one could say what he pleased against this error without *anyone* in the church becoming upset, but such was not the case. I have finally learned that there is not one sin a preacher can preach against, including idolatry, without at least someone in the church becoming upset at what is said.

What about the church being a *denomination*? Did you think the time could come when a "gospel preacher" would say that he believed that the church of Christ was a denomination just like the Baptist, Methodist, etc.? Well, it has been said and precious few have had one thing to say about it. It has been this writer's experience to preach on the fact that the church of Christ is not a denomination in numerous places for the past 5 or 6 years. On several occasions brethren have met me at the door (as mad as an old wet hen as we used to say in south Alabama) and argued

long and loud that such was not the case and that such preaching would drive members away. Brethren, what has happened to the "Jerusalem Ring" in our preaching? Have we filled our buildings with *transplanted denominationalists* instead of *converted sinners*?

Space at this time will not allow me to pursue this most important subject. Thus for the moment, we suggest to the concerned and converted members of the Lord's church that such problems as MARRIAGE, DIVORCE and REMARRIAGE, THE AUTHORITY OF ELDERS, REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY, PREMILLENNIALISM, and THE CHURCH BEING A DENOMINATION are some of the major problem areas that we face. Brethren, it will do no good to smile and say that such, "just ain't so". The truth of the matter is that the problems listed above are real and pose great danger. And that, dear reader, is not an editorial -- it is just plain fact.



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Challenging Dangers Of Modern Versions, 18

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

In these two articles we are dealing with the NIV, one of the newest Bibles since it is the product of this decade-the 1970's. In the previous article attention was called to a brief background and then some of the perversions found in the Preface were noticed. Now we are ready to call to your attention some of the perversions as found in the very text of this new Bible that so many of our own brethren have become so enamored with in recent years. Toward it many people have a depth of affection-an affection, that in my judgment, is without justification or vindication. The NIV is shot through with serious and fatal error. The basic problem with the RSV was its modernistic background and its liberalistic tendencies. Its oldest living translator is Harry M. Orlinsky. He is on record as referring numerous times to the RSV as the Bible of the liberal Protestant community. Seemingly, he should know the proper label for the perverted Bible he helped to put out in 1952. The trouble with the NIV is not so much modernism and liberalism as it is with just plain old denominationalism.

PERVERSIONS IN THE GOSPEL RECORDS

Remember they suggested that they were bringing out a new translation and that they were not going to be guided by the word-for-word kind of approach as had been characteristic of older translations. They began to make changes in the very opening verse of Matthew 1:1 and that is about as soon as any translator could begin a change in Biblical terminology of the New Testament Scriptures. Both the KJV and the ASV begin Matthew 1:1 with "The book." The Greek text has *Biblos* which is correctly rendered as book. In fact this is the very term from which Bible is derived. But the NIV changes the term to "A record." Why the change? Bible students have not had trouble understanding this rendering through the years. There is no justification for this change. But it sets a tone of change that would characterize many of their renderings before they reached the concluding syllable of Revelation of 22:21.

Like nearly everyone of the modern speech versions on the market today the NIV translators have a flat contradiction between what they have the Christ to say in Matthew 5:17 and what they have Paul to write in Ephesians

2:15 and Hebrews 10:9. They have the Christ to say in the Sermon on the Mount, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." According to this Jesus did not come to abolish the Mosaic Economy. Yet they have Paul to say in Ephesians 2:15, "...by abolishing in this flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, . . ." Thus they have Paul to affirm what Christ denied he came to do; they have Paul and Christ in direct contradiction to each other, a contradiction that is both glaring and grievous, that is both daring and destructive. In a brilliant review of the NIV in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE, February 5, 1976, the scholarly Noel Merideth correctly labeled this as "a flat contradiction." (p.86.) Furthermore, they have the writer of Hebrews 10:9 to say, "He sets aside the first to establish the second." This is another flat contradiction! This is fatal error injected into the very text of this so-called new Bible and yet one of my preaching brethren wrote me years ago that the NIV is a word-for-word translation. This preaching brother just did not know what he was talking about!! The presence of flat contradictions is there and yet these men were working from what we are told was a superior manuscript base. What happened to all the tools that are supposed to make them into far more reliable translators?? In view of the absolutely flat contradictions they have among New Testament verses teaching on the same subject it will be interesting to see if they get the predictive prophecies of the Old Testament out of harmonious gear with the New Testament fulfillment. The RSV had this trouble in seeking to inject their denominational teaching into the Biblical text? Of course we will have to await the coming out of the entire Old Testament which is yet in the future before we can determine their practices along these strategic lines.

In dealing with Mark 16:9-20 they at least did not relegate it to footnote status or to the margin as the RSV initially and infamously did more than thirty years ago or in 1946. Yet the NIV left a major question mark hanging over this inestimable portion of Sacred Scripture by leaving the impression that the passage's genuineness is lacking reliable

manuscript authority. As suggested earlier in this series there is abundant and overwhelming evidence for the genuineness of this portion of Holy Writ. Brother Cline recently presented some very fine material on this passage in the pages of the DEFENDER. Yet when the NIV translators came to it they set it apart from Mark 16:8 and placed in brackets, "The most reliable MSS omit Mark 16:9-20." This is surely a highhanded and unfair manner of dealing with this deeply important section of Holy Scripture. Yet it appears hard for modernists and denominational leaders to deal fairly with Mark 16:9-20 in general and with Mark 16:15-16 in particular.

In Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 the NIV says that no one should divorce his wife "except for marital unfaithfulness." The KJV and ASV both have fornication here. The Greek word is *porneia* and means "prostitution, unchastity, fornication, of every kind of unlawful intercourse." We have had no trouble through the years in understanding the import of fornication here. Why make the change? There was no justification for this obviously weaker and less accurate rendering of the Greek original.

Unless the translational members of the NIV had some special liking for the premillennial errors why did they translate the same Greek word in Matthew 24:21 as "great distress" and yet translate it as "the great tribulation" in Revelation 7:14? The American Standard translates it consistently in both places as "great tribulation." So does the KJV. Why change the "regeneration" of Matthew 19:28, an obvious allusion to the gospel dispensation, to "the renewal of all things" if they did not have some hang ups relative to popular millennial theories? Again why change the Greek term *hora* in John 5:28, which is currently translated as hour in both the KJV and the ASV, to "for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out. . .?" The Greek term means a specific point of time. By changing hour to time the door is left open for the various resurrections demanded by the Rapture and other false theories of the millennial position. It is nothing short of surprising and shocking to observe all the premillennialism that has galloped, GALLOPED-mind you, into the modern speech versions of the Bible. The NIV is clearly no exception to this general observation. Current religious society is now molding the new Bibles-not the real Bible molding religious thought and practice. They but reflect what people want to believe and what they intend to practice in our era. Will any deny it? If so, UPON WHAT BASIS?

There are five passages in the New Testa-

ment where the Greek compound word *monogenes* is used in reference to the Christ. They are John 1:14,18; 3:16,18 and 1 John 4:9. This term is rendered consistently as "only begotten" in the KJV and the ASV. In the NIV it is variously rendered as "only Son" or "one and only Son" but never in the text as "only begotten." Yet in the marginal they have "the only begotten Son." Why put into the margin what they refused adamantly to put into the Biblical text itself? If the "mono" portion of this compound term means one or only, then what does the latter part of the compound term mean? They left it without translation just like most modern speech translations do.

PERVERSIONS IN ACTS AND THE EPISTLES

In both the Roman and Galatian epistles they translate the Greek word *sarx* as "sinful flesh" or "sinful man." They are not even consistent in the rendering of the term. This is nothing but a flare back to the old Calvinism of original sin. But what else should one expect when he learns that one of the leading voices in the production of the NIV has a volume out on the five cardinal doctrines of Calvinism one of which is total hereditary depravity or original sin? The term *sarx* should have been translated flesh as our reliable Bibles, the KJV and the ASV, do.

The NIV's rendering of 1 Corinthians 13:10, "but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears" leaves room for current charismatic gifts. It has reference to the completed Bible or the coming of full revelation and then the ceasing of the spiritual gifts as our reliable Bibles make very clear and plain.

The NIV has this untenable rendering in Acts 2:31, "Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body undergo decay." The spirit of Jesus did not go into the grave; it went into Hades. The Greek text of Acts 2:31 is now open before me and Hades is the correct rendering just as the ASV has had it for three quarters of a century now. As one very able student has said on this point, "This is a serious blunder in the NIV." (Noel Merideth.)

One of the most misunderstood verses in all the New Testament is 1 Corinthians 2:14. Multitudes of religious leaders do not have the least idea who Paul's natural man is. The NIV says, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God,..." The NIV acted as interpreter here. It should be translated as "natural man." The Spirit of God is mentioned

(Continued on page 8)

this to be a reference to the Emperor Domitian.⁶ The testimony of Eusebius is, however, late and must be considered as merely secondary evidence - if evidence at all. History does validate the contention that banishment was a predilection of Domitian, and that the bold emperor even banished his wife on a charge of sacrilege - she being a Christian as indicated from inscriptions.⁷ Such a connection, though suggestive, is not conclusive; as banishment was also a common practice of the proconsuls, and persecutions by them were common. Also concerning the exiles of Domitian, Tertullian states: "...being in some degree human, he soon stopped what he had begun, and restored the exiles."⁸ This testimony is also itself suspect as historians are generally agreed that Domitian's persecution did not abate until the Assassination of the tyrant.⁹

We must here stress that the occasion of the Book of Revelation would readily harmonize with the *Late Date*, even though there is much controversy over the banishment of John, which Melito of Sardis consigns to the reign of Nero.¹⁰ (NOTE: *We may add that Melito's testimony in the Syriac Version is not primary evidence: for the four most ancient Syrian catalogues omit the Apocalypse entirely.*¹¹ *The earliest Syrian citation of the book itself is a simple quotation which is adduced from the Syriac works of Ephrem Syrus of the Fourth Century A.D.*¹² *Therefore, the Syriac Version wherein Melito makes his comment must be considered late and inferior. Thus, the controversy marches on.*) The occasion of the Apocalypse is indeed significant: for it is one couched in tribulation and persecution. The writer is on Patmos, being apparently banished to that island - whether by proconsular or imperial action (and if imperial, which emperor instigated it) we leave to controversy. The circumstances and conditions associated with the churches in Asia Minor are ones of tribulation and persecution. Antipas had suffered martyrdom in the city of Pergamos, "where Satan's seat is" (2:13). Jews at Smyrna and Philadelphia are troubling the churches there (2:9; 3:9). Smyrna is warned of imminent persecution as coming in the form of cruel imprisonments. The church would suffer "ten days", or for a short duration of time, and some would even face death (2:10). The book, as well, foresees a persecution of immense magnitude, which was yet future in relation to the time of the penning of the prophecy. Philadelphia is informed of the coming of "the hour of trial which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (3:10). Here a universal trauma is foretold. Martyrdom for many is foreseen in 6:9, where the souls of the martyrs are

depicted as being "under the altar." A number of passages speak of the great Harlot city as being "drunk with the blood of the saints" (17:6; 18:24; 19:2; cf. 16:6). These are suggestive of wide-spread persecution. The martyrs are pictured as pleading with the Father for the administration of divine justice (6:10). But others must yet be slain (6:11). If the tribulation in Asia Minor which occasioned the penning of the Apocalypse be of an imperial instigation, then the reign and persecution of Domitian would most readily account for these problems. This also would harmonize with Clement of Rome's vague reference to "*sudden and repeated misfortunes and calamities*,"¹³ which had befallen the church at Rome at the time of the rotund emperor. Sulpicius Severus also speaks of a Domitianic persecution of Christians.¹⁴ Indeed, the evidence is clear that Domitian waged a brutal persecution of Christians, and this on a *universal scale*.¹⁵ One important point should here be noted in this regard, and that is that whereas Domitian's persecution was universal, Nero's persecution of 64-68 was confined to the immediate area surrounding the city of Rome.¹⁶ This is significant when one considers the destination of the Apocalypse, which was the area of Asia Minor (1:3, 11). This leads us to the following consideration. If it is the case that the problems facing the "seven churches" were of imperial origin, then history - valid external evidence - implies a date other than the *Early Date*. This fact may thus permit the *Late Date*. One may cry that such is merely "external evidence"; yet it is "external evidence" which is often appealed to concerning the chronology of the Book of Acts in association with the events of that illustrious volume. Further, we must stress the evident association and connection which exists between prophecy, which vividly describes the major contents of the Apocalypse incidentally, and history. B. S. Dean has well stated: "*Redemption is historically unfolded in its [the Bible, H.D.D.] pages; it should be historically studied. One may doubtless get good out of a verse, a fact, a character of the Bible, severed from its historical setting; how much more when restored to its connections!*"¹⁷ The Bible student should realize that prophetic thought necessarily includes a philosophy of history which, as Freeman has said, "interprets its course and predicts its ultimate outcome."¹⁸ Therefore, prophecy and providence run side by side in the Scriptures and are united in the moral government of God. Prophecy which is from God can be historically verified (Deut. 18:21, 22). We would expect the same to be true in a consideration of the Book of Revelation.

With this, let us direct our consideration

of Domitian's persecution as to its course and its possible link to the Apocalypse. Under the reign of Domitian, emperor worship reached fever pitch. Domitian, after the practice of Gaius Caligula (r. 37 to 41 A.D.) and, possibly Marcus Antonius, claimed for himself the title "lord and god" (*dominus et deus*).¹⁹ The emperor cult did not, according to Morris, become prevalent in the Empire until the reign of Domitian.²⁰ This imperial cult is presupposed in the Apocalypse in the required worship of the Beast (cf. 13:11-18). By imperial power, the pagan priesthood had the power to put to death "as many as would not worship the image of the Beast" (13:15). The emperor, as the Pontifex Maximus (head of the state religion), thus brought the might of Rome to bear upon those who refused to worship him. The monotheism of the Christian religion inevitably came to oppose Caesar worship. We may add that even in time the name Caesar became specially hallowed and associated with divinity, and thus the emperor became known universally as the Divus Caesar (the Caesar-god).²¹ Following the death of Nero, 'Caesar' ceased to be a family name, but became a divine title appropriated by whomever bore the diadem.²² Domitian himself had a temple built for his own cultus in the city of Ephesus; this would make most probable persecution in that city during his reign.²³

The Roman government was opposed to any new religion, and went as far as outlawing such in its imperial edicts. For forty years the Christian faith was considered Jewish. The account of Christians driven from Rome at the time of Claudius in association with the Jews may very well be indicative of Roman opinion of the Christian faith. (cf. Acts 18:2). However, when Rome levelled Jerusalem and put an inglorious end to the Judaistic remnant, the church remained - stronger than ever. Its numbers were swelling, and the ancient pagan religions were abandoned. George Park Fisher wrote in this regard: "...Christianity continued to make converts rapidly, until it became clear that Roman imperial authority was not strong enough to extirpate the new faith or to stay its advance. At length in the

space of a few centuries, the altars of heathenism were deserted, and the last vestiges of heathen worship passed away."²⁴ The emperors, fearing internal rebellion and disloyalty rose in opposition to the now outlawed faith. Domitian led the way and set the pace for eight more persecutions of major proportions. These were under: Trajan (r. 98-117), Antoninus Pius (r. 138-161), Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (r. 161-180), Septimius Severus (r. 193-211), Decius (r. 270-275), and Diocletian (r. 284-305).²⁵ Domitian set the trend concerning forced emperor worship. Of him Durant writes: "Vanity, which flourishes even in the humble had no check in Domitian's status: he filled the Capitol with statues of himself, announced the divinity of his father, brother, wife, and sisters as well as his own, organized a new order of priests, the Flaviales, to tend the worship of these new deities, and required officials to speak of him, in their documents, as Dominus et Deus Noster - 'Our Lord and God.'" He sat on a throne, encouraged visitors to embrace his knees, and established in his ornate palace the etiquette of an Oriental court."²⁶ The scattered Jews and the thinning Christians refused to "adore the godhead of Domitian,"²⁷ and thus the emperor waged his persecution against those guilty of "Atheism and Jewish manners."²⁸

From the fore-going facts, we deduce the following observations relative to our present enquiry. (1) It would only be natural that antagonism should arise between the Empire and the church. (2) This antagonism could not - as R. H. Charles has noted - have reached the intense state presupposed in the Apocalypse before A.D. 70. (3) Only a widespread persecution therefore could satisfy the book's historical connection. (4) Hence a Domitianic application is implied as the basic thrust of the book. However, we must state that the evidence gleaned from this does not warrant the conclusion that the book was actually written during the reign of Domitian. This evidence does not exclude the Medial Date.

[To be continued]

(Daniel Denham is a graduate of the Bellview Preacher Training School.)

FOOTNOTES

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 23. Guthrie, op. cit.
 24. Fisher, George Park, *Manual of Christian Evidences*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), p.118.
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 26. Durant, op. cit., p.292.
 27. Ibid.
 28. Gibbon, op. cit., p.624.

CHALLENGING DANGERS . . .

but one time in this text; they have him mentioned twice in their rendering.

Their rendering of "make music" in Ephesians 5:19 leaves the door wide open for vocal music, mechanical music or a combination of both. Another modern speech version has the idea of "play music" in this rendering. That moves the piano or the organ right into the Biblical text itself. Relative to this point the brilliant Noel Merideth has well said, "'Music' is not the correct term to use. 'Music' is defined as the art and science of combining (sic) vocal or instrumental sounds or tones in varying melody. Paul did not say we are to combine vocal or instrumental sounds in worship! The Greek word *psallo* refers to singing and making melody. This does not allow for mechanical instruments of music. The NIV missed this passage badly. This is not desirable for reading in worship." (GOSPEL ADVOCATE, February 5, 1976, p.87.)

The NIV has tampered with the gospel plan of salvation. They have justification reached at the point of faith in the first part of Romans 10:10 and salvation reached at the point of confession in the latter part of the same verse! They could

not even stay consistent or avoid contradictions in just one verse!! Here is their rendering, "For it is with your heart that you believe and ARE justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and ARE saved." The reliable KJV and ASV do not butcher this passage in such fashion as does the NIV. The NIV goes an additional step in the Ephesian epistle and gets people included IN Christ at the point of hearing. Note the rendering in the NIV in Ephesians 1:13, "And you also were included IN CHRIST WHEN YOU HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, the gospel of your salvation." (Emphasis mine-RRT.) Our reliable Bibles such as the KJV and the ASV teach that we get INTO Christ at the point of baptism and not at the point of the confession. We are not INCLUDED IN CHRIST the moment we hear the gospel of Christ. "Hear only" is just like "faith only" - it is just not so!!

These are not all the perversions of the NIV by any means. They are just some of the many. I cannot and WILL NOT recommend the NIV as a safe, reliable Bible. One of the ablest Bible scholars of this or any age, Brother Guy N. Woods, has said that the "NIV is shot through with error." With this sentiment I concur.

(Robert Taylor is the minister for the Lord's church in Ripley, Tennessee.)



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY, 1979

Date Of The Book Of Revelation??? Part II

H. DANIEL DENHAM

Another evidence proposed for the Domitianic Date is lodged in the famous Nero-redivivus Myth, which in its early forms held that Nero had not died but had fled to Parthia at the outset of the revolt of Servius Sulpicius Galba and the praetorians under the praefect Nymphidius Sabinus.²⁹ The supposition is that John borrowed the basic idea - the return, or rebirth, of Nero - and applied it to Domitian. That Domitian is called the 'bald Nero' or the 'second Nero' is cited as indicative of history's view of a connection between the two; Nero had been a persecutor, and Domitian would be of the same spirit.³⁰ Hence the expression "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" is taken to mean thus, that in the spirit of Nero the Beast 'was', but he 'is not' in reference to present reign, and 'yet is' in the person of Domitian. (17:8).³¹ However, if this reckoning be true then a Domitianic dating of the book is not possible: as this view presupposes that (1) Nero is now dead and (2) Domitian 'is not' yet reigning, but 'shall ascend' from out of the abyss in the spirit of Nero.³² This supposition would allow only for a *Medial Date*.

Also it is supposed that the letters to the seven churches of Asia point to a marked deterioration of two congregations established by the Apostle Paul. Ramsay postulates that the omission of any mention of Paul from the Ephesian letter to require an interval of

a full generation: due to the church's close connection with the apostle.³³ However, it may very well be explained that the immediate purpose of the letters could possibly exclude such references as they were not behind the intent of John. The evangelist Timothy had labored at Ephesus as well; yet he is not mentioned. Would this *necessarily* imply the passing of a full generation?

John's reference to the Nicolaitanes and their heretical teaching is advocated by *Late Date* supporters as indicating the *Late Date* (2:6,15). It is obvious that the name Nicolaitanes is to be associated with that sect of "false and troublesome men, who," according to Victorinus of Pettau, "as ministers under the name of Nicolaus, had made for themselves a heresy, to the effect that what had been offered to idols might be exorcised and eaten, and that whoever should have committed fornication might receive peace on the eighth day."³⁴ The attempt to identify this name with Judaizers is indeed historically awkward as the Nicolaitanes, as a sect, did actually exist, and received their name from Nicolaus, an Antiochan proselyte (cf. Acts 6:5). This is evidenced by both Irenaeus and Hippolytus.³⁵ Clement, Tertullian, and Irenaeus (as well as a number of others) denounced their hedonistic teachings.³⁶ The Nicolaitanes were a Gnostic sect and apparently flourished after A. D. 70 and the fall of Jerusalem.³⁷ However, we again stress that such evidence

[Continued on page 14]

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DEFENDER

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WE DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE.

Editorial

WILLIAM S. CLINE

We are well aware that the above title is not correct English because it contains a double negative. However, it is totally correct with regard to what is being said by many in the brotherhood, and it perfectly captures the attitude of a great host of brethren who are in the leadership of the church.

It seems that many brethren "DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE" when it comes to *false teachers*. It absolutely amazes one to notice the freedom that false teachers have today. There was a time when brethren would at least fire a man for teaching false doctrine, and even if they did give him a hypocritical recommendation in order to move him and his false doctrine to an unsuspecting congregation, they at least took *some* stand against the false teacher and his doctrine. What should have been done with regard to such teachers was rarely done. Such men should have been corrected and shown the way of the Lord and if they then refused to repent they should have been marked as false teachers and fellowship should have been withdrawn from them. But most brethren did not do that, even though that is what the Bible teaches because they didn't *WANT NO TROUBLE*. Today we see even less action being taken against the false teacher. Whereas at one time the false teacher was usually fired, today, in many quarters he is allowed to continue in his false ways and stay *in the pulpit* and *on the payroll*! When questioned regarding such, brethren usually say, "Well he is such a good man in so many ways, and he is so well liked by most of the congregation that we think it wise to let things ride for right now. Our contribution and attendance are doing well and we *DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE*." Literally translated that says, "We are more concerned about *money* and *numbers* and a *camouflage peace* than we are the truth." Thus the false teacher continues to have the support and the audiences of the church for his work of spreading the cancer of false doctrine.

It also seems that brethren "DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE" when it comes to keeping the church pure within its membership. The world has run after the material things of life until the spiritual and moral seem to have precious little left in our lives. This life has had its influence on the church to the point that we think a man's life *DOES* consist of the things which

he possesses (see Lk. 12:15.) We value gold far more than we value God, and *SEEKING THE KINGDOM FIRST* has come to mean "Not missing the Lord's supper any more than you can help it." The moral standards in the church have been lowered to where, in some congregations, one can do almost anything his heart desires and still remain in fellowship with the brethren. Things that are accepted today would have caused no small stir in the church 15 or 20 years ago. We have "progressed beyond the doctrine" to the point where deacons can have dances in the basements of their homes and brethren say nothing about it. The moral standard in the church has been lowered to where elders attend social functions where alcoholic beverages are served and in some cases it has been a fact that elders of the Lord's church have served as *bar tenders* and not one single, solitary thing has been done about it! We have seen the church move away from the Bible in moral standards to the point that one elder held a dance in the basement of his home for the teenagers and allowed beer and whiskey to be served. Several young people got drunk but that man, without one word or act of repentance, still serves as an elder today. In congregations throughout the land social drinkers lead the prayers, wait on the Lord's table and teach in the class room; dancers, gamblers and people with filthy mouths remain "members in good standing" without one word of rebuke; and whoremongers, fornicators and adulterers fill every position in the church from elder, preacher, deacon, and teacher to members. Why isn't something done about it? Why aren't these people withdrawn from and the church purged of the filth and sin that continues to spot its influence in the community? The answer is truly a proponderous one--"*WE DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE.*" In many congregations we have men in the leadership and by leadership we are presently referring to elders, preachers, deacons, and other influential men who are spineless amoebas and intestine-less wonders when it comes to standing for what is right. Just as heaven must surely rejoice when God's people stand for the truth, every haint in hell must have a holiday when God's people refuse to stand for that same truth.

We likewise seem to have brethren that "*DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE*" when it comes to preaching the gospel. These brethren are evangelistic and want to see everyone in the world converted. At the same time they want everyone in the world to *like* them and to think highly of them. They have not learned that one cannot preach the gospel as God would have us to and at the same time be popular with every worldly, denominational and devilish person in the world. Thus these brethren have "watered" down the gospel. They

are more concerned about the *favor of men* than they are the *favor of God*. They say that we should preach Jesus and leave the church out of our teaching. They say that doctrine is not all that important and that when one stresses doctrine and the church he just drives people away. They have their "Soul Talks" their "Dialogue" meetings and their "Soul Confrontations" but they don't preach and teach the gospel. They "ape" the denominationalist and constantly talk about "*SHARING JESUS*" to the point that it almost makes one want to vomit. They refuse to note that the Bible speaks of preaching Christ and not of *SHARING JESUS*. They do all of this and much, much more to seek the approval of the denominational world. They want to be *accepted* and by all means at any cost they "*DON'T WANT NO TROUBLE*" with the religious world. Many brethren are truly in tune with a new song which says, "I want to go to Fantasy Island where everyone's smiling at me." Debating is made fun of and those who stand four-square for the gospel of Christ are criticised as being dogmatic, legalistic, and unloving.

Brethren, may we always be careful of our attitude and the way we present the truth of God's word. But may we also always preach the truth and if that causes trouble then trouble will just have to come and if need be camp on our front porch. Remember it was Elijah, God's anointed prophet who stood unwavering for the truth that was referred to by wicked Ahab as the "*Troubler of Israel.*"



* * *

CONTRIBUTIONS

Frank Neal, Sr.....	\$ 5.00	*
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Challenging Dangers Of Modern Versions, 19

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

Since this series began nearly two years ago I have received many requests for some information relative to *The New American Standard Version*. This installment and the subsequent one will seek to fill that request.

The New American Standard Version is a product of *The Lockman Foundation* of California and came out during the decade of the sixties. Be it recalled that the *Lockman Foundation* produced the *Amplified Version* during the decade of the fifties. Since the *Amplified* preceded the production of *The New American Standard*, why was the latter one needed if the former one had been an accurate Bible? So far as I have been able to determine the editorial committee that produced the *Amplified Version* is both unnamed and unknown. If any reader of these lines knows their names or how to find their names I would be appreciative to receive such information. The committee that produced the *Amplified Version* claimed that the producers of this version "have recorded incidents again and again which bear the undeniable earmarks of supernatural direction." (Preface of *The Amplified New Testament*.) Surely if this prior product had been under supernatural direction, then there would have been no real need for another new Bible to be produced during the very next decade. But the *Lockman Foundation* is out to produce, promote and peddle books in mass form. And it helps their cause to have different Bibles to suit the fancies of their potential customers. The very origin of *The New American Standard*, its definite kinship with its perverted elder brother - *The Amplified Version* - and the fact that its editorial committee members are unknown by name and unnamed in their promotional schemes should place a gigantic question mark over this new Bible. It surely does in my mind.

A DEEP RESENTMENT OF THE NAME

I have deeply resented the serious implications of its very appellation. Its colossal claim of being the *NEW American Standard* would lead the highly unsuspecting to castigate *The American Standard Version* of 1901 to the archives of obsolete versions. There is further implication that the *American Standard* of 1901 has now been replaced due to the fact that it had run its course of usefulness.

Such is not true at all. I do not agree with some of the footnotes placed in the *American Standard Version* of 1901 such as the one placed in John 9 about the worship of Christ as being that done to a creature-not the Creator nor do I subscribe to the validity of their omission of the eunuch's good confession of Acts 8-yet the basic text of the old ASV is a reliable Bible. *The New American Standard* quite apparently desired to capitalize on the name and reputation that this 1901 product had built up throughout this century. If Lockman wanted to put out a new Bible, why did they not select a name that would not have had serious reflections upon the ASV of 1901? It strongly seems to me that literary honesty and intellectual integrity demanded such. It is sad but nevertheless true that many of the new Bible makers know next to nothing about literary honesty and intellectual integrity. Surely I have proved that in this lengthy series regardless of the adoration that too many of my brethren give the new Bible makers. The ASV of 1901 is now seventy-eight years old. It does not need the type of revision that the NASV has given it. Word meanings have not changed that drastically during this century. And too, the ASV of 1901 was produced by 101 of the ripest Hebrew and Greek scholars the world has ever known. Their names are known. In a number of instances the Lockman product has rewritten or drastically changed what appeared in the ASV of 1901. Some of these will be pointed out in the course of this and a subsequent article for the *DEFENDER*.

BEGINNING EXPLANATIONS

Like all the new Bibles this one contains some interesting matters by way of preliminary remarks. They state in the Foreword their conviction relative to the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament and the Greek Scriptures of the New Testament as originally given. With a twin purpose in mind they claim to adhere as closely as possible to the original languages of the Sacred Scriptures and to make the translation into a fluent and readable style according to current English usage. These are eminently worthy aims if only they had lived up to them. We shall later note some instances where they failed in this momentous matter.

In the publication of the *New American*

Standard New Testament the Lockman Foundation has a fourfold aim. They are: "1. These publications shall be true to the original Greek. 2. They shall be grammatically correct. 3. They shall be understandable to the masses. 4. They shall give the Lord Jesus Christ His proper place, the place which the Word gives Him; therefore no work will ever be personalized." The latter is not a justifiable reason for withholding from the public readers of their products the names of the editorial committee that produced such.

Their use of quotation marks and quotes inside of quotes makes it rather awkward to quote from this Bible in literary works of a religious nature. I prefer a Bible that leaves out quotation marks. There are times when their employment of quotation marks takes on arbitrary choices that have long been debated among Bible students as to whether the writer is speaking or is giving a quotation from Jesus. John 3:13ff is an example of this.

Their format calls for a change of "thou, thy and thee" to "you" except in language of prayer when addressing Deity. They have capitalized personal pronouns when they pertain to Deity. Hence, in prayers such as Matthew 6:9-13, 11:25-26, Luke 11:2-4 the solemn pronouns of "thee and thy" are retained. Yet in conversations between Christ and the apostles while in his personal ministry they refer to Christ in such places as John 6:68-69; 21:12-19 and Acts 1:6 as You. Yet they are not consistent in this for Peter in Matthew 16:16 and its parallel in Mark 8:29 says respectively, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and "Thou art the Christ." Why You part of the time in reference to Christ and yet in other places refer to him as "Thou?" The one who reads the "You" passages in reference to Christ sees the You which is emphasized with a capital Y. But how does the hearer know of this and how can any special emphasis be given by means of an oral communication? If it is appropriate to designate Deity (the Father) in heaven by "thee, thou, thy and thine" and do it consistently, why is it not just as appropriate to designate Deity on earth (the Son) and do it consistently instead of switching back and forth? Seemingly this supernatural direction claimed by the producers of the Lockman Bibles should have kept both the *Amplified* and the *New American Standard Version* consistent at least in this matter. Is not all this a subtle attempt to tamper with the Deity of Jesus Christ by making a difference in the way Deity is addressed on earth and Deity is addressed in heaven? The RSV and the NEB clearly make an obvious difference in having the Father

addressed as "thee and thou" and the Son addressed as You. I have had brethren just hoot at this when I would suggest that such constituted a slap at the Deity of Jesus. But such shows how hoodwinked, duped and gullible people sometimes are when it comes to the new Bibles. The late R. C. Foster, one of the greatest Bible scholars of this century, did not think this was a laughable matter but suggested it was one of the three slaps the RSV translators took at the Deity of Christ. The other two were their tampering with Isaiah 7:14 and their mutilation of *monogenes* in John 1:14,18; 3:16,18 and 1 John 4:19. Yet we have many brethren who will defend all three of these gross errors in the RSV. Read it and weep!!!

THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD: MATTHEW 5:17 AND EPHESIANS 2:15

Over the years in abstracting the new Bibles I have learned that three of the first passages to look at are Matthew 5:17; Ephesians 2:15 and Hebrews 10:9. Then I usually check to see what they have done with the third division of the second Corinthian epistle. Almost without exception they have these passages out of harmonious gear with each other. Here is how the *New American Standard* has dealt with Matthew 5:17, Ephesians 2:15 and Hebrews 10:9. This new Bible has Christ to say, "Do not think that I came to ABOLISH the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfil." (Emphasis mine-RRT.) This new Bible has Paul to affirm in his epistle to the Ephesian saints, "...by ABOLISHING in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace." (Eph.2:15-Emphasis mine-RRT.) This new Bible has Paul to say, "He takes away the first to establish the second." (Heb.10:9.) This is nothing but a flat contradiction. Matthew 5:17 has Christ's denying that he would do what Paul in Ephesians 2:15 affirms that he did do. The contradiction does not lie in either Christ or Paul; it lies in the unnamed, unlisted and unknown editorial committee that produced this new Bible. It was not the purpose of the Christ to destroy the law and the prophets. This would have kept him from their fulfillment. He came to fulfill them and when this stood majestically accomplished at Calvary he abolished or abrogated them. He took away the first one at Calvary in order that he might establish or bring in his own better law on that memorable and marvelous Pentecost in Acts 2. I wonder what happened to this supernatural direction that supposedly hovered over the unnamed, unlisted and unknown committee that produced the

new Lockman Bibles. It would seem that someone nodded and the Godhead never nods like ancient Homer did or as uninspired men frequently do. *The American Standard Version* of 1901 and the *King James Version* of 1611 did not get these covenant changing passages out of holy and harmonious gear with each other.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

DATE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION?? does not exclude the *Medial Date*.

R. H. Charles, a *Late Date* advocate, contended that the church at Smyrna was not established until sometime after A.D. 60-64, and thus its deteriorated condition would not allow for the *Early Date*. This is based on a statement in Polycarp's letter to the Philippians, in which he implies that those of Smyrna had not known the Lord when Paul penned the Philippian epistle. Polycarp wrote: "But I have neither perceived nor heard any such thing among you, among whom the blessed Paul laboured, who are praised in the beginning of his Epistle. For concerning you he boasts in all the churches who then alone had known the Lord, for we had not yet known Him."³⁸ This evidence strongly suggests a date after the Fall of Jerusalem if the "we" refer to those of Smyrna, as Polycarp was a bishop of Smyrna.

However, it does not demand the *Late Date*.

Also Laodicea was destroyed in A.D. 60-61 by an earthquake, but John refers to the church as being "rich, and increased with goods" (3:17). The *Late Date* supposition is that it took a considerable amount of time for that city to rebuild to such a degree. *First*, if the supposition be true, even then the *Late Date* is not demanded. *Secondly*, the Roman historian Tacitus states that the city was "quickly" rebuilt,³⁹ and this "without any relief from us." The city "recovered by its own resources."⁴⁰ The supposition therefore is historically baseless.

In summary of the *Late Date* evidence let us emphasize that the testimony of Irenaeus, though controversial, is indeed suggestive, and it forms the strongest evidence for the *Late Date* alone. The remaining historical evidence adduced for the *Late Date* does not demand such a connection, but could lean that way if the *Medial Date* were not an alternate consideration. The element of imperial persecution at least implies a Domitianic application, if nothing more. The conditions of the seven churches of Asia may be suggestive, especially in the use of the name Niccolaitanes and in Polycarp's letter to the Philippians. [TO BE CONTINUED]

FOOTNOTES

29. Guthrie, op. cit., pp.953,954.

30. Morris, op. cit., p.37.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Guthrie, op. cit., p.954.

34. Morris, op. cit., p.61.

35. Orr, op. cit., p.2142.

36. Ibid.

37. Guthrie, op. cit.

38. Ibid.

39. Orr, op. cit., vol. III, p.1836.

40. Morris, op. cit., p.83.

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After many years of preaching in the Midwest area of Chicago and Detroit, with several of those years in mission work, I am now working with the congregation which meets in the Naples Federal Savings and Loan Building on Bonita Beach Road, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of Route 41, Bonita Springs, Florida. This, too, is a mission work and we are praying and working hard that we can secure a lot and have our own building in the very near future.

The wife and I accepted this work due to my health as I needed a more moderate climate. At the same time, God has placed this great challenge before us here in Bonita Springs.

Bonita Springs is one of the fastest growing

areas in Florida. It is between Ft. Meyers and Naples on the West coast of Florida. The challenge to establish and ground the Lord's church here in this growing community is a great one.

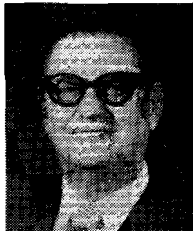
To all my brethren and freinds -- when you come to Florida, visit with us and look our work over. You will be our honored guest both in our home and our worship services. You will see some of the most beautiful country in Southwest Florida, along the Gulf Shore line. Visit a small but friendly congregation of God's people. My home address: 1218 Orchid Ct. Caribbean Park, Naples, Florida 33940. Phone: (813) 597-7364.



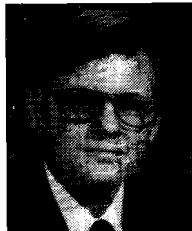
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THIRTEENTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

MARCH 26-29, 1979

GENERAL THEME:

"Renewed Emphasis Upon The Restoration Movement"

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

Monday, March 26, 1979

- 8:30 Leroy Medlock: "The Half Has Not Yet Been Told"
- 9:30 Mrs. Irene Taylor: The Beautiful Life "In Attitude"
- 9:30 Leroy Cox: "A Return to Christ"
- 10:30 Robert R. Taylor: "A Plea for the Old Paths"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH BREAK
- 1:10 J. F. Camp: "Principles of the Restoration" (No. 2)
- 2:10 Clifford E. Rumley: "The Unity Movement and Fellowship"
- 3:10 Calvin Barber: "The Spirit of the New Testament Church"
- 7:00 Congregational Singing led by: Willie Bradshaw
- 7:15 G. Yarbrough Leigh: "Restoring True Spirituality in the Church"
- 8:00 W. Wayne Coats: "The Restoration versus Unity in Diversity"

Tuesday, March 27, 1979

- 8:30 J. F. Camp: "Principles of the Restoration" (No. 3)
- 9:30 Mrs. Irene Taylor: The Beautiful Life "In Action"
- 9:30 W. Ralph Wharton: "Indigenous Restoration Movements"
- 10:30 Pat McGee: "The Need for Sound Doctrine in Our Time"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH BREAK
- 1:10 Howard Winters: "Danger Signs Within the Restoration"
- 2:10 Jerry Westmoreland: "Restoring Important Biblical Doctrine"
- 3:10 Robert R. Taylor: "The Restoration, A Movement of Militancy"
- 7:00 Congregational Singing led by: Alfred Metheny
- 7:15 B. B. James: "N. B. Hardeman, Great Restoration Preacher and His Tabernacle Sermons"
- 8:00 V. E. Howard: "Restoring the Pre-eminence of the Church in the Minds of Men"

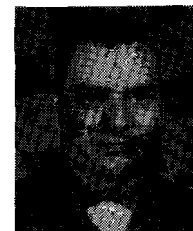
Wednesday, March 28, 1979

- 8:30 James A. Thomasson: "Speak Where the Bible Speaks; Silence Where the Bible is Silent"

- 9:30 Mrs. Jane Foster: "Rejoice in the Lord Always; and Again I Say Rejoice" (No. 1) (To the Ladies)
- 9:30 B. B. James: "N. B. Hardeman, Great Restoration Preacher and His Sermons" (No. 2)
- 10:30 V. E. Howard: "The Church of Christ, the Glorious Church"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH BREAK
- 1:10 Howard Winters: "The Restoration Plea: Things to be Restored"
- 2:10 Ray Peters: "Restoring N. T. Christianity by Restoring N. T. Organization"
- 3:10 Pat McGee: "Recent Attacks against the Restoration Plea"
- 7:00 Congregational Singing led by: Glenn Wilson
- 7:15 Charles B. Myers: "Restoring the Biblical Concept of the Home"
- 8:00 Dan Jenkins: "No Room for Compromise in Bible Preaching"

Thursday, March 29, 1979

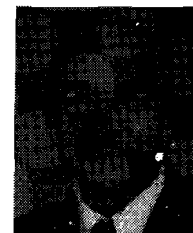
- 8:30 E. B. Daugherty: "History of the Western Reserve: Some Problems"
- 9:30 Mrs. Jane Foster: "Rejoice in the Lord Always; and Again I Say Rejoice" (No. 2) (To the Ladies)
- 9:30 E. R. Harper: "Isaiah 2:3, Walking in the Path of God"
- 10:30 Glenn M. Lee: "Restoring the Spirit of Christ in Our Preaching"
- 11:30 - 1:10 LUNCH BREAK
- 1:10 Allen Poe: "Restoring Respect for the Power of the Word"
- 2:10 Bert Watkins: "Restoration, A Continuing Process"
- 3:10 Don F. Rhodes: "Establishing and Restoring Biblical Authority"
- 7:00 Congregational Singing led by: Roy Williams
- 7:15 Flavil H. Nichols: "Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem: A Picture of the Restoration"
- 8:00 Robert R. Taylor: "The Restoration Movement: Its Continued Validity"



Clifford Rumley



Leroy Medlock



Flavil H. Nichols



Mrs. Jane Foster



G. Yarbrough Leigh



Mrs. Irene Taylor



E. R. Harper



Jerry Westmoreland



Bert Watkins



V. E. Howard



Wayne Coats



Charles B. Myers



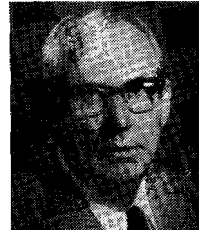
Allen Poe



Leroy Cox, Jr.



Emanuel Daugherty



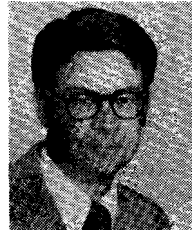
Howard Winters



Dan Jenkins



J. F. Camp



Glenn M. Lee



Robert R. Taylor

Fifth Annual Lectureship

BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES

MAY 13-17, 1979

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1979

- 9:00 "I Believe The Bible Because...".....
Tommy Alford
10:00 "Why Stand Ye Here All The Day Idle?"
[Matt. 20:6].....Billy McKee
6:00 Judgment On The Daughters Of Zion (Isa.
3:16-24).....Tommy Garrison
7:00 World Evangelism.....Ira Y. Rice

MONDAY, MAY 14, 1979

- 7:00 Preach The Word.....George Darling
8:00 "Is It Nothing To You, All Ye That Pass
By?" (Lam. 1:12).....Pat McGee

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1979

- 8:00 Seek Ye First The Kingdom Of God.....
Archie Luper
9:00 The Gospel According To John...Roy Deaver
10:00 Is Holy Spirit Baptism For Us Today?...
Henry McCaghren
11:00 Crucial Issues In Christian Fellowship
Pat McGee
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK
1:00 Doctrine Of Election.....Robert Taylor
2:00 The Doctrine Of Grace, Law And Works....
Winfred Clark
3:00 The Church Of Christ Is Not A Denomination
Gerald Miles
7:00 Evolution.....Bob Camp
8:00 The Divided Worship Assembly..Walter Pigg

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 1979

- 8:00 The Existence Of God.....Terry Hightower
9:00 The Gospel According To John...Roy Deaver
10:00 False Views Of Truth.....Mac Deaver
11:00 "Come With Me To Shiloh" (Jer. 7:12).....
W.S. Cline
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK
1:00 Archeology And The Bible.....Ray Hawk
2:00 The Bible And Science.....John Priola
3:00 The Genesis Flood and The Age Of The
Earth.....Ray Peters
7:00 Evolution.....Bob Camp
8:00 Let Us Arise And Build.....Malcolm Hill

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1979

- 8:00 What's Wrong With Much Of Our Preaching
Today.....Bill Coss
9:00 The Gospel According To John...Roy Deaver
10:00 We Must Stand Regardless Of The Cost.....
Linwood Bishop
11:00 "Go Eat Bread In Thy Own Land" (Amos 7:12)
Winston Temple
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK
1:00 Doctrine Of Predestination...Robert Taylor
2:00 The Doctrine Of Elders.....Winfred Clark
3:00 Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage.....
Ernest Underwood
7:00 Evolution.....Bob Camp
8:00 The Doctrine Of Heaven And Hell.....
Winfred Clark

DEBATE

"There will be a four night debate on April 16-17 and 19-20, 1979, each evening at 7:00 p.m. between GARLAND ELKINS, minister of the Getwell Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee. and BOB L. ROSS (Baptist), Pasadena, Texas.

On April 16-17, the proposition to be debated is:

"The Scriptures teach that water baptism is for (in order to obtain) the remission of past sins."
AFFIRM: Garland Elkins
DENY: Bob L. Ross

On April 19-20, the proposition to be debated is:

"The Scriptures teach that salvation comes at the point of faith alone before and without any further acts of obedience."
AFFIRM: Bob L. Ross
DENY: Garland Elkins

The debate resulted from our answering the booklets, "Some Observations Concerning the So-Called Church of Christ" and "Seven Similarities Between the Church of Christ So-Called and the Roman Catholic Church" through our daily radio program over WBRJ, Marietta, Ohio. The debate is to be held at the Camden Avenue Church of Christ, 2900 Camden Avenue, Parkersburg, West Virginia. This centrally locates the debate amid the greatest number of Christians in this area; in our largest building; near the Baptist group involved. Brother J. Noel Meredith of Camden, Tennessee, will moderate for Garland Elkins. Interest is high. Plan to attend. For further information write: Church of Christ, P.O. Box 104, Marietta, Ohio 45750. W. Terry Varner."



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1979

FOR THAT WE SOUGHT HIM NOT AFTER THE DUE ORDER

I Chronicles 15:13b

MANLIF BARNES

The young man had anxiously awaited the day when he could assume the duties to which he had been appointed by God at the hand of Samuel several years before. He had likely entertained many thoughts of the great things he would do for Jehovah as the king of His chosen people.

Soon after lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan, David began to take the leadership of Israel. Jehovah was with David and blessed him as he set out to strengthen the nation. David and all Israel went up against the Jebusites, captured the city of Jerusalem, and made it the chief city of Israel. David was astounded by the things that were happening to him. Hiram, king of Tyre, had built a new house for him. The Lord had given him victory over his enemies, and everything was going well among his people (II Samuel 5).

In the midst of all of this, David decided it was time to bring the ark of God from the house of Abinadab in Gibeah to Jerusalem. He consulted with the thirty thousand captains of Israel concerning the bringing of the priests and Levites and the ark to Jerusalem. The idea seemed good in the eyes of all the people. But, in the excitement and fanfare of the occasion they forgot the instructions of the Lord concerning the transportation of the ark, and in the course of the journey Uzzah, one of the men who drove the new cart, was struck dead by the Lord because he touched the ark.

At first David was displeased because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah, but was afraid of God when he realized that something was wrong with the way the ark was being transported (II Samuel 6:9). Then David left the ark in the house of Obbedom and went back to Jerusalem. When he had assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites, he instructed them to sanctify themselves in order that they might bring up the ark of God to Jerusalem.

It was in this setting that David made the statement, "For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought Him not after the due order" (I Chronicles 15:13). David recognized that Uzzah had died because they had not followed the pattern as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord (I Chronicles 15:15).

It seems as though David's problem on this occasion has been a problem of mankind down through the ages. This is only one of the many occurrences in the Old Testament where man improvised God's pattern. It is important that we recognize that these things happened unto them for examples and they are recorded for our admonition and learning (I Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4).

We do not know why, but it seems that zeal, too often, has a tendency to over-ride knowledge. Paul's statement concerning the Jews

[Continued on page 25]

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DEFENDER

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A Disturbing Fact

EIDRED STEVENS

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Brother Eldred Stevens tragically passed from this life the week of February 18 in an airplane crash. His strong stand for the truth will be greatly missed. We have so few who speak so plainly. The following article from his pen is being re-printed for its content and in memory of brother Stevens' great ability.]

The other day I heard a well-known, aggressive, influential and very dedicated gospel preacher speak. He said many wonderful things and delivered an excellent and stirring address. The thing that disturbed me was the absence of scripture from his talk. Also disturbing was his obvious lack of knowledge of simple Bible facts. Once he mixed some circumstances from the life of Belshazzar into the life of Moses! Again he quoted some of the words of Jesus and gave as his reference the book of Hebrews! I found myself wondering what kind of grade he would make on a text covering very basic and elementary facts of Bible history.

Yet he is one of our "leading brethren" and very outspoken in criticism of the preaching of our great men of the past. He knows how they blundered with their legalistic preaching and he knows how to lead the church out of its dark past into a new day of spiritual experience and world conquest.

It was evident that he had spent much time with human books about spirituality, dedication, vision, organization, and promotion and so little time, comparatively, with his Bible.

It occurs to me that a man who can't make an "A" on a Bible test ought to be rather meek in his preaching, somewhat slow to criticize his brethren. Perhaps he should stick very closely to first principles. It's a bit old-fashioned, I know, but I am inclined to think that a man who doesn't know his Bible should be slow to pose as a gospel preacher! He certainly should be cautious about "working over" the brotherhood!

It's a sad day when the destiny of the church resides in the hands of any men other than those who are known first and foremost for remarkable knowledge of God's word. I don't care how sincere, intelligent, and dedicated a man may be, he is not qualified to lead among churches of Christ unless he contends for and respects the authority of the Bible.

"On Prayer Partners"

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Regarding the January editorial entitled "Some Problems", we have received one letter of criticism stressing disapproval of our statement regarding "prayer partners". While the letter carried a definite air of sarcasm it also made me aware of the fact that I had not explained what I was concerned about regarding the same. The brother stated that Jesus took three with him into Gethsemane when he went there to pray. He argued that since a prayer partner is an associate, a sharer or a participant that Jesus had "prayer partners" and that even I could not have felt at home with these New Testament people. He failed to observe that Jesus' prayer partners slept through the entire prayer session. The writer further stated that he believed these people went to heaven and wondered if people like myself could even feel comfortable in heaven.

One cannot help but feel that the objector had an axe to grind with regard to the subject of prayer partners. Either such is true or he does not understand what I had reference to and thinks that I object to brethren getting together to pray. I would like to think that he simply does not understand.

In listing some of the problems which we are seeing today which in various ways relate to Holiness-Pentecostal errors, I wrote, "... (9) The use of prayer partners (can you believe it);..." I automatically assumed that each of the nine things listed did not need explanation. Perhaps such was an erroneous assumption.

In a statement from the elders of the University Avenue church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida dated January 21, 1979, in which those elders listed six reasons as to why the members of the University congregation should not participate in such activities and espouse such philosophies because they (the elders) were in disagreement with them, they said under number 1:

1. *The idea and practice that every Christian should have a superior or more mature prayer partner to whom he or she should confess every sin of both thought and action. The prayer partner relationship includes confessing intimate sins, no matter how personal or destructive they may be. It also includes the concept that the one confessing may be disciplined by the more mature prayer partner in various ways until standards established by human judgment*

are satisfied. This often brings about peer pressure to conform to human standards which can have devastating effects in the lives of Christians.

This is part of our understanding regarding prayer partners and this is "chart and compass" away from what Jesus did in Gethsemane. It is likewise foreign to any New Testament teaching.

Our further knowledge of the use of prayer partners is as far from Biblical teaching as hell is from heaven. (Incidentally, the brother in the letter said he believed these [Jesus, Peter, James and John] went to heaven. He should re-examine that statement. Jesus went to heaven, but Peter, James, John and all departed saints have not gone to heaven but rather to hades to await the resurrection. Even David, the man after God's own heart, ascended not into the heavens [Acts 2:34]). To illustrate just *how far* some will go with such an idea, we have learned of "prayer partners" being assigned to individuals who come forward to be baptized. (We understand that it is not the practice of all who use "prayer partners" to assign such to a non-Christian. For most who have "prayer partners" will not have a Christian and a non-Christian assigned together as such.) Those who have gone so far as to assign a "prayer partner" to a candidate for baptism intend that the "prayer partner" and the candidate for baptism get together each day for a period of study (they call it sharing), confession of sins and prayer. According to the format and practice, when the "prayer partner" feels the one who wants to be baptized has progressed enough in knowledge and consecration, or commitment, he (the "prayer partner") then approves the person for baptism. Shades of Pentecostalism! Where do you read of such being practiced in the New Testament? This is from the minds and doctrines of men and not from the Bible. Thus I'm sure that anyone who loves the truth and intends on doing what is right can understand why last month's editorial spoke out against the use of "prayer partners". Surely no one disapproves of brethren praying together. Such is only a camouflage argument designed to take the spotlight off the real issue.

Brethren, we may become irritated and sarcastic at the mention of "prayer partners" but may we state in no uncertain terms that those who practice such as outlined above have gone beyond the doctrine of the New Testament and will not be saved in heaven

(2 Jn.9-11; Matt.15:7-9; Col.3:17; Gal.1:6-9).
Our concern is not what men like, want to do

or feel comfortable with. Rather, our concern is *what is right in the sight of God.*

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Challenging Dangers Of Modern Versions, 20

ROBERT R. TAYLOR, JR.

In the previous article I directed attention to some of the dangers we face from *The New American Standard Version*. Much of that study, of necessity, was employed with preliminaries such as its guidelines, who came out with it, its unnamed and unknown translators, its connection with its elder brother-*The Amplified Bible*-and its unfortunate and totally unjustified appellation of *THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD*. Brief mention was made about its flat contradiction between Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15. Many of my brethren use *The New American Standard*. I wonder how they teach the truth from their preferred Bible when they discuss the law of Moses from what Jesus said in Matthew 5:17 and what they have Paul to write in Ephesians 2:15. Their rendering of Hebrews 10:9 also compounds the problem of how they dealt with Matthew 5:17. We are now ready to pick up right where we left off in the previous article.

OTHER PERVERSIONS

The New American Standard departs from the eminently accurate rendering of both the *King James* and the *ASV* of 1901 in Mark 1:4. This new Bible has John "preaching A baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." (Emphasis added.) Both of the older versions have "THE baptism of repentance "for" or "unto the remission of sins." (Emphasis added.) The change from the definite article to the indefinite article is surely a tampering with the design of John's baptism. Alexander Campbell made a very effective argument in his book, *CHRISTIAN BAPTISM*, by the use of the definite article. Why the unauthorized change? I wish they would leave our Bibles alone!

I deeply deplore what modern translators have done to the last dozen verses of Mark 16. The *RSV* initially left out this entire section and simply transferred it to footnote or marginal status. Mark did not write the final 163 Greek words of his gospel text for the footnote or marginal sections of perverted Bibles centuries later!! There is a marked contrast in the way *The New American Standard* handles the textual problem of Mark 16:9-20 and the way the *ASV* of 1901 handled it three quarters of a century ago. The *ASV* of 1901 makes mention of the two oldest manuscripts along with some other authorities which omit this section. *The New American Standard* says

in regard to these disputed verses, "Some of the oldest mss. do not contain verses 9 through 20." Some is far more indefinite than two. The student is deliberately misled at this vital point because he might easily conclude that some includes not quite half of the hundreds available. Relative to New Testament Greek manuscript authority the name of Tischendorf has few if any superiors. He is on written record as saying that the twelve disputed verses are "found in more than five hundred Greek manuscripts, in the whole of the Syriac and Coptic, and most of the Latin manuscripts, and even in the Gothic Version." This can be found in the *Introduction of the Tischendorf New Testament*. Why did *The New American Standard* say some? Why did they not say two? At least one able Bible student, F. H. Scrivener, thinks it is quite possible that these two (Aleph and B) make only one witness and not two. If that be the case, then look at where that indefinite some of *The New American Standard* is left. What ever happened to intellectual integrity in this matter of Biblical translation?

The New American Standard gives another possible reading at the end of Mark's gospel record. At the end of verse 20 they have in brackets, "And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions. And after that, Jesus Himself sent out through them from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." The translators of the *ASV* of 1901 knew of this different ending for they alluded to it in a footnote. But they thought so little of its value as to omit its very words. Why does this new Bible include such which is lacking in the very tone and tenor of Sacred Scripture? This is nothing but another sly and devious attempt at undermining the last dozen verses of Mark 16:9-20 and what they set forth with stately significance and tremendous truth. If not, WHY NOT??

If the makers of *The New American Standard* are not fondly favorable toward premillennialism, why did they give a premillennial slant to such passages as Acts 3:21 and Romans 11:26? Both the *KJV* and the *ASV* of 1901 in Acts 3:21 refer respectively to the "times of restitution" and the "times of restoration." A plural term is used and it obviously refers to the last days or the gospel dispensation. The Greek text demands times. Why does this

new Bible so-called come along and make it the "period" of restoration unless they had a premillennial axe to grind? Don't you see why some of us object to its being called *The NEW American Standard Version*? In many ways it is a vastly different version. Romans 11:26 has been a premillennial sugarstick for years, that is, when they get through running it through their premillennial strainer it is a treasured sugarstick!! Both the KJV and the ASV of 1901 have, "And so all Israel shall be saved:..." The expressions are exactly alike except for the fact that in the KJV the "And" is capitalized and the ASV of 1901 leaves the "and" in small caps. This new Bible makes the passage to say, "...and thus all Israel will be saved:..." So is changed to thus. For years we have made an argument on the fact that so is an adverb of manner here and the context shows how Israel shall be saved, i.e., by accepting the gospel of the deliverer. Hence, all Israel, if saved at all, would be like all Gentiles, if saved at all, i.e., by gospel obedience. This is a valid argument in my judgment. Why change the So to THUS? Again the passage is tampered with by changing shall which is a conditional transitive to will which is unconditional in its usage? If the makers of *The New American Standard* were not premillennially slanted, why did they make these changes that foster the millennial mania that grips our religious world at this very hour? Seventy per cent or more of so-called Christendom believes in premillennialism and many of our brethren are going forth with the hopes of converting them with a premillennial Bible in their hands!! How exceedingly strange!

The ASV of 1901 suggests that those who "were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) How many, many times across the years have we based a cogent argument on you did if ye were? Did what? Put on Christ. If ye were what? If ye were baptized into Christ. This new Bible comes along and says, "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." Why take out the "put on Christ" and inject the being clothed with Christ? They showed their affinity with their patron predecessor-the *Amplified*-and not with the ASV of 1901 in their treatment of Galatians 3:27. And *The Amplified Bible* is mighty poor company to be allied with; it makes for a mighty poor kinsman!!

The New American Standard adds the word NOW to 1 Peter 3:19. The KJV does not have that now; the ASV of 1901 does not have it; my Greek text does not have it. It is true the NASV places it in italics but it does not belong there italics or no italics. Why put it there unless they were fondly favorable to the doctrine of the second chance theory which is ardently accepted by Roman Catholi-

cism, Adventism, Russellism, Mormonism, etc.? Why alter the text? Why cannot they leave our Bible alone?

Why change the signified of Revelation 1:1 which is used in both the KJV and the ASV of 1901 to that of communicated? The Greek means signified there. The message of the book of Revelation was to be given in signs or a coded message. But this is the way their patron predecessor, the *Amplified*, had it and they followed suit. This Bible should have been called *THE NEW AMPLIFIED* - not *THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD*!! Their father-son kinship is quite noticeable in many renderings.

THOSE EVER DANGEROUS AND DEEPLY FATAL FOOTNOTES

When you choose a Bible for your study and meditation you should not only consider the accuracy of the actual text itself but note also its preface statements and especially its footnotes or marginal statements. You may be thinking, "But I never pay any attention to what is in the Preface or what occurs in the footnotes." If so, that shows a weakness on your part but that is not all the reason this warning is extended. The Preface and footnotes will reveal much in the way of attitudes and actions on the part of the translators. Now to elaborate on what is meant by dangers in the footnotes. Why does the NASV make a change in John 1:18? Both the KJV and the ASV of 1901 have Jesus as the "only begotten Son." The NASV has "only begotten God" and with a footnote which says, "Some later mss. read, Son." There was a time when the Word or the Second Person of the Godhead was not the only begotten Son of God. He became the Son through the Incarnation and for the expressed purpose of redeeming man. But there was never a time when he was not God. Why this change? This Bible should be called *The CHANGED American Standard Version* instead of *The NEW American Standard*.

In Mark 1:1 Jesus is spoken of as the Son of God. The ASV of 1901 has a footnote that some ancient authorities omit this expression. The NASV says that many manuscripts do not contain it. The SOME of the ASV of 1901 becomes the MANY of the NASV. Robert W. Flanigan in *A CRITIQUE OF THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE NEW TESTAMENT* deals with this very point. He says there are nine major and twenty-two minor manuscripts that include the phrase and only two which omit it. (p. 3.) If Mr. Flanigan is right, and he has a B. D. Degree and has majored in New Testament criticism, then the MANY of the NASV is suspect on the very surface of the matter isn't it?

In the NASV Luke 24:12, which is an important verse in the sacred narrative dealing with the Lord's resurrection, has been placed

in brackets. The footnote says that "Some mss. do not contain verse 12." The KJV and the ASV of 1901 did not place it in brackets. Flanigan says that the verse has good manuscript authority for being left in the text. (Ibid.,)

Both the KJV and the ASV of 1901 affirm the ascension of our Lord into heaven in Luke 24:51. The NASV leaves out "and was carried up into heaven" and says in the footnote that some manuscripts add it. Flanigan says that two omit it and that fourteen major and over twenty minor ones include the phrase. (Ibid., p. 5.) Why was it omitted? The very day I write this for the DEFENDER I am working on the SENIOR QUARTERLY lesson in the G. A. series for May 11, 1980, which is entitled "The Glorious Resurrection." A part of the Lesson Text for that vastly important study is Luke 24:50-53. Were we using the NASV as our accepted translation instead of the ASV of 1901 there would be a full half dozen words that would be omitted from the lesson in just one verse. The entire verse in the ASV of 1901 only has nineteen words. Thus the NASV leaves out about 33 and 1/3 per cent of the verse. Brethren, in this two part series we are reviewing a different Bible than the ASV of 1901. Omissions like this make it a shorter Bible!!

These are a few of the many that could be given but these will have to suffice.

CONCLUSION

The NASV is being advertised in words which state, "Many believe it is destined to become 'the accepted Bible' for our day." If and when it does, it will be a dark and gloomy day in the realm of right religion. It is not about to become mine as long as we have reliable Bibles available.

Upon the completion of his critique Flanigan said in regard to the NASV, "This translation needs much work before it is hailed as the best translation of the original Greek and accepted into our churches and schools in place of the KING JAMES BIBLE. The author is saddened by the many mistakes and poor judgments the translators made in this translation.

"This translation, as it stands today, robs the Lord Jesus Christ of His deity and dignity that the Word of God affords Him. It is not the author's purpose to attack the character and testimony of the translators but to draw to your attention the very serious mistakes in this translation. Maybe the translators will correct these and other errors and come out with a REVISED NEW AMERICAN STANDARD TRANSLATION." (Ibid., p. 15.)

Cecil J. Carter has a little pamphlet entitled THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION AND THE DEITY OF CHRIST. He affirms on the last page that when the NASV quotes "the oldest" or "late mss. add" in their marginal references or footnotes that such will "Serve to obscure the truth of God's Word rather than to enlighten it." He further states, "In the light of the above it is evident that the statement 'not found in the earliest manuscripts' is at its best misleading, and at its worst either intentionally or unintentionally, a withholding of the actual facts."

That very versatile and inimitable Bible scholar, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., in his classic volume on A REVIEW OF THE NEW VERSIONS devotes some ten pages in abstracting some of the errors of the NASV. He concludes by saying, "The title THE NEW AMERICAN STANDARD is a misnomer—it is a diverted, and in numerous instances, a perverted translation sailing under a flag of false colors. The claim of loyalty to the AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION is contradicted by multiplied deviations from its text, and the asserted purpose to perpetuate the AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION is contradicted by the evident ambition to relegate it. We opine that it will not succeed." (p. 593.)

The NASV is not nearly as bad as some I have reviewed in these studies nor is it in the class of the KJV that it hopes to supplant nor the ASV of 1901 that it really seeks to relegate to the archives of obsolete books. In all good conscience I CANNOT and therefore WILL NOT recommend it as a reliable Bible.

[TO BE CONTINUED]



*		*
*	CONTRIBUTIONS	*
*		*
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Date Of The Book Of Revelation?? Part III

H. DANIEL DENHAM

Early Date

We have made reference to the Neronian application of the Apocalypse in previous thoughts. Thus we need to direct our attention along this line in the furthering of our enquiry into the date of the Book of Revelation.

An argument presented by Hort in favor of the Neronian Date is the Johannine use of Hebraistic idiom in his Greek syntax. Hort theorized that the Gospel Account and the Epistles of John, bearing purer syntax, were apparently written much later than the Apocalypse. Hort accepted the external evidence of these books as concerns date and placed them around A. D. 95 or 96; yet he rejected the external evidence of the Apocalypse, which suggested a later date than A.D. 70, and on his syntax hypothesis placed its date before A.D. 70.¹ It may be noted that Hort, the initial champion of this theory, stated in regard to external evidence and the Apocalypse, *"If external evidence alone could decide, there would be a clear preponderance for Domitian."*² This is the first problem of the theory. One must first accept as historically veracious the testimony of external evidence on the count of the Gospel Account and the Epistles, while at the same instance renouncing the external evidence of the same witnesses concerning the Apocalypse. Surely, as Campbell stated in his 'Sermon on the Law,' *"the legs of the lame are not equal."* The rules governing historical enquiry would not permit such. Secondly, the theory collapses in a proper consideration of the writer - John, a Jew by birth, the destination of the Apocalypse - the Seven churches of Asia, i.e. Asia Minor, comprised mostly of Jews familiar with Old Testament imagery, the subject matter of the Apocalypse - persecution, deliverance, and judgment, and finally the imagery of the Apocalypse, which is Old Testament in reference, thus forming a prophetic familiarity between the writer and the readers. (cf. 1:3). This Hebraistic idiom, or Hebrew-Greek, is furthermore a common occurrence in the New Testament, being the common vernacular of the principal actors and speakers of the narrative portions, and significantly, it was the Greek dialect found in the synagogues of Palestine and Asia Minor.³ Thirdly, it may very well have been the case that John used an amanuensis in writing the Gospel Accounts and Epistles (cf. John 21:24), and did not have such at his aid in writing the Apocalypse, while on the island of Patmos.⁴

A second theory used to support the *Early Date* is the supposition that *"there were"*, as Tilloch postulated, *"but seven churches in Asia when the Revelation was written."*⁵ The theory proposes that the history of the churches of Asia Minor was not far advanced when John penned the Apocalypse. However, we do know that there were churches at Colossae, Troas, and possibly Miletus, and the congregations at Tralles and Magnesia may very well have been extant at that time, as well as churches in Cappadocia, Bithynia, Pontus, Galatia, and Cilicia. Further, we do know, as Ramsay has pointed out, that the list of the 'seven churches' of Asia is presented in such a manner as to correspond with the path one would take from Ephesus -- the center of John's work - in examining the most cultured and pre-eminent part of the province in an almost circular route.⁶ It is apparent that the Book of Revelation was to be circulated among the churches (1:1). These seven churches would be representative of their area, leading centers of culture and commerce. At any event the supposition of Tilloch is highly suspect.

The references to *"them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan"* supposedly presupposes the *Early Date* as well: as the obvious connection is to those Jews who were masquerading in the midst of the churches as fellow servants of God. (cf. 2:9; 3:9). These "false" Jews were Judaizers, who sought to bind the law of Moses upon all.⁷ The supposition is that with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 the persecuting power of these Judaizers was broken; however, the conclusion does not necessarily follow from the premise of the references. In the large Asiatic communities the hostilities of the Jews were intensified by Jerusalem's devastation. Distinct Jewish nationalism led to two early attempts to rebuild the city, both of which ended in the degradation of further Roman reprisals against Jewish insurgents in 117 and 132 A.D. during the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, respectively.⁸ Further, Ignatius' letter to the church at Philadelphia, dated early in the Second Century A. D., warns against Judaizers. He suggests therein that even some Jews had come into the congregation's fellowship.⁹ Thus, we conclude that the Jews - physically speaking - were still highly active as an internal and external force upon the church after Jerusalem's fall in A. D. 70, and were not dormant as implied by the *Early Date* supposition.

A fourth proposed evidence adduced for the *Early Date* by its exponents is the supposed "allusions" to the existence of Herod's Temple, its court, and its altar in Revelation 11.¹⁰ These "allusions" are nothing more than the name implies, and it is apparent that the allusion is not to "Herod's Temple" *per se*, but to the basic structure of the Temple system which typified the church. (cf. 2 Cor. 6:16). The vision in Revelation 11 therefore is symbolic and figurative, and not literal. It is a vision of the church through Old Testament imagery. It would be just as valid to theorize that the Temple imagery represents a restored literal, physical Temple as an existent physical one. However, the vision is of the present "Temple of God," the church, and not Herod's Temple.

The reference to the city "where also our Lord was crucified in 11:8 is another proposed evidence for the *Early Date*. We might add that this reference forms the strongest single evidence for the *Early Date*. Yet the application of the reference to Jerusalem must contextually be considered suspect. The verse is located amidst highly figurative language and visional imagery. If this key clause be taken literally, and thus as a lucid statement of explanation and interpretation by John, then its usage is out of kilter with John's seemingly consistent procedure of introducing such explanations with qualifying clauses such as: "Here is the mind that hath wisdom," "I will shew unto thee...", "I will tell thee the mystery...", *et al.* Secondly, the verse itself reads: "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Consistency in exposition would demand a figurizing of the concluding clause, if we figurize the preceding portion of the verse. Otherwise, we must have literal "bodies" lying in a literal "street". *Late Date* advocates offer the explanation that the imagery is of 'Rome' and not Jerusalem, and that Jerusalem is "alluded" to in connection with Christ's crucifixion as typical of Roman persecution.

A sixth evidence used to support the *Early Date* is the identification of the sixth emperor in 17:10 as Nero: since it was during the reign of the sixth, the one that "is", the book was obviously written. John says: "Five are fallen, and one is." The *Early Date* advocates, reckoning from Julius, set forth Julius, Augustus, Tiberias, Gaius "Caligula", and Claudius as the five fallen emperors, thus making Nero the one that "is".¹¹ Such a reckoning, though feasible, however stands in opposition to the primary application of the book to Nero as the "Beast", which application is the thrust of the *Early Date* position. John foresees a

seventh and eighth emperor, and the eighth is the "Beast". It is obvious that the sixth is not the eighth, and therefore he is not the Beast. (Cf. vv.11-14). Galba is offered by some Jerusalem theorists as the seventh, and Vespasian is portrayed as the eighth.¹² However, this reckoning is biblically and historically untenable. The persecuting emperor of the Apocalypse is the Beast (cf. 13:1-10); the Beast "is" the eighth, and not a servant of the Beast is the eighth emperor. He "is the Beast." If Nero were the Beast, he necessarily would have to be the eighth and not the sixth. Furthermore, Otho and Vitellius were insignificant as concerns their reigns, and all three were never recognized as emperors in Asia Minor,¹³ to where the Apocalypse was addressed. In order for one to count Galba, he must logically include Otho and Vitellius; and neither would fulfill the imagery of the Beast. Also for one to exclude Otho and/or Vitellius, he must logically exclude Galba: as the same arguments of insignificance would apply to him as well. The argument on 17:10 therefore becomes a problem for and not a proof of the *Early Date*. We might also here add that the *Late Date* advocates are stuck for a feasible reckoning which would portray Domitian as the Beast.

The final argument used for the *Early Date* need here be assessed. This argument is based upon supposed parallels between the Apocalypse and the Olivet Discourse of Matthew 24 concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem. (cf. Matt.24:3-35). These "parallels" are adduced from the similar language of the two. These supposed "parallels" are briefly as follows:

- 1) Rev. 1:1-3; 22:6,20 -- "all things" -- Matt.23:36; 24:2,33,34;
- 2) Rev.1:1 -- "shortly" -- Matt. 24:34 ("this generation");
- 3) Rev.9:6 -- "those days" -- Matt. 24:19,22, 29;
- 4) Rev.6:12,13 -- "sun and moon" -- Matt.24: 29;
- 5) Rev.11:8 -- "the city" (Jerusalem) -- Matt.23:37,38;
- 6) Rev.7:14 -- "tribulation" -- Matt.24:21.

The problem of this reasoning, however, is that it depends upon argumentation from similarity of language, which is concerned with the nature of an event and not the identity of the event in its historical connections. For example, both Amos 1:2 and Joel 3:16 speak of Jehovah roaring from Zion. Does this fact demand the conclusion that Amos 1:2 be fulfilled in the same historical connection with Joel 3:16? Obviously not. Then why should we demand a Jerusalem application of the Apocalypse on the basis of the 'similar language' of Matt.24? It is the conviction of this writer that similarity of language deals with the *similar* nature of events, and does not of itself propose to identify an event in

all its prophetic connections. (NOTE: I believe that it is a failure to respect this relationship in figurative and prophetic language which has led to almost universal confusion on the application of Luke 17.)

In summary, the *Early Date's* strongest

suggestive evidence is based on 11:8, but the remaining 'evidence' is weak, inconclusive, and, in some cases, even forced. 17:10,11 presents more of a problem than a proof, and similarity of language with Matt. 24 develops hermeneutical inconsistencies.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

FOOTNOTES

1. Thiessen, H. C., *Introduction to the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1973), p. 322.
2. Guthrie, Donald, *New Testament Introduction*, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), p. 957.
3. MacDonald, James M., "The Apocalypse: Its Date and Design," edited, Franklin Camp, *The Word of Life*, (Birmingham: Shades Mountain Church of Christ, 1977), Vol. VI, No. 1, p. 1.
4. Thiessen, op. cit., p. 320.
5. MacDonald, loc. cit., p. 2.
6. McDowell, Edward A., *The Meaning and Message of the Book of Revelation*, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1951), pp. 36, 37.
7. MacDonald, loc. cit., p. 3.
8. Langer, William L., *An Encyclopedia of World History*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), p. 124.
9. Hobbs, Herschel H., *The Cosmic Drama*, (Waco: Word Books, 1975), p. 58.
10. Wallace, Foy E., Jr., *The Book of Revelation*, (Fort Worth: Foy E. Wallace, Jr. Publications, 1966), pp. 31, 32.
11. Guthrie, op. cit., p. 958.
12. King, Max R., *The Spirit of Prophecy*, (Max R. King, 1971), pp. 332, 333.
13. Hobbs, op. cit., p. 160.

FOR THAT WE SOUGHT HIM . . .

of his day declares that they were so busy doing what they thought to be right that they had not submitted themselves to what God declares to be right (Romans 10:1-3). The churches of Galatia were being affected by the same misguided zeal (Galatians 4:17, 18).

Departure from God's pattern has always come slowly and usually as a result of the failure of men to look closely at God's pattern in adopting new ways. If David had inquired of God concerning the ark, as he did concerning the battle with the Philistines (1 Samuel 5:19, 23), the death of Uzzah would likely have been avoided. God's pattern is found only in His word, and when men improvise that pattern they are tampering with God's blueprint.

All who love the Lord and His church want to help the church grow and prosper, but we must not let our zeal over-ride God's pattern. We can be sure that those who espoused the missionary society were over-flowing with ideas of the vast amount of good that would come from this new plan. We can also be sure that Tolbert Fanning, who started the *Gospel Advocate* intending to use its columns for open discussion of the society, and others who opposed the society were considered "radicals" for even questioning it. Especially since they were generally in the minority.

This author has just finished reading the book by Thomas B. Warren, "When Is An 'Example'

Binding?" We believe this to be an excellent book which sets forth valid reasoning that can be helpful to us in considering the problem before us. We will endeavor to follow the thesis of that book in presenting our arguments. That thesis is: "In order to decide accurately whether a specific Biblical instruction is binding on men living today, one must (1) recognize the evidence to include: (a) the specific statement under consideration, (b) the immediate context of that specific statement, and (c) the remote context of that specific statement (a, b, c comprising 'the total context'), and (2) reason correctly about that evidence, drawing only such conclusions as are warranted by the totality of that evidence."

1. *The Specific Statement Under Consideration:* "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." (1 Corinthians 11:20). The question with which we are concerned is: Does this account of action bind upon Christians today the obligation to assemble together, as a local congregation, into one place on the first day of the week to worship God in spirit and in truth?

2. *The Immediate Context:* Paul began these thoughts in 11:1, 2 by saying, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." The word "ordinances" (KJV) is rendered "traditions" in the ASV and is the same Greek word as "traditions" in 11

Thessalonians 2:15 & 3:6. These ordinances are undoubtedly the things that Paul had taught them to observe in the assembly; that is: the Lord's Supper, 11:20-26; singing, 14:15; praying, 14:15; proclaiming God's word, 14:18,19; and laying by in store, 16:1,2.

If we will carefully consider the context of chapters 11 through 16, such is said concerning the assembly on the first day of the week. The understanding of the context would be aided by rendering the Greek word EKKLESIA as "assembly" rather than "church" in these chapters. There are a few places where the word "church" would be preferable, but verses such as 11:18,22; 14:4,5,12,19,28,35 would be enhanced by the word "assembly".

Some credence is given, at least in part, to this idea by brother Warren, "There can be no doubt that Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 11:20, and 1 Corinthians 16:1,2 all refer to the same assembly. Every church (congregation) has the obligation to meet in assembly every first day of the week and in that assembly, among other things which must be done, *the Lord's Supper* must be eaten."²

The Greek text substantiates the KJV rendering of "into one place" both in 11:20 and 14:23, which reads, "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place,...". The same prepositional phrase, EPI TO AUTO, is used in both places to denote; "in one and the same place" (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon*, p.60).

In his comments on Acts 20:7 brother Warren writes, "From 1 Corinthians 11:20, it is clear that Christians were to come together *in one place* (emphasis mine, MB) in order to eat the Lord's Supper. So, it is clear that a basic purpose of their coming together on the Lord's day was to eat the Lord's Supper."³ We should recognize that brother Warren was not intending to present the proposition with which this article is concerned, but was simply stating some facts that logically come from 1 Corinthians 11:20.

3. The Remote Context: There is not a great deal of mention in the New Testament concerning the worship assembly. Acts 20:7 has already been mentioned. James 2:1-4 likely refers to the assembly of Christians, but does not give any information which is relevant to our question. This author cannot limit Hebrews 10:25 to the first day of the week, therefore, it is not considered part of the context.

"No Old Testament statement - whether it be a direct command, a declaration, an account of action, etc., can be binding in *specific detail* on men living today-BUT-such can be binding in *principle* (emphasis mine,

MB) on men living today."⁴ Reference is made to brother Warren's book, not because this author considers brother Warren to be the authority, but because the arguments sustaining this proposition are set forth in detail in the chapter from which the statement is taken. It is mentioned here because there is a *principle* in the Old Testament which applies to this article.

In Deuteronomy 29:10-13 Moses had gathered all Israel together to renew God's covenant with them before he relinquished the leadership to Joshua. This reference states that there were captains, elders, officers, all the men, little ones, wives, and strangers present. In the closing of his narrative Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests and elders of Israel and *commanded* them saying, "At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." (Deuteronomy 31:10-13).

Joshua carried out this command just as Moses directed (Joshua 8:35). Ezra 10:1 and Jeremiah 12:43 show that women and children took part in worshipping God in later years. Hence, the *principle* is derived from this Old Testament command that God desires all of His people to assemble together when He so specifies.

4. The Total Context: The evidence derived from the total context warrants the conclusion that: (1) God states that children can hear and learn in the same assembly in which adults are hearing and learning; (2) God has commanded that all ages should come together to receive His instruction; (3) The apostle Paul taught the church at Corinth to assemble as a single congregation in one place on the first day of the week in order to worship God in spirit and in truth.

5. Logical Conclusions From The Total Context: (1) This account of action is binding upon men living today who wish to adhere to God's pattern as set forth in the New Testament; (2) Not all gatherings of the church are included in the context of 1 Corinthians 11:20; (3) Therefore, only the assembly in which the items of worship, which are specified by the Lord, are observed on the first day of the

week is affected by this context. These conclusions not only allow separate Bible classes, at a time which does not interfere with the worship assembly, but also prohibits the dividing of a given congregation into more than one assembly for the purpose of fulfilling its obligations to worship God in spirit and in truth on the first day of the week.

This author realizes that these conclusions have far reaching effects, and that there have been some practices that have heretofore not been questioned, but in light of the evidence presented, let us carefully consider the things we are doing which violate this New Testament account of action. Practices such as conducting two separate worship assemblies, at different times, for the same congregation; conducting two or more separate assemblies, at the same time, for the same congregation; and possibly some other things, are in direct violation of the divine pattern. These thoughts are concluded with two statements. The first from a man much more capable than this author, and the second from a man who far exceeds either of us because he spoke by inspiration.

"Not only are the members of every church

(Brother Barnes is the minister for the Lord's church in Wagoner, Oklahoma)

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

TRYING TO FIND THE NARROW WAY, AND CAN'T EVEN FIND THE CHURCH BUILDING

FRED DIXON

"Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

I stand amazed as a Gospel preacher at the number of my brethren who claim to be seeking the strait and narrow gate that leads to heaven, but are unable to find the church building on Sunday night and Wednesday night.

They will testify at the drop of a hat that they love the Lord, but it is quite evident their love for their Heavenly Father is limited to Sunday morning worship only.

How is it possible for a true child of God to sincerely seek the Narrow Gate, when he or she can not find the church building for any service except Lord's Day morning? Is it not taught in God's Holy Word that the Body of Christ is the very thing that must be entered to open the Gates of Heaven to a person? (Mark 16:16).

(Brother Dixon is the minister for the Lord's church in Donalsonville, Georgia)

(congregation) to meet together every Lord's day in order to eat the Lord's Supper, this is the only day on which that supper is to be eaten. There is no authority in all of the Bible for the Lord's Supper to be eaten on any day other than the Lord's day (first day of the week). And, whatever is done without Biblical authority is sinful (cf. 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor.4:6; Lev.10:1,2; 1 Chron.15:1-15). This is why the use of instrumental music in the worship of God is wrong: there is no authority for it in the Bible."⁵

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12:28,29).

FOOTNOTES

1. Thomas B. Warren, *When Is An "Example" Binding?* (National Christian Press, Jonesboro, Arkansas) p. 44.
2. Ibid., p. 153.
3. Ibid., p. 152.
4. Ibid., p. 117.
5. Ibid., p. 150.

If the Narrow Way could be found in front of a television, on the lake, on the golf course, or resting on a bed, I would not worry about my brethren, for I am sure they would find the Narrow Way which leads to Heaven.

As a child of God, I know entrance into the Narrow Way that leads to Heaven starts with the Narrow Doorway that leads into the place of worship, where God's Holy Word is taught three times weekly, and where Christ is present with his children.

It is my earnest prayer that my brethren will realize before it is too late, unless they find the place of worship, they have no hope of finding the Narrow Way which leads to Heaven.

Fifth Annual Lectureship

BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES

MAY 13-17, 1979

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1979

- 9:00 "I BELIEVE THE BIBLE BECAUSE...".....
Tommy Alford
10:00 "WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?"
(Mat. 20:6).....Billy McKee
6:00 JUDGMENT ON THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION
(Isa. 3:16-24).....Tommy Garrison

MONDAY, MAY 14, 1979

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD.....George Darling
8:00 "IS IT NOTHING TO YOU, ALL YE THAT PASS
BY?" (Lam. 1:12).....Pat McGee

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1979

- 8:00 SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.....
Archie Luper
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 IS HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM FOR US TODAY?...
Henry McCaghren
11:00 CRUCIAL ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Pat McGee

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.....Robert Taylor
2:00 THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE, LAW AND WORKS...
Winfred Clark
3:00 THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT A DENOMINA-
TION.....Gerald Miles
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 THE DIVIDED WORSHIP ASSEMBLY.....
Walter Pigg

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 1979

- 8:00 THE EXISTENCE OF GOD...Terry Hightower
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 FALSE VIEWS OF TRUTH.....Mac Deaver
11:00 "COME WITH ME TO SHILOH" (Jeh. 7:12)...
W.S. Cline
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 ARCHEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE.....Ray Hawk
2:00 THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE.....John Priola
3:00 THE GENESIS FLOOD AND THE AGE OF THE
EARTH.....Ray Peters
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 LET US ARISE AND BUILD....Malcolm Hill

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1979

- 8:00 WHAT'S WRONG WITH MUCH OF OUR PREACHING
TODAY.....Bill Coss
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 WE MUST STAND REGARDLESS OF THE COST..
Linwood Bishop
11:00 "GO EAT BREAD IN THY OWN LAND" (Amos
7:12).....Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.....
Robert Taylor
2:00 THE DOCTRINE OF ELDERS...Winfred Clark
3:00 MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.....
Ernest Underwood
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 THE DOCTRINE OF HEAVEN AND HELL,.....
Winfred Clark



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 4

APRIL, 1979

Momentous Decision

WILLIAM S. CLINE

A few years ago I was rummaging through some old bulletins and I ran across an article that I had found and filed several years before. The article was short but most pointed. It told of a preacher who had been going through some old church records and came across the minutes of a meeting of the *Official board* of the church. He found this entry: "Race problems were discussed for almost an hour-----It was moved, seconded and carried that an extension ladder be purchased."

As one of our past Presidents would say, "This was the art of the possible." Not believing it to be possible to do anything about important matters, they compromised on a non-controversial matter and bought a ladder. I have no idea what church this was, however, the minutes suggest a denominational group by the phrase "official board." Had it not been for those words I would have been certain that it was a business meeting of my brethren. That meeting had all the earmarks of the business meetings I have attended during the past 23 years. Too many times the work of the church has been slowed or *stopped* because some brethren did not want to get others upset. Brethren, we have been guilty of stopping the wheels of progress to satisfy

some cantankerous brother who was more concerned about his idiotic ideas, or personal preferences than he was the lost of the world.

Rivers are crooked because they have taken the course of least resistance. Perhaps the work of the church takes such a circuitous route for the same reason. Often a congregation loads its train, puts its eldership at the throttle and is prepared to move at top speed down the track; but just as the wheels start to roll someone waves a red flag. The train is stopped. The objector declares, "If you do not halt this train, throw overboard the cargo, and reverse course, I am going to be offended." IT IS AT THIS POINT THAT THE AVERAGE CONGREGATION DECIDES TO BUY AN EXTENSION LADDER!

Sometimes it is necessary to adopt policies, enunciate principles, and execute plans which are not universally popular. It is, in fact, this sort of thing which tests the integrity of a church. When *sound* plans and programs which are in harmony with God's word are adopted, those responsible for carrying out such works must stay hitched "until the cows come home." The only other alternative is to decide to purchase an extension ladder.

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DEFENDER

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Immodest Men AND Short-Haired Women

JAMES PILGRIM

The Bible instructs us to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2), declaring all of God's counsel (Acts 20:27), without addition or subtraction (Rev. 22:18,19), and yet this may not be being done. Consider the following honestly.

The Bible teaches on modesty and immodesty (1 Tim. 2:9,10). We have read and heard much preaching and teaching on the subject. It is not our intention to herein discuss correct attire or incorrect attire, whether over-dressing, under-dressing, or cross-sexual dressing. We simply question whether or not all of God's counsel is being preached on the subject. Before you answer in the affirmative, recall the number of sermons you have preached and/or heard on the subject of immodesty with respect to man. Is it any less sinful for males to run around in bathing suits, shorts, tight pants, and such like, than it is for women? Is there a double standard in the Bible with regard to this matter? Is it any wonder that women are crying for consistency and/or equality?

The inspired record also contains law regarding the length of hair (1 Cor. 11). Considerable time and space has been devoted to teaching on the subject. Again, we do not propose to use this space to discuss the rights and wrongs of hair lengths. However, we do question whether or not the entire word has been stressed on the subject. It seems that we are ready to instruct our male brethren as to their sin in letting their hair grow long, yet spend little effort in teaching our ladies about their short hair. Incidentally, the style for women this summer is to cut it real short. Brethren, the same chapter and context that forbids long hair on men also forbids short hair on women. Why do we not hear more about this? Is it sinful for men to violate the passage, but acceptable for women to reject the law? Some men would have to cut their hair as short as brother Guy N. Woods, which certainly cannot be questioned, to have short hair compared to some sisters.

Brethren, let us continue to preach on immodest women and long-haired men, but let us devote equal time to the other side of the coin. We will one day stand before the great and righteous judge of judges to give an account for the way we have preached His word. Good brethren will have to stand before Him to give an account of how they have obeyed His law. May God help us to make all of His will known, and may those who hear it receive it gladly.

P.O. Box 3022

Hueytown, Alabama 35020

Some Practical Observations

W. L. TOTTY

It is not the weave nor the cut of the cloth of our garments nor even the adornment of the person with jewels of gold, silver and precious stones that make a man a Christian; but, rather, it is our good works by which we are to be judged in the house of God. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches us distinctly that our wealth and display of it is not going to buy our way into heaven. Rather, we are to be clothed with humility. (1 Pet. 5:5.)

However, there are some things we would like to point out that we might give some consideration to also. In our day, there is a growing tendency toward a casual lifestyle and manner of dress to the extent that it might make one wonder whether or not we consider seriously the occasion when we meet to worship God.

Which of us would go to some wedding dressed as casually as we sometimes see persons dressed to attend the worship of the Lord? Or would we be seen attending the funeral of a beloved relative or friend without giving due consideration to our attire? If it were noised abroad that the President of the United States would meet with us for a dinner engagement, we would all put our proverbial "best foot forward." We would polish our shoes, clean and press our clothes and be in tip-top condition to greet him.

Well, let us think about the contrast between the President and the Lord of heaven. There is no comparison. The Lord meets with us every Lord's day around the table to commemorate his death and suffering for our eternal salvation; yet, we sometimes think nothing about appearing sloppily dressed to receive the Great Guest, whereas we would not remotely consider receiving the President in our homes without donning the best we had.

We are commanded to serve God with reverence (Heb.12:28); that is, we are to consider the seriousness of the occasion and give due respect to Him who died for us. In the Old Testament worship, the priests could not go into the tabernacle, or temple, with unwashed clothes; and those who bore the vessels of the tabernacle could not be unkempt. Shouldn't we give a little more consideration to our appearance when we come together to serve and worship the God of heaven? We should not, of course, want to dress to that we would call attention to ourselves, either by overdressing or dressing in too casual a manner. But we can all see that our clothing is neat, that our hair is clean and combed, etc.

Let us remember that we are the light of the world. We don't want to cast reflections upon the Lord who gave his life for our sins.

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Date Of The Book Of Revelation??? Part IV

H. DANIEL DENHAM

THE MEDIAL DATE

We have alluded to this alternative to the *Early* and *Late Date* theories in previous comments. This position places the writing of the Apocalypse during the reign of Emperor Vespasian (A.D. 69-79). Its application is to Domitian as the Beast, and as the first universal persecutor among the Imperators. The evidence for this is two-fold.

First, 17:10,11 would best fit the Vespasianic reckoning. The reckoning here would begin with Augustus, as opposed to the *Early*

Date's Julius. The reason for this is that Julius Caesar never claimed the Imperatorship and, prior to his assassination, was elected to the office of dictator for ten years, after which the control of the government would be returned to the Senate.¹ The historian Langer parallels his dictatorship to that of Cornelius Sulla.² Julius Caesar was not of the legal imperial line. Augustus' ascendancy to the purple in B.C. 27 began the reign of the first *imperium proconsulare maius infinitum*, and in 23 B.C. he consolidated his power by Senatorial actions, and in 13 B.C. Augustus donned even the title of *pontifex*

maximus upon the death of Lepidus.³

From Augustus we count Tiberias, Gaius Caligula, Claudius, and Nero among the "five" which are fallen. Galba, Otho, and Vitellius would be omitted in the count as Asia Minor knew them not as connected with the Imperatorship. The sixth and one that "is" would be Vespasian, hence the *Medial Date*. The seventh would be his son Titus, who reigned just two years (A.D. 78 to 81). He is the one who would "continue a short space." The eighth would be Domitian, the Beast. Therefore a Domitianic application is implied.

Secondly, the reign of Vespasian greatly advanced Rome along the collision course toward confrontation with Christianity. The Roman Empire consisted of diverse cultures and nationalities. Occidental and Oriental came within the bounds of its domain. The Romans sought to mingle themselves with those whom they had subjected. The method employed by Augustus and his successors was colonization, putting the people of Rome in the midst of the conquered. This method of occupation alienated, instead of united, the cultures. With Vespasian, who had commanded armies in the East, came a movement toward the Oriental, and an attempted diffusion of Occidental culture with Oriental customs.⁴ With this movement toward Orientalism there grew naturally the insistence upon the worship of the ruler, which reached full expression upon the ascendancy of Domitian. By this movement the Empire sought to place the conquered among the conquerors, and to allow the continued worship of the traditional deities, while perscribing as a prerequisite for citizenship the worship of the emperor.⁵ (Cf. Dan.2:42, 43).

The official Roman policy forbade the establishment of new religions: due to fear of disloyalty and insurrection. As we have previously observed, the church was at first considered a Jewish sect. However, upon Jerusalem's fall in A. D. 70 the indifferent attitude of Rome turned into the fires of persecution. Nero had persecuted the church as a cover-up for the great fire of A.D. 64, according to Tacitus, but generally apathy in opposing her advance typified pre-A. D. 70 attitudes among the Roman despots.⁶ The subsequent persecutions were out-growths, ultimately, of the Neronian "police-action"; the illegality of the religion became the focal point of persecutions. Nero's had started "accidentally," but its message of illegality rang in the minds of the Flavians.⁷ (Nero's persecution did not itself, extend beyond Rome.⁸) Vespasian consolidated in himself all the powers of his predecessors, by an existing law (*lex de imperio Vespasiani*). It was only natural that the church and Rome should develop between them an intense anta-

gonism. Christianity was an out-law sect as far as Rome was concerned, and her people refused to worship the emperor as *dominus et deus*. Such an Oriental philosophy in politics in Rome even effected the practical Vespasian to the point that he declared at the hour of his death, "I feel myself becoming a god," and rising, supported by his attendants, "An emperor should die on his feet."⁹ Vespasian repressed the philosophers and those outspoken in government. He was absolute in government and religion in the Empire.¹⁰ With this understanding of Vespasian, we are not surprised to discover that the persecuting cultus of Domitian was an extension of the cult of his father, Vespasian, and elder brother, Titus.¹¹ Duruy has evidenced that the Roman government under Vespasian went as far as to claim the working of wonders and miracles by the Emperor Vespasian and Apollonius of Tyana to counteract and oppose the church.¹² Thus, the Vespasianic Date, the *Medial Date*, could account for (1) the emperors of 17:10,11, (2) the occasion of the Apocalypse, and (3) harmonize a Domitianic application therefore with the message of the Apocalypse.

Needless to say, this is, in the opinion of this writer, the proper date for the Book of Revelation. It harmonizes the facts of history with the Bible and follows most logically from the accumulated evidence. This writer urges all interested students to weigh the evidence for themselves.

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PRAYERS OF JESUS

WINSTON TEMPLE

1. "Lord's Prayer, The, properly 'the disciples' prayer," since not prayed with but taught to them by Jesus (Matt.6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4)."¹

"In Matthew's account the prayer is given as a part of the Sermon on the Mount and in connection with a criticism of the ostentation usual in the prayers of the hypocrites and the heathen. Luke introduces the prayer after the Galilean ministry and represents it as given in response to a request from one of his disciples, 'Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' It gives us, however, no note of time or place, and it is quite possible that the incident which it records took place much earlier. It is probable that the two evangelists, using the same or different sources, presented the prayer in such connection as best suited the plan of their narratives. In any case, it is remarkable that the prayer is not quoted or directly mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament."² In addition to the opening salutation, "Our Father who art in heaven," the Lord's prayer consists of six petitions according to Matthew.

1. Our Father (showing the object of our prayers is a personal God) who art in heaven (His abode) hallowed (holy, respected, reverent) be thy name.
2. Thy kingdom come--the kingdom (church) at that time was in preparation and hence future. Disciples now need to pray for its spread. The phrase is wanting in Luke's record.
3. Thy will be done (disciples are to pray that the will of God be done everywhere, at all times and by all beings) as in heaven, so on earth. There is nothing to oppose the will of God in heaven, so there should be nothing to oppose His will on earth.
4. Give us this day our daily bread. Most scholars agree this refers to physical needs; of course, we are also dependent upon God for our spiritual needs.
5. And forgive us our debts. In Luke 11:4 it is "and forgive us our sins"; this is the same in meaning.

6. And bring us not into temptation. The disciple of Christ prays to be delivered from the evil one; he prays to be able to escape the severe temptations that the devil may present to him.³

II. Christ's Doctrine of Prayer can be Divided into Three Divisions:

1. Sacredness is involved in the command for privacy (Matt.6:6);
2. Its importunity (Luke 11:5-9; 18:1-8); and
3. Its necessary conditions of humility, absence of self-righteousness (Luke 18:9-14), of display and repetition (Matt. 6:7); necessity of faith and a forgiving spirit (Mark 11:24-26); of agreement in social prayer (Matt.18:19); submission to the will of Christ, "in my name" (Jno.14:13).⁴

In Matt.6:6, Jesus draws a sharp contrast between the public display of the hypocrites and the private devotion of his disciples.⁵

The importunity of prayer mentioned in the texts above can be summed up as follows: If an imperfect human being (just or unjust motives) would inconvenience himself as to give a person what he needs if he comes and asks him for help, how much more will God, the heavenly Friend, who is perfect in love, listen to the sincere prayers and supplications of His children who are really in need.⁶

It is the view of the writer that the things previously mentioned as necessary conditions of humility culminate into one statement: If one bears the name "Christian," then live up to its expectations! Be Christlike. (Cf. 1 Peter 2:21).

III. Prayers Offered by Christ.

1. The High Priestly Prayer. This prayer is unique, not merely among the prayers of our Lord, but also among the prayers of humanity. The determination of the exact spot where the prayer was offered

is not revealed by John, except the probability that the words were spoken in the vicinity of the temple. The prayer is both a petition and a communion; a revealing both of Christ's divine and human natures. He is most divine; He is most human.⁷ This prayer points to the truth that Christ is not divided; neither should his disciples be authors of division and discord. It is direct evidence that screams unto the denominational world that they by their schisms are in strict opposition to the unity prayer of our Lord. "The first part of the prayer (Jno.17:1-5) is an expression of profound communion between the Son and the Father, and the prayer that the Father should glorify the Son, but with the supreme end of the Father's own glory.

In the second part of the prayer (Jno.17:6-19) our Lord prays for His disciples, to whom He has revealed Himself and His relation to God (verses 7, 8). He prays that they may be kept from the evil that is in the world, which is alien from them as it is from Him.

In the third portion of the prayer Christ's relation to His ultimate followers is referred to. Their unity is sought, not an external unity, but the deep, spiritual unity found by the indwelling of Christ in them and God in Christ. The prayer closes by the declaration that Christ's knowledge of the Father is revealed to His people, and the end and crown of all is to be the indwelling of God's love in man by the indwelling of Christ in him."⁸

2. The Prayer in Gethsemane. The prayer is recorded by the three synoptics (Matt.26:36-44; Mark 14:22-40; Luke 22:39-46). "Gethsemane" means the place of the oil presses; it was a field or plot of ground surrounded by a wall, containing several olive trees, and probably some buildings. The scene is eight disciples in one group, three in another (one gone to sell his Lord), and the Master prostrate on the ground, with the sea of all of man's sins billowing turbently at His feet.⁹ "He was sorrowful and baptized in mental anguish. Upon him God had put the sorrow and burden of all; he bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him (Isa.53)."¹⁰ Brief though the prayer is, it exhibits most clearly recognition of God's infinite power, a clear object sought by the prayer, and perfect submission to God's will."¹¹

We cannot grasp nor feel the import of the struggle and distress that our Saviour endured. But we do know that there He made the final decision to die for us unworthy as humanity is--and the least we could do is to love and obey Him.¹²

3. The Prayers on the Cross. "In Matt.27:46; Mark 15:34, Christ uses the prayer of Psalms 22:1. In the moment of complete desolation, the sufferer claimed His unbroken relationship with God. This is the victory of the atoning sacrifice. Luke 23:34 records the prayer of intercession for those who crucified Him; in verse 46 is the calm committal of His spirit to the Father. Prayer here again assumes its highest form in the expression of recognition and trust. Thus, the three prayers on the cross not only reveal the intimate relation of our Lord to the Father, but they also illustrate prayer such as man may offer. They represent supplication, intercession, communion. Prayer thus expresses our relation to God, to others, to ourselves; our trust, our love, our need. In all things He was made like unto His brethren, except without sin. His prayers on the cross illustrate His high-priestly office. It rises at that intense crises to its supreme manifestation and activity."¹³

Jesus cried: "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" This utterance proclaimed the terrible sense of God-forsakenness experienced by Him during those hours as our substitute.

The intercessory prayer. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This prayer of the crucified Redeemer reveals not merely His wonderful self-forgetfulness, but also His magnanimity and His earnest longing that His persecutors should be given another chance to repent before the otherwise inevitable judgment is executed on their sins!¹⁴

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" These words show us that in the Saviour's mind there was again a calm restfulness after the hours of darkness and dereliction were past and He was again conscious of the closest communion with God.¹⁵ In addition, it shows us that Jesus, not because He had to; but because of His unmotivated love for us, died the shameful death on the cross.

4. Prayer After the Resurrection. "It is

to be observed that after His resurrection there is no record of any prayer offered by Christ. In the supper at Emmaus He "blessed" the bread (Luke 24:30); and the ascension took place in the midst of blessing (Luke 24:51), suggestive of the course of the church as ever beneath the benediction of the Lord, to be ended only at the final consummation. The act of eating the fish and honey comb (Luke 24:43) seems to have been unaccompanied by any act of specifically religious form. Mark, with characteristic regard to details, records Christ's looking up to heaven (Mark 6:41; 7:34); Jno. 11:41 refers to a similar act and adds the Lord's words of thanksgiving that God had heard Him (see also Jno. 17:1).¹⁶

Since the observation has been made that after Christ's resurrection there is no record of any prayer offered by Christ, the writer would like to raise a question. Why was this the case? Below may be a probable explanation.

(1) Enough had already been recorded concerning Christ's personal prayers to teach us the desire, the necessity, the significance and the how of prayer (Deut. 29:39).

5. General Conclusions. The following conclusions as to prayer may be drawn from the records of Christ's prayers:

- (1) Prayer is the highest exercise of man's spiritual nature.
- (2) It is natural to the soul even in perfect accord with God.
- (3) It is not only the expression of need, the supply of which is sought of God, but by the example of Christ it is the highest expression of trust, submission and union with God.
- (4) It is to be used both in solitude and in society; it is personal and intercessory.
- (5) It may be accompanied by the plea of Christ's name and for Christ's sake.¹⁷

Christians should realize that prayer is their communication pipe-line to God through Jesus our Lord. To refuse to pray is to deprive ourselves of the blessings that continually flow unto us through this wonderful channel.

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Mrs. Mabel Henderson.....	\$ 5.00
Archie Caudill.....	12.00
Mrs. Lela Mae Driver.....	20.00
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Robert Taylor.....	3.00
Lloyd E. Gale, Jr.....	5.00
J. W. Wakefield.....	5.00
Willie S. Kitchen.....	5.00
Jerry Lindesmith.....	30.00
Don Cox.....	5.00

Fifth Annual Lectureship

BELLVIEW PREACHER TRAINING SCHOOL

DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES

MAY 13-17, 1979

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1979

- 9:00 "I BELIEVE THE BIBLE BECAUSE. . .".....
Tommy Alford
10:00 "WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?"
(Matt. 20:6).....Billy McKee
6:00 JUDGMENT ON THE DAUGHTERS OF ZION
(Isa. 3:16-24).....Tommy Garrison
7:00 WORLD EVANGELISM.....Ira Y. Rice

MONDAY, MAY 14, 1979

- 7:00 PREACH THE WORD.....George Darling
8:00 "IS IT NOTHING TO YOU, ALL YE THAT PASS
BY?" (Lam. 1:12).....Pat McGee

TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1979

- 8:00 SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.....
Archie Luper
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 IS HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM FOR US TODAY?...
Henry McCaghren
11:00 CRUCIAL ISSUES IN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
Pat McGee

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.....Robert Taylor
2:00 THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE, LAW AND WORKS...
Winfred Clark
3:00 THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT A DENOMINA-
TION.....Gerald Miles
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 THE DIVIDED WORSHIP ASSEMBLY.....
Walter Pigg

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 1979

- 8:00 THE EXISTENCE OF GOD...Terry Hightower
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 FALSE VIEWS OF TRUTH.....Mac Deaver
11:00 "COME WITH ME TO SHILOH" (Jer. 7:12)...
William S. Cline
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 ARCHEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE.....Ray Hawk
2:00 THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE.....John Priola
3:00 THE GENESIS FLOOD AND THE AGE OF THE
EARTH.....Ray Peters
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 LET US ARISE AND BUILD....Malcolm Hill

THURSDAY, MAY 17, 1979

- 8:00 WHAT'S WRONG WITH MUCH OF OUR PREACHING
TODAY.....Bill Coss
9:00 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.....
Roy Deaver
10:00 WE MUST STAND REGARDLESS OF THE COST..
Linwood Bishop
11:00 "GO EAT BREAD IN THY OWN LAND" (Amos
7:12).....Winston Temple

12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH BREAK

- 1:00 DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.....
Robert Taylor
2:00 THE DOCTRINE OF ELDERS...Winfred Clark
3:00 MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.....
Ernest Underwood
7:00 EVOLUTION.....Bob Camp
8:00 THE DOCTRINE OF HEAVEN AND HELL.....
Winfred Clark



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 5

MAY, 1979

CULTISM IN THE CHURCH?

T. PIERCE BROWN

[Reprinted by permission from the February 22, 1979 GOSPEL ADVOCATE.]

Long before I wrote a workbook on personal evangelism entitled *Christianity in Action*, I yearned to get Christians involved in winning souls to Christ. Long before I wrote a workbook on teaching entitled *Teach With Success*, I was trying to get more Christians involved in teaching God's Word, privately and publicly.

One can imagine my delight, therefore, after moving to a congregation, to find 30 or more persons who were already involved in intensive personal evangelism. The fact that they called their efforts "soul talks" did not bother me, as long as the talks were scriptural, and the end result was a devoted Christian having been born from above. I rejoiced almost to the point of tears to see so many young people standing around with their Bibles in their hands, engaging each other in apparent loving conversation for an hour or so after the regular church services, and hearing that they were meeting 4 or 5 nights a week in additional Bible studies, devotional periods and Christian activity!

Imagine my surprise and consternation when I discovered, among many other things, the following:

1. Most of the love which seemed to be evidenced by the group for others did not seem to extend to anyone not converted by the group to the programs of the group! When

other members of the congregation were sick or in the hospital, none of this living, "totally committed" group visited or called them, as far as I could discover! I wondered, "Why?" I had heard them talk about "love for the Body," but now I found myself wondering, "What Body? What is their concept of 'the body'?"

2. I inquired why some of them did not assist in the regular work of the congregation, since they seemed so talented and devoted. They told me, "I am not a member here!" They had been here a year or so, meeting with the church, having special devotionals and Bible studies in the building, yet not a member here! I wondered, "Why?" Where did you get the kind of teaching that encourages that?" I have come across a few persons over the years who had "not moved their letter" but thought it was individual ignorance, and not an organized or deliberate effort of a particular group to control members of the church in some other city!

3. I noticed that few of them seemed to contribute money to the work of *this* congregation. I wondered, "Why? How could a group of people be so devoted to the Lord and his church and not contribute to its growth?" Can any thoughtful person, much less a Christian, use the facilities provided by others and feel no sense of responsibility to assist in building or paying for them? To whom did they feel an allegiance, and why?

4. As I talked with the newer converts, I
(Continued on page 39)

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'PREACHING RENDERED USELESS'

Editorial

WINSTON TEMPLE

"To whom shall I speak and testify, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of Jehovah is become unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jeremiah 6:10).

The above passage was uttered by the prophet Jeremiah just before Judah went into Babylonian captivity. It is a message of strange significance especially since God has chosen preaching as the vehicle through which the world is to hear His will for them.

We consider it strange for the following reasons:

1. *Preaching is God's chosen method of awakening and conversion (Eph. 5:14; 1 Cor. 1:21).*
2. *Preaching is the appropriate and established agency by which the Holy Spirit works in conversion (Acts 2:40; 11:14).*
3. *There is a conscience in man upon which Divine messages act with startling force (2 Cor. 3:11-20).*
4. *The Word of God is itself quick and powerful (Heb. 4:12).*
5. *The manifold Divine promises guarantee the preacher against failure when speaking for God (Isa. 49:2; 40:8; c.f. Jer. 1:5, 10, 12).*

Why would God utter such a message through His prophet? We all would agree that God knew the five points that we have considered in the above paragraph. Why then would He reveal such statements as those which are recorded in our text? The answer can only be as God told the prophet Isaiah in chapter six when He called him but the people would not listen (Isa. 6:8-13; c.f. Isa. 29:1). Jesus applied these passages of Isaiah's day to the Jewish nation whose impending doom was evident to Christ, but the minds of the Jewish leaders were blinded by their traditions and false doctrines.

Our preaching is rendered useless and powerless to save those who refuse to hear. We cannot any longer make excuses for ignorance (Acts 17:30). The people of today are ignorant of God's Word and love to have it so! The people of the world will take one so-called evidence which they feel disproves the existence of God

and shout with the highest voice that there is no God! Some members of the church through their indifference and slothful attitude toward God's Word actually aide and promote the same godless concept. Preachers preach to the world and for the most part it rejects the preaching. Preachers preach to the church and for the most part the church is filled with worldly minded people. It would alarm us, maybe, if we knew how many that were in the fellowship of the church who no longer believe in God much less in the precious

church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Brethren, we will continue to preach and people will continue to reject God's Word, but it is not God's fault; it is not the Word's fault, and it is not the preacher's fault. God's part will never fail and the preacher will not fail unless he perverts the Word. Let us speak the Word with boldness. The time is here when we must preach the pure message and let it fall even if it is for the most part falling on deaf ears.

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CULTISM IN THE CHURCH?

noticed that they seldom talked about, or became involved in any program or activity which was planned by the elders of *this* congregation. They were so involved in some group or individual activity demanded by some *other* person that they could never assist in *this* congregation's efforts. Why? Who were these persons who had such control over them, and how did they get such control?

5. Several times when someone would be baptized as a result of a "soul talk", neither elders, preacher, nor congregation was notified.

6. When I began to enquire of the new converts concerning their understanding of their relationship to the eldership or to the congregation, I discovered that in most cases they seemed to have none! Some of them reported that they were told *not* to go to the elders for advice, counsel, or leadership! When I enquired, "To whom do you go?" I discovered it was to a "prayer partner" or a "spiritual mother" or "father" who had pointed them to Christ, even if that person had been a member of the Lord's family only a year! I have taught the value of obeying James 5:16, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that you may be healed." But I never thought I would see it develop into a thought-control system that would ape the Roman confessional box! Nor did I ever visualize a "spiritual father" whose proscriptions and anathemas were apparently as binding as those of a parish priest on his flock!

7. I discovered that some relatively new converts were told that "total commitment to Christ" meant that if their parents did not like for them to be away from home for their special meetings for up to six nights a week in extended "soul talks" and devotional programs, they should leave home! Devotion to a program of activity designed by some human was equated with devotion to Christ. I was told that on many occasions advice similar to this was given: A wife with an irresponsible, unbelieving husband with small children was told that she should leave them in his care

to attend the "soul talk," and if he did *not* like it, he could leave her. That would be one of the costs of discipleship! After all, Christ had said that if a person loves husband or wife, mother or father more than him, he is not worthy!

All my preaching life I have taught that Matthew 10:37 is binding, but I never thought I would see the day it would be perverted into meaning that one must substitute the authority of self-appointed leaders to decide that attendance at the "soul talk" *he* designed, or the devotional program *he* planned is more important than the discharge of another responsibility which God ordained! Is it possible that the expression of Jesus, "hate his own father and mother and his own life" could be so perverted that one might be led to kill himself or his parents?

8. I discovered that if anyone questioned the wisdom of any program or practice, it was construed as a crafty attack of the Devil, and was to be resisted. Any such "weakness" as attending to family duties instead of attending a "soul talk" was to be confessed to a prayer partner, who would, with the help of the "spiritual advisor" increase their guilt complex until they ceased from such unauthorized activity and again came back to submission to the "group will" - called "total commitment to Christ."

9. Few new converts with whom I talked seemed to understand properly the purpose of baptism, or the nature and structure of the church. They were thoroughly taught that when you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Saviour you would be baptized and become a part of the Body. But if there is any difference in a person who hears Billy Graham teach, accepts Jesus as his personal Saviour and is baptized, and those who heard Peter preach in Acts 2 and were baptized, it seemed that few knew or cared!

From *somewhere* is coming the philosophy that if one is taught anything about the distinctive nature of the Lord's church, it will "turn people off," and you cannot baptize as

many. No doubt this is true. If one is primarily interested in the number of baptisms he can report, a Billy Graham crusade might be the proper guide. But if one is interested in converting a person to Christ, rather than to a dynamic leader, cult, or challenging program, another guide is needed.

Of course I have known for almost half a century that there is much sectarianism in the church of the Lord and has been since the first century. (1 Corinthians 1:10ff.) But such sectarianism is harder to recognize and oppose when those who advocate it are much more devoted (to something) than the average church member, attending all the regular services of the church and three or four of their own, baptizing three times as many persons as all the rest of the church combined! But I also discovered years ago that the closer a wrong thing is to a right thing, the more dangerous it is, whether it is in doctrine or in emphasis. A counterfeit \$20 bill would probably not be too hurtful if it had George Washington's picture on it!

I have always known that there is a tension between various responsibilities—to home, to government, to God, etc.; and that when they conflict, one must obey God rather than man. But I have never been conscious before of the insidious teaching that if a mother stays at home and studies the Bible with, and cares for the needs of her children, she is presumed to be yielding to the temptation of the Devil. But if she leaves them in the care of an unreliable husband and attends a devotional program which is demanded of her, she is obeying God!

I suppose the average person would think, as I did, "What kind of an old-fogey crackpot would oppose a Bible study just because it is called a 'soul talk'?", or "What criticism can one possibly have of a 'prayer partner'?", or "Of course you can expect opposition from the 'old-line' fossilized preacher who is jealous of anyone who baptizes 300 a year, when he may baptize 3." My judgment was and is that it is wonderful to break away from the spirit of deadness, indifference and carelessness that has permeated a large part of the church of the Lord. To challenge young and old with "total commitment" and sacrificial living for Christ, and have them respond is thrilling. But when I see an insidious and creeping cultism, mind control, and perverted Christianity masquerading under the guise of positive mental attitude, progress and enthusiastic devotion to the Lord, I weep. Cannot we have devotion and commitment without disregarding the principle of congregational autonomy, and the subversion of the eldership in a given congregation? Can we not have commitment without reviving the ascetic philosophy condemned by Paul in Colos-

sians 2:20-23?

To seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness are injunctions of our Lord! But to make them mean that a Christian should disregard the need to play with his children and be a proper father and husband is another question. The mistakes made by many of us who are preachers in those respects is bad enough, for it creates family stress, breakdowns and guilt complexes. But that is merely results of the mistake in judgment of one man! Imagine how the error is compounded when and if that mistake in judgment of the preacher as to how he should resolve this "conflict of interest" is taught to all new converts as the *true Christian principle*! Imagine the wreckage of homes that will come when large numbers of active, loving, devoted persons teach others that since Christ is more important than husband or children, then to "follow your leader" (not even an elder, but some self-appointed "spiritual father") and do whatever he said is more important than marriage or home responsibility!

Editorial note: The psychological duress which Brother Brown so vividly portrays in the foregoing article is springing up in several congregations in the brotherhood. He is correct in describing it as an insidious form of cultism which will eventually destroy those who espouse it. Any movement in the congregation which seeks to sidestep the preacher and elders is a covert one and ought to be immediately terminated.

--GUY N. WOODS, Associate Editor

CONTRIBUTIONS

Gilbert C. Lamb.....	\$15.00
Mrs. Lera P. Griffin.....	3.00
Eugene Walp.....	10.00
Gerald Miles.....	25.00
Jerry Lindesmith.....	30.00

Some Objections Noted And Answered-No.1

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I have been writing for the religious public for over twenty-five years and rather regularly for nearly a score of years now. This writing has been for radio scripts, tracts, books, Bible School literature and hundreds of articles on nearly every fundamental subject treated in the Bible. I have learned that there are about five to ten areas in which the religious penman will be called in question quickly by brethren if he dares invade one or more of these pet realms. They are: (1) marriage, divorce and remarriage; (2) dancing; (3) the calling of names both of persons and religious bodies; (4) alcoholic beverages; (5) gimmicks over the gospel; (6) the one way into heaven by the one church; and (7) modern versions and what is wrong with them. The last one occupies our attention in this and one subsequent article.

Over the years I have received a multitude of letters relative to the version issue. Many of them have been commendable in nature; others have really taken me to task over positions that have been taken. I am made to wonder if any of the latter group ever send any letters of objections to the makers, publishers and promoters of the perverted Bibles (provided they think there are any such) or do they exhaust all their objections against a few of us who recognize we have a real problem—a veritable battle-of gigantic nature on our hands and are seeking to do something about it. In fact it is more of a war we have on our hands over the versions than simply a battle. Even *READER'S DIGEST* has entered the picture as they are going to come out with a condensed Bible. Since this series began in the *DEFENDER* nearly two years ago, I have received a number of objections. Brother Cline has received some for he has forwarded them on to me; others have come to me directly. I mention a few of the many which have come thinking that readers might be interested in knowing of such.

DID NOT KNOW HIS OWN PRODUCT

Early in this series for the *DEFENDER* I mentioned that the RSV had been a "faith only" Bible for more than thirty years or since it made its debut in 1946. I did not specify the exact location of where faith only or faith alone could be found in the NCC (Na-

tional Council of Churches) Bible. A brother in the northeast immediately wrote me that he had been recommending the RSV for many years and was unaware of its teaching this denominational dogma. I wrote him back and told him where he could find that very doctrine endorsed (Romans 11:20) and suggested that he should become better acquainted with the product he is recommending. Faith only is far less dangerous in a Baptist Creed or Methodist Discipline than when it appears as approved doctrine in the very text of the Bible. It is true that "faith only" and "not only by faith" appear respectively in the KJV and ASV of 1901 in James 2:24. But there we are informed that we are NOT saved by faith only. But that is not the way the RSV treats Romans 11:20. The very first edition of the RSV portion of the New Testament lies open before me as this article is penned. Romans 11:20 in the RSV reads, "That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast ONLY THROUGH FAITH. So do not become proud, but stand in awe." (Emphasis added.) Their very latest edition lies before me now and it still says, "only through faith." It has been that way for a third of a century and yet some of my preaching brethren cannot say enough good things for this thing that calls itself a version. It is too early to know what their new edition for the 1980's will do with this disputed point but I doubt they will change it. Since James denies that we are justified by faith only or only through faith, then this new Bible contradicts itself between Romans 11:20 and James 2:24. No wonder the "faith only" advocates are happy with this new Bible, the one that Harry M. Orlinsky, one of its translators, calls "the Bible of the liberal Protestant community." I cannot fathom a preacher's recommending as a reliable version a "faith only" Bible. Imagine trying to convert a "faith only" religionist and depending upon a "faith only" Bible to do the job! That is somewhat like seeking to convert a premillennialist by using the Scofield Bible as a reliable volume for religious guidance. The Living Bible Paraphrased by Kenneth Taylor would be just as poor in trying to lead someone out of the errors of the premillennial mania. Brethren, let's know what we are recommending before we give our endorsement to a book that proposes to be a reliable Bible.

Continued next page

THEY IGNORED MY TITLE

For nearly two years now I have been writing on the topic "Challenging Dangers of Modern Versions" in the DEFENDER. Everyone has had that title at the beginning of each article up until this current article. The introduction, body and conclusion of that series have been about dangers, Dangers, DANGERS of Modern Versions. I have not written about the dangers of atomic warfare, wreckless driving, pre-marital and extra-marital sex and a hundred other dangers because my selected subject, the VERY ONE BROTHER CLINE REQUESTED I DO, called for no such discussion in this series. Yet objections after objections have come that say in essence, "Why don't you be fair and call attention to the weaknesses and strengths of the KJV? Why don't you call attention to some of the strengths of the modern versions and not dwell entirely on the weaknesses?" Did these objectors do the PASSOVER on every title in this series? Most assuredly they did! I have been talking about modern versions, mostly modern speech versions, and I hardly think that a version that now bears 368 years upon its aged yet beautiful bosom should be placed in the category of being a modern speech version!! Others have objected by saying, "Do you not find anything at all to commend in the new versions you have been examining? Must you always be on the DANGER kick?" Again, they have done the TOTAL PASSOVER with my title. The title of the series called for dangers, Dangers, DANGERS to be discussed. When our children were small and we lived on a road that was always busy each day with heavy traffic, we often warned them of the dangers, dangers mind you, of playing in or near the heavily traveled road. We did not feel obligated to praise the smoothness of the road as a possible route for their tricycles. We did not feel obligated to praise the straightness of the road, the fine texture of its construction ingredients or how good the other side of the road might prove to be for playful purposes. We warned them of dangers, Dangers, DANGERS. If I were with a person who is about to take a liquid that has fatal poison in it, I would feel no obligation to praise the beauty of the container in which it is found or the perfectly harmless ingredients it might otherwise contain. I would be concerned, and ONLY concerned, with the fatal ingredient in the liquid about to be consumed. These lessons have been about dangers, Dangers, DANGERS-not acceptable renderings in the modern speech versions. Quite frequently in speaking engagements I will be invited by congregations, colleges or Schools of Preaching to talk about the dangers of versions. If objections are raised to me when the speech or speeches stand completed, this will be the gist of the first one, i.e., you did not call attention

to any of the strengths of the modern versions. But the assignment had been dangers, Dangers, DANGERS - not strengths, Strengths, STRENGTHS!!!

Objections like the foregoing remind me of an article I wrote some years back on a certain part of a Biblical chapter that touched a crucial subject. A brother in another state immediately fired me a letter in which he took me to task for ignoring another part of the chapter. I don't know why he did not take the time he employed in writing me to set forth what he thought should have been said about his pet part of the chapter and send it to the same editor that had just run my article! I had kept my article in its proper context and wrote back that the part of the chapter he referred to was neither part nor parcel of the announced topic of discussion in said article. The gist of these version articles has been DANGERS. The ones contemplated are the MODERN versions, the ones people are buying, relishing and treating them as though they were reliable Bibles. A number of brethren who wrote could have saved themselves a letter and a postage stamp if only they had read my title!

PERSONAL ATTACKS ON THE PENMAN

A man who has always done a good work for the Lord wherever he has lived once told me something about critics that I have never forgotten. He said, "I try not to think too hard of my critics for some of them may be employing the ONLY talent they have!" A critic in Texas feels it is a great shame that Taylor did not live in the first century in order that my warnings about the versions might have been placed into the very canon of Sacred Scripture. (This criticism was triggered by an article I had in CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH rather than in the DEFENDER.) But such criticism as this is no answer to the dangers I have pointed out over the years in countless articles and in lectures given on the versions in about a third of the states in our country. Such criticism as this makes me more determined than ever to continue to warn brethren and outsiders with both my pen and my tongue of the insidious dangers of these perverted Bibles.

A number of brethren have wanted to know about my credentials for doing such a study. None claimed!! They desire to know where I have been to school and under whom I have studied. I would suggest that such brethren forget about academic background and just deal positively with what I have set forth in the way of argumentation against the modern versions. If I have been illogical in my arguments and grossly ignorant about what I have written, it really would make no difference whether I have a kindergarten educa-

tion, a diploma from high school or a doctor's degree from the most prestigious university in the country. And if what I have set forth is the truth, it is true whether I ever set forth a foot in a college classroom or not. It is interesting to observe that every letter that has made inquiry along these lines has come from a name that I have never seen at the top of an article, on a tract or inscribed upon a book as author. Perhaps these young men could best use the time they spend in writing me about my credentials in getting prepared themselves to help fight some crucial battles that loom before us at this very hour. And when they begin to fight such with the sword of the Spirit I shall not be writing any of them for their background credentials. I shall seek to be an Aaron or Hur and hold up their hands in each fight they make for truth as long as they stay with truth and handle it correctly. But this device is neither new nor novel. The Jewish leaders were unwilling to listen to Jesus because he had not attended THEIR schools. The apostles were rejected and described as unlearned and ignorant men on the same ground. (Acts 4:13.) The Athenians considered Paul a

babbler. Literally, this is a "seed-picker: a bird which picks up seeds in the streets and markets; hence one who picks up and retails scraps of news." (Vincent.) If what I have written is true in regard to the perversions of the versions, then perhaps I may belong in the company of my Lord and his apostles-at least in this one regard. They were inspired; I am not. Yet I have their inspired word as my guide and I am jealous that it not be tampered with by either an avowed and open antagonist or a supposed friend who wants to give the world another and a different Bible. When I get ready to refute Graham's "faith only" system, Roberts' charismatic gifts today, Bolt's premillennialism, Jim Jones' cultism, Dale Francis' brand of Catholicism or any other error, I use what they have said or written as my basis of objections-not where they went to school, under whom they studied or what degree they might hold. The latter points do not matter nearly as much as what they teach and practice. A few of our younger brethren need to learn that elementary principle. They will be far better servants of the Lord when they do.

THOMAS B. WARREN'

to Tennessee Bible College

MALCOLM HILL

Tennessee Bible College is very happy to announce that Thomas B. Warren of Memphis, Tennessee will be moving to Cookeville, Tennessee in August of this year to become Executive Vice President, Dean of the Graduate School of the college, and Professor of Religion and Christian Apologetics.

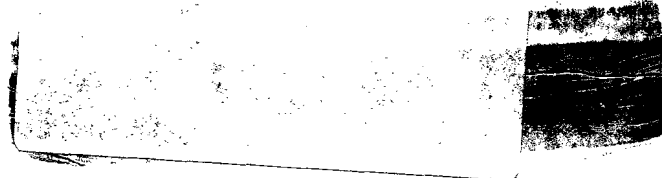
Brother Warren comes with the highest credentials in every way. He is a very humble godly man, having reared three wonderful Christian children. He has a deep understanding of the Word of God and an even deeper respect for its authority. To brother Warren the Bible is *the book*.

Thomas B. Warren attended Abilene Christian University where he received the B.S. degree (in Bible, education and mathematics). He holds two M. A. degrees: one from the University of Houston (in religion) and another from Vanderbilt University (in philosophy). He

received the Ph.D degree from Vanderbilt University in philosophy. Brother Warren has done additional graduate study at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Texas Christian University and Harding Graduate School.

Brother Warren has been a faithful gospel preacher since 1945 having served churches in Texas and Tennessee. He has worked with the Brownsville Road congregation in Memphis since 1973. He is the regular speaker for "Five Gospel Minutes," a daily radio broadcast heard on many stations throughout the United States. He is a giant in the defense of the faith. He has very capably defended the truth both within and without the church in public and private debate. If I were to sum up Thomas B. Warren in a few words, I would say, "He is a living thinking machine." He is a humble, lovable, down-to-earth Christian gentleman.

(Continued on back page)



Brother Warren is considered by many to be the leading defender of the existence of God with atheists and agnostics. He has of late debated two of the world's outstanding atheists. His first debate was in Denton, Texas with Dr. Antony G.N. Flew of England, from the University of Reading in England. This discussion was conducted September 20-23, 1976 in the Coliseum on the campus of North Texas State University. His debate with Dr. Wallace I. Matson on the existence of God was conducted in Tampa, Florida September 11-14, 1978 in the Curtis Hixson Convention Hall. Dr. Matson is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley. Both of these debates have been published in book form and are available on cassette tapes.

Brother Warren is a prolific writer. He edited *The Spiritual Sword* in 1958. The *Spiritual Sword* ceased publication until 1969. When it resumed publication, brother Warren was again selected to serve as editor. The *Spiritual Sword* is now known as one of the best publications in our brotherhood. It is published under the oversight of the Getwell elders in Memphis. Brother Warren served as staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate* from 1958 until 1977, at which time all staff writers were discontinued. He is now the feature editor on *Marriage* for the *Gospel Advocate*. He had written and/or edited over forty books, tracts, film strips, etc. He has just become editor of a new monthly journal, *Golden Gems*, designed to reach non-Christians with the gospel.

Thomas B. Warren is no stranger to the field of higher education. He taught mathematics at Abilene Christian University (1946-47). He helped start Ft. Worth Christian

College in 1958. He taught there (1958-64) and served as President (1959-61). He moved to Freed-Hardeman College in 1964 to become Chairman of the Department of Bible where he served until 1971. In 1970 he taught at Harding Graduate School as visiting professor of Christian Doctrine. Then, in 1971 he joined the faculty of Harding Graduate School as Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Christian Apologetics. He has served in that capacity since 1971.

Brother Warren is a member of a number of professional societies. They are: American Academy of Religion, Evangelical-Theological Society, Tennessee Philosophical Association, Philosophy of Science Association, Near East Archaeological Society, Southwestern Philosophical Society, American Philosophical Society and Evangelical Philosophical Society.

Brother Warren is listed in *Personalities of the South*, *Outstanding Educators of the South*, *Outstanding Educators of America*, *Tennessee Lives*, *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, *Who's Who in Religion*, *Who's Who in America*, *Directory of American Scholars*, *American Directory of Philosophers*, *Notable Americans*, *Men of Achievement*, *Directory of International Biography*, *Notable Americans of the Bicentennial Era*, and *Personalities of America*.

Brother Warren is married to the former Faye Brauer. She has been his faithful and loyal companion for many years. They have three children, all faithful Christians: two lovely daughters, Mrs. J. M. (Karen) Waters and Mrs. Jon R. (Jan) Coleman, one son, Lindsey, who is an outstanding educator and preacher himself. They have four grandsons.



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 6

JUNE, 1979

THE "TOTAL COMMITMENT" EVANGELISTIC MOVEMENT

HARVEY FLOYD

Reprinted by permission from the March 15, 1979 GOSPEL ADVOCATE.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The GOSPEL ADVOCATE throughout its long and illustrious history has sought to inform, to edify and to warn its readers in all matters affecting their spiritual well-being both in this world and in the world to come. It can do no less and be true to the Cause for which our Saviour died. An article by T. Pierce Brown in our February 22 issue regarding what has come to be known as "The Crossroads' Philosophy" has occasioned more favorable response than any other in recent years. The article which follows, by Harvey Floyd, Professor of Bible and of Biblical Languages in David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee, is an examination of the "Movement" in greater detail. Much longer than the articles we normally publish we feel that its significance fully justifies its unusual length. We ask for it a candid and careful reading.

—IRA NORTH, Editor

—GUY N. WOODS, Associate Editor

A few years ago a young man who was active in an evangelistic program came to me with a question. He was not hostile to the program; he was a supporter of its goals and wanted to continue to support it, but he had a question. He was being pressured to attend meetings—to attend more meetings than he was attending and that he felt he could attend. He wanted to discuss with me the question of whether he

could be a good Christian and have some time reserved for his wife to show he had been married a few weeks. Did he, to be a good Christian, have to spend all of his time in such things as fellowship meetings, soul-talks, or could he have some time with his wife? Would it be a good husband be a part of his Christianity? He went back to the group and insisted to them that he and his wife could be good Christians if they reserved some time to themselves, that he did not have to attend all of the meetings that they had set up, and surely he could have some part without doing that. This view was not acceptable to the group and finally he left the program.

THE "GOSPEL OF THE CHANGED LIFE"

The most serious thing that can be said about this whole movement is that it is "the gospel of the changed life." It is not the gospel which changes lives that is heard in the Movement, but it is "the gospel of the changed life." To illustrate what is wrong with this statement, let us say that "the gospel is benevolence, or the gospel is that you help people. If you find someone who needs something you give him what he needs. That is the gospel." But surely this statement is wrong. Benevolence is not the gospel, but a natural fruit of the gospel. It is equally wrong to say that the changed life is the gospel. The gospel changes lives. There can be no question about that. But the "changed life" itself is not the gospel, and for us to focus on the changed life is not to preach the gospel. Nor is it to supply people with the proper motivation for the changing

(Continued on page 47)

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ROOTED UP BY THE GOD OF HEAVEN

Editorial

WILLIAM S. CLINE

*"Every plant which my heavenly
Father hath not planted, shall
be rooted up" (Mt. 15:13).*

Jesus had just finished denouncing the Pharisees for their false teaching. He said their worship was vain because they taught for doctrine the traditions of men (Matt. 15:7-8). His disciples observed the people's attitude at His teaching regarding traditions and reported to Him that they were offended. But this report brought no apology from Jesus. He simply, forcefully, pointedly and truthfully stated, *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."*

Here we find the *test* and the *end* of all human teaching however well intentioned it may be. If it is not *based upon* or *rooted in* the Word of God, it is without pity to be rooted up. And those who would follow such teaching have no end but to fall into the ditch of destruction. By this test we need to try *our* traditions, habits, customs, rules and regulations. Do we in the Lord's church seek to make binding upon people those things which are not rooted and grounded in the Bible? Take for example the order of the worship service or the mid-week night we meet for Bible study. Is it wrong to have the Lord's Supper last? Is it sin to meet on Thursday night instead of Wednesday? Be assured that there are those who would be so bound to tradition and custom that they would answer in the affirmative.

Man is always in danger of destroying the very thing he tries to safeguard when he adds to the simplest things of Divine revelation. No man has the authority to add to or take away from the Word of God. *"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto"* (Gal. 3:15). In their passion to preserve the Law of God, the Pharisees had added rules and burdens which actually made them *destroyers not preservers* of the law. It behooves us to always examine our teaching in light of the revealed word, for it we waver from the revealed we stand in opposition to God. We will never be out of danger of being in bondage to human opinion, tradition, and interpretation. If only by a hair's breadth, we can be regulated from the will of God. To be moved away is to follow the traditions of men, to denominationalize ourselves, which end is to be rooted up and to fall into the ditch.

THE "TOTAL COMMITMENT" . . .
of their lives.

The gospel comes through this way in the "total commitment" Movement: "Jesus is Lord (our Master) and we are his slaves." It is certainly true that Jesus is master. He has the unlimited right to command us and we have unlimited obligation to obey. But, according to scripture Jesus is Lord in a far higher sense than this: When the scripture says "Jesus is Lord" it means not simply that he is master and we are obliged to obey him. It means that he is Lord in the high sense of John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14.) This is the Lord whom we adore and serve.

The chief emphasis in the Movement is that Jesus is master and we obey him. Now, there is no gospel in that. It is not glad tidings, but a message about our changed life. The gospel is not that Jesus is Lord and we have an obligation to obey him. The gospel is the tremendous fact of God's work for us in Christ.

ABSENCE OF CHRISTIAN MOTIVATION

Having missed the point of the gospel, the Movement misses also proper Christian motivation. According to the Movement, the gospel is not good enough to motivate. You may be told this, that we have tried the gospel and it has failed. We have tried to motivate people with the gospel, we are told, and that has not worked. If we trust the gospel to motivate people, the Movement tells us, they will just sit down and be inactive, and we have to find some way—some program—to get people involved and get them moving and busy.

What is used is force, fear and guilt. Instead of Christian motivation, force, fear and guilt are called into play. Psychological force is applied by the group and fear—fear of God's displeasure, fear that God does not love me and will not love me—is constantly appealed to, and guilt feelings are roused and exploited. Sensitive and honest people who want to be better, who want to be real Christians, can simply be destroyed, if someone plays upon their sense of guilt. Anyone skilled in exploiting the human sense of guilt can bring sensitive, honest, and immature Christians near to despair and destruction.

Grace is mentioned, it is true. The love of God for us is mentioned, but it is used as a stick with which to beat people. It is used as a club to produce a sense of guilt. You miss your quiet time, for example. Someone says, "What did you do in your quiet time today?" and you have to say, "Well, today I

missed my quiet time." "You missed your quite time? Don't you love the Lord? Isn't it natural for a Christian to want to spend time with the Lord?" The impression is given that you must not be a Christian, and you are weighed down with a sense of guilt.

ABSENCE OF CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

The Movement has no room for Christian freedom. Christian freedom, to be sure, does not mean we are free to do as we please. It means that we are free from human tyranny. It means that only God is Lord of the conscience and we are bound only by Scripture and by no human being or human tradition.

In the Movement a tremendous pressure is exerted over the lives of people. Fellow members suggest even the number of hours of sleep that would be good or adequate for one. "If you are a real Christian," one is told, "you ought to be able to get by on six hours sleep. What do you mean by oversleeping? If you are a really dedicated Christian and really striving to serve God, don't you know that he will give you enough power so that you don't have to have as many hours sleep as you think you need? So, if you really want to serve God, don't bring me the excuse that you need to sleep sometimes or that you have to do other work sometimes. If you want to serve God, he will give you the strength to do it and you can fare well on less sleep than you are now getting."

Even in a matter such as playing tennis, a person is left with no discretion or freedom. He is given rules. Now, if you want to play tennis, you are told, it is all right with your Christian brother in order to have fellowship with him and to encourage him. Or, you may have fellowship with a non-Christian you are trying to convert; but if you do not have any hope of converting him, you ought not to be playing tennis with him. You ought to be using your time in a better way.

A student confided to one of her sisters in the Movement that she was planning to study Greek and instead of the sister saying to her, "Fine I'm glad you have chosen to study Greek," she said, "Should you really do that? Now, that will take a great amount of time. You really could use your time in a better way than that. That is really not very important for you to study anyway." Isn't a decision such as this a decision for a person to make himself? The Christian does have freedom before the Lord to serve him and to be bound by his Word. Christians cannot in matters like this bind the conscience of one another. We have to respect a person's freedom in such matters.

PERFECTIONISM

Closely aligned with this outlook is the

item of perfectionism. In the Movement the gospel is the "gospel of perfectionism." Or, to say it another way, the gospel has been replaced by perfectionism. On this point the Movement is very similar to Wesleyanism. Out of Wesleyanism grew the charismatic movement. The basic theology of the charismatic movement is Wesleyanism. The doctrinal basis, the doctrinal outlook, of the "total commitment" Movement in the church is Wesleyanism. John Wesley's emphasis fell on what he called a second work of grace. He called it "entire sanctification" or "Christian perfection" and he concentrated his teaching efforts on this point; he taught people to center their aspirations and their focus on the second work of grace. In other words, it was like this: you become a Christian and then sometime later—months, maybe even years later—you become a real Christian, you are sanctified. Sanctification, according to Wesley, means that you have reached the point where you are entirely devoted to the Lord. You reach the point of absolute surrender and total commitment to the Lord.

The term used in the Movement is not sanctification or a second work of grace. The term is "discipleship." You become a Christian and then later you become a real disciple and you act like a real disciple. The emphasis is taken away from what happens initially when you become a Christian, when you are baptized into Christ; the emphasis is put on the second work, ~~just~~ as Wesley did, on becoming a true disciple of the Lord when you begin really to serve him and to be fully committed to him. Now, if I said to anybody who knows the Bible at all that a person reaches the point where he does not sin any more, he has reached perfection. I could not get anywhere with anybody. Everyone would say that I was wrong, because the Bible says that we sin. (1 John 1:8.) But that is not the way perfection is taught. This is the way it is taught: "Do you love God as you ought?" someone is asked. Any serious, honest person would have to say, "No." "Do you love your fellowmen as you ought?" Everyone would have to say, "No." "Do you pray as you ought? Do you spend as much time as you ought in doing all these good things?" Again, every honest person would have to answer, "No." "Well, then, don't you think the Lord deserves better?" "Yes, the Lord deserves better." "Don't you think the Lord deserves your full commitment?" "Yes, he does." "Don't you want to be fully committed to the Lord?" Any real Christian would say, "Yes, I do." "Well, you come and devote yourself fully to the Lord." What is being preached here is Wesleyanism; it is perfectionism. If this is preached, there are two marvels. One marvel is that people do not recognize that perfectionism is being preached and say it is wrong. The second marvel is that if this preaching is regarded as right, why everyone does not

come to dedicate himself totally to the Lord. The marvel is that every person in the audience, including the preacher, does not come every time such an appeal is made.

When a person comes into contact with the Movement, he is hit with questions like this: "How do you feel about your relationship to the Lord?" Unless a person is very mature, he does not know how to answer that question. "How do you feel about your relationship to the Lord?" A person is very likely to answer it this way. "Well, of course, my relationship with the Lord could be improved and I'd like to have my relationship to the Lord improved." Then a second question is asked. "Do you have a quiet time?" "I've never heard of a quiet time," I say timidly. "I do not have a quiet time." "Do you have a prayer partner?" "I haven't heard of prayer partner." I stammer. After I have been hit with all of this, I begin to think that I am not a Christian at all. In this way, then, people are first broken down and then they are loaded with all the things the Movement wants to put upon them. And these are imposed upon them, not by Scripture, but by a program someone has got up—a program that denies the real Christianity of those who are not a part of it. Of course, the Movement says in the fearful pride of its super spirituality that all such "nominal" Christians must be driven from the fellowship of the real Christians in the church.

It is natural for a person broken in the way described above to think he has to be re-baptized. If one finds that he was never a real Christian, he must never have had a valid baptism. It is for this reason that so many in the Movement have come for re-baptism. For this reason, too, the Movement has people constantly coming to confess their sins. They are made to feel their need, time and again, to confess their inadequacies and rededicate their lives to the Lord. Many totally dedicate their lives to the Lord several times.

FALSE SPIRITUALITY

The end of the Christian's existence is to glorify God. (Ephesians 1:6,12,14.) It cannot be expressed by any lesser thing than that. The end of the Christian's existence is not to preach the gospel. It is not to win souls. The purpose of the Christian's existence is to glorify God. Glorifying God will involve the Christian in a number of things. It will involve him in evangelism, in benevolence, in being a good husband, in being a good father, in doing his job conscientiously, in treating people well. In other words, it will involve the whole range of life. Everything the Christian does, he is supposed to do to the glory of God and under the norms of Scripture. Spirituality, the Christian life, is not confined to a

small area of life. Spirituality is not to be defined as religious activity, such as "giving to the body," or fellowshiping my brethren, or winning souls. That is a false conception of what spirituality is. Spirituality involves the whole of one's life.

When Paul treats spirituality or the Christian life in Colossians (Colossians 3), he begins with the motivation—that is, having died and been raised from the dead, we are Christ's (Colossians 3:1-4.) Then, richly filled with the word of Christ, we obey him in every area of our lives. Paul puts it: "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17.) That is the rich and beautiful Christian life as set out by Paul. It is not confined to one area. Then when Paul proceeds to make some specific applications of the Christian life he talks about wives being submissive to their husbands (Colossians 3:18) and about husbands loving their wives (3:19) and children obeying their parents (3:20), about workers serving well in their jobs (3:22-25), and masters treating their servants well (4:1). That is the Christian life and that is spirituality. When a mother takes care of her children, changes diapers, washes the dishes and sweeps the floor, she is doing something far-reaching in its meaning. She is glorifying God. She is serving Christ and being spiritual. All of life lived under God is spiritual. When the husband loves his wife and takes time to be with his family, God is not jealous. The husband is doing what God told him to do. Christians are spiritual when we do what God tells us to do, not when we follow the spiritual program somebody has devised for us.

The orientation of the Movement is seen in the interpretation given, for example, to John 15:1-6. Jesus said, "If you abide in me, you will bear fruit." Fruit bearing is interpreted in the very narrow sense of winning souls. That is the whole meaning: if you bear fruit, you are winning souls. You produce other Christians and that is bearing fruit. That is the only way to interpret it says the Movement. That interpretation should be vigorously challenged. Fruit bearing according to the context in John's gospel is obeying the commandments of God. "If you love me you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15,21,23; 15:10.) It's broad. The whole range of the Christian life is fruit bearing. When we live our lives obedient to God we are bearing fruit as a result of being in Christ. In Galatians 5:22, "the fruit of the Spirit is love." That is fruit bearing—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." But in the Movement bearing fruit is interpreted very narrowly of winning souls.

This false conception of spirituality is exposed in an article in *Christian Chronicle*. (May 17, 1977, p.7.) The article is about a missionary in Belgium who found two families of Jehovah's Witnesses. The families were breaking apart because the wives had been taught that they had to be out knocking on doors. They had not been taught true spirituality—that is, that you are being spiritual when you take care of your family, when you cook the meals for your husband and your children and do the ordinary tasks one faces in life. They had been taught that the chief thing you are supposed to do is go out and witness to people. That's what they were doing. The families were breaking apart. When one of the wives stayed home more often to try to save her family, the leader of the group, regarding family life as of little importance, accused her of being "lukewarm, lazy, and unfaithful." When a minister of the gospel got to those people, he taught them something about true spirituality and restored peace and harmony and happiness to their home.

CULTIC ASPECTS

The Movement presents a number of cultic aspects. In its manipulation of people it is cultic. The Moonies can take bright, intelligent people, impressionable, idealistic youths and brainwash them, separate them from their parents and manipulate them. Some of the same manipulative tactics are used by the "total commitment" Movement. The total commitment required is itself cultic. The Movement is cultic in the means it uses for breaking people and forcing its requirements upon them. It is cultic in the psychological pressure it uses in controlling and manipulating people. Another cultic aspect of the Movement is in its alienation of young people from parents. This is what is done in the Moonies and this is what is done in the Movement. When a young person in the Movement objects that his parents want him to do something or not to do something, he is often told that the Christian must hate his father and mother and must be separated from his family. This is a fearful misrepresentation of the teaching of Christ. (Luke 14:26.) Only in an extreme case would one have to depart from father and mother in order to serve him. In Romans 1 Paul puts disobedience to parents in the midst of his horrible sins of the pagan world.

A person comes to the Movement and is broken. He is made to think that he never was a real Christian. Now he is becoming a real Christian for the first time. Such a person says, "Look, my parents must not be real Christians either. They taught me, they thought I was a Christian. Now that I have

learned I was not a Christian, I realize they are not Christians either because they taught me and I was a part of them." And so there is a separation from parents, a separation from

elders, a separation from preachers, and from the rest of the church. These people are closed up to their own group only. This is what happens in the cults.

Some Objections Noted And Answered-No.2

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

In this two-part series I am sharing with you some of the objections that have come as a result of the lengthy series dealing with dangers from the modern versions. Last month I called attention to the fact that some recommend the new versions without knowing of the denominational and modernistic errors they contain. Then I called attention to the fact that some have written objections because they paid no attention to the title of these studies. Then attention was directed to some personal attacks which do not answer at all the charges I have made repeatedly and forcefully against the perversions of the versions. A few more of the objections will now be noted and answered.

OBJECTORS OFTEN UNFAIR WITH KJV

Tell a listening or a reading audience about the modernism in the RSV, the "faith only" teaching in the REV, the mythological approach to Genesis 11:1 in the NEB, the Calvinism in the NIV, the premillennialism and notorious vulgarity in the LBP or the outright reflection that Phillips' modern speech version casts upon the inspired penmen of the New Testament and many times the objectors will seek to counter with various charges against the KJV. They will usually mention hell for Hades, Ghost for Spirit, the Easter rendering in Acts 12:4, the words that have changed meanings since 1611, baptism for immersion, etc. Hell in 1611 referred to the place of the unseen, the place that was beyond human eyesight, the place that was covered. In that day men who covered roofs were called hellers-they put covers on buildings. They helled their potatoes, i.e., they covered them up. Ghost in 1611 referred to Guest. This was no mistranslation. The Easter rendering in Acts 12:4 is the sugar-stick employed by all objectors of the KJV sooner or later and usually they will bring it up sooner than later. Whatever it refers to in Acts 12:4 it is a Jewish day-not a Christian observance-that Herod Agrippa I was honoring before bringing Peter before the

Jews for his expected execution. Had it referred to a Christian day of some type of honor we may rest assured that the Herodian monarch would have paid no attention to it at all in his malicious maneuverings to slay the imprisoned apostolic leader. Nor would the unbelieving Jews have wanted him to do so. It is interesting to observe that the OXFORD UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES says that Easter referred to "The Jewish Passover-1611." (p. 579.) The Greek word is *pascha* and refers to the Passover Feast or the days of unleavened bread. The context makes this clear. It is mighty strange that brethren will get terribly excited about *Easter* in the KJV of Acts 12:4 and yet they are not bothered much at all with the "young woman" rendering in Isaiah 7:14 in the RSV and a number of other modern speech versions of the Bible. What certain ones have done in omitting the last dozen verses of Mark 16:9-20 does not bother some of our brethren nearly as much as does the Easter rendering of Acts 12:4. I prefer the ASV in its rendering of Acts 12:4 but am not about to concede that the Easter rendering of Acts 12:4 in the KJV is on par with so much of the fatal and poisonous errors injected into so many of the modern speech versions. I have yet to meet the man who said that the KJV of Acts 12:4 turned him into an infidel or a denominationalist.

We all recognize that a number of words have changed meanings since 1611. Prevent then means precede now; conversation then means manner of life now; suffer then means permit now; wit then means know now; wist then also means know now, etc. A preaching brother in another state sometime back accused the KJV of having some 2,300 words in it that were archaic or obsolete. When his hand was called on that number he referred for proof to an 1884 work which "has articles on 2,316 archaic words and phrases in the Authorized Version of the Bible AND THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER." (Emphasis added-RRt.) Naturally there is a difference in attributing 2,300

words to the KJV as being archaic and later saying that many occur in the KJV AND a Protestant publication. Such is not fair by any stretch of the imagination. But an archaic word is not a mistranslation. It is not a designed and deliberate effort to inject fatal error into the Biblical text such as modern speech versions have done again and again.

The KJV has been responsible for leading more people into heaven's way of salvation than all other English translations combined. More than any other English translation it has brought the church to us. I have loved it since boyhood days and I am not going now to devour the hand that has fed me spiritually for these many years. Too many today have forgotten the heritage they owe the beloved KJV of the Bible. For one I am not about to take up membership in this club of ingratitude. Nor am I ready to seal my lips and lay down my pen in a continuing defense of this beloved English translation. For thirty years I have told the story of redeeming love from its powerful pages and plan to do the same for another thirty if the God of my being allows me life and health for that long.

Anyone who will not take the effort to look up the definition of an archaic word in his Bible studies will never be a serious or successful student of God's Good Book. There is really no debate on this primary point. And give me the task any day of explaining archaic words such as suffer, conversation, wot, wist or prevent rather than having to explain the modernistic substitution of "young woman" or "girl" for virgin in Isaiah 7:14 and Luke 1:27. Give me the job any day of dealing with Easter in Acts 12:4 rather than having to explain why a dozen verses with an excess of 160 Greek words were omitted from the text in just one chapter. Give me the job any day of explaining the difference between Hades and hell than in having to deal with the "faith only" passages in the TEV, the premillennialism and notorious vulgarity of the Living Bible Paraphrased, the original sin of Calvinism in the NIV and all the modern speech versions which have tampered with Matthew 5:17; Ephesians 2:15 and Hebrews 10:9. One brother wrote to say that what has been done by one of the new versions between Matthew 5:17 and Ephesians 2:15 is not that hard to harmonize yet in that very version Matthew 5:17 says Christ did not come to ABOLISH the Mosaic Economy and Paul says he did ABOLISH it. Yet, as per the brother's tolerant view, this can be explained with relative ease, with that kind of view nothing, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, in the new versions should cause any concern. I stand utterly amazed that such views as this exist among my preaching brethren!! It is much stranger than fiction.

THE OBJECTORS ARE SELDOM CONSISTENT

There are people who will DEBATE that it

is wrong to debate. There are people who will ARGUE that it is wrong to argue. There are people who will WRITE that it is wrong to use literature (uninspired in nature) to teach a Bible lesson. There are people who will take at least one NEGATIVE attitude that it is wrong to be negative and that one should always be positive. There are those who KNOW that no one can know anything. In the matter of versions there are many brethren who OBJECT to the objections that are raised against the new speech versions of the Bible. Yet nearly everyone of them will mention his objections to the KJV, the ASV of 1901 or both before the letter is completed. Why is it so wrong for me to file my objections against the perversions of the versions and so right for them to file their objections against the KJV and the ASV? One brother wrote that I should not be critical of the New American Standard Version because it might discourage some from reading it and thus receiving its help. Yet before his two page letter is completed he had taken swipe after swipe against the KJV. Apparently, he did not think his criticism might keep me from reading the object of his criticism and of course it will not. He does not think that I should call attention to contradictions in the New American Standard and yet he calls attention to what he asserts (not proves) are objections in the KJV. Verily, the legs of the lame are unequal! One brother wrote to say that there might be some undiscovered manuscripts somewhere that will in future years make one of the fatal footnotes in one of the new Bibles true!! This was a new one on me. I thought translations and any footnotes should be made from what IS available-not what might be discovered in a distant decade. It is truly difficult for the objectors to be consistent.

(Continued on back page)

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THE NEWER EDITIONS HAVE CHANGED WHAT YOU ARE ATTACKING

I do not know the number of times I have listened to this retort when I would speak on some error in a certain version. It usually goes something like the following, "The latest edition of that version has corrected that error...Do you know if the new edition soon to come out will contain that same error you have charged it with in this speech?...Would it not be better to wait and see what they plan to do?...I understand that a new edition of that version has just come out and you need to check it carefully to make sure you are not charging them with something today they taught yesterday but have now corrected." It is never my purpose to charge them with something of which they have never been guilty. Telling it like it is is bad enough. But I do not subscribe to the concept that a version that has taught fatal error for a number of years has relieved itself of any blame by simply correcting that error in a new edition. What about all the ones who use that version who will never see the revised edition? What about all the ones who died using that perverted Bible and believing that fatal error before the revision correction became a reality? A brother in our version correspondence has said that I should not accuse the RSV of what they did to Mark 16:9-20 because they have now restored it to the text. Yet twenty-seven years after the RSV made its debut with this omission I was invited to speak on the versions at a congregation that was beginning to wake up to the dangers of the Versions. They were still using RSV Bibles in their classrooms that relegated Mark 16:9-20 to a footnote status. Such had not been corrected as far as the

Bibles their students were using was concerned. There is no way that the RSV can ever undo all the damage they have done with their perverted renderings regardless of what they do in future editions. And their next edition is going to eliminate certain male oriented terms from the text. I have been predicting for years we would sooner or later have a Women's Liberation Bible or a Feminist Version and we now stand upon the threshold of having one. When a modern speech version injects fatal error into its text and ultimately into the bloodstream of religious readers and present practitioners there is no way a later revised edition can undo all the damage. If so, how, How, HOW??

IN CONCLUSION

These are not all objections by any means that have come but a few of the many. I thought our readers might be interested in some of these. I appreciate the ones who have written in commendation of this series. The latter group far outnumbers the former group depicted in this two-part series.

I am not opposed to the acceptance of a superior translation were one to appear but I am unequivocally opposed to the exchanging of a good one (KJV or ASV or 1901) for bad ones as we are asked to do. Many times I have been asked why we can't have a good translation in the English tongue. Well we do have some good ones such as Living Oracles, the KJV and the ASV of 1901. There is still no truth I need to obey to be saved now and go home to heaven at last but what I can learn from my beloved KJV. If you disagree, tell me what fundamental truth is deficient therein.



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 7

JULY, 1979

An Open Letter To Crossroads

T. PIERCE BROWN

EDITOR'S NOTE: The DEFENDER has carried two articles, one by T. Pierce Brown and one by Harvey Floyd which dealt with a tremendous problem that is affecting churches in all parts of the country. Both of those articles were excellent, forceful, and to the point. Brother Brown has since written a second article which some, who evidently have problems regarding comprehension and understanding, think it was a retraction of his first article. Nothing could be further from fact. In the interest of truth and all who are concerned about truth, we are here carrying brother Brown's article.

This is a reply to your kind letter of March 8th regarding my article in the February issue of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE. I had written you a short reply immediately on receiving your letter, but while I was considering the propriety of sending it, Brother Parker Henderson called. His remarks made me feel that a more detailed reply in an open letter might be appropriate.

As you suggested in your letter, I have more love and respect for Brother Henderson than for almost anyone I know. His humility, devotion and love for the Lord have long been an inspiration to me, and I would sooner question my own motives and think evil of myself than I would of him. Because he thinks I have done a great disservice to the cause of our Lord and wronged at least two congregations, I write this open letter, which I am

inviting all who wish to publish. I am aware that the usual human tendency is to rationalize, accuse others, and excuse one's self for actions that may be improper. I shall not try to do that, for I have more respect for David's attitude and answer than for Adam's.

First, let me say that in the article I did not make any reference to what I have later heard referred to as "Crossroads Philosophy." I had never heard anything taught at Crossroads, nor did I state nor imply that YOU TAUGHT anyone to practice all the things mentioned in the article. If others so accuse because of their own personal experience, I should not be blamed for that.

When I noted that the expression of love of some in the group did not seem to extend to others not converted by the group to the activities of the group, I did not state nor imply that Crossroads either taught or approved of that, or that it was characteristic of all of this group or any other. It shocked and scared me a little when from all around the country I received letters and phone calls indicating that what I thought was a minor symptom of SOMETHING that SOMEONE had perverted was apparently widespread. I certainly did not conceive of anyone being TAUGHT to be that way, nor did I state or imply that either you or your sponsored congregation here ADVOCATED that. I could have pointed out dozens of times when the members of the group were encouraged to mow lawns, assist in benevolent work, etc., and have no doubt that if the leaders had said, "Let us all send cards or go and visit certain sick in the

(Continued on page 55)

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A Beatitude FOR Christians Today

WINSTON C. TEMPLE

"BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH, AND THEY THAT HEAR THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECY, AND KEEP THE THINGS THAT ARE WRITTEN THEREIN: FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND" (Rev. 1:3).

This beatitude is one of seven which is recorded in the Book of Revelation. Even though it was for persecuted Christians of John's day, its blessing contingent upon the stipulations contained within, are applicable to God's people today.

The stipulations were to read, to hear, and to keep the things that were written therein. In order to obtain the blessing of God, let us consider some of the principles involved in these three requirements.

First of all one must read. In order to understand our English word "read", let us notice its definition. In its context the word may very well refer to the person or persons who were designated to read the epistle in every congregation of the Seven Churches of Asia (c.f. Luke 4:16), but its primary meaning, according to *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* is 'to distinguish between or to know accurately.' If one consults any reputable English dictionary, he will find that the word "read" means to get the meaning of something that is either read aloud or printed.

Based on our definition of the word "read" let us notice some passages which Jesus used to impart great spiritual truths. In Matthew chapter nineteen the Pharisees asked Jesus: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Jesus replied: "...Have ye not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female and said for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put assunder" (Matt. 19:3-6). He also went on to teach that: "...Who-soever shall put away his wife except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery" (v. 9).

There are some people today outside of the church who have not read this passage, but this is not Jesus' fault: it has been written ever since the first century, A.D. The law of marriage was instituted when God performed the first ceremony for Adam and Eve, and needlessly to say, all people are amenable. The Pharisees' problem was not that they had not *read* with understanding. They had

read, but were like a number of brethren in the Lord's church today who want to try to tempt the Lord (c.f. 19:3). The brethren of today try to say that Matthew 19:9 is a "covenant" passage and that a person may divorce and remarry, for any cause before he becomes a Christian, but after he becomes a Christian, he comes under the "covenant" passage of Matthew 19:9. Jesus had already shown that a husband was not to divorce his wife, and that this was the law from the beginning. He then shows in verse nine that the only exception to this law was fornication. Modern brethren beg to differ with Jesus. In effect they say, "Now Lord, let us interpret this passage for you. This verse nine applies *only* to a Christian. It is a *covenant* passage." This writer would like to explain to those brethren that their problem is one and the same as that of Moses' day, that is, their heart is hardened. Brethren, let us *read* it as it is, and with proper understanding. Let us not listen to others who have set themselves up to tamper with the Word of God.

Secondly, may we consider the word "hear" in Revelation 1:3. According to Mr. Thayer, the word means "to receive with understanding: to perceive the sense of what is said." One could rest assured that the people of John's day, who were being persecuted even unto death listened with an understanding ear, but all one has to do today to see that such attentiveness is not the case in most people's lives, is to only observe their actions. The people outside the church busy themselves with the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. They have ears only for filth and corruption. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should dawn upon them" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Many members of the Lord's church are following in the same paths as those of the world. They are like those of the Hebrew writer's time who recorded: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:11-14).

Brethren, you are required to listen to a sermon with the intent of understanding and not for entertainment. Preacher brethren,

you are to preach the pure Word of God. You are not in the entertainment business!!

Finally, let us notice the word "keep" as recorded in Rev. 1:3. Again Mr. Thayer gives us the meaning of this word. It means: "... to attend carefully; to take care of." The poor downtrodden disciples of John's time full well understood that not only were they to *read* and *hear* with understanding, but that they were to *keep* the commandments of the Lord even until death (Rev. 2:10, c.f. 14:13 with 22:14). The Holy Writ abounds in passages which plainly give directions in this regard. Consider the following:

1. If one loves God, he will keep His commandments (John 14:15).
2. It is the love of God to keep His commandments (1 John 5:4).
3. We can know Him only by keeping His commandments (1 John 2:3).
4. If we are to enter into eternal life, we must keep His commandments (Matthew 19:17).
5. It is the whole duty of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us *read*, *hear*, and *keep* the Word of God in our lives for the time is at hand!!

AN OPEN LETTER TO CROSSROADS

hospital" even the cases I noted would have disappeared. I have little doubt that Crossroads and similar congregations could report more hospital visits and benevolent acts per member than most any congregation in the brotherhood if they decided that was the way to glorify God. Nor did I say or imply different.

Second, I did not state or imply that Crossroads teaches anyone NOT to become a vital or active part of a local congregation. To the contrary, I have an idea that Crossroads and those trained there would encourage their members to be the MOST involved in every congregation they can. In fact, you have probably been accused of trying to "take over" a congregation by that means. They would probably teach more classes, be more enthusiastic song leaders, have more "outside" Bible studies than any other comparable group. I did not state nor imply any criticism of Crossroads or anyone else for THAT. I simply stated that the evidence I saw and things I heard in SOME cases seemed to point to a greater allegiance to SOME other leadership than the local one. Who, or why, or how it happened I did not know. I simply got the feeling that if SOMEONE told them to leave

and start another congregation, they would do so without consulting the eldership of THIS congregation. However, although I was surprised when 30 or more did this, I still upheld the RIGHT of ANY group of Christians to start a new congregation as long as they practice and teach the truth. But I did not charge nor imply that Crossroads TOLD them to abruptly leave without our foreknowledge on that Wednesday they left. But I DID wonder how and why an apparently spontaneous exodus of more than 30 persons could happen without leadership from SOMEWHERE, for it was not with the leadership of THIS congregation. But I neither suggested nor implied that Crossroads TOLD them to do it that way. If the fact that they immediately had a preacher supported by Crossroads made OTHERS assume there was some direction and control, I do not see how or why that should be blamed on me!

Third, when I noted that several did not seem to contribute to the regular work of the church, and NONE, as far as I could discover, made any contribution toward the special effort of paying for the new addition, I did not charge nor imply that Crossroads had TAUGHT anyone to withhold their contribution from the congregation where they were in order to further a Crossroads-sponsored project. My opinion would have been that if you taught them anything it would be to make some kind of a contribution to the congregation where they worship, and then make an extra special sacrificial contribution for any outside work you suggested to them. I simply reported what seemed a rather widespread custom among the group. My opinion is that they were the most sacrificial givers in the area. I just did not see any evidence that they did it for the work of *this* congregation. But I neither questioned their *motive* nor YOUR teaching in the matter. I questioned *their practice*.

Fourth, when baptisms by members of the group were not turned in to be announced at the next regular service, as I am accustomed to seeing it done, I neither assumed, said, nor implied that Crossroads had TAUGHT anyone not to do that. I just found and reported what I thought was a tendency toward sectarianism, and one or two cultish tendencies that I thought should be avoided. I did not even say THIS group was a cult and it never entered my mind to accuse YOU of being a cult. Even if I started a class on Personal Evangelism and *they* did that, I would write and speak in criticism of it, but would not assume that anyone would think I TAUGHT them to do it! Neither did I think anyone would assume that I was saying Crossroads TAUGHT them to do it! I was simply warning against a RESULT--a PRACTICE which was produced in a few instances by SOMETHING. So, as in most cases, an invitation to come and see and hear

what is taught and practiced publicly **THERE** has no bearing on the situation at all. I feel sure I would be thrilled and inspired by what I would see and hear as Brother Henderson and hundreds of others have. If the groups that go out from you are almost ALL found or reported to be practicing things which you say you disapprove of as much as I, some may accuse you of lying and covering up, but you can not find a word in *my* article that implied that I thought so. I did not even make any suggestions, allegations, or implications

* * * * *

* Brother Joe Ruiz, who is presently the
 * minister for the Westwood Lake church
 * in Miami is a graduate of the Bellview
 * Preacher Training School. He and his
 * family will be moving to Taiwan as mis-
 * sionaries to the 17 million people that
 * are on that island. To help Westwood
 * Lake find a gospel preacher we are
 * carrying the following notice.

PREACHER WANTED

Miami, Florida

* The Westwood Lake church of Christ in
 * Miami, Florida, is seeking a preacher
 * who will preach the truth without fear
 * or favor. One who is well seasoned in
 * the "Old Paths", and will activate us
 * to continue our work for the Lord in
 * this area. The congregation here is
 * going into its 20th year of work and
 * has always stood for the truth in its
 * simplicity. Our average attendance this
 * year has been 85 with a membership of
 * 70. We will need you by mid-August.
 * Available salary of \$250/week with no
 * present housing or housing allowance.
 * If interested please contact us at:
 * 10790 S.W. 36 Street, Miami, Florida or
 * call Joe Ruiz, 1-305-553-1722 or Gary
 * Castel, 1-305-279-2571.

about ANY groups that you influence, for I did not know anything about them. It may interest you to know, however, that congregations all around the country are reporting similar kinds of practices. Instead of assuming they all are lying, it might be good to check to see why it is happening.

Fifth, I did not charge nor imply that Crossroads teaches their members or others to bypass or subvert the eldership of a local congregation. But I did say that I noted a tendency by certain unnamed persons in a particular (but unnamed) congregation to bypass the eldership. After the article was published the leaders here told me that what I

(Continued on page 58)



The Twisted Scriptures - Part I

TOM L. BRIGHT

“Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 3:7) not only describes the many liberals among the lord’s people but also points us to the very things that they openly advocate, i.e. man, through study of the Bible, can never come to a “correct and precise knowledge” of that which is taught in the Bible. In fact, if one would take the contention of these liberals and follow it to its logical end, the statement that I just wrote (that which is taught in the Bible) would be utterly ridiculous.

The church of our Lord is truly being “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14). Things that were unthinkable as being taught by New Testament Christians twenty-five years ago are now openly advocated by the liberal element in the church.

The very denominational doctrines that faithful gospel preachers met and resoundingly defeated in debate two generations ago are now brazenly taught. When brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr. led the fight against that doctrine of the devil that we call Premillennialism, who would have ever thought that we would hear the uncertain sounds that we now hear coming from New Testament Christians?

In years gone by, faithful gospel preachers met, and defeated the proponents of instrumental music in our worship to God; indeed, so resoundingly defeated his false doctrine that its advocates would no longer meet the Truth on the polemic platform. But now, what do we hear? The very same tired and worn out arguments that was crushed by the “word of the truth of the gospel” (Col. 1:5) years ago, BEING MADE BY MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST!!

How strange and foreign to the Truth seemed the Pentecostals. How they misused and abused the Scriptures. Now, the church of our lord is plagued with this same nonsense!

On and on we could go concerning various denominational doctrines that have been shown by faithful gospel preachers of generations past to be so palpably false that they bordered on absurdity, now being openly advocated by some in the lord’s church.

But right here it might be wise to sit and ask ourselves the question, “Why?” From whence comes this false teaching and why from the church?

First of all, let me suggest that we are now reaping the fruit of that spirit of compromise and toleration, that “don’t rock the boat” complex, don’t “ruffle my feathers” paranoia that permeated the church in the years gone by. No longer did brethren like to hear strong gospel sermons, but “sweet nothings” became the norm of the day. No longer was sin pointed out to be sin, nor was false doctrine pointed out to be false doctrine, but a spirit of “don’t upset” became the banner under which far too many took their stand.

The principle established by Paul in Gal. 6:6-7 comes into vogue right here. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever is man soweth, that shall be also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” Whatever one sows, that shall he reap. When one sows non-distinctive preaching, he produces those who would make no distinction whatsoever.

BASIC ATTITUDES

A man acts and reacts because of a basic attitude. One’s actions, thoughts and positions in the political realm are determined by a basic attitude. One’s actions, thoughts and positions in the religious realm are likewise determined by a basic attitude.

Similarly when we try to understand why there is so much liberalism in the church today, we must ultimately come to the conclusion that it is a result of a basic attitude; that basic attitude being Subjectivism.

What I am, what I believe and how I behave religiously are determined by the basic attitude of how I look upon the Scriptures. In this particular article, I am concerned only with the idea of whether I look upon the Scriptures objectively or subjectively.

Subjectivism is a philosophic theory that all knowledge is subjective and relative. A definition of subjectivism would be “that which exists only within the experienter’s mind and incapable of external verification.”

Now, simply boiled down, this means that the truth (in this article, truth always refers to Bible truth) of any proposition depends upon how a person looks upon that proposition and whatever that person decides is the truth of that proposition, is the truth of that proposition. It makes no difference that two people might decide that the truth of the same proposition is different, one is not to bind his *opinion* upon the other.

Objectivism is the exact opposite of this. To say that a man approaches the Bible objectively is to say that this man believes that truth is absolute, that it has an objective stability and independence outside of the knower; that when any given individual comes to the knowledge of truth, that truth is not changed. It is to say that the truth revealed by inspired men is the same today as it was when first revealed, that it has not changed, nor will it change! Furthermore, when one approaches the truth objectively, he believes that truth is understandable and that man CAN understand God's Word alike!

Thus, to summarize: Subjectivism says "Whatever you think the Bible teaches, it teaches." Objectivism says "The Bible teaches today what it taught when first written and will not change, and that man can understand what it says and understand it alike."

Subjectivism is that previously mentioned "basic attitude," the "why" there is so much liberalism in the church today. The Subjectivist looks upon the Bible as teaching only what the person doing the thinking feels that it teaches. To them, one passage of Scripture might teach one thing to one person; but the same passage might teach something entirely different, even contradictory, to another person. To the Subjectivist, one Christian does not have the right to say "The Bible teaches this; this is right and cannot be wrong." To do so would make that person a "legalist." To the Subjectivist, one cannot be really sure and certain about anything the Bible teaches; therefore, any conclusions or deductions that one might reach by careful and diligent study, cannot be bound upon any other, only if the other person accepts such. If he will not accept such teaching, then I would be wrong for trying to show that he is in error. (Is it not somewhat strange that I am in error for telling a man he is in error and the way that I know that I am in error is because the subjectivists have told me so?)

The liberals contend that whatever I might determine a passage teaches, is what that passage teaches. But on the other hand, if I determine that a particular passage teaches an absolute; and that anyone who disagrees with that absolute is in error, the liberals begin to blow their subjective smoke screen

that they are absolutely sure that I cannot be absolutely sure about anything. In other words, to the liberal the only absolute is that there are so absolutes!

In reality, the basic attitude of the liberal is nothing more than a spirit of compromise and toleration of just about anything that one wants to teach. It is the spirit of allowing any and all to add to or to take from the inspired Word of God. To the liberal, it really makes no difference what one believes or teaches, just so they are not "legalistic"; just so they do not believe that there is only ONE WAY and that any other way which is not in agreement with that ONE WAY is in error. (Is it not somewhat strange that Paul was evidently unaware of this idea? If he had been, he would have never written Galatians 1:6-10!!)

The liberals are happy just as long as a man will believe something and not be dogmatic about that! The only thing that they want you to be sure about is that you are not sure about anything. To them, the only certain thing is that you cannot be certain about anything. To them, to say that something is in error is to be in error. To the liberal, the only definite thing is that you cannot be definite about anything. (More to follow.)

AN OPEN LETTER TO CROSSROADS

had observed and had reported to me by others was indeed the case. But I made no specific charges, nor even implied that Crossroads so taught. In fact, it would be rather difficult for me to conceive of a congregation as large as Crossroads with only two elders TEACHING people to subvert the eldership! But the fact that from all over the country reports are being made that the tendency is growing means that I had both the right and responsibility to warn against it. The fact that you deny having anything to do with and oppose such a practice SHOULD make it advisable that you join with all others in publicly opposing it, and trying to find the root of it.

Sixth, I did not charge nor imply that Crossroads teaches anyone to leave their parents if those parents oppose their obedience to the gospel. I ASSUMED that you teach the same things I teach about that, NAMELY: If a person is forced to leave home BECAUSE he obeys the gospel, he must obey God rather than man! What I opposed is a perversion of that. From reports all around the country, it appears that there are young people alienated from their parents, NOT BECAUSE THEY OBEYED THE GOSPEL, but because parents do not understand nor approve of "total commitment" to the programs of the group. If you oppose *that* practice, as I ASSUMED ALL FAITHFUL AND MATURE CHRISTIANS DO, then I suggest that

instead of blaming me with it, you might help find out from what source such practices are coming, and why.

Seventh, I did not charge nor imply that Crossroads teaches or suggests that there is no difference in a Billy Graham convert and one of yours. On the contrary, you are probably being charged with talking people OUT of being baptized until they have proven they are mature enough and dedicated enough to live the Christian life ACCORDING TO YOUR STANDARDS. I did not charge you with either extreme. But I did find both extremes evidenced, and reported one of them. But what I thought was but a "straw in the wind" now appears to be a haystack! For from reports all over the country, it appears that the things I saw here are NOT the FEW, apparently minor things I saw, but a widespread epidemic.

Eighth, I did not charge or imply that you teach anything like the necessity of the Roman confessional box. I *did* say that MANY reports have indicated that SOMEONE has developed a system which *results* in that sort of mind control and cultish practices. But it never entered my mind that anyone would ASSUME that I was charging you with, or even implying that you believe or teach that one person can absolve another of sin, or that one human being OUGHT to have APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY over another. It seems reasonably evident that SOMEONE is assuming that since PAUL was a "minister of reconciliation" as an AMBASSADOR of Christ with the right to regulate the lives of his "spiritual children", all who teach the gospel to others and help win them to Christ have the same KIND OF POWER AND AUTHORITY! I did not accuse or remotely imply that you TEACH THAT, but apparently HUNDREDS believe and PRACTICE it. Instead of merely assuming that so MANY are merely lying about it for some unknown reason, it seems to behoove us to try to find out what we can about what went wrong, and why.

*	CONTRIBUTIONS	*
*		*
*	Dan W. Wyatt.....	\$10.00 *
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*	Eugene Walp.....	10.00 *
*	Grover H. Summers.....	10.00 *
*	Ben H. Smith, Jr.....	30.00 *
*	Mrs. Mary M. Smith,.....	10.00 *
*	R. A. Lester, Sr.....	20.00 *
*	Charles Ivie.....	5.00 *
*	Ivy Lawson.....	30.00 *

Space limitations forbids me from going on. I am by nature conciliatory--sort of non-controversial to the point of gullibility. I have no desire to get the kind of notoriety that would come from the engaging in a running controversy about these things. But I do hope to read somewhere, sometime, YOUR opinion as to why hundreds of congregations in dozens of states report the same things, all of which they say comes from the same source, which you and I both apparently oppose. Is EVERYONE lying? Is so, why?

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How Shall They Hear Without A Preacher?

TOMMY ALFORD

It is in the tenth chapter of the letter to the Romans that the Holy Spirit has recorded the above title. The chapter includes the necessity of preaching the word of faith (v. 8), for faith comes by this word of God (v. 17). This gospel is the power of God unto salvation (1:16), Christians have been called by this gospel (2 Thess.2:14), and they stand and are saved by this gospel unless they have believed in vain (1 Cor.15:1-4). In addition verse 14 of our text sets forth the need of earthen vessels to carry forth this word of life. The Holy Spirit agrees, saying, "...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" It should also be noticed that in v. 15 God says that preachers must be sent.

Brethren, inasmuch as God's word is living and active and never becomes outdated (Heb.4:12), then it is still the power of God unto salvation, people are still called out by it, faith still comes by it, there is still a need for preachers and the preachers must still be sent. We must never let the sands of complacency and self-satisfaction obscure our vision from seeing the need to *fulfill* the great commission in our generation. The Bible commands us to carry the good news into all nations and every creature, teaching and baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

It is apparent from our study that not all can go; some must go and many must send. At the age of 29 and with a wife, a baby boy and a child in the womb, my family and I have decided to be one of those sent into one of those *all nations* and plant the cause of Christ in the hearts of honest men and women. The nation in subject is found on the island of Taiwan with her 17 million occupants. At present there are only two of God's preachers on this island; however, there are many false prophets. For example, there are some 300

(Continued on back page)

Mormon elders located on the island; and, of course, the prevalent denominations are already well-rooted and teaching their deceptive human commandments. There is a need. Paul heard the Macedonian call, and God recorded that call for us to hear; and we can, unless we stop our ears and blind our eyes to the needs of millions of lost souls. Elders and concerned Christian men need to consider foreign missions in the budgets of the local congregations. It not only takes men willing to go to a foreign land, but it also takes concerned Christians who are willing to send them in order to get the gospel to all the world. When we talk about sending, we are talking about money which has been purposed toward the work of the Lord.

I am willing, but I need the financial support of congregations who want to have a part in this great work (Rom.10:15). Ira Rice, Jr. (who has devoted his life to foreign missions) and myself are willing and desirous to speak to concerned congregations.

A brief history of my 29 years would go something like the following: I am a native of Mississippi where I lived until the last three years. It was at the University of Mississippi that I received a bachelor of Pharmacy degree in 1974. I practiced hospital pharmacy in Clarksdale, Mississippi until 1976. At this time I became a student in the Bellview School of Preaching in Pensacola, Florida which is directed by William S. Cline. In 1978 I completed two years of intensified study and began to preach for the Brentwood congregation here in Pensacola; I am still working with these brethren at this time.

My wife and I would appreciate your prayers and any and all help that you can give in carrying forth God's gospel. If you are interested in helping us with this work, or talk with us about this work, please contact either the Bellview church of Christ, 4850 Saufley Road, Pensacola, Florida 32506 (904-455-7595 or 904-453-3426); brother Ira Y. Rice, Jr., 2956 Allshore, Memphis, TN 38118 (901-363-6498), or myself.

4654 Poinciana Drive
Pensacola, Florida 32506
Tele. (904-456-9501)

What About Judging Others?

MICHAEL STONE

Some among us today contend that we, as God's people, are to never condemn the doctrine or actions of others. That it is wrong for the church to discipline a brother who is living in sin is stated by not a few. Those who take such a position usually go to Matthew 7:1 for justification of their position. Matthew 7:1 says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

First of all, I submit that to say Matthew 7:1 forbids the judging of others is to misunderstand the verse. If we carefully read the first five verses of the chapter, we will notice that our Lord is condemning the self-righteous person who would criticize others for their faults while overlooking his own. If Matthew 7:1 means that we are to never judge others, then our exposition of other sections in the chapter is most difficult. In verse six, Jesus told us not to give that which is holy unto dogs. Now, how can that be obeyed without judging who are dogs? Furthermore, Jesus warned in verse fifteen of false prophets and told us to beware of them. Now, how can we obey that without judging who are false prophets? In verse sixteen, the proper basis of our judging others is given-- "By their fruits ye shall know them." In John 7:24 the Bible says, "...judge righteous judgment."

Secondly, to say that we are never to judge others overlooks other scriptures that make judging necessary. The apostle Paul, in Romans 16:17, commanded us to mark those who cause division. Does that not imply that someone must judge who is causing the division? Also, 2 John 9-11 makes it necessary for us to judge who does not have the doctrine of Christ. What about 2 Thessalonians 3:6? To obey that, we must judge who is walking disorderly. Paul, in Galatians 6:1, told us to restore the one overtaken in a fault. But, you cannot even begin to obey that command without first determining (judging) the brother to be at fault.

It seems to me that there is a right way and a wrong way to judge others. We need to be careful and not judge the wrong way. Also, let us be careful to not contend that judging is wrong. We must understand and not misrepresent the teachings of the Bible.



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1979

Advocates Of Children's Church Tell The Truth

WILLIAM S. CLINE

Ever since members of the church adopted the denominational "Children's Church" or "Children's Bible Hour" or what ever it is called in various places, I have been told by the advocates of such that: (1) Children who are bussed to the services cannot be controlled in the regular worship service; (2) Children cannot get anything out of the regular worship service; (3) More good than harm comes from the separate service; and (4) There is no scripture which says that "Children's Church" is wrong.

Those who have not approved of the divided assembly have argued that children can be controlled in the regular assembly and that it was just a matter of members taking an interest in such. They have also argued that children can learn many things while present in the worship assembly which is ordained by God. Further, the error of "the end justifies the means" was pointed out and finally it has been stressed over and over that the question is not "Where is the scripture that condemns 'Children's Church' (that is an old denominational argument), but rather "Where is the scripture that authorizes such?" Some thought they found one in Acts 2 with the twelve apostles but they were just dreaming. Instead, the principle of children being present with parents had been around a long time. In Deut. 31:13 the assembly was to contain the youngest children. In Joel 2:15-16 the "solemn assembly" was to contain everyone from the elders to the "children that suck the breast." In 1 Cor. 14:23 the "whole church" was "assembled together". And in Eph. 5:23-6:9 we learn that Jehovah expected

wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, and masters to all be assembled together when the epistle was read to them. Thus we have the principle for both children and parents being assembled together. We have the example of the whole church being assembled together, and we have God expecting and understanding that the children would be in the assembly with the rest of the congregation. Now let us speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent. Let us learn not to go beyond the things that are written (1 Cor. 4:6).

Arguments such as the above have been made for quite some time. Just recently (within the last month) I received a bulletin from Texas which is published by a congregation that has a "Children's Bible Hour." In the June 17 issue I was amazed to read these words written by a Bible Hour advocate.

"As most of you realize, the bus program has slowed down for the summer. We are now running one bus and several of the children that used to ride the buses are now being brought by their parents, or members of the congregation. Because of this, we do not have what is felt to be an adequate number to have Bible Hour during our 10:45 worship. THEREFORE, WE ARE USING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LET THESE CHILDREN SEE FIRST HAND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PART OF A FORMAL WORSHIP SERVICE. (Emphasis, mine. W.S.C.) To help in this effort, many people have

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DEFENDER

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Drifting-No! Full Steam Ahead--

GEORGE E. DARLING, SR.

A few years ago the churches of Christ had the reputation of being the "fastest growing religious body in America"! Today we are told by those who study such matters that this is no longer true. In fact, we are told by these statisticians that we are nearing the point of "zero growth". Not only from a lack of baptisms but also the tremendous loss of those who are falling away.

Brethren, doesn't this seem a bit strange? Every time you pick up one of 'our' gospel papers you read of the GREAT workshops, siminars, retreats, training programs, lectureships, forums, enrichment series, etc., etc...each one of them preparing for the attendance of thousands of Soul Winners and Personal Workers...and thousands do attend! They hear lessons that stir their enthusiasm, but as Cline Paden said, "What happens after the shouting and high enthusiasm is gone?" How many souls are being won?

Old brother J.D. Tant used to say, "Brethren, we are drifting." I wonder what he would say today if he could see all the gimmicks and clap-trap methods that are being used by some of my brethren under the guise of "Evangelism".

We have brought up a generation of church members that are ignorant of and unconcerned about the distinctive doctrine and practice of the New Testament church. We ridiculed the preachers who preached FAITH--REPENTANCE--CONFESSION -- BAPTISM, and started telling people to "accept Jesus as their personal Savior." Today we have many who claim membership in the Lord's body that cannot tell you what they did in order to be saved! (If you doubt it--hand out paper and pencils and ask them to write down the gospel plan of salvation. See how many blanks you get back.) We became tired of hearing about "the one church". We started talking about our denominational "friends"--our "Baptist neighbor" and our "Methodist brethren". Now we have gone so far that at least one has "joined" the Ministerial Association and another is teaching in denominational "GROWTH SEMINARS".

In many places we are having serious trouble with men who once proclaimed the truth but are today proclaiming error. Some of us try to follow the scriptures and "mark them", but others continue to lend their full endorsement and financial support,---And on, and on, and on, . . .

What brought all this about? I believe the

principle thing is that we failed to "feed the flock" on proper food. We fed them on a constant diet of LOVE, ENTHUSIASM, TOLERANCE, FELLOWSHIP, WORKING, etc., etc., but we allowed them to literally starve spiritually, concerning the New Testament distinction between truth and error, between the Lord's church and denominationalism.

When distinction between truth and error vanishes from the teaching, it will not be long until that distinction is lost in

practice. There can be no doubt that teaching, in some places has already lost its distinctiveness, and in those places, distinctiveness in practice is already dying. Only the dedicated diligence and constant vigilance of faithful Christians can keep the church faithful to the Lord.

PREACH THE WORD, BROTHER!!

(My thanks to Yarbrough Leigh for the thoughts in this article. G.E.D., Sr.)

NOTICE

The Bellview Preacher Training School is earnestly seeking copies of the NELSON AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE--Teacher's Edition--the one which contains a Dictionary. We are only looking for the edition with the Dictionary.

Perhaps our readers know of some that are lying around which could be put to great use in the hands of a faithful gospel preacher. If so, could you help us purchase such?

We deeply appreciate our readers helping us in this search.

--Editor

ADVOCATES OF CHILDREN'S CHURCH . . .

volunteered to sit with a child and help him not only in discipline, but ALSO HELP HIM UNDERSTAND WHAT WORSHIPPING GOD IS ALL ABOUT.
(Emphasis mine. W.S.C.)

By their own admission the children can be taught discipline in the 10:45 worship hour. And obviously what we have been told was going on in Bible Hour -- that is worship on the child's level -- has not been the case. Perhaps it was play time, sand-box time, cut out and color time, tell stories time, puppet time, and what have you time, but not really worship time for now, at least at this one congregation the children are going to see first hand what it means to be a part of a formal worship service. But the statement which stands out which so powerfully pointed against what we have been hearing ever since "Child-

ren's Church" got started is this one, ". . . help him understand what worshipping God is all about." The truth has finally been told. The children in that Bible Hour in Texas haven't been taught what worshipping God is all about. At least that is what they said. Perhaps they have been entertained. Perhaps they have played games, learned Bible stories and been "cooked and kool-aided," but by the leaders own admission they have not been taught what worshipping God is all about.

Brethren, children can learn what it means to be disciplined; they can learn what worship is all about when they sit quietly and observe and participate as they can in the worship assembly as ordained by Jehovah. How long will it take us to learn our lesson -- a lesson that is so vitally important to our young people?

A Visit With W. L. Totty

William S. Cline

It was a memorable occasion for me to once again have the privilege of visiting with brother W. L. Totty of Indianapolis, Indiana. This grand old soldier of the cross has fought the battles and won the victories for Christ and his kingdom in this brotherhood for over half a century! Forty-two of those years (this October) he has been located in Indianapolis.

W. L. Totty, born in Totty's Bend, Tennessee, reared in Nashville, encouraged to preach by A. G. Freed, and trained by such spiritual giants as A. G. Freed and N. B. Hardeman, is truly a giant in Spiritual Israel. He moved to Indianapolis over forty years ago. At that time he had already had twenty-five debates with a cross-section of denominational preachers. Brother A. G. Freed and others had taught brother Totty well and though he was still a young man in those days, he had already build a reputation among the denominations as a powerful debater and a fearful foe. Down through the next forty years he conducted so many debates that today he can't actually tell you how many there have been. What a marvelous experience it was to talk with him about those debates. He recalled arguments he made, humorous events that occurred and some of the more serious moments that still stand clear in his mind.

When brother Totty moved to Indianapolis in the fall of 1937 there were only two faithful congregations of the Lord's church in the city. The congregation he "hired on" with had about 50 which included both members and children. The men agreed to hire him for a year and then for another. Finally he stayed with that church for over 35 years. During those years it grew from the small group of 50 to over 800! It was truly interesting to hear him tell of the hard times in those days such as the fact that banks wouldn't loan churches (at least the Lord's church) money to build, and brethren had to knuckle down and make it on their own. I couldn't help but think that those were the times when brethren had to work and work hard for every inch of progress they made; and perhaps that was one of the reasons why they appreciated what they had so much and guarded the truth so carefully.

Brother Totty has preached the word of God without fear or favor for 56 years. His love for the church and lost souls is an inspiration and encouragement to any who have the opportunity to be around him. He bemoans the tragic departures from the faith in the brotherhood and speaks with unwavering conviction

against such. He loves to hear the gospel preached in its purity, its power and its simplicity. He stands ready at all times to back any man who will preach in such a manner. Though not well as he once was, he travelled over 75 miles one way on two different nights in one week to support the preaching of the gospel when I was in Indiana; and on one day that week he travelled over 250 miles one way to be with and encourage the work of Potter Orphan Home in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He does not travel alone on long trips any more, but faithful members at Shelbyville Road always stand ready to drive him anywhere he is able to go.

Brother Totty is presently preaching for the Shelbyville Road congregation in Indianapolis. This church was started in recent years with a firm commitment to stand in the old paths. It has continued to enjoy growth and is engaged in several works outside its home community. It is one congregation which you can attend and know that it is following the pattern of New Testament Christianity.

As already suggested, brother Totty's health is not as good as it once was. Even though he was stricken by a heart attack in the fall of 1976 he has regained his strength to the point that he is still able to continue to take his pen in hand and write much needed material. He also preaches on a weekly basis at Shelbyville Road. He has just co-authored a book, "SERMONS WE PREACH" with brother Bill Hienselman. It will be available about mid-August. I have seen the unbound copy and I can guarantee that every preacher as well as any other zealous Bible student will profit by adding this book to his library. This book contains 20 full-length sermons -- 10 by each author. You may order your copy from W. L. Totty, 4915 Shelbyville Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46227.

Brother W. L. Totty has passed his three-score and ten years. He has suffered a serious heart attack, but don't be misled. His step is still light and quick, his wit and humor are still keen, his eyes still sparkle with enthusiasm, and his voice, for the right and against the wrong, is as strong as it ever was. From Sunday to Sunday it sounds forth from the Shelbyville Road pulpit just as it has done from pulpits and debate platforms across this brotherhood for over half a century.

It has been my privilege to visit with brother Totty on four previous trips to Indiana and to preach at Shelbyville Road on

one of those occasions. It is also my honor to be scheduled to conduct a gospel meeting there in 1981. It is truly an honor to be associated in such a way with brother Totty. Though it is such a joy to have the privilege to visit with brother Totty, it is also sad in one way. For as I sat and talked with him I realized that we have few in the brotherhood

like him today and the prospects for the future presence of his kind are poor indeed. My prayer is an appreciation for brother Totty, for his health and strength, and for an increase in his tribe. The living example of this great soldier of the cross and the tremendous influence he has is precious indeed.

"NINE LOST BIBLES"

GERALD W. MILES

Recently, there was a notice in an exchange bulletin that there were nine lost Bibles in the church office. The notice encouraged those who had lost these to come by and pick them up. That notice struck this writer like a ton of bricks. Not that there is anything new about people forgetting their Bibles and leaving them at the building, but that the Bible is lost in more ways than one.

The Bible is lost in many churches. They have new Bibles in the racks but the message is lost. Those Bibles are just for looks. The preaching and teaching that is done comes from a human creed book instead of the word of God. Men refuse to believe, obey, and practice the things God has required in His book. Many are traveling down the broad way that leads to destruction and they refuse to change. The Bible is lost in a world of "religion" and so-called "born again" Christianity. As far as many are concerned, Jesus might just as well not have bothered to come to the earth to die for them. Yes, the Bible is a lost book as far as many are concerned. They are like the Jews of old who lost the Word of God in the Temple. Can you imagine? The written copies of the Law were actually LOST in the Temple complex (2 Kings 22:8). This is the way it is in many religious organizations.

The Bible is lost in many homes across this country. It is doubtful that we could go into many homes in our land and not find a Bible on the coffee table or shelf. Yet, as far as the message of the Bible is concerned, it is a lost book. Daddy is not fulfilling his place in the home as God has said; Mother is not in subjection as God has instructed her to be; children do not obey their parents like God wants them to do (Eph. 6:10); there is always a fuss going on which should not be there; and, so on and so on. Is this a Christian home? THINK ABOUT IT! If the family would read and study that Bible which is collecting dust on a shelf they would realize that they cannot be truly happy unless they obey the will of God which is contained in that book. Parents need to learn their responsibilities to their children and

children need to obey their parents. The moral decay of our society is a direct result of the breakdown of the home. The lost Bibles in the homes of our people is the cause of this breakdown.

The Bible is lost in the lives of many church members. These people ought to be "living epistles" (2 Cor. 3:2). The lives of church members might be the only "gospel" the world will ever see. If this "gospel" is perverted, the world will not get the true picture of what Christianity is all about. Those church members who refuse to attend the services of the church are telling the world that Christ and the church are not very important. These can lead more souls to hell than ten of Satan's best. Those church members who live ungodly lives while still claiming full fellowship with the church are hypocrites of the first order! All the world has to do it take a look at their lives and know that Christians do not act that way. When the world goes to the X-rated movies and the "Christians" are there, what do you suppose they think? When the people in the world will not even wear the skimpy bathing suits and shorts but they see the "child of God" wearing such, what do you suppose they think? When the people of the world go to the cocktail parties and see those who claim to have been "born again" enjoying the DEVIL'S BREW, what do you suppose they think? YOU KNOW WHAT THEY THINK! The world sees the ungodly and inconsistent lives of church members who have lost the pure message of the Bible and they turn in disgust. They are repulsed at the very sight of such.

The nine lost Bibles in that church bulletin were simply Bibles which had been left at the church building. The lost Bibles of the above cases are far worse. The message of God is clear and plain if men will read it. Do not let the Bible be a lost book as far as you are concerned. Do not leave your religion at the church building as some did their Bibles. Make the Bible a book of daily study and meditation. You have only your soul to gain. WHAT WILL YOU DO????

The Twisted Scriptures - Part II

TOM L. BRIGHT

In a previous article under the same caption, I stated that the reason for the liberalism within the Lord's church was because of the basic attitude of subjectivism.

Subjectivism denies that Bible truth is objective, i.e., that Bible truth has an objective stability and independence outside of the mind of the knower. The subjectivist (the liberal in the church today) states that the truth (Bible truth) of any proposition is determined by each individual; that the truth of any proposition might be different unto two different people.

I have read the liberal writings for years and have understood that this basic philosophy of subjectivism was behind all of their assertions. But it was not until brother W. Carl Ketcherside published his book, *The Twisted Scriptures*, that I had ever seen the subjective philosophy put in such a concise form.

Brother Ketcherside states on the back cover, "This is a book of protest! Its author is deeply opposed to the division of God's family over human opinions and deductions from the sacred scriptures. . ."

In the book, this brother attempts to deal with the various areas over which there is division in the body of Christ. But it is not until near the end of the book that brother Ketcherside sets forth, in a short, concise three paragraphs, the basic attitude of himself as well as the other liberals that have created turmoil in the church.

THE THREE PARAGRAPHS

Since this book is not copyrighted, I now quote from *The Twisted Scriptures*, by W. Carl Ketcherside, pages 176-177:

"(1). The word of God has a meaning and the doctrine of God can be understood. Such understanding can only result from diligent investigation by earnest students who examine the text of the revelation and apply to their research of those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters. When proper examination has been made, free from preconceived bias, the result must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ as given through the holy envoys, the apostles.

"(2). In view of the fact that such conclusions must depend in part, or in whole, upon the deductions made from the sacred scriptures, and thus represent the sacred

oracles as filtered through human rational processes, the conclusions cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship to the Father. They must not be regarded as the basis for life but of growth, and that rate differs with each individual who is in Christ.

"(3). The deductions from the sacred revelations as made by one individual, or a group of individuals conducting research in concert, are not formally binding upon any other individual, unless commended unto such individual by his own investigation, perception and conscience. They can be shared with others but not saddled upon them, for they can be binding only to the degree and in the measure that they are personally grasped and comprehended. If this be not true the following evils will result.

- a. Individual responsibility will be destroyed and men will be subjected to creedal tests and criteria arbitrarily imposed.
- b. Those who concur with such imposition upon themselves will repose their faith in the wisdom of men rather than in the wisdom of God.
- c. The supreme court of appeal will be "the infallible interpretation" of each party, a thought as reprehensible as "an infallible interpreter," or pope."

WHAT DID HE SAY?

With paragraph #1 I agree. I do not think any honest truth seeker could disagree with the thought presented in paragraph #2.

Thus, according to paragraph #1, we can know what is the doctrine of Christ. But then in paragraph #2, brother Ketcherside states that since such conclusions (that which he concedes to be the doctrine of Christ in paragraph #1) must depend upon deductions as filtered through human rational process, these conclusions (that which he concedes to be the doctrine of Christ in paragraph #1) must not be constituted conditions of union, or communion or tests of one's relationship to God.

Now notice his reasoning. Brother Ketcherside states that the doctrine of God has a meaning which can be understood. But this understanding can only come about by sincere students diligently investigating the word of God and by applying those rules of interpretation governing such matters. Whenever proper examination has been made, the result (of

sincere students diligently examining God's word, using THOSE RULES OF INTERPRETATION governing such matters) must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ. However, since these conclusions (reached by sincere students diligently examining God's word and applying those RULES OF LOGICAL INTERPRETATION which govern such matters, thereby coming to a result which must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ) represent the sacred oracles filtered thru human rational processes, these VERY SAME CONCLUSIONS cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship to the Father.

Paragraph #3 further explains this philosophy. The "deductions" (the previously mentioned 'conclusions') are not binding on any other person, or any group of people "unless commended unto such individual by his own investigation, perception and conscience." Now, these "deductions" (which are conceded to be the doctrine of Christ in paragraph #1), can be shared but are not binding on any others, "for they can be binding only to the degree and in the measure that they are personally grasped and comprehended." Shades of subjectivity and relativity!!

Now this is his basic assertion. Brother Ketcherside teaches that by diligent investigation of the Word of God, applying those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters, the results must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ. But this conclusion (this deduction which has already been conceded to be the doctrine of Christ) is not formally binding upon anyone else, only to the degree the other person grasps and comprehends this "result" (which has been conceded to be the doctrine of Christ).

The reason that this "result", which has been conceded to be the doctrine of Christ, is not formally binding on anyone else is because this conclusion "represents the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes."

I charge that brother Ketcherside is completely inconsistent. I charge that brother Ketcherside has contradicted himself; paragraph #2 contradicts paragraph #1. In paragraph #1, brother Ketcherside speaks of results which must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ and that these results come from applying those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters. But then in paragraph #2, he states that since this doctrine of Christ is a result of the sacred oracles being FILTERED THROUGH HUMAN RATIONAL PROCESSES, they are not binding on anyone else! Notice his line of subjective reasoning -- rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters versus the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational

processes.

Does it sound reasonable to you that God placed in every man this ability to use rational processes and then communicate to us things He placed in us?

What brother Ketcherside is really saying is that you can come to a knowledge of Bible truth only in a subjective way. To him, Bible truth is not objective, but subjective. You cannot really "know" Bible truth for what it really is, only what you subjectively think it is!

His logic would go something like this. You consider proposition X as being the doctrine of Christ. But since your conclusion represents the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes and cannot be formally bound upon person B, if he does not understand proposition X as being the "doctrine of Christ," then to him it is NOT the "doctrine of Christ." Thus, to brother Smith, proposition X IS the "doctrine of Christ," but to brother Jones, proposition X IS NOT the "doctrine of Christ." Furthermore, neither brother Smith nor brother Jones is wrong. Even though they might be worlds apart as to what is Bible truth, neither should consider the other as being wrong. Irregardless of what Smith or Jones teaches, the other is to accept him with the open arms of fellowship; thereby we have this so-called "unity in diversity."

It would be well for brother Ketcherside to inform us what Timothy understood by Paul's exhortation in 1 Tim.1:3: "As I besought thee to abide still in Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." Was there any specific teaching that Timothy was to understand as being some other doctrine? If there was, did the others have to understand it just like Timothy understood it or was Timothy to use the subjective philosophy in fulfilling this? What was that one doctrine which Paul wanted taught? What would one have had to teach to be guilty of teaching that "other doctrine" which Paul mentioned?

It might be well for brother Ketcherside to inform us what Paul meant in 1 Tim.4:16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." What was "the doctrine"? Was there any specific one thing to which Timothy had to give heed and which was applicable to all? Could it have been possible that what Timothy considered as "the doctrine" might not have been considered "the doctrine" by the inspired apostle Paul? What would Timothy have done in such a case? What would Paul have done if he had returned and found Timothy

teaching what he (Timothy) thought was the doctrine but it was not what Paul wanted him to teach? Could Paul have logically corrected Timothy? If so, upon whose authority?

Maybe brother Ketcherside would lead us to believe that Timothy would say something like, "Well, since these commands of Paul involves 'sound doctrine', and what I consider 'sound doctrine' has been filtered down through human rational processes, it is only applicable to me. Furthermore, since it is binding upon the people only as they personally grasp and comprehend it, I can share with them what I think is the 'doctrine' but I do not want to be legalistic or contrary and try to bind something upon them that they do not want bound upon them. After all, what the Lord really wants is unity in diversity, so I will let them decide subjectively what they want the truth to be and to them that will be the truth." (It might be interesting for every reader of this to apply this philosophy to such passages as Titus 2:1 and 2 Tim. 4:3-5.)

Brethren, it is this fallacious philosophy that is the root and core of the liberal problem in the Lord's church today. Certainly, according to them one cannot be certain about anything. They stand in disgust of me when I refuse to extend the hand of fellowship to those who openly advocate the use of instrumental music in our worship to God the Father, or when I refuse the hand of fellowship to those who now openly advocate the Pentecostal doctrine. (More to follow.)

*		*
*	CONTRIBUTIONS	*
*		*
*	Jerry Lindesmith.....	\$30.00 *
*	John E. Mancill.....	2.00 *
*	Eugene Walp.....	10.00 *
*	Elmer J. Brozek.....	10.00 *
*		*

THE FOURTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP **SPIRITUAL SWORD**

"THE HOME AS GOD WOULD HAVE IT — AND CONTEMPORARY ATTACKS AGAINST IT"

GARLAND ELKINS

The dates for this lectureship are October 21-25, 1979. The place is: The Getwell church of Christ, 1511 Getwell Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38111.

The present day degeneration of morality in our nation and around the world is alarming. There are many direct and indirect attacks upon the home. The Fourth Annual *SPIRITUAL SWORD* Lectureship will not only point out the enemies of the home (particularly the Christian home), but will also expose these erroneous doctrines and attacks upon the home.

The home was instituted by God for the

welfare of mankind. It is to be regulated by God's law. Many of these lectures will give great emphasis to the positive side of marriage and the home. It is anticipated that the Fourth Annual *SPIRITUAL SWORD* Lectureship will be one of the most important lectureships of recent years. This view is underscored by many facts, a few of which we mention. (1) The theme is crucial. (2) Everyone's welfare is either explicitly or implicitly involved. (3) The home plays an important part in the welfare of the church, the nation, and plays a tremendously important role relative to our eternal welfare. The Getwell church of Christ appreciates all who will advertise the lectureship, pray for us, and attend.



DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER, 1979

ONCE A CITIZEN, ALWAYS A CITIZEN - UNTIL THE JUDGMENT

RAY HAWK

Almost everyone has heard a Baptist argue that once you are saved, you are always saved. We know the Bible does not teach such a doctrine. However, we sometimes make the mistake of arguing that when a person sins, he falls *OUT OF* Christ! This is a *FALSE* and *MISLEADING* statement.

The Bible teaches one gets *INTO* Christ by immersion (Gal.3:27; Rom.6:3,4). The Bible also instructs that a saint is to repent and pray, asking God to forgive him, when he sins (1 John 1:7,9; Acts 8:20-24). If a brother is withdrawn from and no longer in fellowship with Jesus, he must be restored (Gal.6:1; James 5:19,20). However, if we say that a person falls out of Christ and is back in Satan's kingdom when he sins, we *ERR* in such a statement. If the erring saint is in Satan's kingdom, he is no longer in Jesus'. How does he get back into the body of Jesus? One does not get into Christ through prayer, but by baptism (Gal.3:27).

The Bible does not teach that an erring saint falls *OUT* of Christ. It makes no difference what sin a Christian commits or how often, he does not fall out of Christ's kingdom back into Satan's. If this is so, the

sinner, whether a one time or a consistent one, would stop being a member of the church of Christ while in sin and before he asked God to forgive him. Also, if a Christian becomes a child of the devil at the point of sin, you have a child of the devil asking God, who is no longer his Father, for the remission of sins. He is also asking God to add him to the body of Christ, which he is no longer a member of, and do so by *PRAYER* rather than by baptism! If one person who is not a member of the body of Christ may be added to it by "praying through", why not all?

When does a saint lose his citizenship in the kingdom and no longer considered a member of the body of Christ? According to Jesus, the tares in the kingdom will be separated from the wheat (Matt.13:24-30,41) and the bad from the good in the judgment (Matt.13:47-50).

If you are not in the kingdom, you should believe the gospel and be immersed into Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; Rom.6:3,4). If you are an erring child of God, you should repent and be restored, for you are still in the family of God and have access to the Father by the blood of Jesus Christ (James 5:16; 1 John 1:7,9).

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DEFENDER

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Editorial

SELF-DECEPTION

WILLIAM S. CLINE

The thirty-seventh chapter of Jeremiah brings us to the days of King Zedekiah who had been appointed over Judah by Nebuchadnezzar to reign in place of Coniah. These were troublesome days for Judah because Jerusalem had been under siege by the Chaldeans and it would not be long until the city would be destroyed. The presence of Pharaoh's army had caused the Chaldeans to withdraw and the people had flattering hopes that the siege was now over. But the word of the Lord came to them by the prophet Jeremiah saying, "Deceive not yourselves. . . for they shall not depart."

Jeremiah used no dark metaphors. He plainly told the people: (1) The Egyptians shall retreat; (2) The Chaldeans shall return and renew the siege with more vigor than ever; and, (3) Jerusalem shall be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans. But people have always had a difficult time accepting the truth, especially when it did not agree with their preconceived ideas and emotions. Thus was the case with the Jews. They simply could not see Jerusalem being destroyed, even though they were told that if the Chaldeans were defeated and had only wounded men left, even those would rise up and destroy the city for it is God's decree that the city be destroyed.

The word "yourselves" is a key word. Even Satan himself, the great deceiver, could not deceive us if we did not permit it. It is this writer's conviction that most men are self-deceived simply because they have chosen to be. Our beliefs are often inconsistent. Our will and feelings have a great influence over us and it is a fact that not many contemplate things in the white light of truth. Thus, so far as we permit our vision to be blinded by passion or distorted by lust, we deceive ourselves.

How many who approach a problem with preconceived notions ever find the truth? We humans have a knack for expecting the facts to verify our opinions, and we contrive to make them do so by ignoring what will not agree with them and by selecting for consideration only what is favorable. Perhaps an old cliché worthy of mention is, "Figures don't lie and liars figure." One can easily trace this in the history of religious delusions.

Men are too ready to form their creeds according to inclination, dropping out unpleasant ideas as

though there was no such thing as a standard of truth. It is sad, but true, that men go to the Bible for confirmation of their own views rather than for instruction and they only have eyes to see the text which suits their ideas. Only by adherence and submission to divine revelation can we be saved from religious, self-deception.

Self-deception is disloyal to truth. We are under obligation to *know* the truth and *obey* the truth. Anyone who refuses to know the truth is blind and will never have spiritual sight until they change their attitude and accept the word of God.

Self-deception is also dangerous to our own souls. Facts remain unchanged regardless of the fanciful notion we may have about them. The truth will still rise up and judge us in the last day (Jn.12:48).

Saul of Tarsus was a self-deceived man for he said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). If Saul

had not learned and submitted to divine revelation he would have been lost.

Jesus painted a graphic picture of the self-deceived in Matthew 7:22-23 when he said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Only casual observation impresses us with the fact that multitudes travel the way of these poor, deceived individuals.

We are told that it is possible for a man to follow a lie so long that finally he believes that which he knew to be a lie to be the truth. Such is sad in any area of life but for one to deceive himself with regard to matters of eternal value is nothing short of ridiculous and foolish. Men need to give heed to the truth, to the facts just as they are and thereby heed the injunction given by God in the long ago when He said, "*Deceive not yourselves.*"

We Have Access By Faith Into This Grace

QUENTIN DUNN

There are many conflicting ideas in "*Baptist Church Manual*" Revised by J. M. Pendleton. On page 47 is this statement. "We believe that salvation of sinners is wholly of grace." On this page Scriptures are used. "By grace are ye saved" (Eph.2:5). "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Why must a sinner believe if salvation of sinners is wholly of grace? Let us study this matter further.

"We have access by faith into this grace" (Rom.5:2). "That He by the grace of God should taste of death for every man" (Heb.2:9). Jesus shed His blood in His death. One must believe, but belief only will not put one into the death of Christ. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom.10:10). "Repentance is unto life" (Acts 11:18). The sinner must show his faith by confessing

(Rom.10:9,10). Confession is not into this grace, it is unto salvation. To have access into this grace sinners must be baptized into the death of Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death" (Rom.6:3). When a penitent believer is baptized into the death of Christ he is cleansed by His blood.

Salvation is not wholly of grace. This is one error of "*Baptist Church Manual*" Revised by J. M. Pendleton. If it be considered unkind to point out this error, let me assure you that this is only the tip of the iceberg! There are too many errors in it to mention! Error will not save anyone!

The Scriptures that pertain to salvation supplement each other. They do not contradict each other. Let us believe the Scriptures as we study them. Let us thank God that we have access by faith into this grace.

Getwell Church of Christ presents

The Fourth Annual
"SPIRITUAL SWORD" LECTURESHIP
"The Home as God Would Have It—
And Contemporary Attacks Against It"

October 21-25, 1979

1511 GETWELL ROAD, MEMPHIS, TN 38111

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES

SUNDAY, OCT. 21

- 9:30 JACKSON: Roles of Men and Women
10:20 ELKINS: What Have They Seen in Thine House?
2:30 McCORD: I Cor. 7:1-5 Mutual Obligation
3:15 WATKINS: Reasons for Unfaithfulness
7:00 MUSIC: The Greatness of Married Love
7:45 McCORD: The Guilty Party Cannot Remarry

MONDAY, OCT. 22

- 8:00 TAYLOR: Review of Warren-Fuqua Debate
8:40 DEAYER: What Is Marriage?
9:45 WARREN: The Truth on Divorce and Remarriage
10:50 CONNALLY: It Is False that One Can Unscripturally Divorce, Remarry, and Continue Therein Without Further Sin
1:00 McCORD: The Guilty Party Is Not Free to Remarry
1:45 MERIDETH: I Cor. 7 Does Not Contradict Mt. 19:9
2:30 CLAIBORNE: The Women's Liberation Movement
3:15 MEADOWS: The Threat of Homosexuality to Our Society

LUNCH BREAK 11:30-1:00
DINNER BREAK 4:40-7:00
ATTENDED NURSERY



GARLAND ELKINS



BILL FLATT



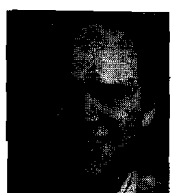
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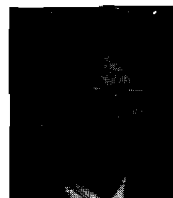
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WINFORD CLAIBORNE



GARY COLLEY



ANDREW CONNALLY



ROY DEAVER

4:00 FLATT: Counseling Troubled Marriages
 7:00 McGEE: Humanism as a Threat to Christian Marriage
 7:45 HIGHERS: Breakdown of Respect for Authority

TUESDAY, OCT. 23

8:00 TAYLOR: Review of Warren-Fuqua Debate
 8:40 DEAVER: Mt. 19:9 Is Not a "Covenant Passage"
 9:45 WARREN: The Truth on Divorce and Remarriage
 10:50 CONNALLY: It Is False that One Can Unscripturally Divorce, Remarry and Continue Therein Without Further Sin
 1:00 McCORD: The Guilty Party Is Not Free to Remarry
 1:45 MERIDETH: I Cor. 7 Does Not Contradict Mt. 19:9.
 2:30 CLAIBORNE: The Women's Liberation Movement
 3:15 WEST: The Role of the Home in the Spiritual Development of the Church
 4:00 HANSON: Counseling the Divorced
 7:00 PRYOR: The Sinfulness of Divorce
 7:45 WINKLER: The Man as Husband and the Woman as Wife

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 24

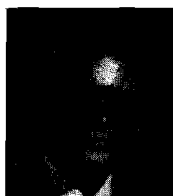
8:00 TAYLOR: Review of Warren-Fuqua Debate
 8:40 DEAVER: Mt. 19:9 Is Not a "Covenant Passage"
 9:45 WARREN: The Truth on Divorce and Remarriage

10:50 CONNALLY: It Is False that One Can Unscripturally Divorce, Remarry and Continue Therein Without Further Sin

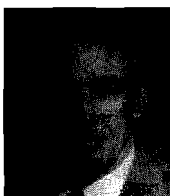
1:00 TURNER: How Will Modern Society's Moral Revolution Affect Your Future?
 1:45 MERIDETH: I Cor. 7 Does Not Contradict Mt. 19:9
 2:30 COLLEY: Pornography as a Threat to the Home
 3:15 GILMORE: What Shall We Leave to our Children?
 4:00 HOWARD: The Husband and Wife as a Team
 7:00 CAMP: Atheism and the Home
 7:45 WARREN: Why So Many Marriages Fail

THURSDAY, OCT. 25

8:00 TAYLOR: Review of Warren-Fuqua Debate
 8:40 DEAVER: Mt. 19:9 Is Not a "Covenant Passage"
 9:45 WARREN: The Truth on Divorce and Remarriage
 10:50 CONNALLY: The Sexual Revolution as a Threat to the Christian Home
 1:00 THOMPSON: Evolution as a Threat to the Christian Home
 1:45 ROCHELLE: Preparation for Marriage
 2:30 JENKINS: Abortion as a Threat to the Christian Home
 3:15 JERKINS: The Joy of the True Christian Home
 4:00 VARNER: Provocative Clothing as a Threat to the Christian Home
 7:00 GANUS: Marxism vs. the Christian Home
 7:45 WOODS: All Men Are Amenable to the Law of Christ



PAT McGEE



JAMES MEADOWS



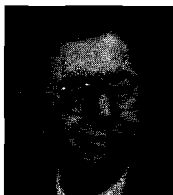
J. NOEL MERIDETH



GOEBEL MUSIC



NEALE PRYOR



THOMAS B. WARREN



WENDELL WINKLER



GUY N. WOODS



JAMES W. WATKINS



EARL WEST

The Twisted Scriptures - Part III

TOM L. BRIGHT

In a previous article under the same title, I dealt with some thoughts presented by brother Carl Ketcherside in one of his more recent books entitled *The Twisted Scriptures*

On pages 176-177 of this book, I drew our attention to three short paragraphs which point out the basic philosophy of brother Ketcherside and others like him whom I consider to be liberal. I now quote the three paragraphs.

"(1). The word of God has a meaning and the doctrine of God can be understood. Such understanding can only result from diligent investigation by earnest students who examine the test of the revelation and apply to their research those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters. When proper examination has been made, free from preconceived bias, the result must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ as given through the holy envoys, the apostles.

"(2). In view of the fact that such conclusions must depend in part, or in whole, upon the deductions made from the sacred scriptures, and thus represent the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes, the conclusions cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship to the Father. They must not be regarded as the basis for life but of growth, and that rate differs with each individual who is in Christ.

"(3). The deductions from the sacred revelation as made by one individual, or a group of individuals conducting research in concert, are not formally binding upon any other individual, unless commended unto such individual by his own investigation, preception and conscience. They can be shared with others but not saddled upon them, for they can be binding only to the degree and in the measure that they are personally grasped and comprehended. If this be not true the following evils will result.

a. Individual responsibility will be destroyed and men will be subjected to creedal tests and criteria arbitrarily imposed.

b. Those who concur with such imposition upon themselves will repose their faith in the wisdom of men rather than in the wisdom of God.

c. The supreme court of appeal will be "the infallible interpretation" of each party, a thought as reprehensible as "an infallible interpreter," or pope."

In this article, I want to consider some further thoughts with reference to those three paragraphs.

Brother Ketcherside states that God's word can be understood and that such understanding can only come by using those "rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters" (paragraph #1). However, he affirms that these conclusions are not formally binding on anyone else because they are a result of the word of God having been filtered through human rational processes (paragraph #2).

I would like to know by whose authority brother Ketcherside speaks so positively, so decidedly, so certainly? Does he know that it is an absolute truth that we can come to a knowledge of God's will by applying those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters? If he should answer in the affirmative, then I must ask, "How do you know that you can know such?" Is he absolutely sure? Is he certain that he can?

If he knows that he can know that the word of God can be understood, does he know that another person can know that the word of God can be understood?

If he affirms that he, as well as another person, can know that the word of God can be understood, and know that they know, then can they know that since these conclusions which they reach must depend in part, or in whole, upon the deductions made from the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes, that the conclusions cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship with the Father and know that they know such? Is he absolutely sure, is he absolutely positive, is he certain that he can know such?

Brother Ketcherside has concluded that since one's conclusions represent the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes, these conclusions cannot be binding upon another, unless commended unto such individual by his own study. Now, how did brother Ketcherside come to such a conclusion? By what method? Is not his conclusion about my conclusions based upon deductions which were filtered through human rational processes?

He concludes that my conclusions cannot be binding upon another person because my conclusions have been filtered through human rational processes. Am I to conclude therefore, that his conclusion about my conclusions

has not been filtered down through human rational processes? Brother Ketcherside binds his conclusion (which was reached through human rational processes) that I cannot bind my conclusions which have been filtered through human rational processes! O consistency, thou art a jewel!!!!

THOSE RULES OF LOGICAL INTERPRETATION

Brother Ketcherside mentions "those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters" in paragraph #1. Whose rules are these? Who is their author? What if I subjectively determine that I do not want to abide by these rules? Are there any rules which make it binding upon me to accept these rules brother Ketcherside mentions? What if, in my study, I decide that I do not want to abide by these rules to which brother Ketcherside refers? But on the other hand, would it really make any difference what rules we used, since his basic contention is that we will not necessarily come to the same conclusions anyway; furthermore, it really makes no difference whether we come to the same conclusions or not, Bible truth is whatever we subjectively think it is anyway!

Are "those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters" understandable? Or are they so complicated that they are actually confusing? Although I do not know to which rules he refers, I do know that the results of his philosophy is most confusing.

Brother Ketcherside contends that the word of God can be understood. This understanding can only come by diligent investigation of the scriptures, using those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters. The results of such study must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ as given through the apostles. However, these conclusions are not binding on anyone else unless such is commended to that person by his own investigation. Therefore, brother Ketcherside is affirming this basis premise: Two different people can take the *same* word of God, use the *same* rules of logical interpretation and come to two divergent, often contradictory, views of what the *same* passage teaches and both views be correct. This, dear readers, is subjectivity and relativity at its best. Nothing is binding upon Christians today; everything is allowed!

THE WORD OF GOD IS UNCHANGING

Considering what brother Ketcherside advocates, strange indeed is it to read on page 83 of this very same book brother Ketcherside's statement, "The word of God is unchanging." How unlike this statement is to that premise presented in the three paragraphs under consideration: not only is it unlike

this premise, but it is contradictory.

Notice his thoughts on page 168 of this same book. "As truth becomes available unto us we must embrace and apply it to our own life and conduct, or we deny the faith which brings us into relationship with the truth." He says, "As truth becomes available unto us. . ." that is, as we become cognizant of a truth not previously recognized, we must embrace it in our life or be guilty of denying the faith which brings us into relationship with the truth.

What he is really saying here is that I might hold that the truth of proposition P is true for a period of time. But, by my study of the word of God, I subjectively come to the conclusion that proposition P is no longer true, but is now false. Therefore, I must reject "true" (for my own self only) and accept "false," or be guilty of denying this faith.

Please understand, according to his philosophy, I was acceptable unto God when I thought proposition P was true. Even though I have now accepted the exact opposite, I still am correct and acceptable to God.

Let us suppose that brother Smith and brother Jones both consider the truth of proposition P as being true, and openly advocate such. However, after a considerable period of study, brother Smith arrives at a conclusion that proposition P is no longer true, but is now false. According to brother Ketcherside's conclusion, brother Smith was correct when he considered proposition P as true and is still correct after changing his mind. He would only be wrong if he refused to follow his "opinion," subjectively reached.

But this still leaves brother Jones. How is he to be considered by brother Smith? With the open arms of fellowship! As one who is faithful to God and teaching the truth!

Let us consider this proposition. "The Bible teaches that Christ will return to earth, set up His kingdom and reign for a literal 1000 years." Brother Jones would say "true". Brother Smith would say "false". Brother Ketcherside would have us to believe that neither man was incorrect in his answer, because both men had examined the text of revelation, applying those rules of logical interpretation, and had come to their own conclusion as to what was the doctrine of Christ. However, since these two conclusions "represent the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes," they cannot be binding upon any other person, unless commended to that person by his own investigation, perception and conscience.

Thus, in our illustration, proposition P

was unanimously "true" for a period of time. Later on, however, proposition P became "true" and "false" at the same time.

This violates one of the traditional "Aristotelian Laws of Thought" as given by Ruby, "A proposition, P, cannot be both true and false".¹ But brother Ketcherside evidently believes that proposition P can be both true and false at the same time.

Notice the conclusions as reached by brother Smith and brother Jones.

"The Bible teaches that Christ *will* return to earth, set up His kingdom and reign for a literal 1000 years."

"The Bible teaches that Christ *will not* return to earth, set up His kingdom and reign for a literal 1000 years."

Both men have used "those rules of logical interpretation" and both men have come to directly opposite conclusions, and these directly opposite conclusions are to be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ. Now what kind of logic is that? It is a denial of the very concept of logic! It is nothing more than mere assertion.

The foundation of this type of "logic"? is nothing more than the quicksand of falsehood that will engulf its advocates in having to compromise "the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col.1:5) in pitiful silence, unable to objectively affirm anything or objectively deny anything.

In the spiritual realm, brother Ketcherside has placed himself under a philosophy that he would utterly reject in the physical realm. Let us suppose that he became very ill and was placed in one of the best hospitals in the country, with two of the best doctors in the country attending to him. After several tests were completed, each doctor gave his own diagnosis. Dr. Smith said that brother Ketcherside was to do "such and such" and under no circumstances was he to do "thus and so," and that his very life depended upon his complying with this. However, Dr. Jones

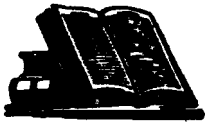
comes to his room later and tells him to do "thus and so," and under no circumstances was he to do "such and such," and that his very life depended upon complying with this.

I wonder what brother Ketcherside would do in such a case? Do you suppose that he would try to comply with both doctors' orders? Do you suppose that he would reason that both of the doctors were honest in their diagnosis and that neither doctor was to bind his "opinion" upon the other? Do you suppose that brother Ketcherside would reason that it really makes no difference which doctor's orders he followed, since they were both the results of human rational processes? I wonder what his reaction would be to those directly opposite orders? (More to follow)

FOOTNOTES

1. Lionel Ruby, *Logic An Introduction* (Chicago: Philadelphia: New York: J.B. Lippincott Co., 1950) p.255

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DEFENDER

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

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER, 1979

What Is Killing The Lord's Church In America?

ROGER SHIFLET

Recently, Dr. Flavil Yeakley reported the following: "Here are some conclusions that I have reluctantly reached after almost 10 years of careful statistical research studying patterns of growth in the churches of Christ in America. Unless we reverse the trend of the past 15 years: (1) the growth of the churches of Christ in this nation will stop in the early 1980s; (2) before the end of this century we will have only half the membership we now have; and (3) within 50 years the church will no longer exist in the United States."

Brethren, this is not what *might* happen, this is what is happening! The church of Christ in the U. S. is *dying*! The church is facing a crisis today that makes the Roman persecution look like child's play. This is not a crisis from without but a crisis from within. It is not a quick, merciful death, but a slow, agonizing, cancer-like death. If our children are to know what Christianity is, we must act now to restore the New Testament church in this country. But before we can attack the problem it must first be identified. Therefore, the remainder of this article will deal with the question -- "What is killing the Lord's church in America?"

The Lord's church in America is being killed by **MATERIALISM**. This country is in love with things, with possessions, and this attitude has infected the church. Despite the Lord's cry of "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth," the Lord's church has become so covetous. Many good and useful programs will never be instituted because of

this prevailing stinginess of heart. When a new and challenging program of work is suggested the first question raised is, "Where would we get the money?" (The answer to this question is and has always been, "Out of our pockets.") Following is a portion of a letter written by a young communist.

"A genuine radical lives in virtual poverty. He turns back to the party penny he makes above what is absolutely necessary to keep him alive...Radicals don't have time or the money for many movies or concerts or T-bone steaks, or decent homes and new cars. We've been described as fanatics. We are. Our lives are dominated by one great, overshadowing factor -- the struggle for socialism."

We will lose to these people unless our commitment to truth is equal to or greater than their commitment to error.

The Lord's church in America is being killed by **WORLDLINESS**. There was a time when a marked difference existed between the Christian and the non-Christian. It is God's will that this be the case (Cf. 1 Cor.6:17 and 1 Peter 2:9). But "We've come a long way, baby." We have now reached the point where we blend in beautifully with the world. We speak the same language, wear the same clothes, embrace the same morality, and even tolerate the same sins. The world is full of Demases of whom Paul said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

The Lord's church in America is being killed-
(Continued on page 79)

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DEFENDER

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Editorial

HOW FAR TO THE COUNTRY CLUB?

BILL DILLON

"Come on in and let me entertain you" has been the world's motto for some years now and unfortunately, the church of Christ seems well on its way to adopting the same philosophy; which is befitting to the world perhaps, yet it is unbecoming those whose affections are set on things above (Col.2:1-2). The fact that these are days of vacillation and compromise, resulting in an imposition of various doctrinal errors, is evident as we read of gospel efforts being promoted on the basis of "free food", "free entertainment", "movies", and "plays"; all sponsored by a church of Christ. Although, refraining from using the term "country club", yet what better phrase could a church of Christ use to describe itself while spending the Lord's money for gymnasiums, exercise rooms, sunset rooms, fellowship halls, lake repairs, pool expenses, horse expenses and rifle range expenses? When the drawing power of Christianity becomes halloween parties, sports activities and fun and games, then little wonder the world begins to lessen the distinction between churches and clubs. Such matters fill all God-fearing, Christ honoring Christians with alarm. While well aware there are many sound congregations in the brotherhood; yet it cannot be successfully denied that many churches of Christ have become infected with the spirit of worldliness in becoming yoked with the entertainment business.

However, there have been warnings in the past, as over thirty years ago in the *Gospel Advocate* B. C. Goodpasture wrote about this grievous and deplorable danger:

"It is not the mission of the church to furnish amusement for the world or even its own members. Innocent amusement in proper proportion has its place in the life of all normal persons, but it is not the business of the church to furnish it. The church would come in a poor second if it undertook to compete with institutions established for the purpose of entertaining people. It would make itself ridiculous if it entered into such competition. Again, it is not the responsibility of the church as such to furnish recreation for its members. A certain amount of recreation is necessary to the health and happiness of the

individual. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, it is said, and rightly said; but it is not the function of the church to furnish the play. The church was not established to feature athletics. Rather it emphasizes the principle that 'bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come' [1 Tim.4:8]. Sometimes one would conclude from the emphasis given to recreation, that godliness is profitable for a little, and that bodily exercise is profitable for all things.

"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 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 in the lap of Delilah, will it turn from its wonted 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' (1 Cor.2:2).

"If the church will discharge its duty in preaching the gospel, in edifying the members, and in helping the worthy poor, it will not have desire or time merely to amuse and entertain."

Let all Israel know assuredly that food, fun and frolic and "noise, numbers and nickels" will not genuinely draw souls (John 6:22ff), nor will they ever be a substitute for knowing God and His son, Jesus Christ (John 17:1-3).

Gimmickery has likewise made enormous and fearful inroads into gospel preaching. Men actually now claim to illustrate Bible lessons by performing gymnastic stunts before assemblies across the land. Those who support such efforts as "Gymnastics to the Glory of God" because it is "Using your talent to His benefit" should have no issue to take with the strip tease dancer, in the Nashville Tennessean May 4, 1979, who says her disrobing is in accord with her religion as she claims to preach while stripping. There is as much authority in using "Gymnastics to the

Glory of God" as for "Stripping to The Glory of God" in order to teach the gospel. Of course strip tease dancing violates many other Biblical precepts such as 1 Tim.2:9 and Titus 2:4-5 (just as immodest apparel in a gymnasium does also), but as far as justifying gymnastics to preach or stripping to preach, on the basis of using your talent, then they rest on a par. However diverse and valued our talents may be, whether riding motorcycles, meat cutting or other, it is wrong on that basis alone, to justify its use in worship to God. Is gospel preaching so off balance and unappealing as to require an artificial contrivance for support? Has it been forgotten that effectiveness in preaching is due, in large part, to the spirituality of the audience (Acts 7:51-53; Matt.13:13-15; 2 Tim.4:3-4)? There is no substitute for the vibrant gospel of Christ, "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom.1:16).

In far too many communities the name of "church of Christ" has become almost synonymous with "country club". How far is it to the country club? Maybe the question should be, "How long is it to the country club?" If the frightening trends, which utterly disdain Biblical authority, continue--then, in the words of an old song, "It won't be very long". One thing is certain though: however far or long the country club may be, the next stop is the morgue.

WHAT IS KILLING THE LORD'S CHURCH IN AMERICA?
 ed by INDIFFERENCE. Christianity is a religion which demands that people care. We must care about the truth (Jude 3), the church (1 Cor.3:16,17), our fellow-man (Lk.10:30-37), the brethren (Phil.3:3,4), the lost (Jn.4:35), and ourselves (1 Tim.4:6). But when one views the prevailing attitude in the church today he is tempted to cry out with Jeremiah the prophet, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" Everywhere one looks in the church he sees priests and Levites passing by on the other side. The world is lost and untaught, many of our members are unfaithful, the church crumbles--and it seems that nobody cares. Now would be a good time to consider again God's warning in Amos chapter 6. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion...that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief oils; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."

The church is being killed by **LACK OF INVOLVEMENT**. During the turbulent 1960s, President Lyndon Johnson often referred to what he called "The Silent Majority." Such a designation is easily fitting in the church. Legion are those who refuse to become involved in teaching a Bible class; visitation work; strong, effective, visionary leadership, etc. Apparently, many think that the way to heaven is to do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. Many refuse to visit the unfaithful for fear of making waves or being criticized as a busybody. Many refuse to speak out for what is right and godly for fear of being labeled a fanatic. Many refuse to defend the faith for fear that the lost will be offended while caring not that God is offended, yea nauseated, by such lukewarmness. In the New Testament, the Christian life is pictured by a runner running a race (Heb.12:1,2), a soldier fighting a battle (1 Tim.6:12), a farmer raising a crop (2 Tim.2:6). All of these illustrations picture intense activity conducted over a brief period of time. Such is the Christian life as God would have it lived (Jn.9:4).

The church of the Lord in America is being killed by **IGNORANCE**. God, through the prophet Hosea, once said, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." There was a time in this country when members of the church of Christ were renowned for their Bible knowledge. Those days are gone. So-called Christians have time enough to spend with newspapers, magazines, and infantile novels but none for the Word of God and material relating thereto. And there is always a convenient excuse for not attending Bible Class. In the Summer they'll be too hot; in the Winter too cold; in the Spring too busy, in the Fall too lazy, and in eternity too late to repent or compensate for their neglect. Such excuses are merely the skins of reasons stuffed with lies. There is no excuse for the ignorance of God's word which eats away at the church (Ps.1:1,2).

The Lord's church in America is being killed by **WISHY-WASHY TEACHING**. The preaching of the apostles was very plain and pointed. In effect they said, "You are a sinner and you need Jesus" (Cf. Acts 2:36-38; 3:14, 15; 13:40,41). But today the rank and file cry, "Don't tell anybody they are wrong." "Don't offend any one." "Don't make waves." "Cry peace, peace when there is no peace." Every Sunday, preachers all over the country, afraid for their livelihoods, stand in pulpits

and scratch the itching ears of a luke-warm brotherhood. If God's word is true, they have bowed the knee to Baal and will pay the consequences. Often when a preacher or teacher takes a strong stand for right and against wrong, he is accused of being a troublemaker (Cf. 1 Kgs.18:17,18). Despite this all who would preach or teach the Word of God must determine to do so plainly and powerfully and without fear or favor.

The church of the Lord in America is being killed by **SECTARIANISM**. The Lord's church is not and could never be a denomination, for when any religious group becomes a denomination, it ceases to be the Lord's church. Denominationalism is wrong, sinful (Cf. Jn. 17:20,21; 1 Cor.1:10). Yet many brethren today would immitate and support the denominations in every particular. Formerly such actions on the part of God's people have been described as whoredom (Cf. Hos.4:11-13). We must not extend the hand of fellowship to those in error nor may we in any way partake of their evil deeds (2 Jn.9-11).

The Lord's church in America is being killed by **LIBERALISM**. This, brethren, may very well be the root problem of all we have discussed. More and more "brethren" are being influenced by those who teach that: (1) the Bible is not inspired, word by word, of God, (2) not all things are black or white but are sometimes a "mushy" gray, (3) the rightness or wrongness of a thing can be ascertained by appealing to feelings, conscience, common sense or love, sweet love. We must return, wholeheartedly, to the Biblical injunction of Col.1:17: "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord." We must realize that all authority is the Christ's (Mt.28:18); that His authoritative teaching was passed on, miraculously, to the apostles and New Testament prophets (Jn.16:13); they, guided by the Holy Spirit, wrote these things down and they are preserved, in permanent form, in the book which we call the Bible (1 Cor.2:11-13). The written word of God is inspired and infallible and is the only proper standard of authority among men (2 Tim.3:16, 17).

Brethren, it is entirely possible that our young people will see the day when missionaries will come from India, Africa, and South America to convert the heathen United States to New Testament Christianity. May God help us all to see the crisis facing the church today and to act *now*!

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The Twisted Scriptures - Part IV

TOM L. BRIGHT

In previous articles under the same heading, I have pointed out the basic idea of brother W. Carl Ketcherside and other liberals of the same philosophy.

As previously stated, brother Ketcherside sets forth this basic subjective philosophy in three short paragraphs on pages 176-177 of his book *The Twisted Scriptures*. By way of quick review, let us notice his thoughts as presented. He contends that the doctrine of God can be understood by diligent investigation of earnest students who examine God's word, applying those rules of logical interpretation which govern such matters, free from preconceived ideas. The results of such study must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ. But since these conclusions represent God's word as filtered through human rational processes, these same conclusions cannot be constituted conditions of fellowship. These deductions made by one person or a group of individuals cannot be formally binding upon any other individual, or group of individuals, unless commended to that individual, or group of individuals, by their own investigation, perception and conscience. These conclusions can be shared, but not bound upon any other.

I propose to show that brother Ketcherside is wholly inconsistent with his own words; that the whole tenor of this book contradicts the basic thought that he presents in these three paragraphs. To this end I now proceed.

IGNORING THE CONTEXT

In the first chapter of this book, brother Ketcherside approaches the subject of the various ways the scriptures can be twisted. In one section entitled "Ignoring the Context," brother Ketcherside writes on page 3, "The sacred scriptures occur in three contexts--time, place and revelation. If properly understood, they must be studied in the light of all of these." I want to draw your attention to the phrase, "if properly understood." What does he mean by this? Following his philosophy, how are we to understand this phrase? What does he really mean when he says that God's word can be "properly" understood? Webster's unabridged dictionary says that "properly" is an adverb and defines it as "in a proper manner" (p.1442). Of the twelve different uses of the word "proper" as listed by Webster, the only one which really fits here is "conforming to an accepted standard or to good usage; correct."

Am I to understand that brother Ketcherside is saying that the scriptures can be correctly (properly) understood? But, following his basic philosophy as recorded in the three paragraphs, how could anything be correctly (properly) understood? Could there really be any "correct" understanding? Could there really be any "incorrect" understanding? If so, please tell me how. And if there is a "correct" (proper) understanding, will this be an understanding alike? By reading his statement on page three, it would so seem; but pages 176-177 are contradictory to such thinking.

Some of the contradictory things that brother Ketcherside did in this book was to present the idea of a "proper" understanding of a certain passage; or to take upon himself the responsibility to explain what a passage taught and even giving a "paraphrase" of a certain passage.

Notice his thought on page 74. "The quest for the truth demands OBJECTIVE RESEARCH into that language." (emp. mine, TLB). Without a doubt, I believe in "objective research," but does brother Ketcherside? If he does he would be hard pressed to prove such. His basic reasoning is whatever I determine the scriptures to teach, that is what they teach.

Consider a statement on the same page. "The expression occurs within a setting and must be understood in the light of its context if properly interpreted." Again, compare his subjectivity with the idea of "...if properly interpreted." Is there agreement between the two ideas? If so, please point it out to me.

Notice his statement on page 79. "Allow me to paraphrase the passage SO YOU MAY UNDERSTAND WHAT THE APOSTLE IS SAYING to correct the situation." (emp. mine, TLB). He volunteers to paraphrase a passage so we might understand the writer. According to his subjectivity, why be concerned about paraphrasing any passage? Is it not his contention that whatever I determine the Bible teaches, that is what it teaches?

He says, "...so you may understand..." Understand according to whom, brother Ketcherside? Does he mean that I should understand the passage as he understands it? According to his philosophy, it really makes no difference whether I understand it like he does or not, whatever I subjectively conclude

a passage teaches, that is what it teaches.

Does he want me to understand it as he understands it? If so, why? Can we not have his "unity in diversity"?

Consider what he writes on page 116 with reference to 1 John 1:7, "An objective analysis of this passage..." Does he really believe in "an objective analysis"? If so, will he and I understand the passage ALIKE when we both have made "an objective analysis"? If we cannot, why even contend for an objective analysis? Why not a subjective analysis? After all, this is what he really believes anyway.

On page 143, brother Ketcherside writes, "Only if we recall constantly the nature of this commandment which was had from the beginning can we ever understand John properly." Again, notice the idea he presents of understanding an inspired writer "properly" (correctly). Does he really believe that this can happen? Possibly he intends for me to understand John "properly" in a subjective way.

DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

In the same chapter, under the section entitled "Disrespect for Authority," page 9, brother Ketcherside writes, "The problem with which we are dealing arises from LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES." (Emp. mine, TLB). Are these not very strange words to flow from the same hand which penned the three paragraphs on pages 176-177 of the same book? Indeed, they are strange; perhaps "contradictory" would be a better word!

According to brother Ketcherside's theory, who determines whether one has or has not respected the "authority of the sacred scriptures"? According to his premise, how can one really NOT respect the authority of the sacred scriptures? Is one not to make a diligent investigation of the scriptures, applying those rules of logical interpretation which determine such matters, and is not the result then to be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ? Is it not also true that he affirms that since such conclusions are filtered through human rational processes that such conclusions are not formally binding on any others? How then can one show disrespect for the authority of the sacred scriptures? Whatever I subjectively determine a passage teaches, that is what that passage teaches TO ME and is binding ONLY UPON ME!

To further confirm his teaching on this thought, let us notice his statement on page 25. "But I respect the right of others to read the Word of God for themselves, to make

their OWN DEDUCTIONS AND FORM THEIR OWN CONCLUSIONS, I do not want anyone else to impose his opinions upon me so I refuse to impose mine upon him. The same scripture which allows ME LIBERTY OF JUDGMENT WILL ALLOW IT TO ALL OTHERS WHO EAGERLY SEARCH FOR TRUTH." (emp. mine, TLB).

Does he really give me the right to read the Word of God, to make my own deductions and to form my own conclusions? If my PERSONAL DEDUCTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS are that I should not consider as faithful Christians those who use instrumental music in their worship, does he still give me this right to read God's Word and to make my own deductions and come to my own conclusions? Indeed, he DOES NOT! According to him, I have the right to make my own deductions and form my own conclusions only as long as I accept, and fellowship, WHATEVER another person concludes to be the teaching of the Bible, irregardless of whether he agrees with me or not.

He OBJECTIVELY affirms that every person has the right to SUBJECTIVELY determine what the Bible teaches! O consistency, thou art a jewel!

If I truly have the liberty to read the Bible and form my own opinion as to what is the truth, why is brother Ketcherside so concerned about whether one really understands (as he understands) the Bible or not? Of course, I may not understand it as he does, but will he argue that I have MISUNDERSTOOD the Bible? Only if I disagree with him.

Let us notice another statement on page 26 of this book. "It is time for men to grow up and free themselves from traditional explanations and expositions which have long since been proven to be invalid." Following his basic subjective philosophy, how can this brother truthfully say that any traditional explanation and exposition has "been proven to be valid"? Who is the one who determines that they have long since been proven to be invalid? Who has the right to take this authoritarian stance and make such a statement? By whose authority is this claim made? Who is it that has authoritatively come to this conclusion which has been filtered through human rational processes, and would make it binding upon any other than those who have come to such conclusions by their own investigation, perception and conscience?

Let us suppose that I should make a diligent investigation of the scriptures and come to the conclusion that these traditional explanations are still valid? Does brother Ketcherside assume the right to tell me they are invalid? But once again we see that his thoughts presented here are not in harmony with his contention recorded in the three

paragraphs under consideration.

CREEDS

On page 39, brother Ketcherside writes, "Whatever one must accept to be regarded as loyal is a creed." We might ask this brother what his creed is. What does he contend one must believe to be loyal? His "creed" has already been stated on pages 176-177. Because I completely reject his subjectivity and relativity, am I loyal? If I contend that the one teaching premillennialism, or the one advocating the use of instrumental music in worship, is teaching error, and will separate myself from those who so do, am I loyal? Can brother Ketcherside consistently say that I am wrong? After all, have I not come to this conclusion by my own subjective reasoning? By his own words nothing is binding upon me other than that which I come to perceive through my own investigation.

Therefore, if I conclude that I must separate from those who are teaching (what I consider) false doctrine, how can brother Ketcherside consistently condemn me?

On page 98 he writes, "Having learned that doctrine that division is a sin, I shall mark and avoid all who create schisms and offences contrary to this doctrine." Now suppose that I conclude that I must separate from those who are using the musical instrument in their worship. What will brother Ketcherside "mark and avoid?" The man who insists on using the instrument, or me for insisting that it should not be used? I think you know the answer as well as I do!

In total agreement with his basic philosophy presented in the three paragraphs on pages 176-177, brother Ketcherside succinctly presents his "creed" on page 98, in the same paragraph as the above quotation. Hear it. "It is true that I have learned a lot of things which commend themselves to me as the doctrine of Christ BUT I DO NOT INTEND TO DEFEND OR DENOUNCE THEM." (Emp. mine, TLB). Just think of all the passages that would never have been written if the inspired writers had agreed with brother Ketcherside; 1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; Gal. 1:6-9 are among many that his contention would completely disregard. I wonder how the four accounts of the gospel would read if Jesus (to whom brother Ketcherside so strongly avows his allegiance) had followed the same philosophy as brother Ketcherside.

AREAS OF DIVERSITY

The fifth chapter of this book is entitled "Conformity or Diversity," and is an attempt to propagate the liberal plank of "unity in diversity." In setting forth what he classi-

fied as areas of diversity "in the primitive community of saints," I would like to point our attention to his consideration of his fourth area of diversity, as listed on page 67. "There was a diversity in KNOWLEDGE. The apostle Paul pointed out that all knowledge was relative (1 Cor. 8:2). God's revelation is perfect." Let us note that he affirms that "The apostle Paul pointed out that ALL knowledge was relative." I beg brother Ketcherside to show where, in any verse of the eighth chapter of First Corinthians, or anywhere else, does Paul say that ALL knowledge was relative. ("relative" carries the idea of not being absolute, depending upon something else for significance.) Thus, his liberal credentials show through once again.

It might do brother Ketcherside well to read his own thoughts on page 112 and apply the very same principle to what he wrote here. "To read anything else into it is to ignore the setting entirely and twist the scriptures capriciously and arbitrarily to fit a preconceived idea or notion." Indeed, he is guilty of ignoring the setting entirely and has twisted the scriptures capriciously and arbitrarily to fit his preconceived idea. Of a truth, brother Ketcherside is eminently qualified to write a book on the twisting of the scriptures!

Let us notice another thought in the same paragraph just mentioned. "God's revelation is perfect for the purpose for which it was given. Men's knowledge of it is not perfect." How does he know this? In the sentence just before this, he states that ALL knowledge is relative. How then, can he write that "God's revelation is perfect for the purpose for which it was given"? Can he consistently refute one who denies the all-sufficiency of God's revelation to man? Remember, he had just written that the apostle Paul taught that all knowledge was relative. If this be true, can he consistently refute the one who does not accept the all-sufficiency of God's revelation of man? I think not.

Indeed, the "knowledge" under consideration in 1 Cor. 8 was "relative." But we must understand that this was with reference to the eating of meat which had been offered to idols and whether one would eat such in violation of his own conscience. But there is a vast difference in saying that the "knowledge" of 1 Cor. 8:2 was relative and in saying that ALL knowledge is relative. And if brother Ketcherside or any other person says that 1 Cor. 8 teaches that ALL knowledge is relative, that person is a false teacher and in violation of God's will!

It is evident that the thought expressed in the three paragraphs under consideration do not agree with the tenor of this book. If



DEFENDER

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

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The Twisted Scriptures - Part V

TOM L. BRIGHT

In his urging for the unity of all the believers, brother Ketcherside writes on page 11 of *The Twisted Scriptures*, "Being human, there is only one type of unity possible for us, and this is unity in diversity." On page 20 he states, "The fact is that the only unity possible on this earth for THINKING people is unity in diversity" (emp. his, TLB). On page 65 we find this statement, "We assert that if there is any unity at all it must be unity in diversity."

In these quotations, we find the liberal plank of "Unity in Diversity" that is advocated by many today. We must understand that this is not a new theory, the denominations have used it for years. The newest thing about it is that many of my brethren have adopted it and are openly advocating it.

The supposed reason for such a theory is given by brother Ketcherside on the back cover of the book under consideration. Hear what he says. "This is a book of protest! Its author is deeply opposed to the division of God's family over human opinions and deductions from the sacred scriptures. He holds that any use of the written word to defeat the purpose of the Living Word is abuse and misuse, and can only come by twisting the divine revelation."

I am also deeply opposed to the division of God's family over human opinions. But right here I want to call your attention to something of which all should be aware. Notice, he speaks of divisions over human "opinions" and "deductions".

First of all, exactly what does he mean by "deductions"? By "opinions"? We shall allow brother Ketcherside, by his own writings, to answer these questions for us. The answer to the first question is found in the second of the three paragraphs that we have used as a basis for this series of articles (p. 177).

In the first paragraph, brother Ketcherside states that the word of God can be understood by the diligent investigation of earnest students who apply those rules of logical interpretation; upon such investigation, the result must be conceded to be the doctrine of Christ. Now let us notice the second paragraph and we can plainly see what "deductions" he refers to as being the source of division in the body of Christ. "In view of the fact that such conclusions must depend in part, or in whole, upon the deductions made from the sacred scriptures, and thus represent the sacred oracles as filtered through human rational processes, the conclusions cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship to the Father. They must not be regarded as the basis for life but of growth, and that rate differs with each individual who is in Christ."

Now, the "deductions" that he mentions on the very back page as being the cause of division are the same "deductions" which he claims "cannot be constituted conditions of union or communion or tests of one's relationship to the Father," since they have been "filtered through human rational processes."

(Continued on page 87)

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Editorial

"For me to live is
Christ and to die
is gain." Phil. 1:21

For Me To Live Is Christ

WILLIAM S. CLINE

The apostle Paul's attitude toward life, simply yet magnificently stated was, *"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* In the twilight of his years he could review his life, look beyond the river of death, and in sublime confidence say, while standing on the brink of the tomb, *"For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."*

Judging many professed Christians by their fruits -- and the Saviour did say, *"...by their fruits ye shall know them"* -- one can think of various renderings which might be given to the above passage:

"For me to live is the world..."

"For me to live is pleasure..."

"For me to live is fame..."

"For me to live is self-gratification..."

"For me to live is to make money..."

But to each of these we must add the solemn ending, *"AND TO DIE IS LOSS."*

What a glorious thing it is to lose sight of the world with all of its fleeting pleasures, selfish lusts, ease and fame and work for the Christ. Such unselfishness brings the sweetest, highest joys that can be enjoyed this side of heaven. The man who loses sight of self and works wholly for Christ is on the one road that leads to true happiness. Yet we seem so slow in learning this valuable lesson. Paul could rejoice in the midst of cruel stonings, ship wrecks, false brethren, imprisonments, stripes, etc. The joy and sunshine of heaven so filled his soul that he could lose sight of the cruel tortures which were without. Though confined in a dungeon, his back

bleeding and his body filled with pain, he still *prayed and sang praises to God!* He was not ready to give up God in the midst of opposition. He was not ready to blame God and throw in the towel. Paul was ready to pay the price no matter what it was, for to him to live was Christ. And as surely as he lived he would live to advance the kingdom of Christ. He would live, work and be spent for the cause of Christ. Listen to him again, *"I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace."*

Think what conquest the church would soon make for Christ if every member could say, *"For me to live is Christ. I am going to give my talents, my earthly store, my all to honor God."* What a blessing it would be if every member of the kingdom would *"present his body a living sacrifice"* unto God in order that he might build up the kingdom for which Christ died. We should ever remember that we are wearing the name of Christ and should do nothing that will bring reproach on His name. Our aim, our desire, our talents and our energy should be used to live for Christ. If we will do this then the end will be the glorious gain of eternity in heaven.

THE TWISTED SCRIPTURES

In other words, in total agreement with his basic philosophy of subjectivity, he is urging the idea that I can study the scriptures and come to a conclusion as to what they teach. However, since "human rational processes" were used in reaching these conclusions, these same conclusions are binding only upon me. The only way they are binding upon any other person is for that person to come to the same conclusions, using the very same "human rational processes." I can hold to these same conclusions AS LONG AS I do not make them conditions of union or communion, or tests of one's relationship to the Father. Should one hold to these conclusions, which are conceded to be the *doctrine of Christ*, to the point that division should be the result, then he is guilty of dividing God's family over *human deductions*.

Therefore, we can conclude that the *doctrine of Christ* is of little, if any, importance. After all, the *doctrine of Christ* is nothing more than what I conclude by human rational processes! And I would like to point out that brother Ketcherside came to this conclusion by human rational processes.

Therefore, he is binding his conclusion, that came by human rational processes, upon

me; this conclusion is that I cannot bind my conclusions upon anyone, which came to me by human rational processes. O consistency, thou are a jewel!

In the same paragraph on the back of this book, brother Ketcherside also listed "opinions" as a source of division in the Lord's church. With such we can well agree. But when one fully realizes what he means by "opinion", then we must take our stand against his false teaching.

Let us allow him to define what he means by "opinions", using his own words. "In practical application to our own messed up situation this means that I dare not enquire of another his opinion about the validity of instrumental music, the support of *Herald of Truth*, the Millennium, the present-day work of the Holy Spirit, or the use of Bible Classes, as a basis for our fellowship." (*Mission Messenger*, May, 1973, p.77, emp. his TLB). By a multitude of other quotations from brother Ketcherside's pen, we can abundantly show that he labels almost everything as "opinion".

Now, here is his basic argument. "Opinions" must not cause division in the Lord's body; since instrumental music, premillennialism and tongue speaking are "matters of opinion", we must not make them a test of fellowship and divide over them.

This is where the liberal plank of "unity of diversity" enters. Since two people might differ in their "opinion" (which was reached by human rational processes) about the validity of instrumental music, premillennialism or tongue speaking, we can still have diversification while having complete unity. All we have to do is allow everyone to believe whatever their subjectivity (human rational processes) dictates to them, accept them as teaching the truth and PRESTO! instant unity (in diversity)! We are united while diversified!

HIS ARGUMENT FOR "UNITY IN DIVERSITY"

To confirm his "unity in diversity" theory, brother Ketcherside attempts to draw an analogy from the domestic realm. Notice what he has to say. "Unity in the domestic realm is unity in diversity. A man and his wife become one flesh, not because they are alike, but because they are not. It is their unlikeness, their diversity, which makes physical unity possible. They are not uniform in their mental and intellectual attainments. Differences arise and arguments ensue in the very best of families. We do not assume that because a husband and wife differ as to which is the best brand of coffee that they no longer have a united home. We do not think

the family ties are severed because a teenager prefers a stick-shift sports car while his mother insists on buying a large job with automatic transmission" (p. 21-22).

Personally, I would have expected a more logical argument from a man as brother Ketcherside. This argument proves nothing except that he is grasping at straws for confirmation of a theory.

So, because a husband and wife might not agree on the best brand of coffee and still have a united house, I can disagree with the one using instrumental music and still have a united Church of Christ. Now, that is real logic!

Why doesn't brother Ketcherside give something that is parallel? Are differences over the best brand of coffee parallel to using or not using instrumental music in our worship to the God of heaven? Are differences over a

READER TAKE NOTICE

Every year we receive numerous letters from avid readers of the DEFENDER telling us that they have not received their December issue. We appreciate you missing the DEFENDER, but we have never printed a December issue; therefore, to save you costly postage and time, please remember the DEFENDER will be back in your mailbox in January.

May you have a prosperous New Year!!

--Editor

sports car with a standard transmission or a big job with automatic transmission parallel with whether or not Christ is coming back to this earth to set up a kingdom that He failed to establish the first time around?

What if a wife believed that she should keep herself in all purity for her husband and only for her husband, but her husband felt that he could commit adultery any time that he so desired? Would brother Ketcherside still argue for his "unity in diversity"? After all, would they not just have differing "opinions" as to how they should order their lives?

I am thoroughly convinced that this brother would not accept this idea. Yet, when it comes to the reasoning about the millennial kingdom of Christ upon the earth, he rejects something just as evidently wrong as the

example just given above and passes over it with a wave of the hand, regarding it as a matter of opinion. I have long begged the liberals to give me just one passage of scripture that might even hint at the idea that the kingdom has never been established, but they, just like all of the premillennialists, have never stepped forth with one passage for their confirmation.

Let us suppose that a woman studied all of the passages that pertain to a wife's subjection to her husband. After such study she subjectively decided that the Bible did not teach that she was to be in subjection to her husband. Subsequently, she refused to submit herself to her husband. Will brother Ketcherside argue here for his "unity in diversity"? Would this not merely be a matter of opinion, similar to a man and woman disagreeing over which is the best brand of coffee?

If our brother should disagree with this conclusion, by whose authority does he do so? By his own subjective reasoning which, itself, was filtered through human rational processes? Would he be consistent if he told the woman that she was wrong? Or would he advocate the thought that the Bible plainly and distinctly teaches that a woman is to be in subjection to her husband? But does the Bible more plainly and distinctly teach that she is to be in subjection to her husband than it plainly and distinctly teaches that the kingdom of heaven has been established? How much more distinctly could Paul have taught that the kingdom was in existence than when he told the Colossians that had been translated into it? (Col.1:13). In what way could John have more distinctly taught that the kingdom was in existence than when he told his readers that he was in it? (Rev.1:9).

Let us notice some more of his reasoning in his attempt to substantiate his claim for this unity in diversity. "Unity in the governmental realm is unity in diversity." In the next paragraph he writes, "We are not agreed upon tariffs or taxes, legislative programs, executive powers, or supreme court prerogatives" (p. 22). Indeed, we may not have the same thoughts or agree as to what they should or should not do. But does this confirm his "unity in diversity" contention? Does his parallel truly parallel? Our brother seems to have forgotten one simple thing, WE MUST ALL ABIDE BY THE SAME LAWS TO BE A GOOD CITIZEN.

Indeed, there are differences in the governmental realm. But if a law is passed, even though I opposed its passage, I am amendable to that law unless it violates God's will (Acts 5:29).

Some things are wrong in the governmental
(Continued on page 90)

FLORIDA SCHOOL of PREACHING

LAKELAND, FLORIDA

FIFTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

JANUARY 21 - 24, 1980

MONDAY, JANUARY 21

- 9:00 "GETTING INVOLVED IN MORAL ISSUES"
JOHN WADDEY
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
- 10:00 "BUILDING A BETTER BIBLE SCHOOL"
J. NOEL MEREDITH
CAMDEN, TENNESSEE
- 10:45 "PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH"
JIM COVIELLO
TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA
- 1:30 "SOUL SAVING: FISHING OR PADDLING"
T. PIERCE BROWN
WINTER PARK, FLORIDA
- 2:30 "FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY"
DALE R. LARSEN
SEFFNER, FLORIDA
- 3:30 "DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP"
FRANKLIN CAMP
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
- 7:00 CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30 "CHRISTIANITY DEMANDS ACTION"
JOHNNY RAMSEY
ARLINGTON, TEXAS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22

- 9:00 "GETTING INVOLVED IN MORAL ISSUES"
JOHN WADDEY
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
- 10:00 "BUILDING A BETTER BIBLE SCHOOL"
J. NOEL MEREDITH
CAMDEN, TENNESSEE
- 10:45 "RESTORING THE FALLEN"
CHARLES BURCH
BRANFORD, FLORIDA
- 1:30 "APPROACHING THE LOST"
LONNIE POLK
EVERGREEN, ALABAMA
- 2:30 "HOME BIBLE STUDIES"
BILL WATKINS
FT. LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
- 3:30 "DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP"
FRANKLIN CAMP
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
- 7:00 CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:30 "DECLARING THE WHOLE COUNSEL"
JACK EVANS
TERRELL, TEXAS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23

- 9:00 "GETTING INVOLVED IN MORAL ISSUES"
JOHN WADDEY
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
- 10:00 "BUILDING A BETTER BIBLE SCHOOL"
J. NOEL MEREDITH
CAMDEN, TENNESSEE
- 10:45 "UPHOLDING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH"
JACK EVANS
TERRELL, TEXAS
- 1:30 "SERIOUS BIBLE STUDY"
JOHNNY RAMSEY
ARLINGTON, TEXAS
- 2:30 "PREACHING IN DISTANT PLACES"
PERRY B. COTHAM
GRAND PRAIRIE, TEXAS
- 3:30 "DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP"
FRANKLIN CAMP
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
- 7:00 "CHOOSING RIGHT PRIORITIES"
MAURICE DAVIS
LAKELAND, FLORIDA
- 7:30 "STANDING AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL"
JOE GILMORE, JR.
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

- 9:00 "GETTING INVOLVED IN MORAL ISSUES"
JOHN WADDEY
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
- 10:00 "BUILDING A BETTER BIBLE SCHOOL"
J. NOEL MEREDITH
CAMDEN, TENNESSEE
- 10:45 "WALKING BY FAITH"
JOE GILMORE, JR.
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
- 1:30 "UNDERSTANDING PROBLEMS OF YOUTH"
ORVEL BOYD
MT. DORA, FLORIDA
- 2:30 "TOTAL COMMITMENT"
HARVEY FLOYD
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
- 3:30 "DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP"
FRANKLIN CAMP
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
- 7:00 CHORUS - CHRISTIAN HOME AND BIBLE SCHOOL
VERNON MEANS, DIRECTOR
MT. DORA, FLORIDA
- 7:30 "THE DANGER OF NEUTRALITY"
WILLARD COLLINS
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

realm and they are wrong for everybody. Some things are right in the governmental realm and they are right for everyone.

None will deny the fact that in the spiritual realm there are matters of opinion; that there are areas that each can be different than the others. But this does not even begin to imply that every, single solitary thing falls into this category.

There is this "unity in diversity" in the home. But this does not mean that every single aspect of the husband/wife, parent-child relationship falls into this category. There is "unity in diversity" in the governmental realm, but this does not necessitate the conclusion that every single aspect of this realm is "opinion".

On page 23, brother Ketcherside states "Unity in the Spiritual Realm is unity in diversity." I definitely agree that there is that which exists in the Lord's church that brother Ketcherside calls "unity in diversity," which is nothing more than matters of opinion. But to say that everything is in this realm is to go beyond what is written. To say that tongue-speaking, instrumental music in our worship and premillennialism falls into the realm where we should have "unity in diversity" is absolutely false teaching!

Instrumental music in our worship is an addition, not a matter of opinion. Premillennialism emphatically denies the power of God. Miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the 20th century are opposed to the teaching of the Bible; no matters of opinion here!

Our brother needs to realize that there is a vast amount of difference in SOME things being classified as "matters of opinion", and every single, solitary thing in the spiritual realm being "matters of opinion."

No one will deny that the New Testament church has been divided by people legislating where God has not. Indeed, "Every faction regards its traditions as having tremendous importance while denigrating those of others" (p. 65). But is extremism in the opposite direction the answer? Extremes, whichever direction they might go, are wrong. The answer is not that we should over-react and make everything matters of opinion.

Generally speaking, I can agree with brother Ketcherside's statements (taken at face value) concerning how I am to act towards those whose opinions vary with mine. But we must always be cognizant of this one fact: that almost everything is considered by brother Ketcherside as being a "matter of

opinion".

AREAS OF DIVERSITY

In the chapter entitled "Conformity or Diversity," pages 64-82, brother Ketcherside lists some "Areas of Diversity" among the "primitive community of saints" to substantiate his Unity in Diversity theory.

First of all, he says there was a diversity of GIFTS, using 1 Cor. 12:4-6, stating that "What was said of the gifts bestowed supernaturally will also be true of gifts derived naturally."

If this is true, then let us ask some questions. What was the purpose of the gifts? Did they not have a specific goal, a specific purpose? Indeed they did! Was there a difference in the gifts? Certainly. Was there a DIFFERENCE in goals? Not as God designed it! Now, if "what was said of the gifts bestowed supernaturally will also be true of gifts derived naturally," would I be wrong in saying that what was said of the purpose of the gifts received supernaturally, can also be said of the purpose of any gifts received naturally? I think not.

Thus, we must conclude that the "diversity" of the spiritual gifts in the early church WAS NOT *purposed* for the "diversity" for which our brother so adamantly advocates. Brother Ketcherside's idea of "diversity" is as far removed from the "diversity" that Paul had under consideration as darkness is from light.

This reminds me of the old argument given in defense of instrumental music. "If I have this talent to play an instrument of music, should I not use it to the glory of God?" I suppose, therefore, we can find a man who can pick a winner at the horserace often enough to be a consistent and substantial money winner and let him raise money for the spread of the gospel! After all, is this not a natural talent?

Brother Ketcherside further states there was a diversity of functions. Indeed there was, but there was still that God given purpose for which these "functions" existed.

Were these "functions" allowed to do whatever they desired, whenever they desired and in a manner contradictory to God's appointed purpose? Was this Unity in Diversity to go in as many directions as there are points on the compass? Could one use these "functions" to advocate whatever he "thought"? Of a truth, what proves too much, proves nothing!

There was a God-given purpose for these gifts and functions. For one to continue in

the approbation of God, he had to stay with these God-given boundaries; and this approbation was ONLY within these boundaries!

Brother Ketcherside further states that "There was a diversity in UNDERSTANDING. Some had to be addressed as babes in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1). Their grasp of truth was elemental. 'I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready.' Others were mature. 'Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom' (1 Cor. 2:6). The impartation of wisdom was 'always on the ability to grasp what was taught. There was a difference from person to person and from congregation to congregation' (p. 57).

Now, if there ever was a twisting, a misuse and an abuse of the scriptures, it is in the above quoted paragraph.

According to our brother's subjective philosophy, Paul should have allowed the Corinthians latitude in their life, because they were at different levels of intellectual ability in grasping (understanding) inspired teaching. It seems that he has forgotten that the very verse he quotes to substantiate his Unity in Diversity is in the context of soundly condemning the division in the church at Corinth!

Indeed there was a "diversity of understanding", better yet, a gross misunderstanding. But here is the point that we must never forget: Paul, through inspiration, SOUNDLY AND IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS, CONDEMNED THE RESULTS OF THIS DIVERSITY OF UNDERSTANDING!!

In the very next paragraph brother Ketcherside wrote "There was a diversity in KNOWLEDGE. The apostle Paul pointed out that all knowledge was relative (1 Cor. 8:2). God's revelation is perfect for the purpose for which it was given. Man's knowledge of it is not perfect. . . ." I ask in all sincerity, where does Paul teach in 1 Cor. 8:2 that ALL knowledge was relative? Further than this, where in all of God's inspired Word is it taught that ALL knowledge is relative? I ask brother Ketcherside, and any or all of his coterie of false teachers, to show me in the Bible where inspiration teaches that ALL knowledge is relative.

It would do our brother well to remember what he wrote in the August, 1973 issue of the *Mission Messenger*, page 118. Hear him, "If I use a word they (Jesus and the apostles, TLB) used but mean something else than they meant, I am either deceived or a deceiver." For one to say that Paul was teaching in 1 Cor. 8:2 that ALL KNOWLEDGE was relative and to apply it as has brother Ketcherside, is to give it a meaning that Paul did not intend for it to have. So we ask our brother to classify himself, is he a deceiver or simply deceived?

I further believe that brother Ketcherside owes all of his readers a retraction of this false statement and an apology for making such.

Next, we come to his "diversity in OPINIONS." I again want to emphasize this thought, that what our brother has to say about one's attitude and actions toward another whose opinions might differ, is correct if taken at face value. But when he speaks or writes about opinions, never forget HIS definition of "opinion", and the various doctrinal issues that he places under this heading.

On page 71 he writes, "The entire chapter (Romans 14) is given over to showing that men should respect and treat each other as brethren in spite of differing personal convictions upon these issues." What are "these issues"? Reverting to the previous paragraph, the writer specifies "eating of meats and observance of days," and that over these matters "The church was being shattered". But, would this brother deny that he is ready, willing, able and has added to "these issues" (the eating of meats and observance of days) such things as instrumental music, premillennialism, tongue speaking and accepting one on his denominational baptism? Should he deny such, I can show, and stand ready to do so, from his writings that he has done so repeatedly!

That Romans 14 and 1 Cor. 8 deal with matters of opinions, I will affirm. But that the above mentioned things added by brother Ketcherside come under the heading of matters of opinion, I deny and do without fear of successful refutation.

Premillennialism denigrates the greatness of the Great I AM. Instrumental music is an addition to our worship directed to our heavenly Father. Accepting people as Christians on their unscriptural baptism is to go beyond that which is written. Upholding the possibility of miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit in the twentieth century is an anachronism par excellent!

Indeed, I must allow latitude in your personal opinions, but this responsibility no longer exists when one crosses over that which distinguishes matters of opinion from matters of faith.

On page 72 he writes, "Harmony does not consist of seeing everything alike on the UNDERSTANDING level, but of welcoming one another on the FAITH LEVEL." Isn't it a shame that Paul, an inspired apostle, did not know this and was so misguided as to be guilty of writing such statements as "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17)?

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Indeed, if any two people understands it, they will understand it alike! We cannot understand it differently. We might both misunderstand it, but we both cannot UNDERSTAND it and be at the opposite ends of the extreme.

In a long, wordy and subtle dissertation on I Cor. 1:10, brother Ketcherside comes to the conclusion that when Paul said "all speak the same thing," that he was actually saying, "stop your party cries" and uses Moffatt, Weymouth, Schonfield and the New English Version as the criteria of correctness.

If Paul was actually presenting the thought that they were to stop their party cries, were they to say, teach or do anything when the party cries ceased?

Paul condemned the division in Corinth. Brother Ketcherside would have similar differences today; the basic difference being that he would tolerate just about everything, i.e., unity in diversity.

He states that the tools that Paul gave to the Corinthians for the restoration of the "rents in the fabric" were "the same mind and same judgment." He continues "They must have the same mind as to what they were to try to do. They must have the same judgment as to how to accomplish it. The first refers to purpose, the second to method" (page 81). We must ask a question right here. When the cleavage was mended, were they teaching various and conflicting things? Did God give them the right to believe and teach whatever they wanted? Would there have been any doctrine that some might have chosen to teach, of which God would not have approved? When they had the same mind and judgment, did they all teach the same thing on anything?

In I Cor. 4:17, the apostle Paul wrote "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church." What did Paul "teach everywhere in every church"? Did he teach premillennialism and amillennialism at the same time, at the same place? Brother Ketcherside would have him doing this!

Would Paul be teaching in every church that it is both correct in God's sight and incorrect in God's sight to use instrumental music in our worship? Brother Ketcherside would so teach!

Would Paul teach TODAY that God approves of a man who believes he can speak in tongues and that God also approves of a man who does not believe that ANYONE can speak in tongues? Would Paul teach both of these thoughts at the same time, at the same place and to the same people? Brother Ketcherside would teach it that way!

It seems that brother Ketcherside has failed to realize that should Paul have taught the things he advocates, then we could only conclude that Paul contradicted Paul. Not only that, but it would be unreasonable and completely illogical!

Therefore, in all sincerity, what do we say about Unity in Diversity? It is a compromise of the restoration principles to which our brother so frequently alludes. It is a toleration of the propagation of false teaching, false teaching that is so far removed from the principles of the revealed will of God that it is preposterous. It places one in a position that the only way he can defend anything the Bible teaches is treating it as "I think," or "It seems to me"; a better word would be "supposition".

Unity in Diversity is a disgrace to the oneness for which Jesus prayed in John 17:20-21. It is a contradiction of that for which Paul exhorted in I Cor. 1:10. It would destroy that oneness of which Paul wrote in Eph. 4:4-6.

Unity in Diversity is "sweet sounding" and subtle. Many are swayed by its promises. But they fail to understand that it cannot provide that which is promised.

Brethren, let us rise to the challenge that is cast before us. Let us draw the sword of the Spirit and put to rest this doctrine of the devil that can only lead to eternal destruction.

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